

## INTRODUCTION

*Troilus and Cressida* is described by scholars, critics and directors as Shakespeare's play for the twentieth century. They point out features of style and content that make it more accessible to modern audiences than to those a century or two ago. The cynical, reductive railing of Thersites about the war and its participants, the scheming of the Greeks, the debate of the Trojans about Helen and value, and the unflattering glimpses of some combatants undercut the long-accepted epic status of the Trojan War and reflect modern concerns. The aura of social malaise has its current parallels. Moreover, Cressida has gradually been viewed with increased understanding as she responds to her male-dominated wartime society. Although ambivalence remains about whether she is a victim of masculine power and politics, a helpless responder to her own shifting urges, or an opportunistic young female seeking her main chance first with romantic Troilus, then with pragmatic Diomedes, there is at least argument, rather than outright dismissal of her as the villain. Conversely, flaws have been discovered in Troilus, Ulysses, and even Hector, who used to be treated with unquestioning sympathy.

The play's comments on people and events from differing viewpoints speak to a modern lack of absolute values. Like the Greeks bogged down before Troy, we have endured the effects of stalemated war. In an anti-heroic age, we accept Thersites' cynical comments on subjects the nineteenth century regarded as high tragedy. During the Second World War, the escapism of a romanticized *Midsummer Night's Dream*, or the heroism of Olivier's *Henry V* resonated, but in that war's aftermath and even more during later conflicts, the debates and attitudes of *Troilus and Cressida* seemed truer. Furthermore, we now talk frankly of sex and disease, topics polite Victorians and Edwardians considered taboo. We accept uncut a broadly played Helen scene, Pandarus' jokes and closing speech, homoerotic elements and Thersites' scurrility. Finally, we are accustomed to plays that are not neatly comic or tragic, but dark satire without closure.

All these aspects are revealed in reading, but the play comes fully alive only in production, as visual images, actions and the spoken word coalesce to emphasise new meanings. The stage history of *Troilus and Cressida* is also essentially twentieth century, but theatre never occurs in a vacuum, and productions have changed radically over a hundred years, reflecting evolving theatrical practice, new critical approaches and shifting tastes and expectations of audiences during a period of wars and cultural revolution. When first revived in England in 1907 and

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1912, and in the United States in 1916, the play was treated as newly discovered Shakespeare. Except for conjectured early seventeenth-century performances and Dryden's 1679 revision, which held the stage fitfully for half a century, *Troilus and Cressida* had no documented stage history until 1890s German revivals. The first twentieth-century producers were consequently free of precedents established by eighteenth and nineteenth-century actor-managers regarding character delineation and set and costume design. Nor did audiences and critics have memories of prior productions to shape their expectations as they responded to the work of Fry, Poel and their early followers.

Traditions have developed, but the text remains the starting point for fresh approaches, especially since 1960, as professional performances rival Shakespeare's more famous works in frequency. Concomitantly, approaches to dramatic literature have changed. Scholars and critics have given directors and performers a wider theoretical and interpretive base and Continental influences have been felt. Occasional later productions or performances stand out as high points in various styles or have been particularly successful in coming to grips with the play's difficulties. Others highlight problems that arise if the treatment of this complex work is too idiosyncratic or not carefully controlled. Unlike much Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida* is not a star vehicle and I shall often concentrate more on the overall conception, rather than a single actor's work.

### From Shakespeare to Dryden

There are no production records of the play from Shakespeare's lifetime. The Stationers' Register entry of 7 February 1602/3 says 'as yt is acted by my lord Chamberlen's Men'. When registered and finally printed in 1609, the play's title page claim of performance by 'The Kings Maiesties servants at the Globe' was replaced during the press run by 'Excellently expressing the beginning of their loues, with the conceited wooing of Pandarus, Prince of Licia'.<sup>1</sup> The Quarto 'b' includes the 'Epistle' to the reader proclaiming it 'a new play, neuer stal'd with the Stage, neuer clapper-clawd with the palmes of the vulgar, and yet passing full of the palme comicall'. Numerous scholars, including Peter Alexander, Gary Taylor and W. R. Elton, have proposed the Inns of Court as the first venue, while Robert Kimbrough has supported the public theatre.<sup>2</sup> The satiric tone and long reasoning speeches do seem appropriate to a sophisticated audience, but evidence is conjectural, and presumably the company would have followed

1 Documents are reprinted in Schoenbaum and details are given in *The New Variorum*, pp. 321ff. Alice Walker discusses the textual problems quite fully, and Anthony Dawson's edition provides analysis and specific details.

2 Peter Alexander and Nevill Coghill also had an ongoing debate about public vs. private venues in *TLS* during January and February 1967.

a special performance with presentations at the Globe, rather than staging the play just once.

One variant between Quarto and Folio texts may indicate revision during performance. Troilus' dismissal of Pandarus: 'Hence brother lackie; ignomie and shame / Pursue thy life, and liue aye with thy name' appeared at 5.3.112–13 in the Folio, as well as almost word for word at the Quarto position in 5.11.3 This suggests that in some early performances Pandarus may have left in 5.3, and the action ended on Troilus' resounding couplet: 'Strike a free march to Troy, with comfort goe: / Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe'.

Ambivalence about classification also began early. The Quarto title page mentions 'comicall' elements. The Folio printers planned to bind it after *Romeo and Juliet*, but inserted *Timon of Athens* there and moved *Troilus and Cressida* to an unpaginated place between the Histories and Tragedies, with an added Prologue filling the blank page before the title and Act 1. The Folio 'Catalogue' of plays omits it, and ownership problems presumably caused some of the printing anomalies with the Folio and the 1603 registration.<sup>4</sup>

Shortly after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, two patent theatre companies were established in London, and divided the extant repertory. On 28 August 1668, *Troilus and Cressida* was assigned to Davenant's Duke's Company. There is no record of a production in the 1660s or 1670s, however, and by 1679 Dryden added his adaptation to the 'improved' versions that supplanted Shakespeare's originals.<sup>5</sup> Adaptation has been described as a form of criticism, and Dryden enumerated his reasons for reworking the original in his prefatory essay 'On the Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy'.<sup>6</sup> He felt Shakespeare lost interest in developing the most fascinating characters, Pandarus and Thersites, and let the play decline into a series of fights that resolved nothing. The major flaw in this potential tragedy was the failure to kill Cressida for her falsehood and give Troilus closure. Shakespeare hadn't dwelt on Cressida's inner responses to temptation and frailty, and Dryden wanted to create a clear, noble motive for her actions. The result is a comparatively uninteresting Cressida who met Harold Matthews' later dictum that a character in a play should not be as inconsistent as a real person.<sup>7</sup> Pandarus' speeches are often less clever and more vulgar, and Cressida's responses less witty and wanton. Before her night with Troilus, she insists on the promise of a priest to unite them later, though nobody mentions marriage in the original.

3 First Folio, facsimile prepared by Helge Kökeritz.

4 *The New Variorum*, pp. 321–34, summarizes many of the arguments and conclusions about the printing.

5 See Hazelton Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved*, for a survey of the revised plays.

6 Dryden, II, 201–9. 7 Harold Matthews, *TW*, October 1960, p. 38.

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Dryden believed he strengthened the play by cutting some characters, including Helen and Cassandra, and expanding scenes between others. A 'due proportion was allowed for every motion', rather than Shakespeare's vignettes. Toward the end of 3.2, after Pandarus' musicians serenade the lovers, Hector tells Troilus of the trade in a long passage where tempers flare, giving a foretaste of their later quarrel. Dryden was proudest of their meeting that replaces many of the battle scenes. Like Shakespeare's Brutus and Cassius, Hector and Troilus make accusations, then reconcile before going to their deaths.

The most important plot changes come at the end. Cressida's father wants to return to Troy, and suggests she pretend to yield to Diomedes so he will relax his guard and they can escape. She is aghast at feigning infidelity, but obeys. Troilus is ready to take revenge on Diomedes, but she pleads for his life. Troilus, of course, misinterprets and curses her. Given no chance to explain, she commits suicide, another wronged tragic heroine forgiving her lover as she dies in his arms. Troilus is distraught and in the ensuing battle slays Diomedes. Achilles and his Myrmidons destroy the Trojan war party, including Troilus. Hector's death is merely reported, and Ulysses' closing speech voices political sentiments current during the succession crisis:

Now peaceful Order has resum'd the reins,  
 Old Time looks young, and Nature seems renew'd,  
 Then, since from homebred Factions ruine springs  
 Let Subjects learn Obedience to their Kings.<sup>8</sup>

Dryden made other changes to meet neoclassical aesthetic standards. His simpler, more ordered structure had fewer shifts between Troy and the Greek camp. A 'heap of rubbish' hid many excellent things, and rubbish removal included most of the long, highly imaged speeches in a play he considered 'so pester'd with Figurative Expressions, that it is as affected as obscure'. He shortened and focused those passages he retained, especially in his first scene, where the Greeks discuss the war.

Dryden's version was entered in the Stationers' Register on 14 April 1679, and soon staged by the Duke's Men. Leading actors originated roles and continued to play them, or moved on to older characters in subsequent revivals. Betterton spoke Dryden's Prologue as Shakespeare's ghost and acted Troilus. By 1709, he was Pandarus, then Thersites, while Wilks and Quin, respectively, played Troilus and Hector. In 1723, Quin took over Thersites, a role originated by Cave Underhill.<sup>9</sup> Dryden's adaptation was relatively seldom played, but the repertory

8 Dryden, *Troilus and Cressida*, p. 256.

9 Details of performances, mainly cast changes and box office receipts, can be found in *The London Stage*, Parts 1, 2 and 3. Lucyle Hook pointed out that Dryden's text refers to

system and stock sets allowed short revivals. On 2 June 1709, for example, it was staged 'At the Desire of several Ladies of Quality'. By the 1720s, songs, dances and afterpieces were added, following current theatrical fashion, though at odds with the tone of Dryden's tragedy. In December and January, 1733/4, after a decade's hiatus, the final documented performances occurred at Covent Garden. Quin still played Thersites, Hippisley repeated his Pandarus of 1721 and leading romantic actor Lacy Ryan was Troilus in a version embellished by the dancing of Malter and Mlle Salle.

I found no descriptions of the staging, but typical Restoration and early eighteenth-century theatrical practice would have dictated scenic backgrounds on quickly shifted wings and shutters, with action mainly on the large forestage. Properties were restricted to those called for in the action. Men's costumes would have classical military touches, while Cressida wore contemporary dress with plumed headgear to indicate her tragic status. A 1709 engraving, illustrating Shakespeare's play, shows Cressida in such a costume handing the sleeve to Diomedes in Greco-Roman armour, with short sword, breastplate, plumed helmet, knee length tunic, and a cloak. Similarly garbed, Ulysses and Troilus stand in curtained shadows representing an upstage right tent. Thersites, in a dark, nondescript costume and small, plain helmet, points from upstage left.<sup>10</sup>

### The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Negative comments by Dryden, Johnson and others may have been partially responsible for reluctance to stage Shakespeare's original, though far less was said about it in prefaces, essays and lectures than about the more popular works. Johnson's remarks in his edition of Shakespeare are typical. Except for textual notes, he was brief: the play 'is more correctly written' than most, but lacks 'invention'. Presumably he approved beginning *in medias res*, covering a few days, and using locales in and near Troy. Apparently self-contradictory, he declared the comic characters 'superficial', yet 'copiously filled and powerfully impressed'. Most significant, he dismissed Cressida and Pandarus. Shakespeare's 'vicious characters sometimes disgust, but cannot corrupt, for both . . . are detested and contemned'.<sup>11</sup> In 1754 Charlotte Lennox, one of the first women to write about

specific actors. Thersites is described in terms of Underhill's nose, mournful eyes and great size, Mistress Betterton's heroic style was suited to the rewritten Andromache, and Mary Lee, Dryden's Cressida, generally declaimed on themes of love and honour ('Shakespeare Improv'd', p. 295).

<sup>10</sup> Nicholas Rowe's edition; also reproduced in Tonson. The sleeve marks it as Shakespeare's, for Dryden substituted a ring, but the artist portrayed stage conventions of the time.

<sup>11</sup> Johnson, VII, 547.

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the play, commented in terms that were echoed well into the twentieth century: ‘Troilus is left alive, and *Cressida*, too scandalous a Character to draw our Pity, does not satisfy that Detestation her crimes raise in us by her Death, but escaping Punishment, leaves the play without a Moral, and absolutely deficient in poetical Justice.’<sup>12</sup>

Coleridge admitted puzzlement. He was certain of *Cressida* as a ‘portrait of vehement passion’. Her ‘sudden and shameless inconstancy’ sinks her into ‘infamy below retrieval’, while Troilus’ ‘moral energy snatches him aloof from all neighborhood with her dishonor . . . [and] rushes with him into other and nobler duties’. He perceived Thersites’ ‘intellectual power deserted by all grace’, and was G. Wilson Knight’s precursor in citing the ‘purer morals’ of the Trojans as opposed to the policy-oriented Greeks.<sup>13</sup> William Hazlitt, though no fan of the play, made some of the most cogent early remarks. He saw in its looseness an approximation of the way things happen, noting the ‘barbarity and heroism’ of Hector’s death and the blend of the ‘stately and impassioned’ with the ‘ludicrous and ironical’. He recognized the originality in Pandarus and *Cressida*, and characterized her as thoughtless and ‘giddy’ rather than villainous.<sup>14</sup> During the nineteenth century, a number of German scholars also discussed the play as part of their methodical study of Shakespeare. Beyond textual matters, however, their predominant focus was on the satire and irony, especially as it was aimed at the Greeks.<sup>15</sup>

While essayists and lecturers puzzled over *Troilus and Cressida*, apparently no one had a chance to judge it on stage. The sale of a Third Folio copy among plays performed at Dublin’s Smock Alley Theatre may indicate a performance in the 1660s.<sup>16</sup> John Philip Kemble began a promptbook, undated and based on a cheap 1791 edition, but never produced it.<sup>17</sup> His pencilled partial cast, listing no women, suggests a date of 1800,<sup>18</sup> and his preparations tell us much about aesthetic taste and theatrical practicality of the period.

12 ‘The Fable’, pp. 92–3. Lennox also dismissed the plot as ‘only a Succession of Incidents’.

13 *Shakespearean Criticism*, I, 98–100. 14 Hazlitt, IV, 221–5.

15 Schlegel, Goethe, Heine and Ulrici are representative. *The New Variorum* reprints substantial extracts.

16 James McManaway found the listing in a sale catalogue of 1827 as part of a group of Third Folio copies from the Theatre, but did not examine it (pp. 64–5).

17 Newlin, ‘The Darkened Stage’, p. 191. Dr Newlin examines Kemble’s proposed changes and their relationship to Francis Gentleman’s suggestions for staging the play in Bell’s 1776 edition.

18 The list included his brother Charles as Troilus, John Hayman Packer as Priam, Richard Wroughton as Hector, and John Bannister, Jr as Thersites. All were in the Drury Lane Company in 1800, and the Kembles left for Covent Garden in 1803. See Highfill, who notes Packer’s retirement before the Kembles returned to Drury Lane.

Kemble repeated many of Dryden's structural changes, probably to avoid shifting Drury Lane's increasingly elaborate scenery. His Greek council opening emphasized the military story. There was no shortage of actresses, but he cut Helen, although Shakespeare's portrayal of the mythic beauty, with her banter and adaptation to life with Paris, creates interesting parallels to Cressida. Cressida's role was diminished, making her less able to match Pandarus' repartee. Kemble cast himself as Ulysses, yet shortened his long speeches, especially in the council scene. Like Dryden, he excised many similes and highly imaged lines, focusing on facts to speed the action, a practice Poel and many others followed in the twentieth century. In 1800, sentimental novels were popular, their long-suffering heroines so different from Cressida and Helen. People wanted absolutes, soon embodied in the heroes and villains of melodrama. *Troilus and Cressida* satisfied neither of these tastes. Although poorer plays were popular, it was apparently not time to revive Shakespeare's original.<sup>19</sup>

Reading was another matter. The play was available in cheap printings such as Dick's, and in good collected editions. Occasional 'acting' editions included extra stage directions and a frontispiece purporting to be a scene in production or a portrayal of a character. The Folger has a number of 'theatrical' engravings, including Robert Dighton's depiction of 'Mr. Brereton in the character of Troilus' for Bell's 1776 edition and Edward Francis Burney's 'Mrs Cuyler in Cressida', printed by Bell in 1785.<sup>20</sup> Ironically, Cressida, so forcefully criticized, was a favourite of artists.

Although George Bernard Shaw insisted that the play was stageable (in a paper delivered to the New Shakespeare Society in 1884), it was the Germans, perhaps spurred Schliemann's Troy excavations, that began modern revivals with a heavily cut translation in Munich in 1898, and others in Berlin in 1899 and 1904.<sup>21</sup> A Viennese 1902 staging had leading actors in a much-revised text that ennobled Ulysses and puzzled reviewers.<sup>22</sup> These productions and one in Hungary may have influenced Charles Fry to present the play in London in 1907, determined that all of Shakespeare's plays could boast a modern English production.

19 The Folger Library owns R. J.'s manuscript from this era that combines Shakespeare and Dryden in another effort to 'improve' the play, but there is no indication that it was ever produced.

20 Most numerous among the prints at the Folger are the lovers, sometimes with Pandarus, sometimes with the sleeve; Cressida giving a glove or sleeve to Diomedes; Troilus tearing her letter; and portrayals of Cassandra, Andromache and Hector, alone or with others. Angelica Kauffman painted Cressida and Diomedes.

21 *The New Variorum* comments rather fully on these pioneering Continental productions.

22 W. von Sachs, *Commercial Advertiser*, 14 February 1902.

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### Pioneering productions

Early revivals in Britain and the United States were single performances or very brief runs, acted by amateurs and semi-professionals, and widely reviewed as curiosities. Not dogged by nineteenth-century scenic conventions, the play could be presented without long breaks to shift ‘archaeologically correct’ representations of Troy or the Greek camp. Two styles dominated. There were Renaissance costumes before an approximation of an Elizabethan tiring house, with a few properties suggesting locales, (Poel, 1912; The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, 1936), or ‘classical’ costumes in front of draperies or columns and screens, with properties resembling Greek artifacts (Yale University, 1916; The Marlowe Society, 1922). Despite speedy staging, the early productions seem to have lacked the coherence and vigour of some later revivals, and critics often declared the play better read than seen.<sup>23</sup>

A new daring was transforming the British theatre by 1907, replacing the moralizing of the melodramas and the neatness of the well-made plays. Shaw and Galsworthy had tackled unpleasant subjects, and Ibsen aroused conservative anger by undercutting society’s sacred institutions. Charles Fry imbedded a performance of *Troilus and Cressida* in a week of familiar works at the Queen’s Theatre.<sup>24</sup> The play’s satiric treatment of an epic event, and its heroine’s conduct didn’t fit preconceived notions of ‘divine Shakespeare’, and the audience was shocked, puzzled and often bored. Reviewers found the action confusing and the long discussions tedious. The predominately amateur cast aimed at ‘elocutionary adequacy’ rather than ‘histrionic interpretation’. E. A. Baughan stayed away, feeling that Fry lacked adequate resources to do the work justice, although he thought Thersites ‘quite modern’. Another critic agreed with Henry Irving that the work should be shortened and ‘fumigated’ despite Fry’s extensive cuts, including Pandarus’ last speech.<sup>25</sup> Walkley commented ‘Pandarus and Thersites cannot possibly be played in full in the present era’, adding that the play is better read ‘as a corrective for romanticism’.<sup>26</sup>

The production was visually simple, with green velvet curtains rather than illusionistic scenery. Classical helmets, breastplates and swords created atmosphere. This departure from pictorial staging may have increased audience confusion, although the programme listed locations, with a quick curtain fall between each

23 Strangely, Daniel Seltzer was still concurring in 1963: ‘Probably no modern production of this play can make it a satisfactory theatrical experience.’

24 The other six plays were *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Winter’s Tale*, *As You Like It*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Henry VIII* and *Much Ado About Nothing*.

25 E. A. Baughan, *Nems*, 3 June 1907; ‘Caradus’, *Referee*, 2 June 1907.

26 ‘Great Queen St. Theatre’, 22 June 1907. James O’Donnell Bennett also mentioned a current ‘higher standard of propriety than the Elizabethans observed’.



of Fry's twelve scenes. He began with the Greek council and Hector's challenge, then conflated Troy scenes 1.1, 1.2 and 2.2. The rearrangement highlighted and provided exposition about the war, focused attention on the Greeks, and subordinated the love story and Cressida. She was barely established before Helen, better known to the audience, became the topic. Scenes 2.1 and 3 were run together, then Shakespeare's order was followed, minus 4.1 and 3, until Act 5. Though Helen (Mrs E. J. Way) was 'comely and seductive', her scene was bowdlerized. Focus after the interval was on the lovers' parting in 4.2 and 4, and the Hector/Ajax combat, arranged by Mortlake Mann. The last act began with Troilus watching Cressida and Diomedes, followed by Andromache and Cassandra's pleas, and gave only a hint of the final battle scenes. Pandarus departed early and there were no Myrmidons. Hector's death was reported by Troilus and given tragic definition by a final mourning tableau occasionally repeated by later directors. Nineteenth-century actor-managers generally cut and rearranged Shakespeare's texts, and Fry followed their example.

*The Telegraph's* reviewer wondered 'what was Shakespeare aiming at?' though he praised some individual performances, including Fry's 'character drawing' as Thersites. He was unimpressed by Lewis Casson and Olive Kennett in the title roles and felt people were laughed at in an 'aborted and ill-natured' play. Edwardian propriety pervades the review. Hector argued too practically for Helen's return, Ulysses 'manipulated the weaknesses of others', Achilles and Ajax were not generous and Thersites, 'mean in body and mind', 'derides his betters'. The play lacked the gallantry and romantic feeling people expected of Greek heroes and proper respect for social position, and exhibited un-Shakespearean bitterness and wantonness.<sup>27</sup>

Changing taste was important. A French production was 'received and enjoyed' in 1912 and 1913, when Adolphe Bressen declared, it would have been rejected in 1900. Bressen appreciated the mix of 'lyricism, buffoonery, triviality, heroism and irony', recognized Pandarus as 'a gin-soaked Londoner', and likened Thersites to a 'splenetic Parisian cabbie'.<sup>28</sup> Although social change on the eve of the First World War made the English slightly more receptive to the second English revival, also in 1912 and 1913, reviewers still struggled with the play.

William Poel had presented Shakespeare in a non-illusionistic 'Elizabethan' fashion since the 1880s, with a tiring house façade, simulated thrust stage and English Renaissance costumes. His speedy productions earned him a reputation when Harley Granville-Barker and Gordon Craig were also experimenting

<sup>27</sup> 'Troilus and Cressida. A Strange Experiment', *DT*, 3 June 1907.

<sup>28</sup> Originally in *Tempe*, reprinted in *DT*, 22 March 1912. *The New Variorum* describes many of the continental productions before 1950 and The Birmingham Shakespeare Library has photographs of more recent revivals.

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with simplified staging for a wide range of plays. Poel lacked money to build an equivalent of today's Southbank Globe, and adapted to the available hall. Each production ran a few days with amateur and semi-professional actors. Poel's fascination with the play began when he was warned against reading it and *Measure for Measure* because they were 'not proper' for schoolboys.<sup>29</sup> Shaw encouraged him and, though he usually presented more popular works with his English Stage Society, he chose *Troilus and Cressida* as his final offering.

Poel's methods were not so consistently 'Elizabethan' as later commentators assumed. Archer said one revival was 'staged after the manner of the sixteenth century and acted after the manner of the nineteenth-century amateur'.<sup>30</sup> The *Troilus and Cressida* promptbooks reveal Edwardian and late Victorian touches, including atmospheric electric lighting, rather than an approximation of the daylight or candlelight of a Globe or Blackfriars production.<sup>31</sup> S. R. Littlewood described 'all sorts of lighting experiments against an enormous spread of black and purple draperies; now Rembrandtesque effects of warm glow, now cold streaks of limelight'. A small recessed area at the rear of the stage was lit from the opposite prompt (right) side.

At the King's Hall, three steps led from the main platform to the constructed forestage, providing downstage entrances as well as those from the tiring house.<sup>32</sup> The programme records Poel's solution to the identification problem besetting later 'Elizabethan' productions: his 'heavy bourgeois' Greeks dressed as Elizabethan soldiers; the more romantic, 'flippant, graceful' Trojans wore flamboyant masque costumes. The result must have been a strange mix of the realistic and highly artificial. Poel also indulged in the tableaux so popular on proscenium stages. He hung dark curtains between the stage pillars and opened or closed them on visually impressive character groupings, eliminating the need for Elizabethan entrance and exit processions. Littlewood found 'the whole thing designed in the modernest of modern ways, to work upon the nerves instead of upon the free imagination'.

Poel followed the 1889 Cassell Edition, with its final tableau of Troilus mourning Hector's corpse, and made further excisions after 5.2, but retained Hector's death. He once said his method was to 'rehearse the whole play as it was originally written, and only when the author's point of view was realized to make such omissions and revisions as are absolutely essential', generally cutting lines

<sup>29</sup> Speaight, *William Poel*, p. 192.      <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>31</sup> The two copies of Poel's promptbook in the Enthoven Collection are very similar, but each has a few unique stage directions and light cues.

<sup>32</sup> Littleton, in *The Daily Chronicle*, recalled details of Poel's production when writing of the Yale revival, 25 June 1916.