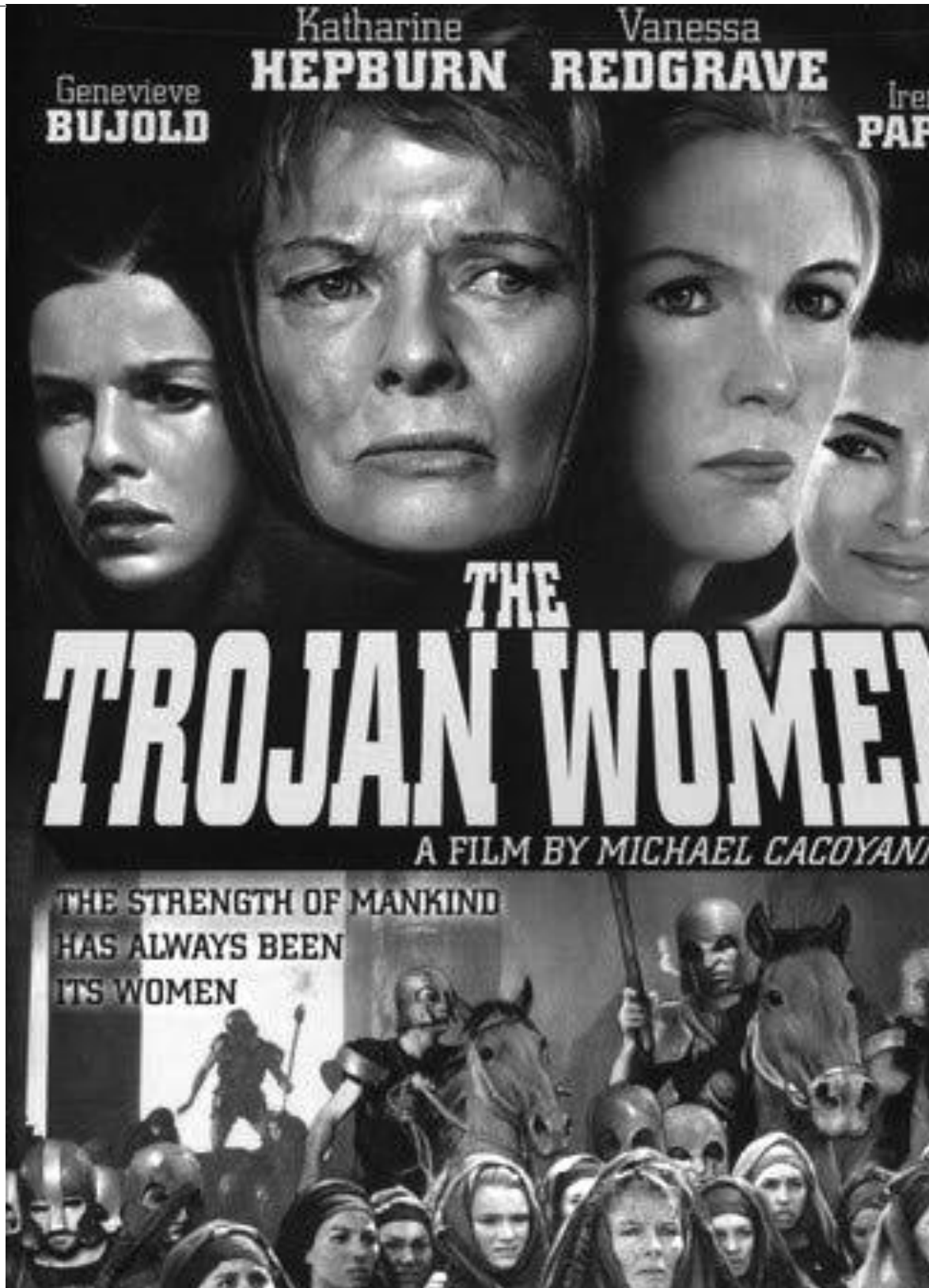
Katharine
HEPBURN
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Genevieve
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THE
TROJAN WOMEN
A FILM BY MICHAEL CACOYANNIS
THE STRENGTH OF MANKIND
HAS ALWAYS BEEN
ITS WOMEN

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A Greek Tragedy against the abuses of power: *The Trojan Women* (1971) by Michael Cacoyannis

Summary

The Trojan Women by Euripides is one of the most important anti-war texts from classical Greece, a daring tragedy in which the poet criticizes the imperialist government of Athens of his time. In this work, the myth of the ancient Trojan War, free from triumphalism and romanticism, is transformed into a plea against the violation of human rights through the perspective of the defeated opponent, and in particular the women and children.

This study analyses the cinematic version of Euripides´ play by the Greek director Michael Cacoyannis, a film-maker who payed special attention in adapting classical texts both for the theatre and the big screen. His recreation of Euripides' tragedy, influenced by the Vietnam War and the dictatorships in Greece and Spain, brings to life and reinforces the message of the original text transforming the cinematic camera into an effective tool to denounce the abuses of power committed against their fellow humans.

1. A Politically Incorrect Text

For many years, I have been interested in the study of *The Trojan Women* (1971), the film by Michael Cacoyannis for its high pedagogical value[1], as demonstrated every time we used it in the classroom after reading the original text by Euripides. The keen interest of the students was clear. On the one hand, the message of the ancient Greek tragedy was completely contemporary and

applicable to any historical moment and place, and, on the other hand, the film maintained its ability to impress and excite. Despite the passage of time, both works of art, far from becoming irrelevant, remained fresh and provoked passionate debates between students and teacher. Initially, we were interested in highlighting, from a philological focus, to what extent the film was faithful to the ancient text, reviewing the formal structure of both.

Years later we extended the teaching experience with the study of two more tragedies by the same author, also filmed by the Greek-Cypriot director: *Electra* (1962) and *Iphigenia* (1977). This brilliant trilogy, which is the best cinematographic heritage that Cacoyannis[2] has bequeathed us, has become a necessary reference for all scholars who study the transmission of classical culture today.

For this paper, I intend to look again at the film and underline the anti-war content it proposes while highlighting the cinematic mechanisms that the director sets in motion in order to make the original text appear to us with all its force. In this discussion, it will be possible to demonstrate how the cinema, in its quality as the modern artistic manifestation, has also been used as a tool for political and social protest. The futility of armed conflicts, the destructive struggles for immediate access to power and the negative results on the civilian population are clearly evident for those who watch the film.

The novelty presented by Euripides to the Athenian public of the 5th century consisted in the change of perspective in the narration of certain mythical events which everyone knew by heart. Who could not repeat the first verses of Homer's *Iliad* without making any mistake? Even as children they had learned to write the first letters of the alphabet reproducing the stories of the Trojan War: the judgment of Paris before the three goddesses, the abduction of Helena or the amzing battles of immortal heroes, such as Hector and Achilles. However, the tragic poet intended to denounce the imperialist policy that Athens was carrying out at that time against its neighboring cities.

To the tension that the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BC) imposed upon Greece, which pitted the Athenians against the Spartans, episodes as shameful as the siege of Melos in 416 were added, in which Athens massacred the whole population of the small island without exception. Some isolated voices were weakly felt until they were violently stifled, as would be the case with the philosophers Anaxagoras and later with Socrates. Euripides, meanwhile, decided to write a tragedy in which the leading figures are not the

Greek generals who would fight against the Trojans but the women of those Trojans turned into slaves[3].

The Trojan Women is the greatest anti-war 'argument' ever attempted on the theatrical stage. Its central story is focused on queen Hecuba herself, aged and crushed by the insolence of the Greek conquerors. In the play she tries to help the rest of the captive women while waiting for the command to board the Achaean ships heading to Greece, where they will serve their new masters, the victors of the war. In the course of the drama the queen will have to overcome increasingly more painful news. First, she herself has been destined to the boat of the deceitful and arrogant Ulysses; next, her daughter Cassandra, consecrated to the god Apollo, won't have her virginity be respected as she will serve in the bed of King Agamemnon; after that, her other daughter, Polyxene, will be slaughtered over the tomb of the glorious Achilles while her daughter-in-law Andromache, the wife of her son Hector, will be taken by Neoptolemus. But the height of the misfortunes is discovered when Talthybius, the messenger of the Greeks, reveals to her that they have decided that her grandson Astyanax will be thrown from the walls of the city so that the noble lineage of the king Priam cannot be reborn from its ashes.

On this basic plot, Euripides masterfully weaves a series of episodes in which the courage of the Trojan women stands out, while all male characters are presented in the background, lacking in character. In this way, King Menelaus appears on the scene to punish his adulterous wife, Helen, but when Queen Hecuba begs him to kill her right there, since she is the cause of so many misfortunes, he is incapable to execute his revenge. Thus, he decides to postpone her punishment for when they return to Sparta, making it clear to the audience that, in the end, his wife will remain alive, manipulating all the men around her, as she has always done.

It is not difficult to imagine why the jury that judged this work when it was first performed, in the year 415 BC, did not hesitate to relegate it to the last position. This was the way to pay the playwright for his boldness to present on stage some verses that hurt like daggers those who then held the power in the city. The parallelism between the atrocities of the Achaean hosts on Trojan soil and the violence with which Athens was carrying out its political imposition on other Greeks was evident. The booing from the stands made the author understand that he should leave the city, and that is how, disappointed by the response of his fellow citizens, he preferred exile instead of renouncing his way of thinking.

Euripides, like no other author to date, discovered the immense power that could come by the word and devoted himself to denouncing the political corruption that was already spreading in the Athenian democracy. Through the choral songs and dialogues which could well seem like judicial debates, he offered the catharsis of the spectators going beyond the purely domestic sphere and reaching the highest spheres of artistic presentation. By all means, such catharsis was the most serious threat to the established government.

2. *The Trojan Women* Travel to Spain

The first theatrical performance of Euripides' *The Trojan Women* by Michael Cacoyannis took place in July 1963 at the Theater of the Two Worlds, in Spoleto (Perugia, Italy), with Mildred Dunnock in the role of Hecuba, Claire Bloom as Andromache and Rod Steiger as Poseidon. Before becoming internationally famous with the box-office success of his film *Zorba the Greek* (1964), the director had already triumphed at Cannes with his first film adaptation of another Greek tragedy by Euripides, *Electra* (1962), and had discovered the immense potential that his texts could offer to the theater as much as to the big screen, identifying much more with him than with Aeschylus or Sophocles[4].

Cacoyannis, who was trained at the illustrious Old Vic Theatre in London as a theatrical director, had worked with different dramatic styles in Athenian theaters since the early 1950s. Simultaneously, his experience at the theatre was enhanced by a promising cinematic career, marked for the successes of his first films, *Windfall in Athens* (1954), *Stella* (1955) and *The Girl in Black* (1956). Aware that the ancient Attic drama had much to say to the modern public, he embarked on the new project to bring *The Trojan Women* to international attention in the 60s. In the same year of its premiere in Italy, it was also staged at the Circle in the Square Theatre in New York, until 1965, while the terrible consequences of the Vietnam War were felt all around. Surely the bitter laments of the Trojan women, in the elegant English translation of Professor Edith Hamilton, moved again, as had happened in classical Athens, the conscience of many American spectators.

From 1965 to 1966, Cacoyannis also performed *The Trojan Women* at the French National Theater in Paris, following this time Jean-Paul Sartre's translation and with sets designed by the Greek painter Yannis Tsarouchis. Seeing the positive acceptance of his theatrical version he began the preparations to premiere the following year at the Herodes Atticus theatre

in Athens. His intention was that the actress Ellie Lambetti, who had starred in many of his films, would assume the triple interpretation of the roles of Andromache, Cassandra and Helena[5] with his friend Tsarouchis again as the sets designer. However, the coup d'état by the Junta of the Colonels in April 1967 cancelled the project and Cacoyannis himself had to remain as an exile in France[6].

Curiously, one of the censorship measures imposed by the Greek military leadership during the seven years of the dictatorship (1967-1974) was to prohibit, among many other things, the reading of the tragedies of Euripides because of their obvious political content. At that time many Greek intellectuals were persecuted and most opted for voluntary exile. However, the denunciation of the abuses committed in the interior of the country came by many filmmakers both from outside the Greek borders and, in a more veiled manner, from the inside[7]. The first to rise up against the regime was Costa-Gavras, whose film *Z* (1968) exposed the lies and machinations of corrupt generals determined to quash any political resistance, even if it was peaceful. Several years after its release, some Greek film productions also appeared that, mocking the strict censorship, presented a new interest in ancient Athenian democracy. Thus, in 1972, the historical film *Hippocrates and Democracy* by Dimitris Dadiras and an adaptation of Aristophanes' *Lysistrat*a directed by Yorgos Zervoulakos in the Greek capital, were released at the Thessaloniki Film Festival.

Michael Cacoyannis pursued his plan to stage the tragic verses of Euripides' work, even more when it became imperative to denounce abuses and the violation of human rights in his own country. He himself decided to write in English the film script for *The Trojan Women*[8] with the intention that its profound pacifist message could be seen and heard in all the cinemas of the world. But before getting down to work, he contacted all four actresses he had chosen to impersonate the main heroines of the tragedy on the big screen. Katharine Hepburn, whom he had met in London in the 50s, was enthusiastic about the project from the start and immediately accepted the role of the aged queen Hecuba, although the salary was lower than she expected. Additionally, Geneviève Bujold and Vanessa Redgrave accepted to play Cassandra and Andromache, respectively, and, finally, his friend Irene Papas, essential in the Euripidean trilogy, also accepted the role and was to become the most convincing cinematographic Helen that has ever been

represented. The writing of the script was carried out keeping in mind each one of these movie stars, a cast who would eventually become one of the main factors for the success of the film.

The cast was also completed by Patrick Magee (Menelaus) and Brian Blessed (Talthybius), the young Alberto Sanz (Astyanax) and a group of great British and Spanish actresses who gave life to the chorus of *Trojan women*[9]. Furthermore, the film featured an intriguing soundtrack composed by Cacoyannis´s friend Mikis Theodorakis, who was imprisoned by the Colonels for two years and was recently released[10].

After a rigorous study of locations, filming finally took place in the town of Atienza, in the province of Guadalajara, Spain. There the whole team moved in September 1970 and, taking advantage of an old Muslim fortress, recreated the ruins of the mythical city of Troy, temporarily darkening the stones of the castle[11]. The production was secured through sources in Greece, the United Kingdom and the United States with local extras and other Spanish specialists who ensured that, during the eight weeks of filming, even the smallest details of setting and costumes were always ready[12]. It is paradoxical that, many kilometers away from Greece, then dominated by the extreme right, Franco's Spain was so passionately involved in a film that, in the long run, it turned against the ruling dictatorial regime. Once again, resorting to the prestige of the classical texts, a powerful political denunciation was forged without any other weapons than the power of some ancient verses and the indiscreet objectivity of the cinematographic camera.

3. Symbolic Realism and Filmic Translation

In a seminal article by Sergey Eisenstein on El Greco, he claims that the Cretan painter shows a purely cinematographic technique, and as an example he analyses his mastery of montage, light and color[13]. A certain disproportion in the representation of large planes and his drawings made from short strokes only increased the sensation of movement. In the pictorial evolution of El Greco, there is a gradual abandonment of the corporeal leading to the final triumph of symbolism, since he was much more interested in the emotions of the characters than in any minute detail. In this sense, we could establish a bridge between the aesthetic conception of both creators, since Eisenstein himself does nothing else but rely on the painter to synthesize his own artistic creed. For his part, Michael Cacoyannis, a great admirer of the films of the Russian director, looks at his style to represent on the big screen the tragedies of Euripides[14] and in many cases his compositional structures seem also to echo El Greco's paintings. For example, we have the astonishing silent prologue of his *Electra*, loaded with symbolic elements, detailed plans and vertiginous camera movements, a metaphorical beginning that owes much to Eisenstein's formalism[15]. Does not the image of Electra's nanny, lying on the ground just before the title of the film, remind us of the forced curvatures designed centuries ago by the great painter of Toledo? Cacoyannis' tendency to draw attention to the hands and eyes, the convulsions that make his actors repeat in moments of greatest suffering and certain frames with geometric composition are reminiscent of that same desire to bring the viewer closer to the spiritual element[16] underlining all religious experience that often leads to ecstasy[17].

The tragic trilogy of Cacoyannis presents an approach to ancient Greece in a realistic way but it moves away from the codes established by the epic productions of Hollywood and the European *peplum*, opting for natural landscapes and for much more credible interpretations. However, the treatment of the sets and the austerity of the dresses manage to create an atmosphere of a certain asceticism[18]. The same coldness and uneasiness with which the Mycenean archaeological site is used in *Electra* and *Iphigenia* is also repeated in the desolate ruins of the burnt fortress of *The Trojan Women*. This stylization is especially striking in the movements of the women's choir[19] and in the scenes in which the director tries to create a strong opposition of characters, as is the case with the dusty rags of the Trojans in front of the luminous tunic of Helen's

jewels[20]. In this way, enhanced chiaroscuro effects were able to highlight the terrible disasters that the war brought with it[21].

Cacoyannis fundamentally believes that the message of the original text is able to reach the screen with all its expressive force today, avoiding unnecessary updates, in the style of Pier Paolo Pasolini's films. Consequently, he also avoids excessive details which, in their attempt to contextualize the drama in specific spatial and temporal coordinates, end up hindering the complete identification of contemporary viewers with the characters of the tragedy. In this cinematic interaction between the mythical and the real, the director replaced the original prologue of Athena and Poseidon with a more modern one in which a voice is heard over still images depicting the abuse of women and children[22]. This makes it clear that men exclusively are responsible for this shameful behavior. Cacoyannis also partially reduces the monologues of the actresses and, above all, the choral songs in order to achieve greater dramatic effect[23]. In addition, thanks to the camera movement, he focuses and highlights aspects that Euripides only suggested in his work[24].

The symbolic realism with which *Electra* was filmed reappears now in *The Trojan Women* following the same aesthetic pattern. The burning remains of the sacked city could be the scene for any war. It is not a matter of reconstructing events from a distant past in real time but of abstracting them from time to make them timeless and, therefore, universal[25]. The desert landscape, the sun and even the wind are integrated into the cinematographic representation as symbols that convey the desolation, exhaustion and humiliation of the Trojan women against the arrogance of the Greeks. Cacoyannis also introduces a new scene without dialogues in which we see how Helen dares to take a refreshing bath while the rest of the women die of thirst. Their indignation erupts in an open revolt which is quickly stifled with violence by the Achaean soldiers. Here is another example of the freedom with which the filmmaker approached the text by translating it in terms much closer to the viewers of the twentieth century.

Along the same lines, the musical score composed by Mikis Theodorakis was based on popular songs and Byzantine melodies, reinforcing the ties between ancient and modern Greece. The musical motifs of the film are characterized by austerity and a certain monotony, using percussion to highlight the moments of great dramatic intensity. The only song we hear is chanted by a group of Trojans who go to the ships to serve as slaves to their new Greek masters at the end of the first episode. While Cassandra is driven by force to her cart, the women's choir sings:

"I´ll never see my son again.

My heart was buried in this place.
The sky is dark, the sound has fled,

The stones are cracked, the grass has bled.

This land is ours, it´s ours, it always has been ours.

We´ll never leave it, because our roots are deep within it."

Even nature seems to rebel against the abuses of the Greek army. They have razed the city to the ground and killed the Trojans, but there still remains the suffering of the vanquished, who are driven into exile. However, the song hides a much deeper symbolism, since, curiously, Theodorakis had composed it only a few years before as a sign of protest against the Greek Junta and it was very popular in Greece at that time[26]. "Tha simanun i kambanes" was the orchestration of verses from the collection *Romiosini* by Yannis Ritsos, a Greek communist poet, who had interpreted splendidly Grigoris Bithikotsis and which Melina Merkouri herself repeated over and over again in the numerous rallies against the Greek dictatorship. The chorus of Trojans did nothing else but reiterate that even at that moment, there were people suffering political persecution, expropriation and exile, although many did not want to understand their song.

Cacoyannis thus rewrote the text of Euripides in his film script, restructuring it and renouncing the unity of time, place and action, but without ceasing to be faithful to the classical tradition[27]. In fact, it could be suggested that the true protagonist in his version is still the spoken word, as it can be seen in the intense debate between Hecuba and Helena or in the final monologue of the queen lamenting her grandson before burying him. However, this tragedy presents a fundamental problem of narrative structure as it is made with the juxtaposition of long monologues that threatened to make it boring for the modern viewer. This extensive elegy required a dynamism that Cacoyannis achieved through a subtle play of contrasts between the monotony of dramatic action and the montage rhythm in the filmed sequences.

4. The all-seeing camera

Comparing *The Trojan Women* with *Electra* and *Iphigenia* we can see that the treatment of time here is more sophisticated, not only in concerns of the

general rhythm of the film but also in its jump-cuts and narrative leaps that

the director employs to condense the action. A very apt example of this can be seen in the sequence with the departure of Helen with her husband Menelaus, followed by the fall of Astyanax and the close-up of Andromache with an empty gaze. To increase the sense of despair, Cacoyannis also lengthens time between episodes, delaying the arrival and departure of the Greek messenger, while the camera remains motionless before the faces of the actresses[28], as they present their respective monologues or rise with difficulty after prostrating without a helping hand, as with Queen Hecuba at the beginning and end of the film. However, in other occasions, the director accelerates movement to highlight moments of extreme anguish, making the spectators empathize with the events on screen. For example in the scene at the cave, Cassandra, in a state of madness, runs from one place to another, while the camera follows her with sharp jump-cuts[29], or as Andromache tries desperately to stop the Greeks from snatching her little son Astyanax. In these two scenes the camera transmits perfectly the restlessness and the desperation of women, the principal victims of war.

Cacoyannis also employs accelerated staccato zooming, an effect frequently used by the directors of the New Wave in the 70's. In particular, we can see this effect in the last scene with Cassandra, when she is driven by cart to the Achaean ships[30]. With this device, Cacoyannis increases the feeling of anxiety and vertigo that Geneniève Bujold manages to create with her impressive performance, underlined even more when the camera turns around a complete 180 degrees[31] and, from the perspective of the princess, shows the ruins of the city[32], indicating the total overturn of the glorious past of Troy. The recourse to the subjective camera also makes the scene with Astyanax's[33] murder even more painful, as the director chooses not to show directly the fall of the child but depicts it through Astyanax's own eyes, assuming again the perspective of

the innocent victims[34].

In addition to the various movements, the camera angle acquires special relevance, through which the director further explores the psychology of the characters. Helen usually appears photographed in sharp contrasted colors emphasizing her dominance over the rest of the characters, as in the last scene, with the camera far above her husband[35], or in her presentation before the Trojans on a rock, while Astyanax is seen through a half angle, hugging his mother like a helpless bird[36]. Similarly, Hecuba appears exalted above the rest of the Trojans as well as with King Menelaus in the third episode, when she is depicted on top of a hill, with the sun on her left and a tree full of sacred connotations[37]. In front of such a vision, the women's choir turns to her and bows to venerate their queen, whose dignity makes the vistors look mean and small. The aura of supernatural luminosity[38] that surrounds her at that moment makes Menelaus look even worse in her presence than what Euripides had presented to us.

The mission of such objectivity is to provide more information than the characters communicate in front of the camera. In this sense, Cacoyannis is an expert of directing in close-ups and detailed shots that speak for themselves. In *The Trojan Women* the most interesting aspect is the faces of the women at the moment of their choral performance. The director films the choir as if it was an indivisible unit[39] sharing the verses of the poem about the destruction of the city and makes the camera focus on them, thus transmitting in a very expressive way the suffering of those who had seen their loved ones die and now feel like caged animals. Their eyes, in addition to their lips, are crying out asking the spectator to react and do something to save them. In an opposite direction we also see Helen's eyes through the wooden planks of her prison. Her defiant look becomes the symbol of falsehood and arrogance. In that level of detail the director highlights an evil human being who is willing to do away with anything, no matter who else is destroyed. In the Helen that Cacoyannis presents, there is no place for compassion or repentance, only *hybris* and the desire for power.

Finally, we want to highlight two sequences with Katharine Hepburn that emanate extreme emotional power. The first focuses on the queen's face at the moment when, suspecting that her daughter Polyxene has suffered some punishment, she utters her name with a broken voice while staring into the void distance. The second is, in the end of the film, when she holds the corpse

of her grandson and sings the deeply moving funeral dirge. In both scenes the uncontrolled tremors of the actress's face only underscore her weakness and helplessness against the barbarism she is forced to endure[40].

Conclusion

As he had achieved years earlier with *Electra*, with *The Trojan Women* Michael Cacoyannis again surpassed all film adaptations of ancient Greek tragedies, such as the academic *Oedipus Rex* (1957) by Tyrone Guthrie or the Marxist *Oedipus* (1967) and Freudian *Medea* (1969), both by Pier Paolo Pasolini[41]. For his Euripides' adaptation, he chose a text with high political content, yet without fear of offending the sensibility of contemporary viewers. Over the centuries, Euripides' powerful verses have lost none of their strength and relevance. Nevertheless, Cacoyannis simplified in his cinematographic script the most ambiguous aspects of the work in order to accentuate its cathartic effect and achieve a full identification of the spectator with the Trojan slaves[42]. In addition, he dared to add his personal touch, using the camera to intensify the moments of enhanced dramatic tension. In fact, he is more explicit than the tragic author when he exposes violence towards women and children, the true victims of any armed conflict[43]. On the other hand, the masterful interpretations by Katharine Hepburn, Geneviève Bujold, Vanessa Redgrave and Irene Papas, his four leading actresses, contributed to presenting women as superior to masculine characters, something that already exists in the original text[44].

The use of music and silences, the sets and costumes, the movement of the camera and the narrative rhythm achieved by the director through the accomplished montage of the film effectively serve this powerful anti-war denunciation, created at a specific moment in time when international conflicts, fascist dictatorships and communist governments attacked again the rights and the liberties of citizens[45]. In the process of creating the film, we find, as a backdrop, not only its filming in Franco's Spain but also the experience of the director and his team, who suffered exile due to the oppression of the Greek Junta[46]. However, Cacoyannis avoided direct political references, keeping them more or less veiled, in order to make his message universal[47], as Euripides had done so many centuries ago.

As expected, the film was not released either in Greece or Spain but was screened in the non-competitive section at the 1971 Cannes Film Festival. The

praise by film critics was unanimous[48], as for example by the National Board of Review of North America which gave its award to the magnificent performance of Irene Papas and the Kansas City Film Critics Circle, which gave their award, in the following year, to Katharine Hepburn. In addition, the film received the Prize of the World Peace Organisation, an award that Cacoyannis had already received four years earlier for his anti-nuclear comedy *The Day the Fish Came Out*. However, in spite of the artistic quality of the film and the excellent performances, it was necessary to wait several years until specialists in philology and classical tradition from North American and European universities rescued it from oblivion and began to study it, emphasizing its high educational value. The film´s reissue in Greece in 2006 and some later versions[1] made it possible for this work of art to continue inspiring new readings and interpretations. And, as is the case in the film, when the chorus of the Trojan women leaves the screen, then the debate really begins.

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Notes

1 We are referring to our article, «*Las Troyanas* de Cacoyannis como recurso didáctico para la reflexión sobre la convivencia y la paz», *Perspectiva Cep* 2 (2000), 87-94 [accessed: 2018-11-5].

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2 Valverde García A., «La gran herencia de Michael Cacoyannis: La trilogía cinematográfica de Eurípides», *Metakinema* 9 (2011) [accessed: 2018-11-5]. http://www.metakinema.es/metakineman9s5a1_Alejandro_Valverde_Garcia_Cacoyannis_Euripides.html

3 Prieto Arciniega A., *La Antigüedad a través del cine*, Universidad de Barcelona, 2010, 23.

4 Goudelis T., «Drame Antique et cinema grec», in Demopoulos M., *Le cinéma grec*, Paris, Centre Georges Pompidou, 1995, p. 84.

5 Ch. Siafkos, *Mihalis Cacoyannis. Se proto plano*, Athina, Psihoyiós, 2009, p. 192.

6 Finally, with its own translation in modern Greek, Cacoyannis will be able to stage it in Greece from 1995 to 1997 at the Theatre of Epidaurus and at the Herodes Atticus Theatre, and his version

will be adapted by Leonidas Loisides in 2009.

7 On the political situation experienced in Greece during this period see Bakogianni A., «Voices of Resistance: Michael Cacoyannis´ *The Trojan Women* (1971)», *BICS* 52 (2009), p. 52-53.

8 This film script will be published two years after the premiere of the film, Siafkos, ib., p. 295.

9 We mention also the performances by Pauline Letts, Rosalie Shanks, Pat Beckett, Anna Bentinck, Esmeralda Adam García, Esperanza Alonso, Margarita Calahorra, Adela Armengol, Gloria Berrocal, Ana Mª Espejo, Mª Jesús Hoyos, Margarita Matta, Mirta Miller and Carmen Segarra. We must also mention the participation of the Greek actress Elsie Pitta, who in *Electra* (1962) played the heroine as a child, and Dan Van Husen as one of the soldiers of the Achaean army.

10 According to Jane Boutwell in "The Talk of the Town: Theodorakis", *The New Yorker* (15-VIII-1970), the composer was released on April 13 of that year. The recording of film soundtrack took place in February 1971, in a London studio. Theodorakis had collaborated with Cacoyannis in his previous films, *Electra* (1962), *Zorba the Greek* (1964) and *The Day the Fish Came Out* (1967), in addition to writing in prison the soundtrack for *Z* (1968) by Costa-Gavras.

11 Siafkos, ib., p. 184.

12 The journalist Gregorio Medina Higes, in his blog www.gremehi.blogspot.com [accessed: 2013-08-16], records some memories and anecdotes of the filming. The costume designer Félix Sánchez Plaza and Lucía Cleto Martín assisted in the props. César Lucas also moved to the town of Atienza, and took photographs of the shooting, while Natalia Figueroa, published a story in the newspaper ABC.

13 Eisenstein S., "El Greco y el cine", *Cinematismo*, Buenos Aires, Quetzal, p. 178.

14 Karalis V., *A History of Greek Cinema*, New York – London, Continuum, 2012, p. 97.

15 MacKinnon K., *Greek Tragedy into Film*, London – Sydney, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1986, p. 76.

16 Examples of these details in the film are in the foreground of Helen, with a defiant look, and in the hand of the soldier in charge of killing Astyanax, as well as in the mystical rapture of Cassandra and in the disposition of the chorus of Trojans around of his queen.

17 Eisenstein S., *ib.*, p. 185.

18 García N., "Classic Sceneries: Setting Ancient Greece in Film Architecture", en Berti I. - García Morcillo M. (eds.), *Hellas on Screen*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008, 28.

19 Special focus is given on their movements in a circle surrounding Hecuba, Andromache and her son, their reverence towards their queen at the arrival of Menelaus or the choral intervention in the first song, the funeral of Astyanax and the final lament.

20 Bakogianni A., ib., p. 65.

21 Cano Alonso P. L., *Cine de Romanos*, Madrid, Centro de Lingüística Aplicada Atenea, 2014, p. 269.

22 García Romero F., «Adaptaciones cinematográficas de la tragedia griega: puesta en escena antigua y moderna», en García Novo E. - Rodríguez Alfageme I. (eds.), *Dramaturgia y puesta en escena en el teatro griego*, Madrid, Ediciones Clásicas, 1998, p. 201.

23 We highly recommend reading the critique of this film offered by Roderick Heath in the On-Line Magazine *Ferdy on Films* [accessed: 2018-11-5]. http://ferdyonfilms.com/tag/euripides/.

24 McDonald M., *Euripides in Cinema: The heart made visible*, Philadelphia, Centrum Philadelphia, 1983, p. 234.

25 Kolonias B., *Mihalis Cacoyannis. 36 Thessaloniki Film Festival*, Athens, Kastaniotis, 1995, p. 31.

26 Bakogianni A., ib., p. 61.

27 Rodighiero A., «Cinema e mito classico», in Gibellini P., *Il mito nella letteratura italiana, V,1: Percorsi. Miti senza frontiere*, Brescia, Morcelliana, 2009, 576.

28 Siafkos Ch., *ib.*, p. 186.

29 McDonald, ib., p. 181.

30 McDonald M., *ib.*, p. 199.

31 The same device was used in *Electra*, at the moment when Aegisthus struck her, desecrating the grave of her father, king Agamemnon.

32 McDonald M., ib., p. 245.

33 Valverde García A., «Michael Cacoyannis: la sabiduría de la simplicidad», en Salvador Ventura F. (ed.), *Cine y autor*, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Intramar Ediciones, 2012, 164.

34 De Martino D., «La representación de la violencia trágica en el cine», en De Martino F.- Morenilla C. (eds.), *Legitimación e institucionalización política de la violencia. Teatro y sociedad en la Antigüedad Clásica*, Bari, Levante, 2009, 380.

35 Solomon J., *Peplum. El Mundo Antiguo en el cine*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 2002, 280.

36 McDonald M., *ib.*, p. 246.

37 McDonald M., *ib.*, p. 205.

38 The director here establishes a clear parallel between this plane and that of the resplendent Apollo that Cassandra thinks she sees at the exit of the cave.

39 García Romero F., ib., p. 196.

40 Bakogianni A., ib., p. 64.

41 Karalis V., *ib.*, p. 100.

42 MacKinnon K., *ib.*, p. 85.

43 McDonald M., *ib.*, p. 244.

44 McDonald M., *ib.*, p. 234.

45 Bakogianni A., ib., p. 55.

46 De España R., *La pantalla épica*, Madrid, T&B, 2009, p. 355.

47 Bakogianni A., ib., p. 58.

48 On the website of the Michael Cacoyannis Foundation in Athens (www.mcf.gr) there are interesting documents of the film, as well as reviews of Dane Lanken and Frank Getlein published, at the time of its premiere, at *The Gazette* in Montreal (20 / XI / 71) and *The Evening Star* in Washington (28 / XII / 71), respectively. Other critics of the moment, signed by Vicent Canby (*The New York Times 28* / IX / 71), Molly Haskell (*The Village Voice* 7 / X / 71) and Roger Ebert (4 / VI / 72) are available through www.imdb.com.

49 We refer to the DVD edition of Michael Cacoyannis: *Trilogy* (Audio Visual Entertainment), which includes *Electra, The Trojan Women* and *Iphigenia* in their original version. Later, the Spanish version appeared with the dubbing in Spanish edited by Manga Films.