IMAGINE ALL THE PEOPLE

Literature, Society and Cross-National Variation in Education Systems

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INTRODUCTION

In light of their nineteenth-century political economies, one wonders why Denmark became a leader in public, mass primary education (1814) and secondary vocational training, while Britain created public mass schooling in 1870 and chose a unitary academic track for secondary education. If industrialization drives educational development, Britain (leading the industrial revolution) should be an innovator in both early mass education and vocational training for skilled workers (Wilensky; Busemeyer and Trampusch), and backward, rural Denmark should be the laggard. Nation-building and social democratic impulses might instead be responsible for small, vulnerable Denmark's early educational initiatives (Boli et. al.), yet the considerable diversity of Danish education (with its large vocational track) seems at odds with mandates of a universalistic, social democratic welfare state (Telhaug et. Al. 2006, Glenn, 2007).

This paper sheds light on the peculiarities of education system development in Britain and Denmark by looking at the association between culture (as manifested in literature) and education policy. I argue that stark cultural differences about the purpose of education and the role of the individual in society mediated British and Danish responses to requisites for expanded education (e.g. nation-building, industrialization, and globalization). Education serves multiple purposes: schooling both develops skills *and* cultivates citizenship. Moreover, access to an education may be posited as an individual right and mechanism for cultivating individual capacities (for employment or self-growth), or as a collective responsibility to train citizens for societal needs (associated with economy, stability and international security). Thus the diverse educational trajectories in Britain and Denmark reflect different cultural constructions: educational institutions evolve to further individual self-growth for upper-class children in Britain, but to bolster a strong society and fulfill social needs in Denmark.

More broadly, the paper contributes to the study of culture and politics with a new method and data source for assessing cultural influences on the political institutional development. I use machine learning techniques to analyze cross-national and temporal variations in large corpora of British and Danish literature between 1700 and 1920. This is supplemented with a qualitative reading of four matched sets of famous novels, allowing us to grasp the micro-foundations of how cultural views about individuals in society, attitudes toward social classes and views of political institutions inform educational policy choices.

Sharp cultural differences in attitudes about the individual and society and the views of education are apparent in the diverse paths of young, male protagonists in early British and Danish fiction, contemporaneous with the period of educational system development. British novelists credit their heroes' triumphs to individual struggle; Danish writers more frequently locate success in societal interventions that bring youth in line with social norms. Thus Charles Dickens' winsome David Copperfield remains plucky against tremendous adversity, sweet-tempered in the face of foul treatment, and optimistic against all odds. Albeit truly victimized by unjust social structures, David never defines himself as a victim, battles injustices and triumphs through perseverance. In sharp contrast, the hapless Christian is the architect of his own demise in Hans Christian Andersen's *Only a Fiddler*. Unlike David, Christian stumbles through life, ignoring the sage advice of his elders, and squanders his opportunities. Authors in the two countries write both novels of *accountability* (protagonists confront internal limits) and *empowerment* (they battle structures of repression). Yet even in British novels of accountability, personal struggles with individual morality rather than acquiescence to societal norms enable coming-of-age maturation (Brown; Bodenheimer, 1979).

This work makes a crucial contribution by replacing thin interpretations of national

culture with empirically-testable methods that allow us to evaluate empirically cultural influences on policy debates and institutional change. The endeavor constitutes exploratory research, because although literary artifacts provide a tangible mechanism for operationalizing cultural predispositions, the complicated interplay between cultural influences and policy outcomes defies easy causal claims. Fiction may reveal or construct new cultural understandings and collective social identities. Literature may legitimate (or challenge) embedded inequities, eroding or reinforcing norms of acquiescence to the dominant political order.

One may make a weak or a strong argument about the high correlation between cross-national differences in the cultural depictions of education and specific choices in education reform. A weak version of this argument is that the same cultural values reflected in literature also shape education policy choices. A stronger claim is that authors use the language and topics of their craft to perpetuate ideas about education and the relationship between individual and society. I seek not to replace economic functionalism with a cultural variant, yet the findings suggest that fiction influences educational development, by tipping the scales toward choices that resonate with social constructions of the individual, society and class.

Our story of educational policy development also has implications for contemporary political-economic concerns. Guided by concerns for equality of educational opportunity, British educational reformers sought rights and equal access to education; however, their individualistic cultural attitudes paradoxically permitted growing socioeconomic inequities. British stories justified the neglect of marginal youth, because celebrations of boys who conquer challenges with self-initiative make it easier to blame those who fail. Early Danish innovations in mass education and vocational training reflected commitment to building a strong society rather than concerns about equality among individuals; high levels of socioeconomic equality were a

felicitous but fortuitous side effect of this social investment. Collectivist views and a desire to build a strong society produced a mandate to educate all the people: neglect of low-skill youth was viewed as a waste of societal resources and a threat to social fabric.

THE PUZZLE OF EDUCATION SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Education system development varies cross-nationally in the *timing* (and funding) of mass schooling, and in the *uniformity* of secondary tracks (unitary general education tracks versus systems with optional vocational alternatives). Britain and Denmark diverge in puzzling ways on each of these dimensions: The percentage of children aged 7 to 14 enrolled in primary schools was nearly the same in Britain (55 percent) and Denmark (nearly 60 percent) by 1895 (Flora and Alber); yet Denmark developed mass schooling much earlier than Britain. Denmark established "common" primary schools in 1814 with oversight by local municipalities and seven years of compulsory education (initially rural children participated less). British private, church-affiliated schools emerged for working class children in the same period; yet, only in 1870 did a bill create comprehensive local school boards to provide primary education and enforce compulsory attendance. Denmark developed early, extensive and enduring vocational education; whereas Britain largely eliminated secondary vocational training with its general secondary education legislation in 1902.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to evaluate adequately all of the reasons for cross-national divergence in education system development, and educational institutions may evolve for a variety of reasons (that may change over time). Rather I wish to show how culture mediates national responses to shifting functional needs for schooling. The following cursory review, then, is meant simply to explain why some familiar theories do not completely explain the puzzling

patterns of early British and Danish schooling before the twentieth-century.

Some explanations link mass education to the requisites of nation-building, social stability and paternalistic absolute monarchs (Boli et al. 1985; Soysal and Strang 1989; Ansell and Lindvall 2013; McDonagh; Greenfeld 1992). These views can account for the early innovation by the Danish absolute monarch; yet they do not explain why Denmark would develop an extensive vocational track even before industrialization.[i]

Mass education may also be a functionalist response to industrialization, particularly in open countries with traded goods, because manufacturing workers (especially in export-sectors) need skills more than agricultural peasants and those in domestic industries (Ansell 2008; Wilensky; Anderson and Nijhuis 2012). Yet industrialization incorrectly predicts that Britain would develop schools earlier and have a larger VET track. Coordinated market economies (Denmark) may require a higher level of workforce skills than liberal market economies (Britain), and countries may use education to catch up with early industrializers (Gershenkron; Hall and Soskice 2001, Iversen and Stephens 2008; Anderson and Nijhuis 2012). Yet Denmark formed vocational programs for low-skill peasants while still an agricultural economy.

Patterns of social conflict – particularly religious and class struggles – may also shape education system development (Soysal and Strang 1989, Ansell and Lindvall 2013). Britain and Denmark both had a state church and no sizable Catholic minorities. Yet Anglican/Dissenter religious wars delayed public mass education in Britain, but the Dissenter/Lutheran divide did not stop public school development in Denmark. Religious leaders preached an ethos of moderation, perhaps because the needs for a strong society would not allow for religious conflict ("Danske Skolehistorie").

Strong unions and left parties generally prefer social investment policies (Busemeyer

2014; Iversen and Stephens), and it is not surprising that workers received higher levels of education in Denmark than in Britain. Yet the educational preferences of organized labor in Britain and Denmark varied significantly. British labor and socialists supported universal secondary education in 1902 to avoid a two-tiered system, and partisan strife sharply defined education politics vis-a-vis worker education (Peterson 1973). Danish labor joined business in endorsing vocational education, and all parties sought higher levels of secondary schooling, even for working class children (Klaus Petersen).

CULTURE, LITERATURE AND POLITICS

Culture (embodied in literature) may also play a role in educational policy development. National cultural explanations for political differences were once a stable of political analysis, and the best used survey data to reveal strong, cross-national differences in cultural views toward politics (Almond and Verba). Yet national cultural arguments may be overly deterministic, difficult to falsify, insensitive to changing ideas, and tautological in that outcomes are used to justify cultural arguments (Lamont, Blyth, Schmidt).

Recent work vastly improves on thin interpretations of national culture, and points to several intersections of cultural artifacts and politics. First, cultural artifacts (literature, language and other symbols) act as lenses that ascribe meaning (Wedeen 2002, 713; Geertz), and either *reveal* or *construct* perceptions of economic, social and political transformation. The first novels developed with the expanding market capitalism and Protestantism; their character-driven stories, market exchange, and political rights *revealed* rising cultural individualism (Watt 12-21, 60). Just as coordinated market economies relying on non-market cooperation operate differently from liberal market economies, the literature of liberal and coordinated countries reveal

divergent views of capitalism (Griswold and Engelstad). Public opinion polls offer insights into contemporary cross-national cultural differences, yet these data are unavailable historically and the study of cultural artifacts helps to fill in this gap.

Yet, important novels may help to *construct* culture and politics, because great artists have unique voices and vision (Schwarz 1983). Fiction constitutes a site for deliberating economic, political or social threats, and serves as "cultural innovators" of responses to social strain (Griswold; Swidler; Petersen and Petersen). Victorian novelists as social reformers criticized industrial capitalism (Williams), and Dickens anticipated that *A Christmas Carol* would have "twenty thousand time the force" of a pamphlet on child labor laws (Henderson, 2000, 140-3).[ii] Recognizing literary contributions does not refute other determinants of policy evolution, but merely points to the task of interpretation. Cultural predispositions may shape our perceptions of educational contributions to goals as varied as individual self-growth, nation-building, social control after the French revolution, and skills requisites associated with industrialization and globalization (See also Wiborg).

Second, literary works *legitimize* or *challenge* contradictions in systems of governance, and reinforce or attack power relations. Institutions have multiple purposes, coercive elements and inequitable applications; and their acceptance depends on some form of legitimation. Authors may serve as organic intellectuals and justify coercive institutions, as when their stories hold victims responsible for structural failings. Thus bildungsroman convey cultural norms of appropriateness (Apol, 62). Yet fiction may also draw attention to the contradictions and cognitive dissonance inherent in governing institutions (Claybaugh 2003-4, 45-6). Changing cultural artifacts also contribute to the legitimatization of new forms of governance, as has been the case with the European Union (McNamara 2015). Education systems must reconcile

contradictory aims -- to provide the differentiation of skills linked to hierarchical socioeconomic position but also to cultivate the shared values of political citizenship (Durkeim; Bordieu 1979; Bjerg et. Al, 1995, 31-2) – and literature may contribute to the legitimization of diverse systems.

Third, literature has bearing on patterns of *collective political action*, by providing a "tool kit" of symbols, habits, and stories suggestive of strategies for action (Swidler 1986, 273-6; Lamont 2000). Scholars use careful process tracing to document how cultural ideas embodied in policy legacies shape familiar national responses to new challenges (Berman 1998; Schmidt and Thatcher). Cultural assumptions embedded in fictional works may also contribute to continuities in modes of political action, even when the goals of politics change. Yet, culture may also be mobilized in historically-contingent ways to support new political agendas, as happened with the rise of European right-wing populism (Berezin 2009), and literary language and themes may be associated with institutional change. Collective identities and definitions of self may be shifting with socioeconomic change (Greenfield 2009).

Particularly important to patterns of collective political action are views of the individual in society, social group relations, and political institutions. With respect to the individual's role in society, individual rationality varies across cultural contexts and the psychological articulation of "self" shapes patterns of engagement with society (DiMaggio and Markus, 2010, 351). Fiction influences psychological attitudes toward individual freedoms, social obligations, conformity to the social order, and individuals' willingness to serve collectivist needs. Because education is a core institution for integrating individuals into society and "constructing the individual" (Boli et. Al 1985, 150), diverse views of individuals in society matter to the formation of education systems. Maximizing individuals' rights to equal education suggests uniform programs; ensuring that all youths contribute to societal needs requires more diverse options.

Fiction also draws or depicts cleavages among economic, regional, religious and ethnic groups and stories contribute to social memory and collective identities. Novels' depictions of villains and blame may politicize or demobilize marginal groups (Swidler 18986; Lamont 2000; Weerssen 2004; Williams). British elites feared that novels would incite working class revolt (Bratlinger). *Uncle Tom's Cabin* fostered opposition to slavery and civil war. Printed books in the vernacular built "imagined communities" and nation states (Andersen). Literacy rates shaped the content of citizen rebellion during the French Revolution (Markoff 1986), and pre-Communist literacy rates predicted post-Communist democratic institutions (Darden and Grzymala-Busse 2006).

Literature contributes to our preferences for the appropriate institutional vehicles for policy reforms. Depictions of markets and industrialization suggest structural or individual reasons for economic malaise; stories of courts and bureaucrats influence the perceived legitimacy of legal systems and government interventions (Lacey 2001, 350). Literary narratives about schools matter to whether we blame individuals or society for stunted employment trajectories, and influence the institutional development of education systems.

Thus literature may also have an impact on the different trajectories of British and Danish education reform. As a collectivist society, Denmark may seek educational expansion to meet nationalist goals; whereas, individualist Britain may view education as largely a tool for individual self-actualization. Regarding *timing*, collectivist Denmark may develop comprehensive, mass education earlier than individualist Britain to instill patriotism, build states, and recruit soldiers. Individualistic Britain may posit education as a vehicle for self-growth: proponents and opponents may agree that mass education fosters individual empowerment and class mobility, but they may disagree about whether giving workers rights to schooling is a

positive or negative ambition. Regarding the form of schooling, individualist Britain may seek a system with equality of educational opportunity and *uniform* schools; in contrast, Denmark may develop strong vocational education tracks for plural societal needs.

Scholars offer important insights into the relationship between literature and politics; yet some questions remain. First is an issue of causal ambiguity: Do fictional works largely *reveal* cultural attitudes toward political problems and solutions, or do they help to *construct* these attitudes, and predate policy reforms? Causal arrows probably go in both directions, but can we find evidence for the predominance of one direction over the other? Second is the issue of how cultural artifacts interact with institutional legitimacy: Do institutions have the same cultural meaning in different countries and do fictional works largely reinforce the legitimacy of these institutions, or do they point out the contradictions of systems of governance? Third is the question of how cultural artifacts foster continuity and/or change in processes of collective political action.

Systematic empirical testing of observable differences in national literatures should allow us to evaluate the association between cultural predispositions embodied in literature and cross-national differences in educational development. Empirical analyses also allow us to explore some of the unresolved questions about the role of culture in politics, such as those related to causality and the specific sequencing of cultural shifts and policy reforms. If the cultural assumptions in literary works are associated with choices in educational system development, the following hypotheses should hold true:

HYPOTHESES

1. Frequencies of education words should increase before major reforms (in Denmark: 1739,

1814; in Britain: 1870); thus frequencies should particularly be higher in Denmark than in Britain in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

2. Passages about education should have higher frequencies of words about individualism in Britain than in Denmark.

3. Passages about education should have higher frequencies of feeling words in Britain than in Denmark.

4. Passages about education should have higher frequencies of words about political governance in Denmark than in Britain.

5. Passages about education should have higher frequencies of words about society and collective goals in Denmark than in Britain.

6. Passages about education should have higher frequencies of upper-class words in Britain than in Denmark.

7. British education passages should include topics related to individual development and early novels should emphasize the role of schooling in cultivating upper-class sensibilities.

8. Danish education passages should include topics related to nationalism and collective identities.

RESEARCH METHODS

Two methods help us explore how cross-national and temporal differences in the cultural artifacts of literature are associated with variation in British and Danish educational development. The first is a quantitative analysis using machine learning techniques to explore differences in broad corpora of British and Danish literary novels, poems and plays between 1700 and 1920 (after which copyright laws limit access). The second is a qualitative discussion

of four matched-pairs of British and Danish literary works.

The quantitative analysis uses machine learning tools to analyze broad differences between corpora of British and Danish works. I analyze the texts with Python machine learning techniques. I use the eight major novels to derive dictionary words, by identifying the top 200 words in each and code these into the following categories: education, individualist, feeling, political, societal, and class words. After stemming the corpora and taking out stop words, I explore temporal and cross-national variations in word frequencies. I calculate frequencies of education words in the each corpus, and construct snippets of (50-word) texts around these words. I then calculate frequencies within these education passages of words referencing individualism, feelings, political institutions, collectivities, and class. LDA unsupervised topic modeling is used as a check on the analysis of word frequencies, to investigate whether topics in education snippets also concern more individualistic issues in Britain and collectivist ones in Denmark. (See Appendix for lists of words and description of methods.)

I also provide a close reading of eight major Danish and British works with coming-of-age themes in four literary periods that are also moments of educational expansion: mid 1700s, around 1800, mid-1800s and around 1900. Danish and British authors in each period write in the same aesthetic genre, are inspired by one another and believe that they are writing similar works. Yet they differ cross-nationally in depictions of schooling, the individual's role in society, and institutions to solve social problems. This qualitative analysis of major novels and plays generates hypotheses about quantitative differences in the word frequencies and topics of the Danish and British corpora. If culture plays a role in educational system development, then thematic differences in major British and Danish literary works should appear in advance of critical education reforms (or non-reforms). Especially relevant are themes depicting education,

the individual versus society and political institutions.

The cases of Denmark and Britain were selected to represent archetypal dimensions on many explanatory variables of cross-national divergence in education (and broader social and economic policy). Britain is a classic LME whereas Denmark is a classic CME; Britain has a liberal welfare regime whereas Denmark has a SD welfare regime; Britain is the leader of industrialization, Denmark is one of the laggards. Both have protestant super-majorities with few Catholics. Yet the outcomes seem to contradict directly these dominant explanatory variables: DK is one of the earliest innovators of mass education; Britain comes quite late. Denmark has extensive VET; UK has very small VET sector.

In selecting works for the broader corpora, the Danish corpus of over 500 works is drawn from the Archive of Danish Literature, a website for "classic Danish literature," and is complimented by leading authors from other lists of great works (http://adl.dk/adl_pub/omadl/cv/OmAdl.xsql?nnoc=adl_pub). The corpus of over 300 British works is constructed from multiple online lists, with full text files provided by HathiTrust.[iii] because the full-text files in HathiTrust were often not first editions, it was necessary to alter manually the dates of the works to reflect their initial publication. Timing of publication is crucial for establishing the sequential relationship between cultural artifacts and education reform.

I chose works by leading authors who appear on multiple national lists of major works and write about young men coming of age. All works had a major impact among educated elites (who made public policy) but these works (predating the twentieth-century explosion of popular culture paperbacks) were also read by mass readers in the nineteenth-century after the expansion of literacy. In most cases, the matched authors knew one another and believed that they were

writing in the same genre as their counterpart. The works are chosen from important literary periods that encompass periods of education reform in at least one of the countries: the prose fiction and novels of the early 1700s when the Danish king issued a decree for schools in every town, the romantic period from around 1770 to 1820 when Denmark enacted public mass education and Britain created private schools, the realist novels of the mid-1800s that anticipated British mass education reform in 1870, and the modernist novels between 1870 and 1920 anticipating the secondary education school reforms. British works include Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Samuel Coleridge's play *Remorse*, Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*, and Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure.* The Danish works include Ludvig Holberg's *Niels Klim's Journey Under the Ground*, Adam Oehlenschläger's play *Hakon Jarl*, Hans Christian Andersen's *Only a Fiddler*, and Henrik Pontoppidan's *Lucky Per*. Holberg is the father of Danish literature, Oehlenschläger wrote the Danish national anthem, HC Andersen has an international reputation, and Pontoppidan won the Nobel Prize. I also mention contributions of these and other authors to education debates, although my extensive historical documentation is beyond this paper's scope.

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Analyses of the British and Danish corpora using machine learning techniques reveal significant and largely predicted differences. First, as expected, the frequency of education words in the Danish corpus is much higher than in the British corpus until the latter nineteenth-century and the gap is particularly large from 1770 to 1820 (See Graph One). Graph Two shows that frequencies of education words rose in both countries in advance of major education acts. Denmark had high word frequencies in the early 1700s (before the king's decree in 1739),

followed by declining frequencies, and then a rise again in advance of the 1814 mass education act. Thereafter, education words declined again and remained low over the nineteenth-century. This decline reflects the successful realization of campaigns for instruction in the Danish language and for mass education, making schooling a less crucial social issue. Authors were instead more concerned about industrialization and the role of workers in the industrial project. (My unpublished charts show industrial words to surge during this period).

In Britain, the frequency of education words is quite high until 1740 during a period when literacy expands dramatically among the middle-class. Word frequencies then decline to a low point around 1800 to 1820, when Britain fails to pass mass education legislation although churches begin to build schools. The inadequacies of voluntary church schools become a big theme for Victorians and education words then rise in advance of the 1870 reform.

Second, within passages about education, frequencies of individualism words (Graph Three) and feeling words (Graph Four) are consistently higher in Britain than in Denmark. Individualism is comparatively higher Denmark from 1720 until 1770, when the enlightenment inspired new liberal values (Watts), drop off when anxieties about social unrest and state-building goals motivated educational innovation, and climb slightly toward the end of the nineteenth-century with modernization. These findings offer support that education is more about individual self-development in Britain than in Denmark.

Third, education passages have nearly equal references to national governing entities (Graph Five) from 1720 to 1820in both countries, which we did not expect given our expectations that nation-building drove education reform. Denmark does have more references than Britain during the period of 1820-1870, when it lost Schleswig-Holstein. The marked drop off in the latter nineteenth-century of governing words in Denmark perhaps reflects the rise of

the “Danish model” of industrial cooperation, which replaced governmental policymaking with negotiated agreement (Martin and Swank 2012).

Graph Six, however, shows that Denmark has a marked advantage over Britain in references to societal goals and entities: the biggest difference is the sense of a strong society rather than of a strong nation state. The increase in British references to societal goals after 1870 (and decline of individualism words seen in Graph Three) may reflect a need for greater collectivism after mass suffrage, and a search for order with anxieties about industrialization, globalization, technological change and world war, all themes of modernist literature (Crosthwaite 2010).

Graph Seven shows that Britain has more references to upper class individuals than Denmark in the education snippets. These findings further document greater support for mass education in Denmark than in Britain, because snippets of text surrounding education words in British literature have greater emphasis on upper-class individuals than in Denmark.

It is possible, of course, that something in structure of the two languages skew the results, although one then should expect one language to have elevated frequencies across categories (not the case). Graph Eight gives us added confidence in the findings by showing that the frequencies of the British word “give” and the Danish word “giver” (both stemmed) track quite closely. The high frequencies of “give” in both countries the early eighteenth-century probably reflect stronger commitments to duty and obligation, and “give” drops in both with modernization (Greenfield).

Finally, I offer added confidence in these findings with unsupervised topic modeling techniques (although space constraints prevent full reporting of these). I request that five unspecified topics should be identified within British and Danish snippets of 500 words

surrounding “school” and “education.” Unsupervised topic modeling produces probabilistic results (each run delivers a different organization of words), yet repeated trials converged on similar topics in each country and demonstrated stark differences between Britain and Denmark. Table One presents results from one such trial for 1720-1770 (which I chose to report in advance).

The British topics largely concerned individual self-development of upper class youth. The first topic linked schooling to the development of wit, genius and capabilities. The second suggested that good ladies would lend their hand to the poor. The third suggested that masters would receive education to become great, worldly, and fit for public matters. The fourth and fifth emphasize the development of good nature, love, reason in the cultivation of gentlemen.

In contrast, the Danish snippets referred to nationalism, foreign influences, and religion, consistent with authors’ campaign against instruction in Latin and concerns about building national identities. The first and third Danish topics concerned learning the meaning of truth and cultivating wisdom for those lost or wild. The second and fifth referred to the issue of schooling in translated Latin and Greek philosophy (which was a hotly debated theme in this period). The fourth references the following the king, God and church in learning as the right way to develop love and wisdom. These themes become even stronger in 1770-1820.

Topic modeling provides added confidence that education in eighteenth-century Britain was to cultivate individual self-improvement among the upper-class before mass education reform, whereas Danish authors already linked schooling to collective entities and goals. (See online Appendix for additional findings.)

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS: EDUCATION IN THE EARLIEST NOVELS

The following sections discuss major British and Danish literary works and their bearing on contemporaneous educational innovations (or lack thereof). We begin in the early eighteenth century, when education and literacy expanded for the middle class in both countries. Churches had provided schooling for elite children throughout the Middle-Ages, and the Reformation prompted a secular classic curriculum and study of Latin (Simon, 1957, 48-9). Literacy rates among the middle classes soared in England in the wake of the Glorious Revolution, but no educational initiatives were taken as elites worried that mass literacy would threaten social stability (Stone 1969; Brantlinger).

Unlike Britain, Denmark embraced mass education in 1739, when the King decreed that every town should have a Latin (grammar) school and all children should have Christian education (Dansk Skolehistorie; Christiansen et. al, 2010, 119). The king commissioned Ludvig Holberg to produce plays in the Danish language and sought schooling to build a national identity. A movement of intellectuals advocated for the study of Danish as well as foreign literature (Falster). Holberg sharply criticized universities focused on (often foreign) metaphysics and medieval logic, and favored educational opportunities for women (Campbell 1918, 98-100).

A new literary genre emerged in eighteenth-century England with novels such as Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*. Novels had a first-person perspective, realistic character-driven plots and everyday-life themes; and were associated commercial capitalism, enlightenment-inspired individualism, and nascent liberalism (Watt, 12-21, 60). Denmark produced true novels later than Britain; yet prose fiction developed. Ludvig Holberg's *Niels Klim's Journey Under the Ground* -- the earliest, Danish coming-of-age adventure story -- was inspired by *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*, and was widely read

(in Latin) (Fitting 1996, 99).

Literary importance and adventure-story themes make Holberg's *Niels Klim* an appropriate comparison to Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, yet the works demonstrate different views of liberalism, education, the individual in society, social group relations and political institutions. Robinson Crusoe pays homage to economic liberalism and growing individualism whereas Niels Klim demonstrates a greater appreciation for liberalism in social relations.

Daniel Defoe devotes scant attention to education in *Robinson Crusoe*, and even his journalism largely neglects education, concentrating instead on religious freedom and moral conduct (Marshall, 2007, 556, 561). Robinson Crusoe readily admits that formal schooling held no allure for him, due to "something fatal in that propensity of nature" and a "wandering inclination" (1-2). Crusoe chooses not to learn a trade while at sea, where he "might have worked a bit harder…and in time might have qualified myself for a mate or lieutenant" (12). Only on the desert island does Crusoe learn to create products with preindustrial technology; his success depends entirely on technical cunning rather than formal education.

Crusoe reads like an ode to individualism, as Robinson lives outside of society and defies social convention, by leaving home (on a whim) without saying goodbye. Despite initial guilt, Crusoe masters a complete "victory over conscience" (6) and amasses a sizable fortune, using his own initiative and capitalist opportunities. Regarding his lack of shame, Crusoe is more troubled about admitting personal failure than about hurting his family, noting that youths "are not ashamed to sin, and yet are ashamed to repent" (11). Robinson's father celebrates the middle class – with "the fewest disasters…all kind of virtue and all kind of enjoyments" (3). Yet Robinson's entrepreneurial spirit helps him to rise above that class, and he pursues the slave trade without regard for justice or equality.

Non-economic political and social institutions are largely absent from the novel; instead, Defoe dwells on technological innovations and economic opportunities (his Brazilian sugar plantation and slave dealings) (28). Robinson's reasoning is deeply economistic; thus, he masters despondence with reason by making a check list – like a debtor and creditor – itemizing his comforts versus miseries (53). Reason is foundational to all successes on the island, and Robinson becomes a master of mechanics (54).

In sharp contrast, Holberg was deeply committed to education as the key to the well-ordered society. Schools in *Niels Klim* emphasize real questions and students must contribute to society. "The students are employed in solving complicated and difficult questions...No one studies more than one science, and thus each gets a full knowledge of his peculiar subject" (491 out of 1846). Engagement in scholarly disputations is tolerated only as amusing spectacle, fit for the stage and subject to gambling (310). Holberg ridicules the "philosophical-land" outside of the utopian capital, where filthy and starving inhabitants have no time to attend to the necessities of life, due to "higher and nobler things in their heads." "Intelligence resulting from methodical and practical study is preferable to the torpid insanity incident to much learning" (645-655).

Holberg's view of individual in society differs significantly from Defoe's. Like Crusoe, Klim explores the world but at the behest of societal elders. He enters a cave that accidentally leads to an underground universe of Pontu. Whereas Robinson only finds his true self when left alone on a desert island, Niels is deeply shaped by the social values and anthropomorphic "tree-people" of Pontu. Initial "contempt was changed to admiration" for their profound insights into life (306). When tree-people doubt Klim's "obtuse and miserable judgment," Klim boasts of university success. He is told that degrees were important in Copenhagen because "the shadow was regarded more than the substance," but in Pontu "the kernel was more important than aught

else" (333). Requesting a change in station, tree-people tell Klim that merit does not confer rights: "Merit ought to be rewarded, but the reward should be adapted to the object, that the State may not suffer" (807). Societal needs triumph over individual desires and capacities.

Social relations in Pontu are marked by significant respect for those who contribute most to society and are "noted for virtue and industry" (404). Laws partial to certain classes were rejected as not "conducive to the general interest" (446 to 457). Tree-people "elect those to take charge of affairs who are proved to be the most worthy" (277). Children represent the greatest societal contribution: A "generation law" accords "advantages of the people according to the number of children each one possess" (404).

Niels Klim reflects extensively on political and social institutions, but ignores technology and economic exchange. All government offices, apart from the monarchy, are "subject to the will of the people, all of whom should be allowed to vote, who could read and write" (446 of 1848). The king "must be accurately acquainted with the opinions of his subjects, and must strive to keep union among them" (474).

Both Robinson Crusoe and Niels Klim are initially willful and impressed with themselves; yet Crusoe's social defiance pays off in earthly riches, whereas Klim swallows his pride and comes to appreciate societal advice. Crusoe enjoys individual, economic freedom; Klim's freedom comes with exposure to socially and politically enlightened views. Defoe celebrates a self-taught education; Holberg celebrates education to help all contribute to society.1

MASS EDUCATION IN THE EARLY 1800S

1 Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* display a similar individualism and neglect of education. The most functional society in Gulliver's travels has non-human inhabitants that are virtuous by nature and lack moral choice (Fitting, 1996). In Denmark, Erik Pontoppidan's *Menoza* holds views similar to *Niels Klim*.

Britain and Denmark expanded mass education in the early 1800s; yet Denmark created public schools whereas British schools remained voluntary and religious until 1870. Mass education was linked to social stability (after the French revolution), state-building, military service, and religious piety (Parielle). Religious conflict between Anglicans and Dissenters delayed public schools in Britain; Denmark had similar religious factions but little dissension over mass education.

Romanticism emerged in late eighteenth-century literature, and poets, playwrights and novelists probed historical themes and legacies of tribal cultures that bolstered national identities (Leerssen 2004). Yet British and Danish romantic works demonstrate different conceptions of the individual and society, which contributed to divergent educational paths. Writers already linked education to self-discovery in Britain but to social investment in Denmark.

Britain

British primary schools for non-elites developed through two church-affiliated, charitable societies. Dissenters formed the British and Foreign School Society in 1808 to create schools based on Joseph Lancaster's education model, with older students teaching younger ones, rote memorization, and few resources. Worried about workers becoming Dissenters, Anglicans formed the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in 1811, based on Andrew Bell's model (resembling Lancaster's) (Doheny 1991, 328-332; Kaestle).

Writers and intellectuals from both religious groups campaigned for mass education and challenged fears of mass literacy (Stone 1969). Dissenters Jeremy Bentham and James Mill supported the Lancaster schools, sought secular public education, and criticized the Anglican schools for forcing people "to come within the pale of the church domination" (Bentham, 52; Mill; Taylor, 1979). Supporting Bell, Anglican Samuel Taylor Coleridge's speech at the Royal

Institution in 1808 was credited for launching the movement to educate the poor. Coleridge believed that education would "stimulate the heart to love" (Foakes,191,8; Pachori, 1983, 26-31).

Diverged in religious affiliation, these authors converged in promoting education for self-discovery and social stability. Coleridge's vision of the individualistic "self" influenced Emerson and other transcendentalists (Harvey 3). Coleridge and Wordsworth supported rote Bell schools for poor children for cost reasons, but preferred experiential education (Pachori, 1983, 26-31). In "The Tables Turned," Wordsworth refers to books as "a dull and endless strife" and urged "Let Nature be your teacher" (Wordsworth; Cordner). Schools would ameliorate social problems because "a man utterly ignorant of the principles of law and...unblest with a liberal education, should act without attention to the habits, and feelings, of his fellow citizens" (Coleridge, 1796, #IV.) "National education and a concurring spread of the Gospel were the indispensable condition of any true political melioration" (Biographia Literaria, Chapter 10). Education could forge a "clerisy" of educated citizens to effect societal reforms (Harvey 2013, 18).

Coleridge's popular poetic play, *Remorse*, develops themes of growing individual self-awareness and political repression infringing on individual rights to religion. Desiring the fiancé (Teresa) of his brother (Alvar), Ordonio asks his associate to kill Alvar, who is away in battle. Alvar returns in disguise, but in lieu of revenge, he seeks to save Ordonio's soul: "The more behoves it I should rouse within him Remorse! That I should save him from himself." (I,I,15). The play depicts Ordonio's awakening to guilt and Alvar's mixed emotions.

Coleridge's primary foci are the individual psyche and violation of religious rights; one learns little about structures of governance or broader society. Alvar deplores the Moors' loss of religious freedom, and recalls fighting "for the native liberty of faith" (II,II,5). Teresa is appalled by the "ghastly punishments" inflicted upon these people (III,II,25). Shocked by a dungeon,

Alvar contemplates, “what if guilty? Is this the only cure?” (V,I,5). Social norms are despised, as dictates of those “most proud men, that loath mankind” (III,1,110).

Denmark

In contrast, Denmark developed a national school system in 1814, with elementary (common) schools controlled by local municipalities, improved grammar schools, and seven years of compulsory education. Common schools initially embraced Bell-Lancaster methods, but dissatisfaction with rote practices produced a plethora of alternative private schools thereafter (“Danske Skolehistorie”). A Great School Commission recommended school construction, better teacher training, and tax-financed free education in 1789 (Christiansen et. Al., 2010, 119; Knudsen 2000). Yet these recommendations were not enacted until military and economic crisis, the loss of Norway, inflation from the Napoleonic wars, and bankruptcy motivated state-building (Elrod 1981). Religious factions had limited impact on the evolution of public education.

Writers promoted a collective societal identity, state-building and nationalism both before and after the crisis. The leading philosopher of the age, Henrik Steffens, lectured widely about organic social unity and the harmony of the natural world, and sought education to build a strong society (“Henrik Steffens”). In 1786, writers created a philanthropic society and gave lectures to fund a revolutionary Descendent School, with poet Edvard Storm as headmaster. Adam Oehlenschläger (father of Danish poetry and most important author since Holberg) studied Nordic mythology at the school (Salmonsens Konversationsleksikon). Self-taught until the age of twelve, Oehlenschläger favored experiential education (Schrøder). Deeply influenced by Steffens and by Nordic myths, Oehlenschläger created romantic poems and plays that celebrated the organic society. His “It is a beautiful land,” one of Denmark’s two national anthems, extols the virtues of society and learning: Denmark is strong as in the old Nordic myths; sciences and art

are the hope of the future; slavery is now forbidden; and hearts beat for girl, country and king.

Oehlenschläger depicts individuals embedded in a strong society in his most famous poetic play, *Hakon Jarl*, about a Nordic saga. Desperate to become king, Hakon Jarl violates all societal norms. Hakon cannot stand praise for others, unlike the ancient ruler, Harald Graafeld, who was humble and self-sacrificing: "He was a king!...who, labouring for his country's weal, Threw off the purple mantle with its gold. And reign'd, in humble sheep-skins simply clad" (Oehlenschläger 10). Hakon Jarl seeks to steal the daughter of Bergthor, who decries that "One's daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, Are all alike in danger of this Jarl" (38.) Hakon is "haughty and imperious" and "encroaching on the people's rights, He seized their [farmers'] goods, their heritage" (51). Hakon's cousin, Olaf, rightfully deserves the thrown and (unwillingly) becomes King to protect the people (54).

Hakon Jarl's view of society offends Scandinavian sensibilities. Hakon is "as afraid Of his own warriors as he is of" the enemy (93), and prefers to rely on slaves (105). Olaf wins with a peasant uprising (113); the farmers meet at the Thing to choose Olaf as king (170).

Remorse and Hakon Jarl offer crucial clues into British and Danish views of individual self-development and state-building at the origins of mass education. Coleridge drew inspiration from the individualistic consciousness of classical Greek writings; Oehlenschläger, from the collective consciousness of the old Nordic myths (Payne 1900, 131-2). Individual redemption is the lesson of Coleridge's penetrating psychological drama; Hakon Jarl has no psychological depth but offers a rich portrayal of social structures and political struggle. Self-reflection saves the soul of Ordonio, while a band of farmers protects the collective from Hakon Jarl. Given the perceived contribution of education to building a strong society, it is not surprising that Denmark moved forward with schools for the masses.

SCHOOLS AND INDUSTRY IN THE MID 1800S

Mid-century educational reformers expanded access to education and developed worker skills with technical schools. Britain finally created a public school system in 1870 (albeit with continuing private options), and private alternatives proliferated in Denmark. Industrialization and urbanization in Britain – and more haltingly in Denmark – heightened the urgency for social reforms. Children under age thirteen constituted about 15 percent of textile workers in 1835, and Britain passed factory acts prohibiting child labor law in 1833 and 1844 (*Report from the Select Committee on the Bill for the Regulation of Factories* in 1832; Nardinelli, 1980, 740-2). Denmark regulated child labor only in 1873, and the bill set off a heated debate over whether the law would harm youths by restricting work. An upper chamber MP remarked, "I fear that this risks making many young people into sleepyheads and loafers"; others feared that the law could permit the moral corruption of young people (Arbejdermuset).

Victorian authors such as Charles Dickens and Hans Christian Andersen bolstered social reforms with their authentic depictions of real characters, aching social problems, and educational failures. Andersen and Dickens admired and visited one another (although the relationship soured late in life). Both suffered early childhood poverty, sympathized with children and held similar views on corporeal punishment. Yet their differences on individual rights, societal relations, and political institutions help us to grasp why British reformers sought regulations for more equal educational opportunity whereas Danish ones favored local control and plural school options.

Britain

Britain struggled to fix its patchwork system and finally passed a comprehensive reform

in 1870, motivated by gaps in voluntary school coverage, discontent with Bell-Lancaster methods, industrial skills need, labor unrest after the Corn Law's repeal, and electoral reform (Millgate, 2004, 52). The Manchester's Education Aid Society found that the poorest children attended neither school nor work (Marcham 184). "Pupil-teacher" and "ragged schools" developed to serve uneducated children; the Mechanics' Institutes offered technical education; and autodidacts engaged in self-education. Reformers sought school inspection to raise quality and funding linked to student performance on exams (Doheny 1991, 336-8; Schupf, 172; Allen, 147-8; Cordner; Shuman 12).

The Education Act of 1870, spear-headed by W.E. Foster, created a comprehensive school system with compulsory attendance and governance by local school boards (Roper 1975, 185-202). Religious factions lobbied to protect church-based voluntary schools, but the act effectively ended the ragged schools and prohibited school boards from offering separate technical schools at the primary level. 1889 legislation temporarily allowed local school boards to create secondary vocational tracks (Marcham 1973; Schupf, 162).

Writers deplored poor children's limited access to schools and embraced education reform. As Forster's brother-in-law, Matthew Arnold reviewed drafts and promoted rationalization, a minister of education, and linked primary/secondary institutions. Elizabeth Gaskell's husband, William, lobbied Gladstone on education with Nonconformist ministers (Connell, 2003, p. 88-9, 112). Charles Dickens "was England's greatest educational reformer," strongly supported a comprehensive, national system of schools, and imparted his views "in the form of object lessons in the most entertaining of all stories" (Hughes, 1903, 1.) Dickens resented education's class bias, Bell-Lancaster "cramming," corporal punishment, and learning for capitalist ends. Championing children's rights, he advocated for "individual selfhood"

(Hughes, 1903, x, 6.) As President of the Chatham Mechanics' Institution, Dickens' readings raised funds for adult education (Collins, 1995, 117-22); yet he distrusted parliamentary solutions (Goldberg, 1972, 62-7).

These reform positions reflected authors' culturally-specific views of the individual in society. John Stuart Mill sought education for enlightened rationality, self-development and social order (Mill 1848). Mill embraced the individualistic self: education for the boy was the making of the man and individual autonomy. An educated, politically-enlightened meritocracy would sculpt public opinion and stabilize social relations (Mill 1867, 217; Capaldi 2004; Ryan 656.) Dickens sought education to nurture "individual selfhood," help victims of industrialization struggle against structural forces (Hughes, 1903, x, 6), and reduce dangers of illiterate men to society (Collins, 124-6).

David Copperfield reflects Dickens' views of child welfare, individual self-determinism, hostile society and faulty political institutions. David is courageous and resourceful in coping with his murderous step-father, punishing school, and brutal factory work. The mature David applauds his youthful spirit: "I never could have done what I have done...without the determination to concentrate myself on one object at a time…whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do well" (574). Dickens sympathizes with victims of industrialization and abuse, yet the boy must save himself.

Social classes are fundamentally at odds, and social coordination has no role in redressing industrial ills. "Society" means social engagements between ladies and gentlemen rather than an organic union of citizens (833). Dickens lovingly portrays kind, working class people and despises the upper class who treat workers as subhuman. The odious Miss Dartle observes about the poor: "It's such a delight to know that, when they suffer, they don't feel" (279). Yet Dickens

either ignores trade unions (*David Copperfield*) or attacks them (*Hard Times*) (Claussen).

Dickens ridicules political institutions, apart from laws protecting individual rights. Courts provide a frequent arena for corruption: proctors play "all kinds of tricks with obsolete old monsters of acts of Parliament" (323-4). Mr. Spenlow remarks, "the best sort of professional business…[is] a good case of a disputed will" with its "very pretty pickings" (366).

Dickens views schools with ambivalence. David suffers greatly at Salem House where Mr. Creakle warns "you won't rub the marks out that I shall give you...Half the establishment was writhing and crying, before the day's work began" (p. 88). David learned little, because the "boys were…too much troubled and knocked about to learn" (93). Yet Doctor Strong's school is "as different from Mr. Creakle's as good is from evil…with an appeal, in everything, to the honour and good faith of the boys" (225).

Denmark

Whereas Britain moved from volunteerism to consolidation, Denmark did the opposite, by increasing private schools (e.g. free worker schools) to fill gaps in coverage and improve upon Bell-Lancaster methods with learning from everyday experiences. Kristen Kold started the folk-high-school movement in 1844 for rural communities; and occupational trades expanded vocational schools in town. The state expanded secondary education, dividing grammar schools into linguistic and mathematic-scientific lines, but many Latin schools became privatized and all private schools received significant public funding by 1899 and 1901 ("Danske Skolehistorie").

Danish writers supported expanded schooling and plural educational experiences, depicting individuals as embedded in and responsible for contributing to the larger organic whole. Ditlev Monrad (author of the Danish constitution and prime minister) wrote, "'The spirit does not exhaust its whole being in some single individuals, but in [their] totality'; because to

'feel the pulse of the spirit' the people must be organized as an organism" (Koch and Kornerup, 17). N.F.S. Grundtvig drew from ancient Nordic myths in treatises on nationalism and organic society: Peasants ("workmen of the sun") should be literate and educated about Danish history to participate fully in society (Grundtvig 1968). Grundtvig favored learning through narrative (the "living word") and opposed written assignments before eighth grade; the "Danish society" movement disseminated Grundtvig's ideas (Grundtvig 1968; Fain 1971, 78-82; Bjerg et. Al, 1995, 31-2). HC Andersen held similar contempt for Bell-Lancaster methods and advocated for schools for the poor (Zipes 2006).

Themes of dangerous individualism, obedience of youth to society and wisdom of elders are reflected in Hans Christian Andersen's realist novel, *Only a Fiddler* (1837). The protagonist, Christian, seeks to be great artist, rejects the morals of Danish society (37), and follows in his father's footsteps, who abandoned the family because "one must be free and alone, and then the whole world is open before one" (9). Christian's consequent alienation brings him loneliness and despair, and he questions the utility of individualistic achievement: "What comfort would it afford him, what comfort to mankind…It is not all one how high we may be placed in life, if we are only firmly placed?" (37).

Andersen disparages cruel, materialistic bourgeois individuals; for example, the grandfather of Christian's rich friend, Naomi, dies in a fire, attempting to rescue his wealth (17). The rich do nothing for Christian, but he is helped to recognize his artistic potential by a music teacher from the community, who teaches that "Order must rule in everything" (117).

Schools could be a palliative to Christian's malaise: "School-life would have alone been able by its severe, rational discipline, to breathe a cool air into this sirocco of the imagination, which weakened his mind and body; but…there was no regulated school for poor children in the

whole town" (38). A kind landlady asks, "Why should not poverty enjoy the advantage [of literature]?" (117-8).

In a review, Søren Kierkegaard found Andersen's tale to be overly bleak, emblematic of Andersen's morose personality and narrowly focused on individual pathology instead of universal man (Kierkegaard, 1838, 30f). Yet Ewald's "The story of Valdemar Krone's youth" (1860), offers similar themes without Andersen's tortured reflections. Valdemar Krone is raised in a rural parsonage, but upon completion of his studies, becomes engaged to a morally-suspect aristocrat (254). After misadventures, Valdemar finds happiness with a good rural Danish girl, reaffirms his commitment to country and community, and finds his bearing (252).

Thus Dickens' David Copperfield is a striver, who overcomes obstacles through boundless effort. Ambitions lead HC Andersen's Christian to become a lonely outsider in a close-knit society. Valdemar Kroner is a striver who succeeds by accepting social bonds.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE EARLY 1900S

At century's turn, Britain and Denmark enacted major secondary education acts, yet differed on centralization, regulation and secondary technical training. Britain legislated central control and scaled back vocational education; Denmark expanded funding for private schools, local control, vocational training, and diversity among secondary tracks.

Realist and early modernist authors critiqued global systemic risks and traditional moral standards (Crosthwaite 2010, 331). Authors favored educational expansion, yet diverged on specific reforms. British authors advocated academic, classical secondary education to all youth opportunities for self-growth; Danish writers favored plural educational experiences to fit diverse societal needs and varied capacities of children.

Britain

Legislation in 1870 expanded access, but failed to regulate schools or expand technological skills. Multiple agencies monitored public and religious schools, and localities varied enormously (Gosden, 44). An 1895 Royal Commission proposed a centralized board of education, enacted in 1899 (Maclure 1965, 140). Other commissions advocated secondary vocational education. Urban school boards created post-primary technical classes; county councils were permitted to raise a rate for technical education; and Parliament passed various industrial acts to build skills (Devonshire Report; Gowing 1-12, ff 52, 58).

In 1902 the Conservative government passed a major education act with broad bipartisan support. The 1902 Education Act strengthened central regulation with new Local Education Authorities (LEAs) monitored by the Board of Education and retained religious schools. Yet it largely eliminated technical secondary education and other local alternatives (pupil-teacher centers). The bill's architect, Robert Morant, embraced grammar schools and humanism over technological studies. Regulations in 1904 developed national curricula guidelines and restricted math and science instruction (Eaglesham 1962, 156-7; Vaninskaya, 2010, 952.) The Fisher Act of 1918 revisited technical education, but the Labour Party distrusted "instrumental, materialistic and nationalist" motives for the vocational training of working class children (Ward 1973, 38). These initiatives revealed elite cultural predilections for liberal arts education, and ultimately limited educational attainment of the working class (Vlaeminke, 2000, 5).

British authors joined the humanistic secondary education movement in protesting educational inequality; Thomas Hardy, D.H Lawrence, George Orwell and H.G. Wells attacked uneven private schools and substandard board schools. James Bryce (of the1895 Royal Commission) founded the National Liberal Club, which included education-critic George

Bernard Shaw among its members (Wells I, 339, 341; Vaninskaya, p. 959; Mattisson 2013; Cordner). Wells, Shaw, and the Webbs praised the 1902 legislation for its efficiency and national regulation (Manzer, 2003, 104; Gullifer 1982). Authors espoused classical education and vocational education for lower-class children as an inferior alternative. Hardy passionately sought classical education for the poor, because (like Jude) he was denied entrance to Oxford and apprenticed as an architect. The April 1888 House of Commons debate on secondary education partially inspired *Jude the Obscure*, moving Hardy to write about a young man's denial to Oxford (Millgate 2004, 318). When Oxford created the Ruskin College to train working class youth in engineering. Hardy quipped that Ruskin should be renamed "College of Jude the Obscure"(https://www.ruskin.ac.uk/perch/resources/the-ruskin-college-fellowship-and-the-first-world-war.pdf.)

Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* embraces themes of individual self-actualization, societal hostility, and gaps in educational opportunities. Hardy's biographer, Michael Millgate (2004, 88-9), describes Hardy's long-term goals as "self-education, self-development and self-discovery"; Jude's dreams of a self-actualization through classical education are Hardy's own. Yet Jude lacks David Copperfield's pluck and has a "weakness of character, as…the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life" (13-4).

Jude experiences society as ignorant, hostile, and abusive; he feels fellowship only with the birds "in a world that does not want them" (11). Town folk consider Jude "very stuck up, and always reading" (35). They enjoy his fall from grace: "All his reading had only come to this, that he would have to sell his books to buy saucepans" (49). Jude recognizes dignity in a stone-cutter's manual work, but forgets this insight "under stress of his old idea" (74). Jude also suffers from middle-class moral strictures, after an unfortunate marriage to a mercenary barmaid (43).

Learning is Jude's great solace and imaginary escape from a desolate rural life. He longs to move to the "city of light" (19-20); but is told that "you will have a much better chance of success in life by remaining in your own sphere" (104). Working men's sensibilities transcend their social class, yet education is beyond their reach (57). Jude realizes that aspirations for self-improvement through education have only produced failure: "It would have been far better for him in every way if he had never come within sight and sound of the delusive precincts, had gone to some busy commercial town with the sole object of making money by his wits."

Denmark

Denmark's 1903 Act on General Secondary Education institutionalized secondary education with multiple learning institutions for diverse student needs and local control. The act created free, middle schools to link primary and secondary schools, gymnasiums (with three lines) for academically-oriented youth, and consolidated private school funding. It emphasized learning by doing and stopped written assignments before eighth grade (Bjerg 1991, 133-137).

Danish authors associated with "The Modern Breakthrough" (led by Georg Brandes) endorsed educational pluralism with work celebrating the collectivist project of industrial development. Inspired by Darwin and Nietzsche, Modern Breakthrough writers sharply criticized traditional religion, sexual repression and middle-class morality; yet they also valued a strong society and expressed greater optimistic than British contemporaries about industrialization, coordination and class relations. Industrialization offered an opportunity to move beyond rural poverty; both state institutions and private associations for industrial coordination were portrayed favorably. For Brandes, economic emancipation was more vital than political suffrage, and British Victorian literature was overly wedded to parliamentary democracy (Skilton 1980, 37-43). These writers participated in contemporary political reforms. Georg Brandes' brother,

Edvard Brandes, created the Radical Liberal Party advancing important welfare reforms; and Georg and Edvard together founded the major newspaper, *Politikken* (Den Store Grondal). Like Hardy, Henrik Pontoppidan supported education reform (Borup 1905) and worked in a folk high school (http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Henrik_Pontoppidan.aspx)

Themes of a strong society, benign views of industrialization/economic coordination, accessible education, and a strong developmental state are apparent in Pontoppidan's *Lucky Per*. Like *Jude the Obscure*, *Lucky Per* tells the story of a young man who seeks success yet fails. But Per is the opposite of Jude: given every advantage and a wonderful woman, Per misuses his talents and opportunities. Per will not conform to society, take personal responsibility or follow through with his (initially-lauded) engineering plan. Like Jude, Per feels called to a higher purpose that exempts him from societal norms: "For men...called out for great work, the common, bourgeois law did not really count for much" (285). Yet unlike Hardy, Pontoppidan blames Per for ceaselessly offending society (344). J.G. Robertson (1920, 376) notes, "Lykkeper [Per] is one long tragedy of the lucky mortal that gets all he wants. It is the tragedy of the will."

Pontoppidan portrays industrialization and unions positively: manufacturing will improve Denmark's economic fortunes (333-4), although impose collateral damage on workers. Jacobe (Per's moral fiancé) shows interest in "labor movements that had such close ties with modern technical development" and feels "alliance with the sooty, subjugated army of workers craving light, air, and humane treatment" (199-200). Workers "did not quarrel with anyone and were held together by mutual respect" (480).

Education and social protections are necessary to compensate for industrial risk. Jacobe founds a school in Copenhagen and sees societal intervention to replace family: "I see no solution other than that school should gradually step in to take the place of home….the children

will also be given the capital for a bright and fruitful sense of life" (477-8). Per celebrates nationalism, saying "Dear old Denmark!" when "a wave of patriotism swept through him" (286).

Hardy and Pontoppidan were criticized for their bleak, unrelenting stories, and their modernist anxieties about social risks made *Jude* and *Per* cautionary tales. *The Guardian* (November 13, 1895) called Jude "a shameful nightmare, which one only wishes to forget as quickly and as completely as possible." Yet these novels hold different lessons; the protagonists had different opportunities. Jude cannot overcome class rigidities; but Per rejects societal aid.

CONCLUSION

This paper sheds light on the puzzle of British and Danish education systems. The early-industrializing Britain was a laggard in mass public education and vocational training, whereas rural Denmark lead in these educational developments. I argue that cultural attitudes about the role of the individual in society help us better to understand the puzzle of education system development: education became a vehicle for individualistic self-discovery in Britain but was a societal duty as in Denmark. British reformers espoused individual rights to and equality of educational opportunity; Danish ones endorsed multiple secondary tracks to meet societal needs.

Authors played a role in the education projects, by supporting mass education and helping to shape its ultimate form. A close reading of major literary works suggests that the cross-national variation in educational purpose has deep cultural roots. British and Danish works reveal significant differences about educational mandates, the role of the individual in society, relations among social classes, and political institutions. English protagonists are often the architects of their own triumph and transcend class strictures, even as their less-talented brothers fail. Danish protagonists mature with the wisdom of societal elders and succeed when

contributing to society. Fictional stories help to construct the individual struggle for self-discovery at the heart of the Anglo education system, and the participation in education for societal development and state-building in Denmark. These themes are incidental to plot lines, yet like the revealing backgrounds of paintings, set the context for action.

Our methodological contribution is to demonstrate how empirically-testable cultural artifacts help us to understand deep cultural influences on state-building and the evolution of political economies. Literature may either reveal or construct the same cultural predispositions embodied in political choices, as societies struggle to meet new social, economic and political problems. Our findings suggest that rising attention to education in the fictional works preceded the political reforms and focused attention on the issue.

Cultural studies also have bearing on the legitimacy of systems of governance, in that fiction makes normative judgments about class inequalities in their depictions of the locus of control over success and failure, and attribution of blame. All political governance systems have distinctive contradictions, winners and losers, and coercive elements. Literature helps people to reconcile the contradictions embedded in governing structures and social orders, to accord legitimacy, and to respond to problems of marginal individuals.

Our findings suggest that British authors both undermined and reinforced power relations and governing institutions. On the surface, they frequently served as reformers attacking the system, yet their narratives included assumptions about individual locus of control that blamed the victim and reinforced assumptions about individual culpability in society. Danish authors demanded that society be accountable for less fortunate members and conveyed support for social investments, yet they also readily accepted uneven hierarchies in education that reinforced status hierarchies.

Literature also contributes to institutional continuity and change. Fictional works may shape the expressions of problems and solutions at critical junctures, and constitute a stabilizing continuity even at points of institutional and policy transformations. Thus the Nordic social investment strategy evolved from conceptions of society that predated institutions of electoral

democracy, industrial relations and social protections. These lessons from literary engagement with historical educational development shed light on the current politics of social investment (or lack thereof) in low-skill youth. Our postindustrial "lean and mean" political economy makes a generation of young people scramble for a shrinking pool of good jobs. The hectic individualism of neoliberalism makes it easy for us to forget the youth that are left behind. Yet as today's episodes of terror and instability constantly remind us, individual losers may well be society's losses.

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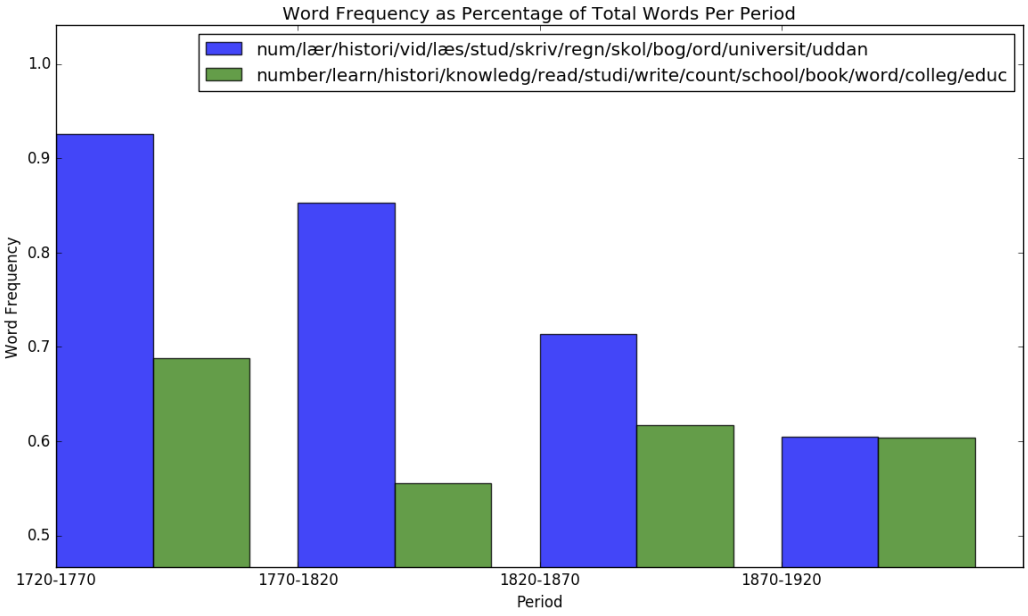
APPENDIX

GRAPH ONE

EDUCATION WORD FREQUENCIES IN CORPORA

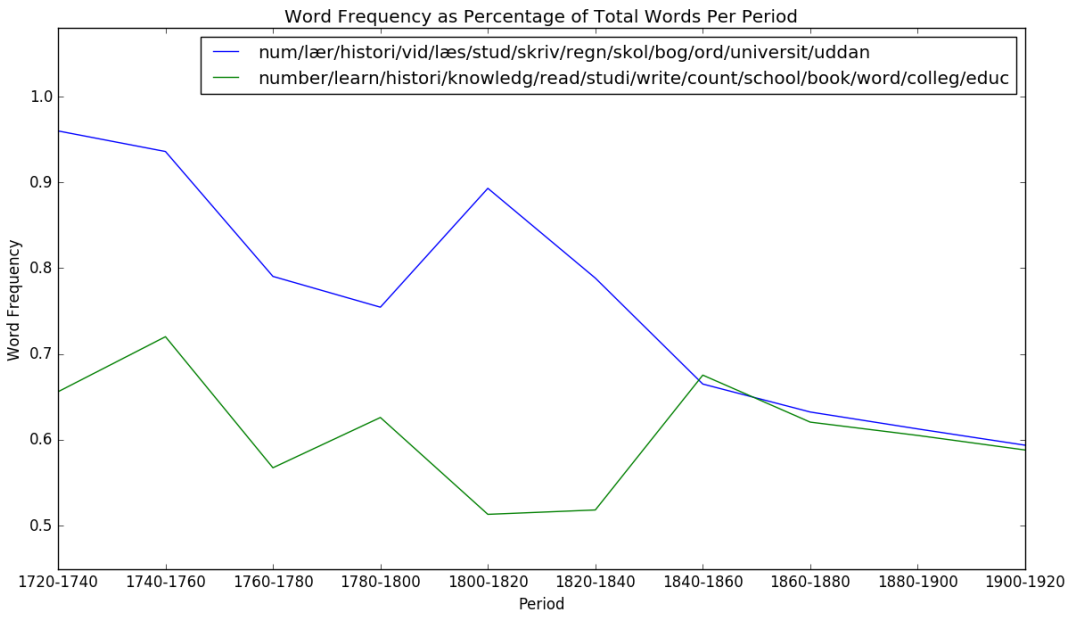
(number, learn, history, knowledge, read, study, write, count, school, book, word, college, education)



GRAPH TWO

FREQUENCIES OF EDUCATION WORDS

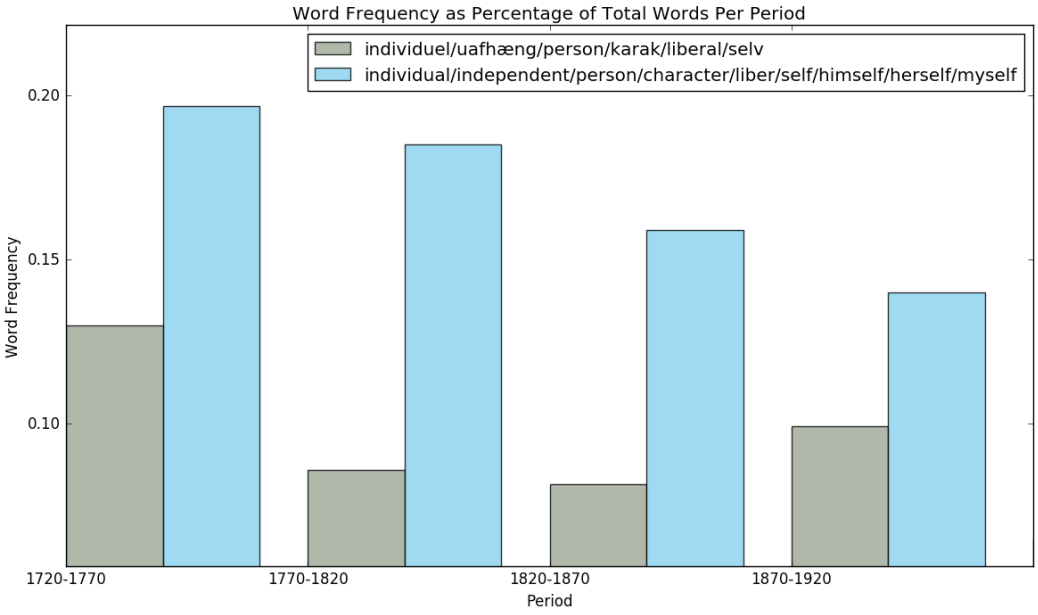
(number, learn, history, knowledge, read, study, write, count, school, book, word, college, education)



GRAPH THREE

FREQUENCIES OF INDIVIDUALISM WORDS IN EDUCATION SNIPPETS

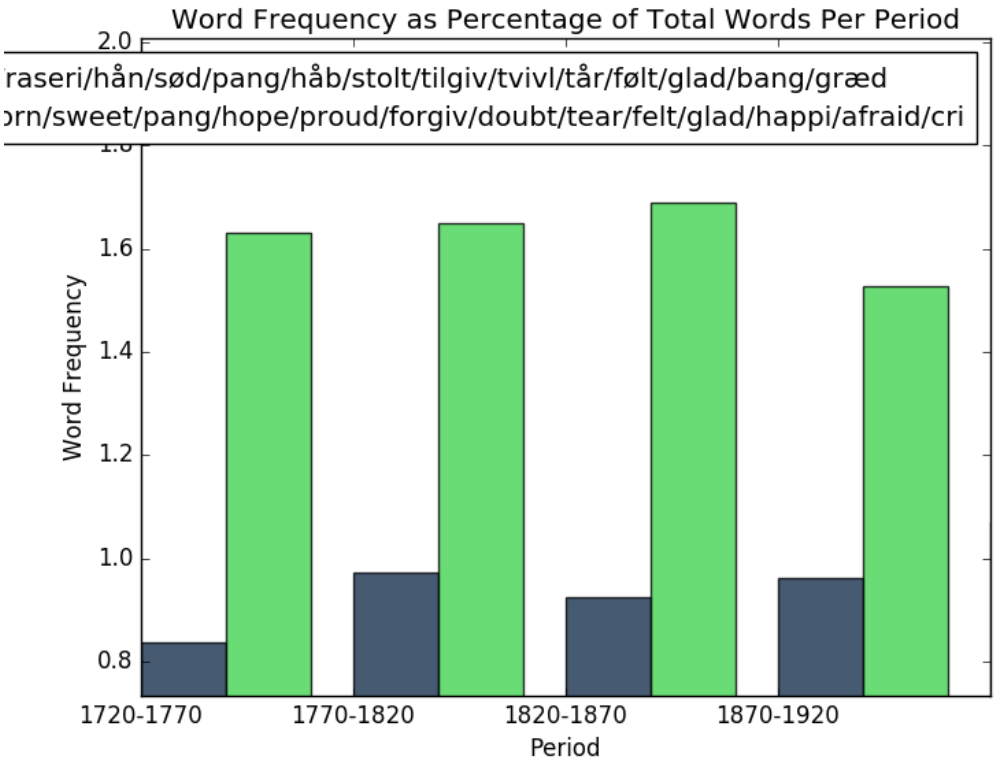
(individual, independent, person, character, liberal, self, himself, herself, myself)



GRAPH FOUR

FREQUENCIES OF FEEING WORDS IN EDUCATION SNIPPETS

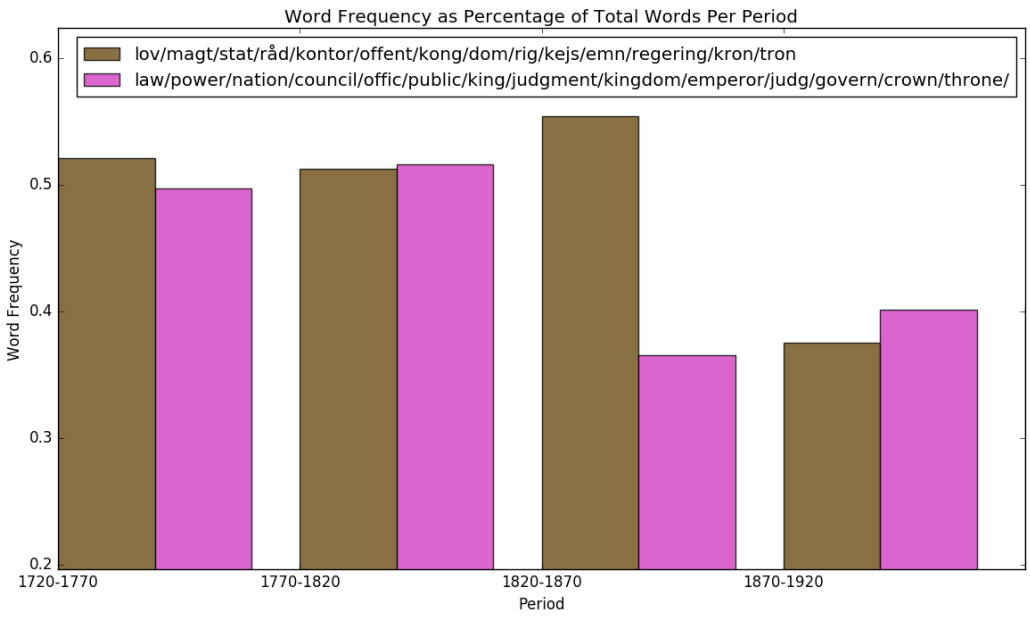
(concern, fear, love, dear, heart, human, feel, guilt, pity, joy, gratitude, remorse, fancy, anguish, innocence, hate, fool, rage, scorn, sweet, pang, hope, proud, forgive, doubt, tear, felt, glad, happy, afraid, cry)



GRAPH FIVE

FREQUENCIES OF POLITICAL GOVERNANCE WORDS IN EDUCATION SNIPPETS

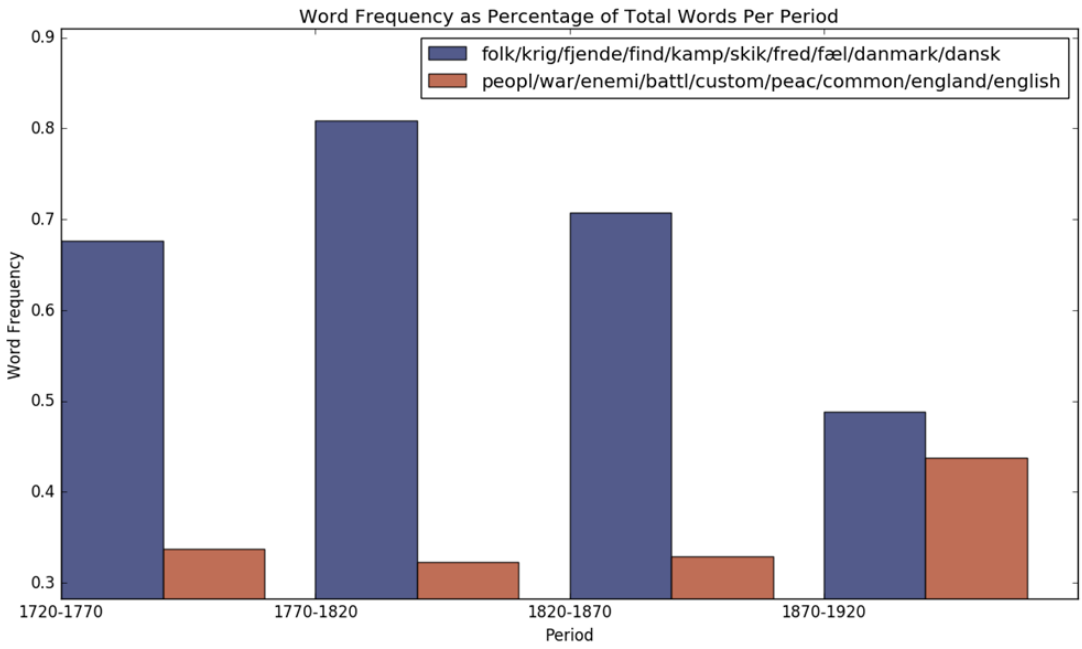
(law, power, nation, council, office, public, king, judgment, kingdom, emperor, judge, government, crown, throne, prince)



GRAPH SIX

FREQUENCIES OF SOCIETY AND COLLECTIVE GOAL WORDS IN EDUCATION SNIPPETS

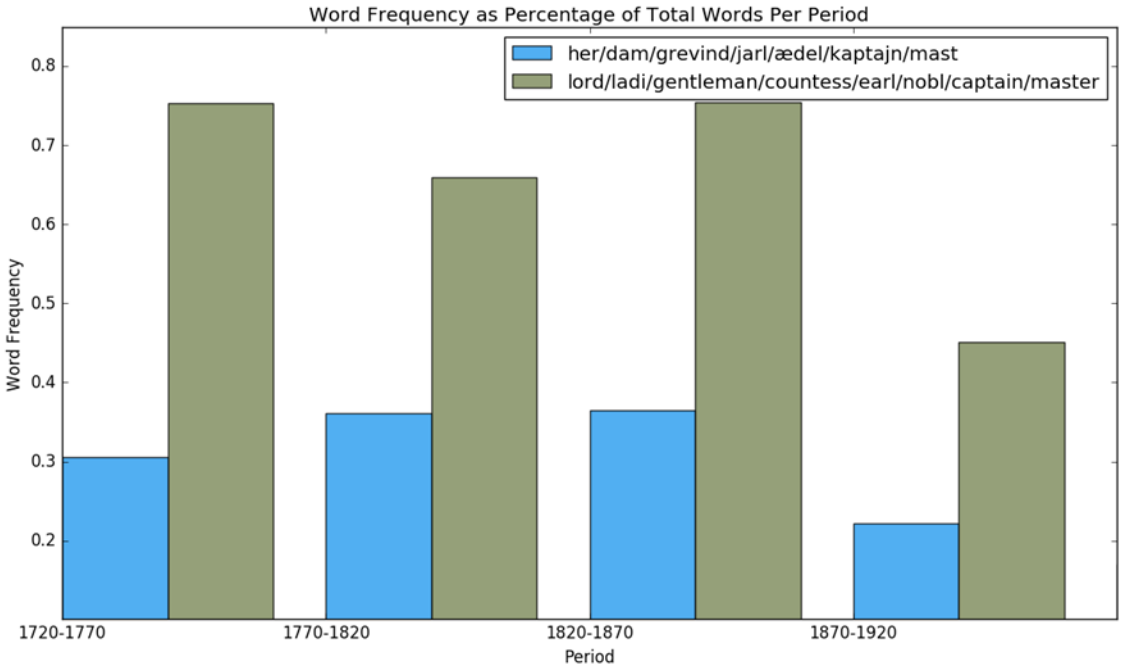
(war, enemy, battle, people, custom, peace, common, England or Denmark, English or Danish)



GRAPH SEVEN

FREQUENCIES OF UPPER-CLASS WORDS IN EDUCATION SNIPPETS

(lord, lady, gentlemen, countess, earl, noble, captain, master)



GRAPH EIGHT

FREQUENCIES OF BRITISH “GIVE” AND DANISH “GIVER”

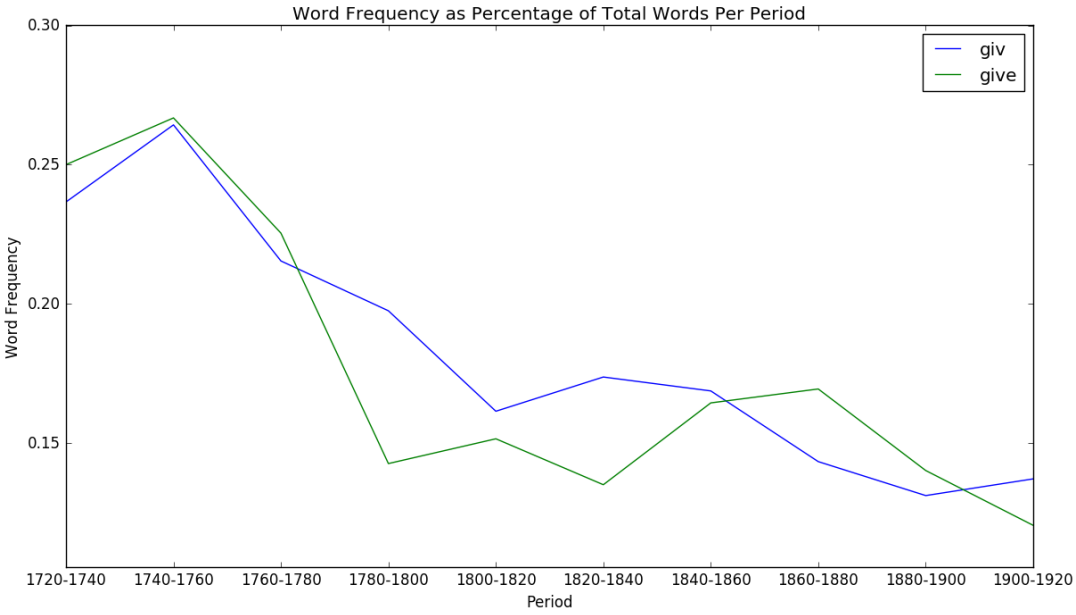


TABLE ONE

TOPICS IN BRITAN AND DENMARK 1720-1770

(proper names deleted)

Britain

1: reader, person, wit, genius, large, sufficient, principle, return, treatise, follow, capable

2: good, great, lady, hand, think, brother, man, poor, dear, live, uncle

3: world, sir, master, private, public, great, education, learn, remember, man, believe

4: good, man, nature, great, thought, love, child, young, think, reason

5: public, master, great, man, universe, learn, gentleman, answer, work

Denmark

1: people, learn meaning truth give wise right word wild/lost hand hold rector

2: discuss, part, Greek, writing translate Latin book philosophy learning indicate

3: man wild/lost right same/together old number people hold calling learning learn

4: king fault learn God church hold right less follow give love wise

5: hand, poem, learning, name, Latin man philosophy book write rector

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[i] This explanation also leads to the antecedent puzzle of why some countries have more clearly-articulated national identities.

[ii] Although popular books may more readily reveal cultural assumptions, the content of these offerings is driven by market-strategies and audiences that are similar across countries and these may vary little (Corse 1279-81).

[iii] I constructed a list of "classic" British works (rather than using Ted Underwood's helpful list of British literature comprising about 20,000 works after removing replications) to correspond to the Danish list of "classic" literature.