

Commentary on the Uses of Classics in *The Fixed Period*

Authors for individual entries are identified by their initials in square brackets, along with the year in which the entry was written or revised. Contributor names and source abbreviations are provided at the end of the document.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Brittanula

- The name Brittanula contains two elements. The first, *Brittan-*, comes from name of the country Britain. The *-ula* is a Latin diminutive ending, which denotes smallness. Brittanula means “Little Britain,” in the sense that it is a small colony founded and peopled by former British subjects, and also in the sense that its cultural framework has, to an extent, been founded by Great Britain, e.g., its English language, cricket, etc. Brittanula is the means by which Trollope sets up his satirical look at Great Britain’s reform policies. [CD 2012]

departure

- President Neverbend repeatedly enlists Classically derived words to refer to concepts associated with the Fixed Period. For instance, he often uses the Latinate *departure* instead of Germanic *death*. Not only does this practice euphemize the practice of the Fixed Period, but it also elevates it by linking it to the Classical past. Henry Hitchings uses President Neverbend’s euphemizing to open his chapter on linguistic purism in *The Language Wars*. [CD & RR 2012; rev. RR 2020]

- source: Henry Hitchings, “Our blood, our language, our institutions,” *The Language Wars: A History of Proper English*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2011, 161.

euthanasia

- The society of Brittanula in *The Fixed Period* made it a law to euthanize its citizens once they reached a certain age. While this practice doesn’t directly parallel any practice in the Classical world, there are perhaps some ancient models on which Trollope builds the perspective of President Neverbend, who sees euthanasia as a duty to country. In Plato’s *Crito*, Socrates is waiting in prison for the day of his execution. Crito, a friend of Socrates, comes to him and attempts to convince him to escape his death and live in exile. Socrates refuses to do this, saying that while many of the Athenians who convicted him

may be unjust, he has lived under the laws of Athens and expects to die under them. If he were to flee from his death, Socrates says that he would be repudiating the laws that formed him. Plato's *Phaedo* recounts the last hours of Socrates, who drinks hemlock to kill himself. Although Socrates was ordered to die by the Athenian court system, he administers the means of his death himself. Much like Socrates, the citizens of Brittanula are required by the law to give up life at a certain age, and are expected, at least by President Neverbend, to submit voluntarily to the process. The term *euthanasia* fits within President Neverbend's attempt to use vocabulary that positively references the "deposition" and "departures" of Brittanula's citizens. President Neverbend uses Classically based vocabulary when referring to this process in order to ennoble it and separate it from Old English or Germanic terms that may have negative connotations. [CD 2012]

- sources: Plato, *Crito* and *Phaedo*

college

- In *The Fixed Period*, the college is the structure in which those who have reached the age of 67 will live for a year. Upon turning 68, they will then be euthanized. During the stay at the college, the ones awaiting their death will live together in a community. The college is roughly based on ancient Roman associations known as *collegia*. During the early Roman Empire, some *collegia* allowed members to claim a stake in a burial place. The college, like some ancient *collegia*, builds community around end-of-life practices. [CD 2012]

- source: OCD

Gladstonopolis

- Gladstonopolis, the capital city of Brittanula, is composed of two word elements. The first, *Gladston-*, is derived from the name of the four-time British Prime Minister, William Gladstone, who introduced much liberal reform in England. The *-opolis* is a combining form derived from the Greek noun *polis*, "city-state," which is used in conjunction with other elements to form the name of a city. In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates and his interlocutors contemplate the construction of an ideal *polis* in order to discover philosophical truths. Gladstonopolis, then, is the capital of an independent country that hopes to undertake liberal reform that will set it ahead of its mother country, Great Britain. It may also be seen, following in the *Republic*'s footsteps, as a model city instituting rational ideals. [CD 2012]

- source: *Encyclopedia Britannica*

deposit

- In *The Fixed Period*, when one is led to the college to undertake a year of rest and glory, one is said to be deposited in the college. In English, *deposit* means to lay down or to entrust, and is derived from the Latin verb *deponere*, “to lay down, to entrust, to get rid of.” Within the novel, President Neverbend is concerned with the way in which the Fixed Period is referenced and is anxious to safeguard it from any negative connotations. The use of words derived from Latin and Greek is meant to show a sophistication and nobility that might not be available in words derived from other languages. [CD 2012]

- We might also want to consider the economic connotations of *deposit*. When President Neverbend discusses reasons for the adoption of the Fixed Period, he includes the economic benefits to future generations and society as a whole if older, unproductive people need not be looked after. By allowing themselves to be deposited at the college like money in a bank, older citizens of Brittanula will turn their deaths into a profit for their descendants. [RR 2012]

- source: OED

their perfected dignity

- *Perfected* here follows more closely the meaning of its etymological components than its modern meaning. It comes from the Latin preposition *per*, “thoroughly,” and the Latin verb *facere*, “to do.” Thus, remaining at the college for the year before being euthanized is a way to bring to completion the honor and dignity of the elderly. [CD 2012]

tyranny

- Great Britain, in sending its warship and reclaiming Brittanula as a British colony, exercises a force above its legal right. President Neverbend refers to this as tyranny, in the sense of the Greek *turannia*, “tyranny, rule outside the law.” Tyranny in Ancient Greece was a form of government resembling, but distinct from, monarchy, which arose when usurpers took control of city-states, setting themselves up as the highest political authority. Tyrants are considered to be above the law in the sense that no political apparatus exists to restrain their power if they abuse it. Great Britain, in forcing Brittanula to become a colony once again, is assaulting the political independence of Brittanula and coercing a sovereign country to capitulate to its authority. [CD 2012]

Chapter 2 – Gabriel Crasweller

Crasweller

- Gabriel Crasweller, the good friend of President Neverbend, is the first Brittanulan citizen scheduled to be deposited and euthanized in the college. As the date of his deposit approaches, he becomes more and more unwilling to go to the college. He eventually escapes this fate through the intervention of the British government. His name, derived from Latin and Old English elements, foreshadows his liberation from the Fixed Period. First, *Cras-* is directly from the Latin adverb *cras*, “tomorrow.” Secondly, *-weller* is the English adjective *well* and the suffix *-er*, which means “one who.” This meaning prefigures his escape from the Fixed Period. Crasweller is the “one who is well tomorrow” through his escape from his deposition and eventual euthanasia. [CD 2012]

filial reverence

- Crasweller has no son who can deposit him or manage his farm once he is deposited. President Neverbend offers to complete this duty which would normally fall to an eldest son. This sense of duty corresponds to the ancient Roman concept of *pietas*—“duty, piety.” The male head of the Roman family, the *paterfamilias*, could expect his family to obey him and demonstrate an acceptable reverence to the power he held over them. Sons were expected to dutifully respect their fathers during life, and when the time came, to bury them in accordance with religious tradition. The best known performer of Roman *pietas* is Aeneas, in Vergil’s *Aeneid*, who, in respect to his gods, ancestors, and descendants, undertakes a long voyage to Italy. One particularly famous image associated with Aeneas is his escape from Troy the night it was captured: carrying his father, Anchises, and the household gods of Troy, Aeneas leads a small group of Trojans out of the city, preserving them to found the Roman peoples. [CD 2012]

mousometor and melpomeneon

- Trollope uses Greek elements to invent these words for musical instruments. *Mousometor* is derived from the noun *mousa*, “Muse, music,” and the combining form *-meter*, which means “measure, instrument,” and is from *metron*, “measure.” *Melpomeneon* is derived from the Greek verb *melpein*, “to sing, to dance,” and recalls the name of one of the Muses, Melpomene, associated with singing and tragedy. [CD & RR 2012]

- source: LSJ

certain veins should be opened while the departing one should, under the influence of morphine, be gently entranced within a warm bath

- The method of death for those who have reached the end of their Fixed Period, a slow bleeding to death in a bath under the influence of morphine, closely resembles the death of Seneca the Younger. An advisor to Nero, the aged Seneca was forced to commit suicide for his supposed involvement in a conspiracy to overthrow the emperor. He chose to cut veins in his arms and legs, which was less than perfectly effective due to his old age. He then drank a poison, probably hemlock, and lay in a warm bath, where he was smothered by the fumes from the water. Referencing Seneca's death illustrates the manner in which those who have completed their Fixed Period are expected to meet their death. Seneca, a Stoic philosopher, killed himself without betraying any emotional attachment to his mortal life. Likewise, Neverbend imagines those being euthanized in the college to die with noble bearing. [CD 2012]

- source: OCD

didascalion

- *Didascalion* seems to be used to mean a school, or college. This is suggested by the meaning of the Greek noun from which it comes, *didaskalion*, "a lesson, teaching." The use of a Greek word to refer to an institution is in line with other ways in which the Classical past is made to inform Britannula's present institutions, practices, and ideals. [CD & RR 2012]

- source: LSJ

Mr. Neverbend

- The elected ruler of Britannula is aptly named, since he resolutely promotes adherence to the Fixed Period. Although the surname Neverbend is composed of Germanic components, we can find in Sophocles' *Antigone* the idea of a ruler not bending to popular feeling. Creon, the ruler of Thebes, sentences his niece Antigone because she performed burial rights for her brother, an enemy of the city. Creon's son Haemon urges him to moderate his views by reminding him that unyielding trees can be destroyed. In *The Fixed Period*, President Neverbend's son, Jack, will also oppose his father. [RR 2012]

- source: Sophocles, *Antigone* 712-714

tyrannical slaves

- Great Britain is viewed by President Neverbend as a tyrant, overstepping its boundaries when it sends a warship to force Britannula to capitulate to its authority. Neverbend refers to the sailors aboard the warship, who are escorting him to England, as tyrannical slaves. *Tyrannical* is an adjective meaning "benefitting to a tyrant, or acting in a manner

like a tyrant.” The crew is tyrannical not only because they are carrying out the wishes of the tyrant Great Britain, but also because they are acting above their power when they force President Neverbend from Brittanula. They are both victims of tyranny and agents of a tyrannical government. [CD 2012]

ne exeant regno

- Crasweller and Neverbend are discussing the possibility that those who have reached the end of their Fixed Period will flee the country. Neverbend says that, as a last resort, there may be a writ of *ne exeant regno*. This is a form of the Latin legal phrase *ne exeant regno*, “let him not depart from the kingdom.” This is a legal order that prevents a person from fleeing the jurisdiction of a country’s court system. In this case, the government of Brittanula would issue a writ of *ne exeant regno* if people attempted to flee the island before their deposition. [CD 2012]

- source: B. A. Garner and H. C. Black, *Black’s Law Dictionary*. 8th ed. St. Paul: West Group, 2004.

Chapter 3 – The First Break-Down

prepare...for the day which we know cannot be avoided

- Neverbend is discussing with Crasweller the difficulties of betaking oneself into the college. Crasweller, doing whatever he can to avoid being deposited, attempts to change his age and talks with Neverbend about how he is not be ready to enter the college. Neverbend’s argument for being ready for death has echoes of Seneca’s *Epistulae Morales*. In Letter 26, Seneca states, “‘Think on death.’ In saying this, [Epicurus] bids us think on freedom. He who has learned to die has unlearned slavery.” Death, for Seneca, is something that will liberate the old person. Neverbend holds a thought in a similar vein as he believes Crasweller’s deposition will liberate Crasweller from his old age and the world. [KS 2012]

- source: Seneca, *Letters* 26.10, translated by Richard Motte Gummere

to obliterate that fear

- Neverbend and Crasweller’s discussion about Crasweller’s deposition has taken a pause, and Neverbend ponders the fear that Crasweller is feeling. Neverbend notes that it is not because of greed that Crasweller does not wish to be deposited, but rather because of Crasweller’s fear of death, which Neverbend notes as a human weakness. Neverbend believes the Fixed Period will liberate people “from so vile a thralldom.” In striving to eliminate a human fear of death, Neverbend has Roman philosophical precedents: the Epicurean Lucretius and the Stoic Seneca. Both Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura* and

Seneca's *Epistulae Morales* contain multiple arguments against the fear of death. [KS & RR 2012]

what duty required of me

- As Neverbend mulls over a response to Crasweller, Neverbend posits that his personal feelings should not take precedent over his duty. There are several examples in Classical antiquity of a man believing that his own feelings and interests should not be set above his duty. Cincinnatus, who was a Roman citizen-farmer, was called upon to serve as dictator. In Book 3 of Livy's *History of Rome*, Cincinnatus is portrayed as a man who does not want to take upon the duties as dictator, but who knows that, as a citizen called upon by his people, he must serve. [KS 2012]

- source: Livy, *The History of Rome* 3.26

Cato and Brutus

- Crasweller believes that humans have never viewed suicide in a positive light, but Neverbend thinks of Cato and Brutus, who are honored and respected even after committing suicide. Cato, who supported Pompey, chose suicide after Pompey's defeat, despite being offered a pardon from Caesar. Brutus, after being defeated by Octavian, also chose death. For Neverbend, these two men chose death rather than old-age and defeat. Cato and Brutus exemplify the sentiments that Neverbend wishes upon Crasweller. [KS 2012]

Chapter 4 – Jack Neverbend

prosperity and obedience

- President Neverbend sees a correlation between a society's prosperity and its obedience to the rule of law. We kind find Creon, the ruler of Thebes in Sophocles' *Antigone*, expressing a similar view. This would not be the only similarity between the two rulers; see the commentary for Chapter 2 for a possible connection between Neverbend's name and advice given to Creon in Sophocles' play. [RR 2012]

- source: Sophocles, *Antigone* 666-676

a meeting had been held in the market-place

- The opposers of the Fixed Period meet in the market-place to discuss public matters. This has a Classical ring to it as it was very common for Greeks to discuss public matters in the agora or for Romans to meet in the forum, which were both open market-places. [KS 2012]

Roman *paterfamilias*

- Neverbend is growing frustrated with his son, Jack, as Jack becomes one of the leading vocalists against the Fixed Period. Neverbend considers the possibility that he might have to punish his son for his civil disobedience, but concludes that he would not be able to “ape the Roman *paterfamilias*,” the male “father of the family” who held considerable legal and cultural authority. For instance, Titus Manlius Torquatus had his son executed for fighting against the Latins without permission, even though his son had fought bravely and successfully. President Neverbend knows that he would not be able to take such an action against Jack. [KS & RR 2012]

- source: OCD

Socrates

- Neverbend attempts to remain obdurate in his beliefs by recalling a number of “great men” and what they accomplished in spite of the opposition they faced. Socrates is at the head of Neverbend’s list. Socrates was condemned to death by his fellow citizens, but his ideas shaped the development of Western philosophy. Socrates’ exceptional dedication to his ideals is evidenced by his decision to obey the laws of his city and drink the hemlock as dictated by the court. [KS & RR 2012]

martyr

- Neverbend expresses his grief that Crasweller, who is so healthy and still fit for society, has to be the Fixed Period’s first martyr. Neverbend does not invoke the idea of Crasweller being a martyr in the Christian sense of the word; instead, Neverbend utilizes the original meaning of the Greek *martyr*, “witness.” Neverbend views Crasweller as a witness or testament to the greatness of the Fixed Period. [KS 2012]

Chapter 5 – The Cricket-Match

instant

- President Neverbend is describing how Mrs. Neverbend has been constantly at Jack Neverbend’s side, urging him on with regards to pursuing Eva Crasweller. He states that he “had known that for the last month Jack’s mother had been instant with him to induce him to speak out to Eva.” However, Jack has proven too bashful in Eva’s presence to say anything of substance. Trollope uses the word *instant* here, relying on its original Latin meaning of “close at hand, pressing.” [CMC 2012]

a girl...shouldn’t get herself talked about

- Mrs. Neverbend is expressing dismay that all of Gladstonopolis is discussing Eva Crasweller and Sir Kennington Oval. She states emphatically that no woman should be

so talked about. This mirrors what Pericles says during his funeral oration in Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Pericles states that the highest praise of the women of Athens comes in the fact that the men simply do not discuss them. The domestic sphere and the women who occupy it should not enter into the public discourse of Athens or Brittanula. [CMC & RR 2012]

- source: Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* 2.45.2

Minerva and Pallas

- During the cricket match, players on both teams are described as Minervas and Jack Neverbend's helmet is described as his Pallas helmet. Minerva is the Roman goddess of wisdom and warfare, while Pallas Athena is her Greek counterpart. Like the cricket players in *The Fixed Period*, Minerva and Athena are depicted in armor with helmets. In addition to enlisting this image as a visual aid, Trollope may be employing humor in using a cross-gendered reference. When Trollope uses female mythological figures to describe male characters, it is usually done to poke fun at the character (as, for instance, the presentation of Archdeacon Grantly as Juno in *Barchester Towers*). Here, Trollope may be suggesting that it is a bit ridiculous to take the cricket match as seriously as the British and Brittanulans are by likening their "warriors" to a female goddess. [CMC & RR 2012]

the mother's true Roman feeling

- Mrs. Neverbend has come to the cricket match, saying "with true Roman feeling" that she is determined to watch her son, whether he win or lose. This phrase could be a reference to the mother of Euryalus in Vergil's *Aeneid*. Euryalus' mother continues to Italy with her son instead of staying behind in Sicily with the other women. Like her, Mrs. Neverbend goes willingly to see her son fight in a "battle" instead of remaining at home. Unlike Euryalus' mother, Mrs. Neverbend does not have the misfortune of seeing her son die. Indeed, Jack is victorious and elevated to the level of national hero by the Brittanulans. [CMC 2012]

- A similar maternal sentiment is famously expressed in Plutarch's *Moralia*, where a Spartan mother is recorded as telling her son to return home with his shield (victorious) or on it (wounded or dead)—but if Trollope were mustering his readers' recollection of this dictum, he should have had Neverbend write "the mother's true Spartan feeling." Neverbend perhaps refers to a strong *Roman* mother as part of a consistent tendency in *The Fixed Period* to compare his familial dynamics to Roman ones. [RR 2012]

- sources: Vergil, *Aeneid* 9 and Plutarch, *Moralia* 241

cocks fighting on our own dunghill

- After the cricket match, the Brittanulans are overjoyed at having beaten Britain. Jack, while at first sharing in their jubilation, later moderates his joy. While many are treating the simple cricket match as if it were a military victory, Jack reminds them that they are simply cocks fighting on their own dunghills. This image is taken from Seneca, who uses it to illustrate that every man is most confident and successful upon their own ground (regardless of whether or not they are successful in absolute terms). [CMC 2012]
- source: Seneca, *Apocolocyntosis* 7

Chapter 6 – The College**college (chapter title)**

- See the commentary for Chapter 1.

sanguine hopes for euthanasia

- President Neverbend says that his hopes for Crasweller's deposition are sanguine. This English adjective means "cheerful" or "optimistic," but its basic Latin element (*sanguin-*) literally means "blood." Given the method of euthanasia that Neverbend hopes to employ, it is likely that Trollope is using the etymology of the word "sanguine" to express humor (albeit dark humor). [CMC 2012]

Necropolis

- The name decided upon for the college is Necropolis, a Greek term that literally means "city of the dead." Here, the Greek word is being used as a euphemism to obfuscate the nature of the college and lessen the anxiety of the citizenry of Brittanula surrounding the Fixed Period. Further, the London Necropolis Company was controversial in Trollope's time for constructing a massive cemetery complex, complete with multiple railway stations, a telegraph station, and different areas for different religions. This caused debate in London, as many were reluctant to move away from the traditional churchyards within their respective cities and towns. [CMC 2012]
- source: *Encyclopedia Britannica*

Aditus

- This was the name that President Neverbend had proposed for the college, which is finally named Necropolis instead. This Latin noun means "an access" or "entrance." It is probable that Neverbend considered the name appropriate on multiple levels: the college being an entrance for those deposited into a year of peace before a calm departure, and the Fixed Period being the entrance into a new age of rationality and civilization. The proposal of a Classically inspired name could be considered part of Neverbend's overall

language program that attempts to acclimate Brittanula to the Fixed Period through words of Classical origin. [CMC 2012]

temple

- The place within Necropolis where the deposited are to die is referred to as the temple by President Neverbend. It is likely that Neverbend is calling it this because he sees it as a place built to glorify not only the Fixed Period, but also his society's enlightenment and rationality. More ominously, as Trollope would have been aware, Classical temples are invariably associated with blood sacrifice. [CMC 2012]

wisdom wrapped in candied sweets

- President Neverbend explains the need for making the college look as nice as possible by stating that children need wisdom given to them in candied sweets. This motif is possibly taken from Lucretius, who was a Latin author of Epicurean poetry. His poetry attempts to enlighten people to not fear death. In his *De Rerum Natura*, he says that the truth needs to be sweetened in the same way that a doctor would mix honey with medicine given to a small boy to get him to drink it. Trollope uses this motif here because Lucretius and Neverbend both seek to dispel a fear of death by using external sensory perceptions. [CMC & RR 2012]

- source: Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 4.1-25

Exors

- Mr. Exors is one of the oldest men in Brittanula and is scheduled to be deposited not long after Crasweller. His name is derived from the Latin *exors*, meaning "chosen one." He is mentioned in a group of others who are due to be deposited. All have said in their own way that they will not set foot in the college. The idea of "chosen one" has an almost sacrificial connotation in *The Fixed Period*, as though Trollope is signaling that Exors is chosen by Neverbend's law to be sacrificed and lead Brittanula and the world into a new age of enlightened living (and dying). [CMC 2012]

ploughing across the waves...to be drowned or succeed

- President Neverbend is attempting to self-motivate by reminding himself that he is intellectual kin to Galileo and Columbus, that he must plough on through the sea and succeed or die trying. The image of ploughing across the sea may be taken by Trollope from the opening of Vergil's *Aeneid*, where Aeneas and his crew are described as ploughing (*ruebant*) the sea in their ship. The connection between Neverbend and Aeneas may be worth considering: both have travelled away from their mother countries to found new societies, and just as a glorious future was foretold for Aeneas, Neverbend

imagines that the establishment of the Fixed Period will bring him fame. [CMC, CD, & RR 2012]

- source: Vergil, *Aeneid* 1.35

Chapter 7 – Columbus and Galileo

Caesar, Gauls, Britons, Romans

- Neverbend is reminiscing about the days before he entered politics, when he was a businessman and quite happy with his life. Once he began to govern Brittanula and legislate the Fixed Period, he had to deal with political enemies. He compares himself to Caesar, whose enemies ranged from those in foreign nations, such as the Gauls and the Britons, to political opponents in his own Rome. He imagines that Caesar's political difficulties, much like his own, kept him from being happy. Caesar was eventually assassinated and overthrown from his dictatorship, so this reference may be foreshadowing Neverbend's removal from office. [CD 2012]

vi et armis

- Neverbend is pondering ways in which he can bring Crasweller to submit to deposition. He believes it impossible, either because of the law or popular opinion, to deposit Crasweller *vi et armis*, "by force and by arms." This is a Latin legal phrase that describes a trespass or assault involving the use of force or weapons. [CD 2012]

- source: B. A. Garner and H. C. Black, *Black's Law Dictionary*. 8th ed. St. Paul: West Group, 2004.

Caesar and Gaul

- Neverbend is considering what his reputation will be if he enforces the deposition of his friend, Gabriel Crasweller. Many on the island of Brittanula have already called him cruel because of his support of the Fixed Period. Neverbend compares his reputation of cruelty to Caesar's conquering of Gaul for Rome. Caesar would have been thought cruel by the Gauls for waging war against them, but Caesar would have thought that he was bringing civilization, or progress and sophistication, to a barbaric country. Like Caesar, Neverbend will be thought cruel for enforcing the Fixed Period, but in his mind he will be bettering his country. [CD 2012]

Romans and filial disobedience

- Jack Neverbend's opposition to his father's belief in the Fixed Period is one of the president's main sources of frustration. He wishes to force Jack into submission, to make him at least be silent about his disapproval of the Fixed Period. Neverbend compares the respect he demands to the respect due the Roman *paterfamilias*, the male head of the

family who had complete authority over his wife's, son's, and daughter's bodies. Filial disobedience is punishable by the *paterfamilias*, and President Neverbend seems to think it within his rights as a father to punish his son to some extent. Yet, he feels compassion for his son, doesn't believe he is capable of being so harsh to him, and speculates that even the Roman *paterfamilias* couldn't have punished his own son very severely. This may be a way of drawing attention to Neverbend's usually unmovable adherence to the dictates of the law, especially in regard to the Fixed Period. He can't bear to punish his son, but he can euthanize his best friend since it is the rule of the land. [CD 2012]

Chapter 8 – The “John Bright”

triumphal march

- President Neverbend describes the procession to the college, where he hopes to deposit Gabriel Crasweller, as a triumphal march. In ancient Rome, a *triumphus* was given to successful generals, who were driven through the city in a chariot. Spoils of war and slaves followed him as a testament to his success. However, while in the chariot, a slave would hold a laurel wreath above his head and chant *memento mori*, “remember that you die.” Crasweller, in the fashion of a Roman triumph, will be led publicly through Gladstonopolis on his way to the college. President Neverbend intends this to be an honor to him, but the impending fact of his death by euthanasia haunts Crasweller. [CD & RR 2012]

- source: OCD

City of the Dead

- Eva calls Necropolis, the proper name of the college which will house people in the year before their death, the “City of the Dead,” which is the literal translation of its Greek components. President Neverbend is often concerned about the way language is used in reference to the Fixed Period. Calling the place where those who have reached the end of their period the college or Necropolis, gives that place a less sinister feel. When Eva uses Germanically derived words, she isn't using the sophistication and respect that President Neverbend hopes the citizens of Brittanula will display when they talk about the Fixed Period. Eva is prone to reference the college with these negative words because her father will be the first to be deposited. [CD 2012]

Chapter 9 – The New Governor

a monstrous cruelty and potency in Fortune

- Fortune, in this instance, is portrayed as an active being, which resonates with the Roman embodiment of fortune, Fortuna. Neverbend is lamenting that Jack's love and the

agreement that Jack and Sir Kennington Oval made will keep him from realizing his dream, which is the Fixed Period. Fortune brought Jack and his love together and Fortune allowed Jack and Sir Kennington Oval to reach an agreement. [KS 2012]

Romans and the telegraph

- Neverbend poses the question of whether the Romans would have accepted the telegraph or not. It seems significant that Neverbend poses this question specifically about the Romans. Neverbend seems to have great respect for the Romans, as he has invoked the *paterfamilias* and other Roman customs. Neverbend believes that even the Romans—often used as his standard or benchmark for behavior—would not have been able to tolerate such a change; thus, he should not be surprised that his own proposed innovation meets resistance. [KS 2012]

Great Britain and Brittanula

- A funny pairing, as Great Britain implies the largeness of Britain while Brittanula's smallness is built into its name. In Latin, a diminutive form can be created by adding a suffix such as *-ula* to a word—thus, Brittanula is a diminutive form of Britain. The witty linguistic contrast emphasizes the actual threat that Great Britain poses to Brittanula and Neverbend. It may also suggest that Great Britain acts the part of bully, since Brittanula is not of similar size. [KS & RR 2012]

to die would be as nothing

- Neverbend believes that he would rather die than see his aspirations as president fail. In Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, there is a similar sentiment as Lucretius states that “death, therefore, is nothing to us.” For Lucretius, once the soul and body are no longer together, one does not have to worry because one does not feel. Neverbend would not have to feel the pain of his failure if he were dead. [KS 2012]

- The same sentiment can be found, in Greek, in Epicurus' *Letter to Menoecus*. Both Lucretius and his philosophical forefather are counselling against fear of death. [RR 2020]

- source: Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 3.830

highest respect is paid to the greatest battalions

- Sir Ferdinando and Neverbend are discussing Neverbend's departure from Brittanula. Neverbend alludes to the British ship's gun and the possibility of his not complying with Britain's wishes. Sir Ferdinando implies that typically the country with the greatest might holds sway. This is reminiscent of the Athenians' attitude towards the Melians as expressed in book 5 of Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*. The Athenians offer an ultimatum to the Melians to surrender or be conquered and believe that the polis

with the most might is right. Sir Ferdinando believes that Brittanula and Neverbend will have to obey Great Britain because Britain is the mightier country. [KS & RR 2012]
 - source: Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* 5.105

Roma patrem patriae Ciceronem libera dixit

- This lines comes from Juvenal's *Satire* 8 and is translated as "Free Rome called Cicero the father of the country." Juvenal is advising his friend, Ponticus, to lead a better life than some of Rome's leaders. Juvenal mentions Cicero as someone who gained his noble status through peace rather than through military victories as Octavian had done. Neverbend likewise has earned his place in Brittanula's history through civic rather than military activity. Sir Ferdinando's use of this quotation might intimate more (or differently) than he would want it to. Juvenal suggests that because Rome was a free republic during Cicero's life-time, the Romans were able to recognize Cicero's excellence; under imperial rule, such recognition might not be possible. The Brittanulans, while self-governing, could celebrate President Neverbend, but now that they are again subjects of the British Empire, they must submit to the exile of their former leader. [KS & RR 2012]
 - source: Juvenal, *Satires* 8.244

Chapter 10 – The Town-Hall

iustum et tenacem propositi virum

- As Sir Ferdinando is delivering his speech to the people of Brittanula, he offers this quotation from Horace to describe President Neverbend: "a man just and firm of purpose." Sir Ferdinando does not extend the quotation, which—like his quotation of Juvenal in Chapter 9—would not necessarily cast a favorable light on Britain. Horace's portrayal of the just man asserts that he cannot be shaken by the power of a tyrant, and already in *The Fixed Period* Neverbend has repeatedly cast Britain as tyrannical in its actions. Despite his removal from Brittanula at British hands, Neverbend will persevere. It is worth noting that this quotation from Horace echoes the literal meaning of the president's last name, Neverbend. [KS & RR 2012]
 - source: Horace, *Odes* 3.3.1-4

Great Britain and Brittanula

- The inherent contrast that was mentioned in Chapter 9 appears again. [KS 2012]

Chapter 11 – Farewell

a little bag

- Mrs. Neverbend has packed Mr. Neverbend's clothes for his voyage to England, including a small bag worn about the neck to keep one's shirt from bunching up. In Trollope's time, a bag of this sort had the Classically inspired name of *sternophylon*, which Trollope deliberately omits. It is possible that this was done so to keep with Mrs. Neverbend's character history of refusing to euphemize with Classical words when discussing the Fixed Period. Such an obviously Classical word as *sternophylon* would sound strange coming from her character. A 19th century list of London patents mention the *sternophylon* as "a chest and shirt protector" registered to Isaac Moses. [CMC & RR 2012]

- sources: Anthony Trollope, *The Fixed Period*. Ed. David Skilton. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993, 185 and *London Journal of Arts, Sciences, and Manufactures, and Repertory of Patent Inventions* 34 (1849): 64.

triumph

- President Neverbend, trying (one can assume) to find a modicum of salvation in his being taken to England by force, states that his being brought at the expense of Britain is in itself a triumph. Trollope here is being ironically clever, as the image of Neverbend being brought back to England is reminiscent of Rome bringing back her defeated enemies for triumphs, to be paraded in front of the Roman people. [CMC 2012]

glory of a great name

- Neverbend is recollecting the last time he saw Crasweller, just as he left the carriage and turned away from the glory of being deposited. The language Neverbend uses is Classical in origin, related to the Greek idea of achieving *kleos* (glory) by dying in battle and with it, immortality. This is one of many instances of Neverbend using Classical references to elevate the Fixed Period. [CMC 2012]

no Greek, no Roman, no Englishman

- Crasweller explains his inability to be deposited for an entire year before his death, and he cites the Greeks and the Romans, as well as the English, as people who could not endure such a thing. The Greeks placed a high premium on courage in the face of danger and much of their mythology revolved around facing death without fear. The Romans also valued courage in the face of death, whether in service to one's country, the performance of one's duty, or Stoic and Epicurean philosophical contexts. Trollope links the Greeks and Romans to the English (who at this time saw themselves as successors to Rome and Greece) in order to suggest that no man, even one belonging to the three

consecutive “master” civilizations of the world (at least according to the English), could endure knowing his death was approaching to the exact hour for an entire year. [CMC 2012]

Chapter 12 – Our Voyage to England

godlike heroism

- President Neverbend, reflecting on whether or not he would have truly been able to make the arrangements to kill Crasweller, decides that he would ultimately have been unable. He states that it would have required godlike heroism to do so. This is clearly invoking the notion of the Greek hero, who was often semi-divine or possessed of super-human strength. By having Neverbend state that such heroism is required—a heroism only possessed by figures of myth—Trollope is implying that no man could carry out such an act, no matter how rational its basis. [CMC 2012]

hydra-headed

- Neverbend describes the prejudices against the Fixed Period as hydra-headed. This is a reference to the hydra of Greek mythology. Every time one of its heads is severed, two more grow in its place. Neverbend is thus essentially saying that no matter how many arguments against the Fixed Period are defeated, even more will come up to take their place. Further, only the mythical demigod Hercules is finally able to defeat the hydra, and Neverbend has previously stated that he does not possess godlike heroism. [CMC 2012]

Socrates

- Neverbend is once again likened to Socrates, only this time not by himself. When Neverbend says that facing public opinion in England will be hard to bear, Crosstrees reminds him that all visionaries bear hardships. This last reference to Socrates is in some ways more honest than the previous ones, as they all came from Neverbend himself and not an outside commentator. [CMC 2012]

Source abbreviations

LSJ : Liddell-Scott-Jones *Greek-English Lexicon*

OCD : *Oxford Classical Dictionary*

OED : *Oxford English Dictionary*

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