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**"Time and Space in Euripides' Choral Odes.  
The Technique of Choral Projections"**

**Smaro Nikolaidou-Arabatzi**

# TIME AND SPACE IN EURIPIDES' CHORAL ODES. THE TECHNIQUE OF CHORAL PROJECTIONS<sup>1</sup>

Smaro Nikolaidou-Arabatzi

Being an integral part of tragedy, choral odes initially corresponded to the ritual character of ancient drama<sup>2</sup>, offering praise to the patron god Dionysus at the Civic Dionysia, the most significant of all the god's festivals. But, apart from its original ritual role, the chorus also took on a dramatic one, as it touched on the events of each tragedy, which progressively developed at the expense of lyric elements<sup>3</sup>. Balancing the ritual and the dramatic role of a tragic chorus was not easy; indeed, there was a strong antagonistic relation, because the chorus' interest in the action could overshadow the ritual character of its lyrics. In this respect, it is notable that in some cases tragic choruses become self-referential, directly referring in the first person to their own *khoreia*, which involved dance as well song. In fact, self-

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<sup>1</sup> I delivered a section of this article (in Greek) at the Second International Conference of Ancient Theatre organized by the Greek Open University at Alexandroupolis in May 2008.

For recent works on the subject of dramatic space in Greek tragedy, Rehm 2002; Ley 2007; Cropp, Lee, and Sansone, eds. 2000. For the chorus in the tragedies of Euripides, see Hose 1991.

<sup>2</sup> The ritual role of ancient tragedy arises from its dithyrambic origins, first observed by Aristotle in *Poetics* 1449a11; see Pickard-Cambridge 1962. This article does not deal with the much-discussed problem of the origin of Greek tragedy; it does however take for granted the ritual status of the chorus in the institution of the dramatic festivals of Athens. On the role of the Greek chorus in general, see Bacon 1994-1995. On the association of the tragic chorus with ritual, Fitton 1973, and Easterling 1993; cf. Calame 1999, also emphasizing on the chorus' ritual role (especially, p. 153: "self-referentiality of the tragic chorus is meant to give the mythic action played out on stage a ritual and performative interpretation, a participant interpretation with a real social effect").

<sup>3</sup> On the dramatic role assumed by the tragic chorus besides its ritual function, see Calame 1994-1995 (especially, pp. 136-137 and 146-148). Already Kranz 1933 treated the chorus' role as mixed, part actor, part performer, in his monumental survey of lyric odes in tragedy. Among recent studies of the role enacted by the tragic chorus, I distinguish Gould 1996, and Goldhill 1996; cf. more recently Foley 2003.

referentiality<sup>4</sup> required the dancers to underline their ritual role as a tragic chorus and to identify with it. At the same time, the spectators, too, recalled the religious character of the *khoreia* being performed in front of their eyes in the orchestra of the State Theater of Athens<sup>5</sup>. It is clear that in these cases, without questioning the dramatic character of the play, self-referentiality stressed the cultic function of tragedy in the festival of the Great Dionysia. To a degree, then, the poet was conscious of the religious context within which he worked.

Particular attention must be paid to the instances in which a chorus recalls a similar *khoreia* from the past or imagines a future *khoreia* of its own or of another group<sup>6</sup>. When this occurs, the chorus moves its dance outside the dramatic space of the play being performed (in fact outside the orchestra of the Athenian Theater) and locates it in a different \_usually undefined\_ space and time. In fact, choral projections are a variety of self-referentiality, because the chorus broadens its *khoreia* with images from the past and future, so creating fictional mirrors of its own performance. A. Henrichs has observed the significance of choral self-referentiality and projection in particular in two articles, in *Arion* (1994-1995) and *Philologus* (1996)<sup>7</sup>. The title of the first “Why Should I Dance?” refers to the chorus’ self-referential question in Sophokles’ *Oedipus the King* 896 (τὸ δὲ μὲ χορεύειν;). The title of the second “Dancing in Athens, dancing on Delos” contrasts the projection on to the Delian maidens (made by the Theban elders in the second stasimon of Euripides’ *Heraklê*s) to the self-referential *khoreia* of the Athenian elders (in the *Herakleidae*), and subtly suggests that analogous choral-projections recalled the ritual character of choral dancing in the dramatic festivals of Athens. Following on this, the present article aims to examine the subject of space and time in the choral projections of Euripides,

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<sup>4</sup> It is characteristic that the forms of self-referential descriptions are numerous in Greek choral lyric; see Danielewicz 1990. More specifically, Lefkowitz 1991:15-20 has argued that the choral ‘I’ is prevalent in ritual odes such as the *paean*s and the *partheneia*, while in the *epinikia* the first person is always the poet’s ‘I’, dealing with the poet’s official duties. On the use of the forms of ‘I’ and ‘We’ in the choral odes of tragedy, see the exhaustive study of Kaimio 1970, concluding that the chorus is the expression of a community.

<sup>5</sup> That the chorus’ ‘I’ links chorus and spectators in a ritual act, as it was in the public performance of archaic lyric odes sung by a chorus, is suggested by Segal 1989 (especially, pp. 343-349).

<sup>6</sup> This was first mentioned by Davidson 1986; he distinguished choruses who “refer to their own dancing while they execute it” from choruses who “refer to dancing which is happening or which has already happened in off-stage contexts performed either by themselves or, more often, by others” (pp. 39-41).

<sup>7</sup> In fact, the term ‘choral projection’ was first used by Henrichs.

and hence to investigate the poet's purpose in expressing self-conscience about the role of tragedy in the Dionysiac festivals. The tragedies chosen are, in chronological order, *Hecuba* (before 423 BC), *Heraklēs Mainomenos* (before 415 BC), *Iphigeneia in Tauris* (before 412 BC), *Helen* (412 BC) and the *Bacchae* (405 BC)<sup>8</sup>.

The members of the chorus of *Hecuba* are Trojan captured women after the city's defeat. In the first stasimon (444-483)<sup>9</sup> they lament their misfortune<sup>10</sup> and, while thinking about their impending exile, mention by name the places in which they could probably take refuge. Having referred to the Greek regions of Doris and Phthia (450-451), in the first antistrophe (455-465) they wonder if it would be better to arrive on Delos, the sacred island where Apollo and Artemis had been born:

ἢ νάσων, ἀλιήρει  
κώπα πεμπομένην τάλαι- 456  
ναν, οἰκτρὰν βιοτὰν ἔχουσιν οἴκοις,  
ἔνθα πρωτόγονός τε φοῖ-  
νιξ δάφνα θ' ἱεροῦς ἀνέ-  
σχε πτόρθους Λατοῖ φίλον ὦ- 460  
δῖνος ἄγαλμα Δίας;  
σὺν Δηλιάσιν τε κού-  
ραισιν Ἀρτέμιδος θεᾶς  
χρυσέαν τ' ἄμπυκα τόξα τ' εὐλογήσω; 465

Or to an island home, sped on my way in grief by an oar plied in the brine, to spend a life of misery in the house, there where the date palm, first of all its line, and the laurel tree sent up their holy shoots as an adornment dear to Leto to grace the birth of her children by Zeus? Shall I with the maidens of Delos sing in praise of the golden headband and bow of the goddess Artemis? (trans. by D. Kovacs in Loeb edition).

<sup>8</sup> The dates of the production of the plays are adapted from Collard 1981:2. The texts are of Diggle (ed.) in OCT.

<sup>9</sup> For the first stasimon of *Hecuba*, see Rosivach 1975; cf. also Mossman 1995:78-93, and the comments by Gregory 1999. The stasimon has been likened to the 'escape odes' of *Hippolytus*, *Helen* and the *Bacchae*, for which see below (nn. 29 and 53).

<sup>10</sup> For lament choruses of captive women, Dué 2006 (for *Hecuba*, pp. 117-135). On the subject of slavery in Euripides' *Hecuba*, see Synodinou 1977:16-25.

In particular, they refer to the famous palm<sup>11</sup> of the island, beside which Leto gave birth to her twins (458-461). Strikingly the women refer to the choruses of Delian maidens<sup>12</sup> (462-465) who praise Artemis as the goddess of the Bow. To be exact, the Trojan women express their desire to take part in the cultic hymn performed by the virgins for Artemis. But, as the performance would involve songs as well as dances (εὐλογίῃσω, 465) for the goddess, the wish of the chorus generates an imaginative *khoreia*, being projected to the chorus of the Delian Maidens; and set in a named place (on sacred Delos), though in an undefined future time. In fact, the desire of the Trojan women is an antidote to their inevitable exile, because the eternity of Artemis' rituals on Delos, with the peaceful holy atmosphere of the island and the *euphoria* of the choruses dancing for the goddess, could be the balm for the sufferings of the women. Here, the word ἄγαλμα<sup>13</sup> (461), aptly placed, characterizes the ancient (*prōtogenos*, 458) laurel of Delos. This word implies a subtle comparison between the sufferings of the Trojan women and the labors of Leto; that is, in the same place where a goddess was granted her desired release, the desperate women of Troy envisage the relief from exile from their beloved homeland.

Immediately afterwards, in the second strophe (466-474), the chorus considers the possibility of coming to Athens in order to meet the maidens of Pallas Athena at her festival:

ἢ Παλλάδος ἐν πόλει  
 τὰς καλλιδίφρους Ἄθα-  
 ναίας ἐν κροκέῳ πέπλω  
 ζεύξομαι ἄρα πώ-  
 λους ἐν δαιδαλέασι ποι- 470  
 κίλλουσ' ἀνθοκρόκοισι πή-

<sup>11</sup> The palm tree is usually associated with Leto's labor and the delivery of Apollo. See Eur. *IT* 1099-1102 (which will be discussed below), and *Ion* 919-922; *Hom. Hymn to Apollo* 117, and *Thgn.* 5-7. For the Delian palm, cf. also *Od.* 6.162-167.

<sup>12</sup> This is the first of the two instances in which the Delian Maidens are mentioned by the tragic choruses of Euripides as exemplars of ideal performance; the second occurs in *Heraklēs* 687-690, for which see below, n18 (also with bibliography on the *Deliades*).

<sup>13</sup> According to Hesychius, the ἄγαλμα is everything causing jubilation, everything delightful (πᾶν ἐφ' ᾧ τις ἀγάλλεται); cf. Aesch. *Ag.* 207 τέκνον...δόμων ἄγαλμα; Soph. *Ant.* 1116 νύμφας ἄγαλμα. In the classical period, the word ἄγαλμα usually referred to the statues and images of the gods. Thus, Plato in *Phaedrus* 251a and 252d identifies the beautiful body as an *agalma*; for the philosophical connotations of the word, see Nightingale 2004:163-167.

ναις ἢ Τιτάνων γενεάν,  
τὰν Ζεὺς ἀμφιπύρῳ κοιμί-  
ζει φλογμῶ Κρονίδας;

Or shall I after all in the city of Pallas embroider in Athena's saffron-colored gown with threads of flowered hue the yoking of her lovely chariot-mares or the race of Titans, which Zeus, Cronus' son, laid low with his thunderbolts of double flame?

Obviously, a new choral projection is generated, this time to the Panathenaea; but the Panathenaea were one of the Athenian festivals, as were the Great Dionysia, too. As, then, the space of the new *khoreia* is transferred from Delos to Athens, the vague future of the dramatic event overlaps with the here and now of the city's festivity, even as the tragic chorus of *Hecuba* performs its own *khoreia* in the orchestra of the State Theater of Dionysus. The poet self-consciously creates alternate images of these off-stage \_more or less distant\_ choruses, representing them as desirable reflections of the chorus in the orchestra. The timeless dimension of the worship of other gods (apart from Dionysus), distinguishable by its ritual content, offers the Trojan women an escape from their captivity. In fact, these few moments of happiness last only as long as the orchestra's *khoreia* that produces them. In their imagined world, however, time stops and, thus, through the power of eternity, the desired resolution of the catastrophe is accomplished. The dramatic events, of course, will be different. The Trojan women well know that expulsion will only save them from death. Hence, they recall their real condition in the second antistrophe: Troy's defeat, the destruction of the city and their own captivity (475-483).

Choral projection is prominent in *Heraklēs Mainomenos*<sup>14</sup>. Self-referentiality is especially the characteristic of the first stasimon (348-450), in which the Theban old men celebrate Heraklēs' victory, evoking, in a visionary vein, the hero's fight against the monsters of his mythical labors. The first strophe (348-358), in particular, features a timeless and non-spatial reference to Phoebus' song about Linos which is connected with the 'here and now' of the *khoreia* by the chorus' use of the first person ('I'):

αἴλινον μὲν ἐπ' εὐτυχεῖ  
μολπᾶ Φοῖβος ἰαχεῖ

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<sup>14</sup> For a commentary on Euripides' *Heraklēs*, see Bond 1981; Cropp and Hamilton 1987; and Barlow 1996. For spatial transformations in *Heraklēs*, see Rehm 2002:100-114 (for the chorus especially, pp. 110-112). U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1895 remains, of course, monumental.

τὰν καλλίφθογον κιθάραν 350  
 ἐλαύνων πλήκτρῳ χρυσέῳ·  
 ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν γᾶς ἐνέρων τ'  
 ἐς ὄρφναν μολόντα παῖδ',  
 εἴτε Διὸς νιν εἴπω  
 εἴτ' Ἀμφιτρύωνος Ἴνιν,  
 ὕμνησαι στεφάνωμα μό- 355  
 χθων δι' εὐλογίας θέλω.

“Chant sorrow, sorrow,” Phoebus sings/after a song of good fortune/as he  
 plies his sweet-voiced lyre/with a plectrum of gold./In like fashion the man  
 gone into the dark of earth, the/realm of the dead/(son of Zeus shall I call  
 him,/or of Amphitryon?)/I wish to praise/as a coronal to his labors (trans.  
 by D. Kovacs in Loeb edition).

Moreover, in the whole narrative of the Heraklēs' labors, the references to the  
 Peliades Muses and the Hesperides are of especial interest. In the first antistrophe  
 (364-374) the chorus concludes its narration of the Centaurs' defeat in Thessaly with  
 a description of the choruses of the Muses on Mount Pelion:

τὰν τ' ὄρεινόμον ἀγρίων  
 Κενταύρων ποτὲ γένναν 365  
 ἔστρωσεν τόξοις φονίοις,  
 ἐναίρων πτανοῖς βέλεσιν.  
 ξύνοιδε Πηνειὸς ὁ καλ-  
 λιδίνας μακραί τ' ἄρου-  
 ραι πεδίων ἄκαρποι  
 καὶ Πηλιάδες θεράπναι 370  
 σύγχορτοί θ' Ὀμόλας ἔναυ-  
 λοι, πεύκαισιν ὄθεν χέρας  
 πληροῦντες χθόνα Θεσσάλων  
 ἵππείαις ἐδάμαζον.

Then the mountain-dwelling tribe/of fierce Centaurs/with his deadly arrows  
 he laid low,/killing them with his winged shafts./The Peneus river with its  
 lovely eddies is witness,/and the far-flung lands of its plain made  
 barren,/and steadings of Mount Pelion/and the settlements that neighbor  
 Mount Homole,/from which the Centaurs filled/their hands with pine-tree  
 trunks and lorded it/over Thessaly with their horsemanship.

The spatial references are now very frequent<sup>15</sup>, but there are no temporal references apart from the vague connection of time with the past of the dramatic *mýthos*. However, the vivid description of the Peliades' dancing, as they joined their hands in a full circle and subdued (ἐδάμαζον, 374) the land of Thessaly with their feet, becomes a reminder of the *khoreia* of the play being performed; being unexpected, it imposes the illusion of a paradoxical comparison of the old men dancing in the orchestra of the Dionysian Theater in Athens with the Muses, imagined as dancing energetically on Mount Pelion.

A similar desire is perhaps veiled in the second antistrophe (394-402), when the chorus, while narrating another mythical labor of Heraklê's, refers to the Hesperides; but the choral allusion here is understood only indirectly, from the adjective ὑμνωδούς (394) with which the whole group of the Hesperides is characterized.

The subtle desire of the Theban elders for the youthfulness of these choral groups becomes clear in the second stasimon (637-700)<sup>16</sup>. After expressing, in the first strophic pair (637-672), their sadness for old age and their love for youth, in the second strophic pair (673-700) they compare their own *khoreia* to the *khoreia* of the maidens celebrating Apollo on Delos. In the second strophe (673-686), particularly, the chorus becomes self-referential: by the use of the first person<sup>17</sup> (οὐ πάσομαι, 673; μὴ ζώιην, 676; εἶην, 677; κελαδῶ, 679; αἰίδω, 681; καταπαύσομεν, 685; μ[ε], 686), it connects its dramatic role as the old men of Thebes welcoming Heraklê's, with the ritual one as the chorus of the play:

οὐ πάσομαι τὰς Χάριτας	
ταῖς Μούσαισιν συγκαταμει-	
γνύς, ἠδίσταν συζυγίαν.	675
μὴ ζώιην μετ' ἄμουσίας,	
αἰεὶ δ' ἐν στεφάνοισιν εἶην·	
ἔτι τοι γέρων ἀοιδὸς	
κελαδῶ Μναμοσύναν,	
ἔτι τὰν Ἡρακλέους	680
καλλίνικον αἰίδω	
παρά τε Βρόμιον οἶνοδόταν	

<sup>15</sup> See Rehm 2002:102-103, focusing on the dramatic role of the chorus in *Heraklê's*.

<sup>16</sup> Parry 1965.

<sup>17</sup> See Kaimio 1970:102-103. Taplin 1977:133n3 notes against the self-referentiality of the chorus in *Heraklê's* 637ff.

παρά τε χέλυος ἑπτατόνου  
μολπὰν καὶ Λίβυν αὐλόν.  
οὔπω καταπαύσομεν  
Μούσας, αἶ μ' ἐχόρευσαν.

685

I shall not cease mingling/the Graces and the Muses,/a union most sweet./May I never live a Muse-less life!/Ever may I go garlanded!/Old singer that I am I still/sing the praise of Mnemosyne,/still hymn Heracles'/glorious victory/in company with Bacchus giver of wine,/in company with the song/of the seven-stringed tortoise shell and the Libyan pipe./Never shall I check/the Muses who have made me dance!

The reference to the here and now of the dramatic space and time (ἔτι τὰν Ἡρακλέους /καλλίνικον αἰίδω ..... μολπὰν, 680-684) occurs alongside elements related to the orchestral *khoreia* (παρά τε χέλυος ἑπτατόνου/μολπὰν καὶ Λίβυν αὐλόν, 683-684), while the religious context of the Great Dionysia is explicitly echoed (Βρόμιον οἶνοδόταν, 682). Lacking as it does any definition of time and space, the chorus' wish reverberates in eternity, and transforms the hymn for Heraklê's *kallinikos agôn* to a eulogy of tragic *khoreia* in general. Heraklê's victory also sets a high standard for the choral competition of the old men, who desire the glorious garland at the end of the dramatic *agôn*. This, in my opinion, is the allusive meaning of the prepositional phrase ἐν στεφάνοισιν (677) and the epithet καλλίνικον (681), which should not be overlooked.

Immediately afterwards, in the second antistrophe (687-700), the chorus makes an unexpected and 'abnormal' comparison of their own dancing to the Deliades dancing in honor of Apollo<sup>18</sup>:

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<sup>18</sup> For the Delian choruses, cf. the *Hom. Hymn to Apollo* 156-164, and Thuc. 3.104. Nagy 1996:56 thinks that the Delian Maidens in the *Hymn* represent an idealization of choral lyric; moreover, "these Maidens are represented in the *Hymn* as archetypes meant to be reenacted in the local ritual context of real choral performances at Delos \_in which context any real chorus members would be equated, for the ritual moment, with the archetypal Maidens"; cf. also Nagy 1990:43 and 375-377. On the Deliades, see Calame 2001:104-110; and more recently Kowalzig 2007:56-128 (with the subtitle "Dancing on Delos: Δαλίων θύγατρεις between Myth, Ritual, and Theoria"; especially, pp. 59-80: "Myth and Ritual, Time and Space: Forging Ties in Choral Song").

παιᾶνα μὲν Δηλιάδες  
 <ναῶν> ὑμνοῦσ' ἀμφὶ πύλας  
 τὸν Λατοῦς εὐπαιδα γόνον,  
 εἰλίσσουσαι καλλίχοροι· 690  
 παιᾶνας δ' ἐπὶ σοῖς μελάθροις  
 κύκνος ὡς γέρων ἀοιδὸς  
 πολιᾶν ἐκ γενύων  
 κελαδήσω· τὸ γὰρ εὖ  
 τοῖς ὕμνοισιν ὑπάρχει. 695

A paeon about their temple gates/the maidens of Delos sing/to the fair son of Leto,/weaving their lovely dance steps./And paeans about your house/I, an aged singer, swan-like/from my hoary throat/shall pour forth. For the power of right/is in my hymns.

As an old ἀοιδός (678), they now declare their desire to perform paeans for Heraklê's victory, whirling like the Delian maidens (εἰλίσσουσαι καλλίχοροι, 690) who accompany with fair dancing their paeans for the son of Leto. In fact, this new choral projection momentarily allays the self-conscious anxiety of the old men over not being worthy of Heraklê's *kallinikos agôn*. Moreover, the imaginary reflection, which is created by the real chorus, achieves clarity by a very sharp definition of space: the *prostylon* (ἀμφὶ πύλας, 688) of Apollo's temple on Delos becomes the alternate image of Heraklê's palace in the play (ἐπὶ σοῖς μελάθροις, 691); the latter is, of course, the dramatic analogue of the scene of Dionysus' State Theater. As regards temporal definition, the paeans for Heraklê's victory, set in the dramatic present, are combined with both the past and the future of Apollo's festivals on Delos, and so, through the eternity of divine worship, the chorus in the orchestra acquires the energy it needs<sup>19</sup>.

In the next (the third) stasimon (735-814), accordingly, the old men cry triumphantly on account of the defeat of dangerous Lycus and make their *khoreia* more impressive by changing it into a general *khoreia* of all the people, not only of the city, but of the whole countryside, too:

σιγᾶ μέλαθρα· πρὸς χοροὺς τραπώμεθα. 761

<sup>19</sup> Calame 2005:229-230 characterizes this ode as polyphonic because of the connection of the immediate performance of the tragic chorus with the performance of the paeans on Delos through the imaginary projected chorus of the *parthenoi*.

.....

χοροὶ χοροὶ  
καὶ θαλία μέλουσι Θή-  
βας ἱερὸν κατ' ἄστν.  
μεταλλαγαὶ γὰρ δακρύων,  
μεταλλαγαὶ συντυχίας  
< > ἔτεκον ἀοιδάς.

765

The house is silent. Let us turn ourselves to dancing.

.....

Dance, dance and feasting,/shall fill our thoughts in the holy city of  
Thebes!/The changing of our tears to joy,/the changing of our  
fortunes,/have brought forth new song!

Ἴσμήν' ὦ, στεφαναφόρει  
ξεσταί θ' ἑπταπύλου πόλεως  
ἀναχορεύσατ' ἀγυαὶ  
Δίρκα θ' ἀ καλλιρρέεθρος,  
σὺν τ' Ἀσωπιάδες κόραι 785  
πατρὸς ὕδωρ βᾶτε λιποῦσαι συναοιδοὶ  
Νύμφαι τὸν Ἡρακλέους  
καλλίνικον ἀγῶνα.  
Πυθίου δεινῶτι πέτρα 790  
Μουσᾶν θ' Ἑλικωνίδων δώματα,  
αὔξειτ' εὐγαθεῖ κελάδω  
ἐμὰν πόλιν, ἐμὰ τείχη,  
σπαρτῶν ἵνα γένος ἐφάνθη,  
χαλκασπίδων λόχος, ὃς γᾶν 795  
τέκνων τέκνοις μεταμείβει,  
Θήβαις ἱερὸν φῶς.

Go gaily in garlands, River Ismenus,/and O ye smooth-worn streets/of the  
city of seven gates, strike up the dance,/and Dirce too with your lovely  
streams!/Come as well, daughters of Asopus,/leave your father's waters/and  
join me in singing,/Nymphs, of Heracles'/glorious victory!/O tree-clad cliff  
of Apollo,/and the home of the Muses/of Helicon, O/glorify with your glad  
shout/my city and its walls,/where the Sown Men appeared,/the company

clad in brazen shields. These/as they pass the land in turn to their children's children/are a holy light shining upon Thebes.

This new *khoreia* enlarges the orchestral one by expanding both the dramatic space and time beyond the limits of the play: from Heraklê's palace to the borders of Thebes and from the killing of Lycus to the celebration of the event. In this context, the obvious self-referentiality of the line 761 (πρὸς χοροὺς τραπώμεθα) signals a notable interchange between the chorus' dramatic and ritual character; the ambivalence will be conceptually expressed at line 793 (ἐμὰν πόλιν, ἐμὰ τείχη), where the dramatic space of Thebes is connected with the cultic space of the orchestra in the Theater in Athens. Thus, the precise reference to the mythical past of Thebes (to the *Spartoi*) in the next lines (794-797) is all the more meaningful, given that the *Spartoi* were sown by Cadmus, whose daughter Semele gave birth to the god of drama. The subtle dionysiac allusion means that only the ambivalent nature of Dionysus can explain the absurd reversal of happiness in the following verses, where Hera's emissary, Iris, announces (822-842) that the goddess will inspire madness in Heraklê's, causing him to kill his wife and children. Because of this impending reversal, the universalizing *khoreia* of the third stasimon becomes ironic, showing with the power of its ritual character the antithetical fate of the *kallinikos* hero.

In *Iphigeneia in Tauris*<sup>20</sup>, ritual is inherent in the tragic myth itself; the homonymous heroine of the tragedy, who has been transferred to the sanctuary of Artemis in Tauris, is obliged by local custom to sacrifice alien visitors to the goddess. The cultic dimension of the play is also emphasized in the heroine's anxiety-ridden dream, which moves her to pour libations for her brother in order to ward off the ill omens. Thus, in the entrance song (126-235), which becomes a lyric exchange between the heroine and the chorus, Iphigeneia calls upon the Greek captive maidens who have accompanied her to the barbarian country to take part in the libations for Orestes. While narrating the events of her tragic fate, she tellingly refers to ceremonies that take place in Greece, in particular those at Argos for Hera<sup>21</sup> as well as at festivals in Athens for Pallas:

νῦν δ' ἀξείνου πόντου ξείνα  
δυσχόρτους οἴκους ναίω,  
ἄγαμος ἄτεκνος ἄπολις ἄφιλος, 220  
ἄ μναστευθεῖς' ἐξ Ἑλλάνων, 208

<sup>20</sup> For a recent commentary on *IT*, see Kyriakou 2006; see also her article (1999) on the chorus of the play (and the *Heraklê's*, too).

<sup>21</sup> For Hera's festivals at Argos, see Burkert 1985:134; and Calame 2001:119-120.

οὐ τὰν Ἄργει μέλπουσ' Ἥραν	221
οὐδ' ἰστοῖς ἐν καλλιφθόγγοις	
κερκίδι Παλλάδος Ἀθίδος εἰκῶ	
<καί> Τιτάνων ποικίλλουσ', ἀλλ'	
ῥαίμορράντων δυσφόρμιγγα	225
ξείνων αἰμάσσουσ' ἄταν βωμοῦς†	
οἰκτρὰν τ' αἰαζόντων αὐδὰν	
οἰκτρόν τ' ἐκβαλλόντων δάκρυον.	

And now as a stranger I dwell in a house/that borders on the Hostile Sea,/with no husband, children, city, or friend./I do not sing in honor of Hera at Argos/or weave with my shuttle upon the sounding loom/the likeness of Athenian Pallas/and the Titans in colors various: no,/with blood-stained death of foreign men,/death no lyre accompanies, I strain the altars,/men who wail their piteous cry/and shed their piteous tear (trans. by D. Kovacs in Loeb edition).

The metaphorical characterizations *δυσχόρτους* ('difficult dancing', 219) and *δυσφόρμιγγα* ('difficult playing lyre', 225), applied to the nouns *οἴκου* ('houses', 219) and *ἄταν* ('destruction', 226) respectively, involve self-referentiality, referring directly to the *thrênos* of the heroine and indirectly to the *parodos* performed by the chorus. Because of her painful task, Iphigeneia cannot have a regular *khoreia*, such as that of Hera's or Athena's maidens. In fact, what is threatened is the real *khoreia* in the orchestra of the Athenian Theater, because the Greek maidens of the chorus with whom Iphigeneia exchanges her *thrênos* were required by choral convention to offer their *khoreia* (dancing and singing) to the honored god Dionysus. Thus, this brief reference to the festivals in Argos and Athens, which evokes the ritual songs (*melpousa...kalliphthogis*, 221-222) from which dancing is not excluded (as in Hera's festivals above all), creates an image opposed to the gravity of the dramatic events; the poet suppresses the impression of the blood sacrifices in distant Tauris for a moment by enforcing elements of conventional choral dancing in famous Greek festivals. Especially, the lengthy reference to the weaving of the veil of Pallas stirs the imagination with images from Athenian worship, part of which are the Great Dionysia.

The poet's aim eventually becomes much clearer, in the second stasimon (1089-1152) more than six hundred verses later. Now it is Iphigeneia's maidens who return to the happiness of the past and recall the Greek rituals they performed, which are

the direct opposite of the onerous tasks they are obliged to undertake in Tauris. At first they remember a festival honoring Artemis *Lokhia*<sup>22</sup> on the island of Kynthos:

ἐγὼ σοι παραβάλλομαι	
θρήνους, ἄπτερος ὄρνις,	1095
ποθοῦς Ἑλλάνων ἀγόρους,	
ποθοῦς Ἄρτεμιν λοχίαν,	
ἃ παρὰ Κύνθιον ὄχθον οἰ-	
κεῖ φοίνικά θ' ἀβροκόμαν	
δάφναν τ' εὐερνέα καὶ	1100
γλαυκᾶς θαλλὸν ἱερὸν ἐλαί-	
ας, Λατοῦς ὠδίῳ φίλον,	
λίμναν θ' εἰλίσσουσαν ὕδωρ	
κύκλιον, ἔνθα κύκνος μελω-	
δὸς Μούσας θεραπεύει. <sup>23</sup>	1105

I, a bird with no wings,/vie with you in lamentation,/longing for the Greeks' gathering places,/longing for Artemis, goddess of childbed,/who dwells by the Cynthian hill/and the date palm with its tender tresses/and the lovely slip of laurel/and the sacred shoot of the gray-green olive,/dear to Leto's offspring,/and the lake that swirls its water/in a circle, where the melodious swan/renders his service to the Muses.

Of all the stages of Leto's painful wandering during her pregnancy, the chorus cites the goddess' retreat to Kynthos, illustrating the mythical event with an image of a singing swan (κύκνος μελωδός, 1104) on a lake. Of course, the rippling waves on the lake's surface are due to the rhythmical movements the swan makes while singing its melody; but in fact, the image of the dancing swan reflects the ritual dance performed on the island in honor of Artemis. Simultaneously, the reference to the venerable Muses and especially the verb εἰλίσσειν (εἰλίσσουσαν, 1103), both of which are typical of the whirling dances of Dionysus, not only exalt the atmosphere of the projected *khoreia*, but they also give it Dionysiac traits not different from those characterizing the performance of the real chorus which celebrates the god in the State Theater orchestra.

<sup>22</sup> The sanctuary of Artemis *Lokhia* is thought to have been on the eastern slope of Mount Kynthos; see Bruneau 1970:191-195; cf. Straten 1995:86. For a general overview, Bruneau and Ducat 1983.

<sup>23</sup> For this stasimon, see Kowalzig 2007:62-63.



What is striking in this strophe is the unexpected substitution of Argos, Iphigeneia's home, by Athens (Ἀθηναίων ἐπὶ γᾶν, 1131), because it correlates the imaginary *khoreia* of Pan and Apollo to the ceremonial atmosphere of the glorious (λιπαράν, 1130)<sup>25</sup> city of Athens. The celebratory city of Athens is thus represented as welcoming the fictional *khoreia* of the two gods; at the same time the Dionysiac connotations of the imaginary projected choruses celebrating Apollo and Pan indirectly recall the Athenian festival as Bacchic. Above all, what is implied is the here and now of the real performance of the tragic chorus of *IT* in the orchestra of the State Theater in honor of Dionysus. It is not accidental that the chorus will later give Dionysiac color to the land surrounding Apollo's oracle in Delphi, by recalling that the maidens of Dionysus performed their dances on the peaks of Parnassos (<συμ>βακχεύουσιν Διονύ- /σῳ Παρνάσιον κορυφάν, 1243-1244).

In the second antistrophe, Iphigeneia's maidens progress to a new choral projection, now in an obvious way: wishing to be at home too, they recall past moments of happiness, when, waiting for their wedding, they took part in virgin choruses in which they competed for the prize of beauty with delicacy:

λαμπροὺς ἵπποδρόμους βαίην,  
 ἔνθ' εὐάλιον ἔρχεται πῦρ·  
 οἰκείων δ' ὑπὲρ θαλάμων 1140  
 ἐν νώτοις ἀμοῖς πτέρυγας  
 λήξαιμι θαόζουσα·  
 χοροῖς δ' ἐνσταίην, ὅθι καὶ  
 ἴπαρθένος εὐδοκίμων γάμων  
 παρὰ πόδ' εἰλίσσουσα φίλας 1145  
 ματέρος ἠλίκων θιάσους  
 ἐς ἀμίλλας χαρίτων  
 ἀβροπλούτοιο χαίτας εἰς ἔριν  
 ὀρνυμένα πολυπόικιλα φάρεα 1150  
 καὶ πλοκάμους περιβαλλομένα  
 γένυσιν ἐσκίαζον†26.

<sup>25</sup> The adj. λιπαρά fits in well with the other splendid references in the song. The same adjective is employed to praise Athens by non-Athenian choruses at Eur. *Alc.* 452, and *Tro.* 803. From this perspective, it should not pass unnoticed that the arrival in Athens is mentioned before the description of Iphigeneia's voyage; for this switch by the chorus, see Kyriakou 2006 on 1123-1136.

<sup>26</sup> Here again there is a reversal of the temporal order of the events, since the girls' self-adornment for the choral competition should normally precede their joining in the dance. In my view, this validates the priority of choral dancing in the ode.

Would that I could tread the gleaming track/where the sun goes with his lovely light!/But above my own chamber/the wings on my back/would cease to beat./May I take my place in the choruses where once/as maiden of illustrious family/near my dear mother I whirled in dance,/and competing in grace/with the throngs of my agemates/and vying with them in the luxury/born of soft-living wealth I put on/a veil of many hues and let down my tresses/to shade my cheek.

It is evident that the movements of dancing are described in detail while the Dionysiac allusions are more eloquent (θοάζουσα, 1142; ειλίσσουσα, 1145; ἀβροπλούτοιο χαίτας εἰς ἔριν, 1149)<sup>27</sup>. The phrase *hamillas charitōn* ('competitions of graces', 1147), in particular, is especially meaningful, alluding as it does to the *khoreia* now performed in the Dionysiac Theater of Athens. That is, the young women of the chorus in *Iphigeneia in Tauris* are now competing for first prize just as they were competing for the prize of beauty in the past. Because the dancing of the delicate maidens in the past alludes in a positive way to their ritual dancing for Dionysus in the tragedy, it creates an effective antithesis to the painful duties of their dramatic role, including abduction and sacrifices in the barbaric land.

In *Helen*<sup>28</sup> the poet dramatizes a mythical aspect first attested by Stesichorus in the *Palinode*, according to which it was the heroine's phantom that was transferred to Troy rather than Helen herself. While in this tragedy the dramatic myth has an obvious priority, the chorus frequently escapes from the dramatic events to the 'elsewhere'<sup>29</sup>, showing a remarkable autonomy. My interest focuses especially on the third stasimon (1301-1368), in which the escape of the chorus is combined with an excellent use of choral projection. The ode refers to Persephone's abduction by

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Kyriakou 2006 on 1143-1152 notes that the reversal probably reflects the progress of the chorus' recollections.

<sup>27</sup> Hair streaming is a movement characteristic of Bacchic cult; see *Ba.* 150. The verb θοάζειν is a Euripidean *Lieblingswort*, expressing very swift movements; see Dodds 1960 on *Ba.* 65 and 219; Bond 1981 on *Her.* 382; and Shirley 1996 on *Her.* 383. As for ειλίσσειν, it usually expresses the movements of whirling dances (e.g. *El.* 180 and 437, and *Phoen.* 234-235; especially, *IA* 1055-1057 ειλισσόμεναι κύκλια/πεντήκοντα κόραι Νηρέως/γάμους ἐχόρευσαν, and *Ba.* 569-570 διαβάς (Διόνυσος) Ἄξιὸν ειλισ-/σομένης μαινάδας ἄξει).

<sup>28</sup> For *Helen*, see the commentaries by Kannicht 1969, and Allan 2008.

<sup>29</sup> The desire of the chorus in *Helen* to escape is examined by Padel 1974 (the odes discussed are *Hippolytus* 732-775, and *Helen* 1451-1511).

Pluto and the subsequent grief of her mother Demeter<sup>30</sup>. The events of the famous myth are narrated in the first strophic pair (1301-1318+1319-1336) of the stasimon; but in the second one (1337-1352+1353-1368) what is described is an imaginary *khoreia* of the Graces and the Muses who are summoned by Zeus to cheer up the goddess and assuage her anger.

In particular, the recalling of the mythical events starts from Demeter's search for *Korē* (1301-1312), which is described without any reference to time; then it moves backwards in time to the moment of Persephone's abduction (1312-1318). In this way, *Korē*'s abduction is incorporated in the narrative of Demeter's search, although it actually precedes it. In my view, this 'reversal' may be put down to the element of the Dionysiac *khoreia* alluded to in the first strophe:

ὄρεϊα ποτὲ δρομάδι κώ-  
 λω Μάτηρ ἐσύθη θεῶν  
 ἀν' ὑλᾶντα νάπη  
 ποτάμιόν τε χεῦμ' ὑδάτων  
 βαρύβρομόν τε κῦμ' ἄλιον 1305  
 πόθῳ τᾶς ἀποιχομένας  
 ἀρρήτου κούρας.  
 κρόταλα δὲ βρόμια διαπρύσιον  
 ἰέντα κέλαδον ἀνεβόα,  
 θηρῶν ὅτε ζυγίους 1310  
 ζεύξασα θεὰ σατίνας  
 τὰν ἀρπασθεῖσαν κυκλίων  
 χορῶν ἔξω παρθενίων  
 ἔμετὰ κουρᾶν δ' ἔ  
 <υυ-υ> ἀελλόποδες,  
 ἃ μὲν τόξοις Ἄρτεμις, ἃ δ' 1315  
 ἔγχει Γοργῶπις πάνοπλος.  
 αὐγάζων δ' ἐξ οὐρανίων  
 <-x-x-υυ->  
 ἄλλαν μοῖραν ἔκραινεν.

<sup>30</sup> See especially, Robinson 1979. Robinson interprets the ode from a dramatic point of view: Persephone's abduction by Pluto implies that Helen may not succeed in escaping from Theoclymenus' threats; but the celebration offered to Demeter alludes to the happy end to the heroine's captivity and her return home with Menelaus.

Once upon a time the mountain-dwelling/Mother of the Gods rushed on swift feet/along the wooded glens/and the gushing streams of water/and the deep-thundering breakers of the sea/in longing for her vanished/daughter whose name is never spoken./The roaring cymbals, their sharp note uttering,/cried aloud/when she yoked her chariot/with its team of wild beasts/and <darted off to find> her daughter/snatched away from the circling/dances of maidens;/after her <there darted> on feet like the wind storm/Artemis with her bow/and the Grim-eyed One in full armor./But looking down from his heavenly <abode/Zeus the all-ruler>/brought a different fate to fulfillment (trans. by D. Kovacs in Loeb edition).

Demeter's search is predicted characteristically by the word *δρομάς* (*δρομάδι κώλω*, 1301-1302), normally used of wild or out of control movement, such as the movements of a Bacchic chorus (*Ba.* 731; cf. *Phoe.* 1124-1125, *Hipp.* 550, *Supp.* 1000, and *Tro.* 42); it is denoted as frenetic by the verb *ἔσύθη*<sup>31</sup> (combined with *δρομάδι*, 1301-1302) and the noun *κρόταλα* (1308), often connected with the choruses in honor of Cybele and Dionysus<sup>32</sup>. Besides, the sound word *βρέμειν*, echoed in the adj. *βαρύβρομον* as used of the *κῦμα* (1305) and *βρόμια* of the *κρόταλα* (1308) respectively, concretizes the Dionysiac framework, inasmuch as *Βρόμιος* ('Roarer') is a frequent title of Dionysus (*Ba.* 84 and 87)<sup>33</sup>. Persephone's abduction moreover happened while she was dancing with other virgins<sup>34</sup>, and the reference to the event, conveyed in only three verses, also serves to underline the 'circular virgin dances' (*κυκλίων/χορῶν...παρθενίων*, 1312-1313). The epithet *ἄελλόποδες* ('storm-

<sup>31</sup> For *ἔσύθη*, cf. *Hom. Hymn Dem.* 43-44 *σεύατο δ' ὡς τ' οἰωνὸς.../μαιομένη...* (of Demeter looking for Persephone).

<sup>32</sup> According to West 1992:123, the normal 'clappers' or 'castanets' (*krotala* or *krembala*), used by dancing girls, were made from "two short lengths of wood strung together"; but the *krotala* mentioned together with drums in the context of an orgiastic worship (of Cybele or Bacchus) "are sometimes said to be of bronze, and appear to be distinct from the normal castanets" (p. 125). See *Eur. Cycl.* 205 (*οὐ κρόταλα χαλκοῦ τυμπάνων τ' ἀράγματα*), and Pindar fr. 70b9-11 Maehler (*Ματέρι πὰρ μεγάλα ῥόμβοι τυπάνων,/έν δὲ κέχλα[δεν] κρόταλ' αἰθομένα τε/δαίς...*).

<sup>33</sup> For *Bromios* as a title of Dionysus, cf. also *Ba.* 141, 375, 412, 536, 546, 584, 592, 790, 1031, and 1250. According to Diodorus (4.5.1), the title comes from the *bromos* of the thunder that struck Dionysus' mother Semele.

<sup>34</sup> In *Hom. Hymn Dem.* 5-8 Persephone is dancing with the Oceanides (as well as picking flowers) when she is abducted by Pluto. The element of dancing was probably connected with the abduction of virgins; Aphrodite also was abducted by Hermes while dancing (*ἐκ χοροῦ*) with nymphs and maidens (*Hom. Hymn Aphr.* 117-120).

footed', 1314)<sup>35</sup> is placed immediately after the mention of the virgin dances, but it refers to Artemis and Athena, who were present at the abduction and tried to prevent it<sup>36</sup>. The epithet characterizes the violent movement of the two goddesses in giving chase to rescue Persephone; but its subtle choral meaning<sup>37</sup> intimates a sense of Athena's and Artemis' wild dancing, as they were frenzied with grief. Persephone's ethereal dances are thus replaced by the anguished *khoreia* of the two goddesses, which in turn reflects Demeter's frenetic search. One may observe that Demeter's rushing across the earth is implied as a divine *khoreia*, of which the maenadic elements (δρομάδι κώλω, 1301; βαρύβρομον, 1305; and κρόταλα βρόμια, 1308) mentioned already are not accidental<sup>38</sup>. In fact, by its own dance in the orchestra, the tragic chorus of *Helen* evokes the primordial *khoros* of Persephone and her companions; it also represents as a wild dance the efforts of Artemis and Athena, as well as Demeter's fruitless search which introduces the choral ode. The chorus thereby exalts its own performance with images of Persephone's abduction, a well-known mythic event.

Choral projection progresses in the second strophic pair (1337-1368), where it culminates in its identification with the chorus' dancing in a significantly Dionysiac atmosphere. After the pause in the first antistrophe (1319-1336), which evokes the immobility and barrenness parallel to the infertility of the earth caused by the grieving goddess, in the second strophe Zeus intervenes (1337-1340), rescuing mortals and gods. And although the father of the gods offers no solution to the *Korē's* abduction, he gladdens Demeter by summoning the Muses and the Graces to a jubilant divine *khoreia*:

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<sup>35</sup> This is the sole use of ἀελλόποδες in extant tragedy (LSJ).

<sup>36</sup> The efforts of Artemis and Athena to rescue Persephone are first attested here. In *Hom. Hymn Dem.* 424, the two goddesses are present at the flower-picking of the virgins, but they make no attempt to prevent *Korē's* abduction. Instead, it is Persephone who resists alone; but her cries are not heeded by Zeus, having already approved the virgin's marriage to his brother Hades (27-30 and 77-80).

<sup>37</sup> The adj. ἀελλόποδες usually expresses rapidity; e.g. of Iris (*Il.* 8.409=24.77 and 159) or of horses (*Hom. Hymn Aphr.* 217, and *Pind. Nem.* 1.6). The association of the epithet with dancing may be implied by comparison with the verb αἴσσειν, frequently used for the movements of the maenads (*Ba.* 625 and 693).

<sup>38</sup> In *Hom. Hymn to the Mother of the Gods* (3-4) the *krotala* and the *bromioi auloi* are mentioned as instruments characteristic of the orgiastic worship of the Mother Goddess (ἤι κροτάλων τυπάνων τ' ἰαχῆ σύν τε βρόμος αὐλῶν/εὔαδεν...). Thus, it is significant here that Demeter is named as Mother of the gods at the beginning of the first strophe (1302); see below, n46.

ἐπεὶ δ' ἔπαυσ' εἰλαπίνας  
 θεοῖς βροτείω τε γένει,  
 Ζεὺς μειλίσσων στυγίους  
 Ματρὸς ὀργὰς ἐνέπει·            1340  
 Βᾶτε, σεμναὶ Χάριτες,  
 ἴτε, τὰν περὶ παρθένω  
 Δηῶ θυμωσαμένην  
 †λύπαν ἐξαλάξατ'† ἀλαλᾶ  
 Μοῦσαί θ' ὕμνοισι χορῶν.            1345  
 χαλκοῦ δ' αὐδὰν χθονίαν  
 τύπανά τ' ἔλαβε βυρσοτενῆ  
 καλλίστα τότε πρῶτα μακά-  
     ρων Κύπρις· γέλασεν δὲ θεὰ  
 δέξατό τ' ἐς χέρας            1350  
 βαρῦβρομον αὐλὸν  
 τερφθεῖσ' ἀλαλαγμῶ.

When she had stopped all feasting/by gods and mortal men,/Zeus trying to soften the grim/wrath of the Mother said,/”Go, you august Graces,/go and from the heart/of Deo angered for her daughter/drive the grief by loud cries,/and you, Muses, by dance and song.”/It was then that Cypris, loveliest of the blessed ones,/first took up the rumbling voice of bronze/and the drums of stretched hide./The goddess laughed/and took into her hand/the deep-sounding pipe,/delighting in its loud cry.

The Graces and the Muses<sup>39</sup> are directly invoked (as if by Zeus’ voice) to cure the goddess’s grief with their dancing cries (ἐξαλλάξατ’ ἀλαλᾶ, 1344)<sup>40</sup>. Thereafter, the chorus itself narrates some meaningful details (in the third person): Aphrodite first

<sup>39</sup> The Muses and the Graces are often meant as chorus leaders in Pindaric Odes (e.g. *Ol.* 14.1-10; *Pyth.* 1.1-4; *Nem.* 5.23-25; *Isth.* 4.61). For the relation of the Muses (characterized as divine dancers in Hesiod *Theogony* 4) to *khoreia*, David 2006:22-51.

<sup>40</sup> Outside tragedy ἀλαλάζειν is usually attested for the triumphant cries of males celebrating a victory, while ὀλολύζειν is attested for women as a ritual cry. But in tragedy, especially in Euripides’ *Bacchae*, the ἀλαλαγή (or the *paeon*) and the ὀλολυγή can be used interchangeably: *Ba.* 23-24 Θήβας τάσδ’.../ἀνωλόλυξα and 1133 αἱ δ’ ἠλάλαζον... (as in the manuscripts); Aesch. *Septem* 268 ὀλολυγμὸν ἱερὸν εὐμενῆ παιώνισον, and *Ch.* 151 παιῶνα τοῦ θανόντος ἐξαυδωμένης; cf. Eur. *Heraklēs* 687-694, and *IA* 1467-1474. The reversal is probably ironic, implying Dionysus’ ambiguous world in which everything may be upset; see Henrichs 1994-1995:104n99.

took the *bysotenê tympana* (1347) while Demeter smilingly accepted the *barybromon aulon* (1351) and expressed her satisfaction with Bacchic cries (τερφθεῖσ' ἀλαλαγμῶ, 1352). The goddess's earlier search in the mountains, rivers and seas is now reset in a delightful *khoreia*, and takes place in an absolutely unspecified space and time past after her fruitless wandering and the catastrophic results of her anger. What is notable is the Dionysiac character given to the divine chorus, especially in the antistrophe (1353-1368) through the use of Bacchic vocabulary (βακχεύουσα τ' ἔθειρα, 1364)<sup>41</sup> and references to elements of actual Dionysiac worship such as the *nebrides*<sup>42</sup> (1358), the ivy-crowns<sup>43</sup> (1360), the *thyrsos* (1361) and the whirling *rhombos*<sup>44</sup> (1362), as well as to Dionysus himself (Βρομίω, 1364):

†ῶν οὐ θέμις οὔθ' ὄσια	
ἐπύρωσας ἐν θαλάμοις,†	
μῆνιν δ' ἔχεις μεγάλας	1355
Ματρός, ὦ παῖ, θυσίας	
οὐ σεβίζουσα θεᾶς.	
μέγα τοι δύναται νεβρῶν	
παμποίκιλοι στολίδες	
κισσοῦ τε στεφθεῖσα χλόα	1360
νάρθηκας εἰς ἱεροῦς	
ρόμβου θ' εἰλισσομένα	
κύκλιος ἔνοσις αἰθερία	
βακχεύουσα τ' ἔθειρα Βρομί-	

<sup>41</sup> On Dionysus' streaming hair, see above, n27.

<sup>42</sup> The *nebrides* (fawnskin robes) are the characteristic costumes of Bacchantes (*Ba.* 24).

<sup>43</sup> Ivy Leaves have a prominent place in Dionysiac worship. Usually they were twined around the νάρθηξ ('fennel stalk') turning it into a θύρσος, the archetypal symbol of Dionysiac energy and potential violence, used by the maenads against their enemies (*Ba.* 113-114). The *thyrsos* is first mentioned as θύσθλα at *Il.* 6.134, where it refers to Dionysus' nurses. As the word θύσθλα is related etymologically to the verb θύειν, according to LSJ, it probably means whatever Dionysus' nurses hold. The connection of the *thyrsos* with the maenadic *narthēx* (*Ba.* 147 and 1157) emerged rather after the middle of the fifth century.

<sup>44</sup> According to West 1992:122, the *rhombos* "consists of a shaped piece of wood whirled round on the end of a string to produce a demonic roaring noise....It was used in some mystery cults, especially those of Dionysus and Cybele, in association with drums and cymbals"; cf. above, n32.

Right and holiness neglecting,/you tarried nightlong in your chamber/and  
have incurred the wrath of the Great/Mother, my child, by not honoring/  
the goddess' sacrifices./Great is the power of the dappled/garb of  
deerskin,/the ivy shoots wound about/the sanctified hollow reed,/the din in  
the air/of the bull-roarer whirled in a circle,/the long hair leaping in bacchic  
joy/for Bromius, and the goddess' nightlong feasts.

Here, the vocative ὦ παῖ ('my child', 1356)<sup>45</sup> is problematic: is it addressed to Helen, Demeter or Persephone. The addressee may well be Persephone, but Demeter is the person who speaks. In the second antistrophe, the divine *khoreia* is evoked again, now in a direct way, resuming the chorus' narrative from the point when the goddess takes the *aulos* in her hands (1350-1351). Thus, dancing like a maenad, Demeter praises the Great Mother, a goddess related to Dionysus<sup>46</sup>. At the same time, she calls to mind the beloved *Korē* and addresses her directly as if Persephone were a participant in the orgiastic *khoreia*. Demeter's warning to her daughter about the wrath (μῆνις) of the Mother Goddess may be better understood as an expression of the *bakheia* (Bacchic *ecstasis*) that possesses her; moreover, the joy of Dionysus' Maenads often is wild itself, mainly when it emerges as a kind of revenge for impiety towards the god. Demeter has every reason to be satisfied, because she has forced Zeus to intervene; her smiling face, however, does not in any way mean that she is reconciled to her daughter's abduction. Thus, the goddess performing a Bacchic dance, in which she wishes her imprisoned daughter could take part, is set off as a new, separate choral projection in the wider divine *khoreia* which the chorus imagines to have begun in the second strophe. In reality, the imagined *backheousa* goddess is identified with the *coryphaia* dancing in the orchestra, and the vocative ὦ παῖ acquires exceptional interest on account of its self-referentiality, as the

<sup>45</sup> Like ὦ τέκνον, the vocative ὦ παῖ is used when the addressee is younger than the speaker; cf. Aesch. *Septem* 686 (with Hutchinson's comment).

<sup>46</sup> The Mother of the Gods has an exotic mythical identity deriving from the East (Phrygia). Her orgiastic rites are often identified with those of Cybele, a goddess worshipped in Phrygia, too (Hdt. 4.76.3). Through syncretism, the title 'Mother' is also given to Cybele and Rhea, both related to Dionysus in the *Bacchae* (78-79 and 128-129; at lines 120-134, in particular, Rhea's music is incorporated in the cult of Dionysus in a typical process of assimilation). In any case, the worship of the Mother Goddess was known in Greece in the 6th century BC; see Pindar *Pyth.* 3.77-79, suggesting that a shrine to Magna Mater and Pan stood by the poet's house (cf. Pausanias 9.25.3). It is notable that in our ode the title 'Mother' is first given to Demeter herself (1302 Μάτηρ ἐσύθη θεῶν and 1340 Ματρὸς ὀργᾶς).

addressee now becomes Helen herself<sup>47</sup>. By projecting themselves on to Demeter's maenadic *khoreia*, the chorus acquires an authoritative voice, and, though not older than Helen, they can criticize the heroine for neglecting the worship of the Great Mother; indeed, they imply that Bacchic dancing, by which Demeter's grief is assuaged, will also be the balm for captive Helen, because the overwhelming power of Dionysiac piety (μέγα τοι δύναται νεβρῶν/παμποίκιλοι στολίδες, 1358-1359) will bring about the expiation (*katharmos*) of the heroine's unreasonable guilt. Without referring to the elements of time and space, the imaginary *khoreia* of the Muses and Graces in honor of Demeter reverts to a Bacchic *khoreia* commemorating the goddess herself, which in fact coincides with the time and space of the dramatic performance at hand. So, the imaginary *drōmenon*, which the choral projection generates, is converted before the spectators to a religious act performed by the chorus of Helen's captive maidens.

In the *Bacchae*, Euripides' last drama and the only Dionysiac one extant among Greek tragedies, the ritual and the dramatic role of the chorus coexist ideally. The Lydian Maenads accompany Dionysus on his journey to Greece (their dramatic role); but the *orgia* they perform in the orchestra of the State Theater characterize the worship of the god as honored at the Great Dionysia (their ritual role<sup>48</sup>). This feature is evident from the very beginning of the entrance song, where the elements of dramatic space (τίς ὀδῶ, τίς ὀδῶ; τίς/μελάθροις; 68-69) and time (θοάζω<sup>49</sup>, 65; ὑμνήσω, 72) are the same as the scenic ones, which are the two *parodoi*, the stage and time of the performance; besides, the hymn that will be sung for Dionysus is sanctioned as a ritual one (τὰ νομισθέντα γὰρ αἰεὶ/Διόνυσον ὑμνήσω, 71-72)<sup>50</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup> In terms of real performance, the allusion of the vocative ὦ παῖ to Helen creates a *paradoxon*, as if the chorus was older than the heroine; speaking, however, self-referentially, the maidens subtly wish for Helen to be incorporated into their *khoreia* dancing as a *parthenos* like them. For the association of Helen with dancing, see Aristophanes *Lys.* 1314-1315.

<sup>48</sup> Henrichs 1994-1995:101n75 observes that the status of the chorus in Euripides' *Bacchae* is unique in that it fuses completely the performative function of its members as dancers in the orchestra with their dramatic character as a maenadic thiasos.

<sup>49</sup> For the bacchic connotations of θοάζειν, see above, n27.

<sup>50</sup> In the *Bacchae* the *parodos* of the chorus represents a typical cultic song which can be classified as dithyramb on the grounds of both style and content; on this subject, see Seaford 1996:155-156.

In the second strophe (105-119), while dancing in the Theater orchestra, the Bacchic chorus describes a *khoreia* that will be performed not by themselves but by the Theban Maenads, who have run away to Cithaeron on account of Dionysus' mania. In this way, what is implied is a transposition from the chorus in the orchestra, which represents Dionysus and his worship, to the off-stage *thiasoi* of the Theban Maenads, who have adopted the worship of the god:

ὦ Σεμέλας τροφοὶ Θῆ-  
 βαι, στεφανοῦσθε κισσῶ· 106  
 βρύετε βρύετε χλοήρει  
 μίλακι καλλικάρπῳ  
 καὶ καταβακchioῦσθε δρυὸς  
 ἢ ἐλάτας κλάδοισι, 110  
 στικτῶν τ' ἐνδυτὰ νεβρίδων  
 στέφετε λευκοτρίχων πλοκάμων  
 μαλλοῖς· ἀμφὶ δὲ νάρθηκας ὑβριστὰς  
 ὄσιοῦσθ'· αὐτίκα γὰρ πᾶσα χορεύσει,  
 Βρόμιος εὖτ' ἂν ἄγη θιάσους 115  
 εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος, ἔνθα μένει  
 θηλυγενῆς ὄχλος  
 ἀφ' ἰστῶν παρὰ κερκίδων τ'  
 οἰστρηθεῖς Διονύσῳ.

O Thebes nurse of Semele, crown yourself with ivy. Abound, abound with verdant bryony with its lovely berries, and become bacchantes with branches of oak or fir. Decorate your garments of dappled fawnskin with woollen strands of white-haired tresses. Make the violent fennel rods pure all around. Immediately the whole land will dance whenever Bromios leads the *thiasoi* to the mountain, to the mountain, where there waits the female throng stung to frenzy from their looms and shuttles by Dionysus (trans. by R. Seaford 1996).

In fact, the orchestral *khoreia* is projected on to the other one, the *khoreia* of the maenadic *thiasoi* on Cithaeron; conversely, the Bacchae's chorus in the orchestra mirrors the off-stage chorus on Cithaeron. This reference to the off-stage space is clear at line 105 through the invocation of Thebes (ὦ Θῆβαι), as well as at lines 116-117 through the double Bacchic cry εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος<sup>51</sup>, indicating Mount Cithaeron, where the Theban women are now living (ἔνθα μένει/θηλυγενῆς ὄχλος, 116-117)<sup>52</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> The cry εἰς ὄρος is cultic (cf. also *Ba.* 164, 977, and 986) indicating a maenad's *oreibasias* which is attested by ancient writers principally for the Theban maenads;

In the first stasimon (370-431), two choral projections are more evident; the first is set in Cyprus (402-408), the second in Pieria (409-416). In the second strophe, particularly, the chorus expresses their desire to go to Cyprus, the island of Aphrodite<sup>53</sup>, or to Pieria, the home of the Muses:

ἰκοίμαν ποτὶ Κύπρον, νᾶσον τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας, ἴν' οἱ θελξίφρονες νέμον- ται θνατοῖσιν Ἔρωτες	405
Πάφον, τὰν ἑκατόστομοι βαρβάρου ποταμοῦ ῥοαὶ καρπίζουσιν ἄνομβροι, οὗ θ' ἄ καλλιστευομένα Πιερίᾳ, μούσειος ἔδρα,	410
σεμνὰ κλειτὺς Ὀλύμπου ἐκεῖσ' ἄγε με, Βρόμιε Βρόμιε, πρόβακχ' εὔιε δαῖμον. ἐκεῖ Χάριτες, ἐκεῖ δὲ Πόθος, ἐκεῖ δὲ βάρ- χαις θέμις ὀργιάζειν.	415

May I come to Cyprus, the island of Aphrodite, where the Erotes who charm the mind of mortals dwell in Paphos, which the hundred-mouthed rainless streams of the barbarian river make fruitful, and to where Pieria is, most lovely, seat of the Muses, the solemn slope of Olympos: thither lead me, Bromios, Bromios, bacchant-leading god of joyful cries. There are the Graces, and there Desire, and there it is lawful for bacchants to celebrate mysteries.

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see Plutarch 249e and 953d. On this subject, Henrichs 1978:148-149, and Segal 1997:112-113.

<sup>52</sup> In the Dionysiac realm maenadism and wine were regarded as the two separate provinces of the god: maenadism was practiced exclusively by women, whereas wine-drinking was the privilege of Greek males; see Henrichs 1982:138-147.

<sup>53</sup> By wishing to be ('escape') in Cyprus, the island of Aphrodite, the Bacchae of the chorus associate the goddess with Dionysus; cf. *Cycl.* 69-72 ... ἴακχον ἴακχον ὦι-/δὰν μέλπω πρὸς τὰν Ἀφροδί-/ταν, ἂν θηρεύων πετόμαν/Βάρκχαις σὺν λευκόποσιν. Dionysus and Aphrodite are discussed together in Plato's *Cratylus* 406c; in connection with the theme of poetic creation, *Phaedros* 265b-c.

Here, the time reference points to the immediate future, because the desire of the Bacchae to escape<sup>54</sup> is a reaction to Pentheus' insane behavior. Simultaneously, the elements of space are mentioned with a characteristic climax, that moves from larger regions to the specific ones: Κύπρος, Πάφος, ἑκατόστομοι βαρβάρου ποταμοῦ<sup>55</sup> ῥοαί (402-407) or Πιερία, σεμνὰ κλιτὺς Ὀλύμπου (410-411). The end of the strophe is noteworthy inasmuch as the imaginary *khoreia* in Pieria is represented as exemplary for Bacchic *khoreia* in general: ἐκεῖ δὲ βᾶκ-/χαις θέμις ὀργιάζειν (415-416).

A new projection on to the choruses in Pieria is made in the *ep̄ōidos* of the second stasimon (556-575). Waiting for Dionysus to make his entrance to stop the *hybris* of the murderous man (φονίου ἀνδρός, 555), the Bacchae imagine the route taken by the god to Thebes, passing through places ready to accept his worship:

πόθι Νύσας ἄρα τᾶς θη-  
 ροτρόφου θυρσοφορεῖς  
 θιάσου, ὦ Διόνυσ', ἦ  
 κορυφαῖς Κωρυκίαις;  
 τάχα δ' ἐν ταῖς πολυδένδροισιν Ὀλύμπου 560  
 θαλάμαις, ἔνθα ποτ' Ὀρφεὺς κιθαρίζων  
 σύναγεν δένδρεα μούσαις,  
 σύναγεν θήρας ἀγρώστας.  
 μάκαρ ὦ Πιερία, 565  
 σέβεταιί σ' Εὐϊος, ἦξει  
 τε χορεύσων ἅμα βακχεύ-  
 μασι, τόν τ' ὠκυρόαν  
 διαβὰς Ἄξιόν εἰλισ-  
 σομένας μαινάδας ἄξει 570  
 Λυδίαν τε τὸν εὐδαιμονίας βροτοῖς  
 ὀλβοδόταν πατέρ',...

Where then on Nysa, nurse of beasts, are you leading thiasoi with your thyrsos, Dionysos, or on the Corycian peaks? Perhaps in the much-wooded coverts of Olympos, where once Orpheus playing the lyre brought together trees with his music, brought together animals of the wild. O blessed Pieria,

<sup>54</sup> For the theme of escape in the choral odes of Euripides, see Padel 1974; cf. above, n29.

<sup>55</sup> The river meant here must be the Nile; cf. Hdt. 2.22.1. See Seaford 1996 on *Ba* 406-408.

Euios respects you, and he will come to dance together with bacchanals, and crossing the swift-flowing Axios he will lead the whirling maenads, and Lydias the wealth-giver of happiness to mortals, the father,...

The reference to Pieria is now given in meticulous detail. The association of this place particular with music and dance reinstates the conditions for a fictional *khoreia* set in idyllic places, which would be familiar to the god Dionysus and to his worship. Thus, the lush forests on Olympus, where Orpheus charmed all nature, animate and inanimate<sup>56</sup>, prepare to welcome Dionysus and his whirling Maenads (εἰλισσόμενας μαινάδας, 569-570)<sup>57</sup>.

The hypothetical Bacchic dances of the god with his Maenads in Pieria, though set in the dramatic present (at the time the Bacchae are waiting for Dionysus' appearance in the orchestra), in fact transcend the temporal limits of the immediate future and become a timeless ritual event. This feature is made obvious in the way the poet uses time and space. The precise geographical delimitations of Pieria (Olympus, Axios, Loudias<sup>58</sup>) are combined with those of the Corycian caves<sup>59</sup> and Mount Nyssa<sup>60</sup>; in this way, the dramatic present (*Cōrykis* = Delphi/Thebes), during

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<sup>56</sup> For the magic music of Orpheus, see the comment by Fraenkel on Aesch. *Ag.* 1629. Orpheus playing his lyre is the subject of Attic vase paintings in the second half of the fifth century BC. After a period of enmity, echoed in his dismemberment by the Bassarides maenads of Thrace (*TrGF* 3. pp. 138-139 on Aeschylus' *Bassarides*), Orpheus was widely associated with Dionysus, especially in the myths and cult of afterlife. See Burkert 1985:300, and Graf 1993.

<sup>57</sup> For ἐλίσσειν, see above, n27.

<sup>58</sup> The Axios and Lydias are famous Macedonian rivers.

<sup>59</sup> The Corycian summits were on Mt. Parnassos (on its south-west side) where the famous Corycian cave was located. The cave was so named from the Nymph *Cōrykia*, who had given birth to *Lykōros* by Apollo (Paus. 10.6.3). From this cave Parnassus is called *Cōrykis petra* in Aesch. *Eum.* 22, while the Nymphs celebrated there were named *Cōrykiae* (Soph. *Ant.* 1126-1130). Moreover, in Aesch. *Eumenides* (22-26) the place is referred to as a locus of Dionysian worship, established after the god's victory against Pentheus.

<sup>60</sup> Nyssa is an imaginary mountain, first mentioned at *Il.* 6.133 as the place where Lycurgus pursued Dionysus' nurses. It is usually associated with Dionysus and located in various places; cf. Eur. *Cycl.* 68-81 where the chorus of satyrs recalls Nyssa while regretting their alienation from Dionysus.

which the Maenads wait for their god, coexists with the dramatic past of Nyssa, the place from where Dionysus began his return to Greece. The result is a representation of Dionysus triumphant route to Thebes before the catastrophic defeat of his opponent Pentheus. Similarly, the present tense of the verbs θυρσοφορεῖς (557)<sup>61</sup> and σέβεται (566) and the future of the ἴξει (566) and ἄξει (570), by which Dionysus' manifestations are described, coexists with the past of the verb σύναγεν (563 and 564), which refers to the timeless (ποτ', 561) magical music of Orpheus. In fact, Dionysiac worship is represented as a universal religious event, linking the past to the present and the future. The obvious self-referential first person of the verb ἔκλυον (573) thus reminds us of the presence of the chorus of the Bacchae in the orchestra, connecting the infinite worship of the god with the here and now of the dramatic festivals honoring him.

In the choral projections of the *Bacchae*, the dramatic role of the chorus exists in ideal harmony with its ritual one. In these projections, definitions of time and space are more obvious and concrete; though they do not weaken the ritual character of the orchestral *khoreia* for Dionysus, perhaps because the authentic Bacchic chorus of the play had no need of any further identification to prove its unquestionable ritual role. In the choral projections of other, non-Dionysiac tragedies, however, definitions of time do not exist, except for the indefinite past or future, while the definitions of space serve mainly to bring out the imaginary, projected choruses; more often, such elements as may be found in them allude to Dionysus and his worship in a more or less clear way.

I suppose, then, that the youngest of the three tragedians sought to exalt the original ritual role of the tragic chorus by the technique of choral projections, since the existence of tragedy itself presupposed this role in the Dionysiac festivals. As noted earlier, the increasing dramatic role of the tragic chorus gradually diminished its ritual *khoreia*. But projections on to other religious choruses glamorize and exalt the *khoreia* performed in the specific orchestra of the Athenian Theater; at the same time they are addressed at the immediate audience of the drama, reinforcing the ritual sentiments of the spectators, the civic community that sees and hears the performance. For this reason, definitions of time are usually absent, except for the aoristic past or future references, which ensure the permanence of the religious event. On the other hand, when the chorus refers to a god other than Dionysus, it must recall the divine presence, albeit in an allusive way. The technique of choral projections shows that Euripides, despite his own questioning of divinity, was conscious of the ritual role of his art within the framework of the Dionysus festivals\*.

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<sup>61</sup> θυρσοφορεῖν means to carry a *thyrsos*, for which see above, n43.

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SMARO NIKOLAIDOU-ARABATZI

Lecturer of Ancient Greek Philology  
Democritus University of Thrace  
Department of Greek Philology  
Komotini