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In the Shadow of Aristophanes: The 1903 *Iphigeneia in Tauris* in Philadelphia

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IN THE SHADOW OF ARISTOPHANES: THE 1903 *IPHIGENEIA IN TAURIS* IN PHILADELPHIA

Forty years ago in a memorable course on Roman drama at Columbia University I learned that Plautus, *Amphitruo*, and Seneca, *Thyestes*, were not only texts for philological study, but also scripts for performance. The instructor advised us never to neglect any opportunity to attend a staging of an ancient drama; even the most inept production, he said, showed things that reading and study could not reveal.¹ With gratitude for that insight and many others given during those undergraduate years and since, I offer this account of a neglected early twentieth-century revival of a Greek tragedy to Professor William M. Calder III on his seventy-fifth birthday.

I. Production

In the Spring of 1902 Provost Charles Harrison of the University of Pennsylvania had an idea. Sixteen years earlier his university had produced the first performance of an ancient Greek comedy in North America. Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, performed in its original ancient Greek with a cast of students from Old Penn, had been a cultural event of national importance. Two performances at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia on May 14 and 15, 1886, had been greeted with so much acclaim that the play was reprised in New York, where it had drawn, one headline proclaimed, "a Greater House than Patti" to the Academy of Music on Irving Place.² Much had changed at the University of Pennsylvania since 1886, but much abided. Greek was still compulsory for all candidates for a bachelor's degree, although other colleges and

¹ See W. M. Calder III, "The Single-Performance Fallacy," *Educational Theatre Journal* 10 (1958), 237–39 = *Theatrokratia: Collected Papers on the Politics and Staging of Greco-Roman Tragedy*, ed. R. Scott Smith (Hildesheim 2005) 1–5.

² L. T. Percy, "Aristophanes in Philadelphia: The *Acharnians* of 1886," *CW* 96 (2003) 299–313.

universities had abandoned the requirement or would soon do so;³ was it time for another Greek play, once again performed in ancient Greek?⁴

Provost Harrison communicated his idea to William Alexander Lamberton (1848–1910), who held the chair of Greek at the University. Professor Lamberton promptly gathered three other members of his department at his house to consider the Provost’s proposal. John Carew Rolfe (1859–1943) was a philologist of “stupendous energy” who would go on to edit twelve volumes in the Loeb Classical Library. Walton Brooks McDaniel (1871–1978) had an interest in the details of Roman daily life. William Nickerson Bates (1867–1949) had a special interest in vase painting and was in the final stages of preparing an edition of Euripides’ *Iphigeneia in Tauris* which would appear in 1903.⁵

The four men agreed on *Iphigeneia* as the play to be produced and began to organize the production. Lamberton and Bates soon emerged as the principal producers. The choice was natural, since Lamberton held the chair of Greek and, as one Philadelphia newspaper put it, was considered to be “thoroughly versed in all the learning of the Greeks, the intellectual masters of the world for over two thousand years,”⁶ and Bates could claim expert knowledge not only of the text, but also of the vase paintings on which the

³ Greek ceased to be required at Williams, for example, in 1894, at Columbia in 1897, and at Yale in 1903, but remained a requirement at the University of Pennsylvania until 1914. See L. R. Veysey, *The Emergence of the American University* (Chicago 1965) 118, 195, 234, and E. P. Cheyney, *History of the University of Pennsylvania 1740–1940* (Philadelphia 1940) 366–367.

⁴ Most information about the 1903 *Iphigeneia* survives in the form of newspaper clippings pasted into a scrapbook preserved in the Archives of the University of Pennsylvania, UPS 2 U58 (University Scrapbook Collection), Box 12, hereafter cited as “Scrapbook,” and in a folder of additional material, UPS 68 IP65.7 1903. I am grateful to the University of Pennsylvania and to Archivist Nancy Miller for assisting me with this material.

⁵ On all four, see their entries in W. W. Briggs, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of North American Classicists* (Westport, CT 1994).

⁶ *Philadelphia Record*, April 26, 1903; Scrapbook p. 14.

costumes would be based.⁷ The producers soon enlisted Professor of Music Hugh Archibald Clarke, who had composed the music for the 1886 *Acharnians*, to perform the same service for the new *Iphigeneia*.

By December of 1902 plans were well under way, and in the Christmas number of the University's newspaper, the *Pennsylvanian*, Lamberton evoked the lingering echoes of the 1886 *Acharnians* and suggested that the new play might also have a claim to be the first of its kind: "Tragedies of Sophocles have been brought out in this country, the 'Oedipus Rex' at Harvard many years ago, the 'Antigone' several times, and last year at the University of California.⁸ But, so far as I know, though plays of Euripides have been represented in England (the 'Ion' some years ago at Cambridge),⁹ none of his works have hitherto been attempted in this country."¹⁰ (He was mistaken on this point, even if he was thinking only of productions in Greek.)¹¹ In a pamphlet addressed to the "men of the University," Provost Harrison urged students to take part in the forthcoming cultural event.¹² By January the cast had begun the

⁷ "The incidents of the drama ... became a favorite subject for carvers of reliefs, painters of vases and cutters of gems ... and in the present instance guided Professor Lamberton and Dr. Bates," *Boston Evening Transcript*, May 2, 1903, p. 26.

⁸ He seems to have been thinking of Stanford, which produced an *Antigone* in 1902; see D. E. Pluggé, *History of Greek Play Production in American Colleges and Universities from 1881 to 1936* (New York 1938), Table III, p. 16. I have not been able to consult John Lewis Clark, *Dramatic Activity in the Colleges and Universities of the United States Prior to 1905* (diss. Stanford 1955).

⁹ In November, 1890, at St. Andrew's Hall, Cambridge; see P. E. Easterling, "The Early Years of the Cambridge Greek Play," in C. Stray, ed., *Classics in 19th and 20th Century Cambridge: Curriculum, Culture and Community* (= PCPS suppl. 24, Cambridge 1999) 27–47, especially 42–43 and n. 34.

¹⁰ *Pennsylvanian* Christmas Number 1902; Scrapbook p. 2.

¹¹ Pluggé, op. cit., Table II, p. 14 and Table III, p. 16, cites ten productions of Euripides prior to 1903. See Appendix. Lamberton may perhaps be excused for not having heard of Albion College's Greek *IA* of 1900, and he may not have heard of Radcliffe's English production of *IT* in 1902.

¹² Women began to attend the University of Pennsylvania as special degree students, mostly in medicine and education, in 1876, but the College was an all-male institution until 1975; see <http://www.archives.upenn.edu/histy/features/women/chronbeg.html>, accessed July 11, 2007. Provost Harrison's pamphlet, along with programs and other

task of learning their lines in Greek. According to a short notice in the *Pennsylvanian*, “once or twice a week.”¹³

Rehearsals continued through late Winter and Spring of 1903. Even an amateur theatrical production has thousands of details, and Lamberton and Bates must have been busy. Costumes and set had to be designed and constructed, and publicity arranged. Bates drew on Greek vases to design the costumes which, he was confident, were “exact reproductions of the costumes worn by Greeks on the stage.”¹⁴ Iphigenia wore a white dress edged with gold embroidery. Her attendant maidens wore pale yellow chitons accessorized with red and blue scarves.¹⁵ A purple scarf distinguished the *choryphaeus*. All had blonde wigs styled in what was then felt to be the Grecian manner.¹⁶ Orestes and Pylades needed travelers’ garb, red and gray cloaks and broad-brimmed hats, for their entrance; as prisoners later in the play they were stripped to short tunics. “The Taurians, with their matted black beards and hair, wore coarser darker tunics rudely decked with metal, and brownish tapering trousers, much like the trows of Scots highlanders.”¹⁷ The costumes were to be built by Fisher, a New York theatrical costumer, and would be ready for the first dress rehearsal on Friday afternoon, April 24.¹⁸

In early March it was time to begin publicizing the upcoming performance. On March 1, headlines over brief notices in three Philadelphia papers proclaimed “Students in Greek Drama. Elaborate Preparations Being Made for Historical Performance” and “Students to Revive the Greek Drama. Players

material from the 1903 *Iphigeneia*, survives in the University of Pennsylvania Archives, folder UPS 68 IP65.7 1903.

¹³ *Pennsylvanian*, January 23, 1903; Scrapbook p. 2.

¹⁴ *Philadelphia Press*, April 19, 1903; Scrapbook p. 7.

¹⁵ Red and blue began to be used as the colors of the University of Pennsylvania in the 1870s (<http://www.archives.upenn.edu/histy/genlhistory/colors.html>, accessed July 11, 2007), but I can find no indication that the association extended to the *Iphigeneia* choristers’ scarves.

¹⁶ *Philadelphia Press*, April 24, 1903; Scrapbook p. 16.

¹⁷ *Boston Evening Transcript*, May 2, 1903, p. 26.

¹⁸ *Philadelphia Item*, April 20, 1903; Scrapbook p. 10.

from University of Pennsylvania to Produce the ‘Iphigenia’ of Euripides.”¹⁹ The *Philadelphia Record* devoted a full page to the play, with photographs of Lamberton and Clarke and engravings of the sacrifice of Iphigenia based on Pompeian wall painting.²⁰ The article stressed the length of time that had passed since the 1886 *Acharnians*, the pioneering nature of the current venture,²¹ and the difficulty of training cast and chorus – themes that were to run through all the press coverage of the 1903 *Iphigeneia*.

What some of those difficulties were became apparent by the middle of March. On March 14, the *Pennsylvanian* introduced a new character on the production staff, Mr. Elwood C. Carpenter, who “has spent much time in preparing the dances for the chorus, and has made an exhaustive study of ancient classical plays with the view to making this feature of the play as attractive as possible.”²² The *Pennsylvanian* then alluded to some of the challenges facing Mr. Carpenter: “The chorus has now begun their work with Mr. Carpenter in earnest, but as the figures and steps are extremely difficult, it may be some time before the students can be drilled into presentable shape.” With little more than a month to go before the curtain went up, the troubles of the chorus began to loom large among the challenges facing Lamberton and Bates, and the press began to focus on them. Would the chorus of maidens attendant on Iphigenia be Greek, tragic, profound? Or would it seem to be what it all too nearly was: a group of young men from Mask and Wig performing yet another varsity drag show?²³

On March 16, 1903, readers of the *North American*, one of Philadelphia’s livelier papers, had their eyes drawn to a stack of headlines announcing “Greek Steps Puzzle Student Dancers. Toes That Twinkled in Gay Abandon

¹⁹ *Philadelphia Record* and *The North American*; Scrapbook p. 3. A notice also appeared in the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, March 1, 1903; Scrapbook p. 2.

²⁰ Scrapbook p. 4.

²¹ “It has been more than fifteen years since a Greek play has been produced by any Eastern American university, and more than twenty since one of the tragedies has been spoken by the tongues of students in this country,” *Philadelphia Record*, March 1, 1903; Scrapbook p. 4 (but see above, n. 11, and Appendix).

²² *Pennsylvanian*, March 14, 1903; Scrapbook p. 6.

²³ Mask and Wig was, and is, the University of Pennsylvania’s leading amateur theatrical society, known for its annual burlesque production.

Halt at Measured Tread. Training for Tragedy. Professor Grows Weary Drilling Wayward Feet for ‘Iphigenia of Taurus’.” Below them appeared the following account:

Professor Carpenter held his first rehearsal on Friday night. He found that in “Iphigenia” there can be only fifteen dancers – an od [sic] number highly confusing to concerted terpsichorean movement. Nor could the students readily catch the idea of classical dancing. So there was a woeful mix-up at the start.

“Everybody put out the right foot!” said Professor Carpenter. A glance down the line showed half a dozen left feet in evidence.

“No, no, the right foot, I said. Don’t you know which is the right foot?”

They didn’t for some little time, but the lesson was finally learned, and the fifteen took eager and careful note of the professor’s artistic gliding and posing.

“Now, altogether; one, two three; one, two three; one, two – wait! This will never do. Point your toes down, so.”

Here was another obstacle. The fifteen legs pointed in every direction, crooked, grotesque, mirth-inducing.

Little wonder that, as the *Pennsylvanian* announced on March 14, “The chorus will hereafter hold weekly rehearsals and get to work in earnest” and on April 18, “The cast and chorus have been rehearsing five nights a week for some time.”

In addition to the fifteen members of the chorus and seven principal actors, supernumerary herdsmen, soldiers, temple attendants, and Taurians swelled the cast on stage to thirty-eight. Professor Clarke’s score called for a full orchestra of approximately 40 musicians and an equal number of singers for the choral odes, as well as a string trio with flute to accompany passages of lyric dialogue. After a month of intensive rehearsals, the *Pennsylvanian* could report progress with the chorus in particular. They could now “point their toes properly, and have learned to keep their knees straight. They have also learned to move their arms and hands slowly, and not in time with the music, with which they had considerable difficulty at first, and have almost overcome the jerky movements which were so noticeable a few weeks ago. The members of

the chorus also had an awkward tendency to keep watching their feet while going through the dances, which is no longer perceptible.²⁴

Ten days remained before the performance. A libretto was printed, with a stiffly literal prose English translation by Lamberton. Posters appeared on campus and in town, with a design by architecture student George H. Bickley and a handsome text in majuscule Greek above a drawing of Orestes as a prisoner before Iphigenia and the essential information in English.²⁵ Tickets went on sale along with libretto and could be purchased at Heppes, 1115 Chestnut Street. Costumes arrived from New York, but the stiff sandals and unfamiliar drapery made some in the chorus think that they would have to learn their Delsartean moves all over again.²⁶ Members of the newly organized Greek Brotherhood, Elliniki Athelfotis, purchased 500 tickets and made plans for a demonstration at the performance.²⁷

II. The Shadow of the *Acharnians*

In the event all went well. On Tuesday, April 28, and Wednesday, April 29, 1903, audiences entering the Academy of Music on Broad Street beheld on stage a pillared portico representing the Temple of Artemis, with a line of skulls along the cornice. In front, an altar stained with human blood confirmed the Taurian practice of human sacrifice. The players entered and spoke or sang their lines well. Even in the demanding lead role, Mr. Frank Van Hart Slack as Iphigenia made only “two trifling verbal slips in the stress of a first performance.”²⁸ The chorus never quite got its Delsartean dances right, but reviewers were charitable. “Though the accomplishment in some ways fell short,” one paper said, “the wonder was that there was any presentable accom-

²⁴ *Pennsylvanian*, April 18, 1903; Scrapbook p. 18.

²⁵ *Old Penn Weekly Review*, April 11, 1903; Scrapbook p. 3.

²⁶ *Philadelphia Press*, April 24, 1903; Scrapbook p. 16. Francois Delsarte (1811–1871) developed a system of accompanying vocal performance with movement and gesture that gained many enthusiasts in Gilded Age America; see N. L. C. Ruyter, *The Cultivation of Body and Mind in Nineteenth-Century Delsartism* (Westport, CT 1999).

²⁷ *Philadelphia Item*, April 28, 1903; Scrapbook p. 18.

²⁸ *Boston Evening Transcript*, May 2, 1903, p. 26.

plishment at all.”²⁹ A nineteen-year-old medical student in the audience was less kind to his younger friend in the chorus. William Carlos Williams remembered Ezra Pound in “a great blonde wig at which he tore as he waved his arms about and heaved his massive breasts in ecstasies of extreme emotion.”³⁰ Almost before the chorus had left the stage, an excited delegation of Greeks rushed up from the audience to present the producer with a bouquet of 200 American Beauty roses wrapped in 25 yards of ribbon in the colors of the Greek and American flags.³¹

A day later, a relieved Lamberton summed up the production for a reporter:

The purpose of the production was to see whether a Greek play, properly presented, in a manner as conformable to the methods of the ancient theatre as the conditions admit, could not be made attractive and comprehensible to modern audiences, and also to see if a certain amount of enthusiasm for the dramatic literature of the Greeks could not be awakened among the students It has been shown that ancient tragedy appeals to the human element; that it is as genuine dramatic work and has as genuine dramatic character as the work of Shakespeare, or of more modern dramatists.³²

Lamberton felt that his efforts had resulted in a culturally significant event like the Aristophanes of 1886, but while the 1886 *Acharnians* figures largely in histories of the University of Pennsylvania, of neoclassicism, or of classical dramatic revivals, the 1903 *Iphigeneia* goes almost unmentioned.³³ To some extent this neglect reflects American emphasis on pioneering efforts, for the 1903 *Iphigeneia* could not go down in history as the first American anything:

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ Quoted in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (Boston 1988) 42. Carpenter mistakenly says that the play was staged “in an English translation.” In the cast photograph, <http://hdl.library.upenn.edu/1017.6/20051025007> (consulted July 19, 2007), Pound is second from left.

³¹ *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, April 29, 1903; Scrapbook p. 21.

³² *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, April 30, 1903; Scrapbook p. 26.

³³ The 1886 *Acharnians* is, for example, the only student activity mentioned in “A Brief History of the University of Pennsylvania,” (<http://www.archives.upenn.edu/histy/genlhistory/brief.html>, consulted July 19, 2007).

not the first production of an ancient Greek play (that was the Harvard *Oedipus* of 1881), nor the first production of Euripides (that was the Beloit College *Alcestis* of 1881) nor even the first production of *Iphigeneia in Tauris* (Beloit again, in 1891; above, n. 11, and Appendix). Examination of Lambertson's aims, however, reveals another reason for the near disappearance of the 1903 *Iphigeneia* from academic history. Seeking to make ancient Greek culture accessible to a cultured public and to rouse student interest in it are modern concerns. They belong to the twentieth century and continue into the twenty-first. The 1903 *Iphigeneia* does not attract attention because it is part of our familiar world of professional classical studies in the American university.

The modernity of the 1903 *Iphigeneia* becomes clear when we contrast it with the *Acharnians* of 1886. Professorial producers, student actors, and even amateur audience were engaged in a fundamentally different enterprise in 1903 than in 1886. This break with the past is obscured, as often happens in Philadelphia, by a tendency to describe present innovation as continuation or revival of past practice – in this case, by the use of the 1886 *Acharnians* as a touchstone at every point for assessing the success of the 1903 *Iphigeneia*. Philadelphians saw the *Iphigeneia* as a double revival: of Greek tragedy, but also of the glorious production of 1886. Lambertson had set his project in motion by expressing the hope that *Iphigeneia* would equal the acclaim of its predecessor.³⁴ On the eve of the final dress rehearsal, the *Philadelphia Record* used its "Plays and Players" column for an extended comparison of the two productions and found signs of diminished significance; even the tickets for *Iphigeneia*, it noted, were the ordinary yellow pasteboards used for any performance at the Academy of Music, while for the *Acharnians* "a blue and red ticket was issued with Greek letters and an owl seal."³⁵ After the performances, *Red and Blue*, a literary magazine published by students at the University of Pennsylvania, published a special issue on the Greek play. Its lead article was a reminiscence of the *Acharnians* by George Wharton Pepper, who had played Dicaeopolis in 1886.

³⁴ He titled his essay in the Christmas, 1902 issue of the *Pennsylvanian* "The Greek Play. A Performance This Year Which Should Equal 'Acharnians'." Scrapbook, p. 2.

³⁵ *Philadelphia Record*, April 26, 1903; Scrapbook p. 14.

Of the principal producers of 1886, only Hugh Clarke, the specialist musician, also had a role in the 1903 *Iphigeneia*. The producers of the 1886 *Acharnians* had not been specialized classical scholars, but rather academic administrators and teachers with degrees in medicine who taught English or French or Greek in the generalized classical curriculum of what has been called the Old College, a convenient term for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American institutions of higher learning in which all students followed a uniform curriculum, with heavy doses of Latin and Greek, for four years. Modern American classical scholarship, developed under the impact of German *Altertumswissenschaft* in the years following the Civil War, had barely begun in 1886, and when the titans of its new institutions, Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve of The Johns Hopkins University or William Watson Goodwin of Harvard, appeared in the audience of the *Acharnians*, newspapers remarked on the novelty.³⁶ By 1903, the profession of scholarship and the modern discipline of Classics had ceased to be new, even at Old Penn. Of the four men who met at Lamberton's house in Spring, 1902, to plan a Greek play, the three younger especially were or would become deeply engaged in professional classical scholarship and its newly developed institutions. Bates edited the *American Journal of Archaeology*, Rolfe produced twelve Loeb's, and McDaniel became associate editor of *Classical Weekly*, later *Classical World*. All three published extensively and developed areas of specialization within Classics.³⁷ Lamberton, the oldest of the four, was in many ways a throwback to the Old College who had spent twenty years teaching Greek and mathematics at Lehigh University, but before taking up the chair of Greek at Penn he had taken a special course with Gildersleeve at Johns Hopkins and gained his endorsement.³⁸

Like their professors, the students in the cast of *Iphigeneia* also differed from those of 1886. The classical courses that they were pursuing were

³⁶ Percy, op. cit., 310–313.

³⁷ See their entries in *BDNAC* (above, n. 5).

³⁸ *Philadelphia Record*, April 16, 1903; Scrapbook p. 14. Alone of the four producers, Lamberton did not have a Ph.D. He earned A.B. (1866) and M.A. (1869) degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and received an honorary Litt.D. in 1894. His study with Gildersleeve is not mentioned in *BDNAC*.

conducted in a Department of Greek, one of several undergraduate paths to a degree now available at a newly departmentalized university, rather than in a “College Department” embracing all undergraduates in the uniform course of the Old College. The students of 1903 seem, also, to have been more docile than their predecessors; there is no record of the naughtiness that earned the chorus of 1886 a rebuke from one of the producers.³⁹ This docility may reflect an awareness that *Iphigeneia*, unlike its predecessor, was not their idea even in part. The suggestion for a Greek play had come not from a committee including students, as in 1886, but from the Provost in the form of a directive to the chair of the Greek Department, and the play had been chosen and planned before the cast was selected.⁴⁰ Lamberton’s second objective, “to see if a certain amount of enthusiasm for the dramatic literature of the Greeks could not be awakened among the students,” hints by its conditional, tentative phrasing at the difference between students who are carrying out what they believe is their own idea and students who are doing what teachers and administrators think they should.

Finally, the audience of 1903 differed in important respects from that of 1886. In the most thoughtful review that the 1903 *Iphigeneia* received, H. T. Parker commented on the difference between the audience of 1903 and the audiences of the 1881 Harvard *Oedipus*, the 1893 Vassar *Agamemnon*, and the 1880 Oxford *Agamemnon*. Unlike the audiences of the 1880s, to whom Aeschylus and Sophocles represented Greek tragedy at its finest and most moving, modern audiences in 1903 responded to Euripides. “Euripides rather meets a sensitive and cultured audience halfway. He does not and he cannot overwhelm them, but he should almost continuously interest them.” Parker went on to applaud the “romantic flavor” in the meeting of Iphigenia and Orestes, the “modern picturesqueness” in the contrast between Greeks and Taurians and the “tang of the neighboring sea that once and again scores the

³⁹ Percy, op. cit., 303–304.

⁴⁰ Provost Harrison suggested a Greek play in Spring, 1902, *Iphigeneia* was chosen shortly thereafter by a faculty committee chaired by Lamberton, the Provost issued a pamphlet calling for actors and Lamberton published an exhortation in the *Pennsylvanian* in December, but the cast was not in place until late January; “The cast has finally been selected, and are now rehearsing two or three times a week,” *Pennsylvanian*, January 23, 1903; Scrapbook p. 2.

verse;” a modern listener, he suggested, “responds to the excess of sentiment with which Aristophanes and Aristotle reproach Euripides” and to the “brevity, subtlety, point and irony” of Euripides’ dialogue.⁴¹ Ten years later, Gilbert Murray would describe the *Iphigeneia in Tauris*, *Helena*, and *Andromeda* as “works of pure fancy or romance” that “move among far seas and strange adventures and ... have happy endings.”⁴² A. W. Verrall had already pointed out, if indeed he did not create, Euripides the ironist.⁴³ These ideas were in the intellectual air at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia on April 28 and 29, 1903.

Lamberton’s first objective, “to see whether a Greek play, properly presented, in a manner as conformable to the methods of the ancient theatre as the conditions admit, could not be made attractive and comprehensible to modern audiences,” acknowledges this new audience and contrasts with the aims of the producers of the earlier *Acharnians*. The earlier audience hoped for an authentic reproduction of Greek art, which they acknowledged as a timeless pattern of excellence in every way; they did not hope for an attractive, comprehensible dramatic experience that spoke to their current condition. As *Harper’s Weekly* put it in 1886, “[T]he real interest of the performance lies in its bringing the spectator, as has been said, right into the life of antiquity. One seems for the moment transported back to a time before time was, when all modern history and most of ancient history was still an unopened book.”⁴⁴ This audience, imbued with what Caroline Winterer has called “the desire for authenticity through contact with physical remains of the ancient world,”⁴⁵ eagerly absorbed the archaeological and philological apparatus which accompanied the 1886 *Acharnians*: a libretto with Dindorf’s Greek text facing John

⁴¹ *Boston Evening Transcript*, May 2, 1903, p. 26.

⁴² Gilbert Murray, *Euripides and His Age* (London 1913) 142–143.

⁴³ A. W. Verrall, *Euripides the Rationalist* (Cambridge 1895). On modern reception of Euripides see A. N. Michelini, *Euripides and the Tragic Tradition* (Madison 1987) 3–51, and on Verrall, id., “The Unclassical as Classic: The Modern Reception of Euripides,” *Poetics Today* 9 (1988), 699–710.

⁴⁴ *Harper’s Weekly*, November 20, 1886, 747.

⁴⁵ C. Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life 1780–1910* (Baltimore 2002) 97.

Hookham Frere's English translation, and discussions in the public press on whether the scene with Euripides (*Acharnians* 407–490) implies the existence of a second story in the fifth-century theater.⁴⁶ They were not seeking the qualities that Lamberton worked toward in 1903: an appeal “to the human element” through a “genuine dramatic work” having “as genuine dramatic character as the work of Shakespeare, or of more modern dramatists.” Even a favorable review in 1886 described the *Acharnians* as a play that “has none of the features of comedy proper ... scarcely a thread of human interest ... and none of that dramatic quality which makes ‘Antigone’ or any other of Sophocles’ tragedies, a perennially inspiring or absorbing play.”⁴⁷

For the very different audience of 1903, Lamberton and his colleagues downplayed the archaeological and philological underpinnings of their *Iphigeneia*. The libretto had no Greek text, and although press coverage emphasized the difficulty of reproducing ancient theatrical practice and applauded Bates for basing his costumes on ancient vase painting, it also acknowledged that compromise with authenticity was inevitable if the needs of a modern audience were to be met. As the *Philadelphia Inquirer* said:

It is not, however, necessary for one to suppose that the audience is transported some twenty-three centuries back and that they are being treated to an exact reproduction of the original in all respects; neither is it possible to consider the movement in any way as frivolous. It is an earnest, painstaking, scholarly effort to reproduce as nearly as may be the form of the Greek drama, that fountain of endless inspiration, with as much of the spirit as the limitations of our present-day knowledge and the capabilities of college students afford.⁴⁸

There were no debates in the public press this time on the second story of the stage building or the use of the *eccyclema*.

The changing relationship between academic producers and cultured public, in fact, made such debates unlikely in 1903. The producers of the 1886 *Acharnians*, physicians William Pepper and William H. Klapp and their

⁴⁶ Percy, op. cit., 302.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 309–310.

⁴⁸ *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 29, 1903; Scrapbook p. 22.

colleague Morton W. Easton, a physician who taught French and Greek, shared their audience's neo-classical culture and enthusiasm for recreating Greek antiquity, and although their classical learning may have been more profound than that of the generality of their audience, they did not think of themselves as professional classicists set apart from the cultured public. In 1903, on the other hand, Lamberton, Bates, and their colleagues were specialists distinguished by professional training and participation in the institutions of an established academic discipline. Reviewing the 1880 Oxford production of *Agamemnon*, Gildersleeve suggested that such productions might heal the growing rift between "the hold that the great poets of antiquity have on the popular mind" and classical philology, the "deeper knowledge ... vouchsafed only to those who make it a special study."⁴⁹ Seventeen years later, those who made classical philology and archaeology their special study had taken on the role that American classicists now play, that of specialists in the interpretation of antiquity for a public to whom classical philology is an unopened book.

Appendix

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Play</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Language</u>
Beloit College	<i>Iphigeneia in Tauris</i>	1891	English
Beloit College	<i>Alcestis</i>	1892	English
University of the South	<i>Alcestis</i>	1893	Greek Chorus, English Dialogue
Beloit College	<i>Iphigeneia in Tauris</i>	1897	English
Beloit College	<i>Alcestis</i>	1898	English
Albion College	<i>Iphigeneia in Aulis</i>	1900	Greek
Ripon College	<i>Iphigeneia in Tauris</i>	1900	Greek?
Beloit College	<i>Iphigeneia in Aulis</i>	1900	English
Ripon College	<i>Iphigeneia in Aulis</i>	1900	English
Radcliffe College	<i>Iphigeneia in Tauris</i>	1902	English

⁴⁹ "The 'Agamemnon' at Oxford," *The Nation*, June 24, 2880, 472.