
Classics in the West and in Japan

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INTRODUCTION: My talk is in three parts, each of which is in turn subdivided. It follows closely the handout distributed, which is here amplified.

I Classics in the West:

(1) Background and definition.

What is Seiyokoten (Western, Greek and Latin, classics)? The German definition is good: *Altertumswissenschaft*, the study of the culture of Greece and Rome. By this is meant culture in the widest sense: language, literature, history, society, philosophy, religion, medicine, science, architecture and artefacts. That is: *Kultur, Kunst and Philologie*. But to many scholars the most important of these is *Philologie*, the study of texts, or-to broaden this a little-of written materials, including epigraphy, papyrology and numismatics.

It is the culture of a wide time: c. 2000 BC-500 AD, from the Early Bronze Age to the time of Justinian; or-in terms of texts-from the eighth century BC to the fifth century AD, from the time of Homer to that of Augustine. (But some might range still more widely, regarding Byzantine and Modern Greek or Vulgar Latin as proper subjects of study for classicists.)

It is the culture of a wide region: Persia to the east and Egypt to the south affect Greece; Rome conquers the Mediterranean world (France, for instance, being Roman Gallia, or Gaul).

The main focus of study is: Athens of the fifth and fourth centuries BC, that is the time of the tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, of the comic poet Aristophanes, of the lyric poet Pindar, of the historians Herodotus and Thucydides, of the philosopher Plato and of the orators Isocrates and Demosthenes; and Rome of the late republic and early empire, that is the time of the prose writers Cicero and Tacitus, and of the verse-writers Vergil, Ovid and Juvenal.

(2) Rationale questions of teaching and training.

Why study classics (in the West)? The question, and its answer, relate to general problems in education today. In a time of financial constraints and social change, the 'relevance' of the humanities is questioned. Pupils, and their parents, look for practical, vocational subjects: to science

rather than the arts; and within the arts to subjects with an evident (or apparent) career usefulness, such as sociology, economics and management.

In addition, there are particular problems for classics, which is seen to be *passé*, *élitist*, and difficult.

Recently a book was published in USA with the title 'Classics: a Discipline and Profession in Crisis'; and in UK a group called 'Friends of the Classics' has been set up to promote and publicise the subject. Perhaps 'crisis' is too strong a word, but there is certainly a problem.

Some justifications, from different times and places: Imitative, a model to improve own standards in art etc. In the renaissance, artists like Michelangelo had a clear motivation. (This has disappeared, but occasionally resurfaces: many nineteenth century town halls in Britain are modelled on the Parthenon.)

Practical, training for professions of church, law etc. The New Testament written in koine Greek. Roman law is the basis of much of western law. (This has disappeared, as standards of linguistic rigour have fallen and diachronic study is no longer valued.)

Theoretical, understanding the roots of language, politics, ethics etc. (This still applies: Greek and Latin are vital philological tools; the pages of Thucydides and Plato epitomise early European thought.) Continuity and change: Latin and Greek in schools and universities. My own experience as pupil, student and teacher reflects the general change from purely linguistic learning to much 'background' study. The classical languages are not now taught in many schools. Two main changes have resulted: the universities are faced with classes of adult beginners in the languages; and classical texts are taught in translation, in courses on the 'civilisation' or 'culture' of the ancient world.

What is the essence of classical study? Texts? How important is knowledge of the ancient languages? How deep should this knowledge be? When should it be acquired? Need the answer be the same for all classicists? Clearly, archaeologists may get along without the languages. But what about historians? Or philosophers? There is now an important series of Oxford commentaries on Plato in translation. What is our response to this trend, in terms of standards? Can breadth of knowledge replace depth in understanding?

(3) Methodology questions of scholarship and research.

This is marked by continuity and change, or new directions and false starts. There are marked differences in time and place. In the renaissance, the prime concern was with the transmission of newly discovered texts.

Establishing a text as close as possible to the author's putative autograph is still an important scholarly activity; but now there is a different emphasis. The old discipline of stemmatics, or establishing a family tree of mss, has been much overlaid by new views about the importance of horizontal transmission and contamination of a text at source. At the end of the nineteenth century, the new discipline of archaeology (allied with social anthropology) brought a different style of approach to the classics.

When Gilbert Murray said 'Greece, not Greek, is the object of our study', he was challenging received ways of thinking. In the twentieth century, new scientific aids have revolutionised the entire academic world. The personal computer has brought changes comparable with those which attended the advent of the printing press. By comparison with specialists in other classical areas, we are fortunate that all of Greek and Latin literature plus much documentary material exists on CD ROM and can be addressed by a variety of programs and packages.

As to place: distinctive contributions have been made by USA (innovatory literary criticism), Greece (discussion of archaeological finds), South Africa (orality; studies based on firsthand experience of tribal society).

II Two case studies:

(1) Greek Tragedy Greek tragedy has been the subject of criticism and imitation from antiquity to the present day. There was criticism already by the contemporary comic poet Aristophanes, who in the play *Frogs* debated the rival merits of Aeschylus and Euripides. Aristotle's *Poetics* a century later considered the constitution and characteristics of the tragic genre.

The foundation of the library at Alexandria facilitated many kinds of scholarly work, such as comparing different texts. A few centuries later, the formation of a dramatic canon was determined in part by reasons of didactic expediency.

Twentieth century approaches may be summed up in terms of isms (Marxism, feminism, structuralism etc.) and ologies (narratology etc.). Imitation, from Seneca to Racine to Brecht, involves also interpretation within an author's own culture.

(2) Hippocratic Medicine The influence of the Hippocratic Corpus has been pervasive in the west, from antiquity to the present day. The view that all true medicine was anticipated by Hippocrates prevailed until the nineteenth century, and medical doctors wrote commentaries (in Latin) for use in everyday practice. When Harvey published his discovery of the circulation of the blood, a French doctor, Riolan, countered with an attempt to adapt the new researches, to bring it into line with Hippocratic

views. The long adherence to humoral theory had the same source. The Hippocratic Oath became, and can be still regarded as, the foundation of medical ethics.

III Classics in Japan:

(1) Background and history (Yaginuma, Kleos 2, 1997).

(2) Rationale questions of teaching and training.

Why study (Western) classics in Japan? Or Japanese at Harvard? From my experience of teaching in Kyoto University, I am impressed by the keenness of students and by the standards some of them achieve in the ancient languages (and in ancillary modern languages). One reservation is that the conventional history philosophy literature divide creates a tendency to premature and excessive specialisation.

(3) Methodology

questions of scholarship and research.

The importance of translation (to bring Greek and Latin texts to the Japanese reading public) and the importance of establishing an international presence (as so few foreigners can cope with Japanese) are obvious. It may be more controversial to suggest that Japanese classicists should have the courage to seek to make a distinctive contribution, to react in their own way, to disagree with one another and with established western traditions. There is no one 'right' approach, no one 'right' interpretation. Some past examples may illustrate the possibilities of productive disagreement (Nietzsche and Wilamowitz on approaches to Greek tragedy), of lateral thinking (Milman Parry on the nature of Homeric formulaic epic), of personal quest (Schliemann on the discovery of Troy), of a bold angle (Bernal in 'Black Athena' on the Afro-Asian roots of Greek civilisation).

There are some cases where the remoteness of Japan presents scholars with a problem: especially study involving artefacts. (But there is no need to despair, as the Greek - Roman museum of Kyoto has a fine collection, including a remarkable number of sarcophagi.)

There are some examples where a different scholarly background could lead to new insights: religion and myth (seasonal festivals; Buddhism making its way from India); social history (the family, for example the practice of 'adopting' adults); heroic poetry (Ainu texts); dramatic traditions (Noh and Kyogen); medicine (kampo and moxibustion). There are of course dangers in arguments from analogy. The point is not simply that analogies exist (though they do) but that scholars might capitalise on their personal awareness of Japanese traditions to explicate comparable Greek traditions.

There is an important question here: ought we to study

another culture from 'inside' or 'outside'? Victorian Englishmen viewed the Greeks as their kin, as honorary gentlemen. There is a tendency now to view them rather as not 'self' but 'other' (in the jargon) or as desperately foreign. Does this mean that they understood one another better than we can ever hope to understand them? That a European scholar (their cultural descendant) can understand them better than an oriental (but see above)? What are the implications for Indology and other areas of classical study? Does human nature change, or are the differences merely differences of custom or nurture? Can we learn from one another here?

There are other opportunities for interdisciplinary cooperation in the translation project 'Selections from the Classics'.

CONCLUSION: The phoenix rising from the ashes in the east? This is an unrealistic aspiration! But we should not lose heart. There were gloomy predictions in the late nineteenth century about the collapse or decline of classical scholarship, in both Britain and Germany. At that time, the perceived threat came from such new subjects as modern languages; but Greek and Latin have not been lost. Perhaps it is a *fin de siècle* phenomenon, to be anxious about losing the old ways. So let us go out to face the future together, with confidence in the value of the classical subjects to which we have devoted our lives.

クレイク教授講演に寄せて

中務 哲郎

西洋古典学の対象と目的、イギリスにおける古典学研究の背景、その存在意義と今日の問題点、具体例として悲劇とヒポクラテス医学をとおしてみた古典と現代との関わり、日本における西洋古典学教育のご経験、これらについて大変明快なご講演を頂き有難うございました。とりわけ、日本の西洋古典学徒に対する暖かい激励ととれる御発言が随所に含まれていたことに感謝いたします。

イギリスの西洋古典学が500年を超える歴史を持つのに対し、我が国では漸く100年を閲したばかりですが、我々には西洋古典後発国としての問題と先進国に追いついてしまった問題とがあるように思われます。まず初めの方について、何にもまして苦しいのは、我々がギリシア語・ラテン語の写本を持たず、テキスト・クリティクの面での貢献が出来ないということです。オリジナルから遠く離れたテキストに基づく古典研究は砂上の楼閣に過ぎず、まず能うかがりオリジナルに近いテキストを復元するという古典文献学の至上の使命を果たすためには、写本を豊富に所蔵する欧米で特別な訓練を受けて行うしかありません。2300年に及ぶ西洋古典学の歴史に明確な足跡を残すような業績が我が国からも現れるように

なりましたが、どうしても及ばないのが写本を直に扱わねばならぬ分野です。

このような限界はマイクロフィルム等の発達によってある程度補えるし、このような限界にもかかわらず、我々が西洋古典学に対して貢献できることは多いとクレイク教授は説かれます。ギリシア・ローマの直系の文化的子孫を自認する西欧人が見落としてきた事柄も、かえって異質な文化の視点から、あるいは従来にない方法論の導入によって明らかにされることがあるとして、アフリカの部族社会あるいは口承社会の世界観やユーゴスラビアの叙事詩研究を例に挙げられます。確かにわが国の文化からも、ギリシア悲劇と能の比較、ギリシア叙事詩とアイヌ・ユカラ、平家物語等との比較の試みがありますし、神話と宗教でもギリシアと日本は顕著な類似を見せますが、アナロジーから出発する立論は魅力的であると同時に危険な陥穽にも意識する必要があります。

第二の、欧米と日本が今や共通に抱える問題は、学生のギリシア語・ラテン語離れです。(日本の場合は、英独仏語が大学の必修科目から外れる傾向の延長線上にこの問題があります) 欧米では今日、ギリシア語を全く学ばずにギリシア史やギリシア哲学を専攻する学生が多いそうです。日本ではギリシア史・ギリシア哲学の学生はギリシア語がよくできずから、この点はこちらが理想を行っているようにも見えますが、欧米では古代史・古代哲学に興味を懐く学生がまだまだ多く、その中の何割かがギリシア語を無しで済ますのに対し、我が国ではそこに赴く人の絶対数が少ないということでしょう。ともあれ、このような現状において、ギリシア語・ラテン語が死語でその文物が過去の遺物と見なされないためにも、古典語崇拜など唾棄すべきエリート主義だと言われぬためにも、翻訳というものが重要だとクレイク教授は説かれます。古典の価値を世に広めるためには翻訳が重要である、全く同感です。

翻訳の重要性を認めた上で、その問題と関わり、シンポジウム全体とも関わることをつけ加えさせていただきます。会の後で内山勝利教授と語ったのですが、今回のシンポジウム、特に二日目の討論では、古典とは後の人類に生き方のモデルを提供するもの、との前提に立った発言が多く、そこから日本に古典はありやなしやという問題も出て、古典の別の側面が無視されていたのではないかと、ということ。思想を表すものだけが古典であるか、という疑念です。たしかに思想の古典は翻訳によって伝えられますから、そしてまた翻訳・誤訳を通しての文化伝達の問題は極めて興味深いものですから、思想は領域横断の共同研究にはうってつけのテーマですが、思想のセールスポイントを持ち出さなくとも成り立つ古典もあるのではないかと。ホメロスやサッポロは意味内容にもましてその音調が味わわれるべきものでしょう。万葉集の歌一首をよんで、これさえあれば他に何も要らないと思えるときがあります。逆に言えば、紫のひともとゆへにむさし野の草はみながらあはれとぞみる、の心で、その歌一首のために日本語から逃れられない、日本人をやめられない、というようなつきあいを強いるものも古典と言えないのではないのでしょうか。講演後の討論では多くを語れませんでした。紙面を与えられた機会に余計なことまで申しました。