

**Zeitschrift:** Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique  
**Herausgeber:** Fondation Hardt pour l'étude de l'Antiquité classique  
**Band:** 26 (1980)  
  
**Artikel:** Latin literature : a century of interpretation  
**Autor:** Bolgar, Robert R.  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-660807>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 06.01.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

### III

ROBERT R. BOLGAR

#### LATIN LITERATURE : A CENTURY OF INTERPRETATION

A handsome girl of eighteen in the first brilliance of her beauty does not usually trouble overmuch about how she dresses. She feels sure of being admired. It is later in life, when admiration no longer comes as a matter of course, that she will interest herself in the newest hair-styles and fashionable clothes. It is when homage has to be extorted from an indifferent world, that the allurements of fashion begin to count.

The history of classical studies during the last hundred years follows this very human model. First we have an age of unflawed self-confidence when the value of classical scholarship is largely unquestioned, and scholars cultivate their own interests with little regard for the world around them. Up to the first world war, the pattern of classical studies was notably idiosyncratic and had little in common with other arts subjects. Latinists in particular tended to isolate themselves from the intellectual fashions of the day. Then in the nineteen-twenties we see the beginnings of a process of integration that was to bring classical learning once more into line with the general development of Western culture. As public esteem for Latin and Greek declined, and classical departments in schools and universities diminished in size, scholars were driven to take more notice of contemporary trends. Finally, after the second world war, as the decline

in the popularity of the ancient languages has grown even more marked, this responsiveness to whatever ideas chanced to be in fashion has progressively increased, so that your classical scholar is no longer a remote figure, but has come to share the concerns of his fellow students of literature and culture.

The year 1879, which marks the beginning of the century we are to examine, does not represent a natural break in the history of classical studies. If we want a natural break, we must go back to an earlier time, perhaps to the decades that followed the fall of Napoleon. The eighteenth century had been a period of stagnation in the teaching of Latin and Greek. Everyone remembers Gibbon's unkind description of the fellows of his Oxford college. Decent, easy men, he called them, who had absolved their consciences from the toil of reading, or thinking, or writing <sup>1</sup>. « It will be a long time before this sort of Learning will revive in England » was the remark Markland scribbled in his own copy of his edition of the *Supplices* <sup>2</sup>, and we have Melchior Grimm about the same time complaining that hardly anyone in France had a proper knowledge of Latin and Greek <sup>3</sup>. Those who devoted themselves to learning were ill-rewarded. Vico's struggles at Naples, Reiske's at Halle, Jean Capperonier's in Paris make pathetic reading <sup>4</sup>. Untutored interest in Greece and Rome remained however unexpectedly lively among the educated public, as we can see from the great number of pictures, plays and novels that made use of classical or pseudo-classical

<sup>1</sup> Edward GIBBON, *Autobiographies*, ed. J. MURRAY (London 1896), 62 ff.

<sup>2</sup> John NICHOLS, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century* (London 1812-15), IV 288.

<sup>3</sup> F. M. GRIMM, *Correspondance littéraire* (Paris 1829-31), VI 20: « depuis longtemps on n'y [en France] sait plus le grec... et on néglige l'étude du latin tous les jours davantage ».

<sup>4</sup> The story of Vico's career is well-known. J. J. Reiske supported himself for twelve years by ill-paid hackwork (J. E. SANDYS, *A History of Classical Scholarship* III (Cambridge 1908), 15). Capperonier left his family virtually penniless (C. JORET, *D'Ansse de Villosion et l'hellénisme en France pendant le dernier tiers du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris 1910), 94-96).

themes<sup>1</sup>, and this interest was then fanned into flame on the Greek side by the genius of Winckelmann and Goethe, and benefited on the Roman side from the admiration felt for the heroes of the Republic, first by the American colonists and then by the Jacobins<sup>2</sup>. There was an uprush of public enthusiasm for antiquity, and this led in its turn to a revival of classical learning in both schools and universities.

If the indifference to education that characterized the eighteenth century had persisted into the nineteenth, this revival would not have had much effect. But in this respect as in others the industrial revolution brought radical change. With the growth of population and the exploitation of new techniques there came a growing need for organization and expertise and a call for ever more skilled administrators and professional men, while entrepreneurs who had made money wanted their sons educated as gentlemen. There was an urgent demand for education. The only education generally available was based on Latin and Greek, and consequently Latin and Greek benefited from the demand. The benefits however, were considerable and more than anyone could have foreseen. Europe was entering into a period of unexampled prosperity. There was money in plenty for schools, universities, academies and research.

Even so it is possible that classical studies would not have flourished long—they were not after all well-suited to serve the needs of an industrial society—had it not been for an odd coincidence. The education that is given in schools and universities is never just a training for life. It is also invariably a selection process. At every stage, it picks out those who are fit for further instruction. And as it happened, the classical

<sup>1</sup> For extensive lists of these see M. BADOLLE, *L'Abbé Jean-Jacques Barthélemy* (Paris 1927).

<sup>2</sup> R. A. LEIGH, « Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the myth of antiquity in the eighteenth century » and M. REINHOLD, « Eighteenth-century American political thought », both in *Classical Influences on Western Thought A. D. 1650-1870*, ed. R. R. BOLGAR (Cambridge 1979).



education was well able to perform this task. To translate a passage from a modern author into the Latin of Cicero or the Greek of Demosthenes may or may not be an intellectually fruitful exercise. But one thing is certain. We have here a task that no one can carry out successfully who is not highly intelligent, who has not worked hard over a long period, and who has not done what his teachers told him. But intelligence, industry, and a willingness to accept discipline were precisely the qualities that the nineteenth century looked for in its civil servants and professional men. The fact that examinations in Latin and Greek could select young men with these qualities proved to be of great social value. More perhaps than any other single factor it contributed to the survival of the classical education and the esteem it received.

The importance of these external forces which affected the development of classical studies should not however obscure the fact that for internal reasons too the discipline was by the early nineteenth century ready to welcome its golden age. The cataloguing of libraries, the identification of manuscripts, their collation, and the publication of their readings had proceeded uninterruptedly since the fifteenth century. It had been a monumental task, and few of those engaged in it realized its extent or its importance. But by the time of Lachmann and Ritschl such progress had been made that a scientific treatment of the manuscript tradition was at last possible; and what the method associated with the name of Lachmann seemed to promise was a new departure in textual criticism which would enable correct texts to be produced of all ancient authors.

Moreover, if textual criticism enjoyed a new dawn, so did that other great department of classical studies, the amassing of knowledge about antiquity. The study of inscriptions, medals, coins, ancient architecture and art had also made giant strides during the eighteenth century and was now ready to be placed on a systematic footing. The *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* begun by Boeckh in 1825 was along with Lachmann's 'Method'

one of the pillars that promised to support a new and improved edifice of classical learning.

Take a look at the middle years of the nineteenth century, and you will see classical scholarship poised apparently on the threshold of a brilliant future. Sadly however we know that this expectation remained unrealized, for within a decade or two the study of Latin and Greek was to see the first beginnings of a slow decline. The century we have to consider has all the outward signs of a period of decadence.

The reasons for this sudden change were complex, and I cannot do more than just mention them here. Lachmann's 'Method', unexceptionable in theory, proved awkward to apply in practice. The manuscript tradition of some authors resisted genealogical ordering as Jahn found in the case of Persius as early as 1843. Moreover, even where *recensio* yielded an acceptable result, there was still much need for *emendatio*. « *Nullam unquam vidi codicem* », Cobet remarked, « *qui sine multiplici emendatione legi intelligique posset* »<sup>1</sup>. Lachmann himself had been responsible for some startling conjectures, and his favourite disciple, Haupt displayed even greater boldness. *Emendatio* will always appeal to imaginative minds more than *recensio*, and a good many of Lachmann's successors were overmuch tempted by its charms. Lucian Müller, Baehrens, Riese were all at times guilty of excess.

Excess in any direction calls forth its opposite, and the faults of the conjecturalists provoked a conservative reaction whose main representatives were Bücheler and Vahlen. Conservatism putting its trust in a *codex optimus* and resisting conjecture was bound to run the risk of accepting nonsense. But for a time it enjoyed substantial influence.

During this same period, the multifarious pursuit of *Altertumswissenschaft* lost the unity it had possessed in Boeckh's

<sup>1</sup> C. G. COBET, *Oratio de arte interpretandi*, cited in E. J. KENNEY, *The Classical Text* (Berkeley 1974), 117.

generation, and did this oddly enough through its very success. Branches of learning which had been subsidiary departments of classical studies developed and in developing struck roots outside the Graeco-Roman field. They embarked on an independent existence, appropriating classical material for their own use, where in former days they had been content just to enlarge our knowledge of antiquity.

Thus, during the first half of the nineteenth century the systematic study of language had been for the most part just a province of classical philology. It has this character for example in the work of Lobeck (1781-1860). But following the publication of Jakob Grimm's *History of the German language* (1848)<sup>1</sup>, we see classical material linked to linguistic information from other sources. H. Steinthal (1823-99), Georg Curtius (1820-85) and Wilhelm Corssen (1820-75) laid the foundations of a general science of comparative philology, and from the eighteen-seventies onwards we find classical scholars learning from comparative philologists rather than the other way round.

Archeology presents a similar picture. Assembling and cataloguing the material which previous ages had amassed about the classical past, as well as the fruits of their own more recent discoveries, occupied archeologists until the eighteen-eighties. But then interest shifted to Egypt. A more modern, more scientific approach to the subject was born, and classical archeology took its place as just one department of a large field of study that covered all past civilizations.

Another subject that broke away from the classical matrix was that still nameless science which was to divide later into anthropology and sociology. Having benefited from the efforts which Greek scholars made during the early part of the eighteenth century to trace the characteristics of the Homeric age<sup>2</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> J. L. GRIMM, *Geschichte der deutschen Sprache* (Leipzig 1848).

<sup>2</sup> For an account of the connections between Homeric scholarship and the Scottish anthropologists see K. SIMONSUURI, *Homer's Original Genius: Eighteenth Century notions of the early Greek epic* (Cambridge 1979), notably chapters 8 and 10.

and drawing largely on travellers' accounts of the habits of primitive peoples, it had won recognition as an independent branch of knowledge already in the seventeen-seventies. The study of mythology and primitive religion had however remained for the time being a classical preserve, to be treated mystically in Creuzer's *Symbolik* (1810-12) and more factually in Lobeck's *Aglaophamus* (1829). But here too the eighteen-fifties brought the beginnings of a broader approach as the discovery of eastern religious writings opened up the subject. Max Müller's *Comparative Mythology* (1856), supplemented within the subsequent decade by the researches of Adalbert Kuhn, Wilhelm Schwartz and Michel Bréal's *Hercule et Cacus. Etude de mythologie comparée* (1864) laid the foundations of an advance which was to culminate in J. G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough*<sup>1</sup>. By the time we reach the eighteen-nineties the relationship between the specifically Graeco-Roman and the broadly general study of religious phenomena is the opposite of what it had been fifty years earlier. Works like Erwin Rohde's *Psyche* (1891-94) and Jane Harrison's *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1903) are dependent on the general development of the subject. They do not like their predecessors at the beginning of the century exercise creative control over it.

At the same time, though in a less decisive and thorough-going way, ancient history and ancient philosophy also gained a measure of independence as they came to be influenced in their aims and techniques by the general study of history and philosophy. What we observe in the last quarter of the nineteenth century is the progressive isolation of that traditional kernel of classical studies, which concerns itself with the mastery of the ancient languages and the accuracy and interpretation of ancient texts, as specialists in linguistics, classical archeology, ancient religion, history and philosophy come to feel themselves more akin to other linguists, archeologists, anthropologists, historians

<sup>1</sup> J. G. FRAZER, *The Golden Bough* (1890; re-issued in 12 vols. 1907-15).



and philosophers than to their fellow students of Latin and Greek.

But these ominous phenomena often appear to me to have been symptoms rather than causes of the decline of the classical discipline. They were the outward signs of a deep-seated malady, a malady which it would not be unreasonable to describe as a loss of purpose. Scholars and teachers of the classics had suffered once already at an earlier period from the consequences of such a loss of purpose, when Latin was displaced as the international language of learning towards the end of the seventeenth century. But on that occasion a sense of mission had been miraculously restored to them when Goethe and others persuaded the world that the experience preserved in the great writings of antiquity could guide us to a fuller understanding of life. Matthew Arnold still believed this <sup>1</sup>, and so did Renan <sup>2</sup>. If the men who taught Latin and Greek at that time had been guided by these champions of their subject, their discipline might have stood on a firmer footing. But they were more interested in the exercise of their specialized skills than in any meaning antiquity might have for their contemporaries. They were content to produce clever translations into the ancient languages. They emended manuscript readings, deciphered inscriptions, gathered all known facts about the Roman stage or the metres of Horace ; and they looked no further <sup>3</sup>. Momm- sen had deplored this : « die Besten von uns empfinden es, dass

<sup>1</sup> Matthew ARNOLD, « On the modern element in literature », in *Essays in Criticism*, 3rd ser. (Boston 1910), and « Literature and science », in *Discourses in America* (London 1885).

<sup>2</sup> Ernest RENAN, « Prière sur l'Acropole », in *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse*, ed. J. POMMIER (Paris 1959), 46-51.

<sup>3</sup> M. L. CLARKE, *Classical Education in Britain* (Cambridge 1959), chapters 7 and 9. Similar conditions seem to have prevailed in France thanks largely to the influence of Louis Havet (1859-1925) whom Renan apostrophized as « ce pauvre Havet qui ne songeait qu'à bien faire toute sa vie son cours de version latine à la Sorbonne », cited by J. SEZNEC, « Renan et la philologie classique », in *Classical Influences on Western Thought A.D. 1650-1870*, ed. R. R. BOLGAR.



wir Fachmänner geworden sind»<sup>1</sup>. But already in the next generation, the accumulation of knowledge for its own sake appeared a sufficient goal to his son-in-law, Wilamowitz: «Das Wesentliche ist die Erstarkung der Wissenschaft selbst. Denn wenn eines den Glauben an den Bestand und den Fortgang der Gesittung überhaupt rechtfertigen kann, so ist es dies»<sup>2</sup>. Classical studies were envisaged as self-justifying. That was perhaps sufficient to comfort those who were already committed to Greek and Latin. But it was not a battle-cry likely to encourage new recruits.

I have spoken so far of classical learning, for Latin cannot be separated from its more esteemed partner, Greek when one considers the factors that affected both. But now we can turn specifically to Latin. And before I proceed, I had better make one point clear by way of apology. I shall attempt to cover Latin studies in all countries. But the period we are considering is one that includes my own lifetime, and I cannot avoid seeing its problems from the point of view that I saw them first—that is working outwards from England. I do not wish to imply that English Latinists were insular. They read, they were influenced by continental scholarship. But all the same, the picture that I was given of Latin studies had an England-centred emphasis; and that is the picture I cannot help reproducing. I apologise for its limitations.

Textual criticism was the branch of Latin studies that enjoyed most esteem; so perhaps we should consider it first. Successful editors, critics whose conjectures appeared in learned journals or in their *adversaria critica* were regarded as the leading scholars of their day. They had the stature of paladins in the eyes of their colleagues.

I have always admired a passage in Housman's review of Palmer's *Heroides*:

<sup>1</sup> Th. Mommsen (1896) cited in U. HÖLSCHER, *Die Chance des Unbehagens* (Göttingen 1965), 20.

<sup>2</sup> U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1900) cited in U. HÖLSCHER, *op. cit.*, 20-21.

« Since Palmer's death was not mentioned in this *Review*, I will say more. In width and minuteness of learning, in stability of judgement, and even in what is now the rarest of the virtues, precision of thought, he had superiors among his countrymen and contemporaries; in some of these things many excelled him, some excelled him far, and Munro excelled him far in all. But that will not disguise from posterity and ought not to disguise from us that Palmer was a man more singularly and eminently gifted by nature than any English scholar since Badham and than any English Latinist since Markland » <sup>1</sup>.

This is the very stuff of epic. Who were Badham, Munro, Markland? The reader does not actually need to know. They were heroes, gifted by nature, excelling in the rarest of virtues, sure of the esteem of posterity. Housman does more in this passage than simply praise Palmer. He extols the whole confraternity of textual critics. And he was not the only writer of his day to indulge in this kind of occupational panegyric. Wilamowitz for his part used similar turns of phrase: « Gegen Ende Februar 1873 erschien Mommsen; damit ging eine Sonne auf, um die alles kreisen musste » <sup>2</sup>: Mommsen-Apollo.

Housman was an adept at glorifying the textual critics' calling. But here we come to a paradox. While Housman employed all the resources of his masterful style to enhance the high public reputation of criticism, he did more perhaps than anyone else to destroy the basis on which that reputation actually rested. It is true that Lachmann's 'Method' was losing credit even before Housman appeared on the scene, as analogists and anomalists locked in dispute. But he with his vast knowledge, his brilliant mind and his gift for invective may be said to have delivered the *coup de grâce*. « *Criticus nascitur, non fit* », he tells us in one of his lectures <sup>3</sup>. In his view there was no communi-

<sup>1</sup> A. E. HOUSMAN, *Selected Prose*, ed. J. CARTER (Cambridge 1961), 90.

<sup>2</sup> U. v. WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *Erinnerungen 1848-1914* (Leipzig <sup>2</sup>1928), 152.

<sup>3</sup> A. E. HOUSMAN, *op. cit.*, 133.

cable science or art of criticism, just a natural aptitude that was a gift from heaven. As for classical studies in general, they had no value either for teaching us to live better (Housman explicitly rejected the theories of Matthew Arnold) or even for teaching us to appreciate literature <sup>1</sup>.

Housman's biographers relate these attitudes of his to a conflict that tore him apart at the deepest levels of his personality. They tell us that he was a man frightened, and with good reason, of his own emotions. To some extent, I am sure, they are right. In the lecture room where we saw him as students, he was aloof and like a machine. His lectures—I heard him on Juvenal—were nothing but a series of notes on difficult readings. In each case he would list the variants, give parallels from contemporary usage, mention the opinions of previous editors, some of which he dismissed with sarcastic quips, and would finally propound his own solution. There was nothing by way of literary comment, nothing of human interest. He seemed to move on a remote plane of pure thought.

Since we knew him to be a poet and a sentimental poet at that, too sentimental for our adolescent taste, we were considerably puzzled. It must be remembered that at this point none of the facts that later came to light about Housman were known to his pupils. Then in the spring of 1933 he was invited to deliver the Leslie Stephen Lecture and he took as his subject *The Name and Nature of Poetry* <sup>2</sup>. Most of you will have read this famous lecture. All went well until he came to the line from Milton :

Nymphs and shepherds dance no more. . .

When he came to repeat this innocuous phrase, his voice broke, and he had to bring out his handkerchief to wipe his eyes. Rousseau's Saint-Preux could not have shown a clearer

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 168-95.

proof of *sensibilité*. We came to the conclusion that Housman's biographers were later to favour. We decided that he feared to talk about literature because his feelings were too deeply stirred.

It was not until Housman was long dead that we discovered that this paradox—the co-existence of the chill logical thinker and the extreme sentimentalist—was not the only one present in his personality. The editor of Manilius, the author of the *Shropshire Lad*, revelled in the crude jokes of the London music halls and was an adept at composing comic verses with a cynical twist:

When Adam day by day  
Woke up in Paradise,  
He always used to say  
'Oh, this is very nice'.

But Eve from scenes of bliss  
Transported him for life.  
The more I think of this,  
The more I beat my wife.<sup>1</sup>

A taste for juvenile frivolity was another facet of his character.

Undoubtedly the anomalies which mark Housman's views on classical scholarship were due to the oddities of his temperament. But I do not think that we should stop at that point. Personal quirks make an impact on the world only when—as in the case of Baudelaire—they act in conjunction with trends that exist outside the individual. Housman was in a way a paradigmatic figure, which is why I have spoken about him at length. Let us take a man who has been trained to be a classical scholar of the kind that flourished in the nineteenth century, and who has been moulded by his training to believe in the value of classical scholarship and in the excellence of the methods it traditionally employed. Let us suppose that this man comes to realise (because he is supremely intelligent) that the world around him has no great use for his speciality. How will

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of A. E. Housman*, ed. H. MAAS (London 1971), 48.



he react ? Is it not probable that like Housman he will on the one hand fervidly maintain the superiority of his chosen field of knowledge, and on the other hand reject with equal fervour that knowledge ought to be related to life ? Housman's views have an exaggerated character, and the exaggerations are the product of his personal difficulties. But the views themselves were shared by many scholars of his time.

When we examine the classical works published during the three decades before 1914, we find that the majority of them were new editions of standard authors. The impulse that stemmed from the philological triumphs of the Lachmann era was still very much alive, and the predominance of classical studies in education—a predominance hardly shaken as yet—provided a readership that publishers were keen to exploit. The great nineteenth-century classical collections of Teubner, Tauchnitz, Didot were joined by the Oxford Classical Texts and by the highly successful Loeb series aimed at those who had learnt, but had partly forgotten their Latin. This is the period that gave us the concluding volumes of Ussing's *Plautus* (1875-87), W. M. Lindsay's monographs on the Plautine manuscripts<sup>1</sup> and his Oxford text of the plays (1904). It saw the final productive years of Baehrens with his *Poetae Latini minores* (1879-83), his pioneering Propertius (1880) and his Catullus commentary (1894). Attention centred on the poets of the Republic. Postgate in his *Corpus* (1893-1905), Brieger (1894) and Cyril Bailey (1900) produced texts of Lucretius. Giussani (1896-8) and W. A. Merrill (1907) brought out annotated editions. We have also a great number of partial editions among which R. Heinze's *De rerum natura* Book III (1903) is distinguished by the excellence of its commentary and F. A. Kelsey's Books I, III and V are distinguished in America by having been reprinted eight times in twenty-seven years. The treat-

<sup>1</sup> W. M. LINDSAY, *The Palatine Text of Plautus* (Oxford 1896) ; *The Codex Turnebi of Plautus* (1898) ; *The Ancient Editions of Plautus* (Oxford 1904).



ment given to Lucretius was in a way characteristic of the age. The relations of the manuscripts, the sources of the poem, the poet's biography all received close attention, but Giussani and Heinze were alone in making a serious effort to interpret his philosophy. One cannot think long about the ideas in the *De rerum natura* without being tempted to apply them to one's own life. If one prefers to avoid vital problems, the philosophy of Lucretius is best left alone.

Catullus was also popular. Between 1882 and 1894 we have the editions of Benoist and Thomas, Postgate, E. T. Merrill and Schulze whose revision of Baehrens' work so outraged Housman<sup>1</sup>; and Robinson Ellis, another of Housman's butts, twice revised his 1867 text.

I hesitate to continue this list for fear of sounding like a library catalogue. Norden dealt superbly with *Aeneid* VI. Lucian Müller produced a fine Horace in two parts (1891-93, 1900) and Lejay a magnificent edition of the *Satires* (1911). Karl Hosius gave us Lucan (1892), and Friedländer his excellent Martial (1886) and Juvenal (1895) which one still has occasion to consult. Housman edited Juvenal (1903), « presenting to the readers and especially to the editors of Juvenal the first *apparatus criticus* which they have ever seen »<sup>2</sup>, and he began work on Manilius. Moving to prose authors, one has Furneaux's *Annals of Tacitus* (1884) and Tyrrell and Purser's *Letters of Cicero* (1885) both of which I used with profit a generation later.

I have listed only a few of the many works that appeared, and those few at random. Editing, as I have already remarked, was the principal activity of scholars during this period, and that was true of the modern as well as of the classical field. However, there was a difference which is worth noting. The aim of editors in the modern field—and of medievalists like Traube—

<sup>1</sup> A. E. HOUSMAN, *Selected Prose*, 72.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

was to make texts accessible for the historian or the literary critic. Once a text had been edited, it was allowed to stand. There was little duplication. In the classical field, duplication was the rule, each editor wanting to improve on the one before, and in some cases, as with Catullus, the gains were minimal. Who in his senses would prefer Schulze to Baehrens, Ellis to Benoist ?

It is fair to say however that alongside the editions and the *adversaria*, there appeared many books and articles on more general topics. What were the issues debated ? *Retractatio* and *contaminatio* in Plautus and Terence were discussed ; also the staging of comedy ; the relationship between the verse *ictus* and the accent of everyday speech ; the social standing of Lucretius ; the identity of Catullus' Lesbia ; the identity of the infant in the fourth *Eclogue* ; the authorship of the *Appendix Vergiliana* and the *Corpus Tibullianum* ; the original form of Cicero's orations ; *clausulae* ; the location of Horace's farm ; the question of the performance of Seneca's tragedies ; the authorship of the *Octavia* ; the identity of Petronius ; the date of the *Satyricon* ; the relationship between Tacitus' *Dialogus* and Quintilian's *Institutio*. But this was the age of Bergson and G. E. Moore, of Russell and Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica* and Sorel's *Réflexions sur la violence*, the age when Zola, Mallarmé and Henry James published their most important works. Bernard Shaw, Gide and Claudel were all writing. Valéry composed *Monsieur Teste*, Thomas Mann, *Buddenbrooks*, Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*. What echo did their preoccupations find in Latin scholarship ? The answer is plainly none. Gaston Boissier's books touched on the importance of an author's cultural background, and Heinze's discussion of Virgil's epic technique had a wide literary interest. But they were exceptions.

The thirty years preceding the 1914 war might fairly be described as the ivory tower era of Latin studies. I ought to say however that this characterization does not apply in quite the same measure to Greek. The widespread belief, popularized

by Goethe, that Greek literature could serve modern man as a guide to intelligent living, had the effect of making both Hellenists and progressive intellectuals eager to discover links between Greece and the contemporary world. We have the political theorist, Lowes Dickinson tracing the origins of modern rationalism in ancient Athens<sup>1</sup>; and scholars like Gilbert Murray responding to this emphasized the rational element in Greek culture. Or again we have the curious repercussions of that interest in mythology which began to play an important part in anthropological research during this period. It gave prominence to the idea that myths—and the majority of classical myths were of Greek origin—reflect man's primitive reactions to his experience, and so reveal the problems which preoccupy us at the deepest level of our personalities: an idea to be forcefully developed by Freud. This theory that myths have a profound meaning gained considerable vogue in the literary world, so that already before 1914 we see Gide writing his *Prométhée mal enchaîné*. This work and its companion piece *Le roi Candaule* inaugurated that craze for subjects from Greek myth and legend which was to give us between the wars Cocteau's *Orphée* and *La machine infernale*, Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning becomes Electra* and Giraudoux's *La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu*. And it is a craze that still endures. Only last year, Edward Bond who ranks definitely as an avant-garde playwright produced at the London National Theatre his new play, *The Woman* which has Hecuba for its heroine. Such a fashion for the imaginative creations of the Greek mind could hardly be expected to leave the world of scholarship unmoved, and the writings of L. Radermacher, H. Jeanmaire and G. S. Kirk are evidence that it did not<sup>2</sup>. But it does not seem to have

<sup>1</sup> G. LOWES DICKINSON, *The Greek View of Life* (London 1896).

<sup>2</sup> L. RADERMACHER, *Mythos und Sage bei den Griechen* (Wien 1938); H. JEANMAIRE, *Couroi et Courètes* (Lille 1939); G. S. KIRK, *Myth: its meaning and functions in ancient and other cultures* (Cambridge 1971).

made quite the same impact on Latin studies in spite of J. G. Frazer's informative edition of the *Fasti* (1929).

In Latin studies as in so much else the first world war marks a watershed. It put an end to the complacent conservatism inherited from the nineteenth century. One of the reasons for the changes that occurred was an unmistakable decline in the popularity and status of Latin and Greek. The state of the classical education in the period between the wars resembled that of Byzantium under the Palaeologi. It had the shadow of importance without its reality. At Cambridge, for example, the classical programme still headed the annual lecture list. Classical teachers were still very prominent in the running of the university. But the faculty was shrinking in size. A period of transition was at hand. At the beginning of the century that pillar of the French academic establishment, Gustave Lanson, had criticized classical studies on the ground that they were linked to aristocratic presuppositions<sup>1</sup>. That was admittedly an overstatement. The classical education had never been primarily aristocratic. But in England at any rate it was the apanage of an economically privileged minority, and when state-aided secondary schools began to multiply in number after 1902<sup>2</sup>, its popularity gradually declined. The new recruits to higher education nourished an understandable prejudice against a subject that was so closely associated with the past age of upper middle-class privilege. Besides, other subjects were much easier to master.

Teachers of the classics felt themselves threatened, as indeed they were; and as was perhaps inevitable, they reacted by trying to copy the methods of their rivals, who taught the recently established arts subjects in the modern field. A new generation of Latin scholars began to explore the possibilities

<sup>1</sup> G. LANSON, *L'université et la société moderne* (Paris 1902).

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Balfour's Education Act (1902) made the county councils responsible for secondary education and so encouraged these authorities to open an ever-increasing number of publicly financed secondary schools.



of literary criticism, and ancient historians turned to those social and economic problems that were occupying the attention of their contemporaries who studied more recent periods. It was plain that changes were coming, though they were not coming very fast.

In the historical field, the difference between nineteenth and twentieth-century methods was not yet very great. The anti-positivist theorising of Bradley, Dilthey, Bergson and Croce had not made much impact on the majority of practising historians. The work of Ettore Pais and Gaetano de Sanctis in Italy, of Rosenberg and Beloch in Germany, of Rice Holmes in England was for the most part an extension and refinement of Mommsen's achievements, and it was Mommsen's critique of the Roman historians that found fresh exponents in scholars like E. Schwartz, P. Huber and J. Vogt who called the objectivity of Sallust, Caesar and Tacitus into question. Such innovations as there were affected the topics chosen for research rather than the methods employed. Rostovtzeff (1926) and an American group headed by Tenney Frank (1936-40) pioneered the study of economic conditions, while eminent German scholars among whom were Kroll, Heinze and Reitzenstein, widened history's field to embrace cultural phenomena. Their purpose was to describe not only what happened, but what people felt about their experience.

The most interesting development in ancient history was however one that had close links with literary studies. By 1914 the foundations had been firmly laid for an understanding of stylistic techniques in Latin, and the information gathered in works like Norden's *Die antike Kunstprosa* (1898) was now applied to the Roman historians. If the latter's handling of facts was sometimes distorted by their political prejudices, it could also, as scholars now realized, have been affected by the way they had chosen to write. H. M. Hubbell had been one of the pioneers in this kind of enquiry with his assessment of the influence of Isocrates on Cicero and others (1913), but the man



responsible for a critical breakthrough was probably R. Ullmann with his analysis of the speeches in Sallust, Livy and Tacitus <sup>1</sup>.

Meanwhile, literary historians and critics were arriving at the study of style by a circuitous route. General books on Latin poets, combining an appreciation of their work with an account of their lives and cultural background, had made their appearance before the end of the nineteenth century. Sellar's *Virgil* (1876) and his *Horace and the Elegiac Poets* (1891) were early examples of this genre read at one time by every English student. Glover and D'Alton in England, A. Bellessort in France <sup>2</sup> kept the tradition alive to the beginning of the nineteen-twenties when the impact of contemporary fashion—natural enough in the decade of Lytton Strachey and André Maurois—brought a more obviously biographical approach into prominence. I remember reading Gilbert Norwood's *The Art of Terence* with open-mouthed admiration as a schoolboy. But Tenney Frank's *Virgil* (1922) or his *Catullus and Horace* (1928) would provide just as good an example of the genre. Like Sainte-Beuve, these scholars sought to reconstitute the personalities of their subjects, and they allowed their imaginations free play. A biographical approach does not however work well with classical authors. We know too little about their lives. It is not surprising therefore that the emphasis on the personal element in literary history tended to decline, while studies of the cultural background, such as R. Heinze's *Die Augusteische Kultur* (1929) continued in favour.

These studies of Roman culture, though they enjoyed a fair degree of success, did not dominate the literary scene. By the nineteen-twenties the pioneering work of Charles Bally and Leo Spitzer was making a slow impact on the academic world. Its effect primarily was to draw attention to the importance of detail in the analysis of literature. Now classical scholarship

<sup>1</sup> R. ULLMANN, *La technique des discours dans Salluste, Tite-Live et Tacite* (Oslo 1927).

<sup>2</sup> T. R. GLOVER, *Virgil* (London 1904); J. F. D'ALTON, *Horace and his age* (London 1917); A. BELLESSERT, *Virgile. Son œuvre et son temps* (Paris 1920).

had produced a great deal by way of detailed study in the field of ancient rhetoric. But that material was of a somewhat specialized nature, and its value for literary analysis in the modern manner was not immediately obvious. However, at the beginning of the century there had appeared Heinze's outstanding book, *Vergils epische Technik*, which had directed attention to Virgil's poetic art, and inspired by it, a whole series of excellent studies by J. W. Mackail (1923), J. S. Phillimore (1925), A. Cartault (1926), H. W. Prescott (1927) and E. K. Rand (1931) helped to develop an interest in the poet's methods of composition which has lasted to the present day. For some time, Virgil remained the centre of interest in stylistic scholarship, but some work was done on Seneca<sup>1</sup>; then as the taste for romanticized biography lost its grip, there came some fine analyses of Catullus' style<sup>2</sup>; and the new critical approach was given a theoretical basis in Marouzeau's *Traité de stylistique appliquée au latin* (1935).

It is important to realize however that from the point of view of the average student—from a worm's eye view that is—these developments appeared marginal. The central purpose of scholarship still seemed to be the editing and interpretation of texts and the elucidation of details connected with them. What was the function of the *angiportus* in the staging of comedy? What form did the Ciceronian *clausulae* take? And students still spent most of their energy on prose and verse composition. They were attracted by the modern approach, but the real authority of learning appeared to be on the side of tradition. One's heart was with Norwood, but one's conscience held fast to Housman.

Transitional periods are always confused, but what made this particular period exceptionally chaotic was the fact that the keystone of the traditional system, the science of textual criti-

<sup>1</sup> A. BOURGERY (1922) on Seneca's prose works; L. HERRMANN (1924) and W. H. FRIEDRICH (1933) on his tragedies.

<sup>2</sup> Notably S. GAETANI (1933) and E. A. HAVELOCK (1939).

cism was no longer what it had been fifty years earlier. Gone was the belief in 'method', gone the hope of finding a *codex optimus*. A. C. Clark in his 1914 inaugural lecture at Oxford had drawn attention to the support papyrus fragments gave to the readings of supposedly inferior manuscripts. Housman himself had advocated a comprehensive approach to the manuscript tradition. And there had been a further advance in this direction during the nineteen-twenties with the work of Stroux and Barwick and B. L. Ullman's articles on the *florilegia*<sup>1</sup>. Then in 1934 came Pasquali's diffuse, but decisive book<sup>2</sup> making a strong case for serious consideration of the *recentiores*. It was to be the Bible of a new age.

The new age began after the second world war. In a way perhaps there was nothing specifically new about it. The trends by which it was characterized had existed back in 1918. All that had happened was that the problems confronting Latinists and their reactions to these problems had become more intense. School Latin was fast losing both pupils and teaching time. (Greek had dwindled almost everywhere to a subject taken in the top class by the odd, exceptional pupil.) Many universities gave Latin a place merely as an option in an arts curriculum embracing several subjects; and courses on classical culture through translations were becoming more and more common. The future for Latin seemed bleak.

At the same time however the development of the subject was taking it beyond the confines of the nineteenth-century tradition by its own internal impetus. The first important advance in the post-war period was made in textual criticism. Timpanaro has demonstrated in a famous book<sup>3</sup> that the metho-

<sup>1</sup> J. STROUX, *Handschriftliche Studien zu Ciceros De oratore* (Leipzig 1921); K. BARWICK, « Zur Geschichte und Rekonstruktion des Charisius-Textes », in *Hermes* 59 (1924); B. L. ULLMANN, « Classical authors in medieval florilegia », in *CPh* 23 (1928); 25 (1930).

<sup>2</sup> G. PASQUALI, *Storia della tradizione e critica del testo* (Firenze 1932; 2<sup>a</sup> ediz. 1952).

<sup>3</sup> S. TIMPANARO, *La genesi del metodo del Lachmann* (Firenze 1963).

dological routines associated with the Lachmann 'Method' had been discovered for the most part before Lachmann. He possessed however the genius and the literary skill to demonstrate their full significance. Similarly the brilliance of Housman's style did much to foster awareness of his brilliance as a critic. Style is a great asset, and the new approach to the manuscript tradition was fortunate in finding a stylist to expound it.

Study of the *recentiores* involved a new factor: the history of their adventures. Indications as to who had possessed particular manuscripts, who had had them copied, were becoming of prime importance; and general attention was drawn to this by Giuseppe Billanovich's article on «Petrarch and the textual tradition of Livy» which appeared in the *Warburg Journal* in 1951. The complexity of the search that traced Petrarch's annotations to a lost Chartres manuscript, a copy of which had been brought by Landolfo Colonna to Avignon, the subtlety with which evidence from disparate sources was assembled, had all the fascination of a detective story. This article however was just the brightest representative of a line of study that was coming to enjoy widespread support. The nineteen-fifties saw many other publications by Billanovich himself, by Roberto Weiss, M. L. Laistner and Paul Lehmann, which were then supplemented in the next decade by Bernard Bischoff and others and by Billanovich's team, which he liked to describe as his *kibbutz*, working under the aegis of the *Italia medioevale e umanistica*. A new branch of scholarship had been born, that linked classical studies with the history of culture.

One startling feature of the post-war period has been that while the number of Latin scholars may have diminished, the number of works on classical subjects has, with the modern zeal for publication, probably increased. Devotees of the old tradition of careful scholarship have continued to produce highly competent editions. When we look at Konrad Müller's *Petronius* (1961), Shackleton Bailey's edition of the *Letters to*



*Atticus*, J. Cousin's *Quintilian*, F. Bömer's edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, L. D. Reynolds' edition of Seneca's *Letters*, to name but a very few, we can see that the present generation has not dropped behind its predecessors in the volume or quality of its editorial output. Indeed, in some respects, it may claim to have outdistanced them. For example, there has been an unprecedented number of editions of individual plays by Plautus and Terence, prompted perhaps by the recent vogue for the teaching of drama; there have been useful editions of minor authors: Apicius, Calpurnius Siculus, Claudian, Columella, Palladius; and great collections like the Loeb and the Budé have gone from strength to strength.

The study of Latin authors from a literary point of view has also flourished. It had its origins, as we have seen, in an attempt by Latinists to respond to interests that were manifesting themselves in the field of modern studies, and this responsiveness to fashion has remained its guiding principle also after the second world war. It is true that a number of works were written that had nothing specifically novel about them, but continued the useful and eminently readable practice of combining some biography, some cultural background, with a scholarly interpretation and appreciation of an author's writings. L. P. Wilkinson's popular *Ovid Recalled* and his *Georgics*, H. Fränkel's *Ovid: a poet between two worlds* and G. Highet's *Juvenal the Satirist* are examples of the genre. But elsewhere fashion made itself more sharply felt.

Since 1945, three varieties of interpretation have held sway in the modern field. The first was philosophical in inspiration and led to all fictional plots and all analyses of character being twisted to suit the categories of Existentialism. This practice did not, I am happy to say, exercise much influence in the classical field though both Camus and Sartre had made use of ancient themes.

Next there came the vogue for close, critical reading which had become fashionable in English studies through the influence



of F. R. Leavis. The application of close reading to Latin texts, as exemplified in the works of Kenneth Quinn, proved notably popular among students. It is calculated to enhance the pleasure we take in reading poetry, but whether it adds to our understanding of that poetry beyond the measure achieved by more traditional forms of commentary remains to be demonstrated. The old commentaries centred their attention on the surface meaning, the level of rational statement. The modern approach takes in also the overtones. One can make out a strong case for the importance of the latter, but the final product of a close reading often seems to owe as much to the critic's imagination as to the author's text, and the risk exists that eventually we shall lose ourselves among a welter of different interpretations.

Finally we have the more recent interest in structure. This has an elaborate theoretical basis in semiotics and has links with linguistics and anthropology. It would be dishonest and, I suspect, useless for me to pretend to a proper understanding of the system expounded in the works of Barthes, Julia Kristeva and Philippe Sollers. Fortunately however the interest in literary structure that has manifested itself in Latin studies has a simpler and more comprehensible character. Even an ossified intellect, trained like mine in the mental habits of half a century back, has little difficulty in following the arguments of Brooks Otis or Galinsky on the *Metamorphoses* or those of Hijmans on Seneca's *Letters*<sup>1</sup>.

Latin provides a good example here of how specialists in a particular, fairly restricted field react to a system of ideas that has gained acceptance in the academic world. They do not embrace that system in its totality and apply it to their specialized interest. Such thoroughgoing capitulations occur, if they occur at all, only where a new system has become so popular

<sup>1</sup> B. OTIS, *Ovid as an Epic Poet* (Cambridge 1966; 2nd ed. with new final chapter 1970); G. K. GALINSKY, *Ovid's Metamorphoses* (Oxford 1975); B. L. HIJMAN, *Inlaboratus et facilis. Aspects of structure in some letters of Seneca* (Leiden 1976).

that it has come to determine the whole structure of contemporary thought, as scholastic logic did in the twelfth century. Initially, your specialist does no more than attempt to solve in his own field and by traditional methods the problems that the new system has brought into prominence; and that is what has happened in Latin studies over problems of structure.

I want to end by mentioning a branch of learning that I have so far neglected: the history of scholarship. For a long time this was no more than an antiquarian preoccupation, satisfying the curiosity of the learned about the lives of their fellows. Even J. E. Sandys in his extensive *History of Classical Scholarship* (1905-08) attempted little more than this and differed from a Paolo Giovio or a Scévole de Sainte-Marthe in scale and thoroughness rather than in intention. But once a mass of evidence has been accumulated, connections inevitably suggest themselves; and the growth of information about scholarship brought to light the possibility of tracing the evolution of its methods. A brief and useful account by Wilamowitz pointed the way here<sup>1</sup>, and its findings have been supplemented since by a host of monographs on the Byzantine exiles, on Poliziano, on Bentley, on Porson. We have had Timpanaro's great book for the nineteenth century, and E. J. Kenney's recent work, *The Classical Text* is full of valuable hints<sup>2</sup>. But we need a comprehensive survey. R. Pfeiffer's recent history does not give enough detail to be really useful<sup>3</sup>.

The evolution of scholarly method would obviously provide the most appropriate framework for a history of scholarship. But the material that is now available to us includes a great deal that has no relevance to method, but would be valuable in other contexts.

<sup>1</sup> U. v. WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *Geschichte der Philologie* (Leipzig/Berlin 1921; 3rd ed. 1927, reprinted 1959).

<sup>2</sup> E. J. KENNEY, *The Classical Text* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1974).

<sup>3</sup> R. PFEIFFER, *History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850* (Oxford 1976).

First of all, we possess a substantial amount of information is relevant to the developments we have noticed in textual criticism. Here we look back, not to Sandys or Wilamowitz, but to another early work, Remigio Sabbadini's indispensable *Le scoperte dei codici latini e greci ne' secoli XIV e XV* (1905). The scientific study of a textual tradition depends on knowledge of the provenance and movements of manuscripts, and here Sabbadini and his successors serve us as useful guides.

Another valuable body of information concerns the influence of classical writings. In this field Zielinski was an important pioneer with his *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte* (1897). Only a handful of writers followed his lead during the next two decades, but then in the nineteen-twenties Stemplinger wrote on Horace's influence, Pansa on Ovid's; and the series *Our Debt to Greece and Rome* included in each volume a chapter on the author's survival. The nineteen-thirties brought two excellent surveys by Douglas Bush on the impact of the classics on English literature, which represented a marked advance; but again the war was the turning point. Once it was over the flood began. There have been books on the classical learning of particular authors: Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe; books on the literary fortunes of Latin poets, and one on a key figure from Latin epic, Edouard Leube's magnificent monograph on Dido<sup>1</sup>. There have been books on topics inherited from antiquity: *fortuna, otium, libertas*. There has been E. Curtius' epoch-making study and a slighter one by Gilbert Highet. The study of classical influences has become a veritable industry, and one that obviously has a busy future.

What I have tried to show—clumsily enough—is how our speciality responded during these last hundred years to the pressures put upon it. We began at a point where Latin scholars were so sure of their status and safe future that they pursued

<sup>1</sup> E. LEUBE, *Fortuna in Karthago* (Heidelberg 1969).

the problems suggested by their subject without regard to the world around them. Then as the popularity of Latin declined, they came to respond more to the intellectual interests of the day, but never to an extent which would have made them neglect their traditional skills or their traditional aim of interpreting ancient literature. Finally, as Latin's decline became catastrophic, we saw its champions beginning to adapt themselves to a new role.

It looks as if Latin, in decline as an independent discipline, may one day take its place as an indispensable element in the general study of literature and the history of culture. One can see the links being forged that will tie ancient to modern studies. On one side, we have the fact that textual criticism properly pursued has come to require incursions into later history. On the other side, we have a growing awareness of the debt that Christianity, philosophy, art, politics, science and literature, all owe to the classical past. And at the same time, we are coming to study in Latin literature the same broad problems that are being studied in the modern field. Your Latinist no longer lives in an ivory tower. He may soon come to have a new and exciting function as an essential contributor to the great common enterprise of learning to understand our culture through its past.



## DISCUSSION

*M<sup>me</sup> Patlagean* : Je commence par exprimer ma gratitude au professeur Bolgar, qui m'a fait comprendre pourquoi je suis devenue byzantiniste. J'ajouterai que les mêmes tendances correctrices, ou pour mieux dire répressives, se sont manifestées dans l'édition des textes postérieurs. Dans le domaine latin, je rappellerai l'exemple d'un Krusch, taillant souverainement dans les Vies de saints de l'époque mérovingienne. Dans le domaine grec, Karl De Boor a édité des textes historiographiques impeccables, mais il ignorait que la structure complexe de la chronique byzantine résistait absolument aux canons de l'édition critique du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Certes, la grande méthode de Louis Havet conserve sa valeur exemplaire, et d'ailleurs il savait bien que les textes classiques avaient bougé, et du vivant même des auteurs. Il écrivait néanmoins dans la préface de son *Manuel*, publié en 1911 : « Le livre a pour matière les altérations des textes, tant les lapsus qui les gâtent d'abord, que les mauvais accommodages qui achèvent de les corrompre ». Cette perspective n'est plus la seule concevable. Cela est sans doute dû en partie à l'essor de la patristique. En partie aussi à l'attention croissante que nous donnons aux motifs qui ont commandé la transmission médiévale, aux manuscrits eux-mêmes, en tant que tels. « On ne fait pas l'histoire qu'avec des textes » a souvent répété Lucien Febvre. Et voici que les manuscrits eux-mêmes suggèrent une réaction en quelque sorte interne contre la tyrannie du texte comme abstraction. Mais alors une première question surgit : quelle place devons-nous faire dans la tradition textuelle des auteurs latins classiques aux leçons médiévales ? Et une autre s'ensuit : y aurait-il une édition 'historique' et une édition 'littéraire' ?

*M. Bolgar* : I think, we must accept that in the case of most classical authors, there existed a definitive version which the author had passed for publication. Admittedly, there are instances where such a definitive text does not seem to have existed, when the author himself probably produced an emended version. When this has

occurred in modern times, as with the poems of W. H. Auden, we do not invariably feel the second version to be superior to the first. So why should we feel this in the case of an ancient writer ? Hence there is some inevitable confusion.

Medieval manuscripts, especially anonymous Saints' Lives, must, I think, be given rather different treatment from the Classics, since the existence of a 'best version' is not so certain as it is in the classical world. These manuscripts were often added to and 'improved' by copyists, and the emended version was just as good a guide to the verbal tradition as the original, and therefore not to be lightly dismissed.

We ought perhaps to distinguish between 'mechanical' copyists who simply reproduced a text as best they could and 'creative' copyists who tried to produce a text that would be to the taste of their generation, as translators produce a new translation calculated to appeal to their contemporaries. The latter—the 'creative' copyists—were particularly active with respect to popular medieval texts ; and their products have therefore a value as documents for the study of culture.

*M. Momigliano* : There is nothing to which I should like to object in M. Bolgar's penetrating and sensitive account. But owing to this conscious choice of an insular point of view, the speaker was bound to leave aside an important fact. What characterizes the classical scholarship of the XIXth century as a whole is the far greater prestige of Greek in comparison with Latin. Greek poetry, Greek art, Greek philosophy, Greek historiography—but above all Greek man as such—appeared more valuable than their Latin counterparts. The trend perhaps began with Winckelmann and interestingly enough was still the common ground for Wilamowitz and Nietzsche. Niebuhr was the exception, and of course an influential exception. But Mommsen accepted to a considerable extent the idea of the superiority of the Greeks. What is behind this idea is another matter. The identification of the Greeks with the Germans played its part. For some obscure reason the Indo-Germanic status of the

Romans was considered doubtful (at least before Dumézil). But there are more respectable and ultimately, I believe, more essential reasons. A different appreciation of poetry, art, history and philosophy brought us nearer to the Greeks. It is only too natural that the Latins should survive better in France. Even elsewhere they maintained respectability as regards law and political institutions. But it was the intervention of four Jews (L. Friedlaender, Traube, Leo, Norden) and one non-Jew (Heinze) which brought about, slowly yet decisively, a change in the situation. Housman, no doubt, contributed from England, though more by virtue of his genius than by the introduction of new ideas. Here one should perhaps mention the meeting of Ed. Fraenkel with Housman in the pages of *Gnomon*—a prelude to their reunion in England. In more recent times (especially after the Second World War) Latin scholarship has been increasingly directed towards the study of the Latin Fathers, medieval culture and Renaissance writers. The name of H. I. Marrou might be added to that of E. R. Curtius already mentioned by Bolgar. All the same, it remains remarkable that R. Pfeiffer, whose death we all mourn, should have been so little involved in the study of ancient Latin, whether pagan or Christian. Pfeiffer was deeply committed to his Catholicism which was identical with his Humanism. But notwithstanding his devotion to Erasmus, he created a direct bridge between Callimachus and la Pléiade.

*M. Bolgar*: I am most grateful to Professor Momigliano for pointing out these gaps in my survey, and I would not wish to disagree with any of his points. From the time that Wilhelm von Humboldt and the Schlegels invented the myth of a special relationship between Greece and Germany, Greek reigned supreme and not only in German universities. Matthew Arnold's case for the excellence of a classical education rested entirely on Greek authors. He stated explicitly that Latin literature was inferior, no better than the European literatures which succeeded it.

The fact that Leo, Norden and Traube were Jews and may therefore have been less affected by that cult of Greece which had

become so much part of 19th century German culture, had completely escaped me. Its interest is obvious. I owe an apology to Leo for failing to mention him. His name figured largely in my rough notes, but I was not sufficiently familiar with his work to place him with any confidence. I had promised myself a visit to a library to study his editions, but then the time gave out. As for Havet, he was certainly a key figure whose influence deserves closer study than it has received. He was as a young man the victim of unkind criticism from Renan. But was he just a pedant ?

Finally, the role of Latin as a vehicle of Christian thought must also be regarded as of considerable importance. If we take into account the work of Mynors on Cassiodorus, of Marrou and Courcelle on Augustine, the possibility that Latin studies may in the future be redirected to serve (in part at least) patristic studies ought to be kept in mind. Perhaps we ought to look forward to a future where Latin studies in school will be a preparation for several branches of scholarship : classical, patristic, medieval, neo-latin.

M<sup>me</sup> Patlagean mentioned in her intervention the restrictive tradition of Latin studies in former French generations, and pointed out that the publication of patristic texts played an important part in breaking down the Havet pattern. She then went on to suggest that the criticism of texts ought to be regarded as a double activity. It had a literary and a cultural aspect.

M<sup>me</sup> Patlagean's point about the critical study of texts is certainly valid. A literary text, a poem for example is both a work of art and a cultural document, and can be studied from these two points of view. The aesthetic study and the cultural study will often need to cover much the same ground. The investigation of linguistic usage, literary convention, ideological background may be common to both. The two forms of study tend therefore to be confused both in works of criticism and in university courses, but their aims are in the last analysis certainly distinct.

*M. Burkert:* Im Anschluss an die Bemerkungen von Prof. Momigliano noch einige Hinweise zur Situation in Deutschland :



Die Geringschätzung der lateinischen Literatur gegenüber den griechischen Originalen, wie sie im 19. Jh. gerade auch bei den Philologen üblich war, hat zum Hintergrund das Ringen um Emanzipation vom übermächtigen Einfluss der französischen Literatur, wie dies etwa mit Lessing begonnen hatte ; nach den Erfahrungen der Napoleonischen Aera war die antifranzösische Haltung erst recht fixiert. Zudem wurde der Neuhumanismus von den protestantischen Kreisen Mittel- und Norddeutschlands angeführt, die der katholisch-lateinischen Tradition fernstanden oder sie bewusst ablehnten.

Für eine gewisse Wende scheint, über Leo und Norden hinaus, ganz besonders Richard Heinze gewirkt zu haben. *Vergils epische Technik* machte den römischen Klassiker als Dichter wieder respektabel, und dazu kam dann der Aufsatz über *Auctoritas* (*Hermes* 60 (1925), 348-66 = *Vom Geist des Römertums* (1938), 1-24), der eine ganze Schar ähnlicher Arbeiten zu 'Grundbegriffen' oder 'Grundwerten' des Römertums nach sich zog. Fast gleichzeitig erklärte Eduard Fraenkel (*Die Stelle des Römertums in der humanistischen Bildung*, Berlin 1926), nicht die Literatur der Römer, sondern die 'römische Art' und insbesondere der römische Staat sei die vorbildliche Leistung, an der die humanistische Schulbildung sich ausrichten sollte. Das Programm hat auf Wissenschaft und Gymnasialbildung gewirkt. Einiges begann dabei im nächsten Jahrzehnt merkwürdig zu klingen, 'auf dem Weg zum nationalpolitischen Gymnasium'. In den letzten zehn Jahren ist darum in Deutschland eine gelegentlich bittere Debatte über Klassik und Faschismus geführt worden. Ein neues Ideal ist nicht aufgetaucht.

*M. Bolgar* : The fact that the 19th century cult of Greece had its origins in a revolt against French influence is a cultural curiosity of the first order. We have the generation of Lessing turning to Greek primarily because it is not Latin, since the French culture of the day had a Latin basis ; and out of this accidental choice, there grows the Hellenism of Goethe which then affects the whole culture of the 19th century.

What should have produced a molehill produced a mountain thanks to the (not to be foreseen) intervention by the genius of Winckelmann and Goethe.

What Professor Burkert says about the lack of interest in the Latin Fathers shown by North German Protestants, I find rather amazing as English Protestant divines in the nineteenth century seem to have been interested in the whole range of the patristic tradition. It is plain that we have to take a variety of Protestant traditions into account.

*M. Dover* : I should like to raise a set of interconnected questions about the influence of Housman and Housmanism. Housman as a 'genius' who advanced our understanding of Latin poetry—yes, we can agree on that : he often produced brilliant solutions to problems which had defeated others. What of Housman as a disastrous influence on the classical scholarship of our time ? To my mind, there are three ways in which this influence has manifested itself in my own generation, and they all stem from what I would regard as an intellectual failure of Housmanism : a failure, that is, to understand a situation, to analyse the probable consequences of different ways of coping with it, and to do what this analysis indicated.

First, the lecturing style which Dr Bolgar described. I suffered many such lectures at Oxford. They were simply inefficient ; the lecturer had not bothered to ask himself what kind of thing is best communicated orally and what in writing or in print. Many people were given a distaste for Classics by this thoughtless and complacent inefficiency. Sometimes they turned to what they believed to be 'literary criticism'—in fact, to subjective effusions of no enduring significance—and so, instead of being taught to realize the essential unity of literary criticism and textual criticism, they were allowed to regard the two as incompatible.

Secondly, linguistic or metrical error was always treated as more culpable than historical error. Obviously, if we get details wrong, we are likely to be wrong about the hypothesis we found upon those details. But it is absurd to dismiss with contempt—as I was brought

up to do—a man who is mistaken over the quantity of the vowel in the first syllable of *omittere*, while treating with far greater tolerance another who ‘knows his quantities’ but overlooks or cannot understand the relation between the Attic calendar and the solar year. It was this spirit which encouraged us to ridicule copyists and scholiasts for their ‘bad’ Greek when we should have been, above all, inspired with gratitude for their work in preserving and transmitting Greek literature.

Thirdly, *odium philologicum* has undoubtedly made a deep impression on the public. The scholar, in the imagination of many, is a person motivated by a desire to prove other people wrong, so that he may express his triumph in elegantly hurtful terms. I have seen one of Housman’s most intemperate remarks defended in print by a distinguished scholar of our own day, who said, «Robinson Ellis *bad*, among scholars, the intellect of an idiot child », which seems to me a very striking lapse in intellectual integrity. An age when classical studies are forced on to the defensive is not a good time at which to present the public with the spectacle of scholars better pleased by an opportunity to castigate one another’s mistakes than by such positive contributions to the subject as even the least gifted of their number may make.

*M. Bolgar* : When I heard Housman lecture he was at the end of his career ; and I have not met anybody who had attended his classes at University College, London, whose members were by his own account very poor Latinists. He must have made some concessions there. Indeed, there is a story about his reading one of Horace’s *Odes* at the end of a class and embarrassing everybody by nearly bursting into tears much as he was to do later in his 1933 lecture. His reaction to poetry (when he did react to it as poetry) was very close to that subjective response that in Sir Kenneth’s words « led to effusions of no enduring significance ». A subjectivism that owed a good deal to the teaching of I. A. Richards whose ‘practical criticism’ was popular between the wars.

I should like to express my agreement with the opinion that textual and literary criticism are not opposites. As I remarked earlier in an answer to Mme Patlagean, the two skills have a great deal in common.

Finally, it is perhaps worth adding a striking example of the low valuation of Byzantine scholarship in the 19th century. J. E. Sandys in the first volume of his *History of Classical Scholarship* quotes a passage from Frederick Harrison in which the latter stigmatises the Byzantines as ignorant pedants.

*M. den Boer*: Mme Patlagean drew our attention to misinterpretation of Byzantine literature by modern scholars; she asked whether in Latin literature the same attitude was found. I can answer this question in the affirmative, especially for authors of the fourth century, such as Aurelius Victor and Eutropius. Modern scholars registered their 'faults'—which are many—, but forgot to make use of these 'faults' as sources for fourth century morality and stylistic ideals. This influenced the editions in which these texts were 'emended', and moral digressions were misunderstood. New editions, as P. Dufraigne's of Aurelius Victor (1975), were more satisfactory. One example may suffice, *Caes.* 12, 1: *Quid enim Nerva Cretensi prudentius...*? Many editors read *Narniensi*, because Nerva was born in Narni. The original text has to be preserved for several reasons, summed up by Dufraigne, p. 99.

There is another point to add to M. Bolgar's list of modern literature. The novels of Gide and the plays of Cocteau had their predecessors in the 19th century in France, in Germany and in Holland, perhaps also elsewhere. In Groningen the Professor of Classics, Petrus van Limburg Brouwer (1795-1847), wrote novels on subjects of Antiquity. Cobet did not like it at all and criticized also his other works, now much appreciated; see O. Gruppe, *Geschichte der klassischen Mythologie* (1921), 215. In Germany, books as W. A. Becker, *Charikles. Bilder altgriechischer Sitte* (Leipzig 1840) were reprinted far into the 20th century. Becker dedicated his book to Gottfried Hermann, « dem tiefen Kenner griechischer Volksthümlichkeit, als



Zeichen der dankbarsten Verehrung und Liebe». I think that productions of this kind will reappear in the future, also for children. Nowadays as in the past the general reader is able to address himself to fiction in order to be introduced to the classical world. How many times this world is and will be misunderstood does not interest commercial circles. This is a permanent danger.

*M<sup>me</sup> Patlagean* : Une dernière remarque : prenez le cas d'*Astérix*. Son immense succès est en réalité ambigu, car il provient du va-et-vient constant entre la Gaule à l'époque de César et les Français moyens d'aujourd'hui, qui sont en réalité les personnages ; c'est cela qui amuse. Mais on pourrait citer aussi des œuvres de fiction, où ce même va-et-vient met en valeur la matière antique d'une tout autre façon, comme *Les mémoires d'Hadrien* de Marguerite Yourcenar, *I, Claudius* de Robert Graves.