Yet, confronted with these challenges, Dodds did not use scholarship as an escape. Instead, he sought to enlarge the limits of the traditional language-bound Classics of his era by informing it with insights drawn from psychology, anthropology, and psychical research, and by extending its range to include neglected authors of late antiquity, while all the time maintaining firm roots in traditional scholarly techniques.

His career and work have, however, been directly addressed in only a handful of special studies, and these have revealed that his autobiography is not the only, and not always the best, source for interpreting and understanding his oeuvre in the context of his life and times. MP, The language is simple and unrehearsed, 4 and the tone unsentimental. It contains vivid narratives journeys to Serbia, China, and the United States and a host of defining incidents charged with unstated meaning e.

Taylor and Max Pohlenz [ MP , 75 and ], Such immediacy generally predominates over analysis, and when the latter occurs as on Ireland [ MP , ], or the decline of Classics [ MP , ] it emerges as rather stale and derivative. The result, then, is a biography not primarily designed to engage fellow professionals or to gratify historians of classical scholarship.

These constituencies want more information about the great scholars whom Dodds knew; instead, they find them passed over in cursory, even evasive, terms. MP provides much factual information on these stages yet explains too little of why the author took up particular areas of study and why he changed from one to the other. Whether through reticence, indifference, or a sense of its irrelevance to his autobiographical project, he leaves perhaps the reader to supply such an analysis. How much further? I have suggested in this journal BMCR MP, 90, 92, than would have been the case at Oxford. But we have to speculate.

Dodds provides only details, such as the memorable story MP, 92 of an audience having to be drummed up at the last minute for a paper on Plotinus at Oxford in Secondly, why did Dodds shift in the s and s to studying authors from the classical period? While his book of poems reflects Neoplatonism and its dualistic psychology, 11 just two years later and here we have to go to the archives he delivered a paper that embraced secular morality, and offered a version of modern instinct-based psychology. His career dovetailed with this development when he returned to Oxford in and had to teach the canonical classical syllabus.

But the account of his development that I have given here is only skirted in Missing Persons. But he does not indicate why he preferred this task rather than joining Paul Henry in editing Plotinus, as he was invited to also in a fact he omits. Initially conceived in the late s as a culturally responsive project at a time of European political chaos, 15 this project turned into a rather traditional piece of work, resembling the edition of the Poetics by his predecessor but one, Ingram Bywater, rather than emulating the outreachings of his immediate predecessor, Gilbert Murray.

There is something sad about the sixty-year old Regius Professor collating a manuscript in Cesena on a Sunday in the s MP, when he might well have been offering ground-breaking seminars to advanced students had he been disposed to accept invitations to teach in the United States. A combination of advancing years and McCarthyism deterred him [ MP , ].

Though he does not say so, it was arguably this system that condemned him to produce an edition of the Gorgias with which he was himself dissatisfied. The Oxford Press must be congratulated for reprinting this autobiography. They ought in particular to rejoice in encountering a scholarly career that, partly through the accidents of history and personal circumstance partly through the determined will of an intellectually curious individual, extended well beyond the normal academic confines. They will not see its like again.

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