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The Evolution of a Paper Tiger

"So why study Greek books? This question remains unanswered in classics departments. There are all sorts of dodges, ranging from pure philological analysis to using these books to show the relation between thought and economic conditions. But practically no one even tries to read them as they were once read—for the sake of finding out whether they are true."

—Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987)

"I do not suggest that learning the languages or the grammar in which the ancient classics were written is necessary to general education. Excellent translations of almost all of them now exist."

—Robert Maynard Hutchins, *The Higher Learning in America* (1936)

"The case of our American classical departments is about the reverse of that of the lion's den in the fable: all tracks lead *away* from them."

—Irving Babbitt, *Literature and the American Humanities* (1908)

Taking Heed of the Past

Whatever their strengths, the academic culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s possessed one undeniable shortcoming: their general disconnect from the history of American higher education. Polemicists taking part in these debates typically paid little attention to the past and thus failed to anchor their contentions in a broader historical context.[1] Even authors who demonstrated some awareness of the history of American colleges and universities tended to present cursory discussions of that history and essentially used it to score points against opponents, rather than to engage in more meaningful analyses of the feuds.[2] Participants in the academic culture wars are not the only writers guilty of ignoring the past: as Meyer Reinhold and William Calder III, two experts on

1. Proctor 1998 makes this point. In its first printing, in fact, the book was titled *Education's Great Amnesia.*

2. See, e.g., Lawrence W. Levine 1996.

the history of classical scholarship, have observed, American classical scholars often understand little about their discipline's history.[3] A brief intellectual history of higher learning in the US and the role of classical studies in American colleges and universities thus helps to situate the debates in a wider historical setting and to shed light on the academic culture wars themselves.

Unity and Disunity

In his influential history of American higher education, Frederick Rudolph suggests that colonial colleges possessed a unity of purpose, since their founders all hailed from England and the first among them were schooled at either Cambridge or Oxford.[4] Although these colonial institutions—and, more broadly, virtually all American colleges prior to the Civil War—boasted a far greater sense of mission and curricular cohesion than did their research-oriented successors, they were not paragons of concord. This should not surprise students of the liberal arts tradition: since their foundation in classical antiquity,[5] the *artes liberales* have a complex history, and thinkers throughout the ages have proffered radically different rationales for studying the liberal arts.[6]

This complicated history is evident in America's first institution of higher learning. Harvard College, founded in 1636 as New College,[7] possessed a colonial-era curriculum that betrays disparate intellectual influences. Since the colonial institutions of higher learning boasted strikingly uniform curricula, these influences are evident not only at Harvard, but also at all the early American colleges.[8] Of these intellectual inspirations—which emanated directly from

3. Reinhold 1984: 17; Calder 1994: xx. The same holds true for German classicists, argues Grafton 1979.

4. Rudolph 1962: 12–13. Elsewhere (23–25), however, Rudolph notes the manifold influences on the antebellum college curriculum. See also Rudolph 1978: esp. 30–31. For the influence of Cambridge—and especially Emmanuel College—on the curriculum of Harvard and (indirectly) on all the colonial colleges, see Rudolph 1962: 4, 23–26; Calder 1966: 216; Cowley and Williams 1991: 68, 73; Lucas 1994: 104; Cremin 1997; Winterer 2002: 11–12.

5. The conception of the liberal arts appears to owe its origin to ancient Rome, not Greece, despite Hellenic influence on them. See Bruce A. Kimball 1995: esp. 12–42; Proctor 1998. Cf. Bloomer 2011. In keeping with previous conventional assumptions, Rudolph 1978: 29–30 traces their origin back to the ancient Greeks.

6. See esp. Bruce A. Kimball 1995; Proctor 1998. See also Pearcy 2005.

7. Cremin (1997: 44) informs us that the General Court of Massachusetts renamed New College Harvard College on March 13, 1639, as a consequence of gifts from the late Rev. John Harvard.

8. By the end of the colonial period, America was home to nine colleges: Harvard (founded in 1636), William and Mary (1693), Yale College (1701), the College of Philadelphia (later the University of Pennsylvania; 1740), the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University; 1746), King's College (later Columbia; 1754), the College of Rhode Island (later Brown University; 1764), Queen's College (later Rutgers; 1766), and Dartmouth College (1769). On the curriculum of the

the Oxbridge colleges that served as the models for early American higher education—Renaissance humanism had the greatest hold on the colonial institutions.[9] But it was not alone. Examining their curricula illustrates the effects of medieval scholasticism and the Protestant Reformation.[10]

Standard histories of American higher education tend to treat intellectual matters sparingly,[11] leading scholars to harbor misimpressions about the role of classical studies in the antebellum American colleges. Such misimpressions chiefly surround the cardinal influence of Renaissance humanism. Originating in fourteenth-century Italy, this movement defined itself in opposition to the scholasticism then regnant in European universities. In laying out their educational programs, Italian humanists such as Coluccio Salutati (1331–1406), Pietro Paolo Vergerio (1349–1420), Leonardi Bruni (1370–1444), Guarino da Verona (1370–1460), and Vittorino da Feltre (1378–1446) looked to Greek and (especially) Roman antiquity as a means to shape the character of students.[12] By examining the writings of the ancients, they thought, pupils could be transformed into good human beings—education's proper goal. Eschewing the study of later authors, Renaissance humanists argued that classical Latin, unlike the supposedly desiccated Latin of the medieval period, was the key to the proper molding of individuals. Learning to write like the ancients would enable one to absorb their thoughts on moral philosophy. Cicero, Vergil, Homer, Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, and Caesar—the study of such authors, thought Bruni, could perfect the human being.[13] During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Renaissance humanism spread to institutions of higher learning throughout Europe.[14] It would thus have a major influence on the American colonial colleges.

As a result of the inroads made by Renaissance humanism at Cambridge and Oxford by the late sixteenth century, the British-educated founders of Harvard College crafted a curriculum in which that philosophy amounted to the domi-

American classical colleges, see Meriwether 1907; Earnest 1953: 19–47; Rudy 1960: 1–5; Kraus 1961; Rudolph 1962: 23–43, 110–35, 221–40, 1978: 25–98; Cowley and Williams 1991: 85–88; Lucas 1994: 109–10, 131–32. Cf. Vine 1976, who discusses the social function of American colleges in the eighteenth century.

9. See Reinhold 1984: 23; Winterer 2002: 10. See also Cowley and Williams 1991: 50–56; Lucas 1994: 71–100; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 74–113. Cf. Meriwether (1907: 13–21), who views medieval scholasticism as the chief influence.

10. See, e.g., Rudolph 1962: 23–25, 1978: 30.

11. E.g., Earnest 1953; Rudolph 1962.

12. See, e.g., Bolgar 1973; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 71–100; Proctor 1990, 1998; Pearcy 2005: 7–11. The Italian humanists especially favored the study of Latin literature in part because it contains so many discussions of patriotism and duty.

13. Proctor 1998: 10–11.

14. See, e.g., Lucas 1994: 76, 80–81.

nant element.[15] Latin—and, to a lesser extent, ancient Greek—hence played an outsized role in the prescribed curricula of the colonial colleges. Prior to 1745, for example, Latin and Greek were the lone subjects required of incoming students entering these institutions.[16] Although rationales other than those the Italian humanists advanced were adduced in support of the classics,[17] the goal of shaping students' character primarily through an engagement with classical Latin loomed large in the pedagogical mission of the antebellum American colleges. Regardless of the shortcomings of Renaissance humanism as an intellectual program, the dominance of classical studies in early American higher education cannot be dismissed merely as an exercise in medieval obscurity or antiquated elitism.[18] The humanists, living at a time when a renewed engagement with ancient writings had a profound impact on their world, saw the study of authors from classical antiquity as requisite for salutary character formation.

Although Renaissance humanism had the largest imprint on the curriculum of the early American colleges, it was not alone. As was the case in contemporary European universities, the American colonial colleges never fully distanced themselves from medieval scholasticism.[19] This movement originated in the eleventh century and reached its peak in the thirteenth century with the work of Thomas Aquinas (1224–74).[20] Unlike the Renaissance humanists, with their emphasis on rhetoric, the scholastics preferred a philosophical and deeply religious approach to the *artes liberales*. Thinkers associated with scholasticism deemed logic—not rhetoric or poetry—the key to their pedagogy. For this reason, they emphasized the mathematical portions of the liberal arts (the quadrivium).[21] Whereas Italian humanists such as Bruni considered arithmetic unworthy of study (because it supposedly could not lead to knowledge of the

15. See Cremin 1997.

16. Rudolph (1962: 25, 1978: 52) notes that in 1745 Yale added arithmetic to the list of subjects required of students at entry.

17. On the pragmatic benefits of a classical curriculum for students hoping to be employed in one of the so-called learned professions, see below.

18. Such charges—and, more broadly, disparaging assessments of the antebellum colleges—are rife in the literature. See, e.g., Meriwether 1907: 286; Earnest 1953: 19–47; Rudy 1960: 4–5; Rudolph 1962: 76, 124, 127, 130, 135, 207, 245–45, 1978: 68, 75, 99–101, 120; Pusey in Eliot 1969: vi; O'Boyle 1983: 17–18; Beam 2008: 9–10; Delbanco 2012: 69–73. Winterer (2002: 3, 185 n. 3, 77) correctly views these denigrations as misleading. Cf. Babbitt 1986: 114–15, who applauds the old curriculum. Douglas 1992: 14, although largely positive about the antebellum college, offers a negative view of its curriculum.

19. See, e.g., Cowley and Williams 1991: 45–49; Lucas 1994: 35–69; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 43–73; Pearcy 2005: 7–9.

20. See Lucas 1994: 38; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 56–57.

21. Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis philologiae et Mercurii*, written in the early fifth century AD, is our first source to flesh out the quadrivium (arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and music) and trivium (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) of the seven liberal arts. See Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 30–31.

good life),[22] the scholastics deemphasized the moral and rhetorical character of the liberal arts.

Without the influence of scholasticism, early American college curricula would have been quite different. Thus, for example, one notes in the course of studies of the incipient Harvard College a regard for logic, metaphysics, and mathematics.[23] Disputations—a primary pedagogical tool of medieval scholasticism—also played a large role in the colonial colleges.[24]

Nor were scholasticism and Renaissance humanism the only influences on the curriculum. Puritans founded Harvard, and competition among Protestant sects had a great impact on the spread of American colleges, most of which were founded by religious groups.[25] Although the colonial institutions of higher learning were far from solely (or even chiefly) dedicated to providing America with an educated ministry,[26] the religious character of colonial life significantly influenced the colleges. As a result, until 1723 Hebrew was a compulsory subject for Harvard students, and the early prescribed curricula also devoted time to Syriac and Aramaic.[27] The spirit of the Protestant Reformation can also be detected in the antebellum colleges' obligatory capstone courses in moral philosophy, in which an instructor (typically the college president) attempted to reconcile the institution's secular studies with Christian doctrine.[28]

It is unsurprising that such varied inspirations, although all directly stemming from Oxbridge models, made for a curriculum without complete ideological coherence. Yet in comparison with their successors—the American universities and colleges after the Civil War—the classical colleges in some regards served as beacons of intellectual and pedagogical consensus. Prior to the advent of the free elective system in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the courses of study at American institutions of higher learning were almost entirely prescribed. This speaks to the financial vicissitudes of the early American colleges: a prescribed curriculum required few instructors and thus fit these institutions, which were seldom far from teetering on the brink of bankruptcy.

22. Proctor 1998: 8–9.

23. Meriwether 1907: 51–59; Kraus 1961: 65; Cremin 1997: 44.

24. See Meriwether 1907: 225–83.

25. According to Cowley and Williams (1991: 71), the original nine colonial colleges "were direct or indirect products of the Calvinist sector of the Reformation."

26. As numerous studies of American higher education make clear: e.g., Wriston 1939: 303; Wright 1940: 110; Cowley and Williams 1991: 88–89; Brubacher and Rudy 1997: 379; Cremin 1997: 48.

27. Kraus 1961: 65, 71. As of 1723, Hebrew became required only of students aiming for ministerial careers. Rudolph (1978: 38) informs us that Harvard consigned Hebrew to fully elective status in 1782, and its popularity withered.

28. See, e.g., Earnest 1953: 28–29; Kraus 1961: 74; Rudolph 1962: 140–41, 1978: 39–42, 90 94, 139, 150; Ben-David 1972: 52; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 168.

But it also speaks to a general pedagogical mind-set. Certain subjects—and only those subjects—could properly educate young men and thus were appropriate for all students.

The curriculum also possessed pragmatic benefits for students, even if it was not often justified in this manner. At their inception, the colonial colleges predominantly trained their enrollees for one of the learned professions (ministry, medicine, or law), all of which required grounding in the classical languages. As a result, various disciplines that play a large role in contemporary American higher education were surprising latecomers to academic life. Harvard, for example, founded its first professorship in modern languages only in 1816.[29] In 1857, Lafayette College appointed Francis A. March its first professor of English language and comparative philology; this appointment influenced other American institutions to make English a formal part of their curricula following the Civil War.[30] Yale introduced the nation's first university program in fine arts in 1869.[31] More generally, the social sciences would have to wait until the late nineteenth century for their full inclusion in the American college curriculum.

A Portrait of Continuing Decline

Ancient Greek and especially Latin played a dominant role in the antebellum colleges. This is to be expected, given the intellectual influence of Renaissance humanism on incipient American higher education and the classical pedigree of learning in the West.[32] Though the classical languages remained the central subjects of study prior to the Civil War, this does not imply that American colleges were static institutions. Far from it. In fact, classical studies—which had more than their share of detractors throughout early American history—experienced a series of changes that commenced soon after the founding of Harvard College.[33]

Although some of the colonial colleges originally instituted Latin as the required language for conversation on campus, this rule proved difficult to enforce and was abandoned by the early eighteenth century.[34] Throughout the antebellum period, moreover, various subjects vied for greater attention in the collegiate curriculum. Since most—if not all—courses were prescribed, the addition of new disciplines threatened the curricular prominence of the classical languages. During the eighteenth century, for example, mathematics—deemed unnecessary by Italian humanists—began to play a more vital role in the colleges.[35] As early as 1711, the College of William and Mary established the first chair of mathematics and natural philosophy.[36] Mathematics became a more integral part of studies at Yale in 1714, when the institution received a large collection of books on the subject.[37] Four years later Yale began to require its students to study algebra.[38]

The modern languages were later arrivals on college campuses, and at first their study was chiefly relegated to the extracurriculum. Yet there was a movement afoot to include them. Thus, for example, Harvard made French a semi-official course in 1720.[39] Yale added English grammar and oratory to its curriculum in 1767.[40] By the early nineteenth century, such subjects were poised to play an official role.

But the natural sciences surely amounted to the chief threat to the centering of the college curriculum around the classical languages. Italian humanist Bruni shunned the natural sciences because their study supposedly did not contribute to the perfection of the human being.[41] As the Enlightenment wore on, however, the exclusion of the hard sciences became increasingly difficult to defend, especially in light of the modest rises in the size of the college-going population over the antebellum period. The growth of the natural sciences hinted that the college-bound could ponder career paths other than the learned professions. Moreover, studying these subjects implicitly attacked the educational rationale associated with Renaissance humanism: rather than concerning themselves with the shaping of character, the natural sciences first and foremost aimed to produce new knowledge.[42] As early as the late eighteenth century, proponents of the natural sciences clamored for their inclusion in the collegiate curriculum, and many defenders of classical studies deemed them a threat.[43]

29. Rudolph 1978: 64.
30. Ibid., 140.
31. Ibid., 143.
32. Although it possessed different pedagogical and intellectual rationales, medieval scholasticism was itself highly classical in its orientation. One notes, for example, its Aristotelian pedigree. Thus, e.g., Bruce A. Kimball (1995: 43–73) views scholasticism as rooted in the Socratic and Platonic approach to learning.
33. For a discussion of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century critics of the classical curriculum in American colleges, see Reinhold 1984: 36, 69–80, 116–41; Winterer 2002: 42–43; Pearcy 2005: 47–50, 53–55. Reinhold (1984: 118) informs us that the first revolt against the classical curriculum in America about which we know took place at the Boston Latin School and occurred in 1711.
34. Meriwether 1907: 92–94; Kraus 1961: 71–72; Winterer 2002: 26. Cf. Rudolph 1978: 36–37.
35. See Rudolph 1978: 33–35.
36. Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 133–34.
37. Rudolph 1978: 33.
38. Ibid., 34.
39. Kraus 1961: 71.
40. Rudolph 1978: 38–39.
41. Proctor 1998: 11.
42. See Bruce A. Kimball 1995: esp. 114–56.
43. E.g., Harvard added chemistry in 1782. See Kraus 1961: 73.

The threat was real. Starting in the early nineteenth century, a few American institutions offered their students an approach to higher learning that eschewed classical studies altogether. Established by the US Congress in 1802, West Point opened in 1804 and boasted the nation's first technologically oriented curriculum. Though it retained the traditional capstone course in moral philosophy, the institution lacked the standard emphasis on the ancient languages.[44] Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, founded in 1824 as an institution focused on secondary education, had success that inspired the growth of vocational, science-based approaches to higher learning.[45] By 1850, the institute had transformed itself from a high school to a scientific college,[46] thereby becoming a model for other institutions aiming to provide a more scientific and pragmatic approach to education.

B.A.s, B.S.s, B.Phil.s, etc.

Educational reform in the nineteenth century was not confined to newly founded institutions. Numerous American educational leaders attempted to remedy the difficulties associated with adding new subjects to the antebellum colleges' prescribed course of study. Up until the Civil War, however, most met with at best limited success.

In 1827, for example, Amherst College inaugurated a parallel course of studies, without Latin and ancient Greek. It failed two years later.[47] The founders of the University of the City of New York (which eventually became New York University) hoped that their institution would offer a more practical education. By 1838, only six years after its founding, the university faced serious financial difficulties that led to the abandonment of the reforms.[48] In 1850, Francis Wayland, the president of Brown University, inaugurated an ambitious series of curricular alterations. This included the establishment of the bachelor of philosophy degree (B.Phil.). Five years later, these reforms failed.[49]

Undoubtedly many of these attempts to broaden the American college curriculum collapsed because of the greater prestige accorded to the traditional course of studies emphasizing the classical languages. The study of ancient Greek and

44. See Rudolph 1962: 229, 1978: 62–63.
45. See Rudolph 1962: 229–31, 1978: 62–63.
46. Rudolph 1978: 106.
47. See Rudolph 1962: 124, 1978: 83–84.
48. See Rudolph 1962: 128–30.
49. See Rudolph 1962: 237–39, 1978: 109–12; Pearcy 2005: 72–73.

Latin possessed tremendous social value in polite society.[50] Proponents of classical studies jealously guarded the bachelor of arts (B.A. or A.B.) degree; students who bypassed Greek and Latin might have graduated, but did so under different auspices. Thus American colleges invented new nomenclature for students who had finished their undergraduate studies without taking the full classical course. The nineteenth century witnessed the proliferation of a veritable alphabet soup of new degrees, many of which did not prove lasting: e.g., the B.S. (first granted in 1838 at Wesleyan),[51] the B.Phil., the B.Litt., and the B.Mus. These designations conferred de facto second-class status on their recipients. Without Latin and Greek, students supposedly received inferior educations.

Some reforms succeeded despite meeting intense resistance. In the early nineteenth century, Eliphalet Nott (1773–1866), the long-serving president of Union College, instituted a series of curricular changes that proved both successful and modestly influential. In 1802, under Nott's stewardship, Union developed a course of study that allowed students to pick a portion of their academic program.[52] Union also inaugurated a parallel course in 1815;[53] in 1828, the college established a parallel scientific course.[54] Though similar efforts floundered at many other institutions, Union's attempt was a triumph. Although such modifications did not prove infectious prior to the Civil War,[55] they hinted at trouble for the continued dominance of classical studies in American higher education. Even the most storied institutions had to take heed of the natural sciences. In 1847, Harvard established its Lawrence Scientific School, which allowed students to devote themselves to a parallel scientific course.[56] In the same year, Yale—the foremost beacon of pedagogical traditionalism in the United States—inaugurated its own such program, housed in what was eventually called the Sheffield Scientific School.[57]

From English-Style College to German-Style University

The nineteenth century witnessed other changes in American academia. US higher education slowly turned away from the English colleges of Cam-

50. See, e.g., O'Brien (2014: 322–27), who focuses on the cachet of Latin and Greek learning in the South.
51. Rudolph 1978: 138.
52. See Rudolph 1962: 113, 1978: 85–87.
53. Rudolph 1978: 86.
54. Ibid.
55. Wayland at Brown tried essentially what Nott had achieved at Union.
56. See Rudolph 1978: 104.
57. Ibid.

bridge and Oxford as its primary models and began to emulate German universities.

The German professionalization of academia had such a profound influence on higher education in the US that many of the realities of the early American colleges seem unfathomable today. Prior to this professionalization, teaching at American colleges appears largely to have been a temporary job, rather than a career.[58] Even at the oldest institutions, instruction was chiefly in the hands of the college president and a number of tutors—typically recent college graduates waiting to earn their M.A. degrees.[59] Not until 1755, for example, did Yale College hire its first professor; the entire academic staff previously had consisted of the president and a group of tutors.[60] These tutors originally were responsible for the whole college curriculum. Only in 1767 did Harvard begin to assign tutors to specific subject areas rather than to a given class.[61]

Prior to German influence, even professors at American colleges had little advanced training in their subjects of expertise. Most often their presumed moral strengths recommended them for their jobs; many would continue on to careers in the ministry.[62] Such a background fit educational institutions modeled after English boarding schools and concerned with the molding of character. It also fit an intellectual milieu that prided itself on the examination of the received wisdom of authors from classical antiquity, rather than on the creation of new knowledge. In part as a consequence of their English influences, American antebellum colleges maintained paramount interest in acting in loco parentis. Harvard College, for example, made no distinction between a student's scholarly attainments and his personal conduct prior to 1869, when the school removed disciplinary considerations from the calculation of grades.[63]

These traditions and practices slowly evolved in American higher education as increasing numbers of educators turned their attention toward innovations in Germany. Beginning in the late eighteenth century, German universities

58. See, e.g., Lucas 1994: 123; Martin Finkelstein 1997: esp. 85.

59. Martin Finkelstein (1997: 85) writes that tutors "would hold short-term appointments and then largely head to other careers (mostly in ministry)." On the M.A. degree at early Harvard College, see, e.g., Kraus 1961: 66.

60. Rudolph 1978: 43.

61. Rudolph 1962: 163, 1978: 44. Kraus (1961: 69) says that this change occurred in 1766. Yale did not take up this reform until 1830 (Rudolph 1962: 163).

62. Similarly, early American college presidents were ministers. Yale did not elect its first nonclergyman president until 1899 (Rudolph 1962: 419).

63. Rudolph 1962: 348, 1978: 147; Ben-David 1972: 74. Rudolph (1978: 146–47) writes that in 1857, Harvard eliminated oral examinations for courses in favor of written ones, which the instructors graded; Yale followed suit in 1865, as did other American institutions soon thereafter. In 1883, Harvard inaugurated a grading system based on five letter grades, A through E (Rudolph 1978: 147).

experienced profound changes as they underwent professionalization.[64] Not surprisingly, given their influence on European universities prior to this time, the classical languages played a major role in this transformation. In the last few decades of the eighteenth century, German classical scholars, inspired in part by the successes of researchers in the natural sciences, pioneered modern philological practices.[65] These entailed the "scientific" investigation of classical texts and a systematic approach to the publication of research. Among the developers of these novel methods was Christian Gottlob Heyne (1729–1812), a professor of eloquence and classical philology at the University of Göttingen from 1763 until his death.[66] Students flocked to Heyne's philological seminars, which offered an introduction to modern textual analysis and the exacting standards associated with the production of classical scholarship.

Among these students was Friedrich August Wolf (1759–1824), whose matriculation at Göttingen in 1777 has been deemed the start of the modern history of classical scholarship.[67] In 1787, Wolf, like Heyne deeply influenced by art historian and archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68),[68] established his own philological seminar at the University of Halle.[69] Wolf's efforts bore their most conspicuous fruit in 1795, when he published his *Prolegomena ad Homerum*, the first great work of German classical philology. By the third decade of the nineteenth century, classical studies in Germany were fully professionalized. Prospective classics professors had to possess rigorous, specialized training in philological methods that culminated in the earning of a Ph.D. degree. Inspired by advances in the natural sciences and Winckelmann's comprehensive approach to the ancients, such classical scholars attached Wolf's label *Altertumswissenschaft* (the science of antiquity) to their discipline.[70] This

64. See, e.g., R. Steven Turner 1974, 1980, 1981; O'Boyle 1983; Leventhal 1986; Cowley and Williams 1991: 133–34; Pearcy 2005: 15–22.

65. See Leventhal 1986: 247. On modern professionalized German classical philology, see R. Steven Turner 1980, 1981; Grafton 1981, 1983; Herzog 1983; Leventhal 1986; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 176; Marchand 1996; Winterer 2002: 50–51; Pearcy 2005: 15–22. For criticism of its approach to antiquity, see Arrowsmith 1963; Selden 1990; Proctor 1998: 92–95; Simmons 2002: 22–23. On Goethe's encouragement of this professionalization, see Trevelyan 1981 (along with Lloyd-Jones's foreword to the book: vii–xxxviii).

66. Contemporary scholars disagree about the originality—or lack of originality—of Heyne and his student F. A. Wolf. On Heyne and Wolf, see R. Steven Turner 1974: 504–5, 510–11; Pfeiffer 1976: 171, 173–77; Grafton 1981, and 1983: 161, 166–67; Herzog 1983: 283; Leventhal 1986: 244 45; Funke 1990; Schindel 1990; Selden 1990: 158–60; Winterer 2002: 51, 155; Pearcy 2005: 16; Harloe 2013: 137–202.

67. See Calder 1981: 4. See also, e.g., Pfeiffer 1976: 173–77; Grafton 1981; Funke 1990.

68. See esp. Harloe 2013. See also Pfeiffer 1976: 167–72; Grafton 1983: 161; Kunze 2014. Pfeiffer (1976: 173) calls Wolf the "last and greatest of Winckelmann's followers."

69. On Halle, founded in 1694 as the first modern university, see Lucas 1994: 94. Wolf became a professor there in 1783. See Grafton 1981: 102.

70. See Pfeiffer 1976: 175–76; Grafton 1981; Harloe 2013: 196; James Turner 2014: esp. 168–

outlook mandated, in the words of Christopher Stray, "the systematic study of the classical world as an integrated whole."[71] As its name suggests, the *Altertumswissenschaft* ideal also encouraged an exacting, scientific approach to classical philology. Although classical studies were among the first disciplines to professionalize, this process soon metastasized to other areas, leading to the creation of the German research university.[72]

These German innovations slowly began to have an impact on American institutions of higher education during the nineteenth century. On September 17, 1817, Harvard's Edward Everett (1794–1865) became the first American classicist to complete German philological training.[73] He and a Harvard colleague, George Ticknor (1791–1871), had traveled to Göttingen for advanced study in classics.[74] In the fall of 1819, Everett commenced his duties as Harvard's inaugural professor of Greek literature.[75] He was the first systematically trained classical scholar in the US.[76] Everett, Ticknor, and other Americans who completed graduate work in Germany returned to their home country with many ideas for academic reforms.[77] With limited success, such men pushed for change, replacing the old pedagogical methods of grammar-drilling recitations with lectures and seminars.[78] They also produced the first American works of what might pass as classical scholarship, though they remained in the business of producing textbooks for students as their main form of "scholarly publication."

70. Fornaro (2014: 669) highlights the influence of Wilhelm von Humboldt and Goethe on Wolf's conception of *Altertumswissenschaft*. Harloe (2013: 166, 171) suggests that Heyne was first to use the term *Wissenschaft des Altertums*, an obvious precursor to Wolf's *Altertumswissenschaft*.

71. Stray 2007: 10.

72. On this topic, see above. Philology played an outsized role in the creation of the German university. See, e.g., R. Steven Turner 1980: 86–87, 1981: 109; Grafton 1983: 160, 182; O'Boyle 1983: 4; Leventhal 1986; Pearcy 2005: 22.

73. Reinhold 1984: 204.

74. Harvard had appointed Everett its Eliot Professor of Greek in 1815, when he was twenty-one years old. It then sent him, Ticknor, and others to Germany so that Harvard could lead the nation in the number of Ph.D.s on its faculty, since at that time doctorates were granted only in Germany. See Calder 1966: 217; Reinhold 1984: 182, 189, 204–13.

75. Reinhold 1984: 209.

76. Ibid., 204.

77. But see O'Brien 2004: 126: "Most early American students at German universities sampled the intellectual wares with some casualness and much incomprehension; they proclaimed the advances of German scholarship more than they understood them."

78. On the first generation of American students to earn Ph.D.s in Germany, see Agard 1953: 147 48; Rudy 1960: 15; Rudolph 1962: 118–21, 1978: 76–77; Calder 1966: 217–21; Reinhold 1984: 182–83, 204–13, 217; Leventhal 1986: 259; Cowley and Williams 1991: 116; Winterer 2002: 49–57; Pearcy 2005: 75–77. Cf. O'Brien 2004: 126–45. Delbanco (2012: 60–64) incorrectly claims that the early American colleges made heavy use of classroom lectures. See Rudolph 1978: 31–32, 69, 79, 89, 144; O'Boyle 1983: 14; Reinhold 1984: 204; Cowley and Williams 1991: 143–44; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 138–39; Winterer 2002: 36, 78–79. Cf. Kraus 1961: 65; Cremin 1997: 44, 46. On lectures and seminars as the primary mode of classics instruction in Germany during the period of its professionalization, see Grafton 1983: 162.

After decades of effort and much resistance, American colleges slowly oriented themselves toward Germany. Professionalization, specialization, and research ultimately became watchwords of American academic life.[79] Early in the twentieth century, the Ph.D. degree—first obtained in Germany and then at US institutions—would become de rigueur for aspirants to the American professoriate. By this time, American colleges and universities had established a regularized hierarchy for faculty members (e.g., assistant professor, associate professor, full professor) and had separated its instructors into discipline-specific departments.[80]

A Change in Focus

Professionalization offered numerous benefits to professors. Greater respectability, higher pay, and eventually academic freedom stemmed in large part from this process.[81] But the German philologists who touted its benefits did not do so solely on pragmatic grounds. Lenore O'Boyle informs us that these men "justified their teaching with the argument that classical culture exerted a desirable influence on character through examples of the great men of antiquity, and provided the best kind of mental training through the study of the formal structure of language—in short, an aim not far removed from the ideal of *Bildung*."[82]

This rationale resembled pronouncements about the goals of higher education popular in early America. Like the Italian humanists, German philologists focused on the shaping of character. Their concerns for the training of the mind, although more in line with the spirit of scholasticism, echo calls in favor of mental discipline from proponents of classical education in nineteenth-century America.[83]

79. On American reactions to the German research university, see Eliot 1969: 6–7; Rudolph 1978: 113–14; O'Boyle 1983: 13; Cowley and Williams 1991: 148–50; Lucas 1994: 142, 170–74; Winterer 2002: 3.

80. See Martin Finkelstein 1997: 87–88.

81. For a discussion of the pragmatic benefits for faculty members that resulted from the creation of the German research university, see O'Boyle 1983: 5–10 (in Germany), 21–23 (in the US). On the 1915 founding of the American Association of University Professors and its role in protecting academic freedom and tenure, see Rudolph 1962: 415; Lucas 1994: 197–98.

82. O'Boyle 1983: 4. Cf. R. Steven Turner 1980: 79–80; Grafton 1981: 103, 1983: 169, 183–84 (who demonstrates that the research imperative soon clouded Wilhelm von Humboldt's ideas of research as *Bildung*); Proctor 1998: 103–5 (who links Humboldt to the idea of using the ancient Greeks as a model to shape the character of students). Winterer (2001) points out that great women from classical antiquity also played a role in the formation of character, especially since American women began to experience classical education in greater numbers during the late nineteenth century.

83. E.g., in the Yale *Reports* of 1828. On this topic, see below.

Along with the professionalization of higher education in Germany, however, came a change in intellectual and pedagogical orientation. Specialized scholarship would now produce new knowledge and encourage an academic ideal of knowledge for its own sake.[84] This marked a profound shift from the spirit of Renaissance humanism, with its focus on transmitting the received wisdom of the ancients. More important, this regard for *Bildung*, however practically applied in German universities, did not translate well to American institutions, given the innate pragmatism of US culture.[85] American public high schools, still at an early stage in their development, were also markedly inferior to German gymnasia and thus could not provide the intellectual well-roundedness requisite for such specialized training at the collegiate level.[86]

The Classical Curriculum's Last Stand

For these and other reasons, the alteration in orientation toward the German research model met with stiff resistance in American colleges during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These efforts—which many historians of education have mischaracterized—slowed institutional change in America for decades.[87]

The so-called Yale *Reports* of 1828 amounted to the nineteenth century's most influential defense of the classical curriculum and the pedagogical status quo.[88] The *Reports* owed their germination to many factors. According to historian David Potts, the advertisement of curricular changes at Amherst College led some observers to criticize Yale's traditionalistic and impractical course of studies.[89] The Yale Corporation responded in 1827 by appointing a committee to examine the possibility of altering the institution's curriculum. In the resulting three-part report, Yale president Jeremiah Day (1773–1867) defended the college's current course of studies;[90] classics professor James L. Kingsley (1778–1852) presented an apologia for the study of the ancient languages;[91] and Connecticut governor Gideon Tomlinson (1780–1854) offered a rousing call in favor of retaining the classical curriculum.[92]

Historians of American higher education have routinely pilloried the Yale *Reports* as an elitist, reactionary screed.[93] Critics have focused particular attention on Day's defense of classical learning on the basis of "mental discipline," a concept that was worlds away from the tenets of Renaissance humanism and that psychologists ultimately deemed unsound.[94] The *Reports*, although more appropriate to the climate of eighteenth-century classicism and unfortunately eclipsing more persuasive defenses of classical studies of the period,[95] halted major curricular change in American higher education through the end of the Civil War. Yale's outsized influence on US colleges ensured that few institutions would abandon the classical orientation of undergraduate studies in the next few decades.

Antebellum and Postbellum Education

It is simplifying to split American higher education into its antebellum and postbellum phases and deem the former the age of the classical college and the latter the era of the research university. What some have characterized as a quick shift in orientation really amounted to a longer, more gradual process.[96] Regardless, profound alterations in American higher education commenced during the Civil War and ultimately directed colleges away from classical stud-

84. See O'Boyle 1983: 5–6.

85. See O'Boyle (1983: 23), who stresses that the importation of the German model of higher education to America occurred without the ideal of *Bildung*. Cf. Pearcy 2005, who offers a compatible argument about the sort of German philological practices that influenced the American approach to classical antiquity.

86. See Shorey (1911: 466): "The superiority of the foreign university rests almost wholly on the severer discipline of the German gymnasium and the English public schools." The first American public high school was not established until 1821. See Rudolph 1978: 158.

87. Winterer (2002 esp. 3, 185 n. 3, 77) convincingly contends that historians of American higher education often unfairly denigrate antebellum colleges by taking up their opponents' arguments. On such disparaging assessments of the American classical colleges, see above.

88. On the Yale *Reports*, see, e.g., Rudy 1960: 1–5; Rudolph 1962: 130–35, 1978: 65–75; Lucas 1994: 131–34; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 150–53; Winterer 2002: 48–49; Pearcy 2005: 65–71; Potts 2010 (which contains the full text of the *Reports*). The document's original title was *Reports on the Course of Instruction in Yale College; by a Committee of the Corporation and the Academic Faculty.*

89. Potts 2010: 20, 30. For the role of State Senator Noyes Darling in this matter, see Winterer (2002: 49); Potts (2010: 25–26).

90. In Potts 2010: 5–30. Day does suggest (5), however, that Yale's "present plan of education admits improvement."

91. In ibid., 30–49.

92. In ibid., 49–56.

93. See Winterer 2002: 48–49. See also the other sources on the Yale *Reports* mentioned above. Potts (2010: xvi–xvii) asserts that many falsities pervade discussions of the *Reports* (including their title), since their text was not readily available until he reprinted it in his book.

94. For a discussion of the ways in which the tenets of Renaissance humanism degenerated into concern for mental discipline, see Proctor (1998: 100–101, 111–12). For a classical scholar's defense of the idea of the ancient languages as mental discipline, see Shorey 1910: 607, 1917: 18, 24–25, 46–50.

95. See Winterer 2002: 49–50.

96. See, e.g., O'Boyle 1983: 17 n. 42; Martin Finkelstein 1997: 84. See also Wriston (1939), who believed that many observers possessed a simplified and distorted understanding of the American classical college. For the traditional view of the changes, cf. Rudolph 1962: 241–63; Lucas 1994: 139–40.

ies. By the start of the twentieth century, the role of classical antiquity in American higher education was greatly diminished.

The first major part of this transformation occurred in July 1862, with the US Congress's passage of the Morrill Land Grant Act.[97] Congressman Justin S. Morrill (1810–98) of Vermont sponsored the act, which donated public lands to several US states and territories to establish colleges that would provide training in agriculture and the mechanical arts.[98] These new institutions did not abandon classical studies (in fact, the Morrill Act mandated them)[99] but added an array of technical subjects to the curricula. At the land grant universities, Latin and ancient Greek competed with a panoply of vocational disciplines, many of them new to American academia.[100] This fit the spirit of an ongoing wave of US populism. Since the 1829 election of Andrew Jackson—the first American president after George Washington not to attend college—the antebellum college's classical curriculum seemed increasingly out of step with the pragmatic, populist nature of American society.[101] As the nation industrialized, the land grant universities developed into institutions dedicated chiefly to what was seen as practical instruction in an urbanizing society. An educational tradition formerly aimed at young men who hoped to work in the learned professions now expanded its reach to the exponentially growing population of young men and women destined for many other careers. Americans with all manner of occupational aspirations could now find training at the land grant institutions.

America's First University

The Morrill Act was just the first in a series of major changes that commenced with the Civil War. In 1865, the same year the war ended, the act led to the chartering of Cornell University.[102] In his report the following year to the trustees of this newly envisioned institution, Andrew D. White (1832–1918), who would serve as Cornell's first president, outlined significant differences between its

97. See Rudolph 1962: 244, 247–55; Cowley and Williams 1991: 118–22; Lucas 1994: 147–48; Eldon L. Johnson 1997; Proctor 1998: 204.

98. Not all funds went to new institutions; some older American colleges benefited financially from the First Morrill Act.

99. Rudolph 1962: 252.

100. Eldon L. Johnson (1997: 224–26) demonstrates that at first there was little public demand for these utilitarian subjects.

101. See Rudolph 1962: 201–20; Winterer 2002: 46–48; Pearcy 2005: 60–61, 74.

102. Rudolph 1962: 266–67. On the establishment of Cornell, see Rudolph 1978: 115–29.

curriculum and those of the classical colleges.[103] Opened in 1868, Cornell lays claim to consideration as America's first university.[104] Under the auspices of the reform-minded White, this nonsectarian institution aimed to be all things to all people. Rather than confine itself to the classical curriculum, Cornell allowed students to study agriculture, civil engineering, mining, law, commerce, and kindred vocational subjects without being banished to a scientific college.[105]

Though White saw a place for the older disciplines at Cornell, he recognized that all students at this sort of institution could not complete the same prescribed curriculum. As reformers such as White looked beyond the classical colleges for guidance, the educational ideals of Renaissance humanism were being set aside. White hoped to unite liberal and practical education without treating the latter as inferior in status. No longer were classical studies (or any other discipline) deemed indispensable for an educated person. Cornell, the first Eastern institution to become coeducational,[106] soon proved an unparalleled success. The university quickly attracted comparatively large numbers of students.

The Birth of the American Research Imperative

Despite the fact that White's Cornell amounted to the nation's first university, it differed from its German models in one fundamental respect: unlike institutions such as Göttingen and the University of Berlin, Cornell did not especially encourage its faculty members to engage in original scholarly research. Other educational trailblazers thus established the first American research university.

In 1876, Johns Hopkins University was founded in Baltimore.[107] Under the guidance of its first president, Daniel Coit Gilman (1831–1908), a reformer who applauded White's work at Cornell, Hopkins was established as a German-style institution promoting advanced academic research and graduate study.[108] Soon imitated by other new American institutions (e.g., Clark University, Bryn Mawr, and Catholic University) and traditional colleges hoping to keep up with

103. See Rudolph 1978: 117–18. On White, see, e.g., Rudolph 1978: 115–29; Ben-David 1972: 56.

104. As Rudolph (1978: 116) suggests.

105. See Rudolph 1978: 118–19.

106. In 1872. See Rudolph 1962: 316, 1978: 124.

107. See Shorey 1919: 40; John C. French 1946; Hawkins 1960; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 161. See also chapter 3.

108. Its founders envisioned Johns Hopkins as a graduate institution that would produce homegrown Ph.D.s. But criticism of this arrangement from Baltimore residents led to the creation of undergraduate studies at Hopkins. See Hawkins 1960: 13–26.

the times (e.g., Harvard, Yale, and Princeton), Hopkins helped reorient higher education in the US around the research imperative. Not surprisingly, given the institution's intellectual orientation, Johns Hopkins's *Register for the Second Year 1877–78* offers the first official mention in American higher education of the terms *major* and *minor* to mean nonpreparatory specializations.[109] As a university dedicated to the production of new knowledge in a variety of academic disciplines, Hopkins and its successors eschewed the prescribed curricula of the antebellum colleges in favor of a pedagogical model more conducive to academic research.

Darwin Meets the Curriculum

Though Cornell and Johns Hopkins helped inaugurate major alterations in US higher education, no figure is more associated with curricular change in American academia in the second half of the nineteenth century than Charles W. Eliot (1834–1926).[110] Although not the founder of the free elective system,[111] Eliot, as Harvard's president from 1869 to 1909, became the system's most tireless and prominent advocate. As early as 1835, Harvard flirted with an increasingly elective-based curriculum.[112] The recent growth of a variety of new disciplines in American academia, combined with the withering of the Renaissance humanist pedagogical ideal in favor of an ideology of knowledge creation and the notion that many different kinds of knowledge could be valuable, rendered the prescribed classical course obsolete and unworkable.

From the start of his presidency, Eliot, a chemist who had graduated from Harvard in 1853, made the establishment of the free elective system—and the concomitant pedagogical modernization of Harvard—his chief goal. In his October 19, 1869, inaugural address, Eliot stressed the foolishness of limiting Harvard students to the study of a few core subjects. Echoing the sentiments

109. Payton 1961: 58. Hopkins classics professor Charles D'Urban Morris appears to have offered the first public use of the terms (59–60). Cf. Rudolph 1978: 131, 198, 227; Cowley and Williams 1991: 146.

110. See, e.g., Rudy 1960: 8, 15–17, 42; Rudolph 1962: 244–45, 291–95; 1978: 18, 135–38, 191–96; Ben-David 1972: 56; Cowley and Williams 1991: 138–41, 145, 148–49; Carnochan 1993: 3–21, 51–53; Lucas 1994: 165–67; Winterer 2002: 106–7; Pearcy 2005: 77–78; Beam 2008: 11, 30–31. Babbitt (1986: 95–99, 106) and Hutchins (1995: 70–71) were critical of his reforms. Shorey (1917: esp. 11–12) criticizes Eliot's disdain for the classical curriculum.

111. See, e.g., Rudolph 1962: 287–306, 1978: 191–96; Ben-David 1972: 56–59; Allardyce 1982: 697; Cowley and Williams 1991: 145; Carnochan 1993: 9–21, 51–67.

112. Rudolph 1978: 77. As Rudolph notes (78–79), Harvard faculty members pushed back against the electives and restored the prescribed course in 1843.

of Cornell's White, he said, "We would have them all, and at their best."[113] The speech, which focuses attention on a college education as an introduction to certain discipline-based skills,[114] anticipates many of the changes to come in American higher education. "The elective system," Eliot pronounced, "fosters scholarship, because it gives free play to natural preferences and inborn aptitudes, makes possible enthusiasm for a chosen work, relieves the professor and the ardent disciple of the presence of a body of students who are compelled to an unwelcome task, and enlarges the instruction by substituting many and various lessons given to small, lively classes."[115] Implicit in the support for a system of elected courses was the notion of the university as a free market—a space in which Darwinian and Spencerian competition would occur between the disciplines, purportedly benefiting both the students and the disciplines themselves.[116]

Eliot's proposals met with much resistance, both inside and outside the walls of Harvard.[117] The new president would have garnered much less success in implementing them if he had not raised the requisite funds. A prescribed curriculum required fewer professors than the free elective system, which needed a greatly expanded faculty capable of introducing students to a gamut of academic disciplines. The influx of capital to Harvard and the spectacular growth of its faculty helped drive Eliot's reforms. In 1872 Harvard abolished all subject requirements for seniors.[118] Seven years later, such requirements disappeared for Harvard's juniors.[119] Sophomore requirements were next to depart, in 1884.[120] By 1897, Harvard had eliminated all required courses, save one English composition class, thus bringing to fruition Eliot's quest for a fully elective curriculum.[121]

In pushing for these changes, Eliot did not present himself as an opponent of classical studies.[122] But his free-for-all curriculum obviously removed Latin and ancient Greek from their central position in American higher education. Thus, for example, during Eliot's tenure Harvard ended compulsory study in

113. Eliot 1969: 1.

114. Ibid., 2.

115. Ibid., 11.

116. Carnochan 1993: 13–14.

117. E.g., see discussions of the debate over the elective system in 1885 between Eliot and Princeton president James McCosh (1811–94): e.g., Rudolph 1962: 297–300, 1978: 194–95; Carnochan 1993: 9–21 (esp. 18, which notes McCosh's antipathy for the notion that a university should be a free market); Delbanco 2012: 82–90.

118. Rudolph 1978: 132.

119. Rudolph 1962: 294.

120. Ibid.

121. Ibid., 294; Rudolph 1978: 194.

122. His opponents characterized him in this fashion, however. See, e.g., Shorey 1917: 11–12.

the classical languages.[123] In 1886, Eliot convinced the Harvard faculty to drop ancient Greek as an admissions requirement for prospective undergraduates; the college would now allow advanced mathematics and physics as substitutes.[124] Some decades later, Harvard also abandoned the Latin requirement for prospective students.[125] Although Eliot did not originally stress the importance of faculty research to his institution's mission, competition with Johns Hopkins led him to organize and professionalize graduate study at Harvard.[126] Eliot's curricular innovations proved vastly influential, ultimately ensuring the obsolescence of the old prescribed classical curriculum.[127]

Humanism, Old and New

Supporters of classical studies in American higher education deplored these changes. The 1880s and 1890s witnessed the so-called Battle of the Classics, in which educators—primarily at well-established eastern institutions—argued over the centrality of Latin and Greek to a college education.[128] Various American periodicals devoted attention to this subject, which often generated more heat than light.[129] Classical scholars took part in these debates. Ancient philosopher Paul Shorey (1857–1934), for example, penned a series of essays for *The Atlantic* that attacked the positions of Eliot, among others.[130]

Although Latin and Greek yielded their dominant position in the undergraduate curriculum, their defenders continued their apologias into the early

123. In 1883, says Winterer (2002: 101); see also Winterer 2002: 107: "In 1912 a survey of 155 public and private colleges and universities showed that 66 required neither Greek nor Latin for the bachelor of arts and only 27 demanded both."

124. Rudolph 1978: 181, 186.

125. Carnochan 1993: 62: "The last traces of Harvard's Latin requirement as a condition of entrance did not disappear until the mid-twentieth century." Yale ended the Latin entrance requirement in 1919 (Rudolph 1962: 214). The push to drop Latin and Greek entrance requirements at institutions across the country lasted decades. As early as 1826, James Marsh, the president of the University of Vermont, attempted to unburden students who did not aim to take the classical languages of such requirements. He did not succeed, however. See, e.g., Rudolph 1962: 121–22.

126. Harvard established its Graduate School of Arts and Sciences in 1890 (Rudolph 1962: 335). On Eliot's turn to support academic research, see Rudolph 1978: 154–55.

127. Understandably, the reforms spread first to wealthy universities and state institutions, which could afford the rapid expansion requisite to launch free election, and then elsewhere. See Rudolph 1978: 191.

128. See Rudolph 1978: 180–88. For examples of the arguments offered in the dispute, see Beman 1921.

129. E.g., Shorey 1917. On Charles Adams Jr.'s attack on Latin and Greek in his 1883 Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard, see also Rudolph (1978: 183–84); Carnochan (1993: 56–57).

130. These essays were later published as a book: Shorey 1917. Cf. Shorey 1910, 1911. On Shorey, see Agard 1953: 153–54; Calder 1966: 222; Winterer 2002: 112–13, 116–17.

twentieth century, most prominently under the auspices of an informal movement labeled New Humanism.[131] Irving Babbitt (1865–1933), a professor of French at Harvard and the most influential thinker associated with the New Humanists, condemned the professionalization, specialization, and vocationalism of contemporary American higher education. Lamenting the degeneration of humanism into Baconian and Rousseauvian "humanitarianism," Babbitt's *Literature and the American College* (1908) pilloried Eliot's scheme. In Eliot's free election system, Babbitt wrote, "There is no general norm, no law for man, as the humanist believed, with reference to which the individual should select; he should make his selection entirely with reference to his own temperament and its (supposedly) unique requirements. The wisdom of the ages is to be naught as compared with the inclination of a sophomore."[132] Babbitt—like the Renaissance humanists before him—stressed the importance of classical authors to the education of the young.[133]

His defense of the classics was out of touch with the academic zeitgeist. Babbitt disliked the professionalization of the discipline. "The uncritical adoption of German methods," he contended, "is one of the chief obstacles to a humanistic revival. The Germanizing of our classical study in particular has been a disaster not only to the classics themselves, but to the whole of our higher culture."[134] Babbitt pined for the classics, but not in their recent scientific guise. He appealed to Renaissance humanists' ideals, not to the German philologists touting their commitment to *Altertumswissenschaft*. Some American classical scholars offered compatible arguments. Shorey, who had earned his Ph.D. in Munich,[135] disdained the "over-specialized erudition" of German culture,[136] which led its classicists to engage in a "parody of scientific research which consists in the 'pyramiding' of unverifiable hypotheses."[137]

In the decades prior to Babbitt's and Shorey's defense of the humanities, however, the term itself was undergoing a transformation. As Caroline Winterer has ably demonstrated, some time around the 1850s educators began to reconceptualize the humanities.[138] Thanks to the Italian humanists, the "hu-

131. See, e.g., Babbitt 1986; Rudy 1960: 132–33; Rudolph 1978: 239–40; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 173 75; Carnochan 1993: 63–66; Winterer 2002: 113, 177.

132. Babbitt 1986: 96.

133. E.g., ibid., 129–30. Babbitt had received a classical education. Significantly, perhaps, he did not earn a Ph.D.

134. Ibid., 143; for similar sentiments, see also 129–30, 135–36, 147–49, 151–67. For a classical scholar's negative assessment of the New Humanism, see Shorey 1919: 44.

135. Kopff 1990: 447–48.

136. Shorey 1911: 466. For Shorey's attitude toward Germany, see Kopff 1990: 450.

137. Shorey 1911: 468. Cf. Shorey's (1928: 177–78) criticisms of the pseudoscientific approach to the study of literature.

138. Winterer 2002: 117. Proctor (1998: 7) dates this change to the 1860s.

manities" (i.e., the *studia humanitatis*) for centuries referred to the study of authors from Greek and Roman antiquity. As the nineteenth century wore on, however, opponents of academic vocationalism began to shift their arguments in favor of liberal studies more generally. Recognizing the sorry future for compulsory collegiate Greek and Latin, these thinkers (the first among whom were classicists) widened the popular conception of the humanities to encompass, in Winterer's words, "a kind of elevating, holistic study of literature, music, and art."[139] This marked a seismic shift in the arguments advanced by proponents of liberal education. They now imbued a variety of academic disciplines—English, French, philosophy, German, art history, and so forth—with a power previously accorded to the classics alone. From a conception that privileged the study of Greco-Roman antiquity, the humanities began to take on their current, more capacious meaning.

As much as anything else, this shift signaled the end of classics' dominance in American higher education. In 1880, the United States had only eleven professors of nonclassical history.[140] One year later, Cornell University founded the first department of American history in the US.[141] As college after college abandoned its Greek and Latin requirements and shifted to the free election system,[142] other disciplines grew in prominence at the expense of the classics. By the turn of the century, Frederick Rudolph informs us, English had replaced classics as the bedrock of the humanities at institutions across the nation—even at tradition-minded Yale.[143]

Professionalization and Alterations

The decline in the role of ancient Greek and Latin authors as the foundation of American higher education coincided with the professionalization of classics as a scholarly discipline in the United States.[144] William Calder III considers 1853 the commencement of the first period of German influence on American

139. Winterer 2002: 117.

140. Rudolph 1978: 177–78.

141. Ibid., 125.

142. In 1902, for example, Dartmouth and New York University abandoned Greek as a requirement for their undergraduates (Rudolph 1978: 213–14); Yale followed suit soon thereafter (213–14). Most American colleges no longer required Greek for admission by 1905, says Winterer (2002: 102). By 1915, fewer than fifteen major American colleges required bachelor of arts candidates to take four years of Latin (Rudolph 1978: 214).

143. Rudolph 1978: 140. Cf. Pearcy 2005: 82.

144. Correlation, of course, is not causation, and there are a number of reasons for this decline. On the history of American classical philology, see, e.g., Shorey 1919; Agard 1953; Calder 1966, 1994; Reinhold 1984; Winterer 2002.

classical studies and the origins of scientific classical philology in the United States.[145] At this time Basil L. Gildersleeve (1831–1924), the seminal figure in the early history of American classical scholarship, received his Ph.D. at Göttingen. During his long tenure at Johns Hopkins University, Gildersleeve reconfigured postcollegiate classical study along Germanic lines.[146] Prior to this period, despite the cardinal importance of authors from Greco-Roman antiquity to US education, America had failed to produce one significant work of original philological scholarship.[147] Even at the elite colleges, professors had lacked sufficient research libraries and time away from teaching.[148]

Many of the trappings of professionalized classical studies in the US originated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1869, the American Philological Association (APA), the first in a new wave of learned societies, was founded.[149] Originally intended to encompass philological work in a variety of language traditions, the APA soon narrowed its scope and became the chief professional organization for North American classical scholars.[150] A year after its foundation, the APA established the *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, the first classical journal in the United States. Thereafter followed the *American Journal of Philology* (1880),[151] *Cornell Studies in Classical Philology* (1887), *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* (1890), and *Classical Philology* (1906), among other scholarly publications.[152]

Classical archaeology showed signs of its professionalization around the same time. In 1879 the Archaeological Institute of America was born. Six years later, specialists in the field had their first American scholarly publication, the *American Journal of Archaeology*. The American School of Classical Studies at Athens was founded in 1881, with the American School of Classical Studies in Rome following in 1895.[153]

Earlier than most disciplines in the American academic universe, classical studies were now set to contribute to the culture of the modern German-inspired research institution. The specialization that had made classical scholarship possible, however, also helped dethrone the study of ancient Greek and

145. Calder 1966: 213.

146. Before being hired as Hopkins's first professor, Gildersleeve had taught at the University of Virginia. For more on Gildersleeve, see chapter 3.

147. Reinhold 1984: 23; Calder 1994: xxiv.

148. See James Turner 2014: 179.

149. See Shero 1964: 5.

150. See ibid.

151. On the history of the *American Journal of Philology*, see chapter 3.

152. See Calder 1966: 223–24.

153. Agard 1953: 150. The American School of Classical Studies in Rome is now called the American Academy in Rome.

Latin authors from its former privileged position in American higher education. As US colleges and universities looked to Germany for their inspiration, they cast aside the Italian humanists and their conception of classical antiquity as the quintessential subject for the educated person.

Curricular Confusion

Despite its rapid spread to institutions across the nation, the newly arrived free elective system soon garnered its fair share of complaints. Although it greatly expanded the intellectual breadth of American undergraduate education, free election also ushered in curricular confusion. Eliot and his supporters had faith in undergraduates to chart their own course, but many merely hunted for the least taxing classes.[154] As Eliot's critics feared, the free election system led to a general lowering of academic standards, as students fled rigorous courses—such as ancient Greek and Latin—in favor of less onerous options.[155] Even worse, it promoted what some considered intellectual incoherence: its boosters had altered the classical curriculum of the antebellum American college, but had not replaced it with any specific, uniform content. Free election dramatically broadened the scope of undergraduate education, but it also signaled to students that no subject was more important than any other. As countless undergraduates flocked to "gut" courses and directed their attention chiefly to the blossoming extracurriculum, some educators felt the need for further innovations.

The changes took different forms. Already in the late 1870s, Johns Hopkins had experimented with requiring students to concentrate their studies in a few areas, thus inaugurating the major and minor in American education.[156] This idea spread to Indiana University by 1885.[157] By 1910 the major had become a routine part of undergraduate education at most American colleges and universities.[158]

In hindsight, the development of student concentrations seems natural, since they fit well with the desiderata of research-oriented institutions. The addition of majors and minors allowed professors to offer a series of narrow courses in their disciplines, and many of those courses could suit their publication goals. A satisfactory system of general education, however, proved more difficult to establish. In many ways, general education goes against the grain of the modern research university, because the perceived need for intellectual breadth clashes with the training of the professoriate.[159] Thus, efforts in this direction have seldom—if ever—met with widespread enthusiasm.

The earliest (and, to this day, most widely adopted) attempt to provide American undergraduates with some form of general education is the distribution model. In place at Cornell University by 1905,[160] this system purportedly owes its continuing popularity to Harvard's adoption of it in 1909, when Abbott Lawrence Lowell (1856–1943) succeeded Eliot as the institution's president.[161] Disappointed with the perceived excesses of his predecessor's free elective system, Lowell inaugurated the concentration (i.e., major) and distribution requirements model at Harvard. This system provides a skills- and discipline-based approach to general education. It compels students to experience a variety of academic disciplines, typically by choosing, say, a few courses each from the social sciences, the natural sciences, the fine arts, and the humanities.

Such an approach has shortcomings: it signals to undergraduates that, with the exception of disciplinary skills, they must possess no essential information to deem themselves educated. But the distribution requirements model has numerous pragmatic benefits. It causes fewer problems for research-oriented faculty members, potentially minimizes disciplinary turf wars, and affords students great freedom of choice. The model also fit the intellectual and cultural parameters of a changing America. In an industrialized country whose population flocked to higher education in greater numbers, the old belief in a unity of knowledge no longer sufficed. Thus, the distribution requirements system remains popular—even dominant—in colleges and universities across the nation to this day.[162]

The Best That Has Been Thought and Said—in English

Some observers looked upon the distribution model as unsatisfying and hungered for different approaches to collegiate general education. In 1919, Co-

154. See, e.g., Rudolph 1962: 306.

155. Ibid. For a classical scholar's criticisms of free election, see, e.g., Shorey 1910: 588, 605–6, 615.

156. Payton 1961.

157. Rudolph 1978: 227. Cf. Rudy 1960: 45 n. 10.

158. Rudolph 1978: 229.

159. As increasing numbers of American scholars developed research agendas over the twentieth century, general education clashed even more with the goals of the professoriate.

160. Rudolph 1978: 228–29. Rudolph also claims that Yale was moving in this direction by 1901.

161. Ibid., 229. Cf. Rudy 1960: 62. On Lowell, see Rudolph 1978: 227–29; Cowley and Williams 1991: 145–46; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 192–93.

162. On the continued popularity of this model, see Arum and Roksa (2011: 73–74).

lumbia University's "War Issues" course transformed into "Introduction to Contemporary Civilization," the class that inaugurated Columbia's influential general education program.[163] This amounted to the birth of the Western civilization course and jump-started the so-called Great Books approach to general education.[164] Eventually expanding to a two-year sequence, the Columbia program aimed to introduce students to canonical authors from the Western tradition in small seminar classes. Recently founded Reed College in Oregon began offering a similar set of courses in 1921.[165]

More famously, in 1931 Robert Maynard Hutchins (1899–1977), the young president of the University of Chicago, along with Mortimer J. Adler (1902–2001), a veteran of the Columbia courses, established a Great Books program at the University of Chicago.[166] With different emphases from those of its Columbia forebear, the Chicago program employed a seminar format to familiarize its undergraduates with the West's most important writers. Although this approach to general education never became as pervasive in American institutions as the distribution model, in its heyday between the wars it sired many Western civilization courses, which were required of undergraduate students at numerous American colleges and universities.[167]

Classical scholars had some reason to applaud these disparate versions of the Great Books tradition. Unlike the distribution model, this approach typically focuses on numerous authors from Greco-Roman antiquity—for example, Homer, Sophocles, Thucydides, and Vergil. The classics thus played some role—however reduced from the days of the classical colleges—in the Great Books model of general education. The Great Books courses also placed ancient Greece—not Egypt, not Persia, not Carthage—at the inception of what was now called "Western Civilization."[168] This was a major intellectual achievement: Western civilization classes convinced huge numbers of American college graduates that the core of their civilization lay in Greek antiquity.

163. Rudolph 1962: 455, 1978: 237; Ben-David 1972: 61; Allardyce 1982: esp. 703–9; Lucas 1994: 213.

164. Allardyce 1982: 698. For discussions of the history of Great Books programs, see Boucher 1935; Rudy 1960: 132–33; Rudolph 1962: 455–56, 479–81, 1978: 237–39, 254–64, 278–80; Ben-David 1972: 61–73; Allardyce 1982; Cowley and Williams 1991: 179; Carnochan 1993: 68–87; Lucas 1994: 212–19; Beam 2008 (a flippant and biased account). Cf. Hutchins 1995: esp. 59–87.

165. Rudolph 1978: 241.

166. On Hutchins, Adler, and the Great Books at the University of Chicago, see Rudy 1960: 132–33; Rudolph 1962: 479–81, 1978: 278–79; Ben-David 1972: 70; Allardyce 1982: 709–16; Carnochan 1993: 85–86, 88–90; Lucas 1994: 215–19; Hutchins 1995; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 179–80; Beam 2008. Cf. Wriston (1939: 320–21), who believes, contrary to Hutchins, that one cannot standardize general education.

167. See Allardyce 1982.

168. On the broader view of antiquity among Americans in the eighteenth century, especially in regard to Carthage, see Winterer 2008.

But classicists also had rationales for criticizing the Great Books.[169] Compared to the Renaissance humanists' educational program, the Great Books offered a diminished place for classical antiquity. Previously the heart of the liberal arts, the ancient Greeks and Romans now became consequential chiefly insofar as they were the progenitors of Western civilization. They took the first steps in a broader process; their significance was underscored as a result of their impact on later inhabitants of the West. This Whig conception of history—what historian David Gress has called a grand narrative "from Plato to NATO"—still signaled the importance of ancient Greece and Rome but removed the classics from their former primacy.[170]

In addition, promoters of the Great Books tended to dismiss the importance of language study in Western civilization courses. In defense of his general education program at the University of Chicago, for example, Hutchins declared, "I do not suggest that learning the languages or the grammar in which the ancient classics were written is necessary to general education. Excellent translations of almost all of them now exist."[171] Adler never learned any foreign languages.[172] When he and Hutchins edited the *Great Books of the Western World*, a giant collection that aimed to bring the best authors from the Western tradition to the masses, they chose some outdated and problematic translations.[173] Study of the Latin and Greek languages served as the bedrock of classical studies for both the Renaissance humanists and classical scholars engaging in professionalized philological research. In comparison with this approach, the Great Books seemed watered down.

This model fell afoul of the modern professionalized professoriate, with its concern for specialization and scholarly publication, for other reasons as well. Unlike the major/minor system, it asked faculty members to teach broad courses at least partly outside their areas of expertise. Like any other professors,

169. See Shorey 1910: 590; Calder 1966: 238; Beam 2008: 47, who notes Shorey's objections; Kopff 1999: 16–19. According to Winterer (2002: 133–34), classicists were the intellectual progenitors of the Great Books. She notes (130–31), however, that some nineteenth-century scholars criticized the study of the classics in translation. See also Beam 2008: 16–17.

170. Gress 1998.

171. Hutchins 1995: 82.

172. Beam 2008: 54.

173. Bloom (1987: 54, 344) was critical of this aspect of the Great Books tradition and was more amenable to language study. But Bloom still subordinated language study to political theory, believing that the former was important only insofar as it afforded students more accurate understandings of great texts for their inquiries.

classical scholars in the US now received comparatively narrow (albeit rigorous) training in one discipline, which allowed them to publish and thus earn prestige and advancement in American higher education. Such experts were likely to feel uncomfortable with intellectually capacious Great Books courses, which could promote superficiality and dilettantism. The heavy preparation requisite for these classes could also keep professors away from their narrower research goals.[174]

Thus, the Great Books approach withered, as did the status accorded to the study of classical antiquity in American colleges and universities in the latter part of the twentieth century. The 1944 passage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (popularly called the GI Bill) massively expanded the college-bound population and led to increased concern for pragmatism and vocationalism in US higher education.[175] In 1945, a Harvard faculty committee published a report, *General Education in a Free Society* (better known as the Harvard Redbook),[176] which disparaged the notion that Latin was superior for the development of the intellect and thus discredited the notion of "mental discipline."[177] The Soviets' 1957 launch of the Sputnik satellite prompted heightened concern for science and vocationalism in the US at the expense of general education.[178]

The late 1960s turned out to be even less amenable to the Great Books. Student radicals demonstrated in favor of curricular freedom and leniency, typically favoring more "relevant" coursework. Strangely enough, their educational desiderata fit well with the contours of Eliot's free elective system—a model crafted along free-market and Darwinian lines. As chapter 1 shows, student radicals often played a pronounced role in shaping the curriculum at various institutions. In 1969, for example, the Harvard faculty gave students unprecedented power in curricular and staffing matters pertaining to its new Afro-

174. It is perhaps unsurprising that the Great Books continue to thrive at Columbia, a wealthy institution that can afford to offer its faculty sabbaticals in recompense for teaching in the program and can hire its current and former graduate students to lead small seminar courses. Humbler colleges and universities likely have more difficulty maintaining such programs without relying on an academic underclass of adjuncts. These programs still exist, however, especially (but not exclusively) at conservative Christian institutions. Many colleges and universities that have retained Great Books programs are members of the Association of Core Texts and Courses. As of the 2013–14 academic year, this organization had sixty institutional contributors, not all of which are American. See http://www.coretexts.org.

175. See, e.g., Rudolph 1978: 282–83; Cowley and Williams 1991: 188; Lucas 1994: xv, 232.

176. See Rudy 1960: 133–34; Ben-David 1972: 71; Rudolph 1978: 257–63; Allardyce 1982: 716–17; Cowley and Williams 1991: 190–91; Carnochan 1993: 89–95; Lucas 1994: 250–51; Bruce A. Kimball 1995: 233–34; Winterer 2002: 181. Harvard president James B. Conant appointed the committee in 1943 to examine general education at the institution.

177. See Winterer 2002: 181.

178. See Ben-David 1972: 81–82; Rudolph 1978: 265; Allardyce 1982: 716; Cowley and Williams 1991: 192; Lucas 1994: 253.

American studies department.[179] As a consequence of student pressure, Amherst College scrapped all its general education requirements in 1971.[180] In such an atmosphere, institutions of higher learning across the nation dropped their obligatory Western civilization and Great Books courses.[181] Much of the energy and enthusiasm in US colleges and universities was directed toward women's studies, black studies, and kindred topics.

This intellectual environment portended serious problems for classical studies: the discipline's erstwhile role as the foundation of American higher education and its perceived irrelevance to the highly charged political climate of the time appeared to be grave liabilities. Mandatory Western civilization sequences may have indirectly aided collegiate Latin enrollments in the US: the early 1960s witnessed the largest numbers of American undergraduates ever to take Latin.[182] This fact may obscure the curricular marginality of the classical languages on campuses, since the passage of the GI Bill led to massive increases in the number of US undergraduates. But though a far lower *percentage* of American students took Latin after the demise of the prescribed classical curricula that required its study, the intellectual climate of the early 1960s still provided pragmatic benefits for classics departments. The conflagrations later in the decade quickly changed all that. Now freed from the burden of required coursework in Western civilization, large numbers of undergraduates were unlikely to enroll in Latin and Greek courses.

Around the same time and for similar reasons, fewer prospective American college students had any prior experience with Latin. As Edward Phinney reported, "Public high-school enrollments in Latin decreased, between 1962 and 1976, by 78.6% from 702,135 students to 150,470."[183] This precipitous drop signaled major difficulties for collegiate Latin and Greek. To carry on in this environment, classics departments nationwide pioneered new courses in English translation—classical mythology, Greek tragedy, and the like—to reach populations of students unwilling to sign up for the classical languages.[184] Formerly a discipline defined by philology, classical studies in the US expanded their purview. This remedy ensured their survival, but caused traditionalists to fret about the relaxing of standards.

The 1970s provided a slightly more fruitful atmosphere for classical studies. The decade witnessed the "back to basics" movement, which sought to reas-

179. Rudolph 1978: 272.

180. Ibid.

181. See Allardyce 1982.

182. See, e.g., Kitchell 1998: 1; LaFleur 2000.

183. Phinney 1989: 77.

184. See Connor 1971.

sert curricular coherence and to limit student choice. High school Latin enrollments in the US experienced modest increases,[185] and volatile college campuses returned to their formerly irenic state. This reaction to the unrest of the late 1960s seems to have been the first inkling of the academic culture wars.

Passing the Torch

If nothing else, our foray into the history of American higher education clarifies the peculiarly slight position of classical studies in the academic culture wars. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the classics ceased to serve as the foundation of the liberal arts. Effectively passing the torch to an array of other disciplines, American classicists began to promote a broader definition of the humanities. Departments of English—which did not require undergraduates to complete rigorous coursework in the classical languages—soon started to eclipse classics departments and became the standard-bearers for the humanities. Shorn of their former role as the core of liberal studies, the classics came to seem almost uniquely arcane, recondite, and useless. By the onset of the academic culture wars in the early 1980s, the humanities were overwhelmingly the preserve of English departments. Culture wars traditionalists, wistful about the Great Books courses, either proved unaware of earlier models of higher education or knowingly discarded them. Thus, for example, Charles Sykes, a conservative polemicist who contributed two books on American higher education during the period,[186] dismissed the antebellum classical curriculum as "a mummification of education" that was both "unedifying and uninspiring."[187]

Winterer has astutely noted that many historians of higher education have assimilated the views of opponents of the old classical curriculum and thus present unreliable characterizations of it that are influenced by the original jeremiads directed against the antebellum colleges.[188] This is not to suggest that the American classical colleges possessed unproblematic curricula. But our understanding of them is colored by polemical—and in many cases, unfair—descriptions. Perhaps because these educational historians lacked a classical education, their works appear hostile to the study of ancient Greek and Latin, failing to note the intellectual rationales in favor of such an approach. Thus, instead of connecting the classical curriculum to the ideals of Renaissance humanism, they tend to cast it as an exercise in antiquated snobbery and its defenders as reactionary elitists.[189] It is peculiar that historians of higher education do not offer similar conclusions about other subjects featured in the curricula of the classical colleges—for example, mathematics, Hebrew, and moral philosophy. All the same, this widespread denigration of the classical curriculum speaks to societal skepticism of the study of the ancient languages—a skepticism that could also account for the culture wars traditionalists' disregard of the antebellum college as a model, in favor of the Great Books tradition.

185. Phinney 1989: 79.
186. Sykes 1988, 1990.
187. Sykes 1990: 82–83. For a similar view, see William J. Bennett 1984: 29.
188. Winterer 2002: 3, 77, 185 n. 3.

The demise of the curriculum associated with the American classical colleges marked a profound diminution of classical studies' role in US higher education—a diminution with which the curricular conflagrations of the 1960s cannot compare.[190] The Renaissance humanists supported a vision of education based on *only one period* in the history of Western culture—Greco-Roman antiquity. The Great Books focused on *all* Western high culture. Renaissance humanists promoted the study of classical Latin and Greek as aesthetic and moral models for students; the Great Books studied texts in English translation. In comparison with the waning of the classical curriculum in the late nineteenth century, feuds between promoters of the Great Books and those who favor a system of distribution requirements seem like small potatoes. Thus, the traditionalists in the academic culture wars would have been correct to view the '60s as witnessing the greatest threat to the classics' position in American higher education. But this occurred in the 1860s, not the 1960s.

This conclusion suggests that traditionalists in the academic culture wars supported an odd assortment of notions. Such thinkers often favored the ideal of scholarly objectivity that is properly associated with the German-style research university.[191] Thus, for instance, Dinesh D'Souza lamented that much modish humanities scholarship seeks to demonstrate that "objectivity and critical detachment" are facades.[192] But culture wars traditionalists also proved critical of the minute scholarly work that became a typical product of

189. On this topic, see above.
190. See Proctor 1998: 144–45; Winterer 2002: 1, 80–81, 101. Cf. Rudolph (1978: 56), who contends that the first half of the nineteenth century amounted to the first period of major problems for Latin and Greek in American higher education. Rudolph (1962: 306) believes that the free elective system heralded the demise of classics as the mark of an educated person.
191. Bruce A. Kimball (1995) would connect this with the "philosophical" tradition of the liberal arts.
192. D'Souza 1991: 157. For other defenses of objectivity from culture wars traditionalists, see, e.g., Sykes 1988: 139–40; Clausen 1993: 16; Jerry L. Martin 1994; Goodheart 1997; Himmelfarb 1997: 145–46; Roger Kimball 2008: 4. See also Page Smith (1990: 18–19), who criticizes the (traditionalistic) National Association of Scholars's plea for a return to objectivity. In a book that anticipates many traditionalistic arguments from the culture wars, Rieff (1985: 1–4) wholeheartedly supports scholarly objectivity.

the research universities. Sykes's "bill of indictment for the professors' crimes against higher education" thus includes the charge that "too many—maybe even a vast majority—[of professors] spend their time belaboring tiny slivers of knowledge, utterly without redeeming social value except as items on their resumes."[193] Their regard for a more fixed curriculum calls to mind the classical course of study at the antebellum American colleges, but culture wars traditionalists either demonstrated no interest in such a curriculum or loathed it for its supposed elitism and irrelevance. Further, some traditionalists in the academic culture wars presented this peculiar hodgepodge of views as if it were the standard approach to Western higher education prior to the turbulence of the late 1960s.

Their antitraditionalist opponents offered a similarly jumbled series of views about American academia. These culture warriors often denounced the pretensions to scholarly objectivity associated with the research university and the professionalization of higher education but lauded the minute scholarly investigations that resulted from them. Thus, for example, as discussed in chapter 1, the authors of *Speaking for the Humanities* simultaneously defended the antifoundationalism of postmodern literary theory[194] and argued that scholarly "professionalization makes thought possible."[195]

Antitraditionalists, like their intellectual sparring partners in the academic culture wars, tended to bemoan the increasing preprofessionalism in American higher education[196] but largely supported curricular models (Eliot's free elective system or the distribution requirements scheme that sought to reform it) that had introduced preprofessionalism into the colleges and universities.[197] Many antitraditionalists labeled their opponents' views reactionary. Thus Henry Louis Gates, Jr. vituperatively (and inaccurately) suggested that Bloom and Bennett promoted the "antebellum aesthetic position."[198] But the antitraditionalist culture warriors themselves often criticized the long-standing preprofessionalism and corporatism of the American university.[199] The cultural Left's embrace of Eliot's curricular ideas during the course of the academic culture wars appears especially strange, given his theories' free-market and even Darwinian bona fides.

193. Sykes 1988: 5–6; cf. 14–18, 101–30. For compatible views from culture wars traditionalists, see, e.g., Bloom 1987: 331; Cheney 1988: 8–9, 11, 32; Page Smith 1990: 1, 6–7, 20, 130, 179, 194–95; Sykes 1990: 61.

194. George Levine et al. 1989: esp. 13 ("Theory has been the pre-condition of the re-emergence of the humanities.")

195. Ibid., 6. For a fuller discussion of this pamphlet, see chapter 1.

196. E.g., Yamane 2001: 137–41. Cf. Jacoby 1994: 17: "The invasion of the liberal arts by vocational and preprofessional studies constitutes the real illiberal education." Yamane (2001: 139–40) correctly noted the "common ground" between the two sides of the academic culture wars in their opposition to preprofessionalism in education.

197. As noted by Jacoby (1994: 94).

198. Henry Louis Gates 1992c: 89. For other examples of tough-worded criticisms from antitraditionalist culture warriors, see chapter 1.

Although traditionalists in the academic culture wars were often deemed reactionaries, the antitraditionalists in reality tended to yearn for an older curricular model for higher education than did their adversaries. The antitraditionalists esteemed primarily variations on Eliot's system (which was pioneered in the late 1860s), whereas the traditionalists venerated the Great Books—a later reaction to Eliot's reforms. Insofar as some antitraditionalists supported a distribution requirements model, they favored a curriculum, like the Great Books, that itself amounted to a reform of Eliot's system.[200] In supporting the Great Books approach, the traditionalists looked no further back than did their antitraditionalist foes.

Humanism versus the Science of Antiquity

Our survey of the history of classical studies in American higher education leads us to other conclusions. For reasons previously discussed, the ideals of Renaissance humanism—even if presented in diluted form via the Great Books—were more likely to appeal to traditionalists during the academic culture wars than to classics professors. As chapter 1 demonstrates, many (though by no means all) critics of American academia during the period had careers outside the university, chiefly in conservative think tanks or journalism. Such figures, who themselves wrote for general readers, were more skeptical of the hyperspecialization associated with the research imperative. Classical scholars in the academy, regardless of their methodological and ideological attachments, had strong professional reasons to remain less enchanted with such an outlook. Opposition to minute academic research may have been particularly unlikely to blossom among classical scholars as a result of the defining influence of the *Altertumswissenschaft* ideal on the field as a whole.[201]

199. See, e.g., Veblen 1918; Douglas 1992: 24.

200. Or, if one prefers, an internal change to the elective system by its proponents. Cf. Rudolph 1962: 304; Ben-David 1972: 64. The distribution requirements model was actually of earlier provenance than the Great Books: ca. 1905 versus 1917.

201. A group of classical scholars' responses to a question Richlin (1989: 61 62) posed to them in a survey of attitudes about the field underscores this point. Richlin asked, "Do you think studying the classics makes one a better person?" (61). Her respondents did not even take the question seriously. This helps demonstrate the disconnection between the ideals of the Renaissance humanists and those of contemporary American classics professors.

Many traditionalists in the academic culture wars possessed a very different pedigree. Irving Babbitt, a defender of Renaissance humanism and an opponent of the research imperative, had a formative influence on T. S. Eliot, who studied under Babbitt at Harvard. Eliot, the founder of the British literary journal *The Criterion*, served as the chief inspiration for Hilton Kramer and Samuel Lipman's *New Criterion*, which was a major source for traditionalist ruminations in the academic culture wars. In addition to the pedagogical musings of Kramer, the *New Criterion* featured traditionalist polemics from the likes of Roger Kimball (then the journal's managing editor), Christopher Ricks, and James Tuttleton.[202] Links thus existed among Renaissance humanism, the New Humanism, and traditionalist arguments in the academic culture wars. The traditionalists consequently esteemed Matthew Arnold, whose views also speak to a connection with humanism and a rhetorical approach to the liberal arts ideal.[203] Since their views on higher education came refracted through the Great Books, however, the traditionalists in the academic culture wars dismissed, or demonstrated no knowledge of, the importance of the classical languages to the liberal arts. Their brand of neohumanism, steeped in Hutchins's support for reading the masterworks of Western literature in English translation, remained disconnected from the pedagogical ideals of Renaissance humanism they otherwise championed.

This helps explain the near irrelevance of classical studies to the feuds that took place during the academic culture wars. But how did classics fare in this period? How were its disputes characterized? The next few chapters examine major controversies in American classical studies, to determine the relationship between them and the broader intellectual disputes of the culture wars.

202. For traditionalist contributions to the academic culture wars in the *New Criterion*, see, e.g., Abowitz 1989; Ricks 1989; Kramer 1990, 1995; Roger Kimball 1991a, b, 1996b; Teachout 1995; Tuttleton 1995.

203. See, e.g., Proctor 1998: 104–8.

Classics, the Culture Wars, and Beyond

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