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Classics Invented: Books, Schools, Universities and Society 1679–1742

In 1740 an anonymous novel was published in London which purported to be an English translation of a manuscript travelogue penned by a French Lesbian.[1] The ironically named Mademoiselle Alithia ('Truth') de Richelieu, cousin of the Duke Richelieu, had allegedly travelled across Europe dressed as a nobleman, accompanied by her maid Lucy attired as her male valet. At the town of Blois in the Loire valley, Alithia is a participant in a pseudo-Platonic dialogue held at the house of the local bishop. After one lengthy peroration by a Marquis on the human passions, the Count with whom our heroine is travelling suggests that the Marquis continue tomorrow, 'as my Friend here, pointing to me, is very fond of the Poetical Works of the Ancients and Moderns, and is forever poring on the Classics, I hope you'll favour us To-morrow with your Thoughts upon the Passions in Poetry'.[2] The Marquis does not wait, but continues immediately; 'the Classics' he discusses include the *Aeneid*, the *Iliad*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Cicero's *In Catilinam*, the *Fables of Phaedrus and Aesop*, and Seneca's tragedies.

Shortly afterwards, 'Alithia' inserts into her first-person account a treatise on morality penned by a Scotsman by name of Mr Somers whom she encountered at Montpellier, a city with one of the oldest universities in Europe, and a longstanding association with Protestant intellectual culture. His discourse recommends to statesmen that they observe religion and practise public piety:

> The World is much influenced by Example, especially the Lower Class of Men, by that of their betters; so that the former (who in every State make the Bulk of the People) are much strengthened in their Belief of Religion.[3]

Within a very few pages, the terms *Classics* and *class* have been used to denote something equivalent to what they mean today, and the Greek and Latin classical

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[1] My title, as a tribute to his pioneering volume *Classics Transformed*, is intended to express my profound intellectual debt to Chris Stray, who has been a mentor and staunch friend for more than thirty years. He taught me to love old Classics textbooks, and it is that enthusiasm which prompted the intensive investigation of early 18th-century volumes in this article. Some of the discussion here overlaps with parts of chapters 1 and 2 of Hall and Stead 2020, a book resulting from an AHRC-funded project, *Classics and Class 1689–1939*, on which Chris proved a most valuable consultant and contributor to an earlier volume; see Stray 2015.

[2] Richelieu 1740, vol II, 68.

[3] Richelieu 1740, vol. II, 72.

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authors have been identified by leisured aristocrats as their preferred reading matter. This seems to be only the second known instance in English printed texts of the two terms in proximity.

In 1736, we find the first use of term ‘class’ in its modern, socio-economic sense being used alongside ‘Classics’, but the social distinction here is not the typically French one of nobility versus ‘the bulk’ of the nation’s people as constituted by the lower class. It is used to make a distinction between two types of British people prosperous enough to purchase their sons an education (it is imperative that we keep in mind that nearly half of the children of Britain, two million, were given even rudimentary schooling only by the passing of the Elementary Education Act 1870). A Georgian polemicist questions the point of boys spending most of the hours available for education on acquiring proficiency in the ancient languages, when reading relevant material had a more obvious application to the aspiring businessman. Teachers are ‘as capable of contributing to the Welfare or Prejudice of a State, as any of the several Classes of Men of which it is composed’; learning Latin, especially how to compose verses in Latin, inculcates no skills useful to commerce. Better to read newspapers instead: several famous writers ‘spell and write English perfectly (better than others who have read the Classics), tho’ they are quite ignorant of Latin.’[4]

Neither term had ever been used in such a sense a mere sixty years earlier. There had of course been precursors of the curriculum suggested by the term Classics, notably the list of Christian books supplemented by pagan authors constituting the *Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum*. This was designed by Jesuits in Rome in 1599 and exported across the planet by the Society of Jesus’ missionaries.[5] But the anti-Jesuit paranoia ever after the Gun Powder Plot of 1605 had helped to prevent any such systematised set of recommended texts taking hold in the British Isles.

Christopher Stray’s *Classics Transformed* (1998) has itself transformed our understanding of the sociology of British Classics education in the 19th and earlier 20th centuries.[6] Other studies of the social context of Victorian Classics have subsequently appeared, including Stephen Harrison’s fine (2017) *Victorian Horace: Classics and Class*.[7] But the present article delves into a previous era in British Classics. By looking at a substantial number of school and university textbooks, it argues that the emergence of Classics as a distinct curriculum under that name, comprising the study of the Latin and Greek authors in their original languages with complementary publications relating to 'classical' history, religion, myth, geography, artefacts and 'antiquities', emerged in England (after 1707 Britain) between the 1670s and about 1715. This was partly in response to the famous French series of editions *Ad Usum Delphini* originally designed for Louis de France, 'Le Grand Dauphin' (1661-1711), the eldest son of Louis XIV. But in Britain, the invention of Classics took place in a different social context, where the power of the monarchy had been curtailed by the Bill of Rights 1689, and the power of the nobility was being challenged by an ambitious mercantile middle class. The term 'class' acquired its precise modern sense slightly later than 'Classics', but (as we have seen) by the mid-1730s sprang naturally enough to the mind of an author discussing the appropriate education for the male offspring of Britons with means.

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[4] Stonehouse 1736, 4, 10. My emphases.

[5] See Cueva, Byrne, and Benda 2009.

[6] Stray 1998a; see also Stray 1998b and 1999).

[7] Harrison 2017. See also, amongst others, Vasunia 2005.

In 1635 the word 'classics' could still mean 'trumpets' or 'trumpets-calls', as the neuter noun *classicum*, plural *classica*, did in canonical ancient authors.[8] In 1635 King Charles I commissioned an epic poem on the achievements of his ancestor King Edward III from Thomas May, renowned translator of Lucan's *Civil War.* In one passage May draws a comparison with the impact made by Julius' Caesar's army in France long ago,

> When dreadfull Classicks in all parts were heard,
> And threatning Eagles every where appear'd.[9]

By 'dreadfull Classicks' being heard in all parts, May clearly does not mean that Caesar subjected the Gauls to long recitations of ancient Greek and Latin literary works.

When the Romans heard their Latin noun *classis*, it contained a resonance that we do not hear when we say class: deriving from the same root as the verb *clamare* ('call out'), a *classis* consisted of a group of people 'called out' or 'summoned' together by trumpets. The word has always been associated with Servius Tullius, the sixth of the legendary kings of early Rome, who was thought to have held the first census in order to find out, for the purposes of military planning, what assets his people possessed (Livy I.42–4). Yet, by the second third of the 18th century, the term was adopted in order to distinguish different strata within English society. The plural *Classics*, meanwhile, had been used in English by 1679, as we shall see, to designate the corpus of Greek and Latin writings. But it is to the legendary first census that the origins of the term Classics must also be traced. In Servius' scheme, the men in the top of his six classes — the men with the most money and property — were called the *classici*. The Top Men were 'Classics'. By the time of the late second-century AD Roman miscellanist Aulus Gellius, the Top Authors could by metaphorical extension be called 'Classic Authors', *scriptores classici*, to distinguish them from inferior or metaphorically 'proletarian' authors, *scriptores proletarii* (*Noctes Attici* 19.8.15). The involvement, historically, of the study of Greece and Rome with the maintenance of socio-economic hierarchies is thus transparent in the label Classics.[10]

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[8] See e.g. Livy 28.27.15, Caesar, *Civil War* 3.82; Virgil, *Aeneid* 7.637.

[9] May 1635, book VII, n.p.

The *Attic Nights* was a favourite Renaissance and Early Modern text, first printed in 1469. By 1602, the adjective classic, variously spelt classick, classicke and classique, is found occasionally, if only in scholarly contexts, to describe a canonical text: William Perkins writes in a theological work written in 1602, 'Neither Plinie (who writ after Paul) nor any other ancient classique author, doth make mention of Phrigia.'[11] He needs to distinguish between 'ancient' classic authors and more recent ones, and he also seems to include St. Paul's epistles amongst 'classical' works. We find the term 'classic' used of a 'folio' in 1628,[12] and a 'word' in the Latin language in 1646.[13] And by 1645, with the increasing familiarity of the Greek treatise *On the Sublime* in European literary circles, Sir Dudley North fuses the idea of a top literary *class* derived from Aulus Gellius with the new interest in sublimity: 'Farre more sublime and better Authours have discovered as little order, and as much repetition; witnesse the Collections of Marcus Aurelius, St. Augustines Confessions, and some of a higher Classe.'[14] By 1694, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Willian Sancroft, can be praised postumously by another learned divine for having being 'an admirable Critic in all the Antient and Classic Knowledge, both among the Greeks and Romans', although here, too, the words 'antient and classic' probably include biblical literature.[15]

The tendency to include biblical literature and patristic writers in the category of 'classic' authors persisted in some quarters for decades.[16] Erasmus' *Colloquies* also find themselves in catalogues of 'Classics' until at least 1714.[17] But, by late in the 17th century, the plural noun with a definite article, ‘the Classics’, begins at least occasionally to mean, without further qualification, texts written in antiquity by non-Christian ancient authors in Latin and ancient Greek. The 17th-century examples, however, remain few.

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[10] See further Hall 2008.

[11] Perkins 1604, vi. 657. Perkins was incorrect; Phrygia is ubiquitous in ancient authors.

[12] Earle 1630, xxxiii.

[13] Browne 1646, vol. V.xiii, 253.

[14] North 1645, vol. III, 181.

[15] 'M.M.', in Sancroft 1694, xiii.

[16] Bentley 1713, 62.

[17] Anon. 1714, 'Advertisement'.

The earliest I have identified appears in a text where one schoolmaster writes to an implied specialist audience of teachers. It is a guide to Latin syntax published in 1679, written by one Jonathan Banks. The author’s intention was to simplify the famous 16th-century Latin grammar of William Lyly: the full title is *Januae clavis: or, Lilly's syntax explained its elegancy from good authors cleared, its fundamentals compared with the Accidence, and the rules thereof more fitted to the capacity of children*. In the Preface, Banks explains the system he has used for explaining the different types of verb: ‘The Rules…are explain’d by adding the *Verbs*…whose variety is shewn, and whose difficulties are cleared by contracted sentences out of the *Classics*.’[18] So there it is, although of course ‘the Classics’ here means books, or possibly authors, writing in classical Latin rather than in Latin and Greek.

Yet, in 1684, ‘the Classics’ first occurs meaning ancient authors, certainly including Greek ones, as studied by well-to-do junior males. That year an English translation of Eutropius’ *Breviarium historiae Romanae* was published, and its authorship credited to ‘several young gentlemen privately educated in Hatton-Garden’; Hatton Garden was a new residential development off Holborn with splendid houses. It was favoured by the rich and aristocratic wishing to flee the squalor of the old city, which had succumbed to a bout of plague in 1665 and gone up in the flames of the Great Fire of 1666. The Eutropius translation was intended to serve as an advertisement for the school. It was prefaced by a poem entitled ‘To the ingenious translators’ praising the efforts of these ‘Auspicious Youths, our Ages Hope, and Pride, / Exalted minds’. It is the work of the Irish poet Nahum Tate, whose adaptations of Shakespearean plays were currently all the rage in London. He praises their teacher while regretting his own less happy experience of reading ancient authors: he had been

> by Pedants led astray,
> Who at my setting out mistook the way.
> With Terms confounded (such their methods were)
> Those rules my Cloud, that should have been my Star:
> Yet groping forwards **through the Classicks** went,
> Nor wholly of my Labors may repent.

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[18] Banks 1679, ‘Preface’, n.p.

Later in the poem, Tate recommends that they move on to read not only Cicero but Demosthenes.

This Preface by the Hatton Garden schoolmaster Lewis Maidwell is dedicated to Baronet John Lowther, whose two sons attended the school and were amongst the translators (the experience did not prevent them leading degenerate lives!).[19] Its list of excellent things the boys may find in ancient authors include material which shows they might expect to study, in addition to Latin, Homer, Plutarch and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who is quoted, albeit briefly, in Greek. Maidwell expresses the interesting viewpoint that England is lacking a system of education for boys which makes sufficient use of their intellectual potential: if more fathers thought so hard about the right education for their sons, 'the sleepy Genius of our Nation would rouse itself... Your nice assistance in Education well imitated, might adorn our Country within itself, and save many the trouble of dry-nursing their Youth abroad'. He specifies France and Italy.

The impact of French scholarship can be seen at work even in Mr Maidwell's school for proudly English boys, however. It is no coincidence that this 1684 translation was published the year after an edition of Eutropius had come out, the work of a young French prodigy, Mademoiselle Anne Le Fèvre, the daughter of a celebrated Protestant academician in Saumur; she is better known by her married name, Madame Dacier.[20] Her Eutropius was one of the early volumes in the Paris-published 'Delphin' series, which was destined to transform educational practice and intellectual life across Europe, as April Shelford has meticulously argued.[21] Another author already published *ad Usum Delphini*, a little earlier in 1681, had been Aulus Gellius of the 'classici' and 'proletarii' authors himself.[22]

This 'Delphin' volumes were the joint brainchild of two eminent Frenchmen with exalted positions in the court of Louis XIV. Charles de Sainte-Maure, duc de Montausier (1610–1690), a fascinating character whose career combined military and administrative service with literary pursuits,[23] was raised Protestant but converted in adulthood. A severe but persuasive figure, supposedly the inspiration behind Molière's *Le Misanthrope* (1666),[24] he gained the monarch's trust. He was appointed official Governor of Louis, le Grand Dauphin, who was, while he lived, the heir to the throne. Montausier was then involved in the appointment of Pierre-Daniel Huet to the post of assistant *précepteur* to the Dauphin in 1670.

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[19] Maidwell 1684. He was a correspondent of Dryden's. The boys were named Christopher and James and in 1684 were about 18 and about 11 respectively. Christopher's gentlemanly classical education did not prevent him from succumbing to alcoholism and gambling debts; he was disinherited by his father in favour of James, who also fought a drink problem. See Beckett 1980.

[20] This book was also printed by a woman, who called herself on the title page 'widow of Antonius Cellier' (Apud viduam Antonii Cellier). Like the Daciers, Antoine Cellier was a Protestant who had converted, and his wife's name seems to have been either Anne or Florence. On Dacier see further Wyles 2016.

[21] Shelford 2007.

[22] Proust 1681.

Huet was a Jesuit-trained intellectual from a nouveau-riche family, born in 1630 in Caen, Normandy. He built up networks with other French and Dutch scholars, including several learned women, transforming the Roman ideal of political friendship, especially as defined in Cicero's *de Amicitia*, into an intellectual and spiritual idiom.[25] He edited Origen and acquired a reputation for his brilliant neo-Latin poems, as well as writing an important essay on the ancient novel.[26] Louis XIV was himself keen on Latin and taking private lessons in it himself;[27] as soon as he was appointed, Huet began work on the Latin texts edited *Ad Usum Delphini*.[28] In this role he became one of the key 'Ancients' in the first round of the French *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, which began in about 1687, as his protegée Anne Dacier was to kick off the second round in 1699 with her translation of the *Iliad*.

The series *Ad Usum Delphini* was conceived as the curriculum for the studious young Dauphin, as Huet wrote to Henry Oldenburg in London, the Secretary of the Royal Society, who was in charge of all its foreign correspondence.[29] Huet was concerned about finding sufficient editors of a high enough standard, but fell on his feet with the prodigious Dacier, with whose scholarly father Tanneguy le Fèvre he had been a regular correspondent. She was a fine Hellenist, as her father had been; she had published an edition of Callimachus in 1674. To her Huet entrusted no fewer than four volumes. Before her Eutropius, she had previously published three other Delphin editions — Publius Annius Florus (1674), Dictys and Dares (1681), and Sextus Aurelius Victor (1681).

Huet threw so much energy into the series because it was his primary weapon in the war that advocates of classical erudition were waging against the combined modernising forces of Cartesianism and vernacular literary production. The series was thus designed as an intervention in a cultural crisis.[30] The 'branding' of the series by the frontispiece dolphin image and the motto 'Trahitur dulcedine cantus' ('he is drawn along by the sweetness of the song') is suggestive of the story of Arion, the inspired singer who was attacked by barbarous pirates but saved by a music-loving dolphin. The series is allegorically represented by Arion, who charmed the ears of a rich ruler; the moderns, it is implied, are but ignorant pirates.

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[23] Lopez 1987.

[24] Seward 1798, vol. IV, 374.

[25] Shelford 2007, 43, 80–6.

[26] See Whitmarsh 2018, 11.

[27] Shelford 2007.

[28] Shelford 2007, 3–4.

[29] Quoted in Shelford 2007, 86.

The series was not intended for the Dauphin alone. Montausier recommended to the King that the editions be published so that his subjects could all share in the education enjoyed by royalty (illiterate French peasants do not seem to have registered in Montausier's thoughts); Louis agreed, decreeing that the volumes were all to be published, for the good of the French public and 'all the world'.[31] Eminent intellectuals lavished praise on the initiative. Leibniz saw an opportunity to attack modernising Cartesian education, and declared the series would 'revivify the nearly extinguished light of antiquity, and then give the best authors a third life, as after the course of barely one century, contempt for them has revived'.[32] At the Royal Society in London, Oldenburg predicted that the series would achieve lasting celebrity, since it reconciled young men, put off by the difficulty of the ancient texts, to liberal studies once again.[33]

The books soon arrived in England, to play their role in the invention of 'Classics' as we know it. The forty-three Latin authors, some (e.g. Cicero and Ovid) spread across several volumes each, edited with Latin paraphrase, commentary and copious appendixes and indexes by thirty-nine scholars, made a colossal impact. Enterprising publishers swiftly printed facsimiles of the Delphin editions: Benjamin Tooke and Thomas Cockerill in 1688 published the 1675 Phaedrus edited by Pierre Danet; Quintus Curtius, as edited by Michel le Tellier (1678), was published by A. & J. Churchill in 1705; Louis Desprez's 1675 edition of Juvenal and Persius was published in 1699 by John Nicholson (on whom see below); the Clarendon Press at Oxford in 1716 published Cicero's oratorical treatises as edited in 1687 by Jean Proust.[34]

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[30] Shelford 2007, 172.

[31] Shelford 2007, 172.

[32] In a letter to Huet of 15th April, 1673, reproduced in Leibniz 2006, 363, translated by Shelford 2007, 173.

[33] Oldenburg 1975, 343–46.

[34] Danet 1688, Le Tellier 1705, Desprez 1675. Proust 1716.

Lists of gentlemanly personal libraries put up for auction in 18th-century Britain rarely do not include several Delphin volumes alongside the editions of Latin authors by Gronovius (Johann Friedrich Gronow), the Hesiod of William III's favourite Graevius (Johann Georg Greffe, 1667), or (for both Latin and Greek authors) the Dutch Elzevir editions, for example the Elzevir Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1627), selections from the *Iliad* (1642) and Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (1647).[35] The popularity of the Delphin editions is shown by the plethora available on the 19th-century second-hand book market, after they were supplanted by A.J. Valpy's extensive new *The Latin Writings after the System of the Delphin Classics, with Variorum*, editorially overseen by George Dyer, the first of which was published in 1819.[36] In Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, Jude Fawley's attempts to teach himself Classics draw on Hardy's own experience as the son of a rural stonemason who struggled to further his classical education while apprenticed to an ecclesiastical architect. In Chapter 5, Jude is given a decrepit horse and a creaky cart to deliver bread near Marygreen. He sits with a dictionary on his knees, and a crumbling Delphin edition of a Latin author, Caesar, Virgil or Horace, which he could just about afford 'because they were superseded, and therefore cheap'.[37]

Publishers also commissioned translations into English of the Delphin authors, correctly assuming that the youths reading these texts at school might want some help in construing them. In 1714 the entrepeneurial Smithfield printer and bookseller John Nicholson, having already profited from several Classics books including a new, expanded 1706 edition of John Potter's popular *Archaeologiae Graecae: or, the Antiquities of Greece*, and synoptic English translations of moral essays by Seneca and Plutarch,[38] published an anonymous translation he had commissioned of Florus, almost certainly inspired by Anne Dacier's renowned 1674 Delphin edition. It includes an Advertisement, presumably penned by Nicholson himself, with this declaration: 'It is design'd to do all the Classicks of Value in these Volumes, publishing one every Month, till most of the Greek and Latin Authors are finish'd, if encouragement be given'.[39] A list of the first texts Nicholson planned to have translated include the Delphin Sallust and Elder Pliny, and only one Greek author, Thucydides. The Advertisement invites not only subscribers to contact him, but also 'Any Eminent

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[35] E.g. Curll 1714, Symon 1723, Unwin 1743.

[36] See further Hall and Stead 2020 chapters 2, 8.

[37] Hardy 1995 (1895) 22–3.

[38] Anon. 1702 and 1704.

[39] Anon. 1714 'Advertisement',

Scholars, that have done, or will do any, if their Performance be approv'd, by the Persons that read these things over'. Sadly, the only other ancient author to see the light in this projected series was Tacitus, 'Made English by several Hands' in 1716, because Nicholson died in 1715 before reaching the age of thirty.[40] But there were hundreds of other translations of this kind published between about 1705 and the 1740s, often by one or more anonymous and now unidentifiable scholars, some of whom are likely to have been women.[41] The schoolboy's and undergraduate's 'crib' was born. There are far more English translations of classical authors than of the Delphin editions or any other untranslated ancient texts in the catalogue of books auctioned in 1729 that had belonged to the prematurely deceased Mr. Lusher, of Pembroke College, Oxford.[42]

A fine example of an early crib is the reading aid of 1712 prepared by David Watson, a teacher at St. Leonard's College, St. Andrews, whose long title shows exactly what was needed in addition to Latin texts: *The Odes, Epodes, and Carmen Seculare of Horace, Translated into English Prose, As near as the Two Languages will admit, together with the original Latin from the best editions. Wherein The Words of the Latin Text are put in their Grammatical Order; the Observations of the most Valuable Commentators, both antient and modern, represented; and the Author's Design and Beautiful Descriptions fully set forth in a Key annexed to each Ode and Poem; with Notes both Geographical and Historical. The Whole adapted to the Capacities of Youth at School, as well as of Private Gentlemen.*[43] Watson specifies the people he imagines will benefit most from his book: 'those of lower capacities' and 'younger Persons'.[44]

In the wake of Dryden's Virgil (1697), the 18th century soon became the great age of vernacular translation from classical authors into English — a development which was not greeted with universal enthusiasm, especially when fairground showmen started adapting bits of the *Aeneid* into vulgar English rhyming couplets to entertain plebeian audiences at the London fairs.[45] Translations were criticised both by those who had paid large sums to educate their sons in the ancient languages and by prudish Christians who were horrified when the racier passages of Ovid or Martial became accessible in English: a vehement controversy between advocates of reading in translation or in the ancient texts is demonstrated in many polemics of this era.[46] So are altercations between proponents of literal and free translation of classical authors, informed by Dryden's famous 'Preface' to the 1680 translation of Ovid's *Epistles*.[47] The wittiest supporter of paraphrase was Aaron Hill, who wrote in 1709 that he wholeheartedly respects 'the Classics', but that

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[40] Anon. 1716; Plomer *et al.* 1922, 218.

[41] Hall and Wyles 2016, 21–22; Hall 2016.

[42] Curll 1729.

[43] Watson 1712.

[44] Watson 1712, 'Preface' pp. v and viii.

[45] See Hall 2018.

> Literal Translation *commonly appears* Confin'd, Uneasy, Close *and* Aukward, *like a* Streght-Lac'd Lady *in her* New Made Stays, *but when* the Version *has put on an* Easy Paraphrase, and *and the* Fine Lady *is completely* Dres'd, *with* Ribbons, Manteau, *and her* Looser Ornaments, *tho' they are* still *the* same, *they were before, they brightly double* Former Graces, *and become* Adorn'd *with an* Attractive Majesty.[48]

The Delphin series, which expurgated all passages regarded as too obscene for the young Dauphin, was an important stimulant to these debates and the whole publishing sector.

Its impact can be seen from a different perspective in 1712. In that year Richard Steele published a satirical article in the *The Spectator* containing what he claimed were letters he had recently received from two schoolboys. One of them, a fourteen-year-old, complains that his father, although wealthy, does not think that training in ancient authors will do his son any good, and will not buy him the (expensive) books he needs to further his studies of Latin authors: our teenager laments, 'All the Boys in the School, but I, have the Classick Authors in usum Delphini, gilt and letter'd on the Back.'[49] By 1712, acquisition of Delphin Classics had become indispensable to what was beginning to be called 'a classical education'.

The series did not include Greek authors, which can help us understand the difference between the French and the British educational versions of classical education at this time. The image of Greek was ambivalent. On the one hand, it was sometimes seen as an arcane and sinister language, associated with evil Jesuits and even witchcraft.[50] On the other hand, after the Glorious Revolution, reading some carefully selected classical Greek authors alongside the New Testament was deemed helpful in distinguishing British boys in their happy liberty from their Latin-focussed, feudal, monarchical, Roman Catholic equivalents in France. Greek was also associated with enlightened Continental Protestants, especially the Huguenots who poured into London after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.[51] Some of them became prominent in printing and publishing: the refugee Luc du Guernier, who engraved most of the frontispieces to versions of Greek tragedy published in Britain during this period, and Abel Boyer, the Marylebone polymath whose *Achilles*, an adaptation of *Iphigenia in Aulis*, was performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1699–1700 and revived at Covent Garden, under the title *Iphigenia*, as late as 1778.[52] Moreover, the two greatest classical scholars at the beginning of the seventeenth century had been Joseph Scaliger and Isaac Casaubon, both Protestant refugees (one in Holland and one in England), whose erudition engendered enormous respect for the Huguenot study of Greek Classics. The brilliant French scholars of Greek, Anne Dacier and her husband André, had both been born and raised in humanist Protestantism before expediently converting.

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[46] See Coney 1722, 19, 'The most Debauch'd of the *Classics* have been turn'd into our Language with some additional Strokes to their *Original Obscenity*; and appeared in a more loose dress in *England*, than they ever dar'd to in *Rome*'. See further Hall and Stead 2020, ch. 2.

[47] Dryden *et al.*, 1680.

[48] Hill 1709, xiv.

[49] *The Spectator*, Wednesday March 19th 1712, no. 330.

[50] Hall and Stead 2020, ch. 16.

The celebrated Michel Maittaire, moreover, was a French Huguenot whose parents had fled to England. He won a King's scholarship at Westminster School in 1682, studied at Christ Church, Oxford, and thereafter worked as a schoolmaster and later tutor to Lord Chesterfield's son. He produced a series of Latin Classics for the publisher Jacob Tonson between 1713 and 1719, in a deliberate challenge to the Delphin editions, as well as his much-reprinted Græcæ Linguæ Dialecti (1706), his Greek New Testament (1714), *Batrachomyomachia* (1721), *Anacreontea* (1725) and Plutarch's *Apophthegmata* (1740).

New books to help in the contextual study of the Classics were already being published in the 1690s. In 1695, Basil Kennet published his *Romanae Antiquae Notitia, or, The Antiquities of Rome*, which he tells us in the Preface offered information, 'gather'd from the Classicks and other Writers',[53] on Roman religion, festivals, politics, warfare, education and erudition, 'with copper cuts of the principal buildings' and a fold-out map. This was followed swiftly by John Potter's 1697 *Archaeologiae Graecae: or, the Antiquities of Greece*.[54] But we begin to see the word 'classic' appearing on title-pages in 1700, when Kennet was also involved in the publication of the English translation of Pierre Danet's *Dictionarium Antiquitatum Romanarum et Graecarum* as *A Complete Dictionary of the Greek and*

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[51] See Hall and Macintosh 2005, 34–5 and Alonge 2019.

[52] Hall and Macintosh 2005, 35.

[53] Kennet 1695, 'Preface' n.p.

[54] Potter 1697.

Roman Antiquities Explaining the Obscure Places in Classic Authors and Ancient Historians.[55]

A key agent in shaping the early 18th-century fashion for the classical curriculum was Henry Felton, in his *A Dissertation on Reading the Classics, and Forming a Just Style*, written in 1709 and published four years later. Felton had been educated at Charterhouse and St. Edmund Hall, Oxford. He wrote the work as domestic chaplain to the Duke of Rutland, and dedicated the work to his pupil, John, Lord Roos, later the third Duke. It embeds its recommendations for imitating the example of the classic writers not only in style but in the morality of the great men they portrayed and the distinctive new vocabulary surrounding the new 18th-century concept of the gentleman: civility and politeness.[56]

The book cites the rhetorical handbooks of Cicero, Quintilian, Longinus and Aristotle as its ancient forerunners, but places itself at a specific time and place in its advocacy of the Classics. It celebrates the Duke of Marlborough's successes in Belgium and France; it talks at length about the need for a new, politer, more civil style of British speaking and writing than had prevailed in the Restoration period. It insists that all education needs to be subservient to the duties of the Christian religion, but also that 'humane' education can be immeasurably enriched by study of the Classics:[57]

> Your Lordship will meet with great and wonderful Examples of an irregular and mistaken Virtue in the *Greeks* and *Romans*; with many Instances of Greatness of Mind, of unshaken Fidelity, Contempt of human Grandeur, a most passionate Love of their Country, Prodigality of Life, Disdain of Servitude, inviolable Truth, and the most publick disinterested Souls, that ever threw off all Regards in Comparison with their Country's Good…[58]

Felton advises that his Lordship could 'extract a generous and noble Spirit from the Writings and Histories of the Ancients' and especially recommends 'the *Classic Authors*' to his favour.[59] This pedagogical handbook was popular for decades, running into five editions and numerous reprints over the next forty years, despite the publication of rival volumes such as *Advice to a Young Student*, with its section 'General Directions for the Study of Classicks' by Daniel Waterland, then Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge.[60]

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[55] Danet 1700.

[56] Felton 1713, xv, xx.

[57] Felton 1713, 13–14, 9–10, 17.

[58] Felton 1713, 18–19.

[59] Felton 1713, 19.

[60] Waterland 1730, 9–11.

Fenton played a seminal role in the establishment of the Classics as the polite and refined curriculum for any aspiring gentleman, and putting that key-word ‘Classics’ on his title page was an influential act of disciplinary branding that was imitated by many. When a revised version of the famed Latin grammar of Samuel Shaw, the Tamworth schoolmaster, was re-published in 1726, the title page made the claim that it had been in the private possession of the friend to whom he had sent it; the second title page consists of a dedication purportedly written by Shaw himself in old age, ‘To all the Young Gentlemen and Scholars in England’, promising that this volume ‘WILL MAKE THEM MASTERS OF THE CLASSICKS (those Fountains of Learning and Philosophy)’.[61]

The modish new syllabus prompted diverse Classics publishing ventures. The title-page of John Pointer’s textbook *Miscellanea in Usum Juventutis Academicae* of 1718 boasted that it provided everything a schoolmaster might need — instructions for ‘Reading the Classick Authors’, ‘A Chronology of the Classick Authors’, ‘A Catalogue of the Best Classick Authors and their Best Editions’, information on pagan mythology and Latin exercises. The maturing discipline prompted a flood of books designed for the classroom, now even exploring the aesthetic value of ancient texts and their authors’ biographies as well their factual content.[62] The appreciation of classical literature was also much enhanced by John Stirling’s 1733 *A System of Rhetoric, in a Method Entirely New: containing all the tropes and figures necessary to illustrate the Classics, both Poetical and Historical.*[63]

But *why* did Classics/the Classics acquire its new name, identity and function in this precise period of English/British history? One factor is that education was being discussed with a new self-consciousness. Influential thinkers from Locke to Rousseau and Shaftesbury to Johnson were united in stressing the importance of education, whatever their views of what its contents should be. But British educators, while imitating the French, were also keen after the Glorious Revolution to *distinguish* the new Anglican gentlemanly classical curriculum from the Continental model, *especially* the French one. The French *querelle* between the ancients and the moderns was transformed to suit local English literature,[64] and the rise of the Classics and Dryden's 1697 translation of Virgil followed by Pope's Homer are inseparable from that cultural dispute.[65]

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[61] Shaw 1726.

[62] E.g. the multiple reprintings of François Pomey’s *Pantheon* translated into English and substantially revised and supplemented by Andrew Tooke 1698, on which see Hall and Stead 2020 ch. 3; Echard 1694; Kennet 1713; Dunster (1729).

[63] Stirling 1733.

[64] See Levine 1991 and 1999.

There was also a debate on whether boys should be educated at home or at school. Robert Ainsworth, author of a famous Latin-English dictionary (1736) which was used to educate countless schoolboys for over a century, staunchly defended a 'domestic education' in his 1698 *The Most Natural and Easie Way of Institution*, but his proposals assume phenomenal wealth. A house needs to be hired 'a small distance from London, with a large garden', and TWO masters hired to speak Latin with the boys round the clock. Ainsworth warns against sending children to school. From dame schools, boys only learn to make errors in spelling and punctuation like 'Vulgar People'. At 'Publick School', 'for the sake of a little Latin', boys are exposed out of hours to the 'Common, if not impious Sayings, of Porters, Car men, and Kitchen-Wenches.'[66]

On the other hand, the *Spectator*'s educational expert, Budgell, found the preference for home-schooling unrealistic.[67] Swift strongly favoured school education.[68] Even the über-aristocrat Lord Chesterfield sent his son to Westminster for three years. The most significant factor was socio-economic: the rise of a new Whiggish mercantile segment of the ruling class. This process, which was beginning to transform Britain, is often subsumed by historians under terms like 'emergence of the bourgeoisie': it entailed the appearance of the anonymous-exchange market and the evolution of what Jürgen Habermas defined as the 'bourgeois public sphere' (*bürgerliche Őffentlichheit*), accompanied by an explosion in printed communication and accelerating urbanisation.[69]

Most importantly, a new ruling order was being created and collectively trained.[70] The Whiggish sons of tradesman and the Tory sons of hereditary nobles were increasingly being schooled *together*.[71] Classics emerged to provide a curriculum which could bestow a shared concept of gentlemanliness upon them all. The eighteenth century saw an exponential growth in private boarding schools, mostly small and run by Anglican priests, offering a classical curriculum aiming to provide the patina of gentlemanliness and access to Oxford and Cambridge.[72]

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[65] Hall 2018.

[66] Ainsworth 1698, 000

[67] *Spectator* no. 313, Thursday, February 28, 1712.

[68] See e.g. Gill 2016, 74–5.

[69] Habermas 1989 (1962); see Wahrman 1995, 6–7.

[70] On the economic, social and political aspects of this development, see the excellent study of Rosenheim 1998.

[71] See the cogent and detailed study of Bründl 2003, 69–151.

[72] Hans 2014 (1951), 117–35; see also Miller 1997, 64–70 and Stray 1998*b*.

In early 17th-century England, the sons of gentry had often been educated besides merchants' children at town grammar schools, but after the Restoration they were educated at home by tutors, or sent to one of the tiny group of richly endowed public schools.[73] Divisions had become very visible in education. A fresh tone and inclusive model of manliness was required for the new and heterogeneous audience after the Bill of Rights 1689.

A new species of gentry among the merchant sector bought land and wanted prestige and a high 'class'. In this context of the contestation of status and social mobility, substantial wealth had become attainable by a wider sector of the literate population and they wanted cultural capital and the status of gentlemen to match: 'In a society which has become more superciliously class-conscious than in earlier centuries, those already privileged to belong to this class, guard its frontiers with a fastidious sensitiveness to the subtleties of class distinctions; at the same time, an increasing number of new aspirants made attempts to climb into the privileged territory'.[74] And once they had made it, they usually began to exclude those who had not, to ensure themselves safe positions high up the social hierarchy. Classics was useful to exclusion.

Ideas about good breeding, honesty and sound character were scrutinised as they gave shape to a revised idea of the 'Gentleman' which was different from the gentlemanly consummate courtier of the Renaissance. This is reflected in the fiction of the period.[75] Samuel Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* 'is a systematic attempt to devise every conceivable kind of situation in which an English gentleman may be called upon to display his gentlemanliness',[76] an explicit aim which Richardson formulated in his Preface. Fielding portrays depraved town gallants and brutal country 'gentlemen', but set against him a range of heroes of the squirearchy — Parson Adams, Dr Harrison, Squire Allworthy — whose moral characters, civility and kindness qualified them, even if they were less highly born, for the soubriquet of ideal gentlemen. And they are classicists: Parson Adams is obsessed with Aeschylus.[77] Both Smollett's titular heroes Roderick Random and Peregrine Pickle desire at all costs to establish themselves as gentlemen, in novels where the author fulminates 'against the depravity vulgarity and sycophancy' of the born-and-bred upper classes in both Bath and London.[78]

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[73] Monod 2009, 37.

[74] Shroff 1983, 117.

[75] Shroff 1983.

[76] Shroff 1983, 11.

[77] See Dudden 1952, vol. I, 157–9, 357–63, and 398–100.

[78] Shroff 1983, 12.

Addison and Steele moulded the idea of the gentleman through *The Spectator* from 1711 onwards. Addison wanted *The Spectator* to proselytise for good breeding and for 'wit tempered with morality' (no. 10), 'effective among all the different sections of a rapidly growing middle class, as well as among the established upper class.'[79] He deliberately aimed at the whole male reading public, including longstanding rivals and antagonists — men of the court, the town, the city and the country. The place where these values were discussed and promulgated were public coffee houses and private clubs.[80] The concept of taste emerges at this time, a strange fusion of the aesthetic and the ethical, but closely tied to classicism, new forms of consumerism, including the book trade, and a burgeoning entertainment industry.[81]

Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* is especially illuminating. In the second chapter, Fielding directly asks whether a low-born man with a noble character and refined education was not as admirable as one who was genteel by birth: 'But suppose, for argument's sake, we should admit that he had no ancestors at all… Would not this *autokopros* have been justly entitled to all the praise arising from his own virtues?'[82] But it turns out that it really *was* only for the sake of argument that this possibility has been raised. Joseph is refined and genteel in his manners and conduct, but can never, as an *autokopros*, become fully a gentleman. The use of the term *autokopros* (never instanced in ancient Greek but invented by Fielding and glossed by him as 'sprung from a dunghill') links the idea of failure to be properly a gentleman with knowledge of the ancient Greek language. Only someone who knew Greek, and was therefore familiar with the term he is imitating, the Athenians' own title glorifying the antiquity of their bloodline and its intimate relationship to the land they occupied, *autochthōn*, could fully understand why Joseph Andrews could never be a true gentleman in every sense, after all.

This piece began with two texts published in 1736 and 1740 where the terms *Classics* and *class* are found in proximity meaning virtually the same things as they do today, with a man's class being identifiable partly through his mastery of Classics. Late 17th- and 18th-century school novels and plays, the latter usually thought to be a genre founded by Daniel Defoe in his allegorical *The Quarrel of the School-Boys at Athens* (1717),[83] are a rich potential source of information about

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[79] Shroff 1983, 38.

[80] Maurer 1998, 15–18.

[81] Maurer 1998, 16–17.

[82] Fielding 1742, vol. I, 6–7.

[83] Reprinted with commentary in Sill 2003, 201–14 and 257–61. Although the object of Defoe's satire is actually the Whig Party in disguise, he incidentally provides many interesting details about the organisation of contemporary boys schools.

Classics teaching.[84] One didactic play for performance in schools published in 1742 required pupils to act out the way their knowledge of Classics would dictate the entire arc of their lives until the day they died. Thomas Spateman's *The School-Boy's Mask* was designed for use on important days in a school's calendar. It is a dramatic lesson teaching a simple moral: boys who work hard at Classics will be rewarded in terms of career and money. Boys who don't will die impecuniously in the social gutter. Spateman was Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral as well as Rector of St Bartholomew's and took an interest in the indigent children of deceased clergy. His only other publication is a sermon he preached at St Paul's to a congregation partially consisting of such fatherless sons, on what was an annual occasion used to fund-raise towards their financial support.[85]

The four acts in the play depict the situations of a set of pupils from professional, mercantile and aristocratic backgrounds, who together attended an imaginary school, as children, students, mature adults and old men respectively. Time delivers the prologue, standing in a school yard; he laments that so many people waste their time on silly pastimes. He offers books to a group of boys, with the admonition to use them well, so that they may one day become a bishop or a judge.[86] The principal characters are divided into two groups by rank, but within each rank there are successes and failures, dictated by their attitudes to classical study, which is presented as inseparable from good taste, refined manners, and virtue.

Amongst the professional-class boys, the dissipated Guzzle and Wild-Rogue insult Time. Wild-Rogue intends to be an army Captain. He can't see what use book-learning would be for such a profession, but Time reminds him that both Caesar and Hannibal were good scholars as well as brave.[87] Wild-Rogue's faults include being aggressive to his father's manservant and asking if Time has a pretty daughter. There is an additional subplot involving a boy called Fondle who refuses to go away to school, is spoiled completely by his mother and never reads a book.[88] As an undergraduate, Guzzle bemoans his hangover.[89] Later in life, we find him drinking in Covent Garden. A near-destitute curate, he dies in acute debt, while Fondler got a servant pregnant and died miserably young, having achieved nothing.[90]

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[84] I have learned much from Kirkpatrick2005).

[85] Spateman 1731.

[86] Spateman 1742, 1–3.

[87] Spateman 1742, 2.

[88] Spateman 1742, 4–6, 14–16.

[89] Spateman 1742, 24–5.

[90] Spateman 1742, 34–6, 42–4.

In contrast, there are three rather sanctimonious middle-class boys who do apply themselves to the Classics and enjoy successful careers. Bookish and Goodwill rebuke their playmates for showing disrespect to Time and accept his gifts of books gratefully. The plot thickens with the introduction of a new boy, Rival, who is envious of the praises bestowed on Bookish and Goodwill by the master. He knows that he is less clever than they are, but nevertheless resolves to work hard in order to take third place in the master's esteem.[91]

Goodwill is rewarded by being the first to be sent off to university in Oxford. In Act II, he travels from Oxford to Cambridge, where Bookish is now studying. He says that Bookish's room is

> as full of Books as Crownfield's Shop.
> Not like Charles Guzzel's, who by shameful Sale
> Has all his Books converted into Ale;
> Swallow'd the authors, that he should have read,
> And got them in his belly, not his head.[92]

Goodwill launches into a rhapsodic encomium to Cicero, hoping that he can be inspired 'with Philippic rage / Against the Antonii of the present age'. Bookish tops this with a panegyric to Fénelon, Homer, Virgil and religious writers. But they both agree that the Bible is more important than all these books, for it is the record 'of Sacred authors wise'.[93]

Fortified by these elevated thoughts, they go to seek refreshment and run into Rival. He is envious that Bookish has already taken his first degree, but resolves to keep on applying himself, since 'Perseverance oft its Ends attains'.[94] In Act III, we meet the same men again as mature adults. Bookish was made Master of his College at an unusually young age. He has also been given a Deanery followed by a Bishopric and publishes famous sermons. He earns six hundred pounds a year in preferments. Goodwill becomes a famous lawyer, because he studied Cicero's orations in his youth, and was then appointed Lord Chancellor. He also married an heiress with twelve thousand pounds. Even Rival became a Doctor of Medicine and is much admired.[95]

Alongside these sons of professionals and businessmen, there are three young landed aristocrats, only one of whom respects the Classics and therefore makes a success of his life. The two decadent nobles, Lords Tinsel and Rakish, rudely dismiss Time and his books because they are going to grow up to be members of the nobility. Rakish is a cheat who even pays one of the studious boys to compose verses for him on the theme *fugit irreparabile tempus*, and is seen in later life dying in drunken penury because he has failed to find an heiress to marry.[96]

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[91] Spateman 1742, 3–4.
[92] Spateman 1742, 17.
[93] Spateman 1742, 19.
[94] Spateman 1742, 19–20.
[95] Spateman 1742, 34, 28, 39, 35, 37.

Lord Grand-clerck, however, provides a contrast with these nefarious aristocrats. At breakfast in his chambers at Cambridge, he is attended by a Bookseller's apprentice, who has brought him Plutarch, Cornelius Nepos, and Perrault's *Lives*. 'What an Assembly of illustrious Personages are here! How I burn to be better acquainted with each of them; to partake of his Adventures, learn Greatness of Soul from him, and make the Love and Emulation of his Virtue Fewel to feed the sacred Spark of my own!'[97] He is interrupted by Lord Tinsel, who has chosen travelling in pursuit of pleasure over university. Tinsel tells him to stop reading and play cards with him; they argue about whether aristocrats need educating. Lord Grand-clerck says he has no need to travel except to the 'delightful Land' of Learning. Its entrance is surrounded by thorns, 'to keep off the great Vulgar, and the small'; its fruits 'are too delicious to be gather'd by those who are not willing to be at some Labour to obtain them'.[98] Tinsel refuses to give money to Grand-clerck's charity, which he has established to found an Infirmary. Later in life, Grand-clerck is now Duke of Kingsdown and an acclaimed philanthropist, while Tinsel is in massive debt. But he is at least given the explicit moral of the show to pronounce when he recognises that he 'fell into all this Misconduct for want of a better Education' because he refused the opportunity to study in his youth.[99]

Spateman's play taught boys that if they studied classical authors hard they would be enabled to attain wealth and status, or, as Thomas Gaisford, Dean of Christ Church, was said to have told his congregation one Christmas Day a century later, the study of Greek literature, 'not only elevates above the vulgar herd, but leads not infrequently to positions of considerable emolument.'[100] Gaisford's supposed apophthegm is the most concise statement available that *financial* capital can be accumulated through acquisition of a classical education. But Spateman's play shows that, by the 1740s, capital of other kinds, including the moral capital that makes a gentleman happy in his virtue, distinguishable from the vulgar and admired by his peers, along with the social capital that makes him attractive to rich heiresses, was already understood to be conferred by what Lord Grand-clerk calls the laborious, thorny but delightful study of those Classics textbooks, too.

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[96] Spateman 1742, 7, 34–5.

[97] Spateman 1742, 21.

[98] Spateman 1742, 23.

[99] Spateman 1742, 49.

[100] Quoted in Tuckwell 1907, 24. The story is very likely apocryphal — cf. Stray 2018a, 76–80.

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