

HUGH LLOYD-JONES

**PAUL MAAS (1880–1964) \***

I first met Ernst Vogt more than thirty years ago in Oxford, in the lodgings of Paul Maas, who had taken great pleasure in his excellent edition of the hymns of Proclus. That has given me the idea of offering him a few memories of that highly memorable scholar. I wrote an obituary notice of Maas (*Gnomon* 37, 1965, 219-221) and reviewed his *Kleine Schriften* (*Classical Review* 25, 1975, 138-140); but these will be simply personal reminiscences, which make no pretence of being a contribution to the history of scholarship.

I first heard the name of Paul Maas during one of the famous seminars on Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* conducted by Eduard Fraenkel, then engaged on his great edition of that play, and at once realised that it was a name to conjure with. It is difficult to convey to people who did not attend these seminars the nature of the excitement, blended with terror, that they caused. They introduced us to a world of high scholarship of which we had previously had no notion, and we learned with awe the names of the famous men who inhabited that world. Readers of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* – since I have heard that it is a popular book in Germany, perhaps I may permit myself this illustration – will remember how the reader becomes aware of the villainous career of the pirate captain Flint, and one by one learns the names and characters of the various members of his crew – Black Dog, Billy Bones, the terrifying blind man Pew, the gunner Israel Hands, and, most to be feared of all, the man with one leg, who turns out to be Long John Silver. Something of the same mixture of awe and admiration attached to the process by which we ignorant young English persons gradually learned the names of the distinguished group of scholars which had centred upon Wilamowitz in his later years. Flint, Stevenson's readers will recall, had long since died of rum at Savannah, but numerous members of his company were still living, and turned out to be near at hand. Just so we discovered that a number of the disciples of Wilamowitz were not only still living, but were actually in Oxford. A few, like Rudolf Pfeiffer and Paul Jacobsthal, were actually teaching in the university; others, like Felix Jacoby and Paul Maas, were harder to locate. I learned from Fraenkel that Paul Maas' works on textual criticism, Greek metre and Greek

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palaeography were the best available guides to the understanding of these subjects. They were inaccessible to me, because of my ignorance of German; but Fraenkel often quoted them and other works of Maas, and someone told me that in consequence of a review by Maas (DLZ 50, 1929, 2244-2247 = *Kl. Schr.* 588-590) Fraenkel had lost belief in the main contentions of his book *Iktus und Akzent*. But it was a long time before I found out that Maas was still active and was living in Oxford. This happened simply because Maas happened to be lodging with the parents of a school-friend of my sister, the learned jurist Fritz Schulz and his wife. But I did not dare to take advantage of this opportunity to become acquainted with the famous man, who remained a figure of mystery to me throughout an undergraduate career which began in 1940, was interrupted at the end of 1941 by military service, was resumed early in 1946 and ended in 1948.

In that year, the year of my appointment to a post at Cambridge, I met Maas for the first time, being introduced to him not by any of the classical scholars whom I knew, but by the last among my acquaintances who I should have suspected might have any contact with him. Anthony de Hoghton – later he inherited his father's baronetcy and became Sir Anthony – came of an old and distinguished Catholic family in the North of England. He had considerable intelligence and feeling for literature, but these qualities were combined with others which made him very like one's idea of a Regency buck, that is to say, a dashing and dissolute young nobleman of the time when the future George IV acted as Regent during the madness of his father George III. This had already involved him in several incidents which brought him a certain notoriety; for example, he published in an undergraduate magazine at Cambridge a blasphemous poem which was regarded as a personal attack upon the Deity, and this for a few days made front-page news.

De Hoghton casually asked me if I knew the name of Maas, and having noticed that I seemed greatly impressed at his knowing such a person, he invited both Maas and me to his rooms in Beaumont Street to drink a glass of wine. He had become acquainted with Maas because the latter too was then living in that street, which visitors to Oxford may remember as containing both the Randolph Hotel and the Ashmolean Museum. The wine De Hoghton provided was a particularly delicious hock – that is our name for all Rhenish wine, Queen Victoria's favourite having been Hochheimer –, and Maas slowly savoured a single glass of it, while remarking that a wine like this did a great deal for him. I was reminded of Goethe's ballad *Der Sänger*.

The best photograph of Maas is the one published in his *Kleine Schriften*; he was a small man, slight in build, with a high forehead, sharply chiselled features, and piercing gray eyes. He liked to wear an open-necked shirt, believing this to be the healthiest mode of dress, and did so in all weathers; he cut an unusual figure as he darted along the streets of Oxford on the bicycle that was his favourite mode of transport.

Although from 1948 to 1954 I taught at Cambridge, my mother had a house in Oxford, so that I was lucky enough to see a good deal of Maas, and I saw even

more after I had been appointed to a post in Oxford in 1954. He had often changed his lodgings, but for most of this period he lived in Norham Road, in a house belonging to Rudolf Barer, the well-known authority on microscopy. «Tell me», said Barer to me one day, «does the Professor manage to be altogether up-to-date?» – «In our subject», I replied, «you can't be quite as up-to-date as he is if you are much younger than he is.» Maas' employment as an adviser to the University Press meant that he had to deal with a succession of rapidly changing tasks, and in consequence he did not take in hand any large project, but produced a steady stream of articles, notes and reviews, never long but always rich in content. Many people consulted him, and he maintained an extensive correspondence with scholars in various countries often replying to letters on large, floppy postcards on which he was able to crowd information with which another scholar might have filled many pages; I learned much simply from sitting with him while he drafted his correspondence. Maas would return a civil answer to persons with whom, considering the past, he might well have declined any dealings. Many scholars visited him, some having come to Oxford specially to consult him; I can remember meeting in his rooms F. Halkin, H. Fränkel, R. Keydell, R. Merkelbach and others, as well as scholars I had also met elsewhere. Maas never taught in the university, and was seldom seen in any college common-room; but to any scholar who sought him out, he was unfailingly courteous and helpful.

Maas once unexpectedly turned up at my rooms in Cambridge; he had come over to discuss with A.S.F. Gow problems arising from the Oxford text of the Greek bucolic poets which Gow was then about to publish. Even in freezing weather I had never seen him wear an overcoat, and Gilbert Murray in a broadcast talk about learned refugees had spoken of one of them as having no such thing, naming no names, but clearly having Maas in mind. But now he was wearing a splendid old-fashioned overcoat with fur cuffs and collar, looking as if it had originated in Germany before 1914. I ventured to ask Maas why he wore his coat, although the weather was mild, and he told me that he judged it proper, since he planned to attend a meeting of the Cambridge Philological Society. Together we set off to this meeting, at which Otto Skutsch was to read a paper on the Soldiers' Chorus in Ennius' *Iphigeneia* (195f. Jocelyn). Maas sat next to me, and during the talk delivered in a very loud whisper a criticism of the paper, which when the discussion started he instructed me to communicate to the company. I suggested that it would be better if he did this himself, but Maas insisted that he was not a member of the society but I was, so that the criticism would have to come from me, and I reluctantly obeyed, not that anybody doubted who was its real author. After the meeting Maas invited Skutsch and me to accompany him back to Trinity College, where he was spending the night as Gow's guest. He was occupying a splendid guest-room, regularly occupied by the judge when he came to Cambridge for the assizes, for whose edification it contained a huge Bible; it had also been occupied by Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, whose arms decorated the vast bed. In these grand surroundings the three of us had a delightful philological

discussion, which was interrupted when someone mentioned Bentley. Maas asked Skutsch if he had seen Bentley's tombstone in the college chapel, and when Skutsch replied that he had not, carried us both off to see it, brushing aside Skutsch's plea that he had a train to catch. A service was taking place in the chapel, but that did not restrain Maas in his search for the tombstone. The search was not easy, for the Fellows whom Bentley had so persecuted had put it in an obscure place, besides refusing to allow the inscription on the stone to mention that Bentley had been Master of the college. But in the end Maas found it, interposing himself between the clergyman and the choir in a way they may have found somewhat disconcerting; I never remembered to ask Skutsch whether he caught his train.

During another visit to Cambridge Maas stayed with me in Jesus College. The triennial congress held by the English classical societies was being held there, and was being attended by the eminent Swedish scholars Einar Löfstedt and Albert Wifstrand, old acquaintances whom he was keen to see again. There were certain English things and practices which Maas liked to recommend to newcomers to England; one of these was the habit of eating porridge for one's breakfast. The porridge provided in the hall of Jesus College was of a particularly thick and glutinous kind, by no means popular with the undergraduates, and when Maas asked for a second helping of it the butler's jaw dropped; he told me that this was the first time such a thing had happened in his long experience.

I was present at the first meeting between Maas and Löfstedt. Löfstedt was then extremely old; his skin resembled the thinnest brown parchment, and he had the air of an immensely ancient and revered Chinese idol. He asked Maas what he was working on, and was told that it was the early medieval text *De rebus bellicis*; this was because the Oxford Press was about to publish E.A. Thompson's edition of that work. «Ah!», said Löfstedt, «there is an edition of that book in the Teubner medieval series, is there not?» Maas replied that he knew of no such edition, but Löfstedt courteously reaffirmed his belief in its existence. As we walked away, Maas asked if I were personally acquainted with the Librarian of the University. Fortunately I was, since H.R. Creswick was my colleague as a Fellow of Jesus College, and Maas asked me to go and see Creswick and ask him to find out whether the Teubner *De rebus bellicis* existed. Creswick conducted me among the Cyclopes of the catalogue room, where every conceivable bibliographical aid seemed to be available, and they established that no such text existed.

I returned to college and reported this to Maas, but he then handed me a note from Löfstedt containing his surrender. This story shows that he liked to win an argument; but it also illustrates a marked feature of his character, his absolute concentration on whatever academic problem had engaged his attention. For him academic, and particularly textual problems, were of great importance, and he spared no pains to find out the answers to them.

Feeling that something should be done to honour Maas on his seventy-fifth birthday, I organised a lunch in his honour at Corpus Christi College, on 18

November, 1955. The friend whose presence it was most important to make sure of was Professor Gilbert Murray, then eighty-nine years of age, who had known Maas since 1909. Staying at a Swiss resort for winter sports, Maas had noticed a well-brought-up English girl, always accompanied by a Nanny carrying a Liddell and Scott. This was Murray's elder daughter Rosalind, afterwards the wife of Arnold Toynbee; when Maas introduced himself as a professor of Greek, she told him that her father too was one, and invited him to stay with the family when he came to England. Maas duly stayed with the Murrays in the Woodstock Road in Oxford, and ever since then they had kept in touch. Murray replied to the invitation by writing that as a rule wild horses could not drag him out to lunch, but that as the name of Paul Maas was equivalent to at least twenty of those animals, he would come. Maas arrived early for the lunch, and although the placement cards had been arranged according to his own instructions, he now rearranged them. When I had asked Frau Maas what were her husband's favourite foods, she had replied «Chocolate and Sauerkraut»; that did not seem a menu that would suit everyone, but fortunately Maas seemed content with whatever food we had. By great good luck the luncheon coincided with the presence of Wolfgang Buchwald, a favourite pupil of Maas during his time at Königsberg. Buchwald had lately been released after ten years of captivity in Siberia, and had made his way to Oxford to visit his old teacher. Buchwald, still wearing a kind of uniform, sat next Murray, and told of his experiences calmly and even with a touch of humour. At the end of the luncheon, Murray made a speech of singular felicity, and Maas in a brief reply said that from the first moment of landing in England in 1939 he had felt at home.

The following year the Oxford Press told Murray that his Oxford text of Aeschylus was to be reprinted, and that he would be able to make alterations. The first edition of this work had appeared in 1937, and had greatly disappointed those scholars qualified to judge it. Murray was well aware of this, and when the Press gave him a chance to bring out a second edition, he and Maas went through the text together with some care. The resulting text, which came out in 1955, still left much to be desired, but it was a great improvement on the earlier book. Some time after Murray and Maas had started work on the third edition early in 1957, I was added to their council. We met on an average four times a week, Maas and I travelling up by bus to Yatscombe, Murray's pleasant house on Boar's Hill, and we would either spend the morning with him and stay for lunch or spend the afternoon with him and stay for tea. Murray was now ninety-one years old, but he retained all his faculties, including his impressive memory for Greek poetry, and his talk was highly entertaining. He was a national figure, known to all for his work for the League of Nations; living between the academic world and the great world outside, he had had an interesting life, and had established a very wide range of contacts. People treated him with something like veneration, but this did not prevent Maas from telling him roundly when he totally disagreed with him, just as he had done to Wilamowitz as an eighteen-year-old student in the seminar,

according to an eyewitness, Paul Jacobsthal. Murray thoroughly enjoyed this; he knew that Maas' cool scepticism was the perfect antidote to some of his own more fanciful conjectures and interpretations. In the end Murray died on 20 May 1957, so that the projected third edition never appeared, though the notes for it may be found among the Murray papers in the Bodleian Library.

Maas had no time for small talk; when an academic visitor arrived, he was asked, 'What problem have you come to discuss?' But in time I got to know him well enough for him to talk about other things with me. His taste in modern literature was surprisingly Romantic. For example, he greatly admired Victor Hugo, and he enjoyed Wagner; his review of Arthur Drews' *Der Ideengehalt von Richard Wagners dramatischen Dichtungen* (Gnomon 8, 1932, 174-176 = *Kl. Schr.* 649-651) interested me in the subject. One of his favourite books was Pierre Benoît's *L'Atlantide*. He told me how it was decided in Berlin that as a Byzantinist was wanted he should be sent off to Karl Krumbacher's seminar in Munich. There he met Otto Crusius, who was editor of *Philologus*. One day Crusius called at Maas' lodging and asked if he had anything for his journal. Maas modestly replied he had nothing, but Crusius opened a drawer and carried off a manuscript, which he duly published; this was the famous article on the colometry of Bacchylides' dactylo-epitrites, in which he promulgated what became known as Maas' Law (*Philologus* 63, 1904, 297-309 = *Kl. Schr.* 8-18), written for Wilamowitz' seminar when he was nineteen years old. When he returned to Berlin, Diels wished him to be styled *Privatdozent für Byzantinische Literatur*, but Maas insisted that he be *Privatdozent für Griechische und Byzantinische Literatur*, and with the support of Wilamowitz gained his point.

He sometimes spoke to me of the time during the First World War when he worked in Istanbul with the medical mission attached to Liman von Sanders' command, and occupied a flat which looked onto the Golden Horn. He became very interested in medicine, and even thought of giving up classical philology in its favour; when I asked him why he had not done this, he told me that he might have done it, if he could have been sure of having only one patient. But except for the occasional reference to Wilamowitz, he seldom spoke of the period between 1919, when he was repatriated by way of Odessa, and 1939, so that F. Solmsen's reminiscences of Wilamowitz' *Graeca*, in which Maas played so notable a part, and E. Mensching's *Über einen verfolgten deutschen Altphilologen: Paul Maas (1880-1964)* were of very special interest to his surviving friends in England.

One evening, at a time when Maas must have been almost eighty years old, there was a loud peal on the bell of my front door. On the step I found Eduard Fraenkel, with an unusually grim expression upon his face. Without a word he handed me an evening paper, in which I read that Maas had been knocked down by a bicycle and was in hospital. I made my way to the hospital, and was surprised to find Maas sitting up in bed, although more than one bone in his leg had been broken. «Ah, Lloyd-Jones!», he said, «the very man! Tell me what you think

about this conjecture in the *Dionysiaca!*» The conjecture had been made in a passage where there was a reference to topics not usually discussed in polite society, and Maas had obtained a photograph of a not especially attractive relief showing Adam and Eve and dated at about the time of Nonnus which he believed supported his own view. His insistence on discussing this problem in the presence of a nurse caused me some embarrassment, but luckily the nurse did not seem to mind. He would never allow anything to distract him from the attempt to solve an academic problem.

Near the end of Maas' life, when his health was failing, the Government of the Bundesrepublik decided to confer on Maas the *Orden Pour le Mérite*. Maas was too infirm to travel to Germany, or even to travel up to London, so that the German Minister in London came in person to perform the ceremony. The Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University at that time happened to be Sir Walter Oakeshott, a fine scholar and an encourager of scholarship, and he found time to come to Maas' lodging for the occasion. The Minister happened to be Herr Rudolf Thierfelder, a cousin of Andreas Thierfelder and a direct descendant of Gottfried Hermann; he delivered a memorable speech, which even those of his audience who knew little German found deeply moving.

15 West Riding  
Wellesley, Mass. 02181 – U.S.A.

PROF. SIR HUGH LLOYD-JONES  
(b. 1922)

