

director, who until then had been so careful, overestimated his audience. The daemonic passion of the African, the satanic malice of his ensign, the cruel slaughter of the innocent Desdemona, all exceeded by far what the nerves of the men of Hamburg and even more those of the women of 1776 Hamburg could bear. The closer the performance approached the catastrophe, the more uneasy the audience grew. 'Swoons followed upon swoons,' reports an eyewitness. 'The doors of the boxes opened and closed. People left or when necessary were carried out; and (according to trustworthy reports) the premature miscarriages of various prominent Hamburg women were the result of seeing and hearing the overly tragic play.'

When the play was next performed on December 4th, it was called 'Othello with Changes'. There were not only deletions and rewritings of crass expressions and scenes but most important a happy ending was added. 'Both Othello and Desdemona remained alive; and Hamburg's coming generations were preserved from theatrical accouchements.'

The eighteenth-century parallel does not assure the historicity of the Aeschylean anecdote. It does prove that the historicity of the anecdote cannot be dismissed on the grounds of intrinsic absurdity. A modern European audience reacted just this way to a frightening stage presentation.

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⁷ That Secretary Schütze would have read Anonymus, *Vita Aeschyli* and invented history to agree with it is what the late Sir Denys Page would have called 'the remotely conceivable alternative'.

CONINGTON'S FIRST EMENDATION

Aesch. *Eum.* 483

φόνων δικαστὰς ὀρκίων αἰδουμένους
θεσμόν.

Page's apparatus: 483 αἰδου- Prien: αἰρου- codd.

C. Prien, *Rh. Mus.* 6 (1848), 192f.: '...so habe ich vor Jahren schon vermuthet [but not published, apparently] ὀρκίων γ' αἰδουμένους mit Vergleichung der Stellen V. 650 [= 680] ὀρκον αἰδεσθε und 680 [= 710] αἰδουμένους τὸν ὀρκον, ohne sie für evident ausgeben zu wollen.'

W. Linwood, *Aeschyli Eumenides* (Oxford, 1844), Corrigenda et Addenda p. 200: 'αἰδουμένους pro αἰρουμένους conjicit juvenis ingeniosus: nec male fortasse.'

Dictionary of National Biography iv (1908), 938f. CONINGTON, JOHN (1825–1869), classical scholar, born 10 Aug. 1825... On 30 June 1843 Conington matriculated at University College, Oxford... He went into residence in October 1843, and in the Lent term of the following year carried off the Hertford and Ireland university scholarships... It is curious that his judgment... drew him in the direction of Cambridge... To Oxford, however, he went, and read with the eminent scholar Linwood, who had the same passion for Greek plays as his pupil...

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THE FINAL LINES OF SOPHOCLES, *KING OEDIPUS* (1524–30)

ὦ πάτρας Θήβης ἔνοικοι, λεύσσειτ', Οἰδίπους ὄδε,
ὃς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἤδει καὶ κράτιστος ἦν ἀνὴρ, 1525
οὐ τίς οὐ ζήλω πολιτῶν ταῖς τύχαις *ἐπέβλεπεν,
εἰς ὅσον κλύδωνα δεινῆς συμφορᾶς ἐλήλυθεν.
ὥστε θνητὸν ὄντ' ἐκείνην τὴν τελευταίαν ἰδεῖν
ἡμέραν ἐπισκοποῦντα μηδέν' ὀλβίζειν, πρὶν ἂν
τέρμα τοῦ βίου περάσῃ μηδέν' ἀλγεινὸν παθῶν. 1530