

Receptions and Comparatists: Temporalities

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Comparing ancient and modern literature

‘Why ought history to be divided into Eastern and Western rather than into Ancient and Modern?’
(Law and Modern History Final Honour Schools exam question,
University of Oxford, Easter 1864)

Summary of argument (with Roman numerals referring to sections below, if you want to look at the supporting evidence): [I] Scholars exploring the history of Comparative Literature have taken either a narrow view (looking at works or courses that use that term) or a broad view (looking at the longer history of literary comparisons). Among the former, many have noted the Classics background of H.M. Posnett, author of one of the first major works on the topic. Less discussed by the latter is the role of comparisons with English literature within the study and teaching of classical literature. [II] This paper looks at some comments on the contrasts between ancient and modern literature in an influential work of ancient history, A.E. Zimmern’s *The Greek Commonwealth* (1911); notes similar observations by some nineteenth-century critics; and [III] roots Zimmern’s method in the *Literae Humaniores* course at Oxford, which foregrounded contrasts between the ancient and the modern. [IV] The paper then briefly examines other ways of linking classical and English literature in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods: the study of influences (including the influence of the modern on understanding of the ancient) and of similar literary phenomena at parallel evolutionary steps; and in relation to the latter [V] considers how Zimmern hypothesizes workers’ songs in ancient Greece similar to those attested for modern Sri Lanka. It concludes with some points of comparison and contrast with the positions of Classics and Comparative Literature in contemporary academia.

[Some institutional background:¹ with the new BA structure established at Oxford in 1800, *Literae Humaniores* and Mathematics & Physics were the only two courses; Lit. Hum. was required for the BA until the 1860s. English was first examined as a Final Honour School in 1896 (a Shakespeare paper had been available in the Pass School since 1873); ‘with the object of connecting ancient and modern literature’ (*Student Handbook* 1906, 193), passing Classics Mods (or another FHS) was initially a prerequisite for the English FHS. The Board of Studies in English, founded in 1894, included the Regius Professor of Greek and the Corpus Professor of Latin as *ex officio* members, as well as eight members chosen by the electors of the Lit. Hum. and Modern History Boards; in reforms agreed in 1911, the board was abolished in this form, and English was included in the new Mediaeval and Modern Languages and Literature Faculty. A paper on classical literature (studied in the original) was compulsory in the First Public Examination in English until 1969; one in translation was available as an option until 2012. The Classics & English course admitted its first students in 1988, with compulsory ‘link’ papers.]

I. History of comparative literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: H.M. Posnett,² *Comparative Literature* (London, 1886), with E. Shaffer, ‘Comparative Literature

¹ See e.g. D.J. Palmer, *The Rise of English Studies: An Account of the Study of English Language and Literature from its Origins to the Making of the Oxford English School* (London, 1965).

² H.M. Posnett (1855–1927): student and tutor at Trinity College Dublin; Professor of Classics and English Literature, University College, Auckland, 1885–1890; barrister; author, besides *Comparative Literature*, of

in Britain', *Comparative Criticism: A Yearbook* 1 (1979) ix-xix; D. Damrosch, 'Rebirth of a discipline: the global origins of Comparative Studies', *Comparative Critical Studies* 3 (2006) 99–112; N. Melas, *All the Difference in the World: Postcoloniality and the Ends of Comparison* (Stanford, 2006) esp. 20–6; J. Leerssen, 'Comparing what, precisely? H.M. Posnett and the conceptual history of "Comparative Literature"', *Comparative Critical Studies* 12 (2015) 197–212; A. Nicholls, 'The "Goethean" discourses on *Weltliteratur* and the origins of Comparative Literature: the cases of Hugo Meltzl and Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett', *Seminar* 54 (2018) 167–94; B. Zabel, 'Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett, World Literature, and the colonial comparisons', *Journal of World Literature* 4 (2019) 330–49. For the relevance of Goethe's philhellenism for his conceptualization of *Weltliteratur* see M. Umachandran, 'The world in Auerbach's mouth: *Weltliteratur* after philhellenism', *Classical Receptions Journal* 11 (2019) 427–52. In general, J. Leerssen, *Comparative Literature in Britain: National Identities, Transnational Dynamics 1800-2000* (Cambridge, 2019). Earlier manifestations of the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns are much discussed: see e.g. L.F. Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient: Literature and History in Early Modern France* (Chicago, 2011).

II. Some of the contrasts in the temporalities of ancient [i.e. Greco-Roman] and modern [i.e. Northern European] literature noted by A.E. Zimmern,³ *The Greek Commonwealth: Politics and Economics in Fifth-Century Athens* (Oxford, 5th edn, 1961; orig. pub. 1911):⁴

a) The poetry of nature:

'the Greek poets who have come down to us seldom pause to describe the scenery of their country, and are never detailed or Wordsworthian in their treatment of it. Landscape poetry, like landscape painting, belongs to the reflective period in a nation's life, when it has learnt to see itself in its own surroundings. Greek writers, at least up to the end of the fifth century, had not yet fully entered upon this stage of self-consciousness. Like all simple folk, they take a knowledge of their scenery and surroundings for granted in all who listen to them.' (19–20)

For similar explanations of Greek descriptions of natural scenery, cf. e.g. F. Schiller, 'On naïve and sentimental poetry', in H.B. Nisbet (ed.), *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Winckelmann, Lessing, Hamann, Herder, Schiller, Goethe* (Cambridge, 1985) 179–232, at e.g. 190; Posnett, *Comparative Literature*, 53–6.

b) Ritual and the tragic plot:

'To us these long-drawn ritual scenes and weird half-savage plots, of which Sophocles especially was so fond, sometimes seem ... tedious and even slightly absurd. It is our want of imagination. Orestes and Electra exchanging alternate invocations at the barrow of Agamemnon, Teucer wrangling with kings to secure burial for his brother Ajax, and that last

Historical Method in Ethics, Jurisprudence, and Political Economy (1882) and *The Ricardian Theory of Rent* (1884).

³ A.E. Zimmern (1879–1957): Winchester College; Lit. Hum., New College, Oxford (first class, 1902); Fellow in Ancient History, New College, 1904–1909; Lecturer in Sociology, LSE, 1910–1911; Board of Education, 1912–1915; Woodrow Wilson Professor of International Politics, Aberystwyth, 1919–1921; Montague Burton Professor of International Relations, Oxford, 1930–1944; knighted 1936.

⁴ Other comparisons at 56 ('The Greek peasant understood and enjoyed the plays of Euripides (which were as deep as Ibsen and as delicate as Galsworthy), but he had never thought of so simple a contrivance as a windmill': 1911 edn only – the comparative, and rather clichéd, parenthesis was removed from the second edition onwards); 102 with n. 1 (Herodotus and the detective story); 220-1 (ancient vs modern utopias, drawing on the ancient/modern comparisons in H.G. Wells' 1905 *A Modern Utopia*): cf. III.d.4); 225 n. 1 (ancient spiritual vs modern material causes of literary change).

almost unbearable scene between the child-murderess Medea and her childless husband – these do not yield their full meaning until we understand something of the old patriarchal world into which they transported their audience’ (73–4), with 74 n.: ‘... Aesch. *Choeph.* 315 ff.; Soph. *Ajax* 866 (where a modern play would end) to 1419 ...’.

For this view of *Ajax*, cf. R. Potter (trans.), *The Tragedies of Sophocles* (Oxford, 1808) 239: ‘With the death of Ajax, according to modern ideas, the drama should end; but the injuries offered to him, and the afflictions of his friends had not yet. We know that to be deprived of the rites of sepulture was to the ancients more terrible than death itself’; R. Jebb (ed.), *Sophocles: Ajax* (Cambridge, 1896) p. xxviii: ‘A reader is apt to feel that, with the suicide of Ajax, the principal interest has disappeared. Modern criticism has suggested various apologies for the latter part of the play ...’; p. xliv on Bergk’s suspicion that ‘the latter part of the play is by an inferior poet ... and has been tacked on to an early play of Sophocles, which stopped, or was left unfinished, at the death of Ajax’.

c) War and sport:

‘Modern readers sometimes wonder why Thucydides and Xenophon deluge them with campaign details; they are apt to resent or to smile at the childish particulars which these grave historians are at such pains to narrate. They should recall the conversations to which they have listened, or perhaps contributed, in smoking-rooms and quadrangles and pavilions, on yorkers and niblicks and ebenezers, on extra covers and wing three-quarters, and ask how much of it would be intelligible, however beautifully written out, to an inquiring posterity which had turned to other pastimes. War was as natural a part of Greek city life as games and recreations are of our own’ (345–6). Cf. 347 on Greek generals ‘whiling away the last uncomfortable half-hour before play begins with such appropriate arguments and exhortations as rowing and football captains know’ (cf. no. 3 below).

Cf. comparative modern representations of sport via the ancient historiography of war:

1. Rowing, cricket, floggings in Thucydidean Greek: T.K. Selwyn, *Eton in 1829–1830: A Diary of Boating and Other Events Written in Greek*, ed. and trans. E. Warre (London, 1903), with review in *Oxford Magazine* 22 (1903–4) 303: ‘Would a public schoolboy at the present day write a diary of his aquatics in Thucydidean Greek ...? Assuredly not.’⁵
2. Rowing pastiche in Thucydidean English: C.,⁶ ‘How Thucydides went to the Trials’, *Oxford Magazine* 5 (19 January 1887) 14 (re-printed with attribution in *Echoes from the Oxford Magazine: Being Reprints of Seven Years* (Oxford, 1890) 126–30).
3. Cricket captain’s pre-match speech in Thucydidean English: R.Y. Tyrrell, ‘A short essay in discipleship: Thucydides’, *Kottabos* [Trinity College Dublin magazine] n.s. 1 (1891) 31–2 (re-printed in id. and E. Sullivan (eds), *Echoes from Kottabos* (London, 1906) 304–5).
4. Spectating the house match: J.E.C. Welldon, *Gerald Eversley’s Friendship: A Study in Real Life* (London, 1895) 163 (‘It would need the pen of a Thucydides depicting the scene in the great harbour at Syracuse to convey an idea of the conflicting emotions and expressions and the energetic actions by which the partisans of one house or the other testify their own vivid interest in the match’).

⁵ Zimmern edited the *Oxford Magazine* in 1903–4.

⁶ I.e. C.E. Montague (1867–1928): City of London School; Lit. Hum., Balliol College, Oxford (second class, 1889); notable *Manchester Guardian* journalist (and son-in-law of C.P. Scott); author of novels and critical writings, e.g. *Disenchantment* (1922, on the First World War).

5. Golf narrative in Herodotean Greek featuring the ancient historian G.B. Grundy: Anon. [A.D. Godley?], ‘Recently Discovered Fragment of Herodotus, Book X’, *Oxford Magazine* 23 (1904–5) 249.

F. von Schlegel, *Lectures on the History of Literature, Ancient and Modern*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1818; Germ. orig. 1815) 1.51–2, offers a different explanation of the supposed modern distaste for battle narratives (decline of rhetorical culture; too many facts now): ‘The relations of society among us are totally of another sort from what they were in the republics of antiquity, and oratory exerts no longer over mankind that imperative and often destructive influence which it formerly possessed. Above all, such is the effect of that immense storehouse of facts which we have it in our power to review in the collected history of the world, that we have lost all taste for minute and poetical descriptions of battles, sieges, and other external incidents.’

III. The institutional background: ancient and modern in the Oxford Classics course:

a) Some comparative questions from *Palaestra Oxoniensis: Questions and Exercises for Classical Scholarships. Second Division* (Oxford, 1879) [a compendium of questions set for schoolboys in college scholarship examinations]:

1. ‘Can any ancient author be said to have had a strong sense of the beauty of nature, or is the feeling wholly modern?’ (3)
2. ‘What reasons would you give for the modern love of natural scenery? Contrast the ancient and modern feeling on this point.’ (27)
3. ‘Compare any play of a Greek tragic poet with a play of Shakespeare.’ (30)
4. ‘What is the essential difference between an ancient tragedy and a modern oratorio, or between an ancient and a modern comedy?’ (78)
5. ‘Compare the characters of Clytæmnestra in the “Agamemnon” and Lady Macbeth, or those of the Œdipus of Sophocles and King Lear.’ (78)

b) R.W. Livingstone,⁷ *A Defence of Classical Education* (London, 1916) 267–8 contrasts ‘modern’, ‘living’ comparative exam questions with ‘dead’, knowledge-focused ones: ‘We can always detect the teacher who is not a “modern man” by looking at the examination papers which he sets. Here are two examination papers on Greek drama (the questions in both have been set in Honour Classical Moderations at Oxford).

The first paper.

1. In what ways was the history of Greek Drama affected by (a) Sicyon, (b) Sicily?
2. What different views have been held as to the origin of the names tragedy and comedy?
3. Compare Sophocles and Euripides in their treatment of (a) prologue, (b) chorus, (c) *deus ex machina*.
4. What do you know of the new comedy, its origin and development?
5. What are the main views held as to the construction of the stage and orchestra?
6. Explain the following terms: οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον, κ.τ.λ. [“nothing to do with Dionysus”, etc.]

This is a “dead” paper. A student ought, indeed, to be able to answer its questions, and some of these or similar questions ought to be in every examination paper on the subject, in order to test knowledge. But no paper should consist entirely of them, and the teacher who set it

⁷ R.W. Livingstone (1880–1960): Winchester College; Lit. Hum., New College, Oxford (first class, 1903); Fellow in Classics, Corpus Christi College, Oxford (1904–1924); Vice-Chancellor, Queen’s University Belfast (1924–1933); President, Corpus Christi College (1933–1950); knighted 1931.

betrays himself. Who would guess from it that Greek drama, like all other, is a portraiture of human life by human beings, with lessons and models for a human world? Who would suspect that it is a living thing, and not a long-dead specimen bottled in a museum for the inspection of the curious? Now compare it with the second paper:

1. "There is no morbid pathology in Greek Tragedy." Discuss.
2. Which of the three dramatists is the best moral educator?
3. Arrange the plot of Hamlet as a typical Greek tragedy, and suggest how Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides would have differed in their treatment of it.
4. Which of your plays do you consider the best acting play, and why?
5. "The essentially tragic fact is not so much the war of good with evil as the war of good with good." Compare this with the Aristotelian view of tragedy.
6. What would be the views of Aristotle on either Shakespeare's historical plays or Wordsworth's theory of poetical diction?

Whatever faults this paper may have (it ignores too much the formal aspects of Greek tragedy, to which the first paper entirely confined itself), it is at any rate living, and betrays a teacher who is "a mediator between the great geniuses and the genius which is coming to be, between the great past and the future".'

Note: The 'first paper' is that set for *Aristotle's Poetics and the History of Greek Drama* in 1908; the 'second paper' is a selection from later papers. The quotation 'There is no morbid pathology in Greek Tragedy' is taken from Livingstone himself (*The Greek Genius and its Meaning to Us* (Oxford, 1912) 167). The closing quotation 'a mediator ...' is translated from F. Nietzsche, *Philologica: Gedrucktes und Ungedrucktes aus den Jahren 1866-1877*, ed. E. Holzer (*Nietzsche's Werke*, vol. 17; Leipzig, 1910) 1.332 (from 'Einleitung in das Studium der classischen Philologie', 1871); the phrase 'modern man' in the first sentence picks up a quotation on the previous page from the same lecture by Nietzsche ('The greatest help to becoming receptive of antiquity is, to be a modern man, and genuinely united with the great moderns', *Philologica*, 1.333).⁸

c) Some comparative examination questions in Honour Moderations in Greek and Latin Literature, University of Oxford (1 from *General Paper*; 2–5 from *Aristotle's Poetics and the History of Greek Drama*):

1. 'Contrast the classical and modern feeling as to the appreciation of natural scenery.' (Trinity Term 1873)
2. 'Enumerate briefly the chief points of difference between Ancient and Modern Drama.' (Trinity Term 1873)
3. 'What does Aristotle say as to the relative importance in a play of the characters and of the plot? Compare any one Greek poet with Shakspeare in this respect.' (Michaelmas Term 1877)
4. "'The spirit of ancient art and poetry is plastic, but that of the moderns picturesque.'"⁹ Explain and criticise this statement.' (Hilary Term 1894)
5. 'Give shortly the plot of one of Aeschylus' plays, and show (a) how it would be or has been modified by Sophocles; (b) in what respects it would be presented differently by a modern dramatist.' (Hilary Term 1899)

⁸ The lecture material is more fully published in 'Encyclopädie der klassischen Philologie und Einleitung in das Studium derselben', in F. Nietzsche, *Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. G. Colli and M. Montinari (Berlin, 1967–2006), II.3, 341–437 (368 for the passages Livingstone quotes).

⁹ Quotation from A.W. Schlegel, *A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* (London, 1861) 22.

Cf. Oscar Wilde's *Mods viva* in 1876 (I. Ross, *Oscar Wilde and Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 2013) 37): "...we talked of Shakespeare, Walt Whitman and the Poetics. He [the examiner] had a long discussion about my essay on Poetry in the Aristotle paper and altogether was delightful." The reference to his "essay on poetry in the Aristotle paper" indicates that he answered the question: "What account do you gather that Aristotle would have given of the nature and office of Poetry? Compare any later definitions of Poetry with that which in your opinion he would have drawn, and explain his point of view."¹⁰

d) Comparative university prize essay questions: e.g. for the Chancellor's English Essay:

1. In what Arts have the Moderns excelled the Ancient? (1787)
2. On the Characteristics Differences between Ancient and Modern Poetry, and the several causes from which they result. (1789)
3. In what Arts have the Moderns been less successful than the Ancients? (1810)
4. Utopias, Ancient and Modern. (1875) [cf. note 4 above]
5. Comparison of Ancient and Modern Political Oratory. (1889)
6. Letter-Writing as a form of Literature in Ancient and Modern Times. (1895)

For similar comparative questions, see A. Lawrie, *The Beginnings of University English: Extramural Study, 1885-1910* (Basingstoke, 2014) 53 (G. Saintsbury in Edinburgh), 68 (J.C. Collins' university extension classes); cf. further below on Collins.

IV. Other late Victorian/Edwardian ways of linking classical and English literature:

a) The ancient influences the modern: see e.g. most of the contributions to G.S. Gordon¹¹ (ed.), *English Literature and the Classics* (Oxford, 1912) – a collection of lectures delivered in Oxford in Michaelmas Term 1911 at the suggestion of the Board of Studies in English Languages and Literature. Cf. the initial requirement that almost all students taking the English FHS pass Classics Mods (above). Prior to the creation of the English degree, from the 1880s on, J.C. Collins¹² pushed for a degree at Oxford spanning ancient and modern literature, pointing to lines of influence as well as drawing contrasts: see e.g. *The Study of English Literature: A Plea for its Recognition and Organization at the Universities* (London, 1891), which proposes a paper *The Comparative Study of English and Ancient Classical Literature* (see 154–5 for sample questions, e.g. 'Point out the influence which Pindar has had on English Poetry. How far are our so-called Pindarique Odes, and how far are Gray's two Odes, "Pindaric"?'; cf. 49–50) and (as title for a thesis) the A.W. Schlegel quotation cited III.c.4 above. The *Pall Mall Gazette* in November–December 1886 published a series of answers by distinguished figures to questions posed by Collins about an English course at

¹⁰ Cf. W. Shuter, 'Pater, Wilde, Douglas and the Impact of "Greats"', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 46 (2003) 250–78, at 250, with 255 for sample examination questions, largely from the *Moral and Political Philosophy* paper. Wilde was influenced by John Addington Symonds (Balliol College; Lit. Hum., first class, 1862), whose *Studies of the Greek Poets*, 2 vols (London, 1873–6) includes e.g. a comparative 'Ancient and Modern Tragedy' chapter (1.276–301). For Wilde's comparatism, see S. Evangelista, *Literary Cosmopolitanism in the English Fin de Siècle: Citizens of Nowhere* (Oxford, 2021) 32–71 (with 52–4 on Symonds).

¹¹ G.S. Gordon (1881–1942): Falkirk High School; Classics MA, Glasgow 1903; Lit. Hum., Oriel College, Oxford (first class, 1906); Fellow (1907–1915) and President (1928–1942) of Magdalen College, Oxford; Professor of English Literature, University of Leeds, 1913–1922; Merton Professor of English Literature, Oxford, 1922–1928; Professor of Poetry, 1933–1938; Vice-Chancellor, University of Oxford, 1938–1941.

¹² J.C. Collins (1848–1908): King Edward's School, Birmingham; Classics Mods (third class, 1870) and Law and Modern History (second class, 1872), Balliol College, Oxford; prolific literary journalist; Professor of English Literature, Birmingham University, 1904–1908.

Oxford, among them ‘Was it desirable that the study of English Literature should be indissolubly associated with the study of ancient Classical Literature?’. Water Pater replied: ‘much probably might be done for the expansion and enlivening of classical study itself by a larger infusion into it of those literary interests which modern literature, in particular, has developed’ (27 Nov. 1886, p. 1).

b) The modern illustrates the ancient: T.H. Warren,¹³ *Essays of Poetry* (London, 1909) 288–9: ‘the rise of new modern types often makes us understand and value the ancient more fully. Molière long ago taught the world a larger appreciation of Plautus and Terence. Racine and Goethe illustrate Sophocles. Lady Macbeth and King Lear render Clytemnestra and Ædipus more intelligible.¹⁴ Tennyson helps us to appreciate Virgil, and Ruskin reflects light on Plato. It may even be said that Ibsen has brought out with new force the realism in Euripides.’¹⁵ Cf./contrast Collins, *Study of English Literature*, 11: ‘The best commentary on Shakespeare is Sophocles, as the best commentary on Burke is Cicero’; 89: ‘Aristotle contributes as importantly to the elucidation of Shakespeare, as Shakespeare contributes to the elucidation of Aristotle.’ Also T.S. Eliot’s famous 1919 formulation: ‘Whoever has approved this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature, will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past’ (‘Tradition and the individual talent’, re-printed in *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (London, 1920) 45).

c) Comparative studies of works produced at supposedly similar stages of social development: e.g. J.W. Duff, ‘Homer and Beowulf: a literary parallel’, *Saga-Book of the Viking Club* 4 (1904–5) 382–406; H.M. Chadwick, *The Heroic Age* (Cambridge, 1912) (published in the Cambridge Archaeological and Ethnological Series). Cf. Posnett’s comparative approach to clan poetry.

V. Comparison between ancient Greece and the pre-industrial modern East hypothesized by Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth*, 260 n. (reflecting the same anxieties over modernity that inform his ancient–modern comparisons):

‘It is unfortunate that Greek craftsmen speak to us only through their works. They have left us none of the songs which they surely used to sing over their tools. All we have is three lines of an old mill-catch:

Grind, mill, grind.
For Pittacus did grind
Who was king over great Mytilene.

(*Anth. Lyr. ‘Carmina Popularia’* 46.) (Compare the song of the well-diggers in Numbers xxi. 17–18.) There is nothing like the beautiful Ceylon potters’ song, quoted in Wallas, *The Great Society*, pp. 346–7,¹⁶ which takes the worker through every stage and process of his beloved work.’

¹³ T.H. Warren (1853–1930): Clifton College; Lit. Hum., Balliol College, Oxford (first class, 1876); Fellow (1878–1885) and President (1885–1928) of Magdalen College, Oxford; Vice-Chancellor, University of Oxford, 1906–1910; Professor of Poetry, 1911–1916; Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, 1914.

¹⁴ Cf. comparative *Macbeth/Agamemnon* questions at III.a.5 above and Collins, *Study of English Literature*, 49.

¹⁵ Cf. n. 4 above.

¹⁶ The reference to Wallas’ 1914 book was added by Zimmern in the second (1915) edition of *The Greek Commonwealth*.

Zimmern is referring to a song translated by A.K. Coomaraswamy,¹⁷ ‘Sinhalese earthenware’, *Spolia Zeylanica* 4 (1906–7) 135–42, at 137–9, and id., *Mediæval Sinhalese Art: Being a Monograph on Mediæval Sinhalese Arts and Crafts, Mainly as Surviving in the Eighteenth Century, with an Account of the Structure of Society and the Status of the Craftsmen* (Broad Campden, 1908) 229–31. For the trope (‘anachronistic survivals’), see T. Rood, C. Attack, and T. Phillips, *Anachronism and Antiquity* (London, 2020) 119–43.

Cf. the analogies between ancient Greece and the contemporary Near East drawn by Zimmern, *Greek Commonwealth*, 62 (‘All this has an important influence on Greek political life. Fellowship means Equality, not the fictitious Equality which has served as a watchword for Western Republics, but the inbred feeling which has always found a home, in common needs and common intercourse, at the springs and the well-heads, the cross-roads and market-places, the temples, shrines, and mosques, of the Near East. There was more true equality in Turkey under Abdul Hamid than in the United States under Roosevelt’); also e.g. 216, 225, 226, 267–8, 296.

Contrast the strong use of the East-West antithesis by E.A. Freeman,¹⁸ whose *Comparative Politics* (London, 1873) inspired Posnett’s title (‘The Science of Comparative Literature’, *Contemporary Review* 79 (1901), 855–872, at 856) and was cited by C.C. Shackford in an 1870s lecture at Cornell on ‘Comparative Literature’ (*Proceedings of the University Convocation* (Albany, 1876) 266–74, at 266¹⁹); and whose view of the unity of history was cited by supporters of a unified Classics–English literary course (Collins, *The Study of English Literature*, 94, 109) – though Freeman himself was famously hostile to the study of literature at University (‘chatter about Shelley’).

¹⁷ A.K. Coomaraswamy (1877–1947): born in Colombo; moved to Britain 1879; BSc, University College London (first class, 1900); Keeper of Indian Art, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 1917–1947; author of numerous works on Indian art, metaphysics (Buddhism, Hinduism, Platonism), and society.

¹⁸ E.A. Freeman (1823–1892): Lit. Hum., Trinity College, Oxford (second class, 1845); Regius Professor of Modern History, Oxford, 1884–1892. Examiner in Law and Modern History in 1864, when the exam question quoted as epigraph above was set (surely by Freeman himself). See e.g. V. Morrisroe, ‘“Eastern History with Western Eyes”: E.A. Freeman, Islam, and Orientalism’, *Journal of Victorian Culture* 16 (2011) 25–45.

¹⁹ Re-printed in H.-J. Schulz and P.H. Rhein (eds), *Comparative Literature: The Early Years. An Anthology of Essays* (Chapel Hill, 1973) 42–51. The date the editors offer for Shackford’s lecture on p. 41 (1871) is disproved by the Freeman citation (an 1872 lecture, re-printed in the 1873 book).