Reconfiguring The Chorus: Adaptations of the Greek Tragic Chorus Since World War II

by

Alysse Rich

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Centre for Theatre, Drama, and Performance Studies
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Alysse Rich 2012

Reconfiguring the Chorus:
Adaptations of the Greek Tragic Chorus Since World War II

Alysse Rich

Doctor of Philosophy

Centre for Theatre, Drama, and Performance Studies
University of Toronto

2012

Abstract

This study is an investigation of adaptations of the Greek tragic chorus since World War II, including the historical, political, and aesthetic contexts that gave rise to these adaptations. Influenced by recent work in the field of Classical Performance Reception and Linda Hutcheon's work on adaptation, this thesis is designed not around a set of case studies, but around a variety of research questions, including: the current definition of "the chorus" and how it might include the "one-person chorus"; the techniques of mediation used by modern choruses and how they might relate to techniques of the ancient chorus; the connection between political adaptations and the encouragement of audience "complicity"; and the complexities involved in the production and reception of intercultural choruses.

I begin by arguing that although August Wilhelm Schlegel's conception of the chorus as an "ideal spectator" remains the most persistently popular model of understanding the chorus, it should be replaced with a new model based on the concentric frames of performance described by Susan Bennett. Through the use of this model, the chorus is revealed as a liminal, oscillating figure that mediates the action for the audience, and I argue that these qualities have made the chorus an attractive element of tragedy to modern adapters. In the case studies that are offered throughout, I further develop this model in order to analyze the ways in which modern choruses create relationships with audiences, as well as what political or ideological functions these relationships are intended to serve. The model that I develop encourages an engagement with both the intentions of adapters and the realities of reception, and I therefore explore not only how communication strategies of the chorus are intended to operate, but also the issues these strategies raise and the challenges adapters - and their choruses - encounter.

Acknowledgments:

Many students speak of writing their thesis as an isolating experience, but my experience at the University of Toronto has been quite the opposite. In my years as a PhD student, I have benefitted immensely from the support and inspiration provided by faculty, staff, students, and friends.

The guidance of my supervisor, Martin Revermann, has been invaluable. He has managed to be supportive and patient while simultaneously challenging my work and my thinking. His commitment to this balance has meant that I have grown as a scholar more than I ever thought possible.

My other committee members have also played active roles in the progress of this thesis. Domenico Pietropaolo has challenged me to dig deeper and always unpack my assumptions and use of terms. Ato Quayson has helped me to trust my critical instincts and be confidently assertive. I am very grateful to them for their time and insightful comments. In addition, I would like to thank Jennifer Roberts-Smith at the University of Waterloo for many inspiring conversations, as well as her encouragement and advice.

At the Centre for Theatre, Drama, and Performance Studies, Stephen Johnson has guided me through my graduate school years and always ensured that I felt supported. In addition, at the Centre, I wish to sincerely thank Luella Massey, Robert Moses, Michael Sidnell, Paul Stoesser, and Bruce Barton, all of whom have supported me in ways too numerous to mention. I would also like to extend my thanks to the very generous people at the *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama*, and in particular, to Stephe Harrop and Naomi Setchell. I am grateful that my research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, as well as a Ronald Bryden Fellowship, an Arthur Lindsay Fernie Research Fellowship, and the School of Graduate Studies Travel Grant.

Even with all of this inspiration and guidance, this work would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of my family: Joe, Brenda, Devra, and Leora Rich. Friends like Tara Egan Wu, Leora Morris, Stephanie Schwartz, Marco Avolio, and Erika Jacobs have made sure that this process has been joyful. Last but not least, I find it difficult to put into words how grateful I am to Daniel Feilchenfeld, whose patience and confidence in my work have given me additional strength every step of the way.

Table of Contents:

Introduction: The "Problem" of the Modern Chorus…………………………………...1

Chapter 1: The One-Person Chorus……………………………………………………30

1.1. Collectivity and Identification: The Legacy of Schlegel………………………….33
1.2. The One-Person Chorus and the Legacy of the Prologue…………………………42
1.3. The Oscillation of Anouilh's Chorus……………………………………………...70

Chapter 2: The Performance of Mediation……………………………………………..86

2.1. That Old Song and Dance…………………………………………………………93
2.2. The Mask………………………………………………...………………..104
2.3. Self-Referentiality and the use of Media…………………………………………137

Chapter 3: The Complicit Collective…………………………………………………..154

3.1. Capitalizing on the Collective Chorus……………………………………………155
3.2. Bertolt Brecht: *The Antigone of Sophocles, A version for the Stage after Hölderlin's Translation*………………………………………………………………………..166
3.3. Richard Schechner and The Performance Group: *Dionysus in 69*………………...191
3.4. Reception and the Problem of Distance…………………………………………...227
3.5. Einar Schleef: *The Mothers*………………………………………………………..251

Chapter 4: Identity and Identification:
Intercultural Choruses and the Limits of Complicity……………………….259

4.1. Scholarly Reversals………………………………………………………………..261
4.2 Intercultural Choral Identity………………………………………………………..279
4.3 Yael Farber: *Molora*..289
4.4 Authenticity, Universalism, and the Future of the Intercultural Chorus..................312

Conclusion……………………………………………………………………......332

Bibliography……………………………………………………………………........343

INTRODUCTION:
The "Problem" of the Modern Chorus

In 1981, when Oswyn Murray reviewed Peter Hall's ambitious production of *The Oresteia,* he praised Hall's adaptation and its chorus, which seemed at home in Hall's conception of the trilogy. He wrote that "in such a conception of tragedy the chorus ceases to be a problem: it is our comment on the meaning of the events we witness, and on our unavailing desires to change or avert what can only be exorcized by the ritual we are undergoing".[1] In this brief statement, Murray encapsulates several aspects of the modern conception of the chorus: he describes the chorus' role of mediating onstage events for the audience, offering commentary on the ritual that the audience undergoes throughout the performance. Because these ideas – a mediating chorus with a ritual role – are essential to the modern understanding of the chorus, they will be major themes of the chapters that follow. Here, however, I will begin by engaging with the first segment of this quote, in which Murray argues that in Hall's conception of tragedy, his chorus – unlike, we are led to infer, other choruses - "ceases to be a problem".

By the time Murray reviewed Hall's production in the early 1980s, it had become common to speak of the chorus as a "problem" to be solved by creative adapters. This idea - that the Greek chorus presents challenges to modern reception – remains a popular notion, despite the recent increase in performances and adaptations of tragedy. Edith Hall claimed in 2004 that "more Greek tragedy has been performed in the last thirty years than at any point in history since Greco-Roman antiquity".[2] In the context of this comment, it is interesting to note that the chorus is an element that still presents particular challenges to modern adapters and audiences.

---

[1] Oswyn Murray (December 11, 1981). "The Drama of Justice", *The Times Literary Supplement*.

[2] Hall (2004a) 2.

The popular conception of the chorus as "problematic" is not only evident in reviews, but has also been acknowledged in scholarship surrounding the adaptation of the chorus. For instance, Felix Budelmann has noted that many directors find the chorus "an embarrassment" and that "spectators who are used only to a theatre of individuals find it difficult to engage with the songs and dances of the chorus".[3] Indeed, the problems involved in adapting the chorus are often attributed to modern spectators' lack of familiarity with the chorus' particular style of performance. Helene Foley, for example, also notes that it is extremely rare for adapters to include the full range of song and dance found in the original tragedies, for both choruses and protagonists. She comments that it is "surprising, despite a growing interest in the production of Greek tragedy on the modern stage, how rarely directors of Greek tragedy have even gestured in this direction".[4]

Although some scholars have argued that our familiarity with naturalistic theatre has impeded the reception of the singing, dancing, collective chorus by the modern audience, Foley calls our obsession with naturalism "a red herring", since "contemporary theatre in both East and West has by now experimented for some time with theatrically eclectic and non-naturalistic performances".[5] Although I would argue that the legacy of naturalism *is* a factor in adapters' decisions regarding their choruses – especially in the case of staging collective choruses – I agree that the chorus' non-naturalism often serves as an overly-simplified explanation of the "problem" of the chorus. Non-naturalism should certainly be regarded as one factor among many, and Foley's article offers several other reasons why adapters are not keen to attempt to re-create the ancient choruses. In addition to the economic factors involved in training a large group of actors, she lists the following:

---

[3] Budelmann (2000) 200. I will argue that we are used to a "theatre of individuals" because of the focus on the individual during the Renaissance, and a focus on *vraisemblance* during the French neo-classical era. Both of these trends (which are further discussed in chapter one) led to the disappearance of the chorus, or its replacement with singular figures such as the *confidant(e)*.

[4] Foley (2007) 354.

[5] Foley (2007) 357.

> it is impossible to reproduce the complex original relation between audience and performance on the modern stage; familiar choral traditions associated with opera and musicals can distort an audience's reception of the very different Greek tragic chorus; above all, creating any undifferentiated collectivity on stage runs counter to modern ideas about the individual's complex and ambivalent relation to social groups and the representation of this relation in performance.[6]

Foley's work not only identifies the issues regarding the adaptation of the chorus, but her article is in fact mainly focused on strategies employed by adapters who do choose to stage a chorus. She therefore concludes with a list of developments that have "generated new interest in the Greek chorus", including our engagement with multi-cultural world theatre traditions and our interest in engaging with collective action and collective memory.[7]

However, these reasons for the chorus' renewed appeal do not necessarily nullify its problematic nature. In Simon Goldhill's recent work on staging tragedy, he warns potential adapters that "more modern performances fail because of the chorus than for any other reason: if the chorus isn't right, the play cannot work".[8] Inherent in all of these scholarly comments on the adaptation of the chorus – and especially evident in their combination - is the paradox of adapting the Greek chorus: the chorus is both appealing as a defining feature of ancient tragedy, but remains in many ways a problematic element for audiences used to naturalistic performances to interpret, and for adapters working in certain systems of theatre to be able to (or willing to) produce.

---

[6] Foley (2007) 354.

[7] Foley (2007) identifies six developments that have generated new interest in the chorus in productions. The first is an engagement with multi-cultural world theatre traditions, which have made us more willing to engage with the unfamiliar onstage. Secondly, there has been a general shift away from naturalistic and heavily psychologised performance on the modern stage. Post-modernism has become a more common alternative (378). Thirdly, the use of new spaces and settings is related to recent interest in breaking down and experimenting with audience/actor/chorus relationships. In these types of experiments, the chorus can be "the focal point of theatrical energy that makes this work, especially when speaking voices emerge in a non-naturalistic way from a simmering and exciting pool of choral energy and performance" (378). Fourthly, the desire to explore shared stories and collective memories, as well as broad cultural responsibility for historical events, without necessarily excluding single voices. Several trends – such as oral history and documentary film – may have contributed to this trend in the theatre. The fifth development Foley explores is largely economic: producers have been encouraged to invest in ambitious productions because of the growing popularity of performance and adaptation of Greek tragedy worldwide. Lastly, Foley notes that "we are often brought up to believe in ourselves above all as 'individuals'; yet the twentieth cnetnruy has once again taught us that the ways in which we are or become part of collectivities may often be at least as engaging and fascinating" (378).

[8] Goldhill (2007) 45.

My project addresses this paradox, and originated in my desire to understand not only the decisions of adapters regarding the chorus, but also the social, political, and aesthetic influences upon these decisions. I am interested in both the immediate reception of these decisions by audiences, as well the legacies of these decisions themselves, and how they impact subsequent adaptations.[9] My work thus builds on the work of scholars such as Foley (and others discussed below), whose work catalogues different adaptations of the chorus, offering insight about the relationship between adapter, source text, social/political context, and chorus. I aim to build on this type of study, however, by focusing in particular on the relationship between chorus and audience: I examine how this relationship is understood by adapters to have functioned in the context of an ancient performance, as well as how a relationship between chorus and audience is created – and manipulated - in modern performances. In what follows, I argue that the potential for the chorus to create a unique relationship with the audience has surpassed "collectivity" as a defining feature of the chorus. It is the potential to create this relationship with their audiences that appeals to modern adapters, tempting them to engage with the "problem" of the chorus.

The Ancient Chorus in Scholarship

In the chapters that follow, I combine my examination of the performance and reception of the chorus in adaptations with classical scholarship on the ancient chorus in order to better understand the many variations of the relationship between chorus and audience. A major assertion underlying my work is that scholarship and theatre traditions exist in relation to one another, as well as with traditions that have come before, whether they choose to assert, subvert, or reject these relationships and legacies. I therefore pay special attention to several of the most persistently popular interpretations of the chorus: August Schlegel's famous conception of the chorus as the "ideal spectator",[10] Vernant and Vidal-Naquet's conception of the chorus as offering collective truth,[11] and Friedrich Nietzsche's emphasis on the collective, choral origin of tragedy[12] all feature prominently in the chapters that follow. The opinions of these scholars remain influential to this day, and different interpretations of these theories themselves have inspired a variety of choral configurations and insights. It is therefore incumbent upon scholars wishing to write about the chorus to address these views and the impact they have had upon the representation of the chorus onstage as well as in scholarly works.

---

[9] I recognize the many shapes that adaptations may take, as well as the many relationships they may have with their source material. I have chosen the term "adaptation" precisely because of its flexibility. My definition of adaptation follows Linda Hutcheon's (2006): she examines adaptations *as adaptations,* ie. "not only as anonymous works. Instead, they are examined as deliberate, announced, and extended revisitations of prior works" (xiv). I engage further with her work below. Foley and Mee (2011) differentiate adaptations from translations, remakings, and remixings (6-10), however, my use of the term "adaptation" includes such productions.

The theories posed by Schlegel and Vernant/Vidal-Naquet were both challenged in Gould's 1996 article "Tragedy and the Collective Experience", as well as in Goldhill's accompanying response to this piece, "Collectivity and Otherness".[13] This pair of articles was essential to the process of re-focusing scholarly attention on the study of the chorus in ancient tragedy. Although Gould and Goldhill challenge former models of understanding the relationship between chorus and audience, they do not adequately define the terms and definitions of their debate. Terms such as "authority" and "other" in the context of fifth-century Athens are not fully examined in this early, provocative work.[14]

Scholarship surrounding the ancient chorus in recent years builds on this early work, and has exhibited three major trends, all of which are inter-connected and have impacted this project.

---

[10] In Schlegel (1809-11: 1876) *Lectures on Dramatic Art in Literature.*

[11] Especially in Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1972: 1981) *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece.*

[12] In Nietzsche (1872: 1956) *The Birth of Tragedy out of The Spirit of Music.*

[13] Both articles were published in M. S. Silk (1996) *Tragedy and the Tragic*.

[14] I engage further with these terms in chapter four.

Perhaps as a response to the confusion of terms by Gould, Goldhill, and others, the first and most recent trend is the separation, definition, and distinction of the complex and inter-connected issues involved in the discussion of the chorus. A recent example of this is Foley's distinction between issues of "identity" and "authority" with regard to the chorus in her 2003 article "Choral Identity". Her distinction between these two terms allows her to make important arguments regarding the performance of the ancient chorus. This article is relatively unique in its approach to the ancient chorus,[15] however, it bears similarities to work that is being accomplished from the perspective of theatre and performance. The work of Erika Fischer-Lichte in particular – which I discuss in chapters three and four – shows a similar interest in identifying terms and models, especially when describing theatrical processes.[16]

The second trend – intricately connected with the first - is the increasing tendency to focus on the *performance* of the chorus. This trend has no doubt been influenced by an increased emphasis on performance of ancient tragedy more generally. In many earlier works that began to acknowledge ancient Greek tragedy as a performance genre*,* the chorus was often neglected, as in Oliver Taplin's seminal 1978 work *Greek Tragedy in Action.*[17] Although Taplin should be credited with re-focusing scholarly energy toward the interpretation of Greek tragedy as performance, the chorus is largely neglected in his early work.[18] When the chorus *is* discussed in subsequent works from the late 1970s and 1980s, scholars often seem to have been influenced by Taplin's move toward describing the performance of tragedy. In *The Greek Theatre* (1985)*,* for instance, Leo Aylen refers to tragedy as a form of "dance drama", anticipating the scholarly attention to performance that would come in the future. [19] An increased focus on performance, however, also means that it is important to note the language that is used in describing the chorus. Due to the ephemerality of performance and a general lack of performance documentation (which I describe further below), no one can be certain of the role and function of the chorus in ancient performance. Therefore, any description of the chorus' role by scholars involves a choice, and often also involves the exclusion of other potential roles and functions.

---

[15] Another work that might be seen as part of this trend also deals with choral identity: Dhuga (2011), *Choral Identity and the Chorus of Elders in Greek Tragedy*.
[16] Fischer-Lichte (2004), (2005), (2004: 2008).
[17] Taplin (1978).
[18] Taplin (1978). In this work, Taplin disagrees with the notion that the chorus was intended to be a naturalistic stage crowd, and instead, believes their function was to dance and sing. However, he states that the chorus will receive little attention in his book "since it is not as a rule closely involved in the *action* and plot of the tragedies" (13). Since this early work, Taplin has been instrumental in the continued emphasis on performance, including the performance of the chorus.

Wilson's work *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia*[20] is emblematic of the third trend in scholarly work on the ancient chorus. No doubt impacted by an increasing emphasis on performance, this trend is the contextualization of analyses of the chorus within the choral culture of classical Athens. Wilson's work offers an especially detailed account the institution of the *khoregia* in Athens, including its formation, functioning, and history.[21] This focus on the choral culture of Athens can also be noted in many recent shorter works about the ancient chorus (dramatic and non-dramatic), including Kurke's "Visualizing the Choral", Martin's "Outer Limits, Choral Space", and Murnaghan's "Women in Groups".[22]

These trends in the study of the ancient chorus – examining specific issues, focusing on choral performance, and locating studies of this performance in the cultural context of Athens – have impacted my methodology. In my work, I approach the chorus with an emphasis on performance, paying special attention to the impact of the specific social, political, and aesthetic context. However, because my topic is not the ancient chorus, but its adaptation in modern and contemporary theatre, these trends in the study of the ancient chorus have impacted my work in conjunction with new studies focused on classical *reception*.

---

[19] Aylen (1985). The influence of the focus on performance is also evident in Rehm's *The Play of Space* (2002), in which he pays particular attention to the physical presence of the chorus. It is also present in Wiles' discussion of the chorus' function of effecting spatio-temporal transformations in *Tragedy in Athens* (1997), not to mention the myriad texts on reception that will be discussed below and throughout this thesis. A focus on performance is especially acknowledged in Foley and Mee (2011). They discuss the implications of this decision in the introduction by explaining that "our focus on performance allows for consideration of the spectator's experience, which means we look at what the productions *do* (theatre as verb) rather than at what the dramatic literature *means* (play as noun), because productions – particularly productions of *Antigone* – are actions, not things" (13).

[20] Wilson (2000).

[21] Wilson (2000). Wilson focuses on the social drama of the *khoregia* – the tension between the required service for the *demos* ("liturgy") and the aristocratic display involved in this "democratic" system of funding. This work is innovative in its examination of tragedy not only as a choral form, but as the production of a vast economic, political, and culturally-specific system.

[22] Kurke (2007), Martin (2007), Murnaghan (2005).

The Reception of the Chorus

The relatively new focus on the performance of the ancient chorus has also meant an interest in reception – both the reception of the genre of tragedy by adapters, and, to a lesser extent, by ancient and modern audiences. My methodology has been influenced by the recent work in the field of Classical Reception Studies, especially Classical Performance Reception. Reception Studies is a relatively new field within Classics,[23] and due to its relative youth as a field of study, scholars remain heavily involved in an analysis of the field itself, determining its place within classical scholarship as well as its future goals.[24] It is worthwhile to briefly engage with these analyses and goals, in order to situate the chapters that follow.

Edith Hall has made a coherent attempt to theorize the field of Performance Reception and to explain how it differs from other strains of classical reception.[25] She explains that "although other contributing subjectivities – those of translators, adaptors, authors, directors – are usually involved, it is the dynamic *triangular* relationship between ancient text, *performer,* and his or her audience that above all distinguishes Performance Reception from the study of the ways in which ancient texts have been received elsewhere".[26] Fiona Macintosh has related this field of Performance Reception to the field of Performance History, stating that "classical performance reception – as performance history is often described in order to situate the field within the broader category of Classical Reception Studies – has begun recently to receive serious theoretical attention".[27] It is within this field of Classical Performance Reception that I situate my study.

---

[23] Although Porter (2008) has recently claimed that Classics should in fact be considered a component of Reception Studies (469).

[24] Much of this theorizing has appeared in the volume *A Companion to Classical Receptions,* edited by Hardwick and Stray (2008). This volume includes Budelmann and Haubold (2008) "Reception and Tradition", Porter (2008) "Reception Studies: Future Prospects", and Macintosh (2008) "Performance Histories". In addition, Hall's important article "Towards a Theory of Performance Reception" (2004b), Hardwick's *Receptions Studies* (2003), and Hall and Harrop (eds.) *Theorising Performance: Greek Drama, Cultural History, and Critical Practice* (2010) have helped to theorize the field, and are important precursors to this study. Many of these works are given further consideration below.

[25] Hall (2004b), "Towards a Theory of Performance Reception".

In her discussion of the study of Performance Reception, Hall argues that "no two scholars, of course, will practice Performance Reception the same way, any more than they will interpret an ancient artwork in the same way against the background of its original creation".[28] She singles out fields and approaches such as psychoanalysis, literary theory, anthropological theory, and feminist theory as potentially useful angles from which scholars might approach Performance Reception. I aim to approach the field of Classical Performance Reception from the perspective of Theatre and Performance Studies. To my knowledge, an in-depth study of the chorus in adaptations has not been accomplished from this perspective,[29] and it is my hope that my training in Theatre Studies as well as Classics will allow in-depth analyses of productions to sit comfortably alongside scholarly discussions of the ancient chorus.

I also intend that my methodology be aligned with the one prescribed by Hall for the field of Performance Reception. She indicates that "the fullest intellectual insights into Performance Reception will always take place at the precise intersection of the diachronic history of a particular text – especially but not exclusively its previous performance history – and the synchronic reconstruction of what such a text will have meant at the time of the production being investigated”.[30] This balance does not always seem to be maintained in practice, in some cases because of an over-emphasis on the context of a work. Macintosh states that when identifying the weakness of the field of Performance History, she would single out

---

[26] Hall (2004b), 52, her italics. Hall offers examples of other venues of reception, "for example in scholarship and academe, in school curricula, in private reading, in adaptations into other literary genres designed to be read privately (for example, the novel), or in visual arts" (53).
[27] Macintosh (2008a) 250.
[28] Hall (2004b) 56.
[29] Erika Fischer-Lichte (2005) is perhaps the closest in her approach to theatre, and she has written here about adaptations of the chorus. However, the chorus receives only one brief chapter of her 2005 work, which is mainly focused on German theatre.

> the absence of serious formalist analysis of the primary texts (the vernacular translations, adaptations and performance texts) as a weakness in the area. Jauss et al. were indebted to Russian Formalism in their formulation of reception theory; the context-driven work of many diachronic studies, by contrast, results in very little close textual work. Performance histories need to combine diachronic awareness with synchronic depth, together with formalist analysis of the texts in question. Form, as Jauss knew all too well, is always more or less political.[31]

In what follows, approaching texts from the perspective of Theatre and Performance Studies helps me to find the balance between a synchronic/diachronic approach, since I am able to examine closely the mechanisms of performance and reception. I hope that my ability to undertake these close analyses of performance texts[32] will contribute toward correcting the weakness that Macintosh describes above.

The Practice of Performance Reception

In addition to producing theories of performance reception and discussions of their applicability, it is becoming increasingly popular for scholars to create such performance histories – that is, to study the adaptations themselves.[33] Many recent studies in this field not only offer analyses of a wide range of productions, but are also organized according to different methodologies and selection criteria. For instance, some works focus on adaptations of a particular text,[34] and offer insights into the performance histories of this text. These have been useful in shedding light on a variety of configurations of the chorus, even if the chorus is mentioned only briefly. Other recent works focus on the adaptation of a particular aspect of performance in productions of different plays. Most popular are discussions of the use of masks, as is evident in Varakis' "Body and Mask in Performances of Classical Drama on the Modern Stage" (2008) and Wiles' extensive work on the mask.[35] More recently, there has been a renewed focus on the reception of Greek tragedy in music and dance, including the recent publication of *Ancient Drama in Music for the Modern Stage,*[36] and *The Ancient Dancer in the Modern World: Responses to Greek and Roman Dance.*[37] Studies from this latter category have been particularly useful to my study of the performance techniques of the chorus, which is found in chapter two.

---

[30] Hall (2004b) 66.

[31] Macintosh (2008) 251.

[32] Many performance theorists now identify all of the elements of a performance as its “performance text”. De Marinis (1982:1993) explains this conception of textuality: “To speak of 'performance text' means to presume that a theatrical performance can be considered a text, even if an extreme example of textuality. This also implies that we conceptualise the semiotics of theatre in terms of textual analysis. The textual approach to performance is linked to the increasingly generalised conception of the 'text' in semiotic theory over the past few years. The term has now taken on a much broader meaning than allowed by its traditional linguistic and literary application, or even its current usage in textual linguistics. From a semiotic standpoint, the term 'text' designates not only coherent and complete series of linguistic statements, whether oral or written, but also every unit of discourse, whether verbal, nonverbal, or mixed, that results from the coexistence of several codes [...] and possesses the constitutive prerequisites of completeness and coherence. According to this understanding of textuality, an image, or group of images, is, or can be, a text.” (47; also published in Bial [2007]). For a series of discussions and case studies of performance texts, see also Pietropaolo (1999).

The adaptation of the chorus is beginning to gain more attention, and to play an increasing role in discussions of reception. However, even at a recent conference "Choruses: Ancient and Modern" (2010) dedicated to the adaptation of the chorus, very few papers dealt with contemporary theatre adaptations.[38] Other works that focus upon the adaptation of the chorus in particular are relatively new and are often still short pieces such as chapters, theses, and articles.[39] I intend my work to enhance this growing aspect of the field of Classical Performance Reception, and to contribute in particular by offering the perspective of performance analysis.

---

[33] As I mentioned above, works discussing the adaptation of Greek Tragedy are not necessarily new: Aylen (1964) *Greek Tragedy and the Modern World* is an early example. More recent examples include Hartigan (1995) *Greek Tragedy on the American Stage*; Rehm (2003) *Radical Theatre: Greek Tragedy and the Modern World;* Hall, Macintosh, Wrigley (eds.) (2004) *Dionysus Since 69*; Hall, Macintosh, and Taplin (eds.) (2000) *Medea in Performance, 1500-2000*, Hall and Macintosh (eds.) (2005) *Greek Tragedy and the British Theatre (1660-1914);* Macintosh et al. (eds.) (2005) *Agamemnon in Performance, 458 BC to AD 2004* .

[34] Such as in Hall, Macintosh, and Taplin (eds.) (2000) *Medea in Performance, 1500-2000,* Macintosh et al. (eds.) (2005), *Agamemnon in Performance, 458 BC to AD 2004,* and Foley and Mee (2011) *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage.*

[35] Especially Wiles (2007) *Mask and Performance in Greek Tragedy.* A further survey of his work is provided in chapter two.

[36] Brown and Ograjenšek (eds.) (2010).

[37] Macintosh (ed.) (2010).

[38] At the conference "Choruses: Ancient and Modern", held 13-14 September 2010 at the University of Oxofrd, only two of the papers focused on analyzing theatrical productions since World War II: a paper by Fischer-Lichte entitled "From Reinhardt to

This Study

As discussed above, my work has been influenced by the trends in the study of the ancient chorus as well as the modern reception of tragedy. These trends have especially influenced my methodology: my focus on combining analysis of performance and reception with theory from the field of Classics is evident in the way I have structured the chapters that follow. I structure each chapter in a different way, depending on its particular research or leading question. Some are based almost fully on in-depth case studies, while others attempt to gather information from a wide range of productions. Despite the different structure of each chapter, they are unified as a whole by my main argument, which is developed throughout: I argue for a particular model of understanding the chorus/audience relationship, and apply this model to a variety of productions, noting the trends and complications that arise.

In chapter one, I argue that Schlegel's conception of the chorus as "ideal spectator" continues to impact discussion surrounding the ancient chorus. Despite the fact that his theory is based on a process of reception of the chorus by the audience, I argue that because of his focus on choral collectivity, this is not a precise way of describing the way that the chorus/audience relationship is now understood. Many adaptations of the chorus, such as Jean Anouilh's one-person chorus in his *Antigone,* capitalize on the unique chorus/audience relationship that Schlegel attempts to describe - and yet they employ a reduced chorus. In order to acknowledge both the impact as

---

Riefenstahl", mostly focused on German theatre, and a paper by Zachary Dunbar entitled "The Politics of the Musical *Chorus Line*". Others focused on topics such as nineteenth-century German scholarship, anthropology, and opera.

[39] In addition to the work of Foley (2007) discussed above, the second chapter of Goldhill (2007) *How to Stage Greek Tragedy Today* deals with the chorus, as does Baur (1999) *Der Chor im Theater des 20. Jahrhunderts : Typologie des theatralen Mittels Chor*, and Fischer-Lichte (2005), chapter nine.

well as the shortfalls of Schlegel's model, I begin with a discussion of this "one person" exception to the collective norm. Through a close examination of the one-person chorus of Anouilh's *Antigone,* I argue that the relationship between chorus and audience can exist regardless of whether the chorus – or, in fact, the audience - is a "collective".

I use my analysis of Anouilh's production to explore several theatrical conventions that might have encouraged Anouilh and others to reduce the chorus. Through this analysis, I develop a model and reception-focused terminology that can be used to discuss the many variations of choruses in performance, both ancient and modern. I argue that if performance and reception are conceived of in the way described by Bennett in her work *Theatre Audiences,*[40] in which performance is described as a double or concentric frame, the chorus' role as a liminal and oscillating figure can be better understood. In addition, this model allows the chorus to be better differentiated from other liminal figures that would have impacted Anouilh's conception of the chorus, such as the Renaissance Prologue or neo-classical *confidant(e*). I argue that the chorus' ability to inhabit a liminal, oscillating space in performance allows it to have a unique relationship with the audience, and that this is the chorus' most appealing attribute to modern adapters.

In chapter two, I apply this model to a variety of productions, in order to discuss the techniques of performance that modern choruses employ, including the use of dance, masks, and media projections. I argue that the aspects of ancient choral performance most often drawn upon in adaptations are those that suit Henrichs' definition of the "self-referential", emphasizing the chorus' liminal and mediating role in relation to the audience. Using the work of Nietzsche and the Cambridge Ritualists, I argue that the impulse to re-ritualize tragedy has led to the resurrection of these non-naturalistic devices and collective choruses. On the other hand, I also argue that adapters must contend with the legacy of the work of Bertolt Brecht, who used many of these same techniques to distance the audience. In my analyses of a variety of productions - including Peter Hall's *Oresteia,* Tyrone Guthrie's *Oedipus Rex,* The Clod Ensemble's piece *Red Ladies,* Katie Mitchell's *Trojan Women,* Eva Palmer-Sikelianos' *Prometheus,* and Kurup's *An Antigone Story: A Greek Hijack* - I explore how the use of techniques associated with different frames of performance can have a variety of effects on the audience, whether intended or unintended by the adapters.

---

[40] Bennett (1997, 2nd ed.), *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception.*

In chapter three, I examine the uses of these techniques in order to communicate political ideology. I examine three productions in-depth: the distancing chorus of Bertolt Brecht's *Antigone,* Richard Schechner's ritualistic *Dionysus in 69,* and Einar Schleef's more recent choral production *The Mothers*. Through these case studies, I argue that a collective chorus is often used in a single production to both draw the audience to identify with the chorus as well as to distance them. I argue that such a combination of techniques is often used in an attempt to create an initial collective between chorus and audience, but to subsequently encourage the audience to evaluate their relationship with the chorus. Through this evaluation, the audience should realize that their earlier identification with the chorus has been framed negatively – as complicity in the tragic action - by the production. It is through this acknowledgment of their complicity that the political ideology or "message" of the production is communicated to the audience. However, this balance between identification and distance often eludes adapters in practice; in examining the reception of these productions, it seems that audiences often only feel one effect or the other – they are either overly-involved, or overly-distanced. I argue that regardless of the ideology being communicated (and the success of its communication), audience complicity has become a major desired effect of the use of the collective chorus.

In my final chapter, I further complicate the idea of audience complicity by looking at two complementary trends which both became prominent in the late twentieth century: interculturalism and postcolonialism in the theatre, and the discourse of the chorus as "other" in the field of Classics. I engage directly with a theme that has been prominent throughout the previous chapters: the use of choruses to perform "rituals", or to "ritualize" a modern production. The chorus' ritual role in tragedy is first present in chapter two in the discussion of the use of masks and the impact of the Cambridge Ritualists, and it re-appears in chapter three, where it is emphasized through the analysis of Schechner's *Dionysus in 69*. The relationship between the chorus and ritual is a major aspect of how we understand the chorus now, as is evident in the quote at the beginning of this introduction. In this final chapter, I examine the complexities of "borrowing" the rituals of other cultures in order to create complicit audiences. This became a popular trend in the 1960s, and is an important aspect of Schechner's production. In addition to looking briefly at productions such as *Women of Troy, Los Siete contra Tebas (Seven Against Thebes),* and *If We Were Birds,* my major case study in this chapter is Yael Farber's *Molora,* a South African adaptation of Aeschylus' *Oresteia.* Through the use of this case study, I look at how intercultural choruses (whether intercultural because of their composition, their creation, or the context of performance) complicate the possibility of creating audience complicity.

Selection of Case Studies

In selecting the case studies listed above, I have aimed to survey a wide variety of material. I have chosen many prominent, influential productions such as Hall's *Oresteia,* as well as smaller productions such as Shishir Kurup's *An Antigone Story: A Greek Hijack.* The larger-scale productions often have a wide range of material available regarding the decisions made by adapters, and there are also often many documents of reception (such as reviews) available for these productions. Supplementing these major productions with examinations of smaller and lesser-known productions has allowed me to examine the specific challenges that smaller productions and companies must contend with, whether in response to economic or creative pressures. Regardless of their size and economic means, all of the productions upon which I focus make adapting the chorus a priority, while also offering very different versions of the chorus' composition and function. Intentionally choosing a wide variety of productions has allowed me to experiment with my proposed model, exploring a wide variety of trends and historical/social contexts.

My goal of including a variety of productions and their choruses has led to certain omissions. There is no in-depth case study of Ninagawa's *Medea* or Miyagi Satoshi's *Antigone,* nor does Lee Breuer's influential *Gospel at Colonus* feature prominently. Although some of these productions are mentioned throughout, the decision not to feature them as in-depth studies was made through careful consideration. In some cases, as with these three productions*,* other works exist that have dealt with this material in depth, and to do so again would be repetitious.[41] In addition to being considered elsewhere, several prominent productions have not been considered here as major case studies because they would not offer new insights to the discussion at hand. For instance, this is the case with Ariane Mnouchkine's *Les Atrides.* As I studied its chorus, I found that not only has the production often been discussed elsewhere,[42] but also that in the context of my discussion of intercultural choruses this chorus would serve a similar function to the case study on Schechner's *Dionysus in 69.* Therefore, information about Mnouchkine's production is used below to complement the case study of Schechner's production in the context of my discussion of the intercultural chorus. These limits have allowed me to maintain a balance between my diachronic and synchronic analyses; my desire to study a wide variety of productions is complemented by my belief in the necessity of in-depth analyses of performances both large and small. Limiting the number of prominent productions featured here as major case studies has opened up space for the smaller-scale productions such as *An Antigone Story: A Greek Hijack* to also be examined in depth.

---

[41] Smethurst has published on Ninagawa's *Medea* (2000) and (2002) and Miyagi's *Antigone* (2011), and her insightful analyses benefit from her knowledge of Japanese theatre traditions such as Kabuki and Noh. Breuer's *Gospel at Colonus* is very often heralded as a "successful" rendering of the chorus, especially its religious and ritual roles. Discussions of this production appear in Goldhill (2007), Foley (2007), and Goff and Simpson (2007).

[42] *Les Atrides* appears briefly in Foley (2007), and Flashar (1991: 2009) 289. The use of mask is discussed in Wiles (2004) and (2007). A discussion of the space of the production is undertaken in depth by Goldhill (2007). De La Combe (2005) provides a chapter entirely devoted to this production. Bryant-Bertail (2000) connects Mnouchkine's production to the legacy of Brecht's epic theatre (chapter six). There is also a wide range of documents available at the APGRD focused on this production.

I have also chosen to focus upon adaptations that have been produced since World War II, and there are several reasons for this decision. First, this is the era in which adaptations of Greek tragedy began to flourish. It is in the wake of the war, as well as other global political conflicts, that the adaptation of tragedy has become increasingly popular. Hall proposes that it is perhaps the survival of characters like Oedipus and Medea that strike modern audiences as appealing, since

> they all survive their terrible experiences and stagger from the stage leaving the audience wondering how they can possibly cope with their psychological burdens. It is perhaps in this respect more than any other that Greek tragedy has chimed with the obsessions of an age which has itself only just survived the man-made horrors of the twentieth century.[43]

In addition to the fact that adapting tragedy has become increasingly popular since World War II, this era has also been a period of immense progress in the theatre more generally. Christopher Innes argues that "in no period is the connection between theatre and society clearer than in the aftermath of the two World Wars, unprecedented in scale and intensity, that have been the major historical events of the twentieth century".[44] The World War II era produced many of the innovations in the theatre that greatly impacted the use of the chorus and its relationship with the audience. For example, the work of Bertolt Brecht has been influential in the theatre since this period, and his uses of the chorus – including in his adaptation of *Antigone* – are of crucial importance to this project. Such innovations have shaped our contemporary theatre and have contributed to the current renaissance of classical adaptations and their uses of the chorus.

---

[43] Hall (2004a) 46. Hall singles out *Antigone,* which has been used to protest a variety of conflicts around the world (18). Mee and Foley (2011) make similar remarks on the international popularity of *Antigone* (3), however, they argue that their focus on performance allows them to see that the play/character is "ubiquitous but not universal" (3), as it "'belongs' to the world in a variety of forms" (3).

However, despite my focus on productions of the past sixty years, it is clear from this project that when studying reception, looking at the present inevitably leads one to look to the past. As mentioned above, the study of these adaptations takes place in the context of a study of the work of Schlegel, Nietzsche, Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, and the Cambridge Ritualists, as well as recent scholarly work. Often, as was the case in the reception of the Cambridge Ritualists, classical theory can influence theatre productions far longer than it remains relevant in its own field. This also operates in the reverse direction – theatre productions can remain important to scholarly discussions even after they have lost their influence in the theatre world.[45] Due to such complexities involved in the interactions between theatre and scholarship, it has sometimes been necessary to engage with both scholarship and theatre conventions outside of the designated period of this study.

Lastly, for this project, I have also set limitations based on language: this project is limited to material that is composed in English or French. Although I have benefitted from scholarship and productions not originally in English (such as Schlegel's *Lectures* and Schleef's *The Mothers*), I have done so only in cases in which translations or supplementary material in English is available. Further work on the chorus might relate the model and conclusions here to other cultural and linguistic contexts that are outside of the scope of my study. Besides other contexts, there are further directions in which to extend this study, and several are suggested in the conclusion of this work.

---

[44] Innes (1995), in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre,* 380.

[45] The attention given to Peter Hall's *Oresteia* in the field of Classical Performance Reception might be considered an example of this tendency. To a slightly lesser extent, this also applies to Peter Stein's *Oresteia* (Berlin 1980), even though it was revived in Russia in the early 1990s.

Theoretical and Methodological Issues Addressed

My approach to my subject matter and the model that I create for the analysis of the liminal role of the chorus seek to acknowledge – and in many cases, directly address - several theoretical and methodological issues I have encountered in the study of the chorus. Below, I survey these issues in brief, as they are essential to understanding the methodology and goals of my work.

A. Idealized Source Text

Despite an increased acknowledgement of the importance of studying performances, scholarship in the area of classical reception is still often underpinned by an idealized view of the source text. It is common not only in reviews (as in the quote from Murray's review at the beginning of the chapter), but also in scholarship to look at modern "solutions" to the "problem" of staging the Greek chorus, and to evaluate these productions' success based on the scholar's interpretation of the ancient chorus' function. Scholars often seem to be asking: despite being an adaptation, what is the best way for the chorus to be loyal to its ancient counterpart? This trend can be seen especially in articles structured around an evaluation of a series of adaptations as case studies with the goal of identifying which "solutions" lead to "successful" performances.

The major criterion for "success" is usually the adaptation's ability to reproduce the original chorus/action/audience relationship as understood by the author. For instance, in his recent work

Goldhill discusses several reduced choruses in adaptations of Greek tragedies, but he is not shy about his opinion of these reduced choruses. Goldhill offers several examples of reduced choruses, including the one-person chorus of Jonathan Kent's production of *Hecuba* (London 2004).[46] In this production, the "choruphaios was played by a single woman, who delivered the link lines between speeches and who helped lift Hecuba when she fell. She was basically a character in the play, another Trojan prisoner of war".[47] Goldhill uses this example to show that "the chorus has lost the lifeblood that makes sense of its presence in the play".[48]

In my work, I seek to rectify what I see as a flaw in the "problem and solution" methodology. In examining adaptations of the chorus, I attempt to avoid defining whether my case studies provide a "successful" or "loyal" chorus. This decision is influenced by Linda Hutcheon's work *A Theory of Adaptation,*[49] in which she argues that adaptations should not be evaluated using a rhetoric of fidelity to the original text. She writes that "the idea of 'fidelity' to that prior text is often what drives any directly comparative method of study".[50] However, although this might be the impulse behind comparative scholarship, "there are many and varied motives behind adaptation, and few involve faithfulness".[51] Her work suggests that it is more useful to look at the strengths of different media and the reasons for the creation and enjoyment of certain adaptations.[52] This is essential when looking at adaptations of the chorus, because examining an adaptation's "success" or "failure" based on its fidelity to its source text causes many other important factors to be overlooked, such as the adaptation's place in theatre history, and the strategies its chorus uses to communicate with its contemporary audience. Hutcheon's work offers the important reminder that "multiple versions exist laterally, not vertically".[53]

---

[46] Goldhill (2007) 64-5.
[47] Goldhill (2007) 65.
[48] Goldhill (2007) 66.
[49] Hutcheon (2006).
[50] Hutcheon (2006) xiii.
[51] Hutcheon (2006) xiii.
[52] Hutcheon (2006) xiii.

With more particular focus on Classical Reception Studies, Hardwick makes a similar point when she notes that "the vocabulary of reception studies has moved on from notions of 'legacy' to include also the values and practices of the present and future creativity of classical culture".[54] She argues that adaptations should be evaluated based on three aspects. First, she suggests asking how different the new work is from the classical text or image. How is this difference expressed? Secondly, she suggests scholars examine how the new work affects perception of the ancient world. And finally, she encourages scholars to look at what the modern work and its reception suggest about the direction of contemporary aesthetic and cultural practices.[55] In my work, I have been influenced by the approaches of both Hutcheon and Hardwick and therefore, although I take the reception and popularity of productions into account, I do not evaluate the "success" of productions. I attempt instead to take the more challenging and productive approach to performance texts proposed by Hardwick.

B. Issues of Terminology

In developing my model for understanding the chorus' role and function in performance, I am also attempting to tackle issues of terminology. In some cases (as in chapter one), I argue explicitly for new terminology, but it is also a general contention of my work that the terminology surrounding choral performance – and implicitly, all performance described in scholarship - be more precise. In particular, I am attempting to challenge the general approach to "choral space" in scholarship, as well as to tackle the issue of "equivalences vs. genealogies".

---

[53] Hutcheon (2006) xiii.
[54] Hardwick (2003) 112.
[55] Hardwick (2003) 112.

i. Choral Space

In reviewing the language used to describe the unique role of the chorus in both ancient and modern productions, it has become clear that scholars do not always differentiate between their explanations of the following:

1. The space that the chorus "occupies" in performance – is it dramatic, extra-dramatic, in-between? Or does the use of terms like "higher plane"[56] indicate a vertical conception of communication?

2. The type or style of the chorus' communication. For instance, does the chorus speak directly to the audience? Do they sing or dance?

3. The reception of the chorus' space and/or style of communication by the audience. How are these being understood? Are they being received as the adapter intended?

All three of these aspects are intertwined, but acknowledging their differences can lead to more precise vocabulary for discussing the role of particular choruses, who seem notoriously difficult to describe. My analysis addresses these issues by first engaging with the issue of the chorus' "space" in chapter one. As I described above, I propose a model in which to understand the chorus' role in relation to the onstage action and the audience. Then, I proceed to discuss a variety of strategies of choral communication in chapter two, and relate these strategies to the spatial model that has been previously discussed. The third factor in the list above is often overlooked, but since the model I describe is essentially reception-focused, the reception of the chorus by the audience is of utmost importance in my analyses.

---

[56] Foley (2003) 21. This issue is further discussed in chapter one.

ii. Equivalences vs. Genealogy

The second issue of terminology that I seek to address is the precise identification of the relationship between adaptations and source material. In the introduction to *Dionysus Since 69*,[57] Hall states that "sometimes it can be proven that a pronounced similarity between a modern work of art and one of the ancient plays results from conscious borrowing on the part of the author or director, but more often it can not".[58] It can be difficult to know when an instance of conscious adaptation has taken place, and when seeming connections are in fact coincidences. In subsequently describing the chapter by Worth, Hall herself seems to struggle with precise terminology for identifying connections between artistic works: she explains that Worth "examines the subterranean influence of Greek dramatic form, convention, and of specific texts" on the work of Samuel Beckett.[59]

I would suggest that it is important to develop terminology that offers a complex vocabulary to discuss both the relationship between a Greek original and adaptations, as well as the relationship between adaptations themselves. In what follows, I therefore differentiate between relationships of genealogy and relationships of equivalence.[60] These terms encourage a distinction that I believe is essential in examining adaptations: plays or conventions are similar *genealogically* if one is based directly upon another, but there is an *equivalence* if the similarity is present without the adapter having consciously borrowed from the antecedent. An equivalence might be due to a number of factors, including the possibility of "subterranean influence".

These terms are not only important in discussing a Greek tragedy's relationship with an adaptation, but the precision of these terms helps to discuss different adaptations in relation to one another. This is essential to the discussions that follow. For example, in chapter two, the one-person chorus of Kurup's *An Antigone Story* is analysed, and I note that Kurup used a chorus in his adaptation because of his reading of Sophocles. Therefore, there is a genealogical similarity between the Greek play and Kurup's adaptation. However, Kurup uses a one-person chorus (named Korus) in his production, and this figure bears striking similarities to Anouilh's one-person chorus in his *Antigone.* The decision to include a one-person chorus was not initially inspired by Anouilh's famous chorus; it was made for economic reasons. If Kurup had never encountered Anouilh's play, there would have remained only an equivalence between their choruses. Yet when Kurup was introduced to Anouilh's play and decided to adapt more of Anouilh's text into his own play, his one-person chorus became genealogically similar to Anouilh's chorus as well.[61]

---

[57] Hall, Macintosh, Wrigley (eds.) (2004).
[58] Hall (2004a) 33.
[59] Hall (2004a) 35.
[60] For these terms, I am indebted to Revermann (forthcoming; article on "Brechtian Chorality").

An example of an equivalence with the Greek original performance can also be noted in Kurup's adaptation. Kurup's inclusion of music (original rock songs, sung by Korus and the characters) is an instance of equivalence with its Greek antecedent. When asked if he included songs because choral sections in Greek tragedy were sung and danced, Kurup replied that this was not the case. Instead, he wanted the music to serve two related functions: to be similar to a rock opera, as well as to offer a moment of relief from the tragic action. As in a musical, he stated, he hoped that the music would further the storyline – there should be the sense that the text *must* be expressed through song.[62] Although it might be argued that the use of the chorus in Greek tragedy functions similarly, in this case, any similarity is only an equivalence, for here Kurup was not considering the Greek original, but the rock musicals and concerts of the 1990s.

---

[61] Kurup (2010). Interviewed by: A. Rich (May 7, 2010).

[62] Kurup (2010). Indeed, Foley (2011) notes the importance of music to this production when she states that the play's "sometimes cryptic new lyric dimension emanated above all from the songs of the heroine herself. Nihilistic and ineffective as her attempt to establish a personal voice may have been in the face of unending public intrusion and distorting media power, it lured those who loved her to performance at her side" (384).

I would suggest that these differentiations are essential to both the writing of performance histories as well as comparative work more generally. When comparing works about which little is known regarding the processes of conception, creation, and even performance, it is easy to become overly-invested in similarities and ascribe connections that might not exist. I have attempted to be vigilant throughout in order to avoid ascribing direct genealogical connections to situations that are only equivalences. However, as Hall noted above, this type of information about an adapter's influences is not always available. When the connection between works is unknown and remains hypothetical, I have tried to make this clear (as in the comparison between Anouilh's chorus and the influences of the Prologue and *confidant(e)* figures in chapter one). I have often found that admitting certain similarities are only equivalences can lead to more precise discussions, and more interesting discoveries. As is evident in the case of Kurup's inspiration from 1990s rock concerts, Greek tragedy is not the only "subterranean influence" at work.

C. The Changing Audience

The third issue that my work attempts to address is the issue of the changing audience. The evolution of theatre conventions causes performance techniques to be received differently by audiences in different eras. For instance, it is not uncommon in theatre in North America at the current time to find the actors directly addressing the audience. In others eras – such as the neo-classical era – direct address would be considered shocking. In addition, this is further complicated by variety amongst audience members; no two people interpret a theatre event in exactly the same way. My methodology and model seek to embrace the changing audience, as well as the diversity of reception.

Understanding the changing audience and its relationship to different adaptations of the chorus is of course complicated by our lack of knowledge about the composition and reaction of the ancient audience.[63] I would suggest that the necessarily speculative nature of the information on the ancient audience has made it easier to generalize about audience response, leading to conceptions such as Schlegel's "ideal spectator". However, more detailed recent work on the choral institutions of Athens has brought the connection between chorus and audience once again to the forefront of scholarship.[64] Martin Revermann, for instance, has argued that many citizens in the audience would have participated in choruses of some kind throughout their lifetime. He explains that

> the percentage of those Athenian spectators at the Great Dionysia who had, at one point or another in their lives, been performing in that very orchestra themselves as members of a dramatic or, more likely, dithyrambic chorus must have been considerable. Therefore, as much as the spectators may have differed in terms of their educational and social background, a substantial portion of them would be united through the theatrical experience of having performed in the theatre of Dionysus themselves. Many metics and foreigners will have acquired similar choral expertise in different contexts.[65]

This comment presents an angle for understanding the chorus/audience relationship in the ancient theatre that takes into account the prevalence of choral performance in Athens. It sheds light on a potential relationship of identification between chorus and audience at the height of tragedy's popularity.

---

[63] Gamel (2010) notes, "evidence about ancient audiences and their reactions to performances is woefully thin, so we must rely on anecdotal observations about what those audiences experienced, but we are more informed about the conditions of production" (158). On ancient evidence, she cites Csapo and Slater (1995), 286-330, as well as Pickard-Cambridge (1988) 263-78. See also Roselli (2011). On the issue of the competence of the audience of Greek tragedy and comedy, see especially Revermann (2006). For another survey of scholarly opinions on the composition of the audience, see n.37 in the latter work.

[64] See Revermann (2006) and Roselli (2011). Roselli argues that "our models of the theater in ancient Athens need to be revised to include the multiple perspectives derived from quite differently constituted groups of people. The process of determining 'whose theater' we mean when we discuss ancient drama unearths a complex history of the role of the theater in society and the agency of spectators" (18). These comments bear interesting similarities to my goals in relation to the modern audience. For instance, see the discussion of "whose collective" in chapter four.

[65] Revermann (2006) 112. See also Roselli (2011) chapter four, which focuses on non-citizens in the theatre. On metics and foreigners in the Greek chorus, see 129-35, in which he argues that "After all, Athens was an imperial center with large numbers of metics and foreigners working in the theatre. A mixed group of some (mostly?) citizens with some noncitizens is likely perhaps in most cases" (131). It should be noted that Roselli has been criticized for his confident assertions as well as his interpretation of the evidence; see the review by Lech (2011), who states that he uses "expressions like 'doubtless' where doubt ought to be present" (December 19, 2011).

Budelmann also comments on the effect of the prominence of the choral culture in Athens; however, this leads him to what he calls a "negative point". He argues that the lack of a similar modern choral culture means that "choruses will never have the same kind of attraction for modern spectators as they did for ancient ones [...] Here, if anywhere, cultural differences bite".[66] This "negative" comment – whether true or not - in fact points toward an interesting positive aspect of the study of adaptations: having a complete understanding the ancient chorus/audience relationship is not necessary for this study, for several reasons.

First, as (rather harshly) concluded by Budelmann, the relationship would be impossible to reproduce. Even if we had a full understanding of the way ancient choruses were received by their audiences, cultural differences would still "bite". As Foley states succintly, "it is impossible to reproduce the complex original relation between audience and performance on the modern stage".[67] The chorus/audience relationship can never be assumed to function in the same way that it might have in an original production, regardless of what that relationship might have been.

The goal of reproducing the relationship between tragedy and its audience is further discussed in a recent article by Gamel (2010), who notes the following "catch 22" of re-creating tragedy: "the closer a modern production approaches the formal conditions of its original production, the stranger it will be to a modern audience. The stranger the effect on a modern audience, the more different their reactions will be from those of the original audience".[68] She argues that instead, "hybrid" productions – those that embrace the conventions of both ancient tragedy and modern performance – are most successful at creating an "authentic" audience experience.[69] However, as my discussion of the work of Hutcheon and Hardwick above has shown, in the work that follows, I attempt to move away from the idea of "authenticity" as a criterion of judgment, regardless of how authenticity is defined.[70] Not only is it impossible to re-create the chorus/audience relationship, but as I have stated above, I consider it methodologically flawed to evaluate productions based on their ability to "authentically" re-create such a relationship.

---

[66] Budelmann (2000) 200.
[67] Foley (2007) 354.
[68] Gamel (2010) 159.

This approach to my material is in fact connected to the second reason why it is not essential to this study to have complete knowledge regarding the ancient chorus/audience relationship. In my examination of adaptations, the focus is shifted away from the ancient relationship between chorus and audience, and toward understanding how adapters and scholars *interpret* this ancient relationship – regardless of whether or not these interpretations are based on factual information. Rather than hypothesizing about the ancient chorus/audience relationship, my work seeks to understand how this relationship has been understood by adapters, and how these interpretations have led to certain configurations of the chorus.

My methodology and my proposed model are therefore not focused on understanding the ancient chorus/audience relationship, but instead, seek to acknowledge and account for changing audiences, as well as changing performance conventions. My focus is the double process of reception – the way that the reception of the source text by the adapter leads to a particular configuration of the chorus, and how this chorus is received by the audience (and sometimes, through a production's legacy, how it impacts subsequent adaptations of the chorus as well). My work in the chapters that follow seeks to unite coherently these close analyses of performance texts and their reception with scholarship in the fields of both Theatre Studies and Classics. It is ultimately my goal to not only address the theoretical and methodological issues identified above, but also to approach Classical Performance Reception from an angle that will provide a better understanding of the potential relationships between modern choruses and their audiences.

---

[69] Gamel proposes the term "inductive authenticity", which she defines as "'intended or likely to arouse effects on the audience'. In the case of 'subsequent performances', engaging the audience members via 'inductive authenticity' means trying to engage them as the original productions might have done. Modern productions and adaptations which may seem radically innovative, unfaithful, subversive, even parodic or satiric, but which provoke critical and emotional responses in their audiences, more closely resemble ancient performances in their *effect*" (160).

[70] Authenticity, I suggest in chapter four, can be a dangerous ideal – not only for over-valuing the source text, but also for its implications with regard to intercultural performance.

CHAPTER 1:
The One-Person Chorus

Introduction:

In Oliver Taplin's description of Greek tragedy in the *Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre,* he introduces the Greek chorus by explaining that "the standard tragic chorus had fifteen members – all Athenian citizens – and, though their leader would sometimes speak on their behalf, they normally performed in vocal and physical unison, as an indivisible group".[71] In another introductory theatre text, *The Broadview Anthology of Drama*, the author outlines similar attributes: "all fifth-century tragedies and comedies featured large singing and dancing choruses: eventually fifteen members for tragedy and twenty-four for comedy". [72] As in these two texts, the ancient Greek chorus is primarily introduced by these defining characteristics: as a group of twelve or fifteen members, they dance, sing, and usually share one identity.[73] However, despite the fact that the collectivity of the ancient chorus and its musical performance style are often considered its most notable features, in modern adaptations these are only rarely features of the chorus. In fact, collectivity and the incorporation of music are often the most challenging attributes for modern adapters catering to audiences in a post-naturalistic era.[74]

There are of course many other attributes that characterize the ancient chorus, and modern adapters can draw upon other features of the chorus that best suit their production's goals and context. Although I will discuss the ways in which the particular performance conventions of the ancient chorus – including the use of dance, masks, and self-referentiality – have been adapted to suit modern goals and tastes in chapter two, in this chapter I will begin by examining how modern adapters have come to characterize the modern chorus. I will draw upon scholarship and performance conventions from a variety of contexts and traditions in order to develop a system for understanding the modern conception – and reception - of the chorus.

---

[71] Taplin (1995) 16.

[72] Wise (2003) 1.

[73] It should also be noted, however, that in the sharing of identity, some exceptions occur (most notably in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata,* in which the chorus is divided into two groups according to gender identity – male vs. female).

[74] The style of performance of the ancient chorus also makes a full understanding of the chorus challenging for scholars. Ley (2007) explains that "the problem of the chorus is of a different kind because it involves questions of music and dancing and our own cultural puzzlement over this kind of performance for which we have no real equivalent" (ix). See chapter 2 of this work, in which he discusses different types of choruses and their styles of performance.

However difficult for adapters, there are reasons why certain attributes of the chorus such as collectivity have come to be seen as its defining features. One of the most influential explanations of the relationship between chorus and audience – that of August Wilhelm Schlegel - in fact highlights its collectivity. In the first section of this chapter, I will discuss his influential description of the chorus as an "ideal spectator" in the early nineteenth century. This theory deserves attention for several reasons: first, it represents a relatively early attempt to understand the chorus' role in the process of performance and reception, which is the focus of this project. Secondly, and most likely due to the theory's emphasis on performance, the conceptualization of the chorus as "ideal spectator" has made a lasting impression on our understanding of the chorus' role and function. However, I argue that although it has influenced how theorists and adapters have understood the chorus' relationship with the audience, neither Schlegel's conception of the ideal spectator (nor the generalizing theories it has been used to support) are sufficient explanations of the relationship between chorus and audience. Schlegel's conception, which relies upon a collective chorus to mitigate the action for a collective audience, cannot adequately account for either the nuances of the ancient chorus' relationship to the audience, nor the variations of this relationship in adaptations.

In order to discuss the particular features of the chorus/audience relationship that elude Schlegel and his followers in more detail, I will proceed by engaging with the phenomenon of the “one-person chorus” in the second and third sections below. The presence of one-person choruses in performance – and the use of this term in theatre reviews – illustrates that collectivity is not necessarily a defining feature of the way we now understand the relationship between chorus and audience. In order to explore how a chorus/audience relationship that does not rely on collectivity might operate in performance, I will draw upon Jean Anouilh’s adaptation of the chorus in his *Antigone* as my primary case study in the second and third parts of this chapter. By grounding my examination in a singular, influential example of a one-person chorus, I will be able to clearly illustrate that the chorus’ relationship with the audience is not dependent upon choral collectivity. Instead, through this case study, new characteristics of the modern conception of the chorus will be identified. This analysis will be complemented by a discussion of several theatre traditions that have impacted not only this particular reduction of the chorus, but through the influence of this and other prominent adaptations, have had a widespread effect on the reduction and reception of the chorus more generally.

Through my analysis of this chorus and its antecedents, I will argue that although it has proven difficult for classical scholars to describe, it is the chorus’ potential for creating a unique relationship with the audience that has drawn many adapters to the chorus, despite their different goals and contexts. By serving as an attractive feature for adapters – and therefore featuring prominently in adaptations - the unique chorus/audience relationship has become a defining feature of how we now understand the chorus. However, this relationship is not based upon mutual collectivity, but is flexible and can be manipulated in a variety of ways to suit an adapter’s context.

My discussion of Anouilh’s one-person chorus and its antecedents will lead to the proposal of a model that can be used to understand choruses of different sizes as well as historical contexts.

I will argue for a flexible and reception-focused system in which to understand the chorus/audience relationship, and this model will also help to differentiate the role of the chorus from similar dramatic devices and figures discussed below. By focusing on Anouilh's chorus in particular, I will show how the model I establish is affected by the context of creation and the conventions of performance in a particular era.

1.1 Collectivity and Identification: The Legacy of Schlegel

Schlegel and the "Ideal Spectator"

Although I have stated above that collectivity is not necessarily central to the modern conception of the chorus, the chorus' collectivity in fact warrants a brief initial discussion. As it is the chorus' relationship with the audience that is the primary focus in this study, it is important to note – and examine the reasons for – the fact that the chorus' collectivity has commonly been used to explain the relationship between chorus and audience.

One of the functions (or perhaps consequences) of the chorus' collectivity in the ancient theatre was to emphasize the individual/collective binary that is a central part of tragedy. The tension between individual protagonists and the collective chorus reflects the concerns and questions of the Athenian society creating and consuming tragedy, and therefore it is these questions which "insistently recur in the tragedies themselves, and which its form is indeed eminently suited to explore".[75] Not only do the plot and themes of tragedy often involve the role of the individual with regard to the collective, tragedy's form (alternating episodes and choral stasima) offers the audience dedicated time in which to focus specifically on the collective. As I will explore in chapter three, this collective aspect of the chorus often remains useful to adapters seeking to capitalize on the political nature of the tension between individual and collective.

---

[75] Wilson (2000) 4. Wilson's monograph contextualizes the dynamic of individual and collective within the institution of the *khoregia*.

Although the chorus' collectivity is by no means the only aspect of the chorus that appeals to adapters, it has been understood as fundamental to the chorus' ability to establish a relationship with the audience. The idea that the collective of audience members automatically identifies with the collective chorus onstage has been used by scholars to explain the powerful connection between the chorus and the audience. In this belief, many scholars have remained reliant on the work of nineteenth-century scholars, and in particular the work of August Wilhelm Schlegel. Scholars have often overlooked the complexities of the relationship between chorus and audience in performance because of the enduring influence of Schlegel's interpretation of the Greek chorus as an "ideal spectator" – or, in his original terms, "idealized spectator"[76]– which mitigates the onstage action for the audience.

Although, as I illustrate below, Schlegel's theory is often quoted or implied as an underlying assumption in scholarly work, it is not often examined in the context of his lectures and the time in which he was writing. Schlegel's theory has most commonly been extracted from the context of his writing, and the effect has been an oversimplification of the way that scholars have understood the functioning of the chorus/audience relationship in performance. It is important to look at the context of Schlegel's particular use of this term, before examining how it came to be so fundamental in explaining the relationship of the chorus and audience.

---

[76] Schlegel's original term is "idealischer Zuschauer". As Silk (1998a) mentions in a footnote, many scholars after Schlegel (including Nietzsche) have converted Schlegel's actual term "idealized" to "ideal" (202, footnote 17). Billings (2009) recognizes that in Nietzsche's lectures on Sophocles (1870), which came before *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872)*,* Nietzsche in fact quotes Schlegel correctly ("idealisirte" rather than "idealische"). It is important to note that a full understanding of Schlegel's use of the term "ideal" is hindered by a lack of firm definition of the term "ideal" in the works of many writers of the traditions of German Idealism and Romanticism. As Ameriks (2000) explains, this has been problematic for scholars (especially in England and America), who often misinterpret the term because "exactly what 'idealism' means for Kant, Hegel, Fichte, etc., is precisely one of the main issues that dominates the work of the participants and interpreters of this era" (8). "Idealism" is still used for ambiguous purposes, and the term is often assumed to indicate anti-realism, "as if 'ideal' must always mean 'not real'"(8). Sometimes, this is in fact the definition of the word, but for other writers – like Plato – the "ideal" is in fact the *most* real (8).

In his *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* of 1809-11, Schlegel explains that the chorus, despite operating differently in different tragedies, maintains its function as ideal spectator.[77] He believes that the chorus,

> in order not to interfere with the appearance of reality which the whole ought to possess, must adjust itself to the ever-varying requisitions of the exhibited stories. Whatever it might be and do in each particular piece, it represented in general, first the common mind of the nation, and then the general sympathy of all mankind. In a word, the Chorus is the ideal spectator. It mitigates the impression of a heart-rending or moving story, while it conveys to the actual spectator a lyrical and musical expression of his own emotions, and elevates him to the region of contemplation.[78]

First, it is important to note that Schlegel believes that the whole tragedy must have the "appearance of reality". It seems that the chorus, improperly used (perhaps if its fictional identity does not "adjust" itself to suit the "stories"), can threaten or "interfere" with this appearance of reality. However, not only should the chorus suit its particular play by being compatible with its reality, but Schlegel has also used the word "ideal" to characterize *all* of Greek tragedy, stating earlier in the same lecture that "the ideality of the representation chiefly consisted in the elevation of everything in it to a higher sphere".[79] It is not only the chorus that is "ideal", then, but every element of Greek tragedy.

It seems that for Schlegel, the ideal and the real are in opposition as terms, but it is in their combination that tragedy - and the chorus - finds success. Tragedy must not only be ideal; it must combine the ideal with the real in perfect proportion. Schlegel explains that the Greeks, "in their artistic creations, succeeded most perfectly, in combining the ideal with the real, or, to drop school terms, an elevation more than human with all the truth of life, and in investing the manifestation of an idea with energetic corporeity".[80] Here, "ideal" stands in opposition to "real" (at least in "school terms"), and the Greeks have discovered how to create a perfect combination of the two. In terms of the chorus, this means that as an *ideal* spectator, they find their counterpart in the *real* audience, and the chorus "mitigates" the action, gives expression to the audience's emotions, and elevates the audience to the "region of contemplation". The chorus, then, must not upset the tragedy of which it is a part, and it does so by contributing to both the reality and the ideality of the performance.

---

[77] Similarly, Budelmann (2000) accounts for changes in the use of the chorus (and its reception by individual spectators), while arguing that it remains a model of communal response.

[78] Schlegel (1811: 1876) 70. All translations of Schlegel by John Black (1876).

[79] Schlegel (1811: 1876) 66.

Schlegel's description of the chorus as "ideal spectator" has invited subsequent theorists to focus on the chorus' role of mirroring the audience, but judging from Schlegel's description, it appears in fact that "mitigating" the action is also an essential aspect of the chorus' role. John Black, the translator quoted above, supplies the term "mitigates" for the German verb "lindern", which has strong medical connotations and might be associated with verbs such as "relieve", "ease", or "soothe". Although Schlegel does not explain his particular use of the term, the connotations of the verb offer an indication that part of the chorus' role is to lessen the emotional impact of the tragic action on the audience. I would suggest that perhaps this is a part of the chorus' process of combining the ideal with the real – mitigating the tragic action goes hand in hand with allowing the audience to be elevated to the "region of contemplation".

It would perhaps be accurate to say that when the chorus achieves the proper balance between real and ideal, the audience understands the chorus both as an integral part of the action, as well as an ideal representation of themselves that leads them to contemplate the tragedy. What Schlegel's argument implies (but does not fully explain) is that the audience somehow always identifies with the chorus, consciously or unconsciously viewing it as an idealized or elevated version of themselves, and that this *identification* is in fact what leads to contemplation.

---

[80] Schlegel (1811: 1876) 66.

Although this process of identification is only an implication of Schlegel's argument, his theory of the chorus as ideal spectator has in fact been reduced to this implication - that there is, inherent in the co-existence of the two collectives in the theatre, a guaranteed sense of "identification" between chorus and audience.[81]

Some scholars have dismissed the importance of Schlegel's argument. In his examination of treatments of the chorus in the nineteenth century, Silk dismisses Schlegel's theory as "superficial".[82] Indeed, when the theory is fully examined in context, it certainly becomes clear that what his theory really tells us about is the time in which he was writing – much more, in fact, than it tells us about the Greek chorus. However, despite the fact that Schlegel's account might be considered vague and has certainly suffered from reduction and misinterpretation, what it represents is an early attempt to understand the chorus in the context of performance and reception. In fact, I would argue that it is precisely because of this focus on performance that this theory has proven irresistible since Schlegel's time, and that its impact has been felt since the nineteenth century.[83] When scholars such as Silk marginalize Schlegel's theory, they often do not account for its *impact*; being "superficial" has not detracted from its influence. Despite the fact that Schlegel's theory has been challenged, it has far from disappeared, but remains influential both onstage and in scholarship - often as an underlying assumption, unattributed to Schlegel.

---

[81] Interestingly, although Schlegel's conception of the chorus as "ideal spectator" has contributed to a subsequent emphasis on the identification between collectives, Schlegel has also engaged with other forms of choruses. For instance, Schlegel in fact *defends* the singular chorus figure of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. See Woodcock (2008) 41-2, who explains "Schlegel's defence of the Chorus ultimately rests – as might be expected from one of the founding fathers of Romanticism – on the capacity of the imagination […] Imaginative supplementation is preferred to the interruption of any intellectual or emotional engagement with the play" (42).

[82] Silk (1998a) 202. Dismissing Schlegel, Silk in particular focuses on Nietzsche and Hegel as providing the most important theories of the chorus in the nineteenth century.

[83] Even within the nineteenth century, Silk (1998a) notes that with the exception of Hegel and Nietzsche, scholars either avoid discussing the significance of the chorus, or else simply cite "some pre-existing theoretical position" (196). Silk's example of this is the work of Karl Otfried Müller (under the name of J.W. Donaldson), who repeats Schlegel's position: "the chorus generally represented *the ideal spectator* [Donaldson's italics] whose mode of viewing things was to guide and control the impressions of the assembled people" (Müller-Donaldson [1858] 411, quoted in Silk [1998] 196).

Schlegel in Modern Scholarship

Although Schlegel and his contemporaries were theorizing about the ancient Greek chorus, his work is still being used to interpret and describe the connection between the modern chorus and audience. The impact of his work can still be ascertained in the explanation of the chorus/audience relationship in the scholarship of various fields, including Classics, Theatre and Performance Studies, and even Film Studies.[84] To give but one example, the mere fact that the chorus is a collective has led the chorus to be associated with groups in two ways in Lehmann's work on postdramatic theatre.[85] The first can be ascertained in his observation that an audience might easily associate the chorus with an offstage group. I am in agreement with Lehmann when he states that "it is obvious that it hardly takes any directorial effort to make the audiences associate choruses on stage with masses of people in reality (of classes, the people, the collective)".[86] A mass of people can stand in for another group without requiring too much imagination on the part of the audience (or, in Lehmann's argument, on the part of the director).

However, one of Lehmann's previous comments is more contentious, and points to the "given" or accepted truism in the chorus/audience relationship, based on the work of Schlegel. In introducing the chorus, Lehmann argues that "the chorus (owing to its character as a crowd) is able to function scenically as a mirror and partner of the audience. A chorus is looking at a chorus, the theatron axis is put into play".[87] In the former statement, the chorus stands in for a group based on their fictional identity, however, in this comment, the chorus has the additional function of standing in for the audience.

---

[84] In addition to the example of Lehmann's work on theatre (discussed below), the "ideal spectator" model has also had an impact in other fields. For instance, Budelmann (2000) devotes an entire chapter in his work on Sophocles to describing how the chorus provides a model of communal response for the audience (195). The chorus' language makes them a "focaliser", one of the audience's "ways into a play" (201). According to Budelmann, the audience can use the chorus (and the offstage group he believes they always represent) as "a group with which they, members of a group themselves, can identify and sympathise or whose perspective they can adopt" (201). His use of the word "model" and the idea of a group connecting with a group shows its debt to Schlegel's "ideal spectator". Budelmann's argument in his final chapter is concerned with the relationship between chorus and audience, however, as in the monograph as a whole, his main focus is the language of the play. In fact, he seems to believe that the chorus' language can help to overcome modern spectators' lack of familiarity with choruses (268). This approach largely (and intentionally) neglects physical performance, and in addition, a major aspect of Budelmann's argument – as in Schlegel's theory – is the assumption of a collective chorus and collective audience, even in modern performance.
Schlegel's theory also seems to have found its way into film theory. Bordwell (1985) writes that in the theory of Ivor Montagu, the viewer is considered an "ideal observer" who can see "aspects which would normally be unavailable to an observer in real life" (10). The ideal spectator, says Montagu, "must be an ideally placed *possible* spectator" (10).
The ideal spectator has even entered the field of theatre education: Prendergast's 2008 monograph, *Teaching Spectatorship,* contains a chapter entitled "The 'Ideal Spectator': Dramatic Chorus, Collective Creation, and Curriculum".

[85] Lehmann (1999: 2009).

[86] Lehmann (1999: 2009) 130.

Lehmann's comment that the chorus is a mirror and partner of the audience shows its debt to Schlegel's theory of the ancient chorus.[88] Lehmann's argument, and other arguments like it, assume an automatic sense of identification or empathy between chorus and audience. The impact of Schlegel's argument – or rather, of the implications of his argument – has led scholars to overlook the flexibility of the chorus in performance. Schlegel's theory (or perhaps merely his creation of the term "ideal spectator") in fact remains so influential that Goldhill, in his 2007 work intended for theatre practitioners producing Greek tragedies, feels it is necessary to discuss the impact of this "overarching theory" in the twentieth century. Goldhill states that the theory of the ideal spectator has even "had a strong influence on modern performance styles".[89] Schlegel's theory is therefore "overarching" precisely because it remains present as an unconscious assumption or consciously accepted truism not only in scholarly works, as I have shown, but also in the prevailing thought surrounding the *performance* of Greek tragedy.

Creating the Audience/Chorus Relationship

What Schlegel described (albeit vaguely) is a complex and performance-oriented process, and he described it in the terms common to his era**.** However, over time his theory has been reduced to the generalization that the audience will necessarily – and always - identify with a collective chorus. Recently, however, classical scholars have stressed the flexibility of the chorus as a dramatic tool of the ancient dramatist, rather than a stale inherited convention.[90] This is important to a discussion of the chorus, both ancient and modern. Unlike descriptions of the chorus that rely on the "ideal spectator" model, the chorus/audience relationship is complex and shifting. Assuming that the audience will necessarily identify with the chorus (especially in our post-naturalist or postdramatic theatre) overlooks the complex ways that the chorus is used to communicate with the audience, both past and present. Some of these specific techniques will be discussed further in chapter two.

---

[87] Lehmann (1999: 2009) 130.

[88] Lehmann subsequently complicates the notion of the modern chorus in terms of its internal tension between individual voices and collectivity, and offers several examples of modern choral work. However, his conception of the chorus remains conjoined with the notion of collectivity, even if constructed from individual voices. I will return to his work in my discussion of Einar Schleef in chapter three.

[89] Goldhill (2007) 52. Goldhill pairs the "ideal spectator" theory with the theory that the chorus speaks with the voice of the author, identifying both as the major "overarching theories" of the twentieth century. Goldhill rightly states that although this view is overarching, it "cannot accommodate the marginal social status of so many choruses, and finds it hard to explain the more bloodthirsty and wild choral odes […] Constructing the chorus as an ideal spectator or as the perspective of the citizens will inevitably underplay the active role the chorus also plays in the drama as a drama" (53)

In addition to encouraging us to overlook many of the complexities of performance as well as changing theatre conventions, one of the most detrimental effects of Schlegel's influence has been that our focus on chorus/audience collectivity as necessary to *identification* has prevented a comprehensive analysis of how the chorus can be used not only as group, but also how it operates when it is reduced in number. In addition, the impact of Schlegel's work has also hindered analysis of how choruses of any size can be used to *distance* the modern audience. The chorus can draw the audience into the performance as well as push them away from the tragic action (and, in some cases, from the chorus itself). Often, as I will continue to demonstrate in subsequent chapters, choruses are used in both ways within a single performance. Practitioners use choruses of different sizes to create both a sense of identification as well as distance for their audience.

---

[90] For instance, Foley (2003) looks at differences between playwrights, as well as choruses (such as the chorus of *Rhesus,* which may have been authored by Euripides), that do not seem to fit with conventions and clichés about the tragic chorus. Rehm (2003) argues that "the variation in placement, tempo, length and metre of choral lyric suggests its inherent flexibility and resistance to a single interpretive or ideological function" (113).

Despite these consequences of its legacy, it is useful to have begun with an extended analysis of Schlegel's theory and his impact, because, as I have stated, his conception of the chorus as the "ideal spectator" has remained the dominant way of conceiving of the chorus/audience relationship. It is clear, however, that a new way of understanding the chorus' relationship with the audience is needed, in order to account for the variety of ways in which the chorus is used to communicate with the audience in modern performance. Adapters working in the theatre may recognize the potential for a relationship between the chorus and the audience, but unlike many theorists and scholars, they do not assume a standard relationship based on collectivity – they create many variations that draw on different aspects of the ancient chorus. Although collectivity might be one of these aspects, it has also often been abandoned, and yet choruses have still managed to maintain unique and diverse relationships with the audience.

Many adaptations of the chorus, such as Jean Anouilh's one-person chorus in his *Antigone,* capitalize on the unique chorus/audience relationship that Schlegel attempts to describe, and yet they employ a reduced chorus. In parts two and three of this chapter, I combine Bennett's work on theatre reception with an analysis of the one-person chorus of Anouilh's *Antigone* in order to propose a new model for understanding the chorus/audience relationship. I will argue that the reception of the chorus has evolved so that the potential to create a unique relationship with the audience should replace "collectivity" as its most attractive – and perhaps even defining – attribute. The model I will propose builds on this observation, by helping to explain the unique relationship between chorus and audience without relying on generalizations about the chorus' collectivity. It will offer flexible, reception-focused terminology that can be used to discuss the many variations of choruses in both ancient and modern performance.

In my analysis of Anouilh's one-person chorus, I argue that this chorus is exceptional not only for being reduced to one person, but also in its attempt to address a political situation while *avoiding* the communication of a political agenda. The balance that Anouilh's one-person chorus attempts to maintain makes it a suitable case study to outline the major characteristics that define the chorus' relationship with the audience, before proceeding to engage with other complex variations of this relationship in the chapters that follow.

1.2 The One-Person Chorus and the Legacy of the Prologue

The "One-Person Chorus" in Popular Entertainment

One way to note that collectivity is no longer a defining feature of the chorus is to acknowledge the current use of the term "one-person chorus" in popular culture. The use of this term offers clues as to the modern conception of the chorus' relationship with the audience. For example, in an online article for MSN Entertainment, television's "most memorable" office assistants are discussed – including Mr. Smithers from *The Simpsons* and Kenneth from *30 Rock* - and the role of these assistants is described. The author writes that "behind every successful TV exec (or monstrous egomaniac, or sought-after deep thinker), chances are there's an able assistant, keeping the boss from falling over the cliff, or acting as a one-person Greek chorus on the absurdities of office life".[91] This writer not only identifies these characters as serving the function of one-person choruses, but she indicates they are part of the tradition of the *Greek* chorus. What does this writer mean when she uses the term "Greek chorus"?

---

[91] Johnston (2010).

In 2004, MIT graduates created a website (or, more technically, a "wiki") to describe and catalogue what they call "TV Tropes". The "Greek Chorus" trope is described as a "minor character or group of minor characters who offer commentary and/or opinions on the actions of the main characters, usually by breaking the Fourth Wall and addressing the audience directly".[92] This one-person chorus is differentiated from the role of the "Omniscient Narrator" because the chorus' "opinions are objective and express what the audience would think (if they are retroactively self-deprecating of even their own actions, etc.)".[93] In this interpretation, not only does the chorus clarify and comment on the action, but perhaps most interestingly, also seems indebted to Schlegel's model of the ideal spectator. Despite a lack of collectivity of either the chorus or audience, the connection between chorus and audience remains. In this case, the identification between audience and chorus occurs not because of the composition of the two groups as collectives, but because of the ability of both audience and chorus to have "objective" opinions. This role is not only defined in reference to television, but also projected back onto the Greek chorus; following the definition, the author(s) state that the trope is "named for the choruses of ancient Greek theatre, who did exactly this".[94]

It is worth noting that this recent change in the reception of Schlegel (the absence of collectivity, one of his model's defining features) has likely been affected by the changing nature of spectatorship and the ever-increasing emphasis, in the twentieth century, on the individual.[95]

---

[92] Author Unknown. Avalailable at: http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/GreekChorus.

[93] Author Unknown. Avalailable at: http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/GreekChorus. The role of the "Greek chorus" is further described as often being played by "Those Two Guys", identified as another television trope. As a depiction of "two guys" playing the role of a "Greek chorus", the website offers the example of the characters Statler and Waldorf from *The Muppet Show*. Although they are part of the "show", they comment on it from within – most interestingly, from seats within the audience.

[94] Author Uknown (2010). Avalailable at: http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/GreekChorus.

[95] The focus on the individual is perhaps epitomized by Erving Goffman's sociological study of the interaction between individuals in the 1960s and 1970s. In explaining Goffman's major project, Smith (2006) states "What is so special about face-to-face situations? Consider what may take place there" (7), and offers a quote from Goffman (1979): "it is in social situations that individuals can communicate in the fullest sense of the term, and it is only in them that individuals can coerce one another, assault one another, importune one another gesturally, give physical comfort, and so forth. Moreover, it is in social situations

The twentieth century saw the rise of many solitary experiences of entertainment such as television and the internet. In these forms of entertainment, not only has the "chorus" been reduced from a collective to an individual or pair – so has the audience.

However, while the collectivity that was once essential to the legacy of Schlegel's model becomes optional, the relationship with the audience remains. This modern and popular conception of the Greek chorus – demonstrated in the television and online examples - might be considered the legacy of influential stage adaptations that reduced the chorus, including Jean Anouilh's *Antigone.*

Anouilh's Antigone

Anouilh's *Antigone* has proven to be an extremely influential adaptation not only of the chorus, but of tragedy more generally, and it has been subsequently performed and adapted many times throughout the world.[96] Looking at Anouilh's influential one-person chorus not only aids in an understanding of the relationship that a chorus can have with the audience regardless of its size, but also how this relationship is manipulated according to an adapter's influences and goals, as well as the political pressures and aesthetic influences of his era. I will return near the conclusion of this chapter to a discussion of how the chorus of this adaptation has itself been adapted.

Anouilh's *Antigone* was first performed in occupied Paris in 1944. In his work on Copeau and popular theatre in Vichy France, Serge Added notes that French reformers of the theatre during

---

that most of the world's work gets done" (Goffman [1979] 5-6, quoted in Smith [2006] 7). Goffman (1974) *Frame Analysis* will also be considered briefly below.

[96] Minaud (2007) notes that "La Libération ne diminue pas le succès d'*Antigone*, qui aura 500 représentations" (11). In addition to its Broadway and London performances in the 1940s, Anouilh's *Antigone* is still being performed. The University of Oxford's *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama* shows that Anouilh's *Antigone* has been performed over twenty times since the year 2000, in countries as diverse as Russia, USA, England, and Japan. Foley and Mee (eds.) (2011) reserves a separate section for chapters dealing with "Sophocles Versus Anouilh" (343-414). They explain in their introduction that "the chapters in this section analyse productions that either adapt or remake Anouilh's play or choose Sophocles for a different set of reasons than those previously discussed, and thus question the kinds of political statements that one can and cannot make using Sophocles and Anouilh" (32).

World War II were hungry for new spectators from outside of the bourgeoisie, and nostalgic for "the days when the theatre had had a universally acknowledged function in the life of the people".[97] This led them to feel nostalgic for traditions such as the Greek theatre, the theatre of the Middle Ages, and the Commedia dell'arte. Added explains that onstage, "distance and unfamiliarity can lend long-forgotten conventions an air of novelty, indeed modernity. Greek choruses were revived in various shapes and formats".[98]

The Greek material not only seemed appealing at this time for reasons of nostalgia, but it was also useful to adapters like Anouilh for its ability to offer a "double perspective" to his audience[99]: adapting an ancient play "provided dramatists with the opportunity to make an indirect comment on the modern world by means of characters and relationships not tied down to a precise context of time or place".[100] In other words, using the subject matter of the myth of Antigone, dramatists could comment on the current political situation. Howarth explains (relying on Flügge's research), that it is likely that "the stimulus for the composition of *Antigone* (which, it was already known, existed in a complete state as early as 1942) came from the case of a young resistance fighter, Paul Collette, who in August 1942 fired on a group of collaborationist leaders at an anti-communist legionaries' rally at Versailles".[101]

---

[97] Added (1996) 251. Added explains that this "renewal through the return to the past" onstage was also what Pétain (Chief of State of Vichy France from 1940-44) was claiming to achieve in politics. Onstage, the return to Greek tragedy was extremely prominent in the work of Cocteau (further discussed below), about whom Landers notes, "from the outrageously modern he turned back into the past" (xviii).

[98] Added (1996) 251. Similarly, Minaud (2007) notes that in the 1920s, "l'Antiquité a cessé d'être le refuge des peintres pompiers et des poets décadents pour inspirer de nouvelles générations d'artistes et de penseurs […] Le XXe siècle redécouvre le tragique" (3).

[99] Hardwick (2004) employs this term to describe the use of Greek material in (post)colonial circumstances, in which the Greek material is adapted to comment on the present situation.

[100] Howarth (1983) 8. Of the material of Greek myth during the second world war, Minaud (2007) states that "le retour au passé a de nouvelles fonctions. […] Tout en permettant une évasion hors des contraintes de la réalité, ils constituent aussi un moyen d'éviter la censure" (4). Howarth (1983) also identifies precursors to Anouilh's play that utilized myth: Sartre's play *Les Mouches,* an adaptation of the myth of Orestes was produced in June 1943, just prior to Anouilh's production. Precursors to the WWII-era plays of Sartre and Anouilh include Gide's *La Roi Candaule* (1901) and his *Oedipe* (1930), Cocteau's *La Machine Infernale* (1934), Ghéon's *Oedipe* (1942), Giraudoux's *Amphitryon 38* (1929), *La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas Lieu* (1935), and *Électre* (1937). Cocteau's chorus is discussed further below.

[101] Howarth (1983) 48. See Flügge (1982).

Although current events might have been the impetus behind Anouilh's creation of *Antigone,* and Anouilh may have been interested in his Greek subject matter because of the popularity of reviving Greek tragedy at this time, Anouilh was not interested in this particular play because of its focus on choral collectivity or its ability to make a firm political statement.[102] On the contrary, his interest in this play is in emphasizing the balance between the arguments of the protagonists. In this focus, his play was likely influenced by the scholarship surrounding the play as well as aesthetic trends of adaptation in performance.

Antigone ***in Scholarship: The Influence of Hegel***

George Steiner identifies Anouilh's *Antigone* as one of the "direct descendents of the Hegel and Hölderlin versions",[103] and he offers a different version of the origin of Anouilh's play: he explains that Anouilh rose to the challenge (offered by the philosopher Alexandre Kojève) that it would be worth attempting to compose an adaptation of *Antigone* based on the Hegelian model of equilibrium between Antigone and Creon.[104] In the context of French politics of the time, this

---

[102] Delattre (1998) explains Anouilh's ambivalence toward the polarizing politics of his time and the effect of his ambivalence on the play's reception: "mais dans ce climat troublé il se sent décalé, à l'écart, et refuse d'afficher un opinion tranchée. Face aux nazis et à la Résistance, il se veut au-dessus de la mêlée et refuse de suivre quelque movement que se soit, ce qui lui sera abondamment reproché. En 1944, un an après *Les Mouches* de Sartre, *Antigone* est jouée pour la première fois. Elle connaît le succès, mais avec un parfum de scandale. Dans la contexte de la fin de la guerre, la pièce est récupérée ou accusée par tous les bords" (12). Howarth (1983) cites a letter by Anouilh, in which he explains that "à la création, dans ma naïveté un peu ahurie d'homme qui s'est toujours senti libre – je n'avais pas eu le sentiment de risquer quelque chose" (51; he cites Flugge [1982] vol. II 45). Howarth, however, also offers a description of another political event that may have sparked the play. He explains that Anouilh's idealism came to an end in 1945, when Robert Brasillach, a poet, critic, and journalist (hardly known by Anouilh) was tried and condemned to death for his collaborationist activities during the Occupation. Anouilh took a petition around for the commutation of the death penalty – a brave activity at the time. The petition was unsuccessful, and Brasillach was executed in February 1945 (51-2). Howarth notes that this "seems to have been a major turning-point in his life" (52).

[103] The other direct descendent indentified here is Brecht's *Antigone of Sophocles* (1948), an adaptation of Hölderlin's translation, which I discuss in depth in chapter three.

[104] On the possible connection with Kojève, Steiner states "just before the second World War, and during its early stages, Alexandre Kojève, a high civil servant and political philosopher, was conducting a series of Hegelian study-groups in Paris. He seems to have suggested that it would be worth trying actually to compose an *Antigone* on the Hegelian model (a model of perfect equilibrium only partially borne out by Sophocles' text). Anouilh took up the suggestion" (13). It is unclear from these statements whether Anouilh was influenced directly by Kojève, of whether their views of the play remain equivalences. See also brief comments on Kojève in Steiner (1984) 36.

In addition to its political circumstances, Howarth explains that Anouilh may have been influenced by Hegel *through* Camus' writings: "Adopting a principle formulated by the German philosopher Hegel in the nineteenth century" (15), Camus explains that the difference between tragedy and melodrama is that "les forces qui s'affrontent dans la tragédie sont également légitimes, would indeed be a difficult challenge,[105] and many audience members struggled to interpret the power dynamics represented in the play. In his introduction to the play, Landers notes that "for some the play was a tribute to the spirit of the Resistance, with Antigone representing the 'No' of all that was best in France to the allurements of Collaboration".[106] Others, however, felt that Anouilh's attempt to balance the forces in conflict with such ambiguity made Creon "the real hero of a fascist play".[107] In fact, the Nazi occupiers allowed this play to be performed because they saw it as "an apologia for Creon".[108] Critics and audiences were divided about how to understand Anouilh's intention, which perhaps merely strengthens the argument that his rendering of the Hegelian "equilibrium" was successful.

Not only has Hegel proposed one of the most influential interpretations of Sophocles' *Antigone,* but through Anouilh's production, this focus on the arguments of the characters led to the creation of a chorus that could contribute to Hegel's conception. In this section, I will show how Hegel's theory – which ultimately overlooks the chorus - nevertheless contributed to the creation of one of the most memorable and influential adaptations of the chorus.

Hegel's (In)famous Reading of **Antigone**

For Hegel, characters must be intimately connected with their goals in the drama, and the success or failure of these goals determines the characters' fates. In discussing the unity of action and the outcomes of plays, Hegel states that "a genuine end is therefore only attained

---

également armées en raison [...] Autrement dit, la tragédie est ambiguë, le drame simpliste [...] Antigone a raison, mais Créon n'a pas tort...La formule du mélodrama serait en somme: 'Un seul est juste et justifiable' et la formule tragique par excellence: 'Tous sont justifiable, personne n'est juste'" (15-6; Howarth cites Camus [1955:1962] 1703). Camus' remarks here do indeed resemble the remarks of Anouilh's Chorus in the central section of the play, which is discussed below. However, Howarth also believes that the confrontation between the individual and the values of the state/society is more ambiguous in *Antigone* than in Anouilh's other plays.

[105] Miriam Leonard (2005) explains that "to make the decision to be with Creon or Antigone was for the best part of a decade to map oneself onto the political polemics of the age" (106).

[106] Landers (1957) 24.

[107] Landers (1957), Flügge (1982), Flügge (1994), and Howarth (1983) offer examples and sources for differing opinions amongst audience members. Leonard (2005) remarks that in his seminar, "Lacan himself makes reference to 'Monsieur Anouilh['s] 'petite Antigone fasciste'" (105). She cites Lacan (1986), 293; (1997), 250.

[108] Steiner (1979) 13.

when the aim and interest of the action, on which the whole drama turns, is identical with the individuals and absolutely bound up with them".[109] This means that if the character's goal is not achieved, the individual him/herself is usually annihilated. Hegel writes that "if the one-sidedness is to be cancelled, it is the individual, since he has acted solely as this *one* 'pathos', who must be got rid of and sacrificed. For the individual is only this *one* life and, if this is not to prevail on its own account as this *one,* then the individual is shattered".[110]

Hegel explains that this development is most complete when "the individuals who are at variance appear each of them in their concrete existence as a totality,[111] so that in themselves they are in the power of what they are fighting, and therefore they violate what, if they were true to their own nature, they should be honouring".[112] In the famous and influential passage which follows, Hegel explores his theory using the example of Sophocles' *Antigone,* which he considers to be the "most magnificent and satisfying work of art" of this kind.[113] He explains that both Antigone and Creon are at fault: Antigone should have been more obedient to Creon, but he himself should have better respected the ties of blood. Therefore, "there is immanent in both Antigone and Creon something that in their own way they attack, so that they are gripped and shattered by something intrinsic to their own actual being".[114]

---

[109] Hegel (1835: 1975) 1167.

[110] Hegel (1835: 1975) 1217.

[111] In his 1975 translation, Knox states in a footnote that "Hegel simply means that, as human beings ('concretely existent'), individuals have an entirety of obligations (are under the dominion of *all* the 'ethical powers') but their overmastering 'pathos' is identified with one obligation alone, with the result that when one individual fights against another individual who is similarly overmastered by a different obligation, they are both caught in a fight against themselves" (1217, n.I)

[112] Hegel (1835:1975) 1217.

[113] Hegel (1835: 1975) 1218. This term "of this kind" or "in this respect" - *nach dieser Seite* – has received much critical attention. Knox offers a useful summary: "The meaning of this qualification has been much disputed. Did Hegel merely mean that the *Antigone* was the finest of Greek tragedies, or did he put it above Shakespeare? His meaning, however, is clear from what he says when he subsequently contrasts Greek tragedy with modern. His point is that the *Antigone* is the finest portrayal of what he regards as the greatest tragic conflict, i.e. one where the issue is not merely personal arising from e.g. jealousy like Othello's, but one where both parties are under the necessity of transgressing; they are divided against themselves; neither of them can obey *both* the valid *laws* to which they are subject" (1218 n.I)

[114] Hegel (1835:1975) 1217-8. For a discussion of the legacy of the Hegelian reading of *Antigone* in French post-war debates about ethics and politics (including those of Lacan, Irigaray, and Derrida), see Leonard (2005) 96-156.

Steiner picks up on what is in fact an important implication in Hegel's argument: if both characters, in their one-sidedness, do wrong, this means that they are both also somehow correct.[115] Antigone is right in believing that she must bury her brother, according to the laws of blood and the family, and that kinship cannot be altered by political decree. Creon, on the other hand, is correct in his proclamation that the law of the city over-rules individual feelings. Both are embodiments of a moral principle, and the two forces of this dialectic destroy each other.

Steiner discusses Hegel as one of three compelling versions of *Antigone* from the early nineteenth century (along with interpretations belonging to Kierkegaard and Hölderlin). However, in all three of these readings – and in Steiner's discussion of them – the focus on the characters remains.[116] Like Hegel, these scholars focus on the conflict between Antigone and Creon, and tend to analyze the play as poetic argument or theory of history, overlooking the many performance possibilities provided by the text, including the chorus. These readings, I would suggest – coupled with the focus on the individual in performance, as I will describe below - influenced the displacement and the neglect of the chorus in both performance of Greek tragedy and scholarship.

---

[115] Steiner (1979), in a lecture on interpretations of *Antigone*, nicely connects Hegel's theory with his thoughts on this particular play, stating that "all human progress passes through destructive conflict. Hegel's own word is not 'conflict' but *Kollision* – collision. It is the nature of historical and political life to move from crisis to crisis. In each crisis there will be destruction – tragic destruction – but the outcome entails that the next stage of human challenge and questioning is richer, more productive than the one before. Thence comes a famous reading: both Antigone and Creon – Creon the ruler, the tyrant of Thebes – are right" (4-5).

[116] While Kierkegaard's focus is on the identity and solitude of Antigone, Hölderlin is interested in Antigone as *antitheos,* and her role as an agent of an ideology opposing that of Creon. The LSJ defines ἀντίθεος, η, ον, as both "equal to the gods, godlike" and also "contrary to God" (as a noun, can also mean a hostile deity). Hölderlin seems to be drawing on this ambiguity. He states that **"**first in what characterizes the *antitheos* where one, after God's own mind, acts, as it seems, against God and recognizes His supreme spirit through lawlessness. Then the pious fear in the face of Fate, and with it the honouring of God as something set in law. This is the spirit of the antitheses placed impartially against one another in the chorus. In the first sense acting as Antigone more. In the second as Creon" (Hölderlin, *Notes to Antigone*, translated by David Constantine [2001]). What he seems to mean is that through challenging God, Antigone simultaneously becomes god-like in lawlessness (before becoming subject to fate). Creon, on the other hand, emphasizes the end result of this process, which is the recognition of fate and the laws that God represents. Tragedy, for Hölderlin, occurs at times of thorough revolution in human thinking and feeling. According to Constantine (2001), Hölderlin "had his eye on the 'total reversal' brought about in his own times by the French Revolution and the ensuing wars; and seems himself to be the tragic vehicle of those times, the locus in which an inevitable process must reach its tragic end" (11-12).

Hegel's impact on the reception of this play has led scholars to overlook the role of the chorus in the play as a performance text. What role can the chorus play in a dialectical interpretation? Must they be situated on one side, or is there middle ground? And what happens to the neat dialectic if the chorus is considered to be sympathetic to both characters - or to neither? Precisely *because* this has been considered a play about characters with opposing viewpoints, it is interesting that Anouilh did not decide to abolish the chorus altogether, but to retain one member. I would suggest (and will elaborate further below) that Anouilh uses a one-person chorus to frame and emphasize this play's dialectic for the audience. In fact, it is a major function of this chorus to prevent the audience from becoming so emotionally involved in the action that they cannot appreciate the arguments of both central characters. The very inclusion of this chorus in Anouilh's adaptation thus negates two of the arguments related to Schlegel's theory of the ideal spectator: first, that collectivity is necessary to the chorus' relationship with the audience; and secondly, that the chorus' relationship with the audience is necessarily one of identification. As I stated above, the chorus is not only used to help the audience identify with the fictional action, but the chorus can also be used for distancing the audience, and this is essential to Anouilh's goals. The success of this production in maintaining the dialectic between Antigone and Creon is in fact *dependent* upon Anouilh's Prologue/Chorus character, who must help to frame the tragic events and guide the audience's perception of the play's dialectic.

Stage Influences: The Prologue

Of course, the reception of this play in philosophical scholarship – especially the work of Hegel – is not the only influence upon Anouilh's adaptation of the chorus. Although the goal of the work may be rooted in a desire to illustrate a dialectic, *how* the chorus frames this dialectical action for the audience is also influenced by figures and trends from theatre history.

In addition to the return to the use of Greek material in the theatre (as described above), Anouilh's play was also influenced by the focus on the individual in the theatre of the nineteenth century. This movement was epitomized by the rise of the "star" actor, a phenomenon which made use of Greek tragedy. Fiona Macintosh offers the example of Mounet-Sulley's portrayal of Oedipus as an "Everyman", which left a legacy in France during the inter-war period and immediately after the Second World War.[117] Most notable, perhaps, is the fact that it was this portrayal of Oedipus that greatly affected Sigmund Freud, whose own impact on the reception of tragedy has been immense.[118] The impact of Mounet-Sully's production lasted nearly sixty years across the stages of Europe, thirty of which were posthumous.[119]

The movement toward individualism onstage mirrors Hegel's focus on the protagonists of *Antigone.* However, looking at the impact of individualism in the theatre allows an examination of the aesthetic trends that impacted not only Anouilh's particular adaptation of the chorus, but the chorus' reception more generally. In the rest of this section, I focus on the impact of prologue figures on the reception of the chorus, and in part three of this chapter, I also engage with the impact of the neo-classical *confidant(e)*. Examining these major figures that have impacted the adaptation of the chorus will offer not only a better understanding of Anouilh's chorus, but as I will show, can also help to develop a more general system for analyzing and differentiating between these figures.

---

[117] Of course, this not only affected the reception of Greek tragedies, but the performance and scholarship regarding other traditions as well; Woodcock (2008) notes that "character-oriented Shakespeare criticism had begun to emerge during the later eighteenth century, though it only really came to dominate English scholarship during the nineteenth century, in no small measure" (43).

[118] In particular, his use of the figure of Oedipus as an example of every man's infantile desire for his mother has influenced many adaptations and the reception of the play. In his Fourth Lecture on Psychoanalysis in 1909 (published 1910), Freud states: "The myth of King Oedipus, who killed his father and took his mother to wife, reveals, with little modification, the infantile wish, which is later opposed and repudiated by the *barrier against incest"*(1909: 1968, transl. James Strachey). A note indicates that Freud officially adopted the term 'Oedipus complex' shortly after this lecture, in 1910, in his 'Contributions to the Psychology of Love'(1910).

[119] Macintosh (2009) 131-2. Chapter five of this work describes the legacy of Mounet-Sully in the productions of *Oedipus* in France during the inter-war period and immediately after WWII (130-58). In Germany, *Antigone* was not only a popular topic for Classical scholars, but productions of the play became dominant in the nineteenth century. As Macintosh (1997) explains, "whilst the French plays had been designed primarily to improve on the Greek originals by extending the emotional range of the material, and the English adaptations had provided clear comment on the contemporary political events, the productions at the Hoftheater sought to capture the universal in Greek tragedy and usher it into the world of Goethe's Weimar" (286). Goethe – who staged Rochlitz's adaptation of *Antigone* - introduced the public to the tragic play that was to remain pre-eminent in European theatre throughout the second part of the nineteenth century. And the subsequent production of the "Mendelssohn *Antigone"* secured the pre-eminence of Sophocles' play in the nineteenth-century Europe (286). In this latter production, the orchestral introduction and the choral settings were composed by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Despite including a sixty-person male chorus, it was not the chorus who was praised (in fact, they seem to have been poorly rehearsed), but the performances of George Vandenhoff and his daughter as Creon and Antigone. It should be noted that this production travelled to Paris and London (in 1844 and 1845 respectively). Although the chorus may not have been popular, this production and its music became so influential that new productions began to use Mendelssohn's score – including Stanislavsky's production of 1899 for the Moscow Art Theatre. For further information, see Macintosh (1997) 286-8.

The Overlapping Prologue/Chorus

The influence of the prologue is very clearly present in Anouilh's play. Anouilh indicates that the opening lines of *Antigone* are to be spoken by the "Prologue", however, the Prologue is not a character in the opening list of *Personnages*, where the character of the Chorus ("Le Choeur") is listed. Who, then, speaks the Prologue? And what differentiates the Prologue from the Chorus, who appears later on? Scholars and critics have had difficulty discussing the Chorus of this play precisely because of this odd differentiation. Some refer to the Prologue being spoken by the actor who is also the "narrator-chorus",[120] or by calling the same character "Prologue" and then later referring to him as "Chorus".[121] In addition, in the most widely-used translation into English (by Lewis Galantière in 1951), "Prologue" is simply changed to "Chorus", creating one continuous character.[122]

Although there is a discrepancy in the name given to this character in the French text, it seems to be consistently performed by one actor.[123] This conflation in the English translation might therefore be intended to reflect the audience's perception: to the audience, there is no reason to believe there would be a difference between these characters. This character never self-identifies as either Prologue or Chorus, and therefore was most likely not viewed as separate characters. Anouilh therefore makes *both* a textual distinction *and* a performance connection between the Prologue and Chorus, perhaps influenced by their interconnected reception history.[124]

---

[120] Falb (1977) 51.

[121] Pronko (1961) 201.

[122] Galantière in fact published two versions of the play: the first, in 1946, and the second, in 1949. In the first, he took many liberties with the translation, while in 1949 he followed Anouilh's version more closely. The first was used for the Broadway production in New York in 1946, while the London production at the Old Vic in 1949 used the second. This second version was the one published in 1951, and the one I will refer to in my notes. For a fascinating discussion that offers comparisons from the text, see Anderman (2005).

[123] Howarth (1983) notes that "though Anouilh uses both terms, I take it as self-evident that the two roles are one and the same. This corresponds to stage practice in presenting the play in the theatre" (61 n.8). Minaud (2007) makes a similar statement: "Le Prologue et le Choeur sont joués par le même acteur, avec le même costume. Anouilh a toutefois voulu séparer les deux personages" (43). I will also refer to this character as being performed by the same actor. While acknowledging that there have been myriad variations in casting - the role has sometimes been divided amongst a group, or played by a female actor (or divided amongst a group of female actors, as in the Smith College [Massachusettes] production in 1947) – for the sake of clarity, I will

Some critics claim that in calling his figure "Prologue", Anouilh was drawing on the Greek convention of the prologue, often used in the plays of Euripides.[125] Although this is possible, it is (perhaps more) likely that Anouilh was influenced by more recent instances of Prologues in adaptations. For instance, in creating a Prologue character that overlapped with the role of the Chorus, Anouilh might have been influenced by other productions that had recently conflated the two. In the 1920s, Jean Cocteau in particular had experimented with Greek tragedy, often reducing the chorus and assigning it aspects of the role of the prologue.[126] Howarth describes Cocteau's *La Machine Infernale* (1934) in particular as an inspiration to Anouilh.[127] In *La Machine Infernale,* "La Voix" delivers the prologue, directly addressing the audience in order to set the action and summarize the plot, as well as comment on the action. La Voix returns at the beginning of each act of the play, in a manner which Howarth notes is "more akin to that of the Shakespearean than of the Greek Chorus".[128]

---

refer to the chorus as "he". The original incarnations (in Paris, London, New York) were all played by males: in the original French production in 1944 (at the Théâtre de L`Atelier), the part of the chorus was performed by the actor Auguste Boverio**.** When the play was first presented in Great Britain in 1949, the chorus character was played by Sir Laurence Olivier, who was also the play's producer. Since I argue that this chorus is a character, the pronoun "he" seems more suitable than "it".

[124] It is interesting to note that although the final lines of the play are spoken by this same figure, he is not referred to in the French text as "Epilogue", but continues to be called "Chorus".

[125] See Delattre (1998) 34, Minaud (2007) 43.

[126] Landers (1957) describes that Cocteau created an adaptation of *Antigone* in 1922, in which "the Chorus had become a disembodied voice (Cocteau's own voice) speaking through a hole in the scenery" (xx). In 1925, Cocteau had offered a Prologue-Chorus in his *Oedipe-Roi,*in which the words of the Chorus were delivered by a hidden actor through the mouth of a statue (xx). He continued to develop this device in *La Machine Infernale* (1934). On Cocteau's engagement with Sophocles' *Oedipus*, see also Macintosh (2009) 139-45.

[127] Howarth (1983) 34.

[128] Howarth (1983) 34.

This comment, made in passing by Howarth, in fact points toward an interesting phenomenon: the overlapping of the prologue and chorus, which we now attribute to the early modern period. I would argue that Anouilh – following Cocteau – is less interested in the prologues of the ancient Greek theatre than he is in capitalizing on the *overlap* occurring in the reception of the prologue and chorus, especially in the work of Shakespeare. This overlap, although rarely studied, has impacted the reception and adaptation of the Greek chorus since the early modern period.

Reception of the Early Modern Prologue/Chorus

The prologue is thought to have reached the height of its popularity in the early modern period.[129] Although this did not cause choruses to disappear, at this time the term "chorus" generally referred to a singular figure. This simultaneous presence of both prologue and chorus figures in the early modern era has caused challenges to scholars working on this period. For instance, Greenfield, in her work on Elizabethan inductions, has difficulty distinguishing between the *functions* of different types of induction scenes, among which she includes both choruses and prologues. She offers a clue to their differentiation when she states, "to call such material merely a chorus is inaccurate in that *chorus* does not denote a self-contained dramatic structure".[130] Other early modern scholars have attempted to make similar distinctions; Sprague, in his work on the prologue, differentiates between the “dramatic” nature of the chorus character and the “extra-dramatic” nature of the prologue.[131]

---

[129] Although some scholars argue that prologues reached their peak at the time of Shakespeare, some say the peak was before his plays: Bruster and Weimann (2004) write that it seems Shakespeare displayed his mastery of prologues after they were already out of fashion (7).

[130] Greenfield (1969) 39-40, her italics. Induction scenes include any type of opening, which may feature a prologue, dumb show, dialogue, or a frame within which the actual play will occur (for example, the opening of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew,* which contains the story of the onstage audience, Sly).Greenfield describes that inductions "sometimes represented the theme of the main play on a different level" and "were sometimes the beginning of a continued chorus-like commentary" (xiii). She classifies choruses as "occasional" inductions because they tend to reappear to comment on the drama. Occasional inductions were often performed by personifications of figures such as Love, Fortune, Envy, Death, Tragedy, Comedy, and Truth. Also included are supernatural beings such as classical deities, ghosts, evil spirits, and slightly more realistic figures suited to the particular play (for instance, Nymphs and Shepherds in pastoral drama). Occasional inductions account for and present the play, explaining why it appears, and sometimes function as onlookers. Frequently, the character(s) reappears again at intervals throughout the play, in this case assuming "a choric role" (39). It seems that although occasional inductions can reappear, when

Tiffany Stern’s work on the performance and records of early modern and Shakespearean texts helps to explain early modern scholarship’s difficulty in differentiating between the functions of prologue and chorus figures. Her work shows that this overlap is not just a feature of the *reception* of these figures, but of their *production* as well; the chorus and prologue were connected at the time of original performance as well as printing. From the treatment of prologues, epilogues, and choruses in early printed versions of plays, she argues that these pieces were all considered separate from the main text of the play. Choruses and prologues (as well as epilogues, songs, etc.) functioned as “stage-oration” pieces that are in many ways separate from the main text: like prologues and epilogues, choruses might have been written by someone other than the playwright, and could have been added (or lost) later than the writing of the main text. She explains that “choruses like (and sometimes with) prologues and epilogues seem also to have been separate documents of separate papers; in their nature they too were impermanent”.[132] This shows that a connection existed – on the basis of both production and reception - between

---

she says that they are “choric”, she means only that they appear frequently to comment on the action. She does *not* mean that there is a collective, nor does she mean that they are in any way involved in the action. A similar clue to her understanding of the chorus’ function appears in the appendix, where, describing William Percy’s *A Country Tragedy in Vacunium or Cupid’s Sacrifice* (1602), she writes that “The chorus, conventionally a means of explanation and direct comment upon the story of the main play, becomes here in addition a symbolic agent and critical weapon” (159).

[131] Sprague (1966) also has difficulty expressing the relationship of the prologue figure to the action of the play and the audience, and comes to a similar conclusion. In the end, he selects the term “extra-dramatic” to express the prologue’s separation from the play. He states that although some of Shakespeare’s characters function similarly to an ancient chorus, “the ‘chorus character’ is dramatic, while Prologues are extra-dramatic” (206). For Sprague, the ‘dramatic’ chorus character – which includes characters like Thersites - shows the audience how to interpret the entire play. Again, we see that the chorus is not necessarily a collective, as Sprague’s examples of the “chorus character” are only ever singular. Sprague attempts a definition of the (Shakespearean) “chorus character”, stating that “a chorus character is one of the *dramatis personae* – often not a principal – who sums up a number of episodes in the play or whose remarks have obvious appropriateness as an interpretation of the play as a whole” (209).

[132] Stern (2009) 107. A major aspect of her argument is that prologues and epilogues are “event-related in a way the rest of the text may not actually be” (118). Prologues, epilogues, and often choruses, were regularly removed after initial performances. Stern’s work is discussed further below, however, it is important to note that the event-specific nature of prologues has been used to glean information about Shakespeare’s plays in many ways. For instance, Woodcock (2008) notes that the Chorus’ “apologetic, metadramatic references to the physical space in which the play is about to be performed – the ‘wooden O’ of the playhouse itself – have long invited popular speculation as to whether *Henry V* was the first play performed at the Globe theatre on the Thames’ south bank, to which Shakespeare’s playing company relocated from the Curtain in Shoreditch in 1599” (12). For related arguments and rebuttals, see Woodcock (2008) 12-13.

the conception of chorus and prologue figures in the early modern period, and therefore goes some way toward explaining the overlap of these figures in scholarship and in modern reception.

In modern theatre scholarship, there is a similar tendency to focus on the points of overlap of these figures. Unlike even the minor differentiations made by Greenfield or Sprague, in his work on dramatic theory, Pfister does not separate the chorus and the prologue, but puts them in the same category due to their mediating function. Pfister, in his theoretical writing on drama, includes prologues, epilogues, choruses, and commentators as figures who create a "mediating communication system" from "inside rather than outside the dramatic action".[133] They are not – as Greenfield or Sprague might say – "extra-dramatic" or "self-contained"; in Pfister's work, the prologue and the chorus are categorized together under the heading "the introduction of epic elements by figures inside the action".[134] Pfister includes prologues as "inside" the dramatic action, along with the chorus.

The *impact* of the discrepancies and overlap in the reception of prologue and chorus figures can best be demonstrated in recent reviews of Shakespeare's productions, in which the term "one-person chorus" is often employed. For instance, describing the actor playing Thersites in a 2001 production of *Troilus and Cressida* (directed by Sir Peter Hall), a reviewer writes that "the mangy, scab-scarred Thersites (Andrew Weems) delivers the prologue that sets the scene for what was and what will be, and also serves as a clarifying one-person chorus throughout".[135] Here, the character received as a one-person chorus is played by the same actor who delivers the prologue, and what makes him choral is in fact his function of clarifying the action as it occurs.

---

[133] Pfister (1977: 1988) 76.

[134] Pfister (1977:1988) 76.

[135] Sommer (2001). Available at: http://www.curtainup.com/troiluscressida.html. In Stern (2009), her description of prologues who also act as chorus is surprisingly similar to these descriptions in reviews of modern productions of Shakespeare. For example, regarding the two manuscripts of Thomas Middleton's *Hengist, King of Kent,* both of which have a prominent 'presenter', 'Raynulph', she explains that he, "Gower-like, speaks the prologue and the epilogue and intervenes at other crucial moments as chorus" (107).

Reviewers, of course, are not necessarily aware of the overlapping of prologue and chorus figures in the early modern tradition. It is more likely that this overlap is often emphasized in reviews because both prologue and chorus figures speak directly to the audience. Direct address in Elizabethan drama was extremely common, as an integral part of the acting style of the time, and was not limited to prologue figures. Referring to characters that directly address the audience as "choruses" is a way for reviewers to account for these figures who seem to have similar functions to the prologue, but speak directly to the audience throughout the performance.[136]

As this example of Hall's production shows, the overlapping nature of the prologue and chorus still impact the reception of these figures in the theatre.[137] In part, this is because they pose surprisingly similar problems of production and reception. In adaptations, both classical choruses and Elizabethan devices present challenges to modern practitioners and their audiences, who may be used to naturalistic performances. Although the prologue is one of the early modern theatrical strategies and techniques taken for granted by Shakespeare and his audience, this figure can seem "alien to our literary and theatrical ways of thinking today and hence likely to be blurred or filtered out by editors, readers, and theatrical professionals".[138] This phenomenon is of course similar to the challenges faced by those adapting the chorus, which I outlined previously in the introduction. Adapters manage both the prologue and the chorus in various ways, according to their goals and the context of their production. Anouilh's chorus in fact

---

[136] Gurr (1992) reminds us that a "convention that seems less than natural today is the tradition of direct address to the audience […] Like explanatory prologues, the explanatory soliloquy or aside to the audience was a relic of the less sophisticated days that developed into a useful and more naturalistic convention of thinking aloud, but never entirely ceased to be a convention" (103).

[137] Two more examples: regarding the actor who played both the Prologue and the Prince in a 1999 production of *Romeo and Juliet,* Alvin Kleinmadison for the *New York Times* writes that "in the beginning, the one-man chorus (played by Paul Niebanck) traverses the tragic journey from 'ancient grudge' to 'new mutiny,' presaging "the two hours' traffic of our stage'" (November 7, 1999). Describing the character of Puck in a recent production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Walstad, a student reviewer writes that although he is "often the source of trouble, whimsical Puck is a one-person chorus for the audience as he darts from one scene to the next, pausing only to shake his head at the foolish mortals in the forest" (2009).

[138] Bruster and Weimann (2004) 1 quote Dessen (1995) 2-3.

emphasizes the overlap that I have described, capitalizing upon the interconnected reception of the prologue and chorus.

Anouilh's Prologue

In the case of Anouilh's adaptation, as I have stated, there is a textual distinction between the Prologue and Chorus, as well as a performance connection: played by one actor, these two are united as one character for the audience. Examining the similarities and divergences from Sophocles' play will offers clues as to *why* Anouilh decided to use this dual character.

The Prologue speaks the opening lines of Anouilh's play,[139] which begins simply with "Voilà".[140] The Prologue then proceeds to introduce all of the other characters onstage. He not only offers basic information about the characters, but it also becomes apparent at this very early point that he has knowledge of the characters' moods and thoughts. For instance, in describing the character of Antigone, the Prologue states that

> She thinks that soon she will be Antigone, that she will emerge suddenly as the scrawny young girl, dark and restrained, whom no one in her family took seriously, and who will stand up alone against the world, alone against Creon, her uncle, the king.[141]

The play does not begin until he has identified and described all of the characters on the stage in this intimate manner.

Although Sophocles' audience would not have needed such direct identification of the characters, the characters in his *Antigone* are nevertheless often described as they enter and exit the stage. Griffith notes that especially in *Antigone*, the reader/audience member is provided with clues about the way that characters enter and approach other characters (for instance, Antigone stares at the ground, Ismene is flushed and in tears, Haimon is dismayed and angry), and sometimes, also about the way they exit.[142] The text spoken or sung by the chorus offers so many hints about the relationships and impending confrontations between characters that it might even be said that the text "indicates how these 'confrontations' should be handled",[143] while still leaving room for different variations in performance.[144] The chorus is often the source of these textual clues, as they remain present onstage to describe the characters who enter and exit the stage.

---

[139] For the French, I use the edition edited by Landers (1957). The French will be given in the footnotes, and the English in the main body of the chapter. The English is my own translation except where indicated.

[140] This word is difficult to express as succinctly in English, but might be rendered as "Here it is". Galantière expands this to "Well, here we are" (1951).

[141] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 39: "Elle pense qu'elle va être Antigone tout à l'heure, qu'elle va surgir soudain de la maigre jeune fille noiraude et renfermée que personne ne prenait au sérieux dans la famille et se dresser seule en face du monde, seule en face de Créon, son oncle, qui est le roi".

Both Sophocles' chorus and Anouilh's Prologue not only describe the characters for the audience, but they also contextualize them. Anouilh's Prologue proceeds directly from describing the characters to explaining the plot by stating simply, "And now that you know everything, they can perform their story".[145] The background he then offers is basically the same as that of Sophocles' play: after describing the battle in which Eteocles and Polynices have killed one another, he states that "Creon, the king, has ordered that Eteocles, the good brother, will have an imposing funeral, but Polynices, the scoundrel, the insurgent, the thug, will be left without tears and without burial, the prey of birds and coyotes".[146]

Noting these clarifying and contextualizing similarities between the original Greek chorus and Anouilh's Prologue, it seems odd that Anouilh did not just consistently call the character "Chorus", as in the English translation. Comparing Anouilh's Prologue and Sophocles' chorus, however, offers some hints as to why Anouilh may have felt that his Prologue was different from the Chorus, despite being played by the same actor. Although the context of the action given in both plays is the same – and they both begin at the same point in the story – the *way* in which the background is described is different. In Sophocles' play, it is clear that the chorus has a stake in the action. At the beginning of his *Antigone,* the chorus enters and sings of Thebes' recent victory in battle.[147] Their description of the battle already allies them with the city; the first hint of the chorus' identity in Sophocles' tragedy therefore comes during the *Parodos*. Singing about the battle in which the brothers Polynices and Eteocles have killed one another, they use many possessive adjectives such as "our land", and "our blood".[148] The chorus describes the battle in terms that not only show their stake in its outcome, but they are also joyous, celebrating the victory, which would have indicated to the audience that they are Thebans. As the Parodos moves from the topic of the battle to a celebration of the victory,[149] the chorus' "rootedness" – to borrow a term from Gould[150] - is given emphasis.

---

[142] Griffith (1999) 24-5.
[143] Griffith (1999) 24.
[144] Griffith also acknowledges that when approaching the text, we must use our imaginations to supplement the textual clues about stage action. He argues that it is essential to have full consciousness of "the power that staging and acting technique have to dictate meaning to an audience, even where the words of the text may be less than transparent" (25).
[145] Anouilh (1944:1957) 41: "Et maintenant que vous connaissez tous, ils vont pouvoir jouer leur histoire". Galantiere renders this simply as"that's the lot. Now for the play" (1951).
[146] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 41: "Créon, le roi, a ordonné qu'à Étéocle, le bon frère, il serait fait d'imposantes funérailles, mais que Polynice, le vaurien, le révolté, le voyou, serait laissé sans pleurs et sans sépulture, la proie des corbeaux et des chacals".

In Anouilh's play, it is the opposite: as mentioned above, as either Prologue or Chorus, this character has no intention of identifying himself, and does not appear to have any stake in the outcome of either the battle that has occurred or the play we will witness. This figure more closely resembles a prologue/chorus figure such as the one in Shakespeare's *Henry V*,[151] who introduces the play by speaking the prologue, setting the stage for the action, and then returns throughout to address the audience. The Chorus of *Henry V* also seems removed from the action, and subsequent productions and adaptations – as with the Greek chorus - have dealt with this non-naturalistic prologue/chorus character in a variety of ways.[152]

---

[147] ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἁ μεγαλώνυμος ἦλθε Νίκα / τᾶ πολυαρμάτῳ ἀντιχαρεῖσα Θήβᾳ (148-9). "But since Victory whose name is glorious has come, her joy responding to the joy of Thebes with many chariots". Transl. Lloyd-Jones (1998).

[148] ἡμετέρᾳ γῆ (110); ἁμετέρων αἱμάτων (120-21).

[149] A description of this process, from "march to dance", is given in Kitzinger (2008), chapter one.

[150] Gould (1996) 226.

[151] For an illuminating discussion on the publishing (and lack of publishing) of the prologue and chorus of *Henry V,* see Stern (2009) 108-9.

I would suggest that it is through the impact of such early modern prologue/chorus figures – especially in the widely-read and performed work of Shakespeare – that we now have no difficulty assuming that a chorus can serve as a prologue figure, delivering the opening lines of a play and locating the action in space and time. Now, when an audience or reader is approached by a singular figure who introduces a play by directly addressing the audience, it is expected that he/she is acting as a prologue, and that if the same figure returns in a "chorus" role (ie. appears at any other point in the production), there is an assumed continuity: he/she will continue to comment on the play with a level of critical distance.

Anouilh therefore draws on a traditional introductory figure with whom his audience would be familiar, and who can easily subsequently serve as a chorus figure.[153] This association suits Anouilh's purposes with his Prologue/Chorus figure - the audience would expect a prologue to assume a position of distance from the fictional action.

---

[152] On adaptations of this chorus, see Smith (2002). Interestingly, she expresses an intentional emphasis on the overlap between this chorus and the chorus of Greek tragedy in the play's early performance history. She explains that "playbills up to 1759 make it clear that the Chorus was a part of these performances, sometimes doubled by the actor playing the Archbishop of Canterbury. Perhaps to pre-empt criticism of this non-naturalistic intrusion, playbills of the 1740s often include the parenthetical classical justification '(after the manner of the Ancients)' before the actor's name" (16). See Smith's Introduction (1-79), as well as her comments within the text at 83-6, 106-9, 136-8, 172-4, 216-19, 235-6 for a fascinating description of adaptations of this chorus. See also the discussions of this chorus in Woodcock (2008), which deals with the reception of the play chronologically and contains the explanation of Schlegel's defense of this chorus (on p. 41-2) noted above.

[153] This might be considered an extension of early modern practice, in which playwrights similarly relied upon their audiences' ability to identify prologue figures from one play to the next. Stern (2009) explains that "prologues were instantly identifiable as such, linked in appearance to a long line of Prologues, rather than to the particular play they were introducing; the 'same' pretend author introduced all new plays" (114). This figure, because of his costume - a cloak, whitened face and colourful beard, as well as crown of laurels symbolising poetic creativity and success - represents a version of the "author". However, Stern argues that in a sense the prologue and epilogue are "anti-author, for they were spoken not just by ritualised characters but by ritualised and phoney versions of 'the playwright'" (112). The prologue does not represent the actual playwright, although he is "*visually* the 'author' of the play and takes on himself *theatrical* ownership of the text" (113). As she notes in her 2004 work, "prologues are dressed like 'authors' but are played by actors. In other words the playhouse takes over 'authorship' on the first performance, which queries the 'ownership' of a play from first performance onwards" (122).

Chorus/Prologue: Liminal Location

Anouilh's use of the prologue capitalizes on its association with distance from the fictional action. In giving one figure these two names, he in fact indicates criteria of distinction for these two roles – criteria which, as I have shown, are not always clear in the scholarship surrounding these figures. Classical scholarship in particular has had difficulty locating the Greek chorus in relation to both the fictional action and the audience in performance. For instance, the Greek chorus' ability to function on different levels or "planes" has been recently commented upon by Foley.[154] She explains that "although choruses are usually of lower social status than the characters (even divine choruses are of lower status than other divinities), stylistically, linguistically, religiously, and as we have seen, performatively they can occupy a higher plane due to their language, themes, song, and dance".[155] Foley's work is useful as it acknowledges the *performance* of the chorus, however, the term "higher plane", stops short of offering precise vocabulary for describing the role of the chorus in relation to the dramatic action and the audience.

I argued briefly in the introduction that scholars have difficulty distinguishing between the following: the "space" that the chorus occupies in relation to the action and the audience; the chorus' style or techniques of performance; and the reception of the chorus' space and style of communication by the audience. In fact, I would argue that the problem of distinguishing between chorus and prologue in scholarship and reception can be understood to be one of *location.* In theoretical explanations of both the chorus and the prologue, there seems to be confusion as to the location of the prologue and chorus: Where are Greenfield's "imaginary realms" located?[156] Why does Pfister locate the prologue and the chorus "inside" the dramatic action? What constitute Foley's "planes"? The location of the prologue and chorus are difficult to determine due to the complexities of performance and reception. For instance, when a member of an acting company emerges as prologue to give a set speech to the audience, is he/she portraying a character? How does the audience perceive the performer's status in relation to the play? Will all members of the audience even answer these questions the same way? Although some of these questions are impossible to answer while accounting for all instances, looking at the overlap between prologue and chorus, as well as the distinctions made by Anouilh, makes it possible to begin developing a vocabulary for analyzing and differentiating between these figures.

---

[154] Foley (2003).
[155] Foley (2003) 21.

In this section, I will therefore develop a spatial model for understanding the relationship between chorus and audience, which I hope will offer others more specific, "horizontal" language (rather than the hierarchy implied in the language of "planes" or "heightening") with which to discuss the chorus' role. This model will be useful in not only differentiating the chorus from figures such as the prologue, but also in describing adapters' intentions, the performance techniques of the chorus, as well as the reception of the chorus in the chapters that follow.

"Framing" The Debate

Recent scholarship on early modern performance offers terminology that can help in defining the role of the chorus, as well as differentiating it from the figure of the prologue. Stern's work, as discussed above, stresses the "impermanent" or removable nature of such as prologues, epilogues, and choruses with regard to the text, and she argues that they are instead connected to the performance event.[157] In particular, these "impermanent" pieces are connected with the initial performance(s) of a play, since the purpose of early modern prologue and epilogue was "to woo the first-performance audience which was judging or auditioning the play and to petition the spectators, begging them to be indulgent rather than unkind".[158] She extends this impermanence also to choruses: "Choruses like (and sometimes with) prologues and epilogues seem also to have been separate documents on separate papers; in their nature they too were impermanent".[159] Like prologues and epilogues, choruses are included as texts that stand separate from the play, and can be added, removed, or altered from performance to performance.[160]

---

[156] Greenfield (1969) In Greenfield's work on inductions, she states that the induction and play constitute separate imaginary realms, and when juxtaposed, they ironically demonstrate the flexibility of the imagination of both playwright and audience (152-3). Greenfield thus refers to meaning as being created in "both imaginative realms" (155). This theory is useful because – like the work of Foley – it approaches the role of the function of the prologue from the perspective of the performance's reception. Also like Foley, however, Greenfield's terminology remains vague; referring to "imaginative realms", seems just as unspecific as "planes".

Stern's label of "impermanence" does not, I would argue, make prologues and choruses marginal to the play in a negative manner. In fact, Stern recovers their purpose with regard to the theatrical event, and her work acknowledges the potential relationship of influence that these elements can build with the audience. This connection between prologue or chorus and the audience of a particular performance event should be considered alongside Bruster and Weimann's work on prologues, in which they discuss the prologue's position as a "go-between", and its function of "occupying liminal position betwixt and between".[161] The prologue, they describe, "was responsible for inspecting, evaluating, introducing – in a word, for *mediating* – separate parties".[162] The prologue inhabits a liminal space they call a threshold, and acts as an usher, asking "the audience to consider, even as they experience, their own relations to issues of theatrical and social participation within and without the early modern playhouse".[163] The classical chorus, too, ushers the audience over a threshold, by offering the opening and closing lines of the play, and capturing the audience's attention at intervals to comment on the action of the play through song and dance (techniques of performance which are discussed in the next chapter). The Greek chorus should thus also be considered to have a mediating function, as they oscillate between the fictional world of the play and communication with the audience.

---

[157] This leads her to believe that many plays published without prologues/epilogues most likely originally had them. See Stern (2009) 102 for examples.

[158] Stern (2004) 122.

[159] Stern (2009) 107. She considers the choruses of *Romeo and Juliet* as well as *The Winter's Tale*. In the case of these two plays, she is of course discussing one-person choruses.

[160] Stern (2009) 109. I have not considered the epilogue separately, because its function is similar to that of the prologue. In addition, Anouilh's play does not consider the final chorus speech to be an "epilogue".

[161] Bruster and Weimann (2004) 32.

[162] Bruster and Weimann (2004) 32.

Not only is "mediating" the term employed by Bruster and Weimann, but it is also the term used in the above quote by Pfister in his work on dramatic theory.[164] In fact, in Pfister's theory, it is precisely the function of mediating that unites the prologue and chorus. However, as I will show, although both serve mediating functions, it is the *different locations from which they mediate* that in fact differentiate the prologue and chorus.

Bennett's analysis of theatre audiences offers a model of understanding performance and reception that is useful here. She uses the model of two concentric frames to describe the audience's reception of a play. She explains that

> the outer frame contains all of those cultural elements which create and inform the theatrical event. The inner frame contains the dramatic production in a particular playing space. The audience's role is carried out within these two frames and, perhaps most importantly, at their points of intersection. It is the interactive relations between audience and stage, spectator and spectator which constitute production and reception, and which cause the inner and outer frames to converge for the creation of a particular experience.[165]

---

[163] Bruster and Weimann (2004) 56.

[164] Bierl (2005) describes the "problem" of the ancient chorus on the modern stage (as well as some "solutions"), a methodology I have explained I do not share. However, in his argument, he uses similar terminology: he explains that the chorus "oscillates", and also uses notes that they can "mediate" between "the events on the *skene* and the audience" (292). However, he remains reliant upon a conception of the chorus which, although broad, relies upon outdated models of the chorus. He explains that it is possible to speak of a "triple function of the ancient tragic chorus: it is *dramatis persona,* Schlegel's 'idealized onlooker' or instrument of *Rezeptionssteuerung* (focalization of attention), and voice of the poet" (292). He speaks of the chorus as oscillating between the functions and dimensions he describes. Although my argument uses similar terminology, in substituting Bennett's model of theatre reception for these more traditional models, I attempt to build on analyses such as Bierl's in order to explore how the modern chorus/audience relationship is established and how it functions in performance.

[165] Bennett (1997) 139. Although she mentions Goffman only briefly in her study, his use of frames as an explanation of how individuals interact and structure human experience seems extremely relevant here. Smith (2006) explains that in Goffman's work, "a frame is a 'schemata of interpretation' that 'allows its user to locate, perceive, identify, and label' (1974: 21) a strip of activity. The frames that give form to our experience are cognitive and are grounded in strips" (56). See especially Goffman

I would suggest that the function of "mediating" – as described by Bruster and Weimann as well as Pfister - can be understood as the use of a figure to manage these "points of intersection" when the frames "converge".

Although the prologue, as we have seen, might be considered to be a liminal figure, he/she is a part of the outer frame, like the other cultural elements that impact the play's reception. In fact, the prologue's function with regard to the first-performance audience – as described by Stern – corresponds to other modern elements of the outer frame with which we are now familiar. For instance, the programme is considered by Bennett to be an aspect of "pre-performance" and the outer frame which can impact an audience's experience. Bennett argues that while a programme may be "a simple sheet of paper listing the names of those involved with a particular production about to be staged, it can also be an elaborate publication which provides the audience with several points of entry to the production [...] Programmes can also carry director's notes which may well be intended to promote a particular interpretation". [166] The director's note in the programme thus often performs the same function as the early modern chorus – explaining or justifying certain choices and communicating the director's "hope" that the audience will enjoy the production.

(1974) *Frame analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience.* In this work, he acknowledges his general use of the language of theatre and performance by devoting a chapter to the theatrical frame and by stating that "the language of the theater has become deeply embedded in the sociology from which this study derives" (124, also quoted in Smith [2006] 60). Goffman (1974) attempts to more carefully explore the interplay between reality and the stage, and he thus explores how real activity can become theatrical. He "identifies eight 'transcription practices' needed to transform 'a strip of offstage, real activity into a strip of staged being' (138): 1. A sharp spatial boundary marking off the staged from the unstaged world. 2. The opening up of rooms in order to give audiences access to staged action. 3. A proxemic modification: the spatial alignment of persons 'so that the audience can literally see into the encounter' (p. 140). 4. The focus of attention falls on one person at a time. 5. 'Turns at talking tend to be respected to the end' (p. 140). 6. The use of the practice of 'disclosive compensation': audiences are given more information about persons and events on the stage than in everyday life. 7. 'Utterances tend to be much longer and more grandiloquent than in ordinary conversation' (p. 143). 8. Everything that occurs on the stage has significance for the development of plot or character" (Smith [2006] 61 quotes Goffman [1974] 138-43). Although this is a rather narrow definition of staged performance, Goffman subsequently relates the theatre's frame structure to that of talk. Goffman, much like Bennett and myself, argues that "frame analysis permits a more discriminating dissection of the organization of experience" (Smith [2006] 62).

[166] Bennett (1997) 136.

A prologue, like other pre-performance elements of the outer frame such as the programme, ushers the audience toward the inner frame, often by offering an interpretation of what will take place. The Greek chorus, however, should be considered the opposite: a figure belonging primarily to the *inner frame.* The chorus – whether a singular figure or a group - is rooted within the inner frame because of his/her fictional identity and relationship to the action. However, the Greek chorus retains the ability to oscillate between the frames, mediating the convergence of the frames from within.

The prologue, however, has impacted our modern conception of this chorus in several ways. As I have argued, the prologue has led to the emergence of one-person choruses, which has encouraged a conception of the chorus that does not necessitate reductive defining characteristics such as “collectivity”. The prologue has impacted the use of the chorus by allowing adapters like Anouilh to capitalize on the close association of these figures. The modern chorus – especially perhaps in its one-person incarnation – can seem much more distant (emotionally and physically) from the action of the play than the Greek chorus might have been. As I have argued, the audience’s close association of these figures is in fact central to Anouilh’s goals.

Based on the above discussion, I would argue that reviewers, critics, and adapters – including Anouilh - seem to be in agreement over several characteristics of the modern chorus. This chorus, no longer restricted to definitions based on collectivity or style of performance, can be identified by the following attributes: the ability to exist (sometimes simultaneously) inside and outside of the fictional action, leading it to have a unique relationship of mediation with the audience. This relationship is often created through the chorus directly addressing the audience (and thus challenging conventions such as the naturalistic “fourth wall”), in order to clarify and comment upon the play, interpreting and contextualizing events. Some of these characteristics of the modern chorus may be, as my example of Anouilh's chorus demonstrates, influenced by other figures from performance history (in the case of Anouilh's chorus, the prologue). However, conceiving of the chorus within the model of performance and reception posited by Bennett allows the chorus to not only be differentiated from these figures, but also more accurately described in relation to them when there is an instance of intended overlap. For instance, if Anouilh wishes to associate his chorus with the prologue figure, it is in order to capitalize on the distance this figure has from the inner frame, because of its traditional location in the outer frame.

At this point, I wish to re-emphasize that although I have identified these defining features of the modern chorus, this does not mean that the modern chorus is not connected to its ancient counterpart. On the contrary, as I described above, the oscillation of the chorus between frames and the unique relationship it creates with the audience are features of the ancient chorus as well. In fact, adapters whose choruses oscillate between the inner and outer frames and share a relationship with the audience are simply drawing on different aspects of the roles of the ancient chorus; instead of creating choruses necessarily composed of collectives who sing and dance in unison, adapters are capitalizing on alternative – yet still performance-oriented – aspects of the chorus' role, which have proven difficult for many classical scholars to describe.

As I stated above, one of the consequences of the impact of figures such as the prologue upon the modern chorus is the flexibility it offers adapters in terms of their choruses. An adapter may now choose to locate the chorus more distinctly in the outer frame, drawing on its associations with the prologue, or, on the other hand, he/she may choose to root the chorus mainly as a character in the inner frame, affected by the action and unable to directly address the audience. The flexibility of a chorus that can occupy different frames and communicate with the audience in different ways seems to suit our modern tastes. The chorus has become a useful and flexible tool for the adapter, to whom it is often desirable that the chorus break away from theatrical conventions such as the fourth wall in order to communicate directly with the audience.

Every adaptation deals with the oscillation of the chorus differently, and therefore modern choruses communicate with their audiences using a variety of performance techniques, some of which are explored in the next chapter. Bennett's model of the concentric frames of performance and reception will remain useful in this exploration. Not only does her model help to accurately describe the chorus in relation to similar figures from performance history, but its openness and flexibility offers a vocabulary with which to begin exploring a wide variety of potential relationships between choruses and audiences. I will therefore continue to use and build upon this model as I examine different choruses and their techniques of mediation below and in the chapters that follow.

In the section below, I will proceed with my examination of the example of the one-person chorus of Jean Anouilh's *Antigone.* I will continue to use this example as a case study in order to show in more detail how choral oscillation can operate onstage. By continuing to compare Anouilh's chorus with the chorus of Sophocles' *Antigone,* I will also show how the chorus' location within the frames of performance (and therefore their relationship with the audience) can be influenced by the theatrical, social, and political context of the adapter. It will become clear that Anouilh's particular chorus, despite being located in the inner frame, is very strongly associated with the prologue figure and the outer frame in order to emphasize the distance this figure – unlike many other choruses – must have from the inner frame, in order for the audience to appreciate the Hegelian dialectic between the protagonists.

1.3 The Oscillation of Anouilh's Chorus

Prologue/Chorus Continuity

In my example of the reception of Shakespeare's "choral" characters, it was simply their re-emergence throughout the play that often prompted these characters to be called "choral" (even when they had also previously performed the function of prologue). Similarly, just because Anouilh's Prologue becomes the Chorus after his initial monologue does not mean that his function and his position in relation to the audience entirely changes. In Anouilh's case, as I will show, his role as "Prologue" already resembles a Greek chorus in some respects, and when he subsequently becomes "Chorus", he remains connected to his earlier role as Prologue - not only because he is played by the same actor. The aspects of the ancient chorus that he draws upon continue to be those associated with the outer frame of the action.

Discussing the Prologue section of Anouilh's play in particular, Falb writes that he "tells us the fate of each character. Anouilh seems to be insisting that we know what is going to happen from the outset. Interest thus is focused not on *what* is going to happen, but on *how* it is to happen, and, if possible, on *why* it happens this way".[167] The Prologue makes statements such as "her name is Antigone and she will have to play her part until the end".[168] Although Falb does not relate this idea to the Greek original, what Anouilh effectively accomplishes is to put his audience in the same state of mind as the Greek audience would have been. They would already know the myth that the play is based on, and they would know that Antigone, Haemon, and Eurydice are going to die. They would therefore be interested to see *how* the playwright dealt with the myth. Even in this early Prologue scene, Anouilh's enigmatic figure is already linked to the role of the Greek chorus: he expresses background information as a Greek chorus might. However, I indicated above that, unlike Sophocles' chorus, this Chorus has no personal stake in the action – neither in the war that took place, nor the tragedy about to occur. Although he may express information like a Greek chorus, the manner in which he expresses it in the outer frame makes him resemble a prologue.

---

[167] Falb (1977) 51. Howarth also notes that the Chorus character seems to have privileged knowledge: with reference to the Prologue's description of the guards, he states that " 'Ils sentient…' is not something demonstrable, that spectators can test empirically; we have to take the author's word for it" (26). It is instances such as this one that lead Howarth to describe the Chorus as an omniscient novelist.

[168] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 39: "Elle s'appelle Antigone et il va falloir qu'elle joue son role jusqu'au bout…". Anouilh's comment is interesting in light of recent theory of adaptation: Linda Hutcheon argues, based on the work of Dawkins (1976), that cultural "memes" operate similarly to genetic evolution: units of cultural transmission or units of imitation, are transmitted, and they always change. Dawkins uses the term "memes" to suggest ideas, however, Hutcheon explains that "stories also are ideas and could be said to function in this same way. Some have great fitness through survival (persistence in a culture) or transgenerational phenomenon […] like genes, they adapt to those new environments *by virtue of* mutation – in their 'offspring' or their adaptations. And the fittest do more than survive; they flourish" (32). In stating that there is only one part for Antigone to play, Anouilh seems to be indicating the "fitness" or "survival" of the character and her tragedy in his culture. However, perhaps ironically, this statement also seems to contradict the many changes that he makes to her character in his adaptation. Her personality and motives may have "mutated", but her fate remains the same.

Despite the fact that the Prologue subsequently takes the name "Chorus", the continuity between the characters is highlighted in the middle of the play, when the idea of fate is again picked up and re-emphasized in the outer frame. After the guard reports to Creon that someone has buried Polynices' body, the Chorus (now named as such) offers a sort of "lecture" on tragedy for the audience. This is a break in the action, and is in fact another instance of the Chorus character being "outside" the action. Here, the Chorus offers a two-page monologue differentiating tragedy from melodrama, in which he describes that

> It's neat, tragedy. It's restful, it's certain…In drama,[169] with its traitors, evil enemies, that persecuted innocence, its avengers, those Newfoundland dogs, those flickers of hope, that appalling death that occurs as if it were an accident. We could have saved him, and the good young man might have arrived in time with the policemen. In tragedy, we are tranquil, we are at home. After all, we are all innocent![170]

---

[169] The direct translation of "drame" is "drama", but Anouilh seems to be indicating bourgeois drama and melodrama in particular (as can be understood by his references to the clichés of the genre). Indeed, Galatière translates "drame" as "melodrama" (1951) 35.

[170] Anouilh (1944:1957) 62-3: C'est propre, la tragédie. C'est reposant, c'est sûr…Dans le drame, avec ces traîtres, avec ces méchants acharnés, cette innocence persécutée, ces vengeurs, ces terre-neuve, ces lueurs d'espoir, cela devaient épouvantable de mourir, comme un accident. On aurait peut-être pu se sauver, le bon jeune homme aurait peut-être pu arriver à temps avec des gendarmes. Dans la tragédie on est tranquille. D'abord, on est entre soi. On est tous innocents en somme!

In saying "we", the Chorus connects with the audience in the outer frame – together, they are all "innocent". The Chorus proceeds to comment upon tragedy, comparing it further with melodrama. In tragedy, Chorus states, "there is no more hope, dirty hope",[171] and so one can

> shout what we want to say at the top of our voice, what we have never said […] In drama*,* one argues because we hope to escape. It is base, utilitarian. Here, argument is free [gratuitous]. It is fit for kings.[172]

Creating a distinction between genres of theatre that the audience would be familiar with, Anouilh uses the Chorus in this scene to frame his Hegelian adaptation by reminding us to focus on the upcoming arguments rather than the outcome. In addition, by connecting this play with tragedy, we are reminded of Anouilh's source text, and also perhaps (if we are a "knowing audience"[173]), its chorus. Such metatheatrical instances point simultaneously to a connection with the source material - the tragic outcome "fated" by the previous text – and also invite us to acknowledge differences, such as the configuration of the Chorus and his relationship to the audience and the action.

Although at this point, he is called "Chorus" and not "Prologue", this scene is one moment in which the continuity between Prologue and Chorus is emphasized. As a liminal and oscillating figure, the Chorus can be understood as still able – like a Prologue – to occupy the outer frame and comment on the drama throughout the performance. However, unlike a traditional prologue, a chorus can also occupy the inner frame.

---

[171] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 63: "il n'y a plus d'espoir, le sale espoir".

[172] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 63: gueler à pleine voix ce qu'on avait à dire, qu'on n'avait jamais dit […] Dans le drame, on se débat parce qu'on espère en sortir. C'est ignoble, c'est utilitaire. Là, c'est gratuit. C'est pour les rois.

[173] I use this term, following Linda Hutcheon (2006), who states that instead of terms like "learned" or "competent", "the term 'knowing' suggests being savvy and street-smart, as well as knowledgeable, and undercuts some of the elitist associations of the other terms in favour of a more democratizing kind of straightforward awareness of the adaptation's enriching, palimpsestic doubleness" (120).

Inside the Inner Frame: Chorus and **Confidant***?*

What separates Anouilh's chorus from a narrator[174] as well as his role as Prologue is the ability to converse with the characters; being able to approach characters in the inner frame of the action and speak with them means that the Chorus cannot be considered entirely separate from the stage action. In Anouilh's play, as I have indicated, the focus on the dialectic between the protagonists shows the influence of Hegel's theory, and led to an association between the Chorus and the more distancing prologue figure. However, the Chorus' ability to interact in intimate situations with other characters also illustrates the impact of previous French staging traditions. When Anouilh's Chorus interacts with the characters, he immediately brings to mind the French *confidant(e)* version of the chorus; Howarth notes that the Chorus in fact "does also on occasion assume the more traditional guise of confidant and mentor to Creon".[175] Although the impact of the neo-classical *confidant(e)* – like that of the early modern prologue - may have contributed to reductions to the chorus in adaptation, the *confidant(e)* led to a completely opposite type of one-person chorus: one unable to exit the inner frame of the fictional action.

From the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, the chorus was affected by trends in neo-classical French performance that led to the transformation of the chorus into the *confidant(e)*: the neo-classical focus on *vraisemblance* (verisimilitude) and decorum both affected the portrayal of the chorus. Neo-classicists believed that theatre should resemble real life, and that it would therefore be absurd to find a group of people singing and dancing during a tragedy. The dramatist John Dennis (1657–1734), wrote that although it is "probable that at the suffering of kings several should be concerned; at the same time you must grant it absurd that they should sing and dance at their sufferings".[176]

---

[174] As I noted, some scholars still refer to him as "narrator" (ie. Falb: 1977). Howarth (1983) notes that the use of the term "omniscient narrator" is borrowed from prose fiction (23).

[175] Howarth (1983) 23.

In this period, the French dramatists replaced the chorus with a *confidant(e)* or the regular onstage presence of at least one character during the intervals between scenes. For instance, the example of the nurse in Racine's *Phèdre* seems especially relevant. Racine believed that only verisimilitude can move us in a tragedy, and he replaces the chorus with the character of a nurse (Oenone). The nurse serves several functions: firstly, she is the *confidante* of Phèdre, giving Phèdre someone to direct her comments toward onstage, and thus allowing the exposition of the true cause of her suffering. Her presence, however, also betrays the class divisions of the era, reflected in the beliefs about decorum onstage. Racine could not accept that a princess (Phèdre) would bear false testimony, so he assigns Oenone the task of accusing Hippolytus of attempted rape. He justifies this change in his preface to the published text by stating that "such baseness seemed to me more fitting to a Nurse who could have more servile inclinations".[177] Both verisimilitude (in terms of dialogue) as well as class-based decorum are preserved through this replacement of the chorus with the *confidante*. As Macintosh states, the Aristotelian privileging of the Sophoclean chorus as 'one of the actors' was considered during the Renaissance (as with all things Aristotelian) something to which modern practitioners should aspire.[178]

The ability of the Chorus to converse with the characters in Anouilh's production is particularly important in two scenes. In the first instance, the Chorus seems to favour Antigone, and in the second, some critics have seen the Chorus as favouring Creon. Following Creon's summoning of the guards to take Antigone to her death, the Chorus incorporates himself into the action for the first time, entering and approaching Creon. The Chorus says,

---

[176] Quoted in Macintosh (2009) 69 (Dennis, from *The Impartial Critic* [1693], 190). Macintosh (2009) 70 and Mittman (1984) also note that in a sense, the audience themselves replaced the collectivity of the chorus: as of 1636, select members of the audience were allowed to occupy seats on the stage at the Comédie Française (later, this was also the case at the Dorset Garden Theatre and the new Drury Lane theatre in Restoration London).

[177] Racine, "Preface" (1677: 1968) 34: Cette bassesse m'a paru plus convenable à une nourrice, qui pouvait avoir des inclinations plus serviles, et qui néanmoins n'entreprend cette fausse accusation que pour sauver la vie et l'honneur de sa maîtresse.

[178] Macintosh (2009) 70. This focus on choral characterization is related to the work of classicists who stress the chorus' fictional identity. See the Introduction above, as well as Dhuga (2010). Although I will discuss the relationship between choral and identity and authority in chapter four, it is important to note here the influence of Aristotle's statements in the *Poetics* that the chorus should be treated as one of the actors that its point of view is determined by its characterization (*Poetics* [18.1456a25], also cited in discussion by Kitzinger [2008] 3).

Chorus: You are a fool, Creon. What have you done?

Creon, *looking into the distance in front of him:* She must die.

Chorus: Do not let Antigone die, Creon! We will bear this wound for centuries.[179]

Here, it would seem that the Chorus favours Antigone, as he is calling for Creon to save her life. On the other hand, when Creon retorts that she wants to die, the Chorus states "She is a child, Creon".[180] This Chorus is not saying that her argument is right, only that she is a child. In addition, since he has also been the figure constantly reminding the audience of the inevitability of the tragic outcome, it would be difficult to believe that he would be reversing his opinion. In this context, he might be considered to be merely heightening the tension and anticipation for the audience – playing with our emotions by challenging our belief in his earlier assertions about the inevitability of the tragedy.

The second instance in which the Chorus speaks to Creon occurs at the end of the play, when the Chorus is the one who tells Creon of his wife's death. In this case, he fulfills the role of the messenger from Sophocles' tragedy.[181] Interestingly, although the Chorus takes over this messenger role, he is *not* then the one to converse with Creon about what he should do next, which is the role of the original chorus. In Sophocles' play, it is the chorus who urges Creon to continue being a ruler and continue on with his life. They tell him, "we must attend to present tasks; the future is a care to those responsible".[182] In Anouilh's play, however, this job is left to the character of the Page boy, who has never spoken onstage until this moment:

---

[179] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 86:
Le Choeur: Tu es fou, Créon. Qu'as-tu fait?
Créon, *qui regarde au loin devant lui.* Il fallait qu'elle meure.
Le Choeur: Ne laisse pas mourir Antigone, Créon! Nous allons tous porter cette plaie au côté, pendant des siècles

[180] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 86: "C'est une enfant, Creon". Howarth understands these scenes as a reversal: "It is Creon, not le Choeur, who now seems to possess a compassionate insight into the tragic process" (43). I disagree with this reading, for the reasons outlined below regarding the displacement of the role of the *confidant(e)* onto the characters of the Nurse and Page boy.

[181] Sophocles' messenger tells Creon: γυνὴ τέθνηκε, τοῦδε παμμήτωρ νεκροῦ, / δύστηνος, ἄρτι νεοτόμοισι πλήγμασιν (1282-3). "Your wife is dead, own mother of this dead man, unhappy one, through wounds newly inflicted!" Transl. Lloyd-Jones (1998).

> Creon: I am going to tell you. The others don't know; we are here, with this task at hand, and we cannot look the other way [fold our arms]. They say it's a dirty job, but if we did not do it, who would?
> […]
> Five o'clock! What do we have today at five o'clock?
>
> Page: Council, Sir.
>
> Creon: Good. If we have council, boy, we will go.[183]

The two characters then exit together. The fact that Creon is not left alone in the world at the conclusion of the play could be used to criticize Anouilh for being too kind to Creon, tipping the scales of sympathy toward the dictator. However, this Page character seems merely to be filling the role that the chorus plays at the end of Sophocles' *Antigone*. The question then becomes: Why didn't Anouilh also use his chorus to encourage Creon to carry on?

---

[182] τῶν προκειμένων τι χρὴ μέλειν / πράσσειν. μέλει γὰρ τῶνδ' ὅτοισι χρὴ μέλειν (1334-5). Transl. Lloyd-Jones (1998).

[183] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 97:
Créon: Je vais te dire à toi. Ils ne savent pas, les autres; on est là, devant l'ouvrage, on ne peut pourtant pas se croiser les bras. Ils dissent que c'est une sale besogne, mais si on ne la fait pas, qui la fera?
[…]
Cinq heures! Qu'est-ce que nous avons aujoud'hui a cinq heures?
Le Page: Conseil, Monsieur.
Créon: Eh bien, si nous avons conseil, petit, nous allons y aller.

The Limits of the Hegelian Chorus

The answer seems to be that Anouilh has set ideas about what his Chorus can and cannot do. This one-person Chorus has limitations – he can only describe, predict, and report, and cannot choose sides or aid characters. Even his injunction to save Antigone is half-hearted; his claim that "we will carry the wound for centuries" is more of a prediction than an argument that she is correct or deserves to live. If Anouilh had wanted to create an ending that favoured Creon, he would have imitated Sophocles' play and eliminated the Page boy. If he had wanted to favour Antigone, the Chorus may have sympathetically spoken with her himself. Instead, Anouilh shows us that the chorus *can* converse with the characters – but immediately reminds us that he will only communicate with them up to a point. This chorus is thus not the *confidant(e)* of either character, intimately interacting with them in the inner frame.

On the other hand, Anouilh does seem to think that the role of *confidant(e)* is necessary: Antigone is given the Nurse as *confidante*, and Creon is given the Page – both inventions of the adapter. The way in which both Antigone and Creon interact with their *confidants* allow the audience to see aspects of their personalities that are necessarily present in the rest of the play. For instance, Antigone is extremely tender and emotional – even fragile - with her Nurse, and tells her "when you cry like that, I become little again…And I can't be little this morning".[184]

Although the Chorus can converse with the characters, Anouilh adds these *confidants,* absolving the Chorus from having to entirely fulfill this role. The Chorus must ultimately be free from emotional involvement with the characters in the inner frame in order to frame their arguments. Just as the Chorus focuses the audience on the balance between the arguments of the protagonists, he himself must balance his own role between the frames: between the association with a prologue - entirely in the outer frame – and the *confidant,* who remains entirely inside the dramatic action.

---

[184] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 45: "Quand tu pleures comme cela, je redeviens petite....Et il faut pas que je sois petite ce matin".

Not only did Anouilh create the Page and the Nurse characters to displace the function of the *confidant(e)* from the Chorus, but the collectivity that one would expect from the chorus is in fact also not absent, but displaced. Anouilh multiplies Sophocles' sentry character into a group of guards who participate in and survive the action of the play, displacing the ancient chorus' role of both participating as a collective and surviving the tragic events of the play.[185] Although the Chorus also survives, his removal from the events of the inner frame seems to necessitate his replacement by a group who, as in Sophocles' play, go on living (like Creon) after the tragedy. It is the survival of the guards that is emphasized through the final line of the play: "All that rests is the guards. They do not care about all this; it's none of their business. They continue playing cards…".[186]

Many of the Greek chorus' functions are in a sense both maintained and displaced in this adaptation. Chorus clarifies and contextualizes, survives the tragic action, and oscillates between his roles inside and outside the tragic action. However, the ability to *intimately* communicate with characters as well as the chorus' collectivity are displaced onto characters invented by the playwright. Anouilh thus capitalizes upon and retains the Greek chorus' roles in the inner frame, but displaces these features onto others in favour of a more distant chorus that speaks mainly to the audience. The collective of the guards, like the *confidants* added by Anouilh, are unable to step into the outer frame; this role is reserved only for Chorus, as it is the aspect of the ancient chorus most useful to Anouilh's emphasis on the dialectical nature of the arguments.

---

[185] Foley and Mee (2011) in fact go so far as to call this collective the chorus: they state that "the play's chorus consists of three guards who, interested in survival and willing to serve power, multiply Sophocles' single figure without dramatizing a broader social context for the action" (45).

[186] Anouilh (1944: 1957) 98: "Il ne reste plus que les gardes. Eux, tout ça, cela leur est égal; c'est pas leurs oignons. Ils continuent à jouer aux cartes…". Landers notes that the Chorus has "ironically fallen into their style of speech" (109). Even though one of the guards does have a conversation with Antigone while she is in her cell (a scene added by Anouilh), as soon as he is called back to duty, he appears to abandon his desire to deliver her message to Haemon. Minaud (2007) remarks, "Si le garde Jonas se laisse vaguement troubler par Antigone, is suffit du retour de ses acolytes pour qu'il retrouve toute sa dureté. 'Pas d'histoires.'" (43).

Choral Identity and Reception

Anouilh thus emphasizes his Chorus' ability to occupy the outer frame more than the inner. I explained above that prologues might traditionally be considered to be further from the action than choruses, and Anouilh's decision to have his unnamed Chorus connected with the role of the prologue – and to rarely interact with the other characters – makes the Chorus seem much more of a mediator than a chorus with a distinct role in the fictional action. This decision, however, varies amongst adapters, who, like the ancient playwrights, use the chorus as a flexible tool. Modern adapters' decisions of how to balance the chorus between inner and outer frames is also intimately connected with the decision faced by ancient and modern playwrights alike: the fictional identity of the chorus.

What is the identity of Anouilh's Chorus? This Chorus is unusual in the history of adaptation: although he is a character in the drama, he does not have any particular identity. Unlike many of the choruses examined later, in this case, the audience remains unaware of how he is connected with the characters in the play. How do the characters in the inner frame view him? Although the characters do not seem to be surprised by his relatively neutral presence, he lacks a specific fictional identity throughout the entire play.

As Goldhill and others have stated,[187] the identity of the chorus was an important decision for the Greek playwright. Goldhill offers the reminder that the chorus was not a stale inherited convention, but one of the areas over which the playwright had the most creative control. As I stated above, the ancient audience would likely know the mythological story a play would be based upon, and would be interested in seeing how a particular playwright dealt with the mythological material. The chorus' identity can help the audience to focus on how things will unfold: through their role of oscillating between frames, they both provide the mythological context that allows the audience to focus on the events and how they have been altered, while they themselves, as characters, are impacted by the tragic action. The way in which they are impacted depends upon their identity, and can shape an audience's interpretation of the play's action. What, then, are the functions and consequences of a *lack* of identity?

---

[187] Goldhill (1996) and Foley (2003). See also the discussion of identity and authority in chapter four.

Budelmann notes that many scholars have emphasized the chorus' flexibility not only in order to articulate the playwright's creative freedom, but also because choosing the chorus' identity carefully might have allowed playwrights to tackle politically sensitive issues.[188] This, he says, "helps to explain how tragedy can let spectators with differing political views all engage with controversial problems without threatening political stability in Athens".[189] This, of course, is related to my earlier discussion of Anouilh's intention of provoking the "double consciousness" of his audience. Not only was Anouilh's aim to create a balanced portrayal of the arguments of Creon and Antigone, but this very balance was what allowed this play to be performed in Nazi-occupied France. Choosing a chorus that has no set identity, but who is more an occupant of the outer than inner frame means that the he can still offer contextualizing information, while being unaffected by the action. This helps to achieve the balance necessary to the play's ability to be produced and performed at this time in history.

The initial reception of Anouilh's play, as I described above, was extremely mixed.[190] However, the subsequent popularity of Anouilh's play invites comparison with later productions of the play. Such comparison shows how an adaptation can itself be adapted to suit a new context, and how it can itself become a major influence on the reception of the chorus. Foley and Mee, who include an entire section in their volume for chapters dealing with "Anouilh Versus Sophocles", argue that

---

[188] Budelmann (2000) 197-99 discusses Griffith (1995) and (1998), Goldhill (unpublished), and Easterling (1997).

[189] Budelmann (2000) 199.

[190] Howarth (1983) 48-51 offers a summary of opinions, and the interesting reminder that "it was not only interpretations of the play in a specific political sense that could be damaging, but the very fact of a favourable review in certain publications" (49).

> despite its political setting, Anouilh's play domesticates the tensions central to Sophocles, including expanding the love interest that the original truncates. The characters' flaws and volatility suggest that, under occupied France, the struggle to define ethical and political issues became irrevocably blurred. Domesticating and modernizing the play's conflicts, however, perhaps accounts for its continued popularity and international influence. Productions that favour developing a new complexity and continuity to Creon's position, psychologizing and privatizing Antigone, marginalizing religious issues, or stressing the impossibility of identifying (or even in some cases retrieving) the bodies of the dead in the context of modern warfare and politics have drawn inspiration from this play".[191]

The ways in which Anouilh's play has been "mobilized" (to borrow a term from Foley and Mee) also shows how slight changes – especially to the role of the chorus – can alter the play's reception.

For instance, a recording from the Broadway Theatre Archive of Anouilh's *Antigone* emphasizes its relation to the original, yet small changes to the Chorus completely alter the meaning of the play. This production states that it uses Galantière's text, yet does not volunteer the information that it has relied on his earlier translation. As I noted above, Galantière in fact published two versions of the play: the first, in 1946, and the second, in 1949. In the first, he took many liberties with the translation, while in 1949 he followed Anouilh's version more closely. The initial looser translation was used for the Broadway production in New York in 1946, and although this filmed production is from 1972, it still uses this earlier translation. This translation takes so many liberties that in its initial publication, its status as an adaptation is

---

Also important is his comment that "it must be abundantly clear that it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to approach *Antigone* in 1944 without prejudice, and to judge it purely and simply as a work of art" (51).

[191] Foley and Mee (2011) 45.

announced: the publication states that the play is “adapted by Lewis Galantière from the play by Jean Anouilh”. No specificity of this sort is offered for the film’s audience.

In this version, the chorus’ omniscient role is explicitly stated at the beginning of the performance, while he is performing the Prologue section and describing the characters. He says, in an offhand manner, “mind you, Antigone doesn’t know all these things about herself. I know them because it is my business to know them. That’s what a Greek Chorus is for”.[192] It is worth noting that although he identifies himself as a Greek chorus, this statement is in fact spoken in what would be the Prologue section in the original text. Here, this figure is not split – he refers to himself as a chorus at the opening of the play. He justifies both his presence and his knowledge, while clearly – and metatheatrically – informing the audience of the director’s interpretation of the role of the Greek chorus.

Text is also added to this earlier version to help Chorus rationalize the end of the play. He states that “Creon was the most rational, the most plausible of tyrants. But like all tyrants, he refused to distinguish between the things that are Caesar’s and the things that are God’s”.[193] The neat balance that Anouilh established for his audience is here reduced to a moralized conclusion, which includes religious undertones. The reference to Caesar is directly biblical, taken from Mark 12:17: “So Jesus said to them, ‘Give back to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s’. And they were utterly amazed at him.”[194] These Biblical allusions in the text are also related to physical actions added earlier in the film: while Haemon argues with his father, Creon washes his hands, a very palpable biblical allusion to Pontius

---

[192] Galantière (1946) 4.

[193] Galantière (1946) 87. Rather than the word “plausible”, the film substitutes “persuasive”. Although this film production edits out some of the text that follows, Galantière (1946) continues: “Now and again, in the three thousand years since the first Antigone was heard of, someone has had to come forward to remind men of this distinction. And whether we say that the result is Christianity, or popular revolution, or underground resistance, the cause is always the same – a passionate belief that moral law exists, and a passionate regard for the sanctity of human personality. Well, Antigone is calm tonight” (87). The 1972 film version eliminates this text, and skips ahead to “Well, Antigone is calm tonight”. At the end of the Chorus’ speech, the credits begin to roll as the guards are shown playing cards, and the Chorus himself plays solitaire.

[194] International Standard Version (2008).

Pilate's washing of his hands to proclaim and symbolize his innocence in the death of Jesus Christ.

The Chorus in this production announces his authority directly, and then uses this authority to reinforce a moralizing interpretation of the conclusion, making the play a story of martyrdom rather than a Hegelian-inspired Greek tragedy. The very fact that this is intended to be the "same" play as Anouilh's production shows that even amongst one-person choruses, the chorus' relationship with the audience can be altered. This particular production demonstrates how this can occur due to a choice of translation (ie. choosing Galantière's 1946 version rather than the more accurate translation of 1949), or more subtly, by choices in direction, as in the addition of Creon's hand-washing. These alterations, of course, can lead the audience to view the mediated action of the inner frame in an entirely different way.

Conclusion

What makes Anouilh's chorus different from both the early modern prologue and the neo-classical *confidant(e)* is precisely what makes it similar to Sophocles' chorus: its ability to function - performatively, as Foley might say - both inside and outside the tragic action of the play. Looking at Anouilh's one-person chorus in the context of Bennett's model of performance and reception has allowed the chorus to be both compared to these influential figures, as well as differentiated from them. As I showed above, the prologue's distanced location in the outer frame differentiates it from a chorus. And while the *confidant(e)* character serves as a sounding board for the protagonists, the neo-classical playwrights' obsession with *vraisemblance* means that their choruses lose their ability to be in the outer frame of the play and communicate directly with the audience. When a playwright chooses to capitalize on the close association between the chorus and such figures, the model I have suggested allows for a more in depth investigation of the intentions and consequences of these decisions.

Bennett's model of concentric frames has thus shed some light on what we now consider to be the role of the chorus. It seems that when we say "chorus", we no longer necessarily mean a collective. However, this does not mean that there are no established connotations, or that these connotations are unrelated to the role of the Greek chorus. It seems that "the chorus" connotes a minimum of one character who communicates with the audience, offering clarification, comment, and reflection on the action. Perhaps most importantly, unlike the *confidant(e)* or prologue, the modern chorus can operate *both* inside and outside of the action. It is the placing of the chorus amidst the frames of the play – balancing it between being inside and outside the action - that has become an important decision for the modern adapter. Often, the way in which this balance is accomplished is dictated by the playwright's influences (from scholarship as well as performance history), his/her goals, and the political context in which he/she is writing.

As I have shown through my discussion of the one-person chorus, our modern theatre is still very much under the influence of the nineteenth century's focus on individual characters - we have become, for instance, more accustomed to prologues and *confidants* than choruses. Looking at Anouilh's production has encouraged an examination of several of the influences on the reduction of the chorus in the Western theatre tradition. Through this examination, I have emphasized that the chorus' relationship with the audience – based on its ability to oscillate between frames – has been an appealing and flexible aspect of the ancient chorus to modern adapters. In the case of Anouilh's production, the audience's relationship with the one-person chorus in the outer frame is used to guide them to appreciate the dialectical relationship between the characters in the inner frame without becoming emotionally involved in their Hegelian collision.

Through the application of Bennett's model to Anouilh's one-person chorus, I have proposed terminology for understanding the chorus which can be used to analyze both the ancient and modern chorus from the perspective of performance, while also allowing for a multitude of variations. In the chapters that follow, I will continue to build upon this model, in order to show how the chorus' location amongst the frames of performance can be altered in choruses of various compositions, in a wide variety of contexts.

CHAPTER 2:
The Performance of Mediation

Introduction:

Following the neo-classical era of the seventeenth century, it became popular to either reduce the chorus in number or eliminate it entirely, due in large part to the impact of the neo-classical focus on *vraisemblance* and the subsequent influence of naturalism in the theatre.[195] As I have argued, particular figures such as the prologue and the neo-classical *confidant(e)* had an impact on the reduction of the chorus, as illustrated by the previous example of Anouilh's use of a one-person chorus in his *Antigone.* These theatre traditions – in combination with trends in scholarship - have impacted our modern conception of the chorus, which no longer relies on collectivity.

However, in the twentieth century, the collective chorus made a surprising return to adaptations of tragedy. Since the mid-twentieth century, the presence of a "collective chorus" - that is, a group of chorus members with a homogeneous identity – has been making a powerful return to the stage. In fact, the plethora of interesting choruses that have emerged recently in adaptations of Greek tragedy make it easy to forget that for at least two hundred years prior, collective choruses were very rarely seen on the stage.[196] This return to the collective chorus is in part due to the impact of the work of Friedrich Nietzsche and the Cambridge Ritualists, who – as I will show below – renewed both scholarly and theatrical interest in the chorus by focusing on its ritual roles. Their emphasis on the chorus' ritual roles not only re-popularized the collective chorus, but also brought into focus certain non-naturalistic aspects of the chorus' performance, such as the use of the mask, music, and dance.

---

[195] Helene Foley (2007) has noted the impact that naturalism and our modern sense of individualism have had on portrayals of the chorus, noting that creating "any undifferentiated collectivity on stage runs counter to modern ideas about the individual's complex and ambivalent relation to social groups and the representation of this relation in performance" (354).

[196] See Fischer-Lichte (2005) on the surprising return to choric theatre in the 1990s. I engage with her comments in chapter three.

The performance of tragedy in general was emphasized again in the 1990s, when classical scholars began to focus on the issue of Dionysus' role in tragedy. They attempted to respond to the following question: when the god is not present in the action of the play, does tragedy have "nothing to do with Dionysus"?[197] This discussion led to the examination of tragedy in its performance context - in relation to the other events of the City Dionysia, and in relation to the audience. Albert Henrichs explains that prior to this phase of research in the early 1990s, Dionysus had just been considered the origin of tragedy, but now, in this "important new phase", there was not only a renewed focus on the "context for performance",[198] but also another approach that "explores the dramatic representation of Dionysos and his worship within the actual plays, as distinct from their external setting in Dionysiac cult".[199] This latter method examines Dionysus *within* the plays – in particular, the god's role as a concept "behind the tensions and ambiguities of tragedy".[200] Using the work of Bierl, Henrichs claims that the tendency to set the entire tragic genre in distinct Dionysiac ambience in fact *gained* momentum in the fifth century, and therefore the god is especially present in the work of Euripides.[201]

---

[197] Winkler and Zeitlin (1990) explain that the meaning of the Athenian proverb, "nothing to do with Dionysus", was debated even at first mention (3). The examination of this proverb (and the questions it provokes) culminated in the publication of the volume, edited by Winkler and Zeitlin (1990), entitled *Nothing to Do with Dionysos? Athenian Drama in Its Social Context.* See also Faraone and Carpenter (eds.) (1993), *Masks of Dionysus,* which contains chapters on tragedy as well as other representations of Dionysus (iconography, ritual, etc.).

[198] Henrichs (1994) 56-7 singles out Goldhill's (1990) article in Winkler and Zeitlin's volume for his emphasis on "the complex social 'context for performance'" (57). Winkler and Zeitlin (1990) explain, "whatever the contrast may have been between an 'original' time and what later transpired, 'nothing to do with Dionysus' takes only the most literal view of the god's significance. But if we turn to consider the circumstances of the festivals that centered on the god brought into the midst of the *polis* and the citizens, then we might propose the contrary – 'everything to do with Dionysos' – or (as we have done in the title) repunctuate the negative statement with a skeptical question mark" (3).

[199] Henrichs (1994) 57. He singles out the work of Charles Segal (1982), Froma Zeitlin (1989) (1991) (1993), and Richard Seaford (1993) (1994), who "have all emphasized the ambivalence of Dionysos as a fundamental concept behind the tensions and ambiguities of certain plays" (57).

[200] Henrichs (1994) 57. See also Vernant (1972: 1981) on "Tensions and Ambiguities in Greek Drama". A discussion of Vernant appears in chapter three and four.

[201] Henrichs (1994) 57 cites Bierl (1991) and its earlier incarnation (1986).

Since these movements in the early 1990s, classical scholars analysing the performance of tragedy have notably moved away from the need to justify their examination of the context of tragic performance and its ambiguities by framing it within the study of Dionysus.[202] However, it is these trends of the 1990s - toward examining tragedy within the context of performance and ritual - that Henrichs built upon in his influential work on choral self-referentiality, which is of central importance to this chapter.

In the previous chapter, I argued that the chorus' oscillation between the inner and outer frames of the action is a central characteristic of the ancient chorus that appeals to modern adapters. In fact, interest in this feature of the chorus' reception has led adapters to be drawn to particular aspects of the chorus' style of performance in the ancient tragedies. In particular, adapters seem interested in choral performance techniques that capitalize upon or emphasize their oscillation, encouraging the audience to view the chorus as mediating the action. In this chapter, I will suggest that for modern adapters, the most popular choral techniques of mediation are those that can be understood as self-referential. I will show that although these techniques of mediation are often drawn from adapters' interpretations of the ancient chorus' performance and ritual role, these same techniques of mediation are often applied for opposing purposes in modern performances. Examining these techniques in depth will offer a better understanding of how both the ancient and modern chorus mediate the action for the audience, including how the chorus manages the balance between distancing the audience and drawing them toward the action in the inner frame.

---

[202] The legacy of this work, however, is apparent in the publications of the last twenty years, which focus not only upon the performance of tragedy, but also the contextualization of the tragic chorus within the choral culture of Athens. As I have noted above, the tendency to consider the choral culture of Athens can be noted most strongly in Wilson (2000), and also in Kurke (2007), Martin (2007), and Murnaghan (2005). Henrichs' work has also been useful to those studying other types of choruses; Easterling (1997) notes that "his study of the way in which choruses draw attention to their own performance is extremely suggestive for the argument that I am presenting here, if we explore its implications when applied to satyr choruses" (42).

Choral Self-Referentiality

Henrichs' work not only responded to new movements in the classical scholarship of the 1990s described above, but he was also responding to a specific debate surrounding the chorus of Sophocles' *Oedipus the King.* David Wiles describes the debate amongst "would-be progressive critics" like Henrichs as turning "upon the supposed metatheatricality of *Oedipus the King,* at the point when the chorus responds to Jocasta's dismissal of oracles: 'why should I dance?'".[203] This debate began in 1966 when E.R. Dodds stated that the chorus, speaking of themselves as such, "step out of the play and into the contemporary world".[204] Henrichs' work responded to Dodds' argument, describing this moment as one of a variety of instances of choral "self-referentiality".

A focus on performance is intimately connected with Henrichs' description of the chorus' self-referentiality, as his argument re-focuses scholarly energy on the performative role of the chorus in particular. Henrichs explains that

> The convention of choral self-referentiality, which recognizes the performative role of the chorus, enables the audience to cross the boundaries between the chorus *qua* tragic character and *qua* performer, between the drama acted out in the theatre and the *polis* religion that sustains it, and more specifically between the cults of the *polis* and the rituals performed in the plays.[205]

The convention of choral self-referentiality – part of the chorus' ritual role - allows the audience to perceive the chorus as both character and performer, and in a moment of metatheatrical distancing, to simultaneously acknowledge this dual identity.

Henrichs' comments not only relate to the discovery of the variety of roles played by Dionysus in relation to tragedy,[206] but his comments also relate to my argument in the previous chapter regarding the chorus' liminal and oscillating position between the frames of action in a performance. Henrichs seems to describe a similar position for the chorus, especially when he states that "as a performer of the ritual dance, the chorus exists simultaneously inside the dramatic realm of the play and outside of it in the political and cultic realm of the here and now".[207] The potential to be present in the outer frame of action not only allows the chorus to communicate with the audience, but also encourages the audience to perceive their dual identity as performer and character.

---

[203] Wiles (2007) 175. In Greek: τί δεῖ με χορεύειν; (895).
[204] Dodds (1966:1983) 186, quotes in Wiles (2007) 175.
[205] Henrichs (1994) 70.
[206] Henrichs (1994) makes Dionysus integral to choral self-referentiality, explaining that "choruses who draw attention to their ritual role as collective performers of the choral dance-song in the orchestra invariably locate their performance self-reflexively

In this chapter, I will use the spatial model outlined in chapter one in order to discuss productions that capitalize on the ancient chorus' particular performance techniques. By separating these two discussions, I have attempted to differentiate between two aspects of choral performance that I argued in the introduction are often conflated in scholarship: the chorus' location, and their style of performance. I have already argued for a liminal and oscillating conception of the chorus, who might be traditionally considered to be grounded in the inner frame of the action but able to communicate with the audience in the outer frame. In what follows, I will argue that many performance techniques of the chorus used in adaptations are selected because of their capacity for self-referentiality: they allow the audience to consider the theatricality of the choral performance, as well as perceive the role the chorus plays as both characters and mediators of the action. In order to fully understand how this process operates in performance (and especially adaptation), Henrichs' argument must be extended further: it is not only vocalized instances of self-referentiality that make the chorus appealing to adapters, but

---

within the concrete dramatic context and ritual ambience of a given play. An integral aspect of this practice is the pivotal role assigned to Dionysus in the articulation of choral identity" (58). Dionysus is connected to the articulation of choral identity because he is often invoked, either in moments of self-referentiality or "choral projection". In the latter, the chorus project their performance onto another time/place, or another performer (such as Pan or Dionysus) (74-5).

[207] Henrichs (1994) 70.

also the various other performance conventions of the ancient chorus that would now be considered self-referential.

Whether or not a performance technique is deemed "self-referential" at a certain point in time is of course dictated by the performance conventions of the era. However, it might be said that a technique is only self-referential if it is perceived of as "distancing" or metatheatrical to some degree by its contemporary audience. For instance, the use of the mask, which will be discussed in depth in this chapter, involves an important aspect of self-referentiality: although, as I will explore, the effect of the mask on the ancient audience cannot be verified, because of connotations of distancing that it has acquired in the twentieth century, the use of the mask now both "recognizes the performative role of the chorus" and "enables the audience to cross the boundaries between the chorus *qua* tragic character and *qua* performer" - major features of choral self-referentiality outlined by Henrichs. The mask is thus a performance technique that supports the chorus' oscillation between the frames of the action, and therefore invites the audience to see the chorus as mediating the action. Capitalizing on the self-referential aspects of the chorus' role encourages the audience to consider the chorus' role in both frames of the action, as well as their own role in relation to the action.

In 1994, Henrichs argued that choral self-referentiality had not been received as a defining feature of the chorus, nor had it been systematically studied.[208] In this chapter, I will argue that this quality's attractiveness to adapters has also not been examined systematically, and therefore this chapter will examine this phenomenon in depth. I will argue that in addition to the vocalized instances of self-referentiality identified by Henrichs, instances of theatrical or performative self-referentiality (such as the use of mask) should be seen as an important aspect of choral performance and reception, and an appealing aspect of the chorus for modern adapters who wish their chorus to mediate the action for the audience.

---

[208] Henrichs (1994) 59. Henrichs acknowledges that the term "hyporcheme" has been widely used to characterize those self-referential choruses in Sophocles who "verbally recognize their choral performance while being physically engaged in the dance". However, although he notes that this is a useful term, Henrichs also emphasizes that it is highly problematic, and offers a full discussion (59-60).

In the first section, I use examples from recent choral dance performance in order to demonstrate how using the Greek chorus as “inspiration” can lead to very different uses of choral dance and music. Using the model inspired by Bennett and proposed in chapter one, I explore how these performances emphasize or minimize choral self-referentiality, depending upon how a non-naturalistic technique such as choral dance is embedded within the frames of the action. In the section that follows, I complicate this notion by engaging in depth with the use of the masked chorus. I explore its use in the ancient theatre, as well as its revitalization in the theatre of the twentieth century. In this section, Henrichs’ emphasis on the ritual role of the chorus comes to the forefront through a discussion of the use of the modern chorus and non-naturalistic techniques for ritualizing purposes.

Through an examination of a series of case studies, I will focus on a seeming incompatibility or paradox: the mask often appeals to adapters because of the distancing connotations it has acquired in the twentieth century, yet these same adapters often employ the masks in an attempt to draw the audience into the action. Although the two well-known productions I engage with use the chorus in an attempt to draw the audience into the action, these adapters are still attracted to the mask because of its capacity to distance the audience by pointing to the constructed nature of the performance. In the final section, I will examine a strategy that capitalizes on the Greek chorus’ capacity for self-referentiality through the use of decidedly (post)modern means: the incorporation of media into choral performance.

2.1 That Old Song and Dance

The reception of ancient texts through dance has recently become a subject of study. In her work in this area, Macintosh notes that "it is not simply that dancers have led the way with bold formal innovations in the stagings of ancient material. It is also true that their danced versions of the ancient plays have often reflected and even on occasions anticipated, other theatrical, and wider intellectual, trends".[209] In fact, Macintosh's introduction offers the reminder that although the ephemerality of dance can make it difficult to study, paying closer attention to dance performances can change our ideas about the reception of ancient texts in certain eras – including long-held notions about the reception of the chorus. Using the example of Gluck's collaboration with the choreographer Noverre, she explains that "whilst eighteenth-century attitudes to the ancient chorus are generally regarded by classical reception scholars as simply a 'theoretical' preoccupation of a few German intellectuals, Noverre's important collaboration with Gluck was a seminal practical experiment that had wide repercussions".[210] Since, as Macintosh argues, reception of ancient texts in dance could lead the way in trends of adaptation, the two productions I will discuss below are extremely recent productions which also appear in Macintosh's volume. I will use the comments of choreographers found in this volume in conjunction with documents of reception and dance scholarship to argue that these practitioners capitalize upon the self-referentiality of both the ancient chorus as well as modern dance.

---

[209] Macintosh (2010) 7. It was not always the singing, dancing chorus, however, that dance practitioners have turned to for inspiration. Acknowledging the problematic nature of the chorus in certain eras, Macintosh explains that "when dance no longer had the spoken/sung word to aid its narrative function, it turned, as we have heard, to ancient pantomime rather than the ancient chorus for inspiration" (12). Macintosh argues that despite advances in dance in the pre World War I period, and the inter-war choric experiments, it was not "until new inter-cultural perspectives were afforded from the east from the 1950's onwards that the ancient chorus found a role in performances of ancient plays" (13). I will discuss intercultural representations of the chorus in chapter four.

[210] Macintosh (2010) 6.

As I indicated above, Henrichs' main focus is the chorus' song and dance, and he is mainly interested in instances in which the chorus vocalize sentiments about their own dance.[211] However, dance in modern theatrical performance, I would argue, is itself self-referential. The non-naturalistic nature of dance – and its accompanying music - calls attention to the construction of the performance through the attention focused on the body of the actor/dancer, and this is a major feature of modern performance. For instance, Lehmann argues that an emphasis on "physicality" is one characteristic trait of postdramatic theatre: "The body becomes the centre of attention, not as a carrier of meaning but in its physicality and gesticulation [...] as its presence and charisma become decisive, the body also becomes ambiguous in its signifying character, even to the point of turning into an insoluble enigma".[212] The performing body in postdramatic theatre calls attention precisely to its own physicality, and dance further emphasizes this focus. "Dance theatre", for example, is a genre associated with postdramatic theatre, and its very name indicates the extent to which the focus on physicality often means a blurring of the boundaries between dance and theatre. Lehmann argues that "the persistent boom of a *dance theatre* carried by rhythm, music and erotic physicality but interspersed with the semantics of spoken theatre is not by chance an important variant of postdramatic theatre [...] Dance theatre uncovers the buried traces of physicality. It heightens, displaces and invents motoric impulses and physical gestures and thus recalls latent, forgotten and retained possibilities of body language".[213]

---

[211] The particular way in which the chorus vocally expresses its self-referentiality is central to Henrichs' argument. In particular, he observes a connection between choral self-reference and choral projection: "Each time a tragic chorus emphasizes its own dancing, the tragedians go out of their way to incorporate the choral self-reference into the imaginary setting of the drama. They do so by separating the choral dancing from the orchestra and projecting it into a different time and place, as in *Oidipous Tyrannos* and *Antigone,* or by projecting it on another performer, whether human or divine, as in *Aias, Antigone, Trakhiniai,* and Euripides' *Elektra.* Invariably, choral projection serves as the matrix for choral self-referentiality and allows it to be given full rein in the here and now of the actual performance" (75). Although I will not engage with these observations directly, they are worth noting in relation to vocalized instances of the self-referentiality of the ancient chorus.

[212] Lehmann (1999:2006) 95-6.

Although the productions discussed below may not identify themselves as a part of the legacy of the 'dance theatre' movement, I would argue that the impact of movements such as this – in combination with the focus on "physicality" or "liveness" in theatre more generally[214] - have encouraged a self-referential focus on the body that productions must contend with when designing and choreographing their choruses. Adapters who wish to stage choruses are often inspired by the potentially non-naturalistic focus on the performing body that can occur through the incorporation of dance, which can lead to a self-referential focus on the chorus and its performance. However, the self-referentiality of dance can be emphasized to different degrees and in different ways, and this is often due to the manner in which it is embedded within the frames of the action.

Both of the performances I take as my main examples in this section not only include a collective chorus – which is, as I have shown, itself anti-naturalistic - but both also use the *concept* of the "Greek chorus" to inspire their performances. However, the examples in this section conceive of the function of the Greek chorus differently, leading to very different styles of performance. In the first example, The Clod Ensemble's *Red Ladies,* the Greek chorus inspired an extremely distancing performance. Although this production included classical resonances, it was not intended as an adaptation of a particular tragedy. By contrast, in the second example, from Struan Leslie's choreography for *Women of Troy,* the Greek chorus provides the inspiration for dancing that is justified within the inner frame of the action. My final comments in this section illustrate that the performing body that is emphasized self-referentially through choral dance can be conceived of as both overly-distancing *or* leading to over-identification, both hyper-responses to a particular conception of the ancient Greek choral dance.[215] Each production thus employs different strategies in an attempt to combat the perceived dangers.

---

[213] Lehmann (1999:2006) (96). In their work on dance, Preston-Dunlop and Sanchez-Colberg (2002) argue that concern with corporeality was a defining factor in the evolution of the German based 'dance theatre'. Productions of this sort "saw the medium of dance as a way to deal with matters physical, physically" (9). They substitute the term "corporeality" (rather than "physicality"), and argue that "corporeality links dance theatre to the radical developments within the avant-garde theatrical practice, to which German Expressionist dance belongs. It dealt directly with the polemic of the body on stage and the body's contentious relationship to a language structure and hierarchy which creates and defines the body's lived-social-political-theatrical and extra-theatrical reality" (10).

[214] See Fischer-Lichte (2004: 2008) 67-74 for a discussion of "liveness". She explains that "with the increasing mediatization of our culture, the 1990s saw a renewed debate about the particular medial conditions of theatre performances, especially in the United States. The central focus lay on the bodily co-presence of actors and spectators and the so-called 'liveness' of performance" (67).

Red Ladies

Clod Ensemble is a British production company, founded in 1995 by Artistic Directors Paul Clark and Suzy Willson. The group creates performance projects, workshops, and events across the UK and internationally, using both traditional theatre spaces as well galleries and public spaces.[216] The Clod Ensemble's piece *Red Ladies* is an "ongoing performance piece" composed of eighteen women dressed identically in red headscarves, black trench coats, red stilettos, red vanity cases and sunglasses. There is a two-step process to their performance, and both are described by their director in terms that indicate their goal of distancing the audience. First, the group infiltrates a particular city with series of "missions" or "interventions", and afterward, they perform "a theatrical demonstration in four movements" in a theatre space.[217] The preliminary intervention allows the Red Ladies to appear in different parts of a given city, speak to people, and occupy unexpected spaces. For instance, Willson, the creator, explains that

---

[215] I borrow the concept of a "hyper-response" from Revermann (2008) 108. Revermann explains that "looking more globally at twentieth-century reception, I have noticed not only how individual artists have latched onto specific differentiators but, even more interestingly, how when they latch on, they often latch onto one differentiator in particular and have a tendency to, if you like, 'supersize' it" (108). For instance, he describes Schechner's Dionysus in 69 as "hyper-ritualized" (108).

[216] "Clod Ensemble: About the Company" (2011).

[217] Willson and Eastman (2010) 420.

> by placing Red Ladies on top of buildings, it creates the effect that they are everywhere. When you see them on the balconies of a town hall, on top of the Bodleian Library, on buildings of political or cultural significance, you wonder how on earth they gained access to these buildings, how did they get past security?[218]

She continues by explaining the functions of this type of performance, which is mainly to de-familiarize: “We don't often look up at all in our own city. By positioning themselves on strategic points of building, they encourage people to look - drawing attention to the architecture. [...] Once again we are trying to create the effect that they are everywhere, that they have things covered and that they are looking out for us. When we are lucky enough to have a helicopter this is taken to an extreme. Red Lady gets a bird’s-eye view”.[219]

A reviewer for *The Guardian* described the intervention in Trafalgar Square as follows:

> Their mission: to celebrate - and gently send up - the Square's heritage as a site of political protest. Accompanied by their own brass band of high-heeled ladies, the group marched in unison, sang articles from the International Bill of Human Rights, and made declamatory speeches.
>
> The masterstroke was the helicopter. From high in the sky, a lady with a megaphone and a Joyce Grenfell voice redeployed her chic squad of civil rights demonstrators to the South Bank. After another parade outside the National Theatre, the women hurriedly changed back into their civilian clothes and melted away.[220]

In the performance the group subsequently offers in the theatre, they also attempt to de-familiarize, however, in this case, it is through their framing of the show. Willson explains that the idea of a theatrical “demonstration” as the frame for the show is based upon the idea of a Women’s Institute cookery demonstration or a political demonstration.[221] She notes that “it is a kind of Brechtian device allowing the Ladies to explain to the audience what they are about to see before they see it. They ask the audience to experience the show as a demonstration of group dynamics, a showing, a coming together and a falling apart".[222] Lita Doolan, a reviewer, noted the use of direct address in the production, stating that "the Red Ladies make it clear as they talk to the audience through out the dance performance that, 'Whatever you think we are, we are not that'".[223] Thus, in both the "infiltration" in the public space and the subsequent "demonstration" in the theatre space, the focus is on distancing the spectators, and this is connected to their inspiration from the Greek chorus.

---

[218] Willson and Eastman (2010) 426.

[219] Willson and Eastman (2010) 426-7.

[220] Szalwinska, “The Red Ladies” (June 13, 2005).

[221] Willson and Eastman (2010) 427.

Willson states directly that she hopes that the audience will perceive of the collective as a Greek chorus. She explains that "through watching a chorus we can perhaps step back from the psychology of the individual and observe the behaviour of a group [...] Our piece doesn't deny leaders exist, or suggest that we don't need leadership, but it does celebrate the beauty and industriousness of phenomena where there is no single leader".[224] Not only is she interested in the collectivity offered by the model of the ancient chorus, but she is also interested in the role of the chorus as witnesses. She states that

> in the tragedies that interest me the chorus has no agency - it does not take action. And because the chorus members are not representatives of power but of the people, often marginalized voices that are rarely heard or seen, there is always a tension between their emotional involvement in and exclusion from the centre of the action. I was interested in this in relation to politics today – how many people feel politically impotent in the face of big business government and the media. We were interested in whether or not the group did in fact have power, whether the very acts of witnessing, watching, remembering, re-enacting, lamenting were powerful, creative, political acts in their own right.[225]

In order to develop a unique style of movement and express these ideas, the group used another one of the Greek chorus' performance techniques: the mask. In the rehearsals for *Red Ladies*, the group used neutral masks – a training tool of Jacques Lecoq and mask-maker Amleto Sartori[226] - in order to find a “movement vocabulary”. The methodology of Lecoq included embodying things from nature (animals, weather, natural phenomena), including “tragic” materials, and then transposing these to dramatic situations. Willson explains that “we can observe the nostalgia that a piece of elastic has for its former shape and the fatigue that ensues after many attempts to revisit it; the scars and bruises that a piece of newspaper retains after it has been crumpled; the shocking shattering of a piece of glass; the melancholy of ice melting. If we embody these movement dynamics, we arrive at a tragic movement vocabulary”.[227] Their tragic movement vocabulary included a basic set of actions: “running, knitting, kneeling, lamenting, preening, falling, flocking, waiting, wrestling, jumping”.[228] Even when the chorus was not performing in unison, this basic vocabulary was underlying their movement. Although they abandoned the masks for the performance, she notes that “of course the uniform is a mask and as such is very protective for the performers when they are on the street. Even when they ‘unmask’ in the show, the principle and heightened atmosphere of a masked performance is always there.”[229] The mask helped to bring the collective together in their embodiment of the chorus on the stage, and the stylization it offered their movement remains integral to their performance and its distancing effects.

---

[222] Willson and Eastman (2010) 427.
[223] Doolan (May 30, 2008).
[224] Willson and Eastman (2010) 421.
[225] Willson and Eastman (2010) 421.

For the performance, the group also commissioned a text which includes classical references. Willson explains that using text

> was an opportunity to highlight some of the themes difficult to draw out in movement alone. It isn't easy to reference the past in movement because movement only really happens in the present. Also, by using classical references, we wanted to encourage the audience to think of the Red Ladies as a kind of tragic chorus.[230]

---

[226] Willson and Eastman (2010) 423. Willson’s biography on the group’s website *Clod Ensemble* (2011) notes that she studied with Jacques Lecoq in Paris before founding Clod Ensemble.

[227] Willson and Eastman (2010) 423.

[228] Willson and Eastman (2010) 424.

[229] Willson and Eastman (2010) 430.

[230] Willson and Eastman (2010) 429.

The text mixes past and present in order to encourage the audience to make their own connections; she believes that once classical references have been introduced into a piece, audience members will continue to discover classical parallels, "should they be that way inclined".[231] It is extremely interesting that Willson felt the addition of text and the use of extreme distancing connected her performance pieces to the Greek chorus. This is certainly contrary to the feelings of other adapters whose practices are also inspired by same concept of the ancient Greek chorus.

Women of Troy

Although Willson used the Greek chorus as a model to inspire a distancing performance in the style of Brecht, others have attempted to limit the distancing effects of non-naturalistic techniques such as choral dance. Struan Leslie, the Movement Director who has worked with theatre director Katie Mitchell on productions such as her *Oresteia* (1999)*, Iphigenia at Aulis* (2004)*,* and *Women of Troy* (2007)*,* has stated that his goal with each production is to create a "Gesamtkunstwerk": although his particular background is in dance, his "interest in, and collaborations with, artists from other disciplines (both performative and visual) enable me to bring to the theatre, and especially text-trained directors, an understanding of, and a desire to work with, the Wagnerian idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* – the 'total theatre' work".[232]

In this goal of creating multi-trained performers, his model, like Willson, is the Greek chorus, who he notes had expertise in text, music, and movement. However, he also adds that this goal conflicts with certain practical issues: although choral work is beginning to receive attention in both the theatrical and scholarly realms, "it is a real challenge to make an ancient Greek chorus connect with today's cultural expectations and norms".[233] Leslie explains that

---

[231] Willson and Eastman (2010) 429.

[232] Leslie (2010) 412. This use of the concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* is not Leslie's alone; Preston-Dunlop and Sanchez-Colberg (2002) argue that the corporeality so essential to the 'dance theatre' movement "can be seen to have its birth in the Gesamtkunstwerk of Wagner and later of Laban and Wigman […] Gesmatkunstwerk brings into play a synthetic approach to the production as a whole including a concern with the dialectic between an individual's internal reality (their subjective life) and its external socio-cultural context. Where the dance's conceptual content has an effect on its material form, where there is an emphasis on emotion and, with it, a focus on the performer's presence as a central factor of the event, a corporeal work emerges" (9). Although the emphasis on the connection between *Gesamtkunstwerk* and dance is not Leslie's alone, it is his connection of these ideas with the Greek chorus that is of particular interest here.

> Chorus work in Britain has rarely been successful in the past, sometimes seeming like a group of women loitering at the back of the stage, waiting for something to happen. This has been often down to sheer financial constraints and rehearsal time. Choral work is not part of the sustained training of actors, singers or dancers, each of whose training has a specific set of skills that pertain to their specific form, but at no point does it reach the level of total skill demanded by the ancient tragedians of their performers. Since these skills have been divided up in our modern creative culture, in training the chorus for particular productions, I am striving to combine specific elements of the training from each of the separate disciplines to create my ideal of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.[234]

Leslie developed a training method to help actors become more aware of one another and their environment, as he believes that this is the key to choral work. In a sense, his theory corroborates the idea of frames and the unique relationship between chorus and audience explored in the previous chapter: he explains that "the [fourth] wall is always in place in the imagination of the actors until it is removed in order that the chorus can speak to the people beyond that wall. But even then the theatrical world continues as the audience become characters in the eyes of the chorus".[235] In his conception, the chorus is primarily reactive, and this connects them to the audience.

In Mitchell's production of *Women of Troy* (2007), the action of the play was set in the 1950s, and "the image of the Women evolved into them being some sort of 'Women's Institute' or guild – a group who know each other socially".[236] Because of its setting in this era, the dance was justified within the context of the action in the inner frame. Leslie explains that

> out of Trojan women's social cohesion arose a way of addressing the dance element of the original Greek chorus – social dance would have been a part of these 1950s women's normal lives as they would have gone out dancing with

---

[233] Leslie (2010) 412.
[234] Leslie (2010) 415.
[235] Leslie (2010) 415.
[236] Leslie (2010) 418.

> their husbands and each other. So that when in time of need and stress they recalled their families, they danced a form the audience know and identify – a partner dance; but they danced it alone. Here the chorus makes a collective response in order to normalize and comfort themselves in the situation. The use of social dance became the signifier of something other, unspoken yet visible, and physically felt by the audience.[237]

Mitchell herself has also stated that "these dances appeal because they are couple-dancing. I find that a very beautiful metaphor for relationships, or the breakdown of relationships".[238]

Although the dance is a metaphor, it is also fully justified within the play - it occurs within the inner frame of the action. One reviewer noted that

> mostly, their Pina Bausch-influenced synchronised movement feels psychologically motivated, but occasionally the group and the atmosphere of the production go wildly Awol to a hot jazz beat. The result, though, is not coolly distancing in the manner of a Brechtian alienation effect. Rather, you are pulled back into the proceedings with all the more raw emotion afterwards. Perhaps a new term is needed for this technique: a re-initiation effect, perhaps?[239]

Rather than a "re-initiation effect", I would call this an instance of choral self-referentiality that emerges surprisingly and momentarily from the inner frame of the action. The dance is justified by the context of the 1950s, and although it may be a surprising moment of theatricality, it is intended – as this reviewer noted – not to distance, but to "pull" the audience back into the proceedings. For Taylor, the reviewer, this was a positive aspect of the production. Other reviewers were less impressed, with one even stating that this show represented "intellectual and theatrical barbarism".[240]

Ironically, Leslie's use of the term "Gesamtkunstwerk" to describe his ideal choral training invokes Wagner, whose contribution to the adaptation of the Greek chorus was mainly that he replaced them with an orchestra.[241] Wagner came to believe that his orchestra was "more Greek than the Greeks",[242] because it is continuously eloquent *beneath* the action – it reflected upon the action without disrupting it. In the orchestral movement marked "Zwischenspiel" in Wagner's *The Twilight of the Gods,* there is an ode about which Wagner remarked to his wife Cosima:

---

[237] Leslie (2010) 418-9.

[238] Mitchell, quoted in Higgins (November 24, 2007).

[239] Taylor, Paul (November 30, 2007).

[240] Peter, John. (December 9, 2007).

> I have composed a Greek chorus...but a chorus which will be sung, so to speak, by the orchestra; after Siegfried's death, while the scene is being changed, the Siegmund theme will be played, as if the chorus is saying 'This was his father'; then the sword motive; and finally his own theme; then the curtain goes up...How could words ever make the impression that these solemn themes, in their new form, will evoke? Music always expresses the direct present.[243]

His statement that music expresses the present is interesting when compared with Willson's feeling (stated above) that text needed to be added to her dance piece in order to *counter* the presentness of dance, and to give it a mythic sense. Willson, on the one hand, seems to be stating that the corporeality of her chorus does not allow for the ideal amount of distance. Wagner, on the other hand, is stating that it is music which expresses the present, and therefore the corporeality of a physical chorus is overly-distancing. In other words, for Willson, performer corporeality is too present, but for Wagner, the corporeality of the chorus is too distancing. As I will show, this discrepancy is also the case in the use of other techniques, such as the mask. The adaptation of a given technique is dependent on an interpretation of its original function, and thus, those with similar goals often wind up with very different performance styles.

---

[241] Although I will not engage with the adaptation of the chorus in opera, Savage (2010) has recently written an excellent overview of this topic. Savage explains that in opera, the chorus did not have a strong presence for at least a century and a half, and then only fitfully (22). When they were present, they had very different functions from the Greek chorus, as their ancestry was more rooted in the Renaissance's own dramatic intermedii, pastoral tragicomedies, court ballets, and masques (22). Eventually, these intermedii impacted the pioneers of opera, and the use of simple interludes spread in the 1600s (24). In French and English theatre of the later part of the century, fiddle music – the "act tunes" – replaced the chorus: "le violon tint lieu de choeur" (24). John Dennis suggested a solution to dealing with the act tunes: accept their presence, but rethink inter-act instrumental music so as to make it at one with the action and changing moods of the drama. By the time of Lessing, he could state that "the orchestra in our dramas in a measure fills the place of the ancient choruses" (24). In fact, Savage notes that Beethoven's 1810 score for Goethe's Egmont was loved by Wagner (with its four entr'actes) (25), and its influence can be felt in his pioneering of the orchestral interlude in opera.

[242] Savage (2010) 25.

[243] Wagner, C. (1978-80), 1. 417-18, quoted in Savage (2010).

In this brief examination of the use of the Greek chorus as a concept inspiring dance performances, it should be noted that Willson's focus was the outer frame, and Leslie's focus the inner. Willson's focus on "framing" the action means that her chorus focuses its energy on the outer frame, in an attempt to distance the audience from the action, thus emphasizing theatrical self-referentiality. Leslie's choral dance, on the other hand, emerges subtly from the inner frame, and although it adds a moment of self-referentiality, it is intended to ultimately draw the audience (and their emotions) inward. In what follows, I will further complicate this observation through a discussion of the mask. I will show not only that one technique is often used for opposing purposes, as I have above, but I will also explore how a technique embedded within the inner frame of the action can be intended to distance the audience, and how a technique associated with distance and the outer frame can be used to draw the audience into a ritualized performance. I will show that a technique emerging from either frame can be used to either distance the audience or to encourage them to identify with the action in the inner frame.

2.2 The Mask

Although Henrichs' particular focus is the chorus' song and dance, he mentions the mask as symbolic of the activity of shifting identities:

> This convergence of drama and ritual in the context of role-playing, make-believe, and shifting identities is epitomized by the mask, which transforms the self into the Other and integrates the choral performance with the Attic cult of the 'mask god' Dionysos.[244]

Of course, all characters in a tragedy would have worn masks, and therefore my discussion below must begin with a discussion of the effects of the ancient mask more generally. However,

---

[244] Henrichs (1994) 70. I will discuss the issue of "Otherness" further in chapter four.

I will show that examining the adaptation and reception of the choral mask in particular provides surprising insights into choral techniques of self-referentiality.

In the late twentieth century, a variety of adapters of Greek tragedy capitalized on the mask, but with diverse intentions. Many sought to capitalize on the ritual nature of the mask and its ability to draw the audience toward the action, while others, like Brecht (whose work is discussed further below), found the mask useful in distancing the audience from the action of the play. David Wiles, who has written extensively on the modern adaptation of the Greek mask,[245] connects the mask to the chorus. He argues that there is an ongoing quest in the theatre,

> to find a way of making theatre which roots performance in the body, but does not at the same time throw out the great western tradition of the text. It is a quest to unite the political theatre of the 1950s and 1960s with the metaphysical tradition of Artaud. [...] Greek theatre, and particularly Aristotle, offer a way of uniting these binary opposites. The linked and defining conventions of chorus and mask constitute a form that makes this union of opposites possible.[246]

In modern productions, Wiles describes the use of the mask and the chorus not only as "defining" characteristics of tragedy, but perhaps more interestingly, these conventions are described as "linked": both are tactics of uniting the text-based tradition of Western theatre with the twentieth century's renewed focus on the body in performance, which was discussed above. This often leads to the use of the mask exclusively for rehearsal purposes (as in Willson's production), however, my examples below will focus on productions that employ this technique as a major aspect of their staging.

As I stated above, different adapters capitalize on the mask – just as they capitalize on dance - for different purposes. Adapters are interested in the mask's ability to both draw the audience into the action of the production, as well as distance them. In fact, as I will show, this difference of opinions is closely related to the debates about the use of masks in the Greek theatre, as it is unknown whether the original masks themselves were used to prompt the audience to feel included or distanced from the action. The use of the mask is thus a technique that can be easily assigned *either* goal by an adapter. However, my examination below will show that these functions of the mask are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they are often dependent upon one another. Because of this dual function, the mask is not limited to a singular effect on the audience – as I will show, masks can have diverse effects, even in the same production.

---

[245] See Wiles (2001), Wiles and Vervain (2001), Wiles (2004a), (2004b), (2007). On the use of mask in Old Comedy, see Wiles (2008).

[246] Wiles (2004a) 261. He goes on to note that the goal of this quest has not been reached – it is "an ongoing, utopian quest for a goal that will never be fully attainable" (262).

Masks in the Ancient Theatre

The fact that adapters have capitalized on the mask for its ability to draw the spectators into the action as well as create a sense of distance correlates to a contradiction in the way the Greek masks themselves are understood. David Wiles has identified two positions regarding the mask: the first, exemplified in the work of Calame (2005), is that the Greek mask was meant to distance the audience from the action, and draw attention to the performer beneath the mask. Wiles quotes Calame's statement that "the primary function of the classical Athenian mask is to dissimulate; only secondarily does it serve to identify. [...] the tragic mask of the classical period serves to distance a voice and a gaze that one might otherwise take to belong directly to the hero of legend represented as 'alive' on stage through dramatic mimesis".[247]

The second – and opposing - view, for which Wiles draws on the work of Ghiron-Bistagne (1988), is that the Greek spectator went to the theatre in order to be fully immersed in the action. Wiles concludes that Ghiron-Bitagne's position that "the spectator in Greek antiquity went to the theatre to involve himself completely in the performance" is more aligned with the evidence we have of Greek theatre.[248] Wiles argues that supporting Ghiron-Bistagne's position challenges the idea that "cognition can be separated from emotion. When moral predicaments are viscerally felt, they are more likely to prompt a politically charged debate after the performance."[249] Here, Wiles argues that the cognition offered by distance cannot be separate from the emotions involved in feeling empathy, meaning that spectators cannot fully comprehend what is being presented without some measure of emotional involvement. By looking at the use of the masked chorus in productions that aim to ritualize tragedy, I will argue below that the converse is also true: emotion cannot be separate from cognition. Empathy does not seem possible, in the ritual context, without some amount of distance. In other words, Wiles' argument in support of Ghiron-Bistagne's position ironically draws attention to the *dual* function of the mask. This is especially useful in a discussion of its connection with the chorus, whose role is most often to communicate with the audience, oscillating between frames of the action.

---

[247] Calame (2005)115, quoted in Wiles (2007) 176.

In fact, recent scholarship on the Greek mask corroborates a position that emphasizes the mask's dual function. Peter Meineck has examined the Greek mask using research from the field of neuroscience as well as comparisons with other theatre traditions, and has stated that

> perhaps most importantly, when viewed in an open-air space, the mask was an effective way of instantly establishing a sense of theatricality. The wearer of the mask is immediately separated from the spectators, and as the vase paintings show, just the simple act of donning a mask indicates that a performance is about to take place. Lastly, in an open-air space that allowed the external environment to inform the aesthetic experience of watching drama, the mask provides a visual focus for emotional communication, and is able to stimulate a deeply personal response from the spectators. The mask demands to be *watched.*[250]

---

[248] Ghiron-Bistagne (1988) 78, quoted in Wiles (2007) 176-7.

[249] Wiles (2007) 177 notes that we should keep in mind the religious dimension of the Greek mask: "The mask was always perceived as phenomenologically ambivalent, but it is reductive to think of that ambivalence in terms of actor and role, and to eliminate the religious dimension. We should think rather of the tension which Vernant identifies in sacred representational objects, where the aim was: 'to establish genuine contact with the beyond, to actualise it and make it present, and thereby participate intimately in the divine, but in the same process, to emphasise what divinity holds that is invisible, inaccessible, mysterious, fundamentally other and foreign'" (177). Wiles cites Vernant (1990) 342.

[250] Meineck (2011) 121.

Not only does the mask distance the spectators, who recognize that they are "immediately separated" from the wearer, but this separation is self-referential: it "instantly" creates an atmosphere of theatricality. The effect of this process on the spectators is not, however, entirely distancing. This distancing in fact *leads to* "emotional communication". Although some scholars believe that the mask distanced the ancient spectator, and some believed it helped the spectator feel involved in the action of the inner frame, it is the positions of those scholars who – like Meineck and Henrichs – do not see these effects in opposition, whose work is most capable of explaining the masked chorus.

Masks in the Modern Theatre

Incorporating masks into adaptations of tragedy allows adapters to not only choose a goal based on the contradictory accounts of the original masks (and therefore justify contradictory goals with the same "origin"), but also evokes the experiments with mask work that occurred throughout the twentieth century in theatre more generally. When we use the mask now, for instance, we not only draw upon the Greek tradition, but the mask also carries the connotations of a variety of movements of twentieth century theatre. For instance, Wiles traces a line of influence from the French director Jacques Copeau , who used "neutral masks" as a part of his practice, to both the influential mask and movement training developed by Jacques Lecoq in Paris, and also (through Michel Saint-Denis, Copeau's nephew), to London and the work of Peter Hall, which will be discussed below.[251] However, it was not only through the radical avant-garde that masks entered the modern theatre, but more recently, as Wiles notes, through other routes such as the rediscovery of folk traditions, exposure to eastern theatre, and the development of the mask in therapy.[252]

---

[251] Wiles (2004a) 247.

All of the traditions stated above have impacted the use of masks in two ways: first, they have led to the use of particular styles of masks. We might, for instance, be more inclined to stage a tragedy using neutral masks than we would have been a century ago. Secondly, since masks not only appear in adaptations of tragedy, but in these other theatre traditions as well, audiences will likely have associations with the mask that complicate adapters' goals. The variety of masked theatre traditions will impact a spectator's reception of a masked character or chorus in an adaptation of tragedy. Amongst these various traditions, it is perhaps the work of Bertolt Brecht that has been most influential to the reception of the mask as a device for distancing the audience. As I will show, even adapters who wish to use a masked chorus to create feelings of involvement in the action must contend with the legacy of Brecht's goals of "alienation".

Brecht: Gestus and the Masked Chorus

One of the major reasons that the mask has come to be associated with distance is due to the work of Bertolt Brecht. In her work on the aesthetics of distance in the theatre, Ben Chaim explains that "the concept of 'distance' has become quite central to both theatre practice and dramatic theory in the twentieth century, especially since the influential work of Bertolt Brecht".[253] Indeed, Brecht's theory as well as his work in the theatre have been essential to the way in which we interpret the mask. In the next chapter, I will look at the chorus of Brecht's adaptation of *Antigone* in more detail,[254] however, here it is essential to acknowledge Brecht's contribution to "distancing" in the theatre more generally by engaging briefly with his use of the mask. In this section, I will examine the use of masks in Brecht's *Antigone* (and elsewhere in his work), in order to note how his use of the mask has impacted the way in which the mask is now understood to function in the context of theatre performance.

---

[252] Wiles (2004a) 248.

[253] Ben Chaim (1984) x.

[254] The full title of Brecht's production is *Die Antigone des Sophokles: Nach der Hölderlinschen Übertragung für die Bühne bearbeitet.*

One of the reasons that Brecht chose to use the mask (in *Antigone* and other productions, such as the *Caucasian Chalk Circle*), is that it could serve as one technique of Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt* – the "so-called A-effect (alienation effect)".[255] Alienation effects were used in Brecht's epic theatre to distance the audience from the action of the play, allowing them to contemplate the action and characters from a critical distance. Brecht describes the epic theatre's *Verfremdungseffekt* concisely in his writing on *The Street Scene:*

> What is involved here is, briefly, a technique of taking the human social incidents to be portrayed and labeling them as something striking, something that calls for explanation, is not to be taken for granted, not just natural. The object of this 'effect' is to allow the spectator to criticize constructively from a social point of view.[256]

Brecht's plays use different devices to alienate social incidents normally taken for granted, allowing the spectators to distance themselves from the action and think critically about what has been presented.[257] Often, these devices – including the mask - point to the constructed nature of the production.

In Brecht's work, Ben Chaim writes, the actors draw attention to themselves as performers, and "presumably, the spectator's awareness of the event as a theatrical performance causes a more active mental participation, with the viewer realizing that he or she is not to become a part of the events but to view them as a performance, perceiving them from the 'outside' rather than the 'inside'".[258] This statement relates Brecht's use of the mask to the frames of the action of the play. The actor *and* the spectator are both intended to view the character from the outside frame, and the use of the mask encourages them to *not* be drawn toward the inner frame of the action.

---

[255] Although Willett's translations always render "Verfremdung" in English as "alienation", other translators prefer different terms in order to avoid the negativity associated with that English term. Patterson (1994), for instance, points out that "this is not a mere linguistic quibble; for the word 'alienation' implies that audiences should become either antagonised by the performance or detached from the stage action to the point of boredom" (274). As Peter Brooker (2006) points out, what Brecht in fact pursued was "'de-alienation'" (217).

[256] Brecht, *The Street Scene* (1950: 1964, written c.1938) 125. Translated by John Willett.

[257] Perhaps the most well-known of Brecht's techniques is the use of projections to inform the audience about what will take place in an upcoming scene, or to show images in contrast to the onstage action. Often, these serve the function of removing any suspense about the plot and encouraging the audience to think critically about the social mechanisms that cause the action to occur. In an essay from the mid-1930s (and unpublished in his lifetime), Brecht (c.1936: 1964) recalled that the "background" in the epic theatre would "adopt an attitude to the events on the stage – by big screens recalling other simultaneous events elsewhere, by projecting documents which confirmed or contradicted what the characters said…" (71).

The gap between the performer and the role is constantly emphasized in Brecht's theatre through what is known as the "gestus of showing". Brecht defines "the realm of gest" as "the realm of attitudes adopted by the characters towards one another".[259] Gest influences physical attitude, tone of voice, facial expression, and the complex and contradictory attitudes which characters adopt toward one another. Mumford elaborates upon this complex term, and defines it as "the aesthetic gestural presentation of the socio-economic and ideological construction of human identity and interaction".[260] The gestus of showing is the use of gest to emphasize the *performer's role*. Mumford describes the gestus of showing as "the performer's clear demonstration that s/he is a performer and one who critically re-presents the behaviour of an historical character and/or critically narrates historical events".[261] Costumes, make-up, and masks are "quasi-gestural extensions" which aid in constructing the gest.[262] The way in which the mask is used within Brecht's productions is often connected with the gestus of showing by being put on and removed within the context of the action.[263]

In Brecht's 1948 production of *Antigone,* Brecht and Neher designed "Dionysiac masks on staves – flat, square, crudely painted faces, signs but also material carnivalesque objects – which echoed barbaric horse-skulls set around the stage".[264] The four elders of the chorus use these masks to celebrate peace, after Creon prematurely leads the city to believe that the war is over. Then, at the conclusion of the play, "they reversed their masks to lay blood-red faces over the body of Haemon while Creon's grinning mask stood implanted as a juxtaposition to his heavily made-up face now fixed in grief".[265] In Brecht's theatre, the use of mask causes the audience to be distanced in a complex way: by watching a performance being constructed before them, they are reminded that the play within which this masking process is taking place is itself similarly constructed. A mask therefore points to a triple identity of its wearer – the actor, the character, and the masked character. The masked chorus in the case of *Antigone* in particular distances the audience by not only emphasizing the theatrical nature of the performance, but also by emphasizing the dramatic irony of the celebration. The audience knows the chorus' masks of Bacchic celebration will not remain for long.

---

[258] Ben Chaim (1984) 28.
[259] Brecht (1949: 1964a) 198.
[260] Mumford (2001) 144.
[261] Mumford (2001) 149.
[262] Mumford (2001) 144.
[263] As is the case in several of Brecht's productions, including both *Antigone* and *The Good Person of Setzuan.*

Yet despite the seeming complexity of Brecht's use of masks, many have criticized Brecht's masks for *not* illuminating the complex contradictions of society, and instead, oversimplifying; Brecht's theoretical emphasis on the importance of connecting gestus with the complex nature of reality sometimes eluded him in practice. [266] In the case of his use of masks in *Antigone*, Wiles argues that Helene Weigel, as Antigone, became the unmasked "emblem of natural human emotion", thus equating the female with the instinctive in a gendered manner similar to the Greek theatre.[267] He argues that "what we see repeatedly in Brecht's practice is a mask of psycho-social alienation juxtaposed against the unmasked face of a human being".[268] In other adaptations I discuss below, the choral masks are in fact used to differentiate the chorus from the protagonists. However, in this case I would argue that it is *not* the juxtaposition of the protagonists and the chorus that the use of mask is intended to emphasize, but the juxtaposition of the choral masks and *the choral actors' own faces*. The gestus of showing and its application to the use of mask creates self-referential moments in which the chorus acknowledges – and through distancing, denies – its relationship with the audience. The implications of this process will be explored in the chapter that follows.

---

[264] Wiles (2007) 120.

[265] Wiles (2007) 120. This use of the mask is also visible in the photographs and descriptions provided in Brecht's *Antigonemodell* (1948), which is further discussed in the following chapter.

[266] This was the case in his 1954 production of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Willett (1998) states that the weakness of this production was the use of masks and music, which offered the simple and didactic message "poor good, rich bad" (105). Despite attempting to make the masks individual, Brecht's use of the masks nevertheless transformed characters into archetypes in the eyes of the audience, thus simplifying their characteristics and relationships, rather than contributing to a complex stylistic presentation of reality.

[267] Wiles (2007) 121.

Like the "partner" dance contained in Mitchell's *Women of Troy,* the masks in Brecht's production are justified within the inner frame of the action. This chorus puts on and removes its masks within the action; the audience understands that the elders are putting on the masks, not only the actors. However, unlike in Mitchell's production, the goal of the masks in Brecht's *Antigone* is ultimately to push the audience into the outer frame. Brecht's use of masks, including the gestus of showing, emphasizes the self-referentiality of the mask, as it metatheatrically calls attention to the role of the chorus in a constructed theatrical performance. Although "distancing" techniques are not limited to the chorus or the mask in Brecht's production, the particular use of the mask in his *Antigone* shows how the chorus can mediate the action for the audience by framing the use of the mask metatheatrically within the action of the play, rather than using masks throughout the entire production. This particular use of the mask illustrates that although a self-referential technique of the chorus can be justified within the context of the inner frame of the action, its intention can still be to distance the audience.

The example of Brecht's use of masks, as I will show, is in direct opposition to my examples that follow, which use the mask as a non-naturalistic aspect of the outer frame (ie. not justified within the inner frame), which is nevertheless intended to draw the audience toward the inner frame of the action. In these productions, however, I will suggest that the adapters must not only contend with but also *utilize* the potentially distancing effects of the mask. These distancing effects are not only caused by the non-naturalistic quality of the mask, but are also due to Brecht's more general impact on the reception of the mask as a device for distancing.

---

[268] Wiles (2007) 120.

In the section that follows, I will proceed by examining masked choruses that attempt to encourage the audience to identify with the chorus, but which capitalize upon the distancing effects of the mask in order to do so. In Part A below, in the context of a discussion of the impact of ritualism, my case study will be Tyrone Guthrie's *Oedipus Rex*. I will explore how Guthrie used choral masks as a distancing technique for ritualizing purposes. I will then proceed in Part B to complicate this binary of distancing/identification further by briefly engaging with another well-known production – Peter Hall's *Oresteia* – in order to demonstrate the potentially diverse and contradictory reception of the masked chorus.

Despite their different source texts (Guthrie adapted *Oedipus Tyrannos* and Hall adapted the *Oresteia*), their use of the chorus as a masked "symbol of humanity" is extremely similar. In addition, both emphasize the chorus' ritual relationship with the audience through their alterations to the conclusions of the plays. These two influential productions also offer an opportunity for a brief discussion of chorus' role in the re-ritualization of Greek tragedy, a discussion which will prove essential not only to this chapter, but also to those that follow. Using a technique such as the mask – with its ancient and modern connotations – complements the chorus' oscillation between the inner frame of the action and the outside frame that connects them with the audience, and this often leads to complex or contradictory audience responses.

A. The Distance of Ritual Involvement

In the work of Henrichs, as described above, self-referentiality is intimately connected with the chorus' ritual role. In his explanation, the chorus' performance is a ritual, which – in moments of self-referentiality – can also be distancing, by focusing the attention of the audience away from the illusion of the fictional action, and instead toward its construction. This understanding of the ancient chorus' self-referentiality as connected to its ritual role will be essential to understanding the use of the masked choruses of both Guthrie and Hall. The importance of the early twentieth century's focus on ritual contributed to experimentation with the mask, as well as a return to the use of a collective chorus.

The focus on the ritual nature of performance in the twentieth century was largely influenced by the impact of the so-called Cambridge Ritualists.[269] It is therefore worthwhile to briefly digress to explore the influence of the Cambridge Ritualists on the adaptation of tragedy-as-ritual, and how this has affected the chorus' role. This will prove essential not only to the discussion of the choruses of Tyrone Guthrie's *Oedipus Rex* and Peter Hall's *Oresteia,* which will follow in this chapter, but also to the discussion of productions such as Richard Schechner's *Dionysus in 69* and Yael Farber's *Molora,* which are explored in later chapters. Regardless of the performance technique selected, attempts to ritualize Greek tragedy - as well as theatre more generally - have often been influenced by the impact of the Cambridge Ritualists.

Excursus: The Cambridge Ritualists

The Cambridge Ritualists were a group of Classical scholars that gathered around Jane Ellen Harrison in the early twentieth century. Gilbert Murray, Francis Macdonald Cornford, and Arthur Bernard Cook worked with Harrison from approximately 1900-1915, exploring the origins of Greek religion and Greek drama.[270] They sought the origin of tragedy in ritual, thus creating what Richard Schechner would later refer to as a "vertical" – or teleological – version of tragedy's evolution.[271] Although their individual work often diverged in terms of subject matter, they were all interested in incorporating anthropology and archaeology into the field of Classics. Their search for the "origins" of tragedy in ritual renewed the focus on the communal or collective aspects of tragedy.

---

[269] Sometimes referred to as the "Cambridge Anthropologists" or "Cambridge School".

What is important here is not a history of this group, which has been written,[272] but its impact on the study and adaptation of the chorus. The major influences on the work of Harrison and her colleagues were the anthropological work of Sir James Frazer and Henri Bergson, as well as Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy,* which all have, at their centre, a focus on the collective.[273] For Nietzsche, perhaps the most important influence on Harrison in particular, ritual emblematized a Romantic reaction against rationalism and individualism.[274] Since Harrison was interested in establishing the "origin" of tragedy in ritual, Nietzsche provided an inspiring model. So much so, that Rainer Friedrich is prompted to state that "in fact, *The Birth of Tragedy* was also the birth of the ritual theory".[275]

---

[270] Ackerman (1991) 67.

[271] Schechner (1966) 27.

[272] See Ackerman (1991) , William M. Calder III (ed.) (1991). For more general accounts, see Csapo and Miller (2007), Csapo (2005), Segal (1996) (ed.), Fischer-Lichte (2005). Beard (2000) argues that the label "Cambridge Ritualists" has been detrimental to the study of the work of these scholars. She argues that there were many differences between the members of the group, and that much scholarship has been devoted to arguing about who was "in" or "out" of the group, when they may not have considered themselves a "group" at all. See pp. 109-128.

[273] Friedrich (1983) 160.

[274] Csapo and Miller (2007) 24.

[275] Friedrich (1983) 161. Silk and Stern note that "one of the first to speak up for Nietzsche's book was the English scholar F.M. Cornford, in whose important study of early Greek thought, *From Religion to Philosophy* (1912), it was pronounced 'a work of profound imaginative insight, which left the scholarship of a generation toiling in the rear'" (126; they quote Cornford [1912]). This was the kind of response Nietzsche had wanted forty years earlier (126).
On the other hand, although Silk and Stern note that Harrison proclaimed herself a "disciple of Nietzsche", they caution against overstating the connection between Nietzsche and Harrison's close collaborator, Gilbert Murray. Although Murray may have gotten his idea of the ritual origins of tragedy from Nietzsche, the idea of "ritual origins" existed before Nietzsche. They also have in common an emphasis on *primitive* ritual, but Murray is influenced in this regard by Frazer and the new science of anthropology. On the other hand, Silk and Stern note that the most significant resemblance between the work of Nietzsche and Murray "is rather the inner logic of the hypothetical ritual sequence, which (according to Murray's reconstruction) involves a movement from the ritual death of the god to his resurrection, and hence an 'extreme change of feeling from grief to joy'" (144-5).

The chorus – and the fact that it immerses itself in the action - plays an important role in Nietzsche's description of the origin of tragedy. Nietzsche locates the origin of tragedy within choral ritual; following Aristotle,[276] Nietzsche writes that tragedy originated from the chorus of dithyramb.[277] Most interesting for my purpose, however, is the relationship between the chorus and the audience that Nietzsche espouses, in what (he believes) is in direct contradiction to Schlegel's theory (presented in the previous chapter). It is consequential that Nietzsche engages with Schlegel directly, for, as Billings notes, Nietzsche draws on many other sources for his *Birth of Tragedy,* and many of them remain unacknowledged.[278]

Nietzsche ultimately misunderstands Schlegel's theory, and this is evident when he states that

> we had put our faith in an artistic audience, believing that the more intelligent the individual spectator was, the more capable he was of viewing the work of art as art; and now Schlegel's theory suggests to us that the perfect spectator viewed the world of the stage not at all as art but as reality. 'Oh these Greeks!' we moan. 'They upset our entire esthetic!' But once we have grown accustomed to it, we repeat Schlegel's pronouncement whenever the question comes up.[279]

This is, of course, intended to be ironic,[280] and in the end, Nietzsche discards Schlegel's idea mainly because if tragedy evolved from a choral form, then originally there would be no spectacle of which to be a spectator: "The emphatic tradition I spoke of militates against Schlegel: chorus as such, without stage – the primitive form of tragedy – is incompatible with that chorus of ideal spectators".[281] Nietzsche's misunderstanding of Schlegel (that the chorus is outside of the action entirely) mainly serves to allow him to dismiss Schlegel's arguments. It is also based on a difference of opinion regarding the several types of distance I have identified in my model: the distance of the chorus from the action of the tragedy in the inner frame, and the distance of the spectators from the chorus in the outer. I will return again to this topic in the chapters that follow, but it is interesting here to note that if Nietzsche had decided to pay closer attention to Schlegel's argument, he may have found an appealing correlation between his opposition of the Apolline/Dionysiac and Schlegel's real/ideal, at least in terms of the tensions of these dialectics involved in the process of performance and reception.

---

[276] In the *Poetics*, Aristotle states: "Anyhow, when it came into being from an improvisatory origin (that is, both tragedy and comedy: the former from the leaders of dithyramb, the other from the leaders of the phallic songs which remain even now a custom in many cities), it was gradually enhanced as poets developed the potential they saw in it" (*Poetics,* lines 8-14, translated by Halliwell [1995]).

[277] Silk and Stern (1981) 147. Silk and Stern point out, however, that he takes certain license with this narrative: Nietzsche identifies the Dionysiac worship represented in the early dithyramb (of which we know very little) with another problematic entity, the 'Dionysiac mysteries', and interprets the supposed satiric aspect of the former with reference to the presumed characteristics of the latter. They note that this is not necessarily untrue, but hypothetical in the extreme.

[278] Billings (2009) points out that in referring to Schlegel and Schiller by name, "the attention Nietzsche calls to his sources is here unique, and highly consequential for an understanding of the strategy of misreading" (253). For more on Nietzsche's "misreading", see Billings (2009) and further discussion below.

[279] Nietzsche (1872: 1956) 48.

[280] Silk and Stern (1981) 269.

Nietzsche's insistence on collectivity was extremely influential for Harrison's own account of the evolution from ritual to tragedy. In *Ancient Art and Ritual,* which she wrote at the end of her most productive period, Harrison summarizes her narrative of the birth of tragedy: "the amazing development of the fifth-century drama is just this, the old vessel of the ritual Dithyramb filled to the full with the new wine of the heroic *saga"*.[282] In other words, when people began to feel that the dithyramb was stale, and questioned its efficacy as a ritual, it was infused with new material from the work of Homer. In her account, myths are always secondary to the original ritual, and arrive on the scene only to give new meaning to old ritual forms.

In fact, according to Csapo, this is the first major premise of ritualism: many myths – those that speak of Zagreus, Zeus, Dionysus, or the Greatest Kouros – are united by one ritual,[283] since myths are merely explanations of ritual. Since there is no evidence for rituals, as most are performed and therefore ephemeral, Harrison creates this premise (that myths explain rituals) in order to make progress in her research. Relying on these premises, Harrison can reconstruct ritual out of the myths that she claims have been derived from the ritual. She looks at common motifs, and invokes Frazer's comparative anthropology in order to reconstruct certain rituals. The third premise of ritualism – which is necessary to the first two - is the assumption that the rituals of the world are all more or less alike in important ways. In fact, they are more alike than myth; it is the existence of one unifying ritual that allows Harrison to overlook the differences between myths.[284]

---

[281] Nietzsche (1872: 1956) 48.
[282] Harrison (1913) 164.
[283] Csapo (2005) 148.

Origins and Archetypes

It is this sort of confusion between origins and universals that leads Rainer Friedrich to divide the work of the Cambridge Ritualists according to what he identifies as two separate goals: proving drama's origins in ritual, and using ritual as an archetype that can be located in all drama.[285] Friedrich claims that the Cambridge Ritualists' theory of the origins of drama in ritual holds up to criticism, but when the theory is applied as an archetype to all drama, it becomes hopelessly inadequate.

It is mainly Gilbert Murray who is credited with (or accused of) expanding the idea of an original ritual into a pattern that could be applied to all tragedies, and which some scholars have applied to later drama as well.[286] Drawing on Frazer's theory of the "Dying god", Murray and Harrison claimed that the original ritual that evolved into tragedy was present in the *Ur-ritual* pattern of the seasons. In their evolutionary account, this pattern then becomes personified as the year god - Dionysus in Greece, Osiris in Egypt. Murray explains that "while the content has strayed far from Dionysus, the forms of tragedy retain clear traces of the original drama of the Death and Rebirth of the Year Spirit".[287] As Csapo points out, once personified, the year god is given a life story, a *mythos.*[288] Then it can make the leap to tragedy, complete with a focus on individual characters.

---

[284] Csapo (2005) 149.

[285] This differentiation will be useful in understanding Schechner's goals with *Dionysus in 69* in chapter three. Friedrich notes that the confusion surrounding the term "ritual" can be traced back to an ambiguity in the influences upon the group: "the evolutionary historicism of Sir James Frazer's anthropology is opposed to the Nietzschean and Bergsonian *Lebensphilosophie,* with its *a*historical and cyclical mode of thought ('the eternal return of the identical'). As is patent, these two approaches cannot easily be reconciled, and hence the confusion" (160; his italics).

[286] Murray not only influenced the methodology of Cornford's book *The Origin of Attic Comedy* (1914), but Friedrich (1983) also identifies later proponents of ritual theory and its application to drama (193-201). Griffith (2007) notes that although it was Harrison and Frazer who generally created the theories (and some are adapted from Aristotle), they may not have succeeded in popularizing their theory without the help of Murray: "the elegant synthesis of these elements that Murray worked out, together with the confident and non-argumentative manner in which he presented the theory as if it were the orthodox view of most experts in the field proved to be immensely persuasive. I doubt that without Murray's authority the 'ritual theory' would in fact have spread nearly so widely nor been swallowed nearly so whole as eventually turned out to be the case" (73).

From the seasonal pattern, Murray and Cornford derived two ritual sequences, one for tragedy and one for comedy. In tragedy, the pattern was identified as "*Agon-Pathos-Messenger's Report-Threnos (Anagnorisis) –Theophany".*[289] In Murray's "Excursus on the Ritual Forms in Greek Tragedy" – which was published in the second edition of Harrison's *Themis*[290] – he attempts to prove his view of the ritual nature of Greek drama by locating the pattern in all extant tragedies, as well as in fragments of lost tragedies.[291] However, as Pickard-Cambridge argued in 1927, Murray could not demonstrate in any play the presence of the ritual pattern as a whole, or even its intact core - even in the most Dionysian play, Euripides' *Bacchae.*[292] In addition, another issue with Murray's use of this play in particular is that his theory – and the work of the Cambridge Ritualists - is evolutionary. They attempt to show how ritual *evolved into* drama.[293] In a theory that is meant to be evolutionary, the fact that *Bacchae* - the "confessedly Dionysiac play" - is not an early play (which he himself admits in passing) considerably weakens his theory. In addition, Murray sees Euripides as the tragedian who adheres most firmly to his pattern,[294] which makes the evolution from Aeschylus to Euripides a sort of backward evolution.

---

[287] Murray (1912) 342.
[288] Friedrich (1983) 164.
[289] Murray (1912) 343-4*,* also discussed in Friedrich (1983).
[290] According to Robinson (2002) 227, Murray had originally presented this paper as a lecture in Oxford in 1910.
[291] Parker (2007) writes that it was the universality of ritual theory that attracted Murray to employ it: "it seems clear that a main attraction of the ritual theory for Murray was the way in which (so to speak) it allowed everything to connect with everything else [...] The ritual theory linked Sophocles to Shakespeare too with their rude romantic forebears" (101).
[292] Friedrich (1983) 192 discusses Pickard-Cambridge (1927), which is also discussed in Silk and Stern (1981). In fact, it is Euripides' *Bacchae* that Murray (1912) first uses as an example. This play is so foundational to his theory that he confidently states that "if there is any truth in this theory at all, our one confessedly Dionysiac play ought to afford the most crucial test of it" (345). However, in the discussion of the *Bacchae* that follows, Murray really cannot show any "truth" in his theory. In order to have "the whole sequence", Murray makes some swift jumps in logic: "Now, when we remember that Pentheus is only another form of Dionysus himself – like Zagreus, Orpheus, Osiris and the other daimons who are torn in pieces and put together again – we can see that the Bacchae is simply the old Sacer Ludus itself, scarce changed at all, except for the doubling of the hero into himself and his enemy. […] The Bacchae is a most instructive instance of the formation of drama out of ritual. It shows us how slight a step was necessary for Thespis or another to turn the Year-Ritual into real drama" (346). This "doubling of the hero" is his (rather transparent) attempt to resolve the problem he encounters in this play, which is of course that it is Pentheus, not Dionysus, who is torn apart.

Re-ritualization

In fact, the potential of re-ritualization helps to explain why the impact of Cambridge Ritualism was not felt most strongly in disciplines such as Classics, but in the avant-garde theatre movements from the 1930s to the present day.[295] Ritualism offered "disaffected directors a road map of the evolution of drama from its 'origin' in the precognitive, the emotive, the sacred, and the tribal to what they perceived as the decadent and moribund nature of their own contemporary bourgeois theatre. All one had to do was to turn and move against the flow and take theatre back to its roots".[296] In fact, this movement backwards might even be considered a goal of Nietzsche, emphasized in his hope for the re-birth of classical art in the work of Wagner, a *return* to the inclusion of the Dionysiac element of tragedy. The "mystery doctrine of tragedy", Nietzsche writes, includes "a recognition that whatever exists is of a piece, and that individuation is the root of all evil; a conception of art as *the sanguine hope that the spell of individuation may yet be broken*, as an augury of eventual reintegration".[297]

---

[293] This goal is evident in Murray's discussion of the "Theophany" aspect of the pattern. He posits that theophanies were incorporated into tragedies when the tradition of concluding a trilogy with a satyr play became less popular. When the trilogy lost its "proper close", Murray says that it faced two options: "Should it end with a threnos and trust for its theophany to the distinct and irrelevant Satyr-play which happened to follow? Or should it ignore the Satyr-play and make a theophany of its own? Both types of tragedy occur, but gradually the second tends to dominate" (345).

[294] "Euripides being the clearest and most definite in his ritual forms, we will take him first" (354).

[295] Csapo and Miller (2007) 26.

[296] Csapo and Miller (2007) 26.

[297] Nietzsche (1872: 1956) 67. My italics.

The idea of a potential return – a re-ritualization - is what links the theories of ritual origin and archetypes, the diachronic and synchronic understandings of the ritual nature of performance. The synchronic view of ritual *depends on* a diachronic origin, and thus both offer the potential – and often, the hope - for drama to return to its form as a collective event. Perhaps even Murray, in seeing his pattern most clearly in the work of Euripides, is indicating the possibility of a return to origins and universals.

The Cambridge Ritualists not only impacted the return to ritual elements – including masks, music, etc. – in theatre, but also led to a return to the use of collective choruses onstage. There seems to be a link between non-naturalistic conventions of tragedy, which are often presented together: collective choruses, masks, and song and dance often appear in the same adaptation. As Wiles was quoted as stating above, the conventions of chorus and mask are both "defining" and "linked", as both are tactics of uniting the text-based tradition of Western theatre with the twentieth century's renewed focus on the body in performance. To my knowledge, no production contains a one- or two-person chorus that is masked, perhaps because of the connection between the reduced chorus and naturalism (especially due to the impact of the prologue and *confidant(e),* as discussed in the previous chapter). On the other hand, as I will show in the final section of this chapter, there are certain techniques of performance that capitalize on the chorus' ritual role of self-reflexivity that seem more compatible with adaptations containing a one-person chorus. Before exploring this phenomenon, however, it is useful to return to the masked chorus of Guthrie's *Oedipus Rex,* one of the first plays in which the impact of the Cambridge Ritualists can be discerned.[298]

---

[298] Friedrich (1983) states that Guthrie's production was"perhaps the first spectacular ritual *mise en scene* of one of the great plays of world drama"(204). Macintosh (2008b) concurs, crediting Guthrie's production as one in which "audiences saw the main tenets of the Cambridge ritualists fully realized on the stage" (541).

Tyrone Guthrie's Oedipus Rex

Not only was Guthrie influenced by the Ritualists' theory of the origin of tragedy, but his production responds to a particularly archetypal view of ritual, instigated by Murray's work (as described above). Guthrie's interest in the ritual aspects of *Oedipus Rex* led to his use of Yeats' translation, in which Macintosh detects "the much longer-standing influence of the Cambridge ritualists on his work – notably Jane Harrison's *Themis* (1912), and especially Murray's appended 'Excursus', in which the ancient rite of the Year Daemon is held to be the controlling tragic principle".[299] This no doubt suited Guthrie's goals with his production; in the programme for the performance of *Oedipus Rex* at the Edinburgh Festival, Guthrie explains that

> *Oedipus Rex* is a Passion Play. The Greek drama originated from the Spring Rites in honour of Dionysus, a deity associated with fertility, joy, intoxication and similar ideas, which in all ages and all climates are naturally associated with the coming of spring. Our Christian spring festivals of Christ's passion and resurrection are closely analogous to the Greek celebrations.[300]

This is one of many indications that Guthrie not only wished to perform the play as a ritual, but also to indicate to his audience that it is a ritual still relevant to their life experiences - and in particular, to their experience of Christianity. His programme note concludes by stating that "we endeavour to perform the tragedy as a Ritual, in which the great masked figures of the Royal Personages and the lesser figures of the Theban Elders speak and move not so much as actors impersonating individual 'characters', but rather as priests and Acolytes in the ceremonial re-enactment of a sacrifice".[301] The character of Oedipus is to be understood as a Christ-like figure at the centre of a scapegoat ritual, which is framed by the chorus, who are to be understood as both "elders" (their character identity) as well as "acolytes" (performers of the ritual).

---

[299] Macintosh (2008b) notes that Yeats even tried to commission Gilbert Murray (among others) to do the translation (528). Macintosh (2008b) also notes the intermediaries in the evolution from the Ritualists to Guthrie: for instance, the use of Yeats' text by Olivier for a production of *Oedipus* (1945) that emphasized the Freudian aspects. She explains that "since Sir Francis Fergusson used the Olivier production as the starting point for his *The Idea of a Theater* (1949), the 1945 production may be said to have guaranteed the popularization of the ritual reading of tragedy as well. In many ways, Fergusson's theory of the tragic hero as ritual scapegoat extended Murray's ritual readings of Euripides' plays to Sophocles; and, as his preface makes clear, his theory came out of watching Olivier play Oedipus using Yeats's text" (540-1). This production – and likely, Fergusson's work – influenced Guthrie's *Oedipus Rex*.

[299] Guthrie (1956) programme. A copy of the programme was viewed at Oxford's *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama*. The play was performed in the Church of Scotland Assembly Hall, which no doubt suited Guthrie's goal of connecting Greek and Christian ritual.

[300] Guthrie (1956) programme.

The chorus' role as acolytes is to mediate the action for the audience; Robertson Davies writes, "if we accept Dr. Guthrie's ritualistic concept of drama, the Chorus are the intermediaries between the worshippers and the priests".[302] Understanding the chorus as acolytes intended to involve the audience in the ritual means that the choral performance – non-naturalistic and therefore seemingly potentially distancing – is nevertheless intended to draw the audience closer to the inner frame. This is because, as Guthrie explains, in successful theatre, the audience is invited to be participants in the ritual, much as a congregation watches a priest symbolically re-enact Christ's experiences during Communion. The audience does not believe that the priest truly is Christ, but they should "participate in the ritual with sufficient fervour to be rapt, literally 'taken out of itself', to the extent that it shares the emotion which the priest or actor is suggesting. It completes the circle of action and reaction; its function is not passive but active. This, I think, is exactly what happens to an audience at a successful theatrical performance."[303]

Thus, an implication of this production's goals is that in order to perform a ritual that invites the audience to feel like participants, adhering to conventions of naturalism is unnecessary; Guthrie *wants* the audience to see through the character identities to grasp the ritual (and its performers) underneath. He is not concerned with maintaining a naturalistic illusion in this production; in fact, in 1959 he wrote that in experiencing art, "there is no illusion. But unmistakably you are rapt, transported; in that condition you lose almost all sense of identity, of time and place. I maintain that the aim of the theatre should be to transport its audience, but not by illusion".[304] A lack of illusion does not exclude the audience from feeling "rapt" or involved in the action of the play; the masked chorus, as both "elders" and "acolytes", encourage the audience to identify as acolytes themselves. In order to investigate how the chorus might eschew illusion but prompt the audience to feel like acolytes involved in the ritual, I will examine below the chorus' relationship with the audience in their roles as both acolytes in the outer frame as well as elders in the inner frame.

---

[301] Guthrie (1956) programme.

[302] Davies (1955) 36. In a rather conventional comparison of chorus and audience, Davies continues, "In a play like *Oedipus* they give voice to the thoughts of the audience with an eloquence and cogency which the audience could not hope to summon up for itself" (36). He also notes that in the subsequent production of 1955, "the Chorus seemed closer to the audience, and more eloquent in expression, than it had been in 1954" (36).

[303] Guthrie (1959) 350.

The Outer Frame: Chorus as Acolytes

The fact that illusion is not necessary for ritual theatre is emphasized in another framing device present in the filmed version of the play: the prologue.[305] In the previous chapter, I indicated similarities between the prologue and the programme of a production, which both exist largely in the outer frame. This prologue in fact serves a similar function in the outer frame to the programme quoted above. In the filmed version of the play (1957), which Macintosh notes "guaranteed that Yeats's *Oedipus* became international property",[306] once again a director capitalizes on the overlapping history of prologue and chorus. William Hutt, the actor who will play the Chorus Leader, emerges unmasked and speaks directly into the camera, addressing the film's audience. He describes the production in ritual terms, framing the action that will come. He explains that the events "are not really taking place", but they are just "the re-enactments of a sacrifice – a human sacrifice". He also relates this action to the real world of the audience, reinforcing Guthrie's original programme note. Hutt states that the play is akin to a Catholic mass, in which the priest symbolically enacts the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of his blood: "in narrative and mime, he commemorates the sacrifice of one man who died for the people. We too shall commemorate such a sacrifice: the destruction of one man, that his people might live". He describes the wearing of masks and the theatrical process as a part of this ritual: "As priests put on vestments and move in a pre-ordained ritual, we put on these characters and re-enact this tragedy". As he reaches the word "characters", Hutt pauses as he is poignantly handed his mask. This prologue in the video serves a similar purpose to the programme quoted above: to ensure that the audience is informed directly in the outer frame how to understand the action which follows. However, it is clear that this description is intended to draw them into the action: Hutt continues with a fascinating plea for the audience to overlook the technical equipment and the stage, and to suspend their disbelief. Hutt commands the audience, "Imagine! These great lamps are the sun, the cameras are watching eyes, the stage is part of the ancient city of Thebes….". The stylization of the production is intended to evoke its ritual aspects, ultimately drawing the audience toward the action in the inner frame.

---

[304] Guthrie (1959) 313.

[305] It is unclear whether the live production contained a prologue. Nevertheless, its presence in the film offers valuable information on how Guthrie's ideal audience would interpret the action that follows.

[306] Macintosh (2008b) 543.

The Inner Frame: Chorus as Elders

Although the masks might be considered an aspect of the outer frame of the performance, they in fact lead the audience toward the inner frame, by showing them with whom they should identify. The audience is led to understand that they should identify with the chorus – and not the protagonists – through the design of the masks, which emphasized the contrasts that Guthrie viewed as existing between characters. Robertson Davies corroborates this view by explaining (in reference to this production) that the true spirit of Greek tragedy

> exaggerates the distinctions between man and man to a degree which now requires some explanation to an audience […] in Greek drama the difference between

> Oedipus and the Suppliants is that between a creature who is the nearest thing to a god on earth, and slave who is little above a beast of burden[…] In the Stratford *Oedipus* this distinction was made visible, and in this fact lay one of the great virtues of the production. In performances of this play without masks the distinction between the relative importance of one character and another in the eyes of the gods – which is very much the same thing as the eyes of the audience- can never be as striking as it is when masks are used.[307]

The distinction between characters was "made visual" not only through the masks, but also through the use of costumes. Davies explains that the added height of the principal actors (who wore boots with soles several inches thick which gave them "the stately walk of the Greek tragic stage") meant that "they appeared to us as beings of a greater consequence than the Chorus, who wore masks only, and the Chorus in their turn were greater than the Suppliants, whose masks were meagre and had little stamp of character".[308] Oedipus' mask was gold and resembled the sun, with his crown reaching out like rays. Jocasta's mask was "a moon to this sun",[309] and the colour was a calming sea-green. Creon wore dark bronze, and his face was "withdrawn and watchful".[310] These three royal characters, Davies notes, "were obviously the most important characters in the drama, and the grandeur of their robes completed a magnificence which no unmasked actor could hope to attain".[311] The masks and costumes therefore played a crucial role in illustrating the distinction and relative importance of the characters.

The masks of Guthrie's production thus helped to create a feeling of ritual symbolism and to make both the characters and the play seem "more than life-size", as the designer Moiseiwitsch herself has stated.[312] The masks of the chorus members (and "lesser" characters such as the Shepherd or suppliants) were also somewhat individualized, however, as is illustrated in the above quotation, individualization is a mark of importance; as Davies described, the suppliants had “little stamp of character”.[313] Therefore, despite being different in minor respects and designed to suit the particular actor, Davies states that “as with the principal characters, we were given masks which were abstracts of humanity, rather than humanity itself”.[314]

---

[307] Davies (1954) 128.
[308] Davies (1954) 128.
[309] Davies (1954) 129.
[310] Davies (1954) 129.
[311] Davies (1954) 129.
[312] Rossi (1977) 53.

This view of the “abstraction” provided by the masks has been applied to the chorus by others involved with the production, as well as those who witnessed the production firsthand. For instance, William Hutt, the actor who played the Chorus Leader, has stated that “the man who played Oedipus was not a human being but a symbol. That’s why he [Guthrie] put everybody in masks. The Chorus, therefore, was simply an anonymous symbol of humanity. And he used the Chorus, really as, I suppose, the brass in an orchestra. He used the voices to create sound rather than to create personalities.”[315] The symbolism provided by the masks throughout shows the audience with which characters in the inner frame they should identify – in this case, with the “anonymous symbol of humanity”, not the individualized symbol of Oedipus. The mask, however, despite this seeming focus on drawing the audience toward the choral characters, is in fact abstracted in order to invite the audience to remember that the choral characters are also being performed by acolytes. The chorus encourages the audience to identify as acolytes themselves and to engage with the ritual action in the inner frame of the play, and it does so precisely by paradoxically distancing the audience through abstraction and symbolism.[316]

---

[313] Hewes, a reviewer from 1954 remarked “we see the chorus wearing masks which though differing slightly from each other all have a plebeian rotundity. They await Oedipus, the yellow-robed king, who enters through the colonnades. His mask is gold, and its strong square shape is echoed in his proud posture” (reproduced in Pope [1966] 243).

[314] Davies (1954) 130. Macintosh notes that the division “between chorus, leader, and Oedipus can be noted absolutely” in Yeats’ 1928 published text. This was amplified in the staging of the 1926 production, in which “the major effect of the staging was to enhance the Yeatsian conception of the hero as one embarked upon a tragic path, in which ‘so lonely is that ancient act, so great the pathos of its joy’” (533). She quotes Yeats (1966) 570.

[315] Hutt is interviewed in Rossi (1977) 182. In Hewes’ 1954 review of the production, he notes that because of the masks, “there is an increase in abstraction. The particular qualities of each character are hidden. Only what the character stands for, or rather what stands for the character, remains” (reproduced in Pope [1966] 244). Despite Hutt’s focus on “sound”, it seems that the production was more memorable for its visual elements. Hewes explains that “the chorus is more exciting in appearance than it is vocally”, and that “without much doubt it is Tanya Moiseiwitsch’s masks and costumes that make ‘Oedipus Rex’ the stimulating visual treat it is” (Hewes [1954], reproduced in Pope [1966] 244).

[316] Although it is not the focus here, it should be noted that the choreography of the protagonists and chorus also supported Guthrie’s conception of the play as ritual. Although Davies (1955) remarks that the movements seemed more “natural and

Ritual Conclusions

The audience's role as acolytes is further emphasized at the conclusion of the play, due to changes made to the ending. In order to solidify the association between the play and a sacrificial or scapegoat ritual, Yeats chose very specific vocabulary for discussing Oedipus' crime. Throughout, the sacrificial nature of Oedipus' crime in emphasized. For instance, Oedipus himself says that he has "doomed myself to banishment, doomed myself when I commanded all to thrust out the unclean thing".[317] However, the conclusion of Yeats' text mirrors the conclusion of Sophocles' play: the stage directions indicate that Creon leads Oedipus into the palace, followed by Ismene, Antigone, and Attendants.[318] Oedipus and Creon return to the palace to await news of the oracle, as the chorus provides the final comment on the action of the play:

Make way for Oedipus. All people said,
"That is a fortunate man";
And now what storms are beating on his head!
Call no man fortunate that is not dead.
The dead are free from pain.[319]

In Guthrie's production, however, instead of commanding Oedipus, "Come, but let your children go",[320] it is the children that must "come", while Creon orders Oedipus sharply to "Go!". Then, the chorus' lines (unchanged from Yeats' text above) are uttered not as Oedipus retreats into the palace, but as Oedipus walks off the front of the stage and through the audience alone.

Fiona Macintosh regards this change to the conclusion as leaving

---

inevitable" in the 1955 production, what he describes (and what is present in the film) is decidedly non-naturalistic. Comparing Guthrie's chorus to the chorus of Greek tragedy, he explains: "The Greek Choruses danced and sang, and until some striking advance is made in the technique of opera we shall not recapture that effect, which must undoubtedly have been deeply moving and exalting. But the Chorus in *Oedipus* moved in this direction; they were close to dance, and close to song, and their actual passage of song was even more touching than it was in 1954" (37).

[317] Yeats (1928: 1969) 96.

[318] Yeats (1928: 1969) 99.

[319] Yeats (1928: 1969) 99.

[320] Yeats (1928: 1969) 99.

> no room here for mere pity: the chorus retreat into the shadows, leaving Oedipus to fumble his way down the steps towards the camera, heavily obscured, almost blotted out as if in silhouette, by the half-light, before disappearing out of sight entirely. This is a far cry from the 1928 text, where Oedipus (as with Sophocles) is sent back into the palace, followed by Creon and the children. Guthrie is offering the audience not only a greater magnification of the Yeatsian isolated Modernist hero; he has also translated Sophocles/Yeats's tragic character into the (Senecan) ritual scapegoat absolutely.[321]

The conception of Oedipus' exit as a ritual sacrifice also betrays the influence of the Cambridge Ritualists, which is an influence that can be noted in Yeats' text. As explored briefly above, Macintosh identifies that in Yeats' description of the "elevation to heroic status as 'a sacrifice of himself to himself almost', we detect the much longer-standing influence of the Cambridge ritualists on his work".[322] Guthrie's decision to use this translation was no doubt impacted by the fact that it suits his ritual interpretation of the play. In order to further reinforce the idea of a ritual sacrifice, he adds the final command of Creon and the exit of Oedipus.

However, this altered conclusion also reinforces the audience's role in the sacrificial ritual. The audience, as acolytes, are necessary for the final moment of ritual scapegoating. As Oedipus exits through the audience, Guthrie reminds us not only that it is necessary that the sacrifice of one man benefits the community, and but also that the audience members are a part of this community - a part of the symbolic or abstracted version of humanity represented onstage by the masked chorus.

The chorus, as I have indicated, attempts to draw the audience toward the inner frame of the action, but paradoxically, through overly-stylized means that are often associated with encouraging distance. The use of the mask for this purpose in fact corresponds to the effects that

---

[321] Macintosh (2008b) 543-4. Oedipus leaves Thebes at the end of Seneca's version of the tragedy, comforting the citizens that their lives will improve once he has departed. In his review of Guthrie's production, Hewes (1954) writes "from this point on the familiar Sophocles tragedy as adapted by Yeats unrolls with a slightly haunted air that would perhaps be better suited to the Senecan version" (reproduced in Pope [1966] 244).

[322] Macintosh (2008b) 531. She quotes Yeats (1966) 569-70.

Henrichs assigns choral self-referentiality in the original tragedies. In the work of Henrichs, self-referentiality is intimately connected with the chorus' ritual role, as I have stated above. The chorus' performance is a ritual, which – in moments of self-referentiality – can be distancing, by focusing the attention of the audience away from the illusion of the fictional action, and instead toward its construction. However, he argues that by emphasizing their identity as performers, the chorus in fact "temporarily expand their role as dramatic characters".[323] This activity of expansion, he argues, does not break the illusion; it invites the audience to participate in a more complex experience.[324] I would argue that this complex experience is more precisely one in which the chorus self-referentially calls attention to their dual identities, inviting the audience to acknowledge the chorus' oscillation between the frames of the action. Guthrie hopes that this complex experience will lead to feelings of involvement; through his use of masks – and especially his masked chorus – he hopes to call attention to the "acolytes" beneath the mask in order to invite the audience to participate in the ritual experience themselves.

Guthrie's production certainly garnered attention for the Stratford festival and Canadian actors. Not only did the production travel to the Edinburgh festival in 1956, but it was also filmed in 1957.[325] The final words of Davies' essay illustrate the impact of the production on Canadian theatre, as viewed in 1954: he writes that the production "carried Canadian actors and Canadian audiences into new territory which, now seized, must not be relinquished".[326] Guthrie attempted to use a masked chorus to signal to the audience how they should respond to his production, and judging from the production's legacy, most audience members seem to have responded favourably. My example that follows, however, demonstrates that the audience does not always receive the masked chorus as intended. I will suggest that the potential dual function of the mask – distancing the audience as well as drawing them toward the action – can in fact encourage diverse and contradictory experiences of its effect.

---

[323] Henrichs (1994) 59.

[324] Henrichs (1994) 59.

[325] In addition, it was also revived by the Stratford Festival, July 31 - October 11, 1997.

[326] Davies (1954) 141. Despite his positive remarks on the production, in a review of *The Cherry Orchard* in 1965, Davies focuses on Stratford's productions of Shakespeare as more successful. In this review, Davies grades the Stratford Festival in different categories; while the festival receives a 90 percent on productions of Shakespeare ("for a series of thirty productions, topped by a splendid *King Lear* last year and a fine *Henry IV* [both parts] this year"), it receives only a 70 percent for Greek Drama, based on the two productions of *Oedipus* (Davies [1965] quoted in Pope [1966] 252-3).

B. Hall's Masks: Intention and Reception

A similar example of the use of mask to create a communal ritual occurs in Peter Hall's *Oresteia* (1981), a production which has received much scholarly and critical attention.[327] For Hall's production, the masks were designed and created by Jocelyn Herbert, whom Hall has praised for her ability to create the ambiguous mask of Greek tragedy which must laugh and cry.[328] Wiles explains that "though her masks seem alive, there is an element of modernist abstraction in them, allowing no spectator to forget that this is a masked performance, a recreation of an ancient ritual".[329] The masks therefore operate similarly to Guthrie's masks – they paradoxically use their distancing effects to bring the heightened ritual closer to the experience of the audience. Like Guthrie, Hall believed that the production should be considered a ritual and that the masks should not alienate the spectators. Irving Wardle from *The Times* states succinctly that "Hall's purpose is to recreate the Aeschylean tragic experience with sufficient strength to generate a communal response from the house".[330]

---

[327] See Taplin (2001), (2005), Wiles (2007), Beard (2010). The project is often compared with John Barton's production of *The Greeks* (1980), or Peter Stein's *Oresteia* (1980), which was performed unmasked. Regarding Barton, Hall recorded in his diaries (1983), "I am worried by certain aspects of a talk I had with John Barton. He is now actively engaged on the Greeks as the centre of his work. So am I; *The Oresteia* is cooking. I said it seemed pretty daft that we didn't do it together" (49).

[328] Wiles (2007) 136-7. Meineck (2011) discusses this issue of the "ambiguity" of masks, and his findings support Wiles' perspective. Meineck states that "it is the ambiguity of an expression that is important, not neutrality. Thus, expressive ambiguity in faces leads to increased spectator engagement, as our visual processing systems work to complete the picture and make emotional and situational judgments. The schematic painted surface of the Greek tragic mask provided just such an ambiguous facade" (134). This ambiguity is thus important because it implies not only a flexibility to the mask, but an active role for the audience.

[329] Wiles (2007) 139.

[330] Wardle (November 30, 1981).

Murray, another reviewer, notes that one of the major foundations of this production is its attempt to be a ritual event, in which Hall tries to persuade the audience to believe and partake of the ritual.[331] Because of this, the masks are not alienating, and in fact, they help make sense of the chorus' role: "in such a conception of tragedy the chorus ceases to be a problem: it is our comment on the meaning of the events we witness, and on our unavailing desires to change or avert what can only be exorcized by the ritual we are undergoing".[332] Murray connects this idea of the play as a ritual with the conclusion of the play, in which the "procession of women" (which he refers to as the chorus), calls on the audience to stand as the Eumenides walk through the auditorium and the procession departs. They ask the audience: "Silence while the Kind Ones pass [...] Now echo our chorus, raise your own cry!".[333] Similar to Guthrie's use of the chorus, this embodied collective can mediate for the audience – especially at the conclusion of the play - because they are meant to represent us. In the final play, in which the chorus represents deities, another masked – but "mortal" - collective has stepped in at a ritually important moment in order to communicate directly with the audience.[334] The group directly addresses the spectators at the end, signifying the conclusion of the ritual and reinforcing our role: "echoing the chorus" and "raising our own cry".

Essential to a "communal response" is the masked chorus and their role. Hall reflects on this production in his autobiography, and describes that in *Agamemnon,*

> the fifteen actors comprising our Chorus wore copies of the same full mask of an old man. If one actor spoke a line while the rest of the Chorus acted it, it seemed as if the whole group had spoken. One voice was easy to understand. The thought was then taken up, qualified and expanded by other single voices. It worked.[335]

---

[331] Murray, Oswyn (December 11, 1981). The other foundation he comments upon is Tony Harrison's translation.

[332] Murray, Oswyn (December 11, 1981).

[333] Harrison, Tony (1981) 115.

[334] This collective is, of course, not an invention of the adapter, but is based upon the final procession in Aeschylus' *Eumenides.* Sommerstein (2008) refers to those accompanying the procession (who have the final lines of the play, 1033-1046) as "The Procesional Escort".

[335] Hall (2000) 319.

As in Guthrie's production, the choral masks serve to efface individual identity. This made the individual voices seem anonymous, allowing one person to speak on behalf of the group.

Although this solution seemed agreeable to the creative team, critics were divided about whether this chorus did in fact "work". The masks of this production in particular received an immense amount of attention from scholars and critics.[336] Despite the aims of the creators, many found the masks ineffective, especially in relation to the chorus. Some critics argued that there were practical issues: it was difficult to hear the lines of the chorus,[337] and one critic argued that although "some vexing problems of choral speaking had been intelligently tackled", it was "only by the extreme (and self-defeating) method of virtually banishing unison delivery".[338] Another critic, echoing Friedrich's differentiation between the originary and archetypal views of ritual theorists, argued that

> Peter Hall emphasises the ritual quality in Greek drama. But there is a difference between the idea that the drama derives its significance from ritual, and the idea that Greek dramatic performances were ritualistic in character, at the expense of the emotional impact. Perhaps the National production is too ritualistic.[339]

By "too ritualistic", the reviewer does not mean he felt overly involved, but rather that the symbolism made the characters and the actions overly distanced.

---

[336] Hall (2000) himself recalls that "the critics, though fascinated, were divided. A few of them couldn't get past the masks. But I knew we had made something live which in my lifetime had been dead; that the fusion of text and music, mask and movement, had created an experience both primitive and tragic. And audiences were genuinely affected" (321). Reviewers tend to refer to Hall's comment that masks "are like magnifying glasses. They concentrate the mind". Wiles has been especially important in exploring the masks of this production, and their reception by the audience. Wiles (2007) argues that the masks do indeed help with visibility and focus: he notes that Taplin and Foley have both reported that masks helped them listen more attentively to the text, which was Hall's major goal. Wiles explains that in our more intimate theatre, in which we are used to excellent visibility, we might see masks in negative terms – as eliminating facial detail (128-9). But outside, as in the original theatre in Athenian, they serve the opposite function: they make the face visible (129). In Athens, masks rely on prior knowledge and imaginative interaction in the audience for their theatrical effect. This imaginative interaction means that the audience builds relationship with the mask to make meaning – not a passive activity. They must infer the character's gaze from the angle of the head, for instance. Therefore, he argues, it is important for us to note that the mask was not an alienation device, but generated a more integrated and powerful emotional response to the words of the play (132). His argument is supported by Meineck's (2011) discussion of the "ambiguity" of masks and the role of the active audience (above).

[337] Barber, John (November 30, 1981).

[338] Cushman, Robert (December 6, 1981).

[339] Fenton, James (December 6, 1981).

Although Billington, another critic, found the conclusion of Hall's trilogy engaging, he in fact refers to the use of masks as "perverse" in today's theatre, and argued that the masks were distancing and alienating in a Brechtian sense.[340] As I stated above, even adapters attempting to draw the audience into a ritual performance must still contend with the legacy of Brecht's work on distancing. In fact, Wiles also connects the work of Hall and Brecht, explaining that part of Herbert's training in mask creation was that her work on Brecht had encouraged her to make masks that were less for *becoming* than for *seeing* and *telling*.[341] Later, Wiles argues that although Hall's production of the *Oresteia* aimed at using the mask as a tool for revealing, in the end, Hall drew mainly upon the Brechtian principle of distancing in order to do so.[342] In this seeming contradiction of statements, Wiles shows that - as others have argued of the Greek masks - it is a combination of distancing and identification that is often the goal of masked performance. In this case, however, despite Hall's intentions, many critics seem to have reacted in the opposite way than was intended. Instead of identifying with the anonymous masked chorus and feeling like participants in the ritual, both practical and theoretical issues prevented many spectators from engaging in the intended manner.

The very discussion of whether masks are overly-distancing in fact forces a return to acknowledge an interesting phenomenon that was stated earlier in relation to the examples involving dance: the use of the same performance technique for opposite effect.[343] However, these case studies of masked choruses also build on this discovery in order to support another, more complex, argument. Earlier, with regard to Brecht's production, I stated that a self-referential technique can be a part of the outer frame or inner frame, yet can still draw the audience toward either frame. In the case of Brecht, the choral mask was a part of the inner frame, justified within the action of the play, yet the use of the mask sought to distance the audience through the use of self-reflexive gestus of showing. In the case of Guthrie and Hall, the masks were techniques associated with the outer frame – not justified, but symbolic – yet they were intended to draw the audience toward the inner frame of the action, as participants in the rituals.

---

[340] Billington, Michael (November 30, 1981).

[341] Wiles (2007) 139.

[342] Wiles (2007) 151-2.

[343] This phenomenon is also noted in Varakis (2008), in which the author also examines the masks of Guthrie and Hall's productions, among others. She argues that "a great deal of work, however, remains to be done on such issues as body language and its impact on the perception of masks" (260). Her chapter concludes with remarks on the usefulness of practice-based research for understanding the mask.

A close consideration of the masked choruses of these productions also demonstrates that it is often a balance or a combination of distancing the audience and drawing them into the action that achieves the intended effect, and that this balancing act is a part of the chorus' self-referential role. The chorus' self-referentiality allows the audience to have the "complex experience" of acknowledging its oscillation between the frames of the action. It is through this process of self-referential oscillation that choruses in adaptations often mediate the action for the audience, helping the adapter to fulfill his/her goals.

Coda: Eva Palmer-Sikelianos

In the productions of both Guthrie and Hall, the masks were intended to draw the audience into the ritual of the production, and the masked chorus was essential to this ideal. However, it is important to note that the decision of whether or not to have the chorus wear masks seems dependent on the adapter's understanding of the *function* of the mask. Just as I emphasized in the first section that an adapter's interpretation of the function of the Greek chorus (and the distancing nature of the performing body) can lead to different performance styles, Eva Palmer-Sikelianos' masked production offers a suitable reminder that this applies to the mask as well. In her seminal production of *Prometheus* in 1927, she felt that the work of Nietzsche led her present the chorus unmasked. Nietzsche's theory that each character is a mask of Dionysus led her to believe that the chorus should be performed unmasked, because the mask was a form of individuation. The chorus, she felt, should not have marked individuation.[344]

Her goal, however, was similar to that of Hall and Guthrie, (and so, in a sense, is her reliance upon Nietzsche). She explains that the circle of the Greek theatre created a unity between actors and audience, and "the psychological phenomenon of unity realized outside of themselves was accentuated also by the use of masks".[345] However, in her work, the actor's self-consciousness was eliminated – "there existed nothing for each individual actor but himself and the god he was worshipping".[346] As her goal is in fact to reduce the distance between performers and spectators, her decision to leave the chorus unmasked is based on a different conception of the mask itself; she believes that rather than effacing identity, a masked chorus would emphasize individuation, which is anathema to communal ritual in Nietzsche's thinking.

2.3 Self-Referentiality and the use of Media

Despite the fact that adapters often capitalize upon the roles of the ancient chorus by adapting aspects of their original performance style (such as dance, music, or mask), the incorporation of projections and video into recent adaptations demonstrates that the role of the chorus can also be adapted through the inclusion of different media. In Foley's survey of adaptations of the Greek chorus, she writes that "the chorus' religious and ritual dimension and its complex political relation to its original community cannot be recreated for an eclectic modern audience that does not have the shared historical and cultural experience of the Attic polis".[347] Although one strategy that she notes has been used to overcome this difference is to perform tragedy in an 'equivalent' context (such as a church), another strategy is to explore equivalences with aspects of the choral role itself. For instance, Foley notes that journalists and the media create from interviews "a kind of choral reaction to current events that preserves the integrity of individual voices".[348] Some recent adaptations have experimented with this role of the media to create a "choral" perspective on the action. Just like other techniques drawn directly from the ancient chorus' ritual role (mask, dance, etc.), my examples below show how the use of media can capitalize on choral self-referentiality to different degrees. The examples of this phenomenon explored below not only experiment with the choral role "performed" by video and projection, but my organization of these examples is intended to emphasize the varying degrees to which these adaptations can also capitalize on choral self-referentiality, as well as how this can be accomplished.

---

[344] Wiles (2004) 249. The influence of Nietzsche on Palmer-Sikelianos is documented in her 1993 autobiography, however, it is unclear where Wiles has located this particular point. See also brief comments in Varakis (2008) 265.
[345] Palmer-Sikelianos (1993) 223, quoted in Wiles (2004) 249.
[346] Palmer-Sikelianos (1993) 223, quoted in Wiles (2004) 249.

Media-As-Chorus

In an example offered by Foley, the chorus is "replaced" by video. In Theater Faction's 2004 production of the *Oresteia, Agamemnon* begins with "Clytaemnestra chalking up logical syllogisms and ethical queries about good effects of bad actions on blackboards while passers-by on Eighth Avenue became a chorus on video by replying to questions about whether a wife could justly kill her husband if he had killed one of her daughters".[349]

This example, which I have termed "Media-As-Chorus", should be considered self-referential only because the use of video is emphasized by the production, adding a layer of theatricality.

---

[347] Foley (2007) 359.

[348] Foley (2007) 358-9.

[349] Foley (2007) 359.

The use of passers-by might prompt the audience to consider their own responses to the ethical dilemma, but they do not consider their own responses to the use of the video itself. The use of video might be considered a technique of the outer frame that draws the audience into the inner frame of the action. By contrast, in my examples which follow, it is the projected images themselves that the audience is intended to question.

The use of media provides adapters an opportunity to capitalize not only on the "reflective" or "reactive" role of the chorus, as in this first example, but also its capacity for self-referentiality. However, just as in the example of choral dance in the first section, the degree of self-referentiality can vary, depending on the extent to which the chorus emphasizes its own role in the outer frame. In my next example below, it is not only the media that *is* choral, but the performance retains a one-person chorus who leads the audience to question the role of the media and our response to images of conflict. In my final example, which I engage with in more depth, the self-referentiality of the chorus is especially emphasized: the one-person chorus of this production is himself the source of the images.

Chorus and Media

In 2003, Storytellers' Theatre Company, in association with the Cork Opera House, produced a version of *Antigone* in Ireland.[350] The text for the production, written and directed by Conall Morrison, remained very close to Sophocles' text. However, Morrison argued that the production was not intending to represent abstract arguments, which led to his determination to create an Antigone that "engages with our world".[351] The action of the play was set in the Middle East, and Antigone was portrayed as a suicide bomber. Since the play's text remained very close to Sophocles' text, the production used other elements – such as projected images of conflict - to invoke the comparison with the conflict in the Middle East. The Storytellers' website stated,

---

[350] For further information on productions of *Antigone* in Ireland, see Macintosh (2011).

[351] Meany, Helen, (February 8, 2003).

> To correspond with the Greek use of mask, music and dance, this production will also feature live music from an original score by Conor Linehan and an elaborate series of back projections. These will work together to create atmosphere and situate the play but more importantly work to provoke questions. How do we respond to images of conflict? Do we question motive or context? Do we just switch off?[352]

The production team hoped not only that the modern score would replace the Greek convention of music, but perhaps more interestingly, that the use of mask and dance would be replaced by the projections. This indicates that the functions of mask and dance were considered similar enough to the functions of the projected images that one could replace the other.

Despite this theory, the adapters seem to have still felt the need to include a human embodiment of the chorus, presumably to guide the audience in asking these questions of the projected material. The production employed a one-person chorus, played by Simon O'Gorman, who was both heavily praised and criticized for his portrayal of the role; one critic, responding positively to the conception of this chorus as well as his performance, noted that the director's "reduction of the chorus of Theban elders to a single actor throws the argument of the play into relief and traces the emotional journey of the characters very clearly. The chorus gives us an opportunity to show the mind in motion, to focus on the psychology of how people respond to argument, the way they become emotionally involved".[353]

---

[352] Storytellers' Theatre Company Website. The website is no longer active, as the company ceased operations in 2009 (after 22 years), when they lost their funding. This website was viewed in hard copy format at the University of Oxford's *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama*.

[353] Meany, Helen (February 8, 2003). Others praised his performance as well; Mary Coll stated that "Simon O'Gorman has the difficult task of single-handedly assuming the role of the chorus, which he achieves effortlessly and holds the centre of the stage with a perfect mixture of masculine energy and hesitant compassion" (February 21, 2003). Others, however, disagreed with the use of the one-person chorus: Liam Haylin argues that "through no fault of Simon O'Gorman, the production is probably over-reaching itself in letting this single character be the chorus. It is the only time that the absolute clarity of the piece seems fuzzy" (*Theatre Review).* Some appreciated the reduction of the chorus, but did not enjoy O'Gorman's acting: Fricker, the reviewer

Together with this one-person chorus, who was noted to be “just as passionate in his inconsistency as [the other characters] are in their self-assurance”,[354] the audience is intended to question their own responses to such media images of conflict. This process might be considered self-referential, insofar as the embodied element of the chorus (Simon O’Gorman) calls into question his own responses to another “choral” element - the projected images. It is therefore interesting that the quote from the website (above) does not mention the one-person chorus, whose role in the self-reflexive activity of “questioning” seems to be vital to the audience’s reception of the images. While the reflective and reactive qualities of the mask and dance might have been replaced by the projections (functioning similarly to the video in the first example), the self-referentially theatrical aspect of the choral role seems to have necessitated an embodied figure.

The next production with which I engage also utilizes a one-person chorus to guide the audience’s interpretation of projected images. It is self-referential to a greater degree, however, as it combines the embodied chorus with the production of the images: this chorus is a journalist, documenting the action selectively and conveying these images to the audience.

Chorus-As-Media:
An Antigone Story: A Greek Hijack

In 2000, Cornerstone Theatre in Los Angeles produced a play called *An Antigone Story: A Greek Hijack.* Set in 2010, the play presents a dystopian vision of the future, in which the United States has been divided into warring factions. The play was performed first at the Getty Centre in Los Angeles, and then afterward re-mounted in an empty subway tunnel. This second

---

from *The Guardian* stated that “having the chorus played by just one person, and speaking as one of the community rather than as a distant commentator, is one of Morrison’s many insightful strokes, but the intensity of Simon O’Gorman’s delivery adds to a sense of one-note relentlessness that causes the action to bog down in places. Under-casting is a problem throughout” (February 27, 2003).

[354] O’Toole, Fintan (February 26, 2003).

performance coincided with a Democratic Convention, which made the play's themes of democracy and tyranny seem especially relevant for its audience. As one reviewer noted,

> Kurup's update is full of local references that are uniformly clever and timely, as he creates a situation so relevant to current questions about civil unrest in this city. One hopes that the flood of protesters who arrive for the Democratic National Convention to start their marches in Pershing Square (just around the corner from the subway terminal building) will get a glimpse of this vital performance and see something truly revolutionary, as well as get a taste of some of the most exciting theatre this city has to offer.[355]

In this adaptation, the chorus was played by one character – called "Korus" - who video-taped and simultaneously projected the action onto a screen at the back of the stage, and could also use the camera to freeze images.

Due to funding constraints, Kurup could only cast one person in the role of the chorus.[356] The parameter of only being able to cast a one-person chorus caused Kurup to think creatively, and it also led to other discoveries and innovations. For instance, Kurup explained that from the combination of the one-person chorus with the technology available to the actors at the Getty Centre came the interpretation of the Chorus character as a journalist. This led to the idea that the play might be about the power of the media and those who control it. As Kurup confessed, "it's really about FOX News. What if Rupert Murdoch got to be Krayon?".[357] In Kurup's adaptation, Krayon is a conservatively-minded computer hacker who rose to become a media mogul and then elected official in his section of the United States. In this play, the U.S. has split into factions at economic war with one another (a comment on the USSR), and with very different ways of life. Krayon rules over the CAN sector, which is more martial than the NW Sector – with its agrarian way of life - that Polynices defected to.

---

[355] "Reviews", *The Actors Trade Weekly* (August 3 – August 9, 2000).

[356] This adaptation offers the important reminder that the decision to limit the chorus to one person is not necessarily motivated by any theoretical intentions. Kurup confessed that he had been working on the play before he discovered Anouilh's *Antigone.* When I asked Kurup whether the decision to include a one-person chorus was based on Anouilh's play, he admitted that before he had encountered Anouilh's play, he had already planned to use a one-person chorus because of funding constraints. Kurup said that in this case, "the parameters of the art dictated the art", and that this in fact fostered creativity and made the play flourish. He felt that he had to come up with a creative solution for how he might create something "astounding" without having a group of people "speaking in unison". Influenced by the work of Brecht and Thornton Wilder, Kurup had decided upon a one-person chorus before encountering the work of Anouilh. This seems to illustrate the reminder offered by Bennett (1997) that "economic factors often determine why particular products are available and constitute culture, and, more significantly, highlight once again the inextricable link between production and reception" (109). In this case, Kurup had a limited number of actors he could afford to pay, and this was a major factor in his decision to use a one-person chorus. Once he discovered Anouilh's work, however, it did of course impact his work. When reading the script it is easy to see the influence of Anouilh's adaptation on many aspects of the play, and Kurup explained to me in an interview that he wanted to "take Anouilh's ideas further" and to "keep pulling people out of the suspension of disbelief".

[357] Kurup (2010). Interviewed by: A. Rich (May 7, 2010). Citations from this interview will be indicated as "Kurup (2010)" below.

Despite Kurup's many innovations and the addition of music, his Korus retains many of the roles that I mentioned in connection with Anouilh's Chorus, as well as those indicated in the reception material on the one-person chorus (reviews, television tropes) in the previous chapter. Kurup's Korus character is both inside and outside the action, and he speaks directly to the audience, clarifying, commenting on, and surviving the tragic action. This chorus character is somewhat unique, however, because his engagement with his own role as a journalist emphasizes the self-referentiality of his choral role. I had the opportunity to interview Kurup in 2010 regarding this production and its chorus, and the information gleaned from his unpublished script and this interview will allow a more in-depth examination of this use of the chorus.[358] I will explore Korus' role in the outer frame of the action, as well as his role in the inner frame, however, what will become essential is how these roles come into conflict. Through Korus' struggle to separate his "outside" role of a journalist from his "inside" role in the action, the audience is led to question the very notion of objective representation.

Not Quite a Prologue: Korus in the Outer Frame

The play opens with Antigone's entrance, which can take up to fifteen minutes, and which is accompanied by a newscast and commercials. On the newscast, the audience sees the character of Tyreeseeus, described as "a very flamboyant new-age psychic as if Quentin Crisp mated with one of the outlandish hosts on Spanish language Univision Television".[359] The newscast tells of the recent insurgency and the death of Polynices and Eteocles. Tyreeseus sets the tone – characteristic in this play – of combined seriousness and humour, saying that he is "deeply perplexed and knows that right after the program today he needs to fast and pray for better clarity. But first a word from our sponsor and when we come back I promise I will make next weekends predictions for top box-office grosses".[360] The Korus' speech to the audience – a similar speech to Anouilh's Prologue - follows this introduction.

---

[358] See also Foley (2011), 376-84. Foley's brief discussion of the production includes photographs.

After the news ends, the Korus films Antigone, freezing her image before speaking to the audience. As in Anouilh's play, this Korus speaks directly to the audience, in this case beginning by saying "There you are! Welcome. Don't worry, your cars are safe. And this building has been retrofitted against terrorist attacks. Peter Howard. Playing Korus in this hijack called An Antigone Story".[361] Interestingly, part of this Korus' introduction is to metatheatrically situate the play itself as an adaptation - a "hijack" – and himself as an actor. Showing his debt to Brecht and Wilder (which Kurup acknowledges in the printed text), he has Korus introduce himself and the other actors not only by their character name, but by their real names, and often, by some talent the actor may have. So, for instance, when introducing the actor who plays Hayman, Korus says, "Ladies and Gentlemen Joseph Grimm. Joe juggles. Juggle Joe. (*He does)* Very nice. Joseph or Joe plays Hayman".[362] In these instances, the influence of Brecht's tactic of the "gestus of showing" has been taken to an extreme, and in a sense, the scripting of the "actors" playfully subverts the conception of onstage identity as a strict duality of actor/character.[363]

---

[359] Kurup (2000) 1.
[360] Kurup (2000) 1.
[361] Kurup (2000) 2.
[362] Kurup (2000) 2.
[363] As I have argued with respect to both ancient and modern theatre, issues of onstage identity and the reception of this identity are complex. It is important to note that there is not necessarily only a dual identity (actor and character) at work. This production in fact plays with these tensions – not only are the actors known for theatrical "tricks" like juggling, but there are

Korus' position as media journalist not only makes him the perfect figure to introduce the characters and contextualize the action, but he also simultaneously complicates any notion of clarity by himself being a member of the media. Although it is difficult to notice in the script, Korus could use his camera to support the action onstage (ie. showing Ismene when the characters onstage discuss her), but also for juxtaposition. For instance, Korus could project the sad face of Antigone onto the screen while she is enjoying a moment of happiness onstage. The audience is then forced to choose where to direct their attention – the real people onstage, or the close-ups on the screen provided by Korus. Watching the Korus make these choices, and choosing for themselves where to direct their focus, emphasizes the gap for the audience between reality (in this case, onstage reality) and its representation. The audience is encouraged to consider the "objectivity" of both the Korus character and the media.

It is also difficult to understand fully from the script alone how Korus relates to the characters and whether he becomes personally caught up in their stories. What is his emotional involvement? In reading the script, it is possible to believe that Korus remains detached and clinical in his recording of the characters. However, Kurup told me that onstage, it is clear that Korus faces dilemmas. In a review, one critic wrote that Korus is "also omniscient; he knows what will happen to Antigone. So he's presented with the dilemma of whether to warn her".[364] Kurup told this critic that he was fascinated by the ethical question facing journalists: "What are

---

moments when actors are "acting" the scripted versions of their real life selves. This might be seen as a partial – and playful - subversion of Brecht's gestus of showing, a questioning of whether an actor can ever really be simply him/herself on stage. In the middle of the show, the actor playing Krayon "ends" the performance. When confronted in the dressing room, the script indicates: "BERNIE/KRAYON: Oh my god you guys I ended the play! I was in the moment and I did it. It felt right. It felt truthful. *(The other actors ad lib protests and confusion. This ad libbing should be shaped but not prescribed.)* Go with me you guys, have I ever let you down?" (33). This deliberate conflation of performed identities will continue to be important in subsequent chapters, especially in my discussion of Schechner's *Dionysus in 69*, in which the lack of differentiation between actor/character became problematic for the actors themselves. Schechner's play, however, was not a direct influence on this production, but an equivalence, as Kurup told me has never seen or read *Dionysus in 69*.

[364] Shirley, Don (2000). "Ancient Politics for Our Time", *Los Angeles Times* (July 23, 2000).

the repercussions of interfering or not?”.[365] Kurup explained further in our interview that the Korus character is complicit, but has an opinion; he compared Korus to someone who might work for FOX while knowing he is “dredging the bottom”.[366]

In his speech at the beginning of Act II (which takes the place of Anouilh’s ‘lecture’ on melodrama and tragedy), Korus attempts what Kurup refers to as a “C’est la vie” attitude.[367] Korus enters and “focuses the camera on the audience and when he has a good sampling of them he freezes the image so that the audience is looking at themselves behind Korus as he speaks to them directly”.[368] In his speech he discusses inevitabilities and the passing of time. He tells the audience that “if you stand still long enough the earth will bury you. Like it or not. If they did nothing to that poor body rotting out there, it would, in the span of a century, be 4.7 feet below the earth”.[369] Although Anouilh’s ‘lecture’ and Kurup’s monologue differ in many ways – Kurup does not have his Korus discuss melodrama, for instance – there are basic similarities. Both are about fate, and the impossibility of change, which Kurup’s Korus refers to as “familiarity”.[370] The major difference between this speech and that of Anouilh’s Chorus seems to be that this Korus is unable to entirely convince himself, and throughout the play, becomes engaged in the action. To put it in “Anouilh” (or perhaps early modern) terms, this Korus, as journalist, can’t seem to convince himself to remain a prologue, communicating objectively with the audience in the outer frame.

---

[365] Shirley, Don (2000).
[366] Kurup (2010). The issue of the complicity of the chorus – and the audience – will be a major focus of chapters three and four.
[367] Kurup (2010).
[368] Kurup (2000) 22.
[369] Kurup (2000) 22.
[370] Kurup (2000) 22.

The Inner Frame: Interacting with the Characters

Korus interacts with Antigone herself early in the play. On the morning that she buries her brother's body, Korus approaches her and engages her in a brief dialogue. In this section, he also simultaneously re-identifies himself and reminds the audience of the play's status as an adaptation.

Korus: There you are. Startin' early, huh? *(pause)* Are you gonna be singing for the Governor's big to do tonight? State of the union is it? Followed by the big to do. *(Beat)*

Antigone: How are you Horace?

Korus: Korus.

Antigone: What?

Korus: My name is Korus.

Antigone: Really? I thought your name was Horace.

Korus: Obviously. But it's not. It's Korus.

Antigone: Oh. *(Beat)* I'm so embarrassed. I always thought it was – what kind of name is Korus?

Korus: *(Korus shrugs)* Greek?

These early interactions not only provide moments of metatheatrical comic relief (the reminder that the audience is watching an adaptation), but also show Korus' relationship with the characters: he is not close enough with Antigone for her to properly know his name, but he can engage with characters in the inner frame. This character *does* have a name, and this name is in fact emphasized by being the material of this joke. Korus is in the inner frame enough that the incident causes her embarrassment – Antigone herself feels she should have known his name.

As mentioned above, in this play, the chorus' ability to be both inside and outside of the action is itself a point of tension for both the character and the audience. It is often Korus' job to record what the audience cannot see (a scene that takes place in the dressing room, for instance), forcing the audience to rely on the recording instead of live actors. At the end of the play, this is further complicated, as it is his job to document the deaths that occur offstage. As in Greek tragedy, the death of Hayman occurs offstage, and in this play, the Korus is present at the moment of his death. The stage directions indicate that as the music to a song "Flash of Green" ends, the Korus films Antigone's suicide, and then,

> *Suddenly in his grief Hayman pulls out a pistol. Music. Hayman stalks Krayon very slowly across the stage. Suddeny, Hayman has a change of heart and goes behind a large wall and Korus who has been focusing on the eyes and faces of father and son, stalked and stalking, follows the son off stage. He captures the gun being put into the mouth. The camera then mercifully rises above the head, onto Antigone's spray painted scribble of "Life is the question asking, what's the way to die". We hear the shot.*

Although the Korus is there to document this string of tragedies, it seems that just as the Greek audience was not permitted to see the deaths of the characters, we are still denied access to the moment of death. The word "mercifully" seems to indicate that there are still things we are not accustomed to being shown, either onstage or in the media. There are still conventions surrounding the representation of death – at least in adaptations of tragedy - and interestingly, the one-person chorus/Korus in these adaptations is still used to mediate these situations.

Next, it is Eurydice's turn to die, and Korus becomes even more involved. He tries to get Krayon to stop her from committing suicide, by saying directly, "Will you not try and stop her? (*Beat*) Krayon! She's going off to die. Krayon! (*Deliberately)* SHE'S GOING TO DIE! Stop her!". Krayon, however, replies, "I can't. The fever must run its course".[371] Korus then steps forward and explains to the audience in detail how Eurydice will commit suicide (in this case, by slitting her wrists and throat with scissors).

---

[371] Kurup (2000) 43.

Just as in Sophocles' play, it is the Korus who speaks to Krayon to tell him he is now alone. However, just as in Anouilh's play, Krayon is afterward comforted by an assistant (in this case, by the young Private Rojas). Krayon tells him "Good. Good. You'll help me. Help me clean up. I have to give a speech. To the people".[372] Korus is left to address the audience, as in Anouilh's play. He states that "Tonight, Antigone is calm. The fever that consumed her has broken. Will we remember what she did here? Why she died? Why they all died? The living will continue living. Some will thrive others merely survive but that's what might have happened anyway. (*singing*) 'Moment of death lick skin never stop my time, Shine on chain of light, fireflies on a night flight…' (*blackout).*"[373] Korus survives the action, and although his closing remarks seem just as cynical as in Anouilh's play, in the context of this play's focus on Korus' struggle and issues of media representation, his question "Will we remember what she did here?" seems more like a challenge to the audience than a comment on her fate.

Kurup's *Antigone Story* was, however, misinterpreted by some. I suspect that for such critics, misunderstanding the struggle of the Korus was important to their failure to comprehend Kurup's adaptation. One critic wrote that "In his 1944 adaptation, Jean Anouilh used Antigone to rail against the Vichy government for its collaboration with the Nazis, whereas Kurup gives us an entertainment on the pointlessness of political activism. And for what? Ironic despair? I hear Big Brother applauding".[374] It seems that this critic misunderstood both Anouilh's *Antigone* as well as Kurup's adaptation. In both, the one-person Chorus/Korus' ability to interact in the inner frame with the characters and the outer frame with the audience served the plays and the playwrights' intentions. Kurup's Korus, who in fact attempted to be more outside the action than he was able to accomplish, offered a self-referential comment on the nature and role of the media in modern society.

---

[372] Kurup (2000) 44.

[373] Kurup (2000) 44-5.

[374] Morris, Steven Leigh. "Cause without a Rebel: A beautiful, Pointless Antigone Story", *LA Weekly* (August 18-24, 2000)

Using media for mediation (pun intended) might be considered choral because of its ability to reflect upon and react to the onstage action, as in Foley's example of the video used in *Agamemnon*. However, it seems that productions that incorporate media often feel the need to add a one-person chorus to "interpret" the media alongside the audience. This should be considered a further indication that the self-referentiality of the chorus, a product of its liminal role between the frames of the action, is an important aspect of the chorus' role to modern adapters. In fact, the self-referential quality of the chorus seems to offer a major incentive to include an embodied chorus in adaptations, as illustrated by the addition of choruses to accompany the media in both Morrison's *Antigone* as well as Kurup's *Antigone*. Without the embodied chorus to interpret the media – and in the case of Kurup's production, his own role in its dissemination – the self-referentiality of the choral role is lost.

Conclusion

As I have shown, the self-referentiality of the chorus is apparent not only in instances in which the chorus vocally refer to their own song and dance. Instead, if this concept is extended to refer to instances in which the theatricality – and sometimes metatheatricality - of choral performance is emphasized, this concept is useful for understanding the role of the chorus, in both the ancient and modern performance contexts. The self-referentiality of the modern chorus manifests itself as the chorus oscillates between the frames of the action, and closely examining this oscillation has led to many surprising discoveries: first, that one technique is often used for opposing purposes. A singular technique such as the use of dance or masks can be used to draw the audience toward either the inner or outer frame of the performance, thereby leading them to feel involved or distanced. In addition, as I have shown, the frame in which the technique is embedded does not necessarily inform or limit its effect; a technique embedded within the inner frame of the action can be intended to distance the audience, and vice versa. The self-referentiality of the chorus in fact encourages this sort of overlap, as the chorus oscillates between the frames of the action. Many adapters, as I will show in the next chapter, attempt to both draw the audience toward the inner frame, and then subsequently distance them, using this juxtaposition to communicate a complex political position.

Due to a focus on the importance of “distancing” in the twentieth century, including strategies such as Brecht’s “gestus of showing” which highlight the theatricality of performance, adapters have had to contend with audiences’ close associations between non-naturalism and distance. However, examining attempts to re-ritualize tragedy and the chorus through the use of non-naturalistic devices like the mask have shown that the distance provided by abstract or symbolic design elements can in fact be a tactic intended to draw the audience toward the inner frame of the action, in both the ancient and modern performance contexts. However, in modern performances such as Hall’s *Oresteia,* the chorus’ oscillation between the frames of the action often draws upon – and forges connections between - seemingly opposing techniques and intentions. Due to this complexity, the use of these techniques can often elicit unintended reactions from audience members. The consequences of such contradictions between intention and reception will be essential to understanding the case studies undertaken in subsequent chapters.

In the first two sections of this chapter, I explored how techniques of the Greek chorus such as dance and the mask have been capitalized upon, focusing on how the oscillation and self-referentiality of the choral role is adapted and emphasized to varying degrees. In the final section, I showed that in order to capitalize upon the ancient chorus' ritual role of self-referentiality, adapters do not necessarily attempt to re-create performance techniques of the ancient chorus (including mask, music, and dance), but have now also turned to entirely different techniques such as the incorporation of media. I have argued that the use of media in the theatre might be considered "choral" because it can replace the chorus' reflective and reactionary role. However, in order to truly capitalize upon the self-referential aspect of the chorus' role, the use of media still seems to necessitate an accompanying embodied choral figure. The inclusion of this figure by adapters such as Morrison and Kurup therefore shows not only that the self-referentiality of the chorus is an appealing aspect of the choral role for adapters, but also that – as in productions that employ dance or masks - the degree of self-referentiality can be altered to suit a production's goals and context.

It should also be noted that in the first two sections of this chapter, no matter whether they were intending to distance the audience or re-ritualize the tragedy, the choruses employed were all collectives, formed of groups of at least four members. Non-naturalistic techniques such as the mask and dance seem compatible with the non-naturalistic collective chorus, as opposed to its "naturalized" counterpart, the one-person chorus (influence by its early modern and neo-classical predecessors). The one-person chorus does, however, seem compatible with productions that involve media, and several of the examples above indicated the self-referential role that a singular chorus member can have in combination with the use different media (projections, live recording, etc.). It is also interesting to note that these latter productions with one-person choruses are also both adaptations of *Antigone,* perhaps influenced by the legacy of Anouilh's chorus.[375]

In the chapter that follows, I will apply the concepts of distance, ritual, identification, and self-referentiality that I have explored here to several in-depth case studies of productions that utilize collective choruses. I will focus upon the political purposes the strategies described here can serve, including how a production's ideology is communicated to the audience as well as why these communication strategies might fail.

---

[375] Foley (2011) has attempted an explanation of the popularity of Anouilh's adaptation in the United States. She states that "Twenty-first-century America seems uncomfortable with an Antigone who is not a talented, immature, damaged, volatile obsessive (though arguably she always was a version of that) whose positions an audience can distance because of her (mis)behaviour and the missing divine authority for the burial voiced by Sophocles' Tiresias" (391). This does not, of course, account for the attractiveness of this Chorus in particular, though the popularity of Anouilh's adaptation in the United States does explain how the text (and its Chorus) have become so widely-known. The Chorus itself, as I argued in chapter one, might be considered appealing for its unique distance from the action in the inner frame, as well as its similarity to figures such as the prologue and *confidant(e)* from more recent – and naturalistic - theatrical traditions.

CHAPTER 3:
The Complicit Collective

Introduction

As I demonstrated in the previous chapter, the “collective chorus” has been making a powerful return to the stage since the mid-twentieth century. I argued that adapters employing a collective chorus often complement this decision by incorporating performance techniques of the ancient chorus that are now considered non-naturalistic, including the use of masks, music, dance, and more recently, media. These techniques are not only non-naturalistic, but as I have shown, they also capitalize upon the self-referential role of the chorus as it oscillates between the frames of the performance, allowing adapters to emphasize the theatrical self-referentiality of their chorus to varying degrees. The oscillation of the chorus between the frames of the action and the ensuing self-referentiality will continue to be a major focus in this chapter, however, here I will focus on how techniques of collective choruses are related to the chorus’ communication of political or ideological messages to an audience.[376] What will become clear is that by both leading the audience to identify with the chorus as well as distancing them from the group, the oscillating collective chorus of classical tragedy has become useful to adaptations that deal with distinctly *modern* issues.

---

[376] On ideology, see Eagleton (2007), especially 1-31. For the connection between Marxism and ideology, see especially Haslett (2000) 50-85, in which she differentiates further between ideology as doctrine, ritual, and belief.
Haslett (2000) notes that definitions of “ideology” are extremely diverse, yet there are two important tendencies: the first “associates ideology with a sense of illusion or distortion, an ‘epistemological’ definition insofar as it suggests that this falsity can be recognized and thus, perhaps, countered by knowledge, science or argument” (50). This might be considered the way in which Marx himself utilized the term. The second tendency treats ideology “more neutrally in the sense of values or beliefs which are shared by groups of people” (50). In this study, which seeks to analyse rather than evaluate performance, I employ the term “ideology” in the latter sense. Interestingly, however, the two adaptations that serve as major case studies below aim to offer a corrective to the type of “illusion” explained in the former definition.
Eagleton’s (2007) initial list of definitions differentiates between those that consider ideology a process, a medium, a set of beliefs, etc. Eagleton gives sixteen definitions of ideology that are currently in circulation (and concludes, on pp.28-31, by placing them in six categories).
Based on such distinctions, I would argue that in discussing performance, there should be a differentiation between how ideology might relate to the creation of a performance and it’s intended reception by an ideal audience. For instance, a group of performers may be governed in the creation of the performance by a particular set of beliefs, but it is not necessarily these beliefs that they seek to communicate through the performance. Although it is likely that the creation of the performance and its political message are governed by the same set of beliefs, the creators may wish to communicate something specific or more relevant to a particular political situation. I will therefore use the term “message” when I wish to indicate the aspect of the production’s ideology that is intended to be transmitted to the audience, often as some sort of warning or call to action.

3.1 Capitalizing on the Collective Chorus

Adaptations of Greek tragedy since the mid-twentieth century have commonly had political issues as a major focus. Edith Hall, for instance, has observed that "since the time of Aristophanes in the later fifth century [Greek tragedy] has been seen as a medium which could fan political fervour in its audiences. The late twentieth century has reawakened its political potential".[377] Often, as I showed in the discussion of Anouilh's adaptation of *Antigone*, adapting Greek tragedy offers a way to critique the dominant political situation indirectly. Anouilh's production, as I stated, could be performed in Nazi-occupied France precisely because of his careful handling of the Greek material.

However, unlike Anouilh, many theatre practitioners wishing to establish a connection between an ancient play and a modern political situation are drawn to collective choruses. Although I have shown that a one-person chorus can oscillate amongst the frames of performance and comment on the action, the collective chorus can contextualize the action of a tragedy in the inner frame – through their fictional identity - in ways which an individual cannot. By embodying the collective onstage, the chorus serves as a constant *visual* and *physical* reminder of the community affected by the actions of the individual protagonists. Regardless of the chorus' fictional identity, when the collective interacts with an individual character (or characters) in an episode, the audience can glean insight regarding the character based on their relationship with the collective (and often, vice versa). For instance, there is a marked difference between the interactions of the chorus and Aegisthus in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* as opposed to their relationship with the title character.

---

[377] Hall (2004a) 18. In particular, she identifies Sophocles' *Antigone* as a "hardy perennial" that has protested against political situations as diverse as South African apartheid, Polish martial law, and the conflicts in the Middle East. During World War II alone (from 1939 until 1945), the University of Oxford's Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama has compiled thirty one productions of Sophocles' *Antigone,* in countries ranging from the United States and England, to Germany, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, and Greece. On the political uses of *Antigone,* see also Foley and Mee (2011), who claim that "*Antigone* is perhaps the only play, classical or modern, to have been (re)produced all over the world, and an enormous number of these productions have reconceived and remade the play to addres modern local – and in some cases international and global – issues and concerns" (1).

The physical collective onstage, then, can be a useful aspect of the chorus' role within the inner frame. By locating the tragic action within the context of a community, the chorus' role in the inner frame offers the audience an important perspective on the tragic events, regardless of how it communicates with the audience in the outer frame. The presence of a collective chorus in the inner frame - their participation in the action of the play, and their interactions with the individual characters – emphasizes the dialectic of individual/collective that is a central part of both the content and form of tragedy. The tension between individuals and the collective reflects the concerns and questions of the Athenian society creating and consuming tragedy, and therefore it is these questions which "insistently recur in the tragedies themselves, and which its form is indeed eminently suited to explore". [378] Tragedy's form (alternating episodes and choral stasima) supports this dialectic by offering the audience dedicated time in which to focus specifically on the collective.

Individual/Collective in the Outer Frame

Adapters wishing to capitalize on the political potential of tragedy seem to have caught on to the importance of the dynamic of individual/collective and its ability to engage an audience in the concerns and questions of society. Therefore, in this chapter, as elsewhere, my focus is not only on how these aspects of the chorus and tragedy exist in the inner frame, but also how they are communicated to the audience. If the chorus as characters in the inner frame illustrate the opposition between individual and collective, what effect does this have on the chorus' communication in the outer frame?

---

[378] Wilson (2000) 4.

In fact, inherent within Vernant's influential structural analysis of tragedy one can note a preliminary interest in the communication of his binary opposition to the audience. He argues that

> the tragic technique exploits a polarity between two of its elements: on the one hand the chorus, an anonymous and collective being whose role is to express, through its fears, hopes and judgements, the feelings of the spectators who make up the civic community; on the other the individualized figure whose action forms the centre of the drama and who is seen as a hero from another age, always more or less alien to the ordinary condition of a citizen.[379]

Although I will offer a more full critique of Vernant's explanation of the chorus in chapter four, here it is nevertheless essential to note not only the importance he gives to the opposition between individual and collective in his analysis, but also that he attempts to relate this opposition to the audience and their own concerns during the "historical moment" in which tragedy flourished in Greece. The tension between individual and collective in the inner frame must be communicated to the audience in the outer frame.

However, in his conception, the audience identifies with the chorus, and we see again a reliance upon the "ideal spectator" model. In fact, this model is similar enough to Schlegel's that Goldhill characterizes Vernant's model as a "construction of the chorus as the collective on stage representing the collective of the audience - which redrafts the formula of the 'ideal spectator'".[380] The reliance upon Schlegel once again impedes the manner in which we understand the complex role of the collective chorus – in this case, its role of oscillating between frames of action and eliciting feelings of both identification and distance from the audience. I would argue, however, that there are indications that Vernant is in fact not only interested in process of eliciting feelings of identification between chorus and audience, but also of distance: he complicates the relationship between the collective chorus and the audience by stating that in fact, the chorus' language is further from the everyday speech of the Greek audience, and it is the "heroic figures" whose speech is closer to that of "ordinary men".[381]

---

[379] Vernant (1972: 1981) 2.

[380] Goldhill (1996) 244.

In this chapter, I will argue that the opposition between individual/collective is important in both frames of the action: it is present in the inner frame of the action as well as in the reception of the fictional action by the audience. In order to understand its reception, the tension between individual/collective in the outer frame should be related to another opposition explored previously. In chapter two, I argued that a choral technique might be considered self-referential if it is perceived of as distancing to some degree by its contemporary audience, pointing to the constructed nature of the performance. I explored the way modern collective choruses balance the distance and identification communicated to the audience, and I argued that often, choruses are used in both ways within a single performance. As I will show, this is especially pertinent to avant-garde productions that attempt to communicate political ideology or messages to their audiences.

A collective chorus' ability to lead the audience to feel both identification and distance can be related to the tension between individual/collective as it is communicated in the outer frame. Collectivity should be paired with identification, and can be understood as occurring in moments when the audience is led to feel part of the choral collective. On the other hand, individuality might be paired with distance, and understood as occurring in moments in which the chorus (or, in some cases, other aspects of a performance) encourages audience distancing. Without relying on the ideal spectator model, it will become possible to see why – and more importantly, *how* -

---

[381] Vernant (1972: 1981) 2.

adapters use a collective chorus in political adaptations of Greek tragedy. In examining modern incarnations of collective choruses, it will become clear that neither the individual/collective dialectic nor its communication to the audience is as straightforward as it may seem.

Shared Complicity

As I have argued, the chorus has become an increasingly useful tool for adapters wishing to capitalize on the political aspects of tragedy. Hall's description of the texts of Greek tragedy being "appropriated to serve diverse political causes"[382] in the theatre indicates that the use of tragic texts is often aligned with an intended message (anti-apartheid, pro-environment, etc.). Unlike Anouilh's *Antigone*, political productions generally use the chorus to "involve" the audience by prompting them to take one side or the other over the course of the play, in order to communicate a particular message. However, the *process* through which this occurs is not always straightforward, and it is precisely this process that is the subject of this chapter.

Foley proposes that modern directors are often drawn to Greek choruses - especially Euripidean choruses - "either to express group suffering in the wake of twentieth-century wars or group complicity in historical events".[383] "Complicit" choruses did exist in the Greek theatre, yet they account for only one type of chorus. The potential complicity of choruses, however, is an aspect of the chorus that modern adapters have particularly capitalized upon. Foley describes how "although Greek tragic choruses (such as that of Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians*) can become complicit with the actors and participate in their plots and deceptions, twentieth-century versions of the plays can considerably enhance, draw attention to, as well as call into question this aspect of the plays".[384]

---

[382] Hall (2004a) 18.

[383] Foley (2007) 361.

Foley uses the term "complicit" to discuss the characterization of certain choruses in adaptations. For instance, in Brecht's adaptation of Sophocles' *Antigone,* which I will discuss below, she notes that the chorus' complicity with Creon is important for Brecht's exploration of cultural responsibility. This term is also often used by practitioners describing their own choruses. For instance, in a quotation from Kurup in the previous chapter, he explained that his one-person Korus in *An Antigone Story: A Greek Hijack* is intended to be complicit, but to have an opinion. He compared Korus to someone who might work for FOX while knowing he is "dredging the bottom".[385]

However, I would argue that this term is not only useful in describing the relationship between the chorus and the central characters; it is also useful in describing the types of relationships that adapters attempt to build between choruses and audiences. Adapters have used the chorus/audience relationship not only to lead the audience to understand the chorus as complicit, but to lead the audience to *feel complicit themselves*. This is in fact a popular technique, often used by adapters who wish to "enhance, draw attention to, as well as call into question" the complicity of the chorus. I would suggest that whether a modern collective chorus is composed of suffering victims or is a part of the power structures that cause the tragic events of the play, the effect upon the audience is often intended to be the same. The audience either feels complicit along with the chorus, who have collaborated in causing the tragedy, or they may also be led to feel complicit in the case of a victimized chorus. In the productions that form the body of this chapter, it is the former that is attempted in each case, while the latter – and its relation to issues of intercultural theatre - is taken up in chapter four.[386]

---

[384] Foley (2007) 361. Although she uses the term "actors", Foley is presumably referring to "characters". This is an important distinction, not only with regard to ancient performance, but also (and especially) to twentieth century performing traditions, which, as I have shown, often attempt to emphasize, complicate, or question the distinction between an actor and a role.

[385] Kurup (2010).

The term “complicit” is a useful description of the intended audience experience of many modern political adaptations of tragedy. The word complicity, meaning “partnership in an evil action”, is etymologically related to the term “accomplice”.[387] Indeed, the two terms remain related: a complicit party, although not the main perpetrator of an action, is guilty by somehow serving as an accomplice to the action. Just as one can be an accomplice by engaging in a wide range of actions, the term “complicit” encompasses a wide variety of actions and different types (and degrees) of involvement in wrongdoing. This varying level of involvement a complicit party can have makes the word applicable to the intended audience experience of many different adaptations, which encourage audiences to participate to varying degrees, and in a variety of ways. In addition, the flexible amount of involvement implied in the term can account for individual audience members’ different reactions (and perhaps even actions) in a single performance. Although it is not always stated explicitly as a goal of the performance, making the audience feel complicit is nevertheless a common use of the chorus in political adaptations of tragedy. As I will show, creating an audience that recognizes its own complicity not only seems to be a desirable outcome of these adaptations, but is also a complex process.

In the case studies below, I will demonstrate that communicating complicity to the audience can be considered an extension of the dialectic of individual/collective – present in the inner frame, in which the chorus represents a particular fictional collective – to the audience. Leading the audience to recognize themselves as complicit is often accomplished in several steps which are associated with this dialectic as well as the related dialectic of identification/distance. The first step is identification with the chorus: the audience must be guided to feel they have become part of the collective. The second step is the subsequent distancing of the audience, causing them to withdraw in some way from identification with the collective, back toward individuality and distance. This distancing is often how a production and its chorus illustrate to the audience how they should understand their own previous or ongoing identification with the choral collective, as well as their collective action (or inaction). Through this process, an ideal audience of the productions examined below would realize that their involvement has been framed negatively by the production; their identification with the chorus has led them to become complicit in the tragic action. It is through this process from identification to distancing that the political ideology or message is communicated to the audience. Provoking an acknowledgement of complicity – and its relationship with the dialectic of individual/collective - is often in fact the locus of the political message of the adaptation.

---

[386] Foley (2007) argues that performances of Euripides’ *Trojan Women* in multiple conflicts have most typically served this modern impulse of showing suffering collectives (361). Robert Gore-Langton, a reviewer, would agree: he notes that although this is the tragedy in which nothing happens, it is the most prone to updating (March 17, 1995).

[387] See Hoad (ed.) (1986) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology. The Oxford English Dictionary* defines complicity as “The being an accomplice; partnership in an evil action” (*OED Online*).

In my case studies, I will show that encouraging audience complicity in order to communicate a political ideology or message requires this two-step process: adapters build audience identification with the collective chorus, and then subsequently encourage enough distance for the audience to recognize that their former identification and action in the collective has been characterized as complicity in the tragic action. Exploring the distancing of the audience and the evaluation of their participation in the collective is thus a major task of this chapter. This distancing aspect of the chorus/audience relationship is often overlooked, in large part due to the focus on identification inherited from the ideal spectator model (and present once again in Vernant's model above). The case studies examined below will show how complicity is communicated – and commented upon – through a complex combination of identification as well as distancing.

The Case Studies

Adapting Greek tragedy and including a collective chorus allows adapters – like their Greek counterparts – a structure in which to comment on the tension produced by the often competing interests of individuals and collectives. In this chapter, I have chosen to closely examine the work of influential avant-garde adapters who have not only incorporated collective choruses in politically-charged adaptations of tragedy, but who have also sought new roles for the audience in their performance practice more generally.

The goal of involving – or in some cases, confronting - the audience in the avant-garde theatre tradition has greatly affected the use of collective choruses. In discussing the tradition of audience involvement in theatre productions, Bennett explains that in almost all reactions to naturalist theatre, "the audience has been acknowledged as a creative aspect of the dramatic process, and the spectator generally confronted, often co-opted, into a more direct role in the theatre event". [388] According to Lehmann, this move constitutes a "fundamental *shift from work to event"*[389]*,* in which the audience members "become an active *component* of the event".[390] The audience has come to be viewed as a co-creator in performance, and through their reception, they can affect not only the performance but also the dramatic text.[391] Lehmann's translator Karen Jürs-Munby states succinctly that "the turn to performance is thus at the same time always a turn towards the audience, as well".[392] Based on the above discussion, we might add that in adaptations of tragedy, the "turn towards the audience" has meant a "turn towards the chorus". The move toward the inclusion of the audience in avant-garde styles of theatre has affected adaptations of classical plays, and has significantly altered the way in which choruses – especially collective choruses – communicate with the audience.[393]

---

[388] Bennett (1997) 4.

[389] Lehmann (1999: 2009) 61, his italics.

[390] Lehmann (1999:2009) 61. The avant-garde movements that Lehmann discusses in his work on postdramatic theatre - such as Dadaism, Futurism, and Surrealism - sought not only to include the spectator more, but they often demanded a physical attack on the spectator.

[391] Bennett (1997) 19.

Bertolt Brecht and Richard Schechner both created adaptations in different historical, social, and political contexts that nevertheless both employ collective choruses in attempt to establish feelings of complicity – and an evaluation of this complicity - in their audiences. There is excellent documentation surrounding both of these productions, which allows an investigation of the influences on the adapters as well as the reception of the production by the audience.[394] Both practitioners sought unconventional means of communicating complicity to their audience; however, for both, the balance between identification and distancing of the audience was essential to the communication of the political aspects of their adaptations.

Looking at Brecht's adaptation of *Antigone* and Schechner's adaptation of Euripides' *Bacchae* (his *Dionysus in 69),* will show the importance of examining what might lead an adapter to employ a collective chorus, the decisions behind their particular use of the chorus, as well as how this chorus is received. Therefore, parts two and three of this chapter are each devoted to exploring one of these productions (*Antigone* and *Dionysus in 69,* respectively). Each part is further divided into two sub-sections: in section A, I discuss the adapter's decision to include a collective chorus, including an analysis of his particular conception of the chorus. In section B, I offer a performance analysis, emphasizing the progression from audience identification to distance. I explore how this progression is intended to communicate to the audience that their identification with the chorus has resulted in their complicity in the tragic action, as well as how they are intended to apprehend the production's political message. In the fourth section, I engage with the surprisingly similar problems of reception faced by both adapters.

---

[392] Lehmann (1999: 2009) 5.

[393] See Bierl (2005) for an overview and brief survey of German incarnations of the chorus of *Agamemnon* leading to the 'performative turn'. Bierl's survey traces "a line of development from an experimental production based on performative, but mostly semiotic, concepts rooted in the 'linguistic turn', through to reactions grounded in forms of *Sprechtheater* (theatre of words), towards the more recent efforts in the performative trend" (293).

[394] Brecht's production produced his first "model book", a published documentation of the production (with photos by Ruth Berlau), intended to be useful to future productions. Shortly after Schechner's show completed its run, a book was also compiled, recording not only the script, but also including photos and comments by Schechner and the cast. Much like Brecht's model book, this volume is helpful in understanding the decisions made by the cast, especially since the script itself is compiled from many sources and was subject to changes depending on the particular performance. In addition, Schechner's production was filmed by Brian De Palma (shot in June/July 1968), and a monograph recalling and theorizing the production process was published by one of the actors, William Shephard, in 1991.

In the fifth section, as a coda to this chapter, I also explore the more recent work of Einar Schleef, whose choral conception of drama has received much attention from German practitioners and scholars. His production of *The Mothers* complements the discussion of Brecht and Schechner's plays by illustrating an alternate way of dealing with the tension of the individual and the collective: locating it within the chorus itself. However, I argue that although his use of identification and distancing is innovative, it is also less political, for while it engages with complicity to communicate an ideology, it lacks a message in the manner of Brecht and Schechner.

3.2 Bertolt Brecht: *The Antigone of Sophocles, A version for the Stage after Hölderlin's Translation* [*Die Antigone des Sophokles: Nach der Hölderlinschen Übertragung für die Bühne bearbeitet*]

A. Introduction: The Chorus in the Epic Theatre

Due to his focus on the audience and his attitude toward the "classics", the work of Bertolt Brecht created an influential legacy for adapters of tragedy, as well as for theatre practitioners more generally. Brecht's work was essential to the "turn towards the audience" described above, as it encouraged the next generation of theatre practitioners (and, importantly, their audiences) to think about the audience's relationship with the stage action in new ways. Bennett explains that Brecht's "ideas for a theatre with the power to provoke social change, along with his attempts to reactivate stage-audience exchange, have had a widespread and profound effect not only on theatre practice, but also on critical responses to plays and performance".[395] The impact on theatre practitioners and critics can be ascertained most simply in the widespread and often appropriative use of his name. "Brechtian" has become an adjective which Michael Patterson notes can be used to legitimise, limit, and also to distort.[396] Patterson quotes Sheridan Morley in *The Sunday Times Magazine*, who as early as 1977 complained that "'Brechtian' has become one of those critical hold-alls, now bursting at the seams but still used to describe everything from a stage on which the designer has failed to place enough chairs to an acting company loosely dedicated to a political ideal somewhere faintly to the left of Mrs. Thatcher".[397] Aligning oneself with the goals of Brecht's revolutionary theatre can sometimes be a desirable method of elevating the status of a piece (despite the fact that some practitioners seem unaware of the precise meaning of "Brechtian").

---

[395] Bennett (1997) 21.
[396] Patterson (1994) 273.
[397] Morley (1977) 70, quoted in Patterson (1994).

However, Patterson adds that "despite misunderstanding and misappropriation Brecht's name will deservedly continue to be used as an adjective and condition the way we think about theatre for many decades to come".[398] Indeed, Brecht's work has influenced not only the theatre that we now see onstage, but, as Patterson states, even the way we "think about theatre" more generally. Brecht's focus on the audience continues to encourage theorists interested in reception to look at the cultural and extratheatrical factors that contribute to reception. For example, Bennett states that "above all, Brecht's work makes manifest the productive role of theatre audiences and positions that role ideologically", and for her, this is a reminder that "any research in reception, then, must also look to production and deal with issues which are cultural as well as individual".[399] As Brecht has been such an influential figure in the turn toward performance, the audience, and the study of reception, his work is a logical place to begin this chapter's discussion of the chorus/audience relationship.

The Chorus in the Epic Theatre

Although Brecht's work has had an enormous impact on theatre and performance since his own day, it is worth noting that Brecht himself had a complex relationship with those who preceded him. Brecht's epic theatre began in opposition to what Brecht called "Aristotelian" theatre, but which might better be understood as the naturalistic and bourgeois theatre of his time.[400] Yet, as Fuegi explains, "by 1948, with the staging of *Antigone* and the composition of the *Short Organum,* Brecht has beaten a skilled retreat from much of his earlier iconoclasm".[401] It is surprising that Brecht, who had established his epic theatre as "anti-Aristotelian", would return to adapt a play like *Antigone,* and that he would retain one of its major formal elements: the chorus.

---

[398] Patterson (1994) 285. The problems with defining Brecht's legacy can be seen in Lehmann's work and the reception of his theory of the "postdramatic theatre". Lehmann (1999:2009) feels compelled to characterize the postdramatic theatre as "a *post-Brechtian theatre"* (33). Lehmann considers Brecht's theory to be a "*renewal and completion of classical dramaturgy"*(33), in particular because of Brecht's focus on the 'fable' (story). The postdramatic theatre, on the other hand, situates itself in a space opened up by the Brechtian inquiries and leaves behind "the political style, the tendency towards dogmatization, and the emphasis on the rational we find in Brechtian theatre; it exists in a time *after* the authoritative validity of Brecht's theatre concept" (33). Lehmann takes pains in his book to categorize Brecht's theatre as "dramatic", while it might have been more useful to consider him a catalyst, or to differentiate between different periods of Brecht's work (the *Lehrstücke*, for example, differentiated from the later plays like *Life of Galileo).* In her review of Lehmann's book, Fuchs criticizes Lehmann's categorization; she writes that Lehmann "reads the first half of the century as an extended preparation: Maeterlinck, Stein, Witkiewicz, Brecht, the Absurd, even the documentary theatre of the 1960s – all yield clues to the postdramatic to come" (Fuchs 2008). Placing Brecht (and other theatre movements once considered avant-garde) in the "dramatic" tradition seems to invite criticism precisely because of the difficulty of drawing such distinctions.

[399] Bennett (1990: 1997) 33.

One of the reasons for Brecht's retention of the chorus is that it could serve as one technique of accomplishing the epic theatre's *Verfremdungseffekt* – the "so-called A-effect (alienation effect)" - used to distance the audience from the action of the play, allowing them to contemplate the action and characters from a critical distance.[402] Brecht's plays use different devices to alienate social incidents normally taken for granted, allowing the spectators to distance themselves from the action and think critically about what has been presented. Perhaps the most well-known of Brecht's techniques is the use of projections to inform the audience about what will take place in an upcoming scene, or to show images in contrast to the onstage action. Often, as I have indicated in my discussion of Brecht's use of masks, these serve the function of removing any suspense about the plot and instead encouraging the audience to think critically about the social mechanisms that cause the action to occur.

---

[400] After relating "Aristotelian" drama to burlesque shows on Broadway, Brecht explains (in an essay composed c. 1935) that "non-aristotelian drama would at all costs avoid bundling together the events portrayed and presenting them as an inexorable fate, to which the human being is handed over helpless despite the beauty and significance of his reactions; on the contrary, it is precisely this fate that it would study closely, showing it up as of human contriving" (Trans. Willett, in Willett [ed.] [1964] 87).

[401] Fuegi (1987) 102.

[402] See chapter two above for Brecht's definition. Although Willett's translations always render "Verfremdung" in English as "alienation", other translators prefer different terms in order to avoid the negativity associated with that English term. Patterson (1994), for instance, points out that the word "alienation" implies that audiences should become either antagonised by the performance or detached from the stage action to the point of boredom. As Peter Brooker (2006) points out, what Brecht in fact pursued was 'de-alienation'" (217).

Brecht decided to retain the chorus in his adaptation of *Antigone* because it serves this purpose of distancing the audience. The chorus, as I have mentioned, has often been viewed as problematic and uncommon in the naturalistic theatre. Even Schlegel, as discussed above, was concerned about its potential to "interfere" in the reality of the production. Interestingly, the problematic nature of the chorus - which is in fact the same reason that other dramatists would diminish or eliminate the chorus in their adaptations - is what makes it useful to Brecht.

Although in this production the chorus was already present in Brecht's source material (the *Antigone* of both Sophocles and Hölderlin), it is essential to note that it was not uncommon for Brecht to incorporate a chorus before this time. Although formally, in this play, the chorus may be understood as an adaptation of Brecht's source material, the use of an onstage collective - especially one that sings - was already a fundamental aspect of the epic theatre, especially in his more didactic works.[403]

The* Antigone *Chorus in Context

In the *Antigone* model book*,* Brecht writes that "Greek dramaturgy uses certain forms of alienation, notably interventions by the chorus, to try and rescue some of that freedom of calculation which Schiller is uncertain how to ensure".[404] This quote illustrates several important aspects of Brecht's use of the chorus. First, that Brecht not only sees the chorus as an alienation device useful to the epic theatre, as noted above, but that he also projects this function of the chorus backward on the Greek theatre. Fuegi observes that by 1948, Brecht had become aware that the use of choral odes to disrupt the action in classical Greece was a definite anticipation of key elements of his epic theatre. Secondly, Fuegi also states that Brecht was "surely aware that both Goethe and Schiller had anticipated him in noting and commenting favorably upon these facets of Greek drama".[405] Schiller had, in fact, expounded a similar view of the chorus to Brecht's own, in the published preface (entitled: "On the use of the chorus in tragedy") to his play *The Bride of Messina (Die Braut von Messina)*. He writes that

---

[403] According to the work of Steinweg (1972), cited in Patterson (1994), a fragment in the Brecht archive articulates a differentiation between Brecht's works that are Major Pedagogy and Minor Pedagogy (*kleine Pädagogik* and *grosse Pädagogik)*. Plays performed in more conventional theatre settings, with distinct differentiation between the actors and audience, can be considered Minor Pedagogy. The spectators are invited, through Brecht's techniques of alienation, to engage in a critical dialogue with the stage action. However, as Patterson points out, "this dialogue can only be mental and silent" (284) which is of course how the intended audience of *Antigone* would receive the play – at least, while they are in the theatre. Although they do not participate directly, a work of Minor Pedagogy "encourages the audience to adopt a more productive attitude in their reception of a theatrical performance" (284). It is into this category that the *Antigone* falls (along with many of Brecht's well-known plays like *Galileo* or *Mother Courage*). By contrast, the Major Pedagogy "envisages a theatre which has change as its fundamental principle" (284). According to Patterson, the *Lehrstück* were experiments intended to lead to a tradition of Major Pedagogy, which Brecht never lived to see. Some of Brecht's most prominent and innovative choruses occur in these *Lehrstücke,* or "learning plays".

[404] Brecht, *Masterful Treatment of a Model* (1948: 1964) 210. Translated by John Willett. This piece was published as the foreword to Brecht's *Antigone* model book.

> the common judgement against the chorus (that it destroys illusion and disrupts the emotive hold of the play on its audience) can be used as the chorus' highest recommendation […] The chorus holds the individual parts of the tragedy apart and enters between passionate outbursts with soothing contemplation, and it is because of this that freedom is restored to us, freedom that would otherwise be lost in a storm of emotions.[406]

Fuegi notes that Brecht must have noticed the similarity, and he therefore cannot account for the fact that Brecht claims Schiller to be "uncertain of how to ensure" the freedom of calculation. Indeed, others have also noted Schiller's strong anti-naturalistic tendency with regard to the chorus, and compared this with Brecht's work.[407] It can be speculated that if Brecht indeed knew about Schiller's ideas surrounding the chorus, that he may have found Schiller's plays themselves to not fulfill the goals outlined in his theory.[408] Perhaps Brecht felt that Schiller *noted* the importance of the audience's freedom of calculation without accomplishing the amount of distancing that Brecht considered ideal. Indeed, according to Silk, there were serious logical flaws involved in Schiller's use of the chorus,[409] and so "most of the controversy surrounding [Schiller's] chorus in any case relates more to his dramatic practice than to his theory".[410]

---

[405] Fuegi (1987) 104.

[406] Schiller's essay was first printed as a preface to his play *The Bride of Messina (Die Braut von Messina)*, which was performed in 1803. The preface is quoted in Fuegi (1987) 105. Willett (1964), however, offers a different quotation from Schiller (from the Schiller-Goethe correspondence) that Brecht might also have been referring to: "A dramatic plot will move before my eyes; an epic seems to stand still while I move round it. In my view this is a significant distinction. If a circumstance moves before my eyes, then I am bound strictly to what is present to the senses; my imagination loses all freedom; I feel a continued restlessness develop and persist in me […] But if I move round a circumstance which cannot get away from me, then my pace can be irregular; I can linger or hurry according to my own subjective needs, can take a step backwards or leap ahead, and so forth" (Schiller-Goethe correspondence, 26 December 1797). Indeed, Brecht includes this quote in his journal on January 9, 1948. Brecht had read Lukács's "The Schiller-Goethe Correspondence" in December 1947, and read the correspondence itself in January 1948, according to his journals (*Journals [1934-1955]* 381- 385).

[407] M. Silk (1998a) explains that like so much theory of the period – Schlegel included – Schiller is preoccupied with the ideal, which he understands as opposed to the tendency toward naturalism (208), in which art copies reality. Silk notes a connection with Brecht's epic theatre in footnote 31: "Up to a point [...] it might be argued that Schiller is anticipating the Brechtian principle of 'epic drama' whereby a non-naturalistic element, such as a chorus, is a quasi-positive alienating device and produces a *Verfremdungseffekt.* The principle that the chorus *per se* (and the *Braut* chorus specifically) is an epic device survives in recent theory in e.g. Pfister 1988: 74-5".

Regardless of Brecht's intentions with regard to Schiller, his discussion of the chorus in Greek drama and its comparison with the work of other dramatists shows that by the time Brecht was working on *Antigone*, he was willing to see his work (and the role of the chorus in the epic theatre) in the context of theatre history, despite his refusal to abandon defining himself in opposition to those who had come before. Brecht's relationship with theorists who preceded him – from Aristotle to Schiller - was complex and changed over the course of his lifetime. In what follows, I am not suggesting that Brecht adheres to any classical model, but that his decision to adapt a classical play from a tradition he once professed he would overthrow is worthy of closer attention than it is usually given. This play is generally considered to be less important in the canon of Brecht's works (and therefore is rarely studied),[411] however, this play was important in the development of Brecht's epic theatre.[412] Although he would not wish to be overtly connected with Aristotle, Schiller, or Schlegel, Brecht's use of the chorus is better understood – and in fact emerges as more impressive - through a discussion that contextualizes his particular use of the chorus to create a complicit yet critical audience for his adaptation of *Antigone.*

---

[408] In fact, Brecht praises Schiller's theory on January 2, 1948: "Schiller sees the dialectic (linking by contradiction) of the relationship between *epic* and *drama* astoundingly clearly. My own remarks on the epic theatre are often misleading because they are critical and oppositional in nature and oppose head-on the dramatic forms of my day, which are employed artificially and undialectically" (*Journals [1934-1955]* 382).

[409] Silk (1998a) notes that there is a problem because Christianity is the dominant religion, and it is essentially individualist and inward, in opposition to the collective chorus supposed to embody it (211). Silk states: "It is as if his preoccupation with the effect of the chorus on us, the audience, has distracted him from its relation to the heroic characters and to the ideology of the play" (210).

[410] Silk (1998a) 209.

[411] Foley (2007), who notes that this chorus in particular is made "complicit" in the tragic action, is one of the few scholars to engage with this play at all. Another exception is Taxidou (2008), though she is not concerned with the chorus in particular, but with the *Antigone Model Book*. The Cambridge Companion to Brecht (1994), second edition (2006), both make only passing references to the production. On Brecht's general use of the chorus, see Baur (1999) 51-71 (and on the chorus of *Antigone* in particular, 52-5). Savage (2008) offers an excellent examination of this play within the context of a book on the reception of Hölderlin, *Hölderlin after the Catastrophe*. Although a surprising number of programmes list this production amongst a long line of *Antigone* adaptations, the production is in fact also rarely performed. This can be noted even in the new volume *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage* (2011), in which, by contrast, the impact of Anouilh's *Antigone* merits an entire section. In the introduction to this volume, Foley and Mee (2011) note that the "high point" of this play's afterlife was its performance by The Living Theatre to make a pointed political statement during the Vietnam War period. Hall (2004a) also notes that his play reached a wide audience in this revival in 1967. This production was performed over the course of two decades in no fewer than sixteen countries (18-19), and the script of this production was published by Malina (1984). A recording of this performance is

Brecht's* Antigone*: A Homecoming

After spending six years in America, Brecht had returned to Europe after the end of World War II, flying into Paris on October 31, 1947. After a few days in Paris he travelled to Zurich, Switzerland, hoping to re-establish a career in theatre in Europe. After reconnecting with his former collaborator Caspar Neher, the two developed many plans for new theatre projects. Brecht's first job as a director in the professional German-speaking theatre, however, was to direct Sophocles' *Antigone* for a theatre in Chur. Hans Curjel had offered Brecht the use of his theatre in Chur in November 1947, and suggested several works he might stage. Among these choices was Sophocles' *Antigone,* which Brecht chose.[413]

It is interesting that after Brecht's determination to create "anti-Aristotelian" theatre, he chose to adapt *Antigone*, especially since Curjel's other options included plays such as Brecht's own *Mother Courage.* Brecht records that "the Antigone story was picked for the present theatrical operation as providing a certain topicality of subject matter and posing some interesting formal

---

also available at Oxford's *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama*. Brady (2006) also notes that Straub and Huillet adapted Brecht and Hölderlin's *Antigone* to film in 1992, making it an explicit response to the First Gulf War. Foley and Mee (2011) therefore correctly state that "although Brecht's play has been revived and imitated less often than Anouilh's, its re-interpretation of Sophocles has colored many later versions, which also borrow from Brecht's style of performance" (47). It is not, then, this play that has been influential – as in the case of Anouilh's play – but the more general epic style of performance, and its ability to engage with political issues.

[412] Brecht's production not only marked his return as a theatre director, but also the beginning of renewed collaboration with Neher, as well as Helene Weigel's first real speaking part in over ten years. Recalling their work on *Antigone,* Berlau writes that "for the first time I saw what directing a play meant to Brecht. In America he had always worked under handicaps. I was fascinated by the amount of enjoyment he brought to the rehearsals of *Antigone"* (Berlau [1985:1987] 168. All translations of Berlau's work edited by Hans Bunge and translated by Geoffrey Skelton).

[413] Kuhn and Constantine (2003) 219.

questions".[414] However, he also makes it clear that he has no interest in recreating the classical *Antigone.* He writes that "there can be no question of using the Antigone story as a means or pretext for 'conjuring up the spirit of antiquity'; philological interests cannot be taken into account. Even if we felt obliged to do something for a work like *Antigone* we could only do so by letting the play do something for us".[415] This attitude toward the "classics" corresponds to his comments in the *Short Organum,* which he was writing at the same time as working on *Antigone.*[416] In the *Short Organum* and his notes to *Antigone*, Brecht shows a surprising return to dramatists like Shakespeare and Sophocles. However, Brecht uses these plays as examples of how "classical" plays can be useful only if they are updated to suit the era of the audience. As I stated above, in the late 1940s, Brecht seems to have begun contextualizing the epic theatre within the context of theatre history, although it is often in order to show how the epic theatre differs from what has preceded it – in this case, by emphasizing what alterations would be required to make this past material relevant.

Brecht encourages his audiences – both present (in the theatre) and future (readers of the model book) - to view his *Antigone* the way that he himself had viewed his source material. Brecht attempts to make clear that his production and its documentation are not simply an example for future productions to copy; the model book is simply a record of their particular approach. Just as he alters his source material in adapting *Antigone,* future dramatists should adapt *his* plays and models to suit their own eras, because "working with models need not be pursued with greater seriousness than is needed for any kind of playing".[417] A play, whether classical or modern, is only useful if it speaks to contemporary issues. What issues, then, did Brecht's production address? Why was he attracted to this particular play at this particular time?

---

[414] Brecht (1948:1964) 210.
[415] Brecht (1948: 1964) 210.
[416] Brecht (1949: 1964a). In section 68, Brecht shows how he would interpret the plot of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* so that it would suit his own era. He states that "given the dark and bloody period in which I am writing – the criminal ruling classes, the widespread doubt in the power of reason, continually being misused – I think that I can read the story thus: It is an age of warriors […] Faced with irrational practices, his [Hamlet's] reason is utterly unpractical. He falls a tragic victim to the discrepancy between such reasoning and such action" (201-2).

Savage suggests that the motifs of homecoming and daybreak that are emphasized in Brecht's adaptation may also point to reasons why this play was attractive to Brecht at this time. Savage reads the Prelude (*Vorspiel*) to the play symbolically: the two sisters are "coming home to find fascism (the rampant fire) still active in the guise of a fresh new start (the morning light)".[418] Therefore, it is not the "daybreak" that Brecht emphasizes, but the *mistaken* nature of the daybreak at the moment of homecoming. At the beginning of the play, the elders of the chorus are led by Creon to believe that the war is over but in fact, it is still ongoing. Creon's fist line onstage is "Sirs, share this with everyone: there is / No Argos any more. The settling up / Was total". [419] The chorus will later discover that the war is not only continuing, but that their army is faltering.

This "mistaken daybreak" is not the case in any of Brecht's sources (Sophocles or Hölderlin), in which the war is truly over at the opening of the play. This is an alteration of the plot - one of many - created by Brecht, at least in part because *Antigone* for him is not only a work about homecoming, but a work *of* homecoming.[420] Brecht himself had returned to Germany and the German theatre, and acting upon a suggestion proposed by Neher, Brecht decided to use the German translation of Sophocles' *Antigone* by Friedrich Hölderlin, which was first published in 1804.[421] Hölderlin's translation is notoriously challenging to understand, and modern scholars have found it to also be highly inaccurate, departing from the Greek original in many instances.[422] However, regarding Hölderlin's translation, Brecht wrote, "I find Swabian intonations, and schoolboy Latin constructions, and feel at home. Something Hegelian is there, too. It is probably the return into a German-speaking country that drives me to this enterprise".[423] Brecht's return to the German language – his linguistic homecoming - was an important aspect of his return to Europe,[424] and he emphasized the connection between his adaptation and Hölderlin's translation by choosing to title his production *The Antigone of Sophocles, A version for the stage after Hölderlin's translation* (*Die Antigone des Sophokles: Nach der Hölderlinschen Übertragung für die Bühne bearbeitet)*.

---

[417] Brecht (1948: 1964) 215.
[418] Savage (2008) 163.
[419] Brecht (1959: 2003)13.
[420] Savage (2008) 181; my italics.
[421] Although the translation was difficult to work with, Kuhn and Constantine caution against understanding Brecht's decision to stage Hölderlin's text as unprecedented or eccentrtic. This *Antigone* had been staged a dozen times before Brecht directed it, and most recently (earlier in 1947) in Basel and Zurich.

Brecht's homecoming was not only nostalgic but also highly critical. Brecht was concerned as he returned to Europe that the distinctions between the old and new had become blurred. He observed that "there seems to be a good deal of confusion as to what is new and what is old, while fear that the old will return has become mixed with fear that the new will step in".[425] The confusion between old and new is something that Brecht would engage with in adapting this play, no doubt formally – by adapting something old – as well as within the themes of the play.

---

[422] Savage (2008) writes that philologists have identified hundreds of errors in translation. He refers readers interested in the "more than thousand errors" to Jochen Schmidt's commentary on Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe* (1994) 2:1326-28. Constantine (2001) indicates three reasons for the "philological inaccuracies": first, Hölderlin did not use the most recent and best available text of Sophocles' own play. Secondly, the publication included many misprints, which are documented in a letter from Hölderlin himself to the publisher. Thirdly, although he "had more insight into the heart of Ancient Greek culture than anybody else in his generation, he was not very sound in the grammar of the language, and in translating made basic mistakes" (9). Although modern scholars have found it to be highly inaccurate, in a letter to his son Stefan, Brecht referred to Hölderlin's translation as "relatively faithful" (Letter to Stefan Brecht. *Letters* 442-3. Zurich, December 1947. Quoted in Kuhn and Constantine (2003) 200-1). Savage argues that by "faithful", Brecht may not have been referring to its proximity to the Greek (which he would not have been able to assess, as he had no knowledge of Greek), but "because he thought it best approximated to the rough-hewn, archaic, and specifically oral linguistic gestus proper to its hypotext" (167-8). For a comparison of Brecht's *Antigone* with the Hölderlin version, Savage also refers readers to Weisstein (1973).

[423] Völker (1971:1975) 144. Translation by Fred Wieck (1975). Brecht might be referring to Hegel's influential reading of the play, in which Antigone and Creon represent two equal rights in collision with one another (as described above). Brecht was aware of Hegel's *Aesthetics* at least since 25 February 1939 when he recorded in his journal "Hegel's reproduction of the Aristotelian theory of art in the introduction to his aesthetics is extraordinarily beautiful" (*Journals, [1934-1955]* 22-3). He proceeds to quote some lines from the introduction. The following day, he adds more comments, including: "this man hegel's philosophy of history is a tremendous piece of work. His method enables him not only to see the positive and the negative in any historical phenomenon, but also to make this polarity the cause of further development" (*Journals [1934-1955]* 23).

[424] Brecht's feeling of "homecoming" extended to his renewed inclusion amongst German poets; in 1949, he would wrote to Peter Huchel, editor of *Sinn und Form*, an influential poetry magazine, to say: "I want to thank you for the excellent special issues, it's really the first publication that brings me together with the Germans, apart from my own efforts. A kind of petition for admittance to literature" (*Letters* 477. Berlin, July 1, 1949). For more about Brecht's relationship with this magazine, see Parker (2008).

[425] Brecht (1948: 1964) 209.

Just as Brecht's homecoming can be understood as a dialectical push and pull, simultaneously joyous and critical, this is reflected in his production and especially in his use of the chorus. Not only does the chorus serve as a distancing device, but it is first employed in order to promote audience identification. The tension between identification and distance, which is palpable in Brecht's homecoming, is reflected in his use of the chorus as both an identification and distancing device, used to manage the relationship of the ancient *Antigone* with the audience's experience of the recent war.

Connections to WWII

By contrast with Anouilh's WWII-era adaptation, Brecht did not present the two sides of the play's conflict as equal in opposition. Savage writes that in the wake of World War II, education on both sides of the Iron Curtain seized upon the story of *Antigone* as a relatively uncontroversial contribution to the process of denazification.[426] This meant that "Creon's insistence on patriotic duty over private scruple no longer seemed, as it still had for Hegel, a position just as defensible as Antigone's appeal to the unwritten laws of heaven".[427] In his adaptation, Brecht is not concerned – as Anouilh was – with using his chorus to balance the opposition between Creon and Antigone. As noted above, it is more common in adaptations that address political issues for the chorus to be employed to ally the audience with one side of the conflict. However, whether their identification with the chorus and their participation in the collective is ultimately felt to be positive (as collaboration or solidarity) or negative (as complicity in a negative action) depends on the chorus' – and the production's - ability to distance the audience, allowing them to self-reflexively evaluate their own role.

---

[426] Savage (2008) 155.

[427] Savage (2008) 155. In a note, Savage cites Steiner's *Antigones* (1984) in support of this claim.

In Brecht's production, the evil of Creon's actions has been amplified, which makes the chorus' support of Creon more disdainful. In this play, Creon has led his army to attack Argos for their natural resources. The war is therefore not occurring in Thebes, but on foreign soil. Polynices has fled the battle in fear after watching his brother Eteocles being killed in battle. Creon has Polynices killed, and his body is left to rot as an example. This is recounted by Antigone to Ismene in the opening speech of the play, in which she states:

In a long war, one man among many
Eteocles fell, our brother. In the tyrant's train
He fell young. And younger than him Polynices
Sees his brother pulped under horses' hooves. Weeping
He rides from an unfinished battle, for this to one
And that to another the battle spook deals when he comes
  at him hard
With his just desserts and smashes his hands. Headlong
Already the fugitive
Had crossed the streams of Dirce and breathing again
He sees the seven gates of Thebes still standing, then Creon
There at the rear lashing them into the fight
Seizes him splashed with the blood of his brother and hacks
  him to pieces.[428]

This exposition serves not only to establish the plot, but to establish several other things as well: an audience aware of the plot of Sophocles' *Antigone* will recognize that they will be seeing some major alterations to the plot in the upcoming play, and that through these alterations, the evil of Creon will be amplified.

After Ismene refuses to help Antigone bury Polynices and the two girls exit, the chorus of Elders enters, and their speech also quickly establishes their characterization in Brecht's adaptation. They only discuss the joyous return of the soldiers after their true stake in the battle is mentioned: the “booty”. Speaking of the war which they believe has ended, they say, “But victory big in booty has come / And favoured the numerous chariots of Thebes”.[429] Foley describes how “in its first speech, the chorus does not celebrate peace, as does Sophocles’ chorus, but greedily anticipates the returning spoils of war. Sophocles’ famous choral ode on man (*Antigone* 332-75) becomes in Brecht’s version a meditation on human greed and monstrosity”.[430]

---

[428] Brecht (1959: 2003) 9.

Creon then enters and discusses the victory with the Elders. In an unsettling adaptation of the script, as Creon is concluding by telling the elders that “the city must be cleansed” of those who are against him, he is interrupted by a guard who addresses him as “My führer”.[431] Constantine’s decision to retain this one German term in his translation is especially important to an examination of the play’s reception by an English-speaking audience. Although most scholars seem to agree that Creon represents Hitler in this play, in Germany, the amount of subtlety involved in the use the German term “führer” – which has the literal meaning “leader” or “guide” - would depend on the performer’s intonation and gestures. The term has the potential to serve as either a subtle suggestion or a blatant connection. Retaining the name “führer” in English (a language in which “führer” is associated mainly with Hitler), however, removes any subtlety and further solidifies the connection between Creon and Hitler.

Whether in German or English, however, Brecht’s main alterations to the tragedy have been introduced within the first several scenes: the adapted portrayal of the various characters – including the chorus - and their increased relevance to the recent experiences of his European audience. In his *Antigone*, the chorus and audience become associated in order for both to be chastised for their *lack* of participation. For Brecht’s goals with his chorus to be accomplished, three steps are necessary to attain his ideal audience reaction of self-reflexive complicity: first, the audience must be led to identify themselves with the chorus. Then, through this association, they must come to see the chorus and themselves in comparison with Antigone. They must then be led to toward a critical attitude of the events and characters of the play, including – most interestingly - their own association with the chorus. The performance analysis below explores these three steps in depth and examines how over the course of this play, Brecht's ideal target audience would realize that they have associated themselves (or been associated by Brecht) with a complicit onstage group that provides them with a *negative* example.

---

[429] Brecht (1959: 2003) 12.
[430] Foley (2007) 361.
[431] Brecht (1959:2003) 15.

B. Performance Analysis

Identification

When Antigone is brought in and confesses to burying Polynices, Creon asks her to apologize. When she remains silent the Elders ask her, "Say then why you are obstinate", and she replies: "For an example".[432] Savage interprets this moment as Antigone acknowledging that her role is largely symbolic: she knows that alone, her actions will change nothing. However, when looking at issues of chorus and audience identification, the idea of using Antigone as an example in this play becomes much more complex.

It is in this same scene that the Elders become most connected with the audience. While Creon is interrogating Antigone, both characters refer to the group watching, and the vague nature of these group references can mean that the audience begins to assume the characters are including them. They refer to this group on two occasions during this central argument. First, Creon refers to them when he asks,

---

[432] Brecht (1959: 2003) 21.

> Creon: So you think others see it as you see it?
>
> Antigone: These see it too, these too are smitten by it.
>
> Creon: Aren't you ashamed to interpret them unasked?
>
> Antigone: Surely we honour humans of one flesh?[433]

The references to "others", "these", and "them" could certainly be interpreted as including both the chorus and the audience in the context of performance. In the epic style of acting, direct address is an important aspect of the performers' communication with the audience.[434] Direct address would certainly facilitate the audience's feeling that the performers were including both the chorus and themselves when they refer to "those" observing the argument. Subsequently, Creon begins to warn "the group" not to help Antigone, despite her pleas:

> Creon: I advise you, you'll say nothing, to her there
> Speak nothing, if you know what's good for you.
>
> Antigone: But I appeal to you to help me in my trouble
> And help yourselves, so doing. Who seeks power
> Drinks of a salty water, he cannot desist but must
> Drink it and drink it. My brother yesterday, today it's me.
>
> Creon: And I am waiting
> To see who sides with her.
>
> Antigone *when the Elders remain silent:*
> So then you let it be and you keep your mouths shut for him.
> Let that not be forgotten.
>
> Creon: She notes it against you.
> At odds she wants us under the roof of Thebes.

---

[433] Brecht (1959:2003) 22-23.

[434] Brecht writes in his "Short Description of a New Technique of Acting" (written c.1940, published in 1951, translated by Willett in 1964): "The directness of the relationship with the audience allows and indeed forces the actual speech delivery to be varied in accordance with the greater or smaller significance attaching to the sentences. Take the case of witnesses addressing a court. The underlinings, the characters' insistence on their remarks, must be developed as a piece of effective virtuosity. If the actor turns to the audience it must be a whole-hearted turn rather than the asides and soliloquizing technique of the old-fashioned theatre" (138-9).

> Antigone: Screaming for unity you live on discord.[435]

Antigone is attempting to set an example – but an example requires followers, and neither the chorus nor the audience comes forward to prevent her death. In this scene, the chorus and the audience are serving the same function: as passive onlookers, it is easy to conflate the onstage group with the offstage group. Savage writes that the Elders'

> recognition of the *theatricality* of her cry for help entrenches them in their position as voyeurs at the very moment she is demanding that they abandon it. In this respect, the Elders function as stand-ins for the theatregoers in front of them, whose response to the desperate entreaties of the heroine is to remain motionless in their seats, looking on in silence as she is dragged off by the palace guards.[436]

Both groups are witnessing the action, but *choosing* not to step into it. The Elders themselves admit to Creon, near the end of the play, "We heard / Many a bad thing from there and dismissed it with / The messengers, trusting you, and stopped our ears / Fearful of fear. And shut our eyes when you drew in / The reins tighter".[437] The audience is in a similar situation. It is only theatrical convention – which they adhere to by choice – that prevents them from becoming involved. Like the chorus, they feel a certain 'safety in numbers', which allows them to remain bystanders, witnesses to the action. It is, in a sense, the very fact that the audience remains in the outer frame that is intended to be understood as problematic. Brecht, in emphasizing the chorus' *decision* not to act, thus offers a challenge on many levels: he challenges both the conventional inactivity of the chorus, as well as the audience's role as equally passive onlookers. Brecht connects the chorus and the audience in order to call this very coalition of witnesses into question.

---

[435] Brecht (1959: 2003) 21-2.

[436] Savage (2008) 159. The chorus does not in fact remain completely silent, but makes feeble attempts to diffuse the argument, reminding the characters of Thebes' recent victory: "She is unhappy. Don't hold her words against her. / But you, do not forget in your folly and because / Of your own grief Thebes' splendid triumph in battle" (24).

[437] Brecht (1959: 2003) 44.

The Example

When Antigone is being led to her death, the Elders attempt to console her, and she interprets their sympathy as mockery. She then tells them "And better it would be if you / Collected together all the scolding of wrong and dried / It of tears for me and put it to use. You are not / Farseeing".[438] When they reply by speaking about the force of fate, she rejects their words, placing the blame squarely on Creon, the human agent of her misery, stating "Do not, I beg you, speak of fate. / I know it. / Speak of him / Who lays me out, innocent, for death. Knit him / A fate! For do not think / Unhappy souls, you will be saved".[439] Denying the role of fate is one of the major alterations in Brecht's adaptation. Raymond Williams writes that in Brecht's tragedies, "it is not the inevitability of tragedy, as in the traditional tragic acceptance or the modern tragic resignation. The choices are made in a dimension that is always potential, and so the action is continually played and replayed".[440] In order to show the world as alterable, fate can have no place in Brecht's work.

Denying the influence of fate in this tragedy not only makes Antigone appear brave in this scene - it also connects her to the inactive chorus. Although they may have seemed to be in opposition, once she leaves, the Elders remark:

But she also once
Ate of the bread that was baked
In the stony dark. And while unhappiness
Harboured in the towers
In their shadow she sat at ease until
The deadly things that went forth from Labdacus' home
Returned deadly.
[…]
Not until the last
Patience was consumed and measured out the last

---

[438] Brecht (1959: 2003) 36.
[439] Brecht (1959: 2003) 36-7.
[440] Williams (1966: 2006) 236.

Criminal act, did the child of unseeing Oedipus
Remove the long since threadbare blindfold from her eyes
To look into the abyss.[441]

In short, until the evil that Creon was afflicting upon Thebes affected herself, Antigone too was a bystander.[442] The Elders remind us that Antigone, though she now serves as an "example", has her own faults and fears as well, and needed to be personally affected before taking action. As Williams states, in Brecht's tragedies, "we have to see not only that suffering is avoidable, but that it is not avoided".[443] At one point, Antigone too chose not to take action, just as the chorus (and the audience, with whom they have been identified) now chooses not to confront their leader.

In one sense, the Elders eventually do follow her example. When Tiresias comes and confronts Creon about the state of the war, they too are instigated into action. Like Antigone, it is only when their own interests have been threatened that the chorus is willing to challenge their king. Now that they realize the war will not lead to "booty" and victory for Thebes, they choose to confront the king about his tyranny. They question him about how the war is actually proceeding, and even ask, "Son of Menoeceus, have you / perhaps / Broached an enormity?".[444] Creon answers,

When I went against Argos
Who was it sent me? Metal in the spears
Went after metal in the mountains
At your bidding. For Argos
Is rich in metals.[445]

---

[441] Brecht (1959: 2003) 37-8.

[442] Indeed, in Brecht's journal entry from January 12, 1948, he writes that after Tiresias "drops out", "all that is left for antigone to do is to help the foe, which is the sum total of her ideological contribution; she too had eaten for too long of the bread that is baked in the dark" (*Journals [1934-1955] 385*-386).

[443] Williams (1966: 2006) 240.

[444] Brecht (1959:2003) 43.

[445] Brecht (1959: 2003) 43.

Just as they chastised Antigone for waiting until her own life was affected before acting, Creon now chastises them, pointing out that “no one has sent me back the ore / I fetched from Argos, but bending over it / You blather of butchery there and lament my brutality. / I’m used to greater indignation of the loot is late”.[446] The audience, allied with the chorus, can see themselves as being compared with the example of Antigone. Both Antigone and the Elders have waited too long, and now can only serve as examples in their challenges to the king.

However, unlike Antigone, the chorus do not stand by their principles. The play concludes with the chorus’ announcement that they will follow their leader, even to defeat. They admit,

But we
Even now all follow him still and the way
Is down. Our biddable hand
Never to strike again
Will be hacked off. But she who saw everything
Could help nobody but the enemy who now
Is coming and quickly will wipe us out. For time is short
And disaster all around and never enough of time
To live on thoughtlessly and easily
From compliance to crime and
Become wise in old age.[447]

They lament that they were unable to progress from compliance and crime to wisdom. Because of their inability to act on Antigone’s example, in the end her resistance helped no one but the enemy. The chorus’ regret about their own “compliance” creates an interesting twist on the words of Sophocles’ final chorus, and this alteration is emblematic of Brecht’s use of the chorus throughout the play. Sophocles’ chorus states that “the great words of boasters are always punished with great blows, and as they grow old teach them wisdom”.[448] Here, by contrast, guilt is not only caused by boasting, but also compliance. The compliance of the chorus itself (and the audience by association) is emphasized – it is no longer "them", but "we". In addition, the consequences of their inaction are amplified: not only will Creon suffer, but the entire city will be destroyed. Ultimately, the comparison of the chorus/audience collective with the example set by Antigone is used to prompt the audience to evaluate their "role" in the tragedy.

---

[446] Brecht (1959: 2003) 44-5.

[447] Brecht (1959: 2033) 51.

[448] μεγάλοι δὲ λόγοι / μεγάλας πληγὰς τῶν ὑπεραύχων / ἀποτίσαντες / γήρᾳ τὸ φρονεῖν ἐδίδαξαν (1350-1353). Transl. Lloyd-Jones (1998).

Contemplation of the Example

It is important to note that in order for the chorus to distance the audience effectively from the action of the play, the identification of the chorus and the audience cannot be a complete identification. In Brecht's work, the idea of "identification" is challenged on many levels: not only must the audience be prevented from fully identifying with the action in order to view the play from a position of critical distance, but in the epic theatre, even the actor never truly "becomes" a character.[449] In her work on theatre audiences, Bennett writes that when the device of the chorus or prologue is employed in a production, "the review process is necessarily complicated by the demand on the audience to hypothesize about (and invariably judge the accuracy/usefulness of) the character(s) presenting the commentary.[450] In Brecht's theatre especially, the audience is *encouraged* to judge the characters' actions, viewing them from a contemplative distance, and relate these actions to their own.

This is, however, a complicated step in Brecht's *Antigone* because of Brecht's use of the chorus. The chorus, with whom Brecht has encouraged the audience to identify, must now also seem distanced enough for the audience to evaluate. The audience must be able to withdraw from the collective back to individuality and distance, in order to think critically about their own role. Unlike other examples from previous chapters – such as the use of mask in Hall's *Oresteia* – Brecht attempts to use the same chorus to accomplish an extra step: the communication of self-reflexive distance. Brecht attempts to accomplish distance and critical evaluation by not only offering the audience Antigone and the chorus as "examples", but clearly indicating how these examples should be interpreted. Through the evaluation of the chain of examples that links Antigone to the chorus and audience, the audience members should be distanced enough to individually contemplate the examples of self-interested bravery they have been offered and associated with. And upon contemplation, the audience of *Antigone* will quickly realize how bystanders are viewed by this play.

---

[449] Brecht writes in the *Short Organum* that the actor must be showing the character: "At no moment must he go so far as to be wholly transformed into the character played […] He has just to show the character, or rather he has to do more than just get into it" (section 48). Brecht also gives an example from his play *Life of Galileo:* "This principle – that the actor appears on the stage in a double role, as Laughton and as Galileo; that the showman Laughton does not disappear in the Galileo whom he is showing" (section 49). See the remarks on the gestus of showing in the discussion of Kurup's *An Antigone Story: A Greek Hijack* (above in 2.3), including a description of how this simple binary between actor/character can be complicated and questioned. The complexities of actor/character identity will return again as a subject of discussion with regard to Schechner's *Dionysus in 69,* below.

[450] Bennett (1997) 141.

Near the conclusion, after Creon learns of the deaths of both his sons and the impending attack on Thebes by Argos, he asks the Elders:

If I dig her out
Will you stand by me then? You, if not always
The movers, were always compliant. That
Implicates you.[451]

In both this excerpt as well as the one above, the word "compliance" – not complicity – is used by the chorus and Creon to describe the chorus' involvement in the tragic action. Yet this play's chorus serves as an example of a "complicit" chorus in Foley's description, and in my argument communicates complicity to the audience as well. What accounts for this discrepancy of terminology? Above, I stated that complicity is a useful term for its flexibility in the degree and nature of involvement a complicit party can have. In fact, compliance can be a form of complicity – The *Oxford English Dictionary* supplies the following definition for "complicit": "Involved knowingly or with passive compliance, often in something underhand, sinister, or illegal".[452] This production in fact *emphasizes* the connection between compliance and complicity, and this is a major aspect of its political message.

---

[451] Brecht (1959: 2003) 47.

I would argue that although the chorus may describe itself as compliant (and the audience may feel they are also merely compliant), compliance is characterized by this play – and even by the chorus - as associated with crime: in the earlier quote, the chorus lamented their inability to complete a progression from "compliance to crime and / Become wise in old age". Creon here drives home the association between compliance and guilt; their compliance "implicates" the chorus, and through their identification with the chorus, the audience is implicated as well. The production attempts to emphasize that compliance – the passive activity of the collective of chorus and audience – is in fact tantamount to complicity.

Compliance is a form of both consent (and therefore guilt) to Creon, and in this case, he also seems to be speaking for Brecht, who has identified his chorus with the audience in order to show the complicity of bystanders in wrongful actions.[453] Antigone and the chorus, although they both confronted Creon, do not serve as entirely positive examples of rebellion, for they all remained compliant for too long, and therefore became complicit in the tragedy.[454] As the chorus themselves acknowledge, "But we / Even now all follow him still and the way / Is down".[455] In this play, therefore, contemplation – perhaps as described by Schlegel or Schiller - is not enough, for it is an activity that can be undertaken passively. Savage explains that Antigone's words

---

[452] *OED Online* (2012).

[453] Brecht's intention is supported by his comment on March 1, 1948: "about outlawing those who collaborated: it was right during the war to describe it to the german people as hitler's war, now the war must be described as the german bourgeoisie's war which they commissioned hitler to manage" (*Journals [1934-1955]* 386).

[454] Of course, despite her own faults, Antigone is still held up more positively than the chorus, who have followed their leader to the very end of the play (and presumably beyond, though "the way is down").

[455] Brecht (1959: 2003) 51.

> remind the audience, long since inured to the inexorability of tragedy, of the individual and collective responsibility it bears for the perpetuance of the conditions under which tragedy is still possible. We, the people, are shown to be no less implicated in the show trial we are witnessing than is Antigone herself. At this moment, the *contemplative attitude* with which we have drawn pleasure from her impending sacrifice becomes tendentially (and tendentiously!) inseparable from the culpability incurred by those who stood by while the horror unfolded. The roles of spectator and accused have undergone dramatic reversal.[456]

Again, the role of spectators/bystanders as "implicated" and "culpable" is stressed. This is because in this tragedy which denies the role of fate, the tragic events are presented as preventable. The spectators can indeed then become the accused, as we are all to blame for the perpetuation of tragedy. Our compliance "implicates" us, and we become complicit in tragedies that might have been avoided.

Raymond Williams writes that in the work of Brecht there is ultimately a rejection of tragedy: Brecht not only rejected the idea that sacrifice is necessarily redeeming, but also "the idea that suffering can ennoble us".[457] It is a bad society that needs heroes, and a bad life that needs sacrifices. He explains that "tragedy in some of its older senses is certainly rejected. There is nothing inevitable or ennobling about this kind of failure. It is a matter of human choice, and the choice is not once for all; it is a matter of continuing history. The major achievement of Brecht's mature work is this recovery of history as a dimension for tragedy".[458]

However, in Brecht's *Antigone,* the roles of spectator and accused (the audience and Antigone) are not the only roles that have undergone a reversal at this moment. Brecht ultimately connects the audience to the chorus only to challenge the chorus' ability to provide a positive example. An in-depth examination of Brecht's chorus/audience connection shows that in Schlegel's terms, Brecht might be thought to reverse (or at least complicate) the relationship of the “ideal spectator” with the audience: the chorus, which I have shown is framed as far from “ideal”, might be considered to represent only a “real” audience – the audience of the European audience’s all-too-real history, who refused to become involved until they were affected themselves. Framing the chorus as *un-ideal* spectators is intended to incite the spectators to become more ideal versions of *themselves* in their own lives and communities, after the conclusion of the play.

---

[456] Savage (2008) 159-60. My italics.

[457] Williams (1966: 2006) 234.

[458] Williams (1966: 2006) 239.

Brecht, a theatre practitioner, may not have been aware of all of the theories surrounding the ancient and modern use of the chorus, but he recognized that the chorus could be a flexible tool useful to his epic theatre. Brecht’s chorus is intended to create a self-reflexive awareness of collective complicity in the audience that leads them to realize that “identification” and “contemplation” – and even “learning” - are mere steps in the process of social change, and must lead them to create a world in which tragedy is obsolete. Looking at Brecht’s use of the chorus through the model I have proposed has allowed a better understanding of how Brecht used the chorus to lead the audience to both identify with the collective, as well as subsequently to feel distanced and to reflect on their complicit role in the tragedy. Brecht used the chorus – to him, a distancing device – in order to establish a collective sense of identification between chorus and audience, only to attempt to distance the audience from the chorus once again through the framing of the “example” they set.

Brecht’s relationship to both the “individual” and the “collective” is complex and highly political. Although I have argued that distance in the outer frame is aligned with individuality, I do not mean to suggest that Brecht was uninterested in collectivity; on the contrary, he was interested in building collectives of critically thinking people. In the case of Brecht’s production, I would argue that self-referentiality – which I have shown is traditionally an aspect of the choral role - is intended to be transferred to the audience in the form of self-reflexivity. In this case, when the audience is distanced from the chorus with whom they have been identified, the audience "recognizes the performative role of the chorus" and "cross the boundaries between the chorus *qua* tragic character and *qua* performer". However, in addition, since they have been previously identified with the chorus, they are also intended to feel distanced *from their own role*, and to self-reflexively consider their complicity. Brecht's ideal audience would be distanced enough to acknowledge their own compliant role in the play as well as the negative way in which this role has been framed: as complicity in the tragic action.

Schechner's use of the chorus will similarly show how a chorus can be used to create both a sense of identification and distance in an audience, despite his production's very different political, social, historical, and performance context. By contrast with Brecht, who I argued established a sense of identification between the chorus and audience in order to ultimately set them up as a negative example, it was difficult for audiences to tell whether Schechner was framing his chorus as a positive or negative example for the audience. Was identification with the chorus to be viewed as a positive collaboration or negative complicity?

The issues of distance and identification are complicated by Schechner's attempts to physically involve the audience; in this play, participation itself becomes a form of identification with the chorus. In the end, it was difficult for his audience to make the leap from identifying with the chorus and participating in their actions to feeling distanced enough from the collective to evaluate that same relationship. Comparing the uses of the collective choruses in these two plays will show that using the chorus to create feelings of identification and collectivity in the audience is an important and flexible tactic in delivering a political message. It is also, however, a tactic that is often complemented by a subsequent attempt to distance the audience and encourage them to individually and self-reflexively evaluate their role and acknowledge their complicity in the tragic action. This second step, which might be considered borrowed from the self-referentiality of the chorus, is essential to the communication of a political message. However, an examination of both productions also shows that accomplishing the balance between identification and distance necessary to successfully delivering that message can be difficult.

3.3 Richard Schechner and The Performance Group: *Dionysus in 69*

A. Introduction: Schechner's Ritual Chorus

Dionysus in the 1960s

Whereas *Antigone* was very popular with adapters in the first half of the twentieth century, during this time, *The Bacchae* was not often produced because it was considered to be too violent and disturbing for audiences. Suddenly in the 1960s, however, the play began to seem relevant; in *The Bacchae,* dramatists of the 1960s found a way to express such ideals as living at one with nature, overpowering tradition and following new cults, and celebrating the god of wine/intoxication. This interpretation of the play in the 1960s caused an explosion in its popularity, which began in 1963.[459] *The Bacchae* continued to be produced throughout the 1960s, and an explanation for its sudden popularity in this decade is provided by Julius Novick, a

---

[459] Hartigan (1995) explains that in the early 1960s, *The Bacchae* still mainly interested academics. In 1963, Minos Volankis was invited to produce the play to "remedy the tendency toward academic and uninteresting productions of classic Greek plays in America" (83). Twentieth-century America was ready for an embodiment of the play that was not merely an academic study, and the result was a Dionysus who appeared as a combination of Mick Jagger and John Lennon, and a chorus for whom the ecstasy of worshipping Dionysus was connected with the ecstasy of consuming the drug LSD (81-3).

New York Times drama critic. In a review of the 1969 production of *The Bacchae* by the Repertory Theatre of the Yale School of Drama, he stated:

> *The Bacchae* is important to us because Dionysus, especially as Euripides here depicts him, is for better or worse the god of our times: the god of intoxication, of frenzy, of release-your-inhibitions and blow-your-mind…the god who makes you dance 'until the mind splits open and the world falls in, and Dionysus is glad.' Dionysus is glad a lot these days. We had better learn as much about him as we can; our survival may depend upon it.[460]

This Yale production contained a physically active chorus who were skilled in acrobatics but were criticized for lacking in joy during their service of Dionysus. Clive Barnes, also a writer for the *New York Times*, explained that to conceive of the chorus as contemporary hippies was a "relevant insight, and the most meaningful part of the production, but the conception led to no coherent interpretation – the athletic figures lacked passion".[461] Just because a show could be adapted to emphasize its relevance does not guarantee a coherent production. What this quote from Barnes' article shows, however, is an increasing acknowledgement that the adaptation of the chorus, perhaps especially in productions of *The Bacchae,* could be "the most meaningful part" of a production.

The celebration of *The Bacchae* in the 1960s culminated in the show *Dionysus in 69,* produced by the Performance Group and directed by Richard Schechner. This show is considered so important in the history of Performance Reception that Hall has stated that "the reawakening of interest in Greek tragedy" was "heralded by Schechner's remarkable production".[462] The performances of *Dionysus in 69* ran from June 1968 until July 1969**.** The script for the show included six hundred lines from Arrowsmith's translation of *The Bacchae,* some spoken more than once. It also included sixteen lines from Wycoff's *Antigone* and six lines from Grene's

---

[460] Novick (23 March 1969) B11.

[461] Barnes (15 March 1969).

[462] Hall (2004a) 1. She later refers to the "vision" and "courage" of the production (12).

Hippolytus.[463] The rest of the script was composed of text written by individual members of the group. There were other lines spoken, which were part of improvisations that changed with each performance, according to the whims of the actors and the participation of the audience. In order to record these in the "script", the Group includes stage directions in their published version of the text, indicating that the section was an improvisation and offering several examples of lines that were used at various stages in the show's run.

Schechner indicates his satisfaction with the script in the volume, explaining that "in the end we came up with a script that does, I think, make sense, incorporate conceptual as well as affective diversity, reflect the complicated internal dynamics of the Group, and do justice to the implications of Euripides' genius".[464] In this summary quote, three important goals of the production are made clear. First, the idea of "conceptual and affective diversity", might be considered an acknowledgment that both the creation and reception of this play are individual and personal, in addition to being collective. Individuals are expected to respond to it with a variety of reactions and opinions, just as the Group initially responded to *The Bacchae*.

Secondly, the acknowledgment of the personal nature of each person's relationship to the play means that the production can encompass – and in some instances, perform - the personal dynamics and interpersonal relationships specific to the Group. Not only within the fictional play, but also within the Group, the tension between individual and collective was a common theme, and one which will be important in my analysis. Thirdly, Schechner is stating a goal of the production that is foundational yet easily overlooked: *Dionysus in 69* is not intended to challenge *The Bacchae* of Euripides and its place in the traditional canon. Unlike many performances in the 1960s which sought to challenge the dramatic canon and its texts, performances of *The Bacchae* in the 1960s were instead intended to assert the tragedy's relevance – and *Dionysus in 69* is no exception.

---

[463] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.* This volume has no page numbers. When I am quoting a comment by a particular Group member, I will cite that person's name and the title of the volume. See also Shephard (1991) for an account of the workshop/rehearsal/performance process and analysis of group dynamics.

[464] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

In addition to its sexual associations, even the title of Schechner's production has profoundly political implications. Zeitlin has noted that the title was chosen "not only for its more naughty associations, but also to propose a revolution that 'would elect Dionysus president in the coming year'".[465] Revermann has also noted the political dimension of the title: "with the presidential elections looming in November 1968, *Dionysus in 69* functioned as a tongue-in-cheek campaign slogan, signalling the advent of a Dionysiac age once this god of liminality and transgression had been chosen for the highest office in the country".[466] The political aspects of this play – whether political in the "traditional" election sense, or implicit in other themes of the play, such as sexual politics – are expressed in the production through the tension between individual or personal reflection and collective action.

Dionysus in 69

As the audience members entered the Performing Garage one at a time for the Performance Group's landmark production, *Dionysus in 69,* they were encouraged to wander around the interior until they found a space in which they wished to sit. They were confronted by two large towers, and the audience were invited to sit underneath, in front of, or on top of the elevated platforms of the towers.[467] In the centre were mats, which members of the Group were already occupying when the audience entered. The actors were rolling around, making noises, and occasionally speaking audible phrases. Although the audience was most likely ignorant of the reason for their presence, they were all performing psychophysical activities that they had learned through workshops with the director, Richard Schechner. This part of the performance was not referred to as a "warm-up", but instead, dubbed the "Opening Ceremonies" by the group. This "opening" might be considered an inversion of the traditional *parodos* of Greek tragedy. Instead of a *parodos* in which the chorus enters the stage space, in this case it is the audience that is entering, to find the chorus already performing. In both cases, the entering – or "opening" – is a part of the performance itself, a ritual element of the chorus' performance, and what Schechner would later call the "ritual process".

---

[465] Zeitlin (2004) 51. Hall (2004a) notes that the title, "with no apostrophe before the numeral, did not refer to the date of the production's premiere, which was actually in 1968. Its predominant signification was certainly intended to be sexual" (11-12).
[466] Revermann (2008) 102.
[467] For more information on the space for the production, see chapter 10, "Dionysus in 69", in McNamara, Rojo, and Schechner (eds.) (1975), or Schechner (1973).

From the 1960s onward, Schechner argued that ritual is a type of performance, because "when the whole sequence is considered, it becomes clear that the ritual process is identical to what I call 'restored behaviour', 'twice behaved behaviour,' behaviour that can be repeated, that is rehearsed [...] Ritual process is performance".[468] Schechner's work shows his desire to analyze not only the ritual "event", but the other parts of the process leading up to the event. Schechner wrote in 1990 that "ritual studies are turning from looking at the 'finished product' toward examining the 'whole performance sequence': training, workshop, rehearsal, warmup, performance, cooldown, and aftermath".[469] In examining Schechner's use of the chorus, I propose to look at this play precisely as Schechner would analyze a ritual; examining the entire "ritual sequence" is a lens through which to grasp his work's influences, aims, and impact.

This will require looking at the workshops leading up to the production, as well as the production's reception. It will be important to examine this production both *as* a ritual, as well as looking at the smaller rituals it *contains*. Analyzing the use of the chorus in this play to create a collective ritual will show that, as in Brecht's production, the chorus is used first and foremost to create a sense of identification between the chorus and spectators. It is a combination of this collectivity with subsequent distancing - allowing the audience to self-reflexively understand their previous identification and collective action as complicity in the tragedy - that is again intended to lead to the communication of the political message of the play.

---

[468] Schechner (1990) 43.
[469] Schechner (1990) 43.

As I stated above, it is common for adapters interested in creating a political adaptation of a tragedy to capitalize on the chorus' role in the tension between individuals and the collective. In *Dionysus in 69,* this tension exists not only within the source play – Euripides' *Bacchae* - but it is also reflected in Schechner's adaptation on two levels: first, of course, it features (as in Brecht's adaptation) in the chorus' relationship with the audience. Secondly, as I briefly stated above, Schechner incorporates of the dynamics of the personal relationships between performers and their roles. Due to the inclusion of the personal feelings of the actors, the performers' relationships with each other often also find expression onstage, contributing to the tension between individual and collective.[470]

As I have previously argued, the communication of this tension between individuals and the collective – important to the production on both of these levels – is intimately related to the chorus' role in creating audience identification and distance. The audience has a sense of identification with the chorus, and then must also be distanced to evaluate their role as complicit parties to the tragic action. As I have shown in previous chapters, both identification and distancing can be accomplished through performance techniques arising out of either the inner or outer frame of the action, and that is certainly the case in this production. The tension between individual/collective is emphasized and manipulated by Schechner's use of the chorus throughout the performance.

---

[470] Hall (2004a) notes the usefulness of the chorus to Schechner's collectivizing goals: Schechner was concerned with "the barriers between audience and actor, and between individual actors and the performance group. In the subversion of these boundaries, the convention of the Greek tragic chorus proved as inspirational to Schechner as to many directors subsequently" (30).

Chorus at the Conceptual Centre

Collectivity is at the heart of this adaptation, in which there is one large, inclusive chorus at the conceptual centre of the production. Its place at the core of the production is connected with Schechner's system of role rotation. Schechner explains that the Group decided to implement a system of role rotation as a tactic to ensure that the show would not become stale. Once the group realized they were going to have a long run,

> I wondered how the performers could grow. I don't know who suggested role rotation, but it was the perfect answer. Each person could contribute his own interpretation of various characters to the swelling lore of the production. The chorus was at the conceptual centre and from it spun out this role and that one. The goal was elegant and simple but extraordinarily difficult: everyone would perform every role. One night, there would be no role assignments. During the opening ceremonies, characters would emerge, here Tiresias and Cadmus, there Dionysus and Pentheus, and so on. The show would pass into ritual. We have not reached our goal, but we have come closer to understanding the process of exchange. We know very well that every performance is a negotiation between a person, the set of events which mark out a character, and the equally precise but more communal experience of the chorus.[471]

Although Schechner says that they did not accomplish their ultimate goal of not needing to pre-assign roles, the show did operate according to a schedule of role rotation.[472] This had three major repercussions. The first was that the chorus, as Schechner states, can be considered the "conceptual centre", from which all the roles emerge. The chorus is thus of central importance to the structure of the play and its communication with the audience.

A second consequence of having one chorus at the conceptual centre of the production is the conflation of the willing and unwilling choruses of Euripides' play. In order for the chorus to be at the conceptual centre of the performance and to also be inclusive to the participation of the audience, the Group found it necessary to make changes to the manner in which Euripides employs the chorus in *The Bacchae.* Euripides' chorus is a group comprised of foreign women who do not lament the tragic action, but celebrate throughout the disastrous events of the play. Allied with Dionysus, they delight in his triumph over Pentheus and the Theban royal family. As the play slowly builds sympathy for Pentheus (or at the very least, for Cadmus and Agave), their celebration begins – at least to most modern audiences – to seem as perverse as Dionysus' use of his power. However, this group is an important foil to a secondary chorus in the play, the Theban women occupying the mountains. While the Eastern chorus of followers might be considered a "willing" chorus, the Theban women are contrasted with them for being "unwilling", since they are worshippers of the god only because he has driven them mad. The audience does not see this chorus, nor do they see their wild actions. What we do see, in the "willing" chorus, is "a dramatic correlative – controlled music dances of the Chorus, [and] vivid descriptions of wilder events offstage".[473]

---

[471] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[472] See Schechner (1970) or Revermann (2008) for the role rotation chart.

Schechner's chorus differs from the chorus provided by Euripides in many ways, but his collapsing of the willing and unwilling choruses is perhaps emblematic of his overall adaptation of the chorus. Schechner explains that his chorus represents both of the choruses found in Euripides' play:

> The women are Asian bacchantes dancing behind Dionysus into Grecian Thebes. They are also Theban women driven out of their minds and homes by ecstasy. The chorus is initiation by example. And, for the Group, it is the matrix of the play. Scenes come from the chorus and dissolve back into it. Everyone is part of the

---

[473] Bagg (1978) 6. He attributes the fact that we only see the "willing" chorus to his belief that showing the audience the Maenads "was dramaturgically impossible and aesthetically risky" (6). Although I disagree with Bagg's reasoning (ie. the "impossibility" of staging the Maenads), his differentiation between the two choruses can be useful to understanding the way the chorus functions in this play.

> chorus, emerging from it to play specific roles. Thus the chorus is the underground that gives birth to the entire play. As such, it is indestructible and, finally, joyful.[474]

According to Schechner's "conceptual chorus" model, which he has re-stated here, every member of the Group should be considered primarily a part of the singular, central, and very "willing" chorus.

The third repercussion of having one chorus at the conceptual centre of the production is that instead of being forced to understand each character in a stable way, the system of role rotation allowed actors to interpret the characters according to their own relationship with the role and, importantly, to allow this to be influenced by their relationships with other members of the Group. As I mentioned above, this impacts the way that the tension between individuals and the collective is expressed in this production. It also means that the performance text changes constantly - not only to accommodate different audiences, but also because as different actors played the same role, they were encouraged to explore their own personal connections with the character and the Group.

Anthropology, Centre Stage

The chorus, as conceptual centre, is essential for this show's "communal experience". This experience is built through identification between the audience and the chorus, which largely occurs through the chorus' role in the onstage rituals. One of the major aspects often overlooked in studies of this production is the fact that this production's basic conception and goals rely upon Schechner's particular conception of the chorus: it is the chorus at the centre of the production that includes the audience in the rituals, leading to the potential for a "communal experience".

---

[474] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

The rituals that Schechner and the Performance Group inserted into *Dionysus in 69* were mainly based on exercises that the Group undertook in workshops. The Group began by meeting in 1967 and doing "psychophysical" exercises, which Schechner had learned from the theatre director Jerzy Grotowski. According to Schechner, Grotowski had two goals when including rituals in his style of theatre: to develop "some kind of ritual performance (public or not) and, perhaps more importantly, a way for the people he works with to develop their spiritual, personal, and perhaps professional (though that is less obvious) abilities".[475] These rituals are therefore both process and product oriented, and this method – along with the particular exercises - seems to have greatly influenced Schechner's work.

By calling the exercises "Psychophysical", Schechner means they relate the body to the mind, "in such a way that the two apparently separate systems are one".[476] In these early workshops, Schechner first demonstrated the "physical exercises", and then later, the "plastic exercises" (or *exercises plastiques*).[477] The training in these workshops, however, did not aim for a perfection of form. Schechner told Shephard (an actor who would later become part of the Group) in these workshops to resign himself to imperfection in form, and to accept the fact that there was no perfect headstand. Shephard records that "he asked that I explore the relationship between the mental associations and the physical process".[478] There were partner activities as well, such as the "Total Caress", which allowed the actors to methodically and "objectively" explore the bodies of others. Some people at the workshop found Schechner's exercises too strenuous (or, I imagine, too invasive), and left during the breaks.[479]

---

[475] Schechner (1993) 248-9.

[476] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[477] Shephard (1991) 6 - 8. The former involved articulating the major joints, aiming to isolate and manipulate certain muscles (ie. wrists, shoulders, neck, chest, waist, legs, etc.). The plastic exercises improved skills such as balance, and involved headstands, balancing on one foot, and rolling across the floor.

[478] Shephard (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[479] For a more detailed firsthand description of the workshop exercises and process, see Shephard (1991).

Schechner had learned these exercises from Grotowski in 1967, and he later recalls that at the time he "felt they were influenced not only by yoga, which Grotowski acknowledges, but by the south Indian dance-theatre form, Kathakali".[480] In 1972, when Schechner himself visited the Kathakali Kalamandalam in Kerala, he discovered that Eugenio Barba had also previously visited, and had then brought Kathakali exercises to Grotowski in Poland where they came to "form the core of the plastique and psychophysical exercises".[481] Thus, at the time of the creation of *Dionysus in 69,* cross-cultural rituals were commonly being shared amongst theatre practitioners as techniques, and adapted to suit the mandates of their particular theatres.[482]

Grotowski, in a 1967 interview conducted by Schechner in New York (where Grotowski was and his collaborator Ryszard Ciesak had just completed teaching a four-week course at NYU), explains the goal of the exercises. He concludes with comments that make them sound very applicable to the Performance Group's exploration between individuals and the collective, distance and identification. He says that "with these exercises we looked for a conjunction between the structure of an element and the associations which transform it into the mode of each particular actor. How can one conserve the objective elements and still go beyond them toward a purely subjective work? This is the contradiction of acting. It's the kernel of the training".[483]

The workshop exercises that Schechner adapted from Grotowski were important to the creation of the show. Within the actual production, the Group used these exercises to build physical activities that would help the audience understand (and sometimes, feel involved in) the action, often through metaphor. In many instances, these exercises also involve the audience as a part of the collective action, within rituals. These rituals, often drawn from the psychophysical exercises and the religious rituals of other cultures, all encourage (and rely on) the audience's identification with the chorus.

---

[480] Schechner (1976) 215.

[481] Schechner (1976) 215.

[482] Schechner (1976) notes that not only did the exercises become useful to Grotowski's "poor theatre", but that Barba used these exercises – as modified by the Polish Lab – as the basis of his work when he founded the Odin Teatret (215).

[483] Grotowski (1968) 253.

These rituals not only served to mediate the relationship between the chorus and the audience. As I stated above, Schechner's production was as much about the tension between individual and collective in the inner frame of the Theban society as it was about this tension in the Performance Group itself. As Revermann says, "it is revealing that this nice pattern of alternating exposed individuality with the anonymity of the collective was destabilized by the all-too-human dynamics within the troupe itself".[484] In 1991, Bill Shephard published a monograph, in which he recalls (in a surprisingly candid manner) the "behind-the-scenes" dynamics and inner workings of the Performance Group during the period in which *Dioysus in 69* was conceived and performed. In it, he theorizes about the tensions between individuals and the collective Group that so impacted the production.[485] He describes that Jung was highly critical of group consciousness, because it has a tendency to lower the consciousness of the individual. However, he engages with Jung's comment that the inevitable psychological regression within groups is partially counteracted by ritual. This prompts Shephard to briefly summarize this theory's relation to the Performance Group: "the dynamic tension in our work between the actor and the role, the individual and his or her function in the Group, seemed to counterbalance the regressive tendencies of our group consciousness and promote the coordination of our individual efforts toward a performance".[486] In other words, ritual is a way of managing – or mediating – the tension between individuals and the collective, within the collectives of both chorus/audience and performer/Group.[487]

---

[484] Revermann (2008) 111.

[485] Shephard's published account of the production process (in 1991) provides useful – if highly subjective – details. As with the comment by Jung, Shephard often theorizes about the Group's process.

[486] Shephard (1991) 89.

Passing into Ritual

Just as Brecht's relationship to the theorists and practitioners before him changed over the course of his life, Schechner's relationship with ritual and ritual theory is complex, and the way he defines his work in relation to these influences has evolved. In 1966, early in his career, he attempted to define his work in opposition to the Cambridge Ritualists, whose work he felt was still a powerful influence in understanding performance. In a recent article, Julie Stone Peters uses this 1966 article by Schechner to argue that "Schechner's extended (hostile) evaluation in his seminal 'Approaches to Theory/Criticism' (20–28) suggests how important it was for early performance studies theorists to situate themselves in relation to the Cambridge ritualists".[488] It is important, then, to understand in what ways Schechner may have been reacting to their influence in the creation of *Dionysus in 69*. Unlike Brecht, who used the chorus as a distancing device, Schechner relied upon sources like the Cambridge Ritualists for theories that associate the chorus with the types of inclusive rituals that would draw the audience into the central, willing chorus. Before proceeding, it is essential to briefly explore the evolution and context of Schechner's engagement with ritual theory, in order to have a better understanding of his goals in this production.

In the previous chapter, I outlined not only the goals of the Cambridge Ritualists, but also some criticism of their work. I explained that Rainer Friedrich divides the work of the Cambridge Ritualists according to what he identifies as two separate goals: proving drama's origins in ritual, and using ritual as an archetype that can be located in all drama. Friedrich claims that the Cambridge Ritualists' theory of the origins of drama in ritual holds up to criticism, but when the theory is applied as an archetype to all drama, it becomes hopelessly inadequate. Not only does Friedrich take issue with Murray's archetypal approach, but it is also one of the main reasons for Schechner's early opposition to ritualism. In his 1966 article, after drawing attention to issues similar to those described by Friedrich, Schechner concludes, "there is no Primal Ritual extant; the connections between surviving rituals and the Dithyramb are doubtful; and the connections between the Dithyramb and the Greek theatre are unproven".[489] Indeed, in the same article, Schechner announces, "perhaps it is time to abandon the Cambridge thesis altogether as one which is too limiting and no longer suited to our perceptions of theatre".[490]

---

[487] See, for instance, Shephard's example of the "sacrificial ritual" performed in rehearsal, and how it prompted his emotional re-integration into the Group (41).

[488] Stone Peters (2008) 37 n. 66.

Schechner, however, was not interested in proposing a different origin of Greek tragedy. He explains that "origin theories, I think, are irrelevant to understanding theatre".[491] However, he will not exclude ritual; instead, he argues, ritual is one of several activities (including play, games, and sports) that are related to theatre. He declares that "the relation among these that I wish to explore is not vertical – from any one to any other(s) – but horizontal: each autonomous form shares certain characteristics with the others".[492] This structuralist approach (typical of its time) emphasizes the relationship between different types of performance. Schechner would expand this list over the course of his career,[493] and this approach to ritual would occupy much of his scholarly and dramatic work.

---

[489] Schechner (1966) 24.
[490] Schechner (1966) 26.
[491] Schechner (1966) 26.
[492] Schechner (1966) 27.
[493] For instance, compare with his chart of "Performance Events" in Schechner (1990) pp. 20-4.

Although in his early work Schechner defines his goals in opposition to those of the Cambridge Ritualists, he was undeniably influenced by their work. Only one year after these comments, Schechner would begin work on what would become *Dionysus in 69.* Stone Peters notes that later, "in a revision of 'Approaches to Theory/Criticism,' Schechner himself acknowledged: 'whatever my quarrels are with the Cambridge thesis, a number of productions of Greek tragedies have exploited it, including my own Dionysus in 69'".[494] Like Brecht's initial resistance to classical texts, Schechner also seems to have gained respect for the "old", but only when it could be made useful and relevant.

The narrative of tragedy emerging from the dithyramb, moving from collective ritual to a form focused on the story of an individual is important to *Dionysus in 69*. In their evolutionary narrative, the Cambridge Ritualists emphasize the tension between individual/collective, protagonist/chorus that is created through this process. They shared this focus with one of their major influences, Nietzsche. A return to collectivity is at the heart of *The Birth of Tragedy,* in which the Dionysiac element of art triumphs over the Apollonian.[495] The narrative of the "birth" of tragedy proposed by Nietzsche is the representation of Dionysus being torn apart by the Titans, transformed into ritual. For Nietzsche, all tragedy is a version of this story, and other characters "are merely masks of that original hero, Dionysus".[496] This narrative of the ripping apart – Dionysus' *sparagmos* - represents the process of individuation, and Nietzsche explains that individuation "should be regarded as the source of all suffering, and rejected".[497] Art, especially as Nietzsche saw it reborn in Wagnerian opera, offered a hope – a corrective – that there would be an end to individuation, and with the rebirth of the Dionysiac element in tragedy, a return to acknowledging the importance of collectivity. Or as Silk and Stern succinctly rephrase, Nietzsche believed that “this is the basis of the Dionysiac experience: *the collapse of individuation”*.[498]

---

[494] Stone Peters (2008) 37-38 n.66 cites Schechner (1988), 28 n.1.

[495] A point which Friedrich (1983) notes is often overlooked (161).

[496] Csapo and Miller (2007) 25.

[497] Nietzsche (1872: 1956) 66.

In Harrison’s account especially, the move from the collectivity of ritual toward the individual action of tragedy is important to understanding tragedy as it survives today. She writes that “in the old ritual dance the individual was nothing, the choral band, the group, everything, and in this it did but reflect primitive tribal life. Now in the heroic saga the individual is everything, the mass of the people, the tribe, or the group, are but a shadowy background which throws up the brilliant, clear-cut personality into a more vivid light”.[499] The move from collectivity and ritual to individualism is a part of the evolution towards modern drama. However, as was the case with Schlegel’s “ideal spectator” model, there is an important *implication* in Harrison’s work that has held sway in the imaginations of theatre practitioners. In this case, as I have previously argued, the implication is the potential for re-ritualization that remains inherent in theatre as it survives today.

Re-ritualization

For Harrison, the straightforward evolution from ritual to drama is ultimately a loss. Stone Peters explains that for Harrison, “the birth of drama (and of art more generally) represents a tragic falling off from the intensity, the desire, the power, the engagement, the collectivity, the magic of ritual enactment. In a sense, when ritual drama becomes drama proper, it begins to lose its essential identity”.[500] Harrison believed that “in the separation of spectator from object, a ‘community of emotion ceases,’ the spectator is ‘cut loose from immediate action,’ and an

---

[498] Silk and Stern (1981) 64. Their italics.
[499] Harrison (1913) 159.
[500] Stone Peters (2008) 22.

‘attitude . . . of contemplation’ takes over”.[501] Ultimately, Harrison believes that “‘‘Greek drama . . . betrays us’’.[502] However, Stone Peters also argues that Harrison saw the possibility for re-ritualization of theatre:

> Art (theatre) was a mistake, Harrison implies, producing a life of second-hand imagination and second-hand emotion. But, through a return to its exotic origins in the soil and in primitive ritual – a return made possible by rupturing the civilized boundaries of Europe (geographical and historical) – art could turn itself back into the kind of ritual performance that it was always meant to be.[503]

In the previous chapter, I related the re-ritualization of theatre to the work of Nietzsche and Gilbert Murray. Harrison’s remarks also seem surprisingly similar to the plans of Grotowski and Schechner to incorporate cross-cultural anthropology into theatre, although it predates their work by fifty years. However, as I stated above, Schechner is not interested in a return to an origin. In his later work, he proposes that the “origin” of the aesthetic genres – theatre, dance, music – could as well be themselves, or could be healing, fun-making, or teaching. To call all of these “rituals”, he argues, is to beg the question.[504]

This is a divergence from his mentor Grotowski, who later became increasingly interested in creating “not-for-a-public ritual performances whose sources are almost totally ‘traditional’ – that is, non-Western – cultures”.[505] In 1988, Grotowski explained that “ritual is a performance, an accomplished action, an act. Degenerated ritual is a spectacle. I don’t want to discover something new but something forgotten. Something which is so old that all distinctions between aesthetic genres are no longer of use [...] Essence interests me because in it nothing is sociological”.[506] Grotowski’s work developed toward a search for origins; he uses foreign ritual as a way to not only to attempt to reach origins, but “*the origin”*.[507] The goal of what Grotowski called “objective drama” was to “re-evoke a very ancient form of art where ritual and artistic creation were seamless [...] First to discover differences, and then to discover what was before the differences”.[508]

---

[501] Stone Peters (2008) 22 cites Harrison (1912; she cites 1927) 46; (1913) 193; (1912) 46.
[502] Stone Peters (2008) 23 cites Harrison (1913) 14.
[503] Stone Peters (2008) 27.
[504] Schechner (1990) 24.
[505] Schechner (1993) 246.

Schechner would later argue that both Grotowski and his other major influence, the anthropologist Victor Turner, were interested in returning to theatre’s origins in ritual. Schechner explains that Turner’s speculations at the end of his life paralleled Grotowski’s work, since both searched for ritual’s creative powers and wanted to show how ritual generated new images, ideas, practices. However, Schechner writes that before he died, Turner seemed interested in finding a global basis for the ritual process.[509] The relationship between a “primal ritual” and a “global basis”, I would suggest, is the same as the relationship between a conception of ritual as the origin or the archetype of drama. These views might be better identified as “diachronic” and “synchronic” views of drama: Grotowski’s search for the ritual origins of drama implies a diachronic view of the evolution of performance, while Turner’s search for an archetype for cross-cultural performance could be considered to imply a synchronic understanding.

In the 1980s, it was not only Turner, but also Schechner, who was interested in searching for the synchronic basis of performance. In an essay near the end of his life, Turner wrote that

> both Schechner and I, approaching the issue from different directions, envision theatre as an important means for the intercultural transmission of painfully achieved modalities of experience. Perfect transcultural understanding may never

---

[506] Grotowski (1988) 36-40 quoted in Schechner (1993) 254-55.
[507] Grotowski (1988) 36-40 quoted in Schechner (1993) 254-55.
[508] Grotowski (in Osinski [1991]) 96 quoted in Schechner (1993) 246.
[509] Schechner (1993) 255. He explains further: “If Turner had lived, he would have wanted to find out if a Grotowskian ‘objective drama’ performance shared with the rituals of its source cultures attributes at the level of autonomic nervous system responses, brain waves, and so on” (255).

> be achieved, but if we enact one another's social dramas, rituals, and theatrical performances in full awareness of the salient characteristics of their original sociocultural settings, the very length and intensity of what Schechner calls 'the training-rehearsal-preparation process' must draw the actors into 'other ways of seeing' and apprehending the 'reality' our symbolic formations are forever striving to encompass and express.[510]

Turner, like Harrison and the Cambridge Ritualists before him, inspired Schechner and other theatre practitioners because of the potential for a *re-ritualization* of drama. In a striking similarity to Stone Peters' arguments about Harrison, Schechner writes that "Turner regrets what he calls the '*sparagmos'* of ritual, but detects 'signs that the amputated specialized genres are seeking to rejoin and to recover something of the numinosity lost in their [...] dismemberment'".[511] The origin of tragedy – and the Ur-ritual archetype some believe it leads to – is collective. Thus, the reversal is a re-absorption of the actors back into the chorus, a return back to the "conceptual centre".

Efficacy and Entertainment: A New Archetype

What the above discussion – in conjunction with the background provided in the previous chapter - establishes is not only the general context of ritual theory to which Schechner was responding; it also shows that whether Nietzsche and Harrison (or even Grotowski and Turner) were interested in ritual's originary or archetypal relationship with theatre, all of these theorists implied the possibility of a return to the collectivity still inherent in theatre. This is essential to understanding Schechner's goals of re-ritualization and his use of the chorus is *Dionysus in 69.*

When Schechner synthesizes the work of the ritualists, he capitalizes on this important implication of re-ritualization. In Schechner's description of the relationship between ritual and drama, the possibility of a *reverse-evolution* features prominently:

---

[510] Turner (1982) 18. The implications of these views for intercultural adaptations of the chorus will be taken up in chapter four.
[511] Schechner (1990) 24 quotes Turner (1990) 12.

> Entertainment/theatre emerges from ritual out of a complex consisting of an audience separate from the performers, the development of professional performers and economic needs imposing a situation in which performances are made to please the audience rather than according to a fixed code or dogma. It is also possible for ritual to arise out of theatre by reversing the process just described. This move from theatre to ritual marks Grotowski's work and that of the Living Theatre. [...] In all entertainment there is some efficacy and in all ritual there is some theatre.[512]

Schechner's account of theatre's emergence from ritual is much more realistic than that of Harrison and the Ritualists, as it takes into account practicalities such as economic factors. However, they do share an important similarity that is often overlooked: ritual can arise from theatre just as theatre can arise from ritual.

According to Schechner, theatre can become ritual, because he does not conceive of these two in evolutionary terms. As I have stated above, Schechner was not interested in the origins of theatre, and did not believe that to be a fruitful avenue of exploration for performance theory. In his account, however, a reverse-evolution is possible precisely because he believes there is a binary – an archetype – underlying *all* performance. However, for Schechner, this binary is not at all similar to the pattern proposed by Gilbert Murray. This is in part because Schechner does not believe that theatre and ritual are the true opposition underlying performance. Instead, the basic binary should be drawn between "efficacy" and "entertainment". These two are "opposed to each other, but they form a binary system, a continuum", which is inherent in all performance.[513] The decision to call a performance "ritual" or "theatre" is thus dependent on the degree to which the performance tends toward efficacy or entertainment.[514] According to this theory, which Schechner recorded between 1974 and 1976, theatre flourishes when efficacy and entertainment are "both present in nearly equal degrees".[515]

---

[512] Schechner (1976) 218.

[513] Schechner (1976) 206-7.

[514] Schechner (1976) 207.

This binary, I would suggest, is useful because it is essentially *reception-focused.* It emphasizes the balance between ideal receptions of both ritual and theatre: an ideal ritual is efficacious, and the ideal reaction to a piece of theatre is entertainment. Schechner provides a chart of terms associated with both efficacy and entertainment, which will be useful in analyzing the rituals of *Dionysus in 69*:

EFFICACY←--	→ENTERTAINMENT[516]
(Ritual)	(Theater)
results	fun
links to an absent Other	only for those here
abolishes time, symbolic time	emphasizes now
brings Other here	audience is the Other
performer possessed, in trance	performer knows what he's doing
audience participates	audience watches
audience believes	audience appreciates
criticism is forbidden	criticism is encouraged
collective creativity	individual creativity

There are certain aspects of this binary that are particularly emphasized in Schechner's production. The analysis that follows expands my previous connection between the collective/individual and identification/distance to include another aligned dialectic: efficacy/entertainment. In particular, the opposition between "audience participates" and "audience watches" might be considered a consequence of the audience's inclusion or exclusion in the collectivity created by the rituals. It is also important to note that in an efficacious performance, in which the audience participates, “criticism is forbidden”. Collectivity, participation, and identification go hand-in-hand with efficacy. Individuality, distance, and the ability to criticize are allied with entertainment. In Schechner’s production, the tension between efficacy and entertainment is felt by the audience as a tension between the individual/collective, and their own sense of inclusion/exclusion by the collective Group chorus. The smaller rituals contained in the production support its overall goals, and must mediate the audience’s reactions to the play as both efficacious ritual and entertaining theatre.

---

[515] Schechner (1976) 209. Schechner uses this theory to praise the theatre of his own time: "During these brief historical moments the theatre answers needs that are both ritualistic and pleasure-giving. Fifth-century Athenian theatre, Elizabethan theatre, and possibly the theatre of the late nineteenth century and/or of our own times show the kind of convergence I'm talking about" (209). Although Schechner's more recent revision (2003), places more importance on explaining that there is no "evolutionary 'progression' making today's theatre better than yesterday's or tomorrow's better than today's", (132), the earlier statement remains, with the small alteration "the late nineteenth century to our own times" (134).

[516] Schechner (1976) 207. This chart remains important to Schechner's performance theory – it also appears (sometimes with slightly different wording) in Schechner (1977) 75, as well as in Schechner (1988) 120; second edition (2003) 130. Interestingly, between 1977 and 1988, the line "brings Other here/audience is the Other" is removed. Schechner's evolving views of anthropology and performance are engaged with further in chapter four.

As in my analysis of Brecht’s *Antigone,* a progression from chorus/audience identification and collectivity to the questioning of this identification and collective action (leading to an acknowledgement of complicity in the tragic action) can be ascertained as a goal of the production. Surprisingly, despite the many differences between these productions, the steps of this progression are quite similar: there is an attempt to encourage the audience to identify with the chorus, and individual characters emerge to serve as particular “examples”. There is then an attempt to encourage the audience to feel distanced – to self-reflexively evaluate both the characters and the chorus with whom they have been associated, based on whether they have provided suitable “examples” in dealing with the conflicts of the play. Looking at the Group’s exercises, rituals, and goals shows that the tension between individual/collective (represented in Schechner’s concern with efficacy/entertainment) is reflected not only in the training of the Group, but in their performance as well. From the inclusion of the psychophysical exercises in the “Opening Ceremonies” of the play, this tension is communicated to the audience through the use of the chorus for both identification and distancing.

B. Performance Analysis

From Exercises to Opening Ceremonies

The "Opening Ceremonies" described above were based on the psychophysical exercises that the Group undertook in their workshops. As the audience entered, the performers were spread throughout the space, doing these exercises. These "Ceremonies" were of indeterminate length, and "their several functions overlap": the spectators enter the space, the performers come into close physical and psychic contact with one another, and they warm up by performing the exercises.[517] This might be considered the moment in which Schechner's "conceptual chorus" is most clearly displayed; no characters have differentiated themselves from the rest of the Group.

Perhaps most importantly, the Opening Ceremonies also "distribute the performers throughout the space, so that they activate and control it".[518] Although Schechner refers to this last point as "mundane",[519] it is rather important – the chorus, together with the audience, can be spread out throughout the space. They are already intermingling and physically negotiating which space is for "performance", and which is for "audience". In fact, the chorus' ability to mingle with the audience and their control over the space will later become essential to the production.

In the Opening Ceremonies, however, there are two factors that prevent the audience from being able to fully perceive the Group as an undifferentiated, collective chorus. First, there were differentiated roles within the collective "chorus", and this differentiation is drawn along the line of gender. The men are only permitted to say one line, "Good evening, sir [or ma'am], may I take you to your seat?".[520] The lines that the women speak and sing during the Opening

---

[517] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*
[518] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*
[519] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*
[520] (1970) *The Performance Group.*

Ceremonies, however, are fragments of Arrowsmith's translation. The core of the Opening Ceremonies is in fact this "first chorus", sung and spoken by the women.[521]

Precisely which fragments of the text would be used by the women was decided by each individual performer. Early in the rehearsal process, Schechner asked the women to go through the text of the first chorus and underline the words, phrases, sentences, or sections that affected them, whether positively or negatively. The order in which the fragments were spoken/sung followed a rigid structure, but might be spoken/sung in a different way for each performance. This was the structure of the text for most of the choral sections of the play. In this process, Schechner explains, "there was no obligation to Euripides, or The Performance Group, or even *Dionysus in 69*. It was an absolutely personal selection".[522] According to Schechner, "the principles controlling the selection and distribution of chorus lines reveal the precise nature of the personal element that confronts social ritual throughout our version of the play".[523] The idea that the choral text could be personally selected should be considered emblematic of the entire play's construction. As I stated above, the tension between the individual and collective is present in the relationship of the performers with their roles, as well as with one another. From the beginning of the performance, it can be noted that individual emotions and desires have been brought into confrontation with the communal rituals created by the Group.

Not only was there differentiation along the lines of gender at this early point in the play, but some members of the Group also felt that although the actors were not differentiated into characters, these exercises were still too individualistic. In fact, there were various opinions as to whether the exercises should be a part of the performance at all. Shephard recalls that "after Grotowski's visit to the play in November, he pointed out that it was better to confine certain personal exercises to workshop. In performance, the variables were such that the demands made upon the individual changed the process of exploration, and weakened it".[524] Ciel, a performer in the Group, admits that she "never really liked the opening exercises [...] within a structure which is, at best, loose, personal patterns develop which are solipsistic, repetitious, and enervating".[525]

---

[521] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*
[522] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*
[523] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

Not only did performers feel that these exercises detracted from their goal of collectivity, but some audience members noted this as well. In his detailed review, Stefan Brecht describes his experience of the play's opening:

> The group does not come on as a phalanx. They approach us on individual terms, themselves disunited. Individual actors do their thing right next to this or that spectator. We are let in on their confusions, hesitations, hang-ups. The manner of line-delivery & the freedom of timing support this picture. Interaction grows out of individual exercise, group-action out of interaction. Until the end, the scattering of props, actors, audience symbolizes effectively a looseness of group-structure indicative of individual spontaneity.[526]

In Brecht's view, the entire play builds toward collectivity. He does not interpret the actors as emerging from the chorus and returning to it, as the Group intended. This misinterpretation, I will show, works in contrast to the Group's aims, which are to move from collectivity toward a *questioning* of this collectivity.

Tiresias and Cadmus: Complicit Examples

Whether or not the Opening Ceremonies felt "inclusive", they certainly fall into the "entertaining" category, and have not yet become "efficacious". The move toward the inclusion of the audience begins in the following scene, in which (as in Brecht's *Antigone)* characters emerge to serve as "examples". Between the Opening Ceremonies and the major ritual that follows, Tiresias and Cadmus emerge from the chorus to perform the scene corresponding to the first episode in Euripides' play. As the first actors to have dialogue with one another, they provide a connection between the Opening Ceremonies and the subsequent action. They also establish the way in which the actors will relate personally to their roles:

---

[524] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*
[525] Smith (1970) *The Performance Group.*
[526] S. Brecht (1969) 162.

> Cadmus: [...] And how sweet it is to forget my old age.
>
> Tiresias: How old are you?
>
> Cadmus: Twenty-seven.
>
> Tiresias: I'm twenty-six. It's the same with me. I, too, feel young enough to dance.[527]

The audience is invited to find this comical, yet this brief scene nevertheless prevents the audience from being caught up in the fiction, by drawing attention to the fact that the actors are young men playing old men.

Their dialogue not only serves to alienate the audience – in the Brechtian sense – from the onstage fiction. It also prepares the audience for their role in the rituals to come. In direct parody of Euripides' text, this scene from *The Bacchae* has been adapted so that Tiresias' and Cadmus' decision to join the chorus should lead the audience to follow. This is in contrast to Euripides' text, in which Cadmus emphasizes the solitary nature of their act:

> Cadmus: We alone shall dance in the god's honour.
>
> Tiresias: Yes, we alone have sense, the others none.[528]

---

[527] (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[528] Κάδμος: μόνοι δὲ πόλεως Βακχίῳ χορεύσομεν.
Τειρεσίας: μόνοι γὰρ εὖ φρονοῦμεν, οἱ δ᾽ ἄλλοι κακῶς (195-6). Transl. Kovacs (2002).

In the Performance Group's version, depending on the actor playing Tiresias, a version of the following is spoken:

> Cadmus: Are we the only ones who are going to dance for Bacchus?
>
> Tiresias: I don't know.
>
> Cadmus: Why don't you ask them?
>
> Tiresias: You want me to ask them?
>
> Cadmus: Yes, ask them.
>
> Tiresias: All right. You wait here. Don't move.[529]

He goes directly into the audience, and asks individual members, "Would you like to go through our ordeal with us?".[530] A speech follows, in which Tiresias (when played by McDermott) states,

> Did the god say that just the young should dance? Or just the old? Or just the whites? Or just the blacks? Or just the Italians? Or just the Greeks? Or just James Brown? No, he wants his honor from all mankind. He wants no one excluded from his worship. Not even The Performance Group.[531]

This is in contrast to Euripides' Tiresias, who states that "the god has not distinguished old from young where dancing is concerned: he wants to receive joint honor from everyone and to be magnified by all without exception".[532] The changes made to the text, including the direct communication with the audience (not to mention the humour) prepare the audience for the upcoming Ecstasy Dance.

---

[529] *The Performance Group.*

[530] An alternate version of this line is spoken when another actor performs this role. She says instead, "Have you come to join the revels of the god or just to watch?". The video recording also shows McDermott asking, "Will you dance with us later on if you dig the music/our women?".

[531] *The Performance Group.*

[532] οὐ γὰρ διῄρηχ᾽ ὁ θεός, οὔτε τὸν νέον / εἰ χρὴ χορεύειν οὔτε τὸν γεραίτερον, / ἀλλ᾽ ἐξ ἁπάντων βούλεται τιμὰς ἔχειν / κοινάς, διαριθμῶν δ᾽ οὐδέν᾽ αὔξεσθαι θέλει (206-9). Transl. Kovacs (2002).

In Brecht's use of direct address in *Antigone,* I explored the ambiguous inclusivity of Creon and Antigone's references to those watching – "them" – which served to link the chorus and audience. Here, the connection is much more concrete. The Group has expanded Tiresias' text from a condemnatory warning into a direct confrontation and an endorsement for the upcoming opportunity to physically participate by dancing. An interesting phenomenon worth noting at this point is that in both Brecht and Schechner's productions, the outer frame is not reserved for the chorus alone. Other characters can enter the outer frame and not only communicate with the audience, but also encourage the audience to identify with the chorus. Just as Tiresias and Cadmus will join the chorus, they try to literally lead the audience to do the same. In addition to encouraging identification with the chorus, in both productions other singular characters will also help the audience with the second step: encouraging the audience to feel distanced from the chorus in order to acknowledge their complicit role in the tragedy. I will return to this phenomenon - the use of individual characters in the outer frame – below in part four.

The Birth Ritual: Bridging the Efficacy/Entertainment Divide

After Tiresias and Cadmus have attempted to lead the audience by example, the chorus essentially does the same. Now, however, the example is a performed ritual. After the brief scene between the two "old" men, all of the performers take off their clothes, and the men lie on the floor side-by-side, while the women stand naked over them. The first character to pass through the "birth canal" – the chorus' legs – is Pentheus. When he emerges from the canal, he gives a speech very close to the text spoken by Euripides' Pentheus.[533] Next, the character of Dionysus stands up and delivers a monologue which is, by contrast, very dissimilar to any text of Euripides' play. For instance, when William Finley plays Dionysus, he says to the audience,

---

[533] See Euripides lines 215-262.

> Good evening. I see you found your seats. My name is William Finley, son of William Finley. I was born twenty-seven years ago and two months after my birth the hospital in which I was born burned to the ground. I've come here tonight for three important reasons. The first and most important of these is to announce my divinity. The second is to establish my rites and my rituals. And the third is to be born, if you'll excuse me.[534]

Finley then climbs into the canal through the women's legs, and – quite comically – continues to talk as he passes through the canal, although his words are often drowned out as the women shout and sing.[535]

This "Birth Ritual" is an example of what I will call a "borrowed" ritual. Schechner based this section on a ritual of the Asmat people of New Guinea. Schechner has explained that he was not alone in "bringing back" techniques and forms, but that this was a very common practice at the time that Dionysus in 69 was created.[536] As I stated earlier, Schechner was very influenced by the impact of anthropology on theatre. Not only were techniques borrowed for training, as in the use of the exercises in the Opening Ceremonies, but in cases such as the Birth Ritual, entire rituals were being separated from their original social or religious context and included as part of the "action" in a play. Borrowed rituals – such as the Birth Ritual - were given new form and new significance through their placement in the context of performance. The first time the

---

[534] *The Performance Group*

[535] This can be seen in the video recording: *Dionysus in 69* (1968). Photos of this scene are commonly reproduced. See, for example, the cover of Hall, Macintosh, and Wrigley (2004).

[536] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.* In discussing the Opening Ceremonies, I argued that practitioners like Barba and Schechner were borrowing techniques. However, the borrowing of entire foreign rituals was also swiftly becoming more common in the second half of the twentieth century. Schechner (1976) states that "travellers bring back experiences, expectations, and, if the tourists are practitioners, techniques, scenes, and even entire forms" (214). In fact, by 1976, this process had become so common that Schechner could claim that "theatre historians will regard tourism as of as much importance to twentieth-century theatre as the exchange between England and the Continent was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" (214). Schechner indicates that "the birth ritual of *Dionysus in 69* was adapted from the Asmat of West Irian; several sequences in the Living Theatre's *Mysteries* and *Paradise Now* were taken from yoga and Indian theatre; Philip Glass's music draws on gamelan and Indian raga; Imamu Baraka's writing is deeply influenced by African modes of storytelling and drama. The list could be extended, and to all the arts" (214). This practice of "borrowing" rituals also marks one of the most influential choruses of the twentieth century – that of Ariane Mnouchkine's *Les Atrides.* De La Combe (2005) describes that she not only makes the chorus "the centre of the performance" (286), but also drew on Asian performance forms: Noh for Cassandra, Kathakali for the chorus (283).

Group ever attempted the Birth Ritual, everyone took turns going through the birth canal. A member of the Group later wrote that

> in imitating the Asmat ceremony, we found a connection not only between them and us but among ourselves. It is this connection we celebrate in the ecstasy dance. It is in honour of Dionysus, but the Dionysus who is of The Performance Group. This god is our creation, and his terror and beauty extensions of our own possibilities. No abstract deity handed down through literature, Dionysus in the garage is the energy of all focused through one.[537]

The function of the ritual is no longer the function ascribed by the Asmat community (and Schechner does not describe what the original function was). It is now a symbolic birth of the Group as connected performers at the start of each performance. Shephard explains that "the birth ritual began to become increasingly significant not only in our work but also in our collective existence because it gave us the opportunity of experiencing and expressing our common bonds in a non-rational, symbolic form".[538]

If perhaps renewed collectivity was the symbolic meaning of the ritual for the Group, the audience would not necessarily have comprehended this from their actions. However, as Schechner notes in his discussion of efficacy and entertainment, performances are not always apprehended the same way by everyone in a given space. Sometimes, he notes, the ritual seems to be "authentic" for the performers, but for the audience, watching this same ritual is entertainment.[539] However, while acknowledging the difference in reception, this ritual might also be considered a shared ritual of initiation. For the performers, the ritual prefigures their connection that is solidified in the Ecstasy Dance, and for the audience, it initiates them into the ritual nature of the show. In this moment, they are only observers, but as Schechner was quoted as stating above, “the chorus is initiation by example”.[540] In this case, the audience is initiated into a production-as-ritual in which they will soon be invited to participate.

---

[537] Ciel (1970) *The Performance Group*.

[538] Shephard (1991) 88.

[539] Schechner (1976) 217. I will return to a discussion of "authenticity" and intercultural choral rituals in chapter four.

The Birth Ritual illustrates the goals and consequences of the pervasive cultural “openness” in the Western avant-garde that led to the borrowing – or in many cases, trading[541] - of ritual forms. Such rituals are removed from their social and cultural context and used to infuse Western performances with a communal or collective atmosphere. This sort of re-ritualization is an attempt to infuse efficacy (and its related qualities) into performances that have become mere entertainment. The implications and consequences of this movement will be explored further in chapter four, after I have more closely analyzed the process by which this occurs below.

Once the Group has established the connections between chorus and audience in the Opening Ceremonies by challenging the division of space, they initiate the audience into the ritual nature of the performance through the Birth Ritual. Only then does the chorus begin to actively include the audience, encouraging them to demonstrate their identification with the collective through participation.

The Ecstasy Dance: Identification and Participation

Up to this point, Schechner has followed a surprisingly similar trajectory to Brecht. The audience has been encouraged to identify with the chorus, and both the chorus and characters have served as examples. However, it is at this point that Schechner’s production diverges from the audience/chorus relationship of Brecht’s production. The chorus encourages feelings of identification in the audience not because of their collective passiveness, but on account of their participation.[542]

---

[540] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[541] Schechner (1976) explains that, for example, Peter Brook “exchanged” rituals with people in Africa – they performed for each other. Schechner and MacIntosh were similarly invited to watch rituals because they also performed. He notes that this is unlike Artaud’s experience of viewing the Balinese dancers, as this was not an exchange (215-6).

Once Dionysus has been "born", he invites the audience to participate in the subsequent action. What follows is called the "Ecstasy Dance", the first ritual to involve the audience. In other words, the move from the Birth Ritual to the Dance is one from a *model* of efficacy (which therefore remains "entertaining"), in which the Group performs a collective ritual in front of the audience, to one in which the audience members participate, if they "believe". The move from entertainment to efficacy is in this case a move from performance for spectators, to an event of "collective creativity". The establishment of an inclusive collective reduces the distance between audience and chorus, which also leads to a reduction in the audience's ability to critically evaluate the collective's actions. The audience is led toward the inner frame, which in this case, includes their own physical participation.

If audience members "believe" that the actor is the god, they are invited to dance with the performers, who are also playing instruments (cymbals, a flute, etc.). The audience is encouraged to follow their impulses and become a part of the chorus group by participating in this ritual. Finley, when playing Dionysus, emerges from the "birth canal" and states,

> Here I am. Dionysus once again. Now for those of you who believe what I just told you, that I am a god, you are going to have a terrific evening. The rest of you are in trouble. It's going to be an hour and a half of being up against the wall. Those of you who do believe can join us in what we do next. It's a celebration, a ritual, an ordeal, an ecstasy. An ordeal is something you go through. An ecstasy is what happens when you get there.[543]

Finley-as-Dionysus explicitly asks the audience to join the Group, and calls this a ritual for those who "believe". In this first participatory ritual, the audience is expressly invited to participate.

---

[542] See Fischer-Lichte (2004:2008), especially chapter 3, for remarks about audience participation in this production in relation to the idea of a "social event", as well as her theory of the "autopoietic feedback loop" of performance.
[543] (1970) *The Performance Group.*

So strong is their identification with the chorus from these early scenes, that later, they often participate in choral rituals without needing to be invited.[544]

The Ecstasy Dance is one of the many "rituals" that changed over the course of the show's run. In 1968, nudity was incorporated into the rituals, based on a suggestion from Grotowski. Schechner records that

> Grotowski saw the play in November 1968 [...] He did not like the costumes. The red chitons and black underpants of the women and the black jockstraps of the men were too much like strip-tease, he said. He felt that one might either perform naked as a sacred act or let the nakedness come through everyday clothes. I decided a few days later that the performers would do sections of the play naked.[545]

The decision to incorporate nudity, however, altered both the text and the participation of the audience. Although the nudity was daring at first, members of the group began to feel "numb", and some simply closed their eyes. Schechner reported to them on December 8, 1968, "I notice a 'blindness' in our nudity. We do not want to see ourselves naked".[546] The decision was made that audience members could not come onto the mats at the centre of the space unless they, too, were naked. The mats were to be considered a "sacred" place, and "the audience must not come on the mats unless they are as we are".[547]

In April 1969, the ecstasy dance changed again, because "the ordeal had become a routine".[548] They returned to an earlier idea of the ecstasy, but "because we had changed, our return was on a further curve of a spiral. We wanted the audience to participate, but we didn't want a discotheque anymore".[549]

---

[544] An example of this is the "tag chorus", another choral section. The actors try to convince different segments of the audience that the bacchantes are right and Pentheus is wrong. Pentheus runs around and puts his hand over each of their mouths. They must stop, frozen. When all of them are silent, the first part of the chorus is over. After a brief silence, in which Pentheus returns to the mats, the chorus begins again wherever each of them left off. As Pentheus moves faster and faster the energy builds. The stage directions note that "Spectators frequently add their voices to those of the performers. It is not unusual for spectators to physically try and stop Pentheus. As the scene builds, songs begin in different parts of the room. They are simple nursery rhymes or popular melodies. The songs spread infectiously. One dominates, and soon the performers and the audience are singing and clapping together".

[545] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[546] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[547] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[548] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

Schechner and the Group allowed their rituals to evolve because they were very attuned to the goals of each "ritual" section, and when something stopped achieving its goal, it was very often changed. Like Harrison's account of the ancient Dithyramb, when the ritual lost its efficacy it was ready to evolve – or in this case spiral - into something else. In the case of the Ecstasy Dance, the Group attempted a Harrison-like evolution from efficacy to entertainment, but found that audience participation was necessary for the ritual to accomplish its goals and not become "routine". However, what exactly *was* the efficacious goal of *Dionysus in 69* to which these rituals contributed?

Distance: The Function of the Ritual

Many critics and reviewers have discussed the influence and impact of this production. Hartigan, for instance, explains that *Dionysus in 69* was intended as "an environment and an experience" which were intended to alter the way people think about drama.[550] Earlier in his monograph, Shephard recalls that "Schechner wanted to introduce our audiences to new options of response in a theatrical context".[551] There is therefore the sense that some amount of "audience training" was a goal of this production. I would suggest that this is related to the play's main goal, which is to attempt to build a community with its cast and audience members through shared ritual. This, however, might be considered its *artistic* goal, which is dependent upon the ability of the Group to form a collective with the audience through the rituals in the play.

---

[549] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.* In his notes from April 3, 1969 (included in the 1970 text), Schechner wrote the basic rules for involving the audience in the new ecstasy dance: "Living tension between personal style and social tradition. Not individual – that is, no liberty to do simply what one likes. But an over-all pattern within which variations are possible. Circle movement. Song. Encompassing. Slowly increasing tempo and intensity. Receptive to others".
The idea of the evolution of the dance as a spiral is an idea not only in the work of Schechner, but in Turner (1990) as well. He indicates that the interrelation of social drama to stage drama is not in an endless, cyclical, repetitive pattern; it is "a spiralling one". The spiralling process is responsive to inventions and the changes in the mode of production in the given society. Thus, all members of a society are able to make an impact on the understanding of a society – philosophers, politicians, etc. feed into the spiralling process (17).

[550] Hartigan (1995) 85.

[551] Shephard (1970) 80.

The play's *socio-political* goal must also be considered. Shephard acknowledges that "unlike counterculture groups such as the Black Panthers, the Student Democratic Society, the Yippies, and the Weathermen who had specific socio-political goals, the Group had no particular prescription for society other than our own brand of collective vitality".[552] Shephard seems to believe that that production's artistic aim of collectivity was its only goal. In that case, an ideology would be shared, without any particular political message or point. However, if we look closer, this "collective" goal can be regarded as a very particular socio-political goal.

In order to understand fully how the production-as-ritual related to its political context, it is useful to return to the work of Victor Turner. Turner understands rituals as a response to certain moments in "social drama". By means of genres such as theatre, "performances are presented which probe a community's weaknesses, call its leaders to account, desacralize its most cherished values and beliefs, portray its characteristic conflicts and suggest remedies for them, and generally take stock of its current situation in the known 'world'".[553] Turner readily applies his theory to Schechner's work, which he believes "was alive to the social dramas of our time, and sought 'by freely unfolding images beyond the bounds of reality' to lay hold of the nature of its predicament".[554] Schechner's work, in other words, may not have provided a remedy, but still had a social function, and in addition, it was self-conscious of this function. However, it is precisely this function that is often overlooked.

---

[552] Shephard (1991) 236-7.
[553] Turner (1982) 11.
[554] Turner (1982) 15.

Reflecting upon Complicity

As I have stated above, the play's form emphasized the tension between individuals and collectivity. However, self-consciously *reflecting upon this tension* was also part of the play's subject matter and the goal of the play as a ritual. This aspect was most often unacknowledged in the play's reception. Most audience members easily understood the artistic goal; they were willing participants, and actively integrated themselves within the chorus and aided in the humiliation of Pentheus whenever possible. However, the play's socio-political goal of self-consciously highlighting the tension between individuals and the collective was often overlooked. This is because many audience members, absorbed in the collective rituals, overlooked the fact that the play *cautions* against any one-sided understanding; like *The Bacchae,* the "message" of *Dionysus in 69* is complex and can be elusive.

As in Brecht's play, there is an attempt to distance the audience from their identification with the collective chorus. Near the conclusion of *Dionysus in 69,* a Messenger tells the audience directly,

> Each of you is a chance. And most of you are passive. Night after night you go along with Dionysus, just as we do. And night after night you confirm the need for a Pentheus. Look, if Dionysus could lead you into the promised land, Dionysus or someone else could lead you right out again, Dig? Most of us have a pretty cheap fantasy of self-liberation. So before I open the pit door and set your catharsis in motion, consider this. It's harder to be a man than to be a god. And tragedy leaves behind no morals because it consumes them. So don't understand us too quickly. Dig?[555]

In fact, this speech could do little to dissuade people from thinking the play is entirely about sexual liberation and following Dionysus. For instance, Froma Zeitlin, who later recalled her impressions of the production, said that although upon re-examination of the script she was reminded of the play's political messages – which they often complicated within the play - this is not what made the production memorable. Zeitlin recalls that “in reviving the memories of that closing scene, I realized too that, strangely enough, I had conveniently forgotten it altogether. It was the rituals and the naked bodies that I remembered best”.[556]

---

[555] *The Performance Group.*

In one version of the conclusion, Dionysus throws election campaign buttons (proclaiming “Dionysus in 69”) to the audience. Schechner says that he would watch most people scramble to pick them up, and wonder how so many people had completely missed the point. Audience members often participated in the scrambling “with the same un-thinking power with which they validate their congressmen, bosses, priests, and presidents. The people deceive and betray themselves even as they listen to a warning against deception and betrayal”.[557] Similarly to Brecht’s production of *Antigone,* Schechner’s *Dionysus in 69* depends on the audience’s ability to not only identify with the chorus (in this case, even participating in their rituals), but to subsequently recognize that such unthinking collective action as been framed as negative by the production - as complicity in the tragic action. Most spectators’ inability to have such a recognition during *Dionysus in 69* is in fact what caused the production’s intended political message to remain unacknowledged.

3.4 Reception and the Problem of Distance

The problem of balancing distance with identification is not only an issue relevant to the collective chorus’ onstage presence, but, as I have argued, to the theory surrounding the chorus as well. To return once again to Schlegel and Nietzsche and apply my model to these theoretical discussions of the chorus, it becomes apparent that even in the nineteenth century, many of the disputes about the chorus/audience relationship can be understood as disagreements about – and conflations of – different types of "distance": the distance between the chorus and audience in the outer frame, as well as the chorus and the characters/action in the inner frame. How closely a chorus connects the audience with the action of the play – how much identification an audience has, and how it is built or maintained – is a major factor in Nietzsche's misreading of Schlegel, as I began to explore in previous chapters.

---

[556] Zeitlin (2004) 75.
[557] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

I noted that Nietzsche misunderstands Schlegel's theory of the ideal spectator, believing that Schlegel means the chorus is completely removed from the action. Billings in fact traces Nietzsche's misreading to the work of Reinkens (*Aristoteles über die Kunst*), which Billings believes is Nietzsche's most important source on the chorus. Reinkens also misunderstands Schlegel's concept of the ideal spectator; according to Billings, Reinkens reads Schlegel as arguing

> that the chorus' consciousness replicates that of an audience, which would deny the theatrical public any ability to distinguish between the world of the stage and the empirical world. In refutation, Reinkens argues the audience, unlike the chorus, never perceives the action on stage as objective truth [...] The chorus must believe the world of tragedy to be the real world [...] Reinkens takes the 'Zuschauer' of Schlegel's theory as attributing to the chorus a perspective outside of the drama, which certainly does make the theory absurd.[558]

What these scholars disagree about (and the particular ways in which they misunderstand each other), are largely related to the problems of balancing identification/distance that both Brecht and Schechner have struggled with in their productions. How involved is the chorus in the tragic action? How closely are they related the spectators? The model of concentric frames that I have proposed is intended to offer a way to differentiate between and explain these different types of distance and how they are dealt with by adapters. However, as I expressed in the introduction, the model is also essentially reception-focused. A consequence of this focus is that it not only offers a way to describe the goals of adapters and the techniques they use to accomplish them, but it also allows a closer look at where these goals may have been challenged or misunderstood by the audience in their reception of the production.

---

[558] Billings (2009) 255. Billings goes further to suggest that Nietzsche's misreading is intentional, for in his earlier work, before *Birth of Tragedy,* Nietzsche had "not only fairly represented Schlegel's theory, but spoken positively of it" (256).

Both Brecht and Schechner aimed to employ collective choruses in order to initially create a sense of identification in the audience, and to subsequently elicit feelings of distance, framing their earlier identification and collective action as complicity. However, once these collective alliances were built, it was difficult for both productions to use these same choruses to manage the necessary balance between identification/distance essential to communicating their political messages. As in productions such as Hall's *Oresteia* that I have described earlier, audiences do not necessarily receive production techniques as intended. The struggles of these two productions become apparent when it is noted that both Brecht and Schechner made alterations to their shows during their runs. Several common problems related to balancing identification and distance in the chorus/audience relationship can be ascertained by looking at the particular changes that were made to the shows in response to the audience's reception. \

In order to understand the challenges faced by both adapters, as well as the changes they made to "correct" them, it will be necessary to add another frame to the concentric frames I have suggested in my model of performance and reception. This new frame is context-specific; as I will show, it is cued or triggered for the audience by the action in the inner frame and the oscillation of the chorus (and in some cases, other elements of the performance) between the inner and outer frames. Because of its situational nature, this "third frame" represents a different aspect of reception for each adapter. For Brecht, this third frame is the associations and experiences of his audience regarding the recent war, and this frame should therefore be drawn around the outer frame. Meanwhile, for Schechner, this frame encompasses the reception of the play by the actors themselves – in their relationships with their roles, as well as with one another. In Schechner's case, this frame should in fact be the smallest frame, drawn within the inner frame, as the relationships between an actor and his/her role (as well as with the other performers) affect how the audience understands the action in both the inner and outer frames. In both cases, the adapters had to contend with the constant threat that this third frame would upset the careful balance of distance and identification attempted within the established inner and outer frames of the performance.

Brecht's Antigone: How Much Contextualization?

In Brecht's production, the communication of a political message regarding complicity and bystanders is complicated by his own ambivalence regarding the relevance of *Antigone* to World War II. This confusion is reflected in his attempted use of the chorus for both identification and distance within the inner and outer frames. As I have shown, Brecht employed the chorus – which he originally considered an alienation device – in order to create a sense of identification between audience/chorus. Although he wished to use the identification he established between chorus and audience to make the audience aware of the complicity with which they were associated, in the end, the chorus could not play "double duty" - they could not entirely become an alienating device.

As I argued above in relation to Nietzsche's misunderstanding of Schlegel, Brecht's issue also seems in part to be a confusion between two types of distance in the established model: the distance between the chorus and the audience in the outer frame, and the chorus and the tragic action in the inner frame. The chorus, if used only as a distancing device, would prevent the audience from becoming emotionally involved in the action of the play. For this to be accomplished in a situation in which the audience identifies with the chorus, a large amount of distance between the chorus and the tragic action would then be necessary – the chorus would need to provide a model of distance. But as I showed above, Brecht's adaptation *amplifies* the effect of the tragic action on the chorus, by concluding the play with the impending attack on their own city.

Brecht's confusion of intentions with regard to the chorus is reflected broadly in the play as a whole. Brecht seems to have been ambivalent about another level of distance/identification that greatly affected the reception of his political message: he struggled with how closely the audience should connect the play with the recent war. This, as I have stated above, might be considered a third frame of this production – a frame about which Brecht himself was undecided. On the one hand, it seems that Brecht wished to establish a connection between WWII and the play, and that he even encouraged it. For instance, in the programme for the original Chur production of 1948, Brecht included a poem, which he titled "Antigone", and it concluded with the stanza:

And you let the powerful off
Nothing and with those confusing the issue
You did no deals nor ever
Forgot an insult and over wrongdoing
There was no covering up.
We salute you.[559]

This poem serves not only to emphasize a strong connection between the war and the play, but by "saluting" those like Antigone, Brecht also clearly establishes, before the play has even begun, which side of the conflict the audience should take. This, however, was not the only overt connection for the audience between the play and recent events. For the performance in Chur, Brecht also added a Prelude, which takes place in during World War II. In the Prelude, two sisters emerge from their house to find that their brother has been hanged on a meat hook. They must decide whether to take him down in front of the SS Officer, which would be to risk their own lives. The Prelude concludes with the First Sister's question: "Then I looked at my sister. / Should she on pain of death go now / And free our brother who / May be dead or no?".[560] The real play, *Antigone,* begins directly after this, almost as if it is answering the First Sister's question.[561] The combination of the poem and the Prelude seem to indicate that Brecht wanted to cue a third frame for his audience: he wanted his audience to identify the play that followed with the recent war, and "salute" those who were part of the resistance, like Antigone.

---

[559] Translated in Kuhn and Constantine (2003) 202-3.

On the other hand, this open-ended question at the conclusion of the Prelude ("Should she…?") is directed to the audience, and in effect, it is passed on to them as a lens through which to view the play that is about to begin. The question seems to indicate that the audience should not just side with Antigone, but should think critically about her decisions and answer the question after judging her actions and the consequences. As I have shown, the play questions her suitability as an "example". The Prelude can thus be understood as attempting to ensure that the audience maintains its critical stance while watching the play. This view in fact corresponds with Brecht's comment that a true appreciation of the play was only accessible to those who did not associate the play with the events of the war:

> So far as the subject's political aspect went, the present-day analogies emerged astonishingly powerfully as a result of the rationalization process, but on the whole they were a handicap; the great character of the register in the old play does not represent the German resistance fighters who necessarily seem most important to us. It was not the occasion for a poetic tribute to them; and this is all the more pity because so little is now done to preserve their memory and so much to make people forget it. Not everyone will necessarily realize that they are not the subject in this case, but only he who does so will be able to summon the measure of strangeness needed if the

---

[560] Brecht (1959: 2003) 7.

[561] Also suggested by Savage (2008).

> really remarkable element in this Antigone play – the role of force in the collapse of the head of the state – is to be observed with profit.[562]

Brecht claims that a real appreciation of the play was only available to those who could summon the necessary "measure of strangeness", and that even the Prelude was only capable of "outlining the subjective problem".[563] There seems to be a fine balance between making a play seem relevant to the audience, while preventing their emotional involvement in the action.[564] The distance between the audience and the play in the inner and outer frames is affected by their identification of the action with the third frame.

Masks and Costumes

I am certain that Brecht hoped that the inclusion of a chorus would prevent the audience from fully identifying with either the chorus or the action, allowing them to critically evaluate their position in relation to the action. One way of attempting to ensure "the measure of strangeness" despite the presence of the poem and prologue was not only the inclusion of the chorus, but the design for the chorus. Neher, the show's designer and Brecht's close collaborator, created the costumes for the chorus. His design for the chorus (not to mention the entire show), would certainly have been unsettling to the audience,[565] and would have prevented the audience from fully identifying with them, in particular because of their use of large masks.[566] As mentioned in the previous chapter, masks can work to both distance the audience as well as draw them into the action by focusing their attention on the text, depending on their use and the context of reception.

---

[562] Brecht, *Masterful Treatment of a Model* (1957: 1964) 210. Translated by John Willett (1964).

[563] Brecht, *Masterful Treatment of a Model* (1957: 1964) 210. Translated by John Willett (1964).

[564] So fine a balance, it seems, that this was not the only instance in which Brecht was unable to predict the reaction of his audience. In *Mother Courage* as well, the audience showed sympathy, and his comments showing "how far Brecht was willing to accept the fact of his play's evident emotional appeal, and how far he felt it to be based on a misunderstanding by audiences and producers" can be found in Brecht (1949: 1964b, especially notes from 1952) 215-222. On Brecht's relationship with his audience, especially pre-World War II, Durst (2004) explains that "the basic assumption, namely that the modern audience did not wish to abandon itself to suggestion, be violated and patronized, or have its understanding swept away by the enrapturing effects of fascism's aesthetic politics, proved to be false, almost naively so in the case of Hitler's Germany" (201).

[565] The set was designed to have minimal furniture or props, however, it did feature huge poles topped with the skulls of horses.

[566] For a further description of the choral masks, see chapter two.

As I stated in the previous discussion of masked choruses, Brecht justifies the chorus' masks within the inner frame (ie. the chorus take them on and off within the fictional action), yet they are intended as a distancing device. In his *Short Organum for the Theatre,* Brecht describes the process and effect of using masks in certain theatrical traditions:

> The classical and medieval theatre alienated its characters by making them wear human or animal masks; the Asiatic theatre even today uses musical and pantomimic A-effects. Such devices were certainly a barrier to empathy, and yet this technique owed more, not less, to hypnotic suggestion than do those by which empathy is achieved. The social aims of these old devices were entirely different from our own.[567]

This comment not only supports my earlier argument in chapter two that a distancing effect can lead to identification, but it also shows that Brecht ascribes a distancing effect even to the classical use of masks. However, he distinguishes *his use* of them, which will not include "hypnotic suggestion", since he has new and different "social aims". As I stated above, Brecht attempts to accomplish his ideal amount of distancing in part through the epic theatre's "gestus of showing", which Mumford describes as the performer's "clear demonstration that s/he is a performer and one who critically re-presents the behaviour of an historical character and/or critically narrates historical events".[568] The mask can be used metatheatrically to distance the audience by offering a constant reminder that the actor is donning a fictional persona. This distance should prevent "hypnotic suggestion".

---

[567] Brecht (1949: 1964a) 191-2; Section 42 of *Organum.*

[568] Mumford 2001 (149). There are many factors that complicate the possibility of a simple binary between character and actor. See the discussion of Kurup's *An Antigone Story: A Greek Hijack* in 2.3, as well as the discussion of the third frame of Schechner's production, below.

Regarding the design for the chorus, Brecht wrote to Neher that “your *Antigone* stage (including costumes and props) is exemplary, and must be kept, all the more so as it can absorb all sorts of variations. And in my opinion your solution of the chorus problem is among your lasting contributions”.[569] Brecht needed the design to help balance his audience’s identification with the chorus - which is (as I have shown) encouraged in the text - with their ability to distance themselves from the work and evaluate the tragic action with which they have been made complicit as bystanders.

Changes Based on Reception

Despite Brecht’s distancing aims, it seems the audience identified the action of the play with events in the third frame - the recent war - more closely than Brecht had hoped. Perhaps, as the analysis of Schechner’s chorus showed, encouraging identification and collectivity necessarily meant sacrificing distance and criticism. Brecht responded to the initial reception of the play by making changes for the subsequent performance in Greiz in 1951.[570] He removed the Prelude and replaced it with a Prologue: before the play begins, the actors playing Antigone, Creon, and Tiresias would now enter and Tiresias would give a short speech. Much like in Anouilh’s adaptation, the Prologue speech now introduces the characters and the plot, stating “Friends, the high language / May be strange to you / In the poem from thousands of years ago / That we have learned our parts in here. Unknown / To you is the poem’s story that was to the listeners then / Closely familiar”.[571] Instead of any overt connections with recent events (as there were with the original Prelude and programme poem for the Chur production), this new Prologue simply states,

---

[569] February 7, 1948 (*Letters* 444).

[570] This production in Greiz was directed by Ernst Otto Tickhardt, and was the first to be staged using the model book created by Brecht and Berlau after the production in Chur.

[571] Brecht (1951: 2003). Translated in Kuhn and Constantine (2003) 218.

"We beg you / Search in your own hearts and minds for similar deeds / In the recent past or for the absence / Of any such deeds".[572]

Brecht seems to have used the Prologue here for the same reason as Anouilh – to prevent the audience from having too emotional a reaction to the play. Brecht replaces prelude with prologue in order to re-work the play's balance between relevance and distance, attempting to increase the amount of distance for his audience, especially between the action of the play and the third frame, the events of WWII. It seems that the chorus – despite innovations of design - could not manage to sufficiently act as both a tool of identification and distancing, and another one-person character was needed to mediate the action for the audience. However, in the end, Brecht still does not seem to have accomplished his ideal balance of identification and distance, within any of the three frames of this performance. Although the changes he made seem to indicate a concern about over-identification, instead, he seems to have "overly-distanced" the audience; many in the audience were left with nothing but a sense of confusion. According to Ruth Berlau, "the usual Chur audience found the performance odd, and I believe no one understood it at all. In consequence, it was done only five times, to which can be added a single matinee in Zurich".[573]

Schechner: Managing "Participation"

As I stated above, Schechner's production – despite its very different context – attempted to follow similar steps to Brecht's production with regard to building chorus/audience identification and distance, leading to a self-reflexive acknowledgement of complicity. However, I have also stated that where the two plays differ is that Schechner's production encourages audience participation through rituals. This seems to have merely exacerbated the kind of problems I described above with regard to Brecht, related to identification and distance. A chorus that seeks to involve the audience (in this case, making them efficacious partners in ritual and allies in the death of Pentheus), has difficulty maintaining the amount of distance required for the audience to evaluate their own role. I mentioned one particular instance above – the nudity involved in the Ecstasy dance – but this was not the only time that a ritual in the production was changed based on its reception by the audience. Schechner, like Brecht, found himself making changes to his production during its run in reaction to audience reception. Below, in discussing audience response, I will not need to modify the model of the inner and outer frames of performance. However, subsequently, in discussing the responses of the actors, the third frame – drawn within the inner frame - will become useful in understanding the attempt to balance individuality/collectivity, as well as distance/identification, in relation to their experiences of the production.

---

[572] Brecht (1951: 2003). Translated in Kuhn and Constantine (2003) 218.

[573] Berlau (1985:1987) 169. Kuhn and Constantine (2003) explain that "contemporary reviews praised the Prelude, set in Berlin in April 1945, for its compelling updating of the myth, and it was recognized that the epic presentation – the actors showing, rather than impersonating their roles – marked this out as a significant theatrical event. Nonetheless, the critics struggled with the text and with Brecht's efforts to manoeuvre the story away from its familiar moral battleground (of individual conscience and the demands of the state). The publication a few months later of the *Antigone-Model,* including the complete play-text, was even more disappointing; only some five hundred copies were sold initially" (xii-xiii). They add that the only other full production in Brecht's lifetime was the performance in Greiz, and although the conclusions were "again generally favourable, it was still a minor event in a decidedly modest theatre" (xiii).

Like Brecht, Schechner was concerned about unexpected over-identification. In the case of his production, this took the form of excessive participation. Initially, before the conclusion of the play, there was a section called the "Caress", in which the actors and the audience members touch each other (as in the "Total Caress" exercise from the Group's workshops). When Pentheus and Dionysus emerge from the pit, Dionysus hands Pentheus over to the women, whose caresses become violent. Violence (biting, scratching) is simultaneously introduced into the actor/audience caresses. The Caress section, however, could get out of control; Schechner explains that "with increasing frequency, audiences gawked, talked, or wanted to make out with the performers. Sometimes this was pleasant, but on more than one occasion a nasty situation unfolded in the darkened room. The performers refused to continue with the caress. One girl put it very bluntly: 'I didn't join the Group to fuck some old man under a tower'".[574]

So, in December 1968, the Caress was replaced with the "Moiety Dance". The dance offered something that everyone could see, and did not put the members of the Group into dangerous situations. However, it was not an ideal ritual. Schechner later said that "doubtlessly, the caress was the more radical doing. It was also more dangerous and more difficult to maintain. It depended on an innocence that a long-run play cannot have. And a willingness to participate within the terms of the production that audiences do not have".[575] In the end, Schechner and the Group learned that the inclusion of the audience is important to rituals and their efficacy, but that including the audience sometimes also necessitates altering the balance of efficacy/entertainment in a way that is not ideal. In the case of the Caress, the scales were tipped from efficacy to entertainment (inclusion to exclusion, identification to distance) in a way that was not ideal, because the proper participation of the audience could not be guaranteed.

When inviting the audience to form a collective with the audience, how and where is the line between audience and performers to be drawn? If the goal were truly to re-ritualize drama back to its origin, the Group would not have been concerned with entertainment and controlling the audience's reactions at all. But Schechner's goal – unlike that of Grotowski – was still a performance, and he used his chorus to get as close as possible to a balance between efficacy and entertainment.

---

[574] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[575] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.*

Collective Ending: Hip or Anti-Hip?

Above, I stated that the scenes such as the Messenger's speech could not dissuade the audience from believing that the play's message was limited to sexual liberation. Although the play's artistic goal of creating a collective ritual seemed clear, as I have argued, the play's ending is in large part responsible for audience members' confusion about the actual political message of the play. Schechner's play concludes with a "Death Ritual" (which is the opposite of the earlier "Birth Ritual"). Before the ritual, the women ceremoniously dip their hands in "blood", and then line up as they did in the Birth Ritual, although now they face the opposite direction. Instead of helping the men through the birth canal, they now raise their blood-stained hands above their heads. All of the men in the Group are "killed" throughout the Death Ritual before Pentheus, after the men ask Dionysus to allow it ("Yes, sir, it's my turn now, sir, can I go now, sir?").[576] Pentheus is the last to crawl through. He is looking for aid and comfort, but is ripped apart, as he pleads, "Mama, mama, it's me, Pentheus, your little boy. Don't kill your little boy for what I did wrong".[577]

Afterward, as in Euripides' play, Agave is brought to her senses, realizes that she has murdered her son, and Dionysus curses the characters. In this production, however, Dionysus does not curse the characters, but the members of the Performance Group. These curses were done in five different ways over the course of the show's run, and the changes were inspired by different actors playing the role of Dionysus, as well as changes in the political climate. Perhaps most famous is the first version, captured in the film, which was performed by Finley before the presidential election in 1968. In this version, Finley speaks as if he is campaigning for Dionysus. From the top of the tower, with a bullhorn, he begins his curses. For example, he curses Bill

---

[576] *The Performance Group* (1970).

[577] *The Performance Group* (1970).

Shephard because "he did nothing for me. He didn't satisfy me. Now he has only a false death, some stage blood, and the promise that he has to do the same damned thing tomorrow night".[578]

After the jarring Death Ritual, the audience are confronted with these curses, which are quite humourous, and also offer a reminder about the Group's personal identities. After cursing the other performers, Finley further condemns the audience to remember the evening's events and William Finley, and to "most of all, remember him when you go into your voting booths this fall", because "a vote for Finley in 68 brings Dionysus in 69".[579] Everyone then sings the melody of Stars and Stripes, and they all march and salute each other, raising the door as if it is a flag. Finley is carried out into the street, still campaigning ("Get down! Delight in real contact with one another. Grab a thyrsus! Pack a .45!").[580] Some audience members usually follow the performers down Wooster Street.

Interestingly, in the early part of the run, the performers would return later to clean the theatre and mop up the "blood". However, this eventually became part of the ritual. Jan Kott saw the show in October 1968, and as the performers marched out into the street, Schechner and Kott began to talk about the play. As they were talking, the stage hands began to mop and scrub the mats. Jan commented, "But, Richard, here is the true end to your play. Always the people come and clean away the blood". From that point on, the clean-up was incorporated into the performance, before the procession into the street.[581]

---

[578] *The Performance Group* (1970).

[579] *The Performance Group* (1970).

[580] *The Performance Group* (1970).

[581] Schechner (1970), *The Performance Group*. Kott is paraphrased by Schechner. The cleaning of the blood offers a striking similarity to Peter Stein's *Oresteia* (1980), as described by Michelakis (2005). The production "concludes with the Chorus removing the corpses of Agamemnon and Cassandra from the stage and washing away their blood.In this metatheatrical moment the Chorus, who take off their jackets and become actors in their post-performance routine of cleaning up the stage, not only remove from the performance space the signs of atrocity and violence that have just taken place. They also erase from their memory the crimes that have changed the moral universe they inhabit. Stein turns the end of the *Agamemnon* into a bitter reflection on the history of twentieth-century Germany, and Western democracies in general, dramatizing the unwillingness of the people to remember the past and learn from it" (18). It is unclear whether these two conclusions are intentionally similar, or whether the cleaning of blood is merely an equivalence between productions. However, they certainly both rely on the Brechtian tactic of concluding a production with some form of "comment" by the actors themselves.

In fact, if this clean-up had marked the end of the play, the play's conclusions might have been clearer. The collective movement out of the theatre seems to have caused confusion about the meaning of the play for many spectators. A move from individuality to collectivity, and then to a questioning of this collectivity, seems to be the desired effect of the production. However, if one views the Group as being individuated in the Opening Ceremonies – as Stefan Brecht did - the show's movement is merely from individuality (both within the Group and the audience) to enforced collectivity (including the Group and the audience).

This discrepancy between the Group's intentions (collective-individuals-collective-questioning of collective) and the audience's perception (individuals-collective) is what led many, like Stefan Brecht, to wonder about the meaning of the play. He writes that Schechner's position toward Euripides' play is dialectical, and that it is the content of the play makes one tempted to call the show "anti-hip".[582] Presumably, he is referring to scenes such as the Messenger scene, which I described above. However, he then writes that "by the form of the theatrical event, [Schechner] seems existentially committed to the hip, a hippie & engaged in converting the spectators to it. Since the medium is the message, the show turns out effectively pro-hip".[583] He describes the conclusion of the play, the "spontaneous collective" that marches down the street, as "a synthesis of the loving & the destructive elements of the hip. Call it fascism".[584] Above, I stated that there were some audience members only too willing to go along with Dionysus by the end of the show. There were others, like Stefan Brecht, who found the attempts to control the audience stifling.[585]

---

[582] Brecht (1969) 159.
[583] Brecht (1969) 159.
[584] Brecht (1969) 161.
[585] Walter Kerr, writing for the *New York Times*, also complained that he felt the show promoted a *lack* of freedom; the audience was forced to dance, they were not provided with a time or place to smoke, and were prevented even from thinking since the play seemed "unintelligible by design". Kerr felt that the focus on the bodies (of both the performers and the audience) was to the detriment of the play. He asks: is physical contact more conducive to empathy than Euripides' "awful penetration of words"? He

I have explained that Schechner removed Euripides' differentiation between the "willing" and "unwilling" choruses, in favour of one chorus at the conceptual centre of the production. I believe that this differentiation was not lost in this production, but taken up by the collective of the audience, who, once drawn into the production's collective, were divided into two camps: those willing to follow Dionysus, unthinkingly and at all costs, and those who were unwilling to participate. This latter group, like the Theban women, found themselves in a "fascist" situation in which Dionysus made the rules.

Shephard's conclusion is that although the attempt at performance-as-collective-ritual was earnest, the ritual process was not completed by this show. What was missing, in fact, is what Turner refers to above as "remedies". Shephard's explanation ties the performance into other anthropological theory, and is worth quoting at length:

> the suggestion of a goal culture was conspicuously absent in *Dionysus;* rather, the ironical aspect of the performance – Dionysus' curse at the end of the show – was indicative of our inability to complete the process we had begun. Van Gennep's *The Rites of Passage,* outlined the characteristics of the ritual process which we earnestly sought but which eluded us – separation, transformation, reintegration. In *Dionysus* the Group achieved the process of separation by challenging accepted forms of theatrical presentation, we entered the transformational stage by engaging our audiences in a provocative examination of the basic forces which influenced our lives, but we failed to reintegrate the experience on a new level of social perception. In short, the ritual process of *Dionysus* remained forever suspended in the liminal state. Whether or not the ritual process begun in *Dionysus in 69* ever reaches completion must be left to successive theatrical adventures and the knowledge we gained in our attempt".[586]

Although the production as a ritual takes stock of the current political and social situation, and challenges society's (and conventional theatre's) beliefs – for instance, about sexuality –

---

concludes that it is not, and he was not alone in this opinion (Kerr [1968] Section 2). Blau (1990) also offers a succinct retrospective explanation of why the ritual was not successful for all: "Schechner and I, Turner and other anthropologists, were involved in a collective research – with performers from other cultures, not only actors and dancers but priests and shamans – to see whethere it might happen the other way around [whether theatre might also "spill over liminally" into ritual]. But Turner was right: one can't quite count on its happening either way unless there is, as there mostly is not, an initiating energy in prior social relationships and the concurrence of achieved occasions" (12-13).

[586] Shephard (1991) 240-1.

Shephard, (like Turner quoted earlier), believes that the play did not complete its ritual goals. However, as I have stated, the play did seem to have a political message about collectivity and complicity, it was just not properly received by its audience. This was due to problems of balancing identification – in this case, in the form of participation – with the amount of distancing necessary for the audience to evaluate their own involved role. Many audience members believed their complicit participation in the rituals was being framed as positive collaboration (due to moments such as the march down Wooster Street), and therefore overlooked the complexities of the show's political message, which in fact – like Brecht's production – aimed to question such complicit collectivity.

The Third Frame: Actor/Role/Group Tensions

Schechner's play not only encountered problems related to the balance of identification and distance with regard to the audience's complicit participation. The collective and choral nature of the workshops and production also meant that there were serious issues of identification and distance for the performers themselves. In order to understand the challenges Brecht's production faced in reception, I argued that a third frame is useful, encompassing the audience's associations and experiences of the recent war. In Schechner's production, as I have stated, a third frame should be added in order to emphasize the reception of the play by the actors themselves, which was an important aspect of the creation, performance, and reception of this adaptation. Throughout my analysis, I have commented upon the ways in which the performers in Schechner's production were meant to personally identify with their role, and to use the Group politics to fuel the play's action. This occurred in the cases I described above in which the actors' personal identities were emphasized (rather than their character identities). For instance, in the early scene between the “old men”, Cadmus and Tiresias, the actors’ real ages were announced, to great comic effect. In the cursing at the end of the production, Dionysus was encouraged to curse the actors personally, using their real names. For the audience, these moments emphasized the distance between actor and character.

In fact, this technique is related to the “gestus of showing” that I described in relation to Brecht’s use of masks. The gestus of showing is a technique of the epic theatre’s acting style, and it has exerted a large amount of influence on performance and acting conventions. Since Brecht’s era, the strategy of an actor addressing the audience as him/herself has remained prominent, especially in politically-oriented productions.[587] Brecht employed the gestus of showing as a distancing device; the actor maintains distance from the character, reminding the audience that they are viewing a fictional performance.

However, in the case of Schechner’s production, what often seemed like “distancing” to the audience was in fact felt to be “identification” by the actors. As I showed in my discussion of the Birth Ritual, it was not uncommon in this production for the reception of certain moments to have separate meanings for the performers and audience. Instead of providing distance for the actors from their characters and the rest of the actors in the Group, bringing their real identities into the production was often used to fuel the action in a way that was damaging to the relationships within the group, as well as the mental health of its members. Shephard recalls that “I sensed I was not really a king. I didn’t know what I was. Later I discovered I was a scapegoat. It certainly was no longer just a play”.[588]

---

[587] See the discussion of Kurup’s adaptation in chapter two for a challenge to the simple binary of actor/character. In Schechner’s production, a similar technique of merging identities is undertaken, and this section reveals the personal and interpersonal consequences of this technique.

[588] Shephard (1970) *The Performance Group.*

The identification between actor and role was particularly problematic for Shephard. He describes how the choral rituals and the inclusion of the audience affected him during a ritual referred to as a the Tag Chorus, in which he runs around the room attempting to silence the chorus: "I am physically exhausting myself, [...] pursuing an action to its very end, so that my life mask cracks and falls away and I am revealed in my vulnerability. The audience is very amused. But I don't feel their amusement. To me it is derision, mockery. They are mocking me personally. And I feel it very deeply and personally.[589] The audience's full identification with the chorus means that there is no room for sympathy for Pentheus. Fully identifying with the role of Pentheus and being excluded from the collective night after night began to affect Shephard's mental health, as well as his relationship with the other Group members.

The Group members most obviously affected by the lack of distance between character and actor were of course those who emerged from the collective to play major roles like Pentheus and Dionysus most often. However, because of the decision to employ role rotation and Schechner's insistence that the inner politics of the group be brought into the action of the play, the lack of distance seems to have affected all of the performers and their cohesiveness as a Group. To deal with these issues, weekly encounter meetings (therapy) were held for the Group from November 1968 to July 1969.[590] These were voluntary, but the fact that by April the entire Group was attending speaks to the troubling effects that the performances were having on the members of this collective.

In the reception of the play by the actors themselves, in what I have called the third frame, there was often not enough distance between an actor's real identity and his/her roles to ensure their mental well-being and the proper functioning of the collective. In the reception of this play by its audience, the chorus could also not provide enough distance for the audience to apprehend the socio-political message. Incorporating their real identities into their roles may have appeared to the audience as a gestus of showing, but was felt by the actors to be its opposite - a lack of distance. Consequently, there was therefore not enough distance created in either the outer frame or the third frame of this production, despite what might be considered the incorporation of distancing techniques such as direct address of the audience. In this production, experimenting with audience participation and the merging of actor and role meant that distance was often sacrificed for identification and collectivity.

---

[589] Shephard (1970) *The Performance Group.*

[590] Schechner (1970) *The Performance Group.* The sessions were led by Lary Sacharow and other members of the Daytop Community.

Conclusion

Schechner aimed to use his "conceptual chorus" to invite the audience to participate in collective rituals, but in the end could not manage to create an ideal balance of identification and distance – neither for the audience nor the performers. Similarly, Brecht's attempts to use his chorus as both a distancing device and a group with which the audience could identify contributed to confusion regarding his play's relevance to the real-life experiences of the audience members. Despite these challenges, both productions have influenced subsequent adaptations of Greek tragedy and the chorus; the "turn toward the audience" advocated by both of these artists has meant that a collective chorus has become an increasingly desirable element of a production. As I have argued, the chorus' ability to oscillate between different frames of the action has increased its popularity in an era in which contact with spectators is desirable.

However, another consequence of the turn toward the audience is that elements of a production other than the chorus can also make use of aspects of the traditional choral role. For instance, in both plays, protagonists as well as the chorus directly address the audience and offer comment on the action. It is interesting to note that Schechner and Brecht both use these "individual" characters to encourage the audience to identify with the chorus. As mentioned previously, in Schechner's production, the audience is addressed and "led" by Tiresias and Cadmus, and in Brecht's production, the direct address by Creon and Antigone emphasizes the audience's identification with the chorus.

Both productions also employ a singular individual who is *not* a protagonist as a corrective to the confusion of identification and distancing caused by the collective chorus. In both productions, the use of a collective chorus that builds identification with the audience seems to have necessitated the inclusion of an additional character who could take on certain aspects of the traditional choral role. Brecht resorted to a direct-address Prologue to counteract the over-identification of the audience, while Schechner attempted to counteract his overly-participatory audience with the inclusion of the Messenger's speech.

Although both Prologues and Messengers are themselves singular (not collective) elements of Greek tragedy, the way in which these singular figures are employed as correctives makes them more related to the role of the ancient chorus than that of the protagonists. In each of these adaptations, these figures not only occupied the outer frame of the action (more fully than the protagonists - Tiresias and Cadmus, Creon and Antigone - discussed above). More importantly, they also acted as mediators by speaking directly to the audience and offering alternative interpretations of the action. Even the Messenger, who might be expected to remain "in character" in the inner frame, directly acknowledges and addresses the audience with his warning.[591] As in Anouilh's production, I would suggest that these adapters have capitalized upon the overlap between these "outer frame" figures and the ancient chorus in their attempts to accomplish an ideal balance between identification and distance, individuality and collectivity.

---

[591] For an interesting discussion of the role of the Messenger in ancient tragedy from the perspective of performance, see Dickin (2009). She argues that "there is a need to 'take the role off the page' and try to understand the Messenger and his/her speech specifically as an acting part. By taking this perspective, I hope to show how the 'no-name' messenger could nevertheless have become one of the most important acting roles for a 'big-name' star" (6).

Both Brecht and Schechner felt the need to have these figures - the Prologue and Messenger - take on the distancing functions that the chorus alone could not accomplish. It seems that the chorus, so busy creating identification with the audience, could not be counted upon in either production to offer the critical distance necessary for the audience to comprehend that their identification with the collective was being framed as complicity in the tragic action. Thus, the collective choruses could not, in the end, ensure that the audiences understood the political message. Attempts to re-balance the tension between the individual/collective and distance/identification in both productions led to the addition of a distancing individual.

The use of both protagonists and additional distancing figures in the outer frame disrupts the traditional understanding of the individual/collective dynamic of tragedy. In the more traditional view proposed by Vernant above, the "individual" usually indicates a protagonist, who is opposed in this binary by the collective chorus. However, I have argued that some aspects of the choral role in these productions – with regard to promoting both identification and distancing - have in fact been accomplished by individual protagonists and singular mediating figures. In my discussion of Anouilh's production, I argued that the chorus' traditional role as characters in the inner frame had been displaced onto the Nurse and Page, while the collective aspect of the chorus had been displaced onto the Guards. These displacements allowed the Chorus to serve as a singular distancing figure, emphasizing the overlap between prologue and chorus and encouraging the audience to appreciate the arguments of both protagonists. I would argue that a similar displacement is occurring here. However, by contrast, it is the *distancing* aspects of the choral role that are being displaced onto *individual* characters.

When adaptations such as these are examined closely, the traditional binary of collective/individual emerges instead as a flexible dialectic. Instead of being rigidly aligned with the opposition between chorus/protagonist, it becomes clear that the roles of the "collective" or "individual" (perhaps especially their roles with regard to "distance" and "identification") can be taken up by different characters and design aspects of the production. In the case of the productions examined in this chapter, the distancing aspects of the choral role have been "individualized".

Although in Brecht and Schechner's productions, aspects of the choral role are displaced onto individuals, these individuals do not themselves become collectives. However, an excellent example of this (rather rare) phenomenon – the collectivizing of the individual protagonists - occurs in Miyagi's *Antigone,* performed by his Ku Na'uka Theatre Company in 2004. In this production, Antigone's individuality was emphasized through the use of "multiple Creons, representing state authority, and multiple Ismenes, representing citizens, who compromise rather than directly confront power".[592] Miyagi decided to create a chorus of Ismenes in order "to generalize on the obedience, timidity, and fearfulness of Japanese women", while the chorus of Creons "reflected his view that Japanese men are authority figures who are domineering and unsympathetic towards women".[593]

By collectivizing and generalizing these characters, it is they who are intended to attract audience identification. As in Brecht's production, the audience is also intended to evaluate the complicity with which they have been identified, especially in comparison to the individual example set by Antigone.[594] In the Japanese context in particular, Smethurst argues that "Miyagi made a strong statement about the need for all to question authority and for women to stand up for their own rights".[595] Adapters often manipulate or displace aspects of the traditional roles of the chorus as well as the protagonists, in an attempt to achieve a balance between identification and distance that will serve their political purposes and specific contexts.

---

[592] Smethurst (2011) 222.

[593] Smethurst (2011) 226. Smethurst also explains the collectivizing of these individuals in the context of Japanese performance traditions: "Each chorus was a collective entity that could easily shift between odes and dialogue that represented individual characters. This strategy provided a balance between the individual and the group that both fit the production and reflected a shift between chorus and character or chanter and character that is a staple in the traditional Japanese theatre" (227).

However, not only do modern adaptations of the chorus complicate the simple binary of individual/collective by displacing choral functions such as collectivity and distancing. In this process of displacement, I would argue that choral self-referentiality is also often shared or transferred. In chapter two, I argued that a choral technique might be considered self-referential if it is perceived of as distancing to some degree by its contemporary audience, allowing them to acknowledge the constructed nature of the performance. The choruses in the productions of Brecht and Schechner (as well as Miyagi) do incorporate several of the self-referential techniques I previously identified, such as masks and the incorporation of music and/or dance. However, in these productions, in order for the audience to acknowledge - and more importantly, to evaluate - the role they have been asked to play in the performance, there has been an attempt to transfer self-referentiality to the audience in the form of self-reflexivity.

The hope seems to be that the chorus' self-referential role will transfer to the audience in the form of a self-reflexive *audience* perspective. There is an attempt to amplify the audience's critical attitude toward the chorus/audience relationship, including their own complicity in the collective and its action (or, as in the case of Brecht's chorus, inaction). As I have shown, this complicity – and its relationship with the dialectic of individual/collective - is often the locus of the political purpose of the adaptation, and a failure of the audience to achieve a self-reflexive attitude can lead to the their failure to understand the production's message.

---

[594] The title of Smethurst's chapter indicates this intended identification – and sense of complicity - of the audience: "Are We All Creons and Ismenes?: *Antigone* in Japan".

[595] Smethurst (2011) 226.

3.5 Einar Schleef: *The Mothers*

In the past twenty years, Einar Schleef's "choric theatre" has received increasing critical attention. This has mainly occurred amongst German theatre scholars,[596] however, Schleef's ambitions with his choric theatre are essential to a study such as this one, and complement the discussion of individuality/collectivity and distance/identification emphasized in the analyses of Brecht and Schechner above.

Lehmann identifies Schleef's theatre as "the most explicitly choral theatre within the postdramatic spectrum".[597] In his own writing, Schleef relates the history of modern drama to the fate of the chorus. In his view, classical drama displaced the ancient chorus, and Schleef seems particularly concerned with the fate of the female chorus. Lehmann explains that Schleef believed that "the modern drama broke with the ancient chorus because it wanted to forget the interdependence of the collective and the individual".[598] This is interesting not only because it closely mirrors Cambridge ritualist thesis (in which the movement from collective to individual mirrors the evolution from ritual to drama), but also in the context of my discussion of the productions of avant-garde practitioners Brecht and Schechner.

Erika Fischer-Lichte explains that by contrast to Schechner (as well as theatre practitioner Nitsch), "whose productions engendered transient yet largely harmonious communities", Schleef's definition of community "focused on the perpetual collision of the individual and the group".[599] She includes a quote, translated from Schleef's own writing in *Droge Faust Parsifal,* which is worth reproducing here:

---

[596] See Lehmann (1999: 2009), Fischer-Lichte (2004), (2004: 2008), (2005), Roesner (2003), and most recently, Schmidt (2010). See also Schleef's own work, entitled *Droge Faust Parsifal* (1997).
[597] Lehmann (1999: 2009) 131.
[598] Lehmann (1999: 2009) 131.

> The ancient chorus is a terrifying image: crowds of figures, huddling close together, seeking shelter, yet energetically rejecting each other, as if the proximity of the other poisoned the air. This threatens the group, which would easily collapse on attack. Prematurely frightened, it finds and expels a victim to buy itself out. Although the chorus is aware of its betrayal, it does not rectify the situation. Instead, it clearly presents the victim as guilty. That is not just an aspect of the ancient chorus but a process repeated every day. The enemy-chorus does not primarily represent the millions of non-whites, the dying, war pillagers, and asylum seekers, but the dissenters, especially those speaking our own language; they are to be eliminated first and using all means available.
>
> Until that moment of elimination, the ancient constellation remains in place; the chorus and the individual will continue their struggle. Haunted by its relationship with the others, that is, the formerly isolated, and by their relationship amongst themselves and as a whole against the chorus, the latter successfully hopes to fend them off.[600]

Schleef believed that a new theatre form must reconnect with displaced figures and forms, in which the basic model of the axis chorus/individual survived. Lehmann explains that this means that "many German dramas could basically be read as choruses: *The Soldiers, The Weavers, The Robbers*".[601] According to Schleef, the German plays "'vary the motif of the Last Supper, the necessity of the drug, its use by a chorus and the individualization of a chorus member through betrayal'".[602] The stagings of many of Schleef's plays thus emphasize their choric elements. For instance, in his production of Brecht's *Puntila,* the character of the Master is the only one who remains a single figure, while the positive hero Matti becomes a choral mass.[603] This, of course, is similar to the collectivization of the individual in Miyagi's Japanese production of *Antigone,* discussed above. The presence of these protagonist-choruses in Miyagi and Schleef's productions reinforces my argument that the binary of individual/collective should be considered a dialectic in which the roles of both the "individual" and "collective" can be displaced and complicated in modern political productions. Schleef's production of *Puntila* is not, however, an adaptation of tragedy. Despite his interest in chorality, Schleef turned only once to Greek tragedy, in his production of *The Mothers.*

---

[599] Fischer-Lichte (2004: 2008)

[600] Schleef (1997) 14 quoted and translated in Fischer-Lichte (2004: 2008) 56.

[601] Lehmann (1999:2009) 131.

[602] Lehmann (1999: 2009) 131. He quotes Schleef (1997) 7. Lehmann continues: "Against this background, he reads in drama the coexistence of an obvious suppression and a secret persistence of the choral motif, reading *Faust* and *Parsifal* as the symptomatic works in which the 'drug' works as a catalyst (the blood of the Last Supper in *Parsifal;* magic potions, lethal poisons, sexual stimulants in *Faust*)" (131).

[603] Lehmann (1999: 2009) 131.

Erika Fischer-Lichte has discussed Schleef's production *The Mothers* from a particularly reception-focused point of view. This production was a combination of Euripides' *Suppliant Women* and Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes,* and the performance lasted four hours.[604] There were three different choruses in this production, all of which were composed of women: "the chorus of widows dressed in black, meeting Theseus (Martin Wuttke) with axes in their hands; the chorus of virgins dressed in white tulle in the first part, red in the second; the chorus of women dressed in black overalls, like workers in a munitions factory".[605] The chorus – in a similar manner to the chorus in *Dionysus in 69* – occupied the space, exerting a great deal of power over it. For this production, that space included the stage, a catwalk (on which "they ran, hurried, dashed up and down, wearing black metal-toed boots"), as well as the stage behind the spectators.[606]

Although the collective dressed alike and moved/spoke/shouted together, Schleef used the chorus to engage with his ideas about individuals and collectivities, explored above. Fischer-Lichte explains that "the chorus appeared as a permanent battleground between the individual who wants to join the community while having her uniqueness upheld, and the community which strives for total incorporation for all its members and threatens alienation to those who insist on their individuality".[607] Within the chorus, the tension between individual members and the community never vanished over the course of the production; in fact, it intensified, and the group never became a harmonious collective.[608]

---

[604] Fischer-Lichte (2004) 355.
[605] Fischer-Lichte (2004) 355.
[606] Fischer-Lichte (2004) 355.

Fischer-Lichte also extends this tension between individuals and the collective within the chorus to the relationship between actors and spectators, in what I have called the outer frame of performance. The fact that the space allowed the actors to surround the spectators suggested that a harmonious community could be formed. However, the conflict that was exhibited amongst chorus members was also felt in the relationship between chorus and audience. The space not only surrounded the spectators, but also included a catwalk that cut through the auditorium, exposing "the spectators to the violence done on them by the chorus when they trampled up and down the steps overhead and shouted down to them, or shouted them down".[609] The chorus attempted to "overwhelm" the audience.

As in the other productions explored in this chapter, the chorus' relationship with the audience seems to involve a two-step process: first, the chorus attempts to create a collective with the audience. In this case, Fischer-Lichte seems to suggest that it is the space and the distribution of the chorus in the space that gives the suggestion that a unified collective is possible. However, this collective is always threatening to dissolve. Where this production differs from those of Brecht and Schechner is that it seems the chorus alone was able to encompass the tension between the individual and collective; whereas Brecht and Schechner added "distancing" individuals, in this production, it appears that no other characters are necessary for this purpose, since the chorus itself communicates both the potential for unity, as well as its impossibility.

---

[607] Fischer-Lichte (2004) 356.
[608] Fischer-Lichte (2004) explains that the tension "made itself felt as an act of violence done to the individual by the community as well as to the community by the individual". She notes that this latter violence became more obvious when the chorus was confronted with another individual, such as Theseus or Eteocles (356).
[609] Fischer-Lichte (2005) 247.

Although there were rare moments of unity, these only proved to be moments of transition before the outbreak of further conflict.[610]

Although Schleef attempted to create this new form of choric theatre in the 1990s, his audience members were just as divided as the audiences of Brecht and Schechner's productions about how to react to the chorus that confronted them. Audience members, of course, responded in a variety of ways: "the audience felt physically attacked and responded, in its turn, either by retreating or aggressive defence – as, for instance, by stamping, by rhythmically clapping their hands or even by shouting comments".[611] As the chorus attempted to bring about a state of ecstasy by overwhelming the audience, not only did they respond, but many members resisted – either verbally or by departing. On the other hand, some members succumbed to the chorus, either through fear or pleasure, becoming involved and perhaps even complicit. Therefore, as in the other productions – especially Schechner's *Dionysus in 69* – audience members responded to such strong affronts in a variety of ways. In fact, in a manner directly reminiscent of Stefan Brecht's review of Schechner's production, Fischer-Lichte notes that some critics denounced Schleef's theatre as fascist. Interestingly, she notes it was "in particular those critics who had fervently advocated political theatre in the 1960s and 1970s as a theatre of enlightenment".[612]

Despite such connections with Schechner's work, Fischer-Lichte takes great pains to differentiate the two practitioners. This is due to her discussion of Schleef as opposed to Schechner: "the position realized and suggested by Schleef's theatre radically opposed the rather naïve utopian visions of communities of former epochs – from the turn of the century until

---

[610] Fischer-Lichte (2005) continues, describing the chorus' use of rhythm, language and bodies: "Thus, we have to differentiate between two positions. The chorus was performing an ongoing, never-ending battle between body and mind, with changing dominances that allow for no permanent supremacy of one over the other. What was happening between the chorus and the spectators, however, was the experience of the other and oneself as an embodied mind" (251).

[611] Fischer-Lichte (2005) 247.

[612] Fischer-Lichte (2005) 249.

Dionysus in 69".[613] Schleef's production instead figures as a part of Fischer-Lichte's analysis of "The Rebirth of Tragedy out of the Chorus". She argues that in the 1990s, especially in Germany, new forms of choric theatre arose which "radically criticized the concept of such a community and fundamentally questioned its very possibility".[614] The choric theatre of the 1990s, she argues, appears to be "a searing critique of late capitalist, post-industrial societies. The market and the Internet have no need of individuals – of any particular identity – only consumers and surfers".[615] While it is true that Schleef's choric theatre, and the other theatre she mentions, offer a reminder of the tension between the individual and his/her community, I would argue that my analysis of Brecht and Schechner's productions show that this is not a new goal. In many respects, *Dionysus in 69* – as well as Brecht's *Antigone* – were similar attempts to explore the tensions between individuals and their communities.

The alterations that Brecht and Schechner make based on reception show an attempt not only to capitalize on the tension between individual/collective inherent in the original tragedies, but also the desire to continue to experiment with the individual/collective dialectic both formally (through the use of a collective chorus as well as individual distancing agents), as well as within the content of the plays. These experiments tend to be either overlooked, misinterpreted, or misunderstood, however, they have led to important turns toward the adaptation of choruses, in theatre such as that of Einar Schleef.[616]

However, what might be considered new in Schleef's production is not the exploration of the tension between individual/collective, but the location of this tension *within the chorus itself*. The tension between individuals and the collective within the chorus was not only witnessed by the audience, but through the suggestion and denial of unity with the audience, the tension was communicated without the use of an additional mediating individual figure.

---

[613] Fischer-Lichte (2005) 250.
[614] Fischer-Lichte (2005) 240.
[615] Fischer-Lichte (2005) 243.
[616] Fischer-Lichte (2005) 251. Following his production of *The Mothers,* Schleef continued to experiment with choric theatre until his death in 2001. However, he never returned to Greek tragedy.

Another difference between the productions of Schechner, Brecht, and Schleef lies in what I have called the “message” of the production. In Schechner and Brecht’s productions, the audience is intended to self-reflexively evaluate their willingness to be complicit in collective actions in their own societies, and this is the – surprisingly similar - message that an ideal audience of both productions would apprehend. In Schleef’s theatre, on the other hand, the tension between individual and collective reflects his understanding of real societies, in which the tension cannot be resolved: “individual and community cannot be conceived independently of each other. There is an ongoing battle between the two but it is a battle which can never be won”.[617]

I would argue that there is an “ideology” being communicated in this production, but not a “message”: the tensions within the choruses as well as within their relationship with the audience reflect a particular understanding of the roles of collectives and individuals in society. Schleef does not attempt to communicate a particular opinion or evaluation of these roles. Audience members may participate to the point of complicity in the collective action in the production (especially the collective aggression toward “individuals”), however, the conflict between individuals and the collective is presented as an inevitability. Through the performance of these tensions, Schleef indicates the impossibility of a harmonious collective of individuals. Although the production demands recognition of this perspective, it does not necessarily demand action or change from the spectators.

---

[617] Fischer-Lichte (2005) 249. In this chapter, she relates her analyses to a theory of sacrifice: “no one should claim that the conflict could be solved by the mechanism of sacrifice, by directing the violence of all onto one victim. A sacrifice is unable to uphold the community. Society can only exist as a permanent conflict between individual and community” (249).

All three productions discussed above used the chorus to establish feelings of collectivity, identification, and distance in their audiences, but the very different ways in which the plays established and manipulated a chorus/audience relationship offers the reminder that the creation and reception of the chorus are heavily influenced by their contexts, in several ways. First, the adaptation of the chorus and the message or ideology that it seeks to communicate is heavily influenced by the social and political context of the production. Secondly, the conventions of performance and reception that correspond to these contexts are important in analyzing audience reception. The strategies of Brecht's epic theatre, for instance, would be interpreted differently now than in the 1940s. By examining not only the productions' intentions, but also their reception, I have shown that it is essential to look at not only the goals of influential productions – their "ideal" relationships with spectators - but also the "reality" of their reception, in order to see how the chorus/audience relationship truly functions in modern performance.

Thirdly, not only are performance techniques interpreted differently according to the conventions of a given era, but so is a concept such as "collectivity". Neither "collectivity" nor "individuality" are stable or unchanging concepts, as an over-simplified structuralist reading might indicate. As I have shown, in adaptations of tragedy, individuals can take on aspects generally associated with the collective, and vice versa, in order to respond to changing notions of the relationship between individuals and their communities, as well as changing performance conventions. All three productions explored above use the dialectic of individual/collective offered by the presence of the ancient chorus in an attempt to question the way we form collectives and communities, in very different political and social contexts. As I will show in chapter four, changing notions of who can be a part of a chorus' collective continue to affect the way that identification and distance – as well as complicity - are framed.

CHAPTER 4:

Identity and Identification: Intercultural Choruses and the Limits of Complicity

Introduction

Although one of the major goals of the rituals in Schechner's production of *Dionysus in 69* was community-building, by the arrival of the 1990s, even Schechner himself was beginning to question the idea of a singular, cohesive "community". A new, international community for tragedy – along with theatre more generally - was developing, leading Edith Hall to declare that "recently, Dionysus, the theatre-god of the ancient Greeks, has transcended nearly *all* boundaries created by time, space, and cultural tradition, for staging Greek tragedy is now emphatically an international, even worldwide phenomenon".[618] In the late twentieth century, in both the theatre and the field of Classics, deciding who was a part of a production's community became a major issue in the discourse surrounding performance. Due to its unique relationship with the audience, this has greatly affected the reception of the chorus.

In the previous chapter, I explained that modern collective choruses often aim for audiences to feel that they have been "complicit" in order to communicate a political message. This often requires the careful management of the audience's feelings of identification and distance. I have argued that using the model of concentric frames of reception in order to examine the playwright/director's intentions with regard to complicity, as well as the actual reception of these productions, is a useful way of understanding the collective chorus' role in modern adaptations of Greek tragedies.

---

[618] Hall (2004a) 2.

In this chapter, I will further complicate the idea of identification and distance in the relationship between chorus and audience by looking at two complementary trends which both became prominent in the late twentieth century: interculturalism and postcolonialism in the theatre, and the discourse of the chorus as "other" in the field of Classics. From the 1970s to the 1990s, the question of whether the chorus created a "collective" with the audience or represented a group of "others" became prominent in the field of Classics. This dichotomy is of course intimately connected with the dialectic of distance/identification that I examined in the previous chapter. To feel that another (or a group) is "other" implies a measure of distancing, while "collectivity" can be related to a sense of identification with the group.

In chapter three, I argued that in creating both audience identification as well as distancing the audience, the chorus (as well as protagonists) could itself take on aspects of both collectivity and individuality. Similarly, it is the way in which the chorus itself has been understood as both collective and other that I examine below. In other words, this dialectic of collective/other is not expressed as the tension between the chorus and another figure(s), but represents different ways of understanding the chorus itself. Exploring the debate over the chorus' role as collective/other - which arose at the same time as intercultural theatre was beginning to attract scholarly attention – offers a useful entry point into an examination of the particular issues faced by intercultural adaptations of the chorus.

In order to examine the issues of identity and identification associated with choruses in intercultural adaptations, this chapter is divided into four parts: the first contains a brief survey of the complementary debates of "otherness" in classical scholarship and the rise of intercultural and postcolonial theatre. The second section uses the terms of these debates to illustrate the general trends in adapting the chorus' identity in intercultural productions. In the third section, I offer a brief case study of the South African adaptation *Molora* in order to further engage with the issues raised. In the final section, I conclude with remarks on "authenticity", "universalism", and the future of the chorus in intercultural adaptations.

4.1 Scholarly Reversals

Sharing Rituals in the 1990s

Although in the 1960s and 1970s Schechner excitedly described the practice of sharing of rituals between cultures, this began to seem problematic to him by the 1990s. As I explained in the previous chapter, Schechner inserted rituals into the action of *Dionysus in 69* with the hope that the chorus could include and involve the audience, and as I have argued, this in fact sometimes led audiences to become overly-involved in the performance. Later in his career, he began to interrogate this practice of borrowing rituals from other cultures. He noticed that there were many theatre traditions developing that led people to believe that undertaking certain physical actions (such as holding a specific pose) would lead to an authentic spiritual or communal experience.[619] He realized that those like Grotowski - whom he calls a "parashaman" - were in fact turning orthodox ritual on its head: rituals, which in spiritual practices are mainly used for conservative purposes such as passing on religious knowledge, were being appropriated for non-conservative purposes.[620]

Schechner examines the artistic practices of Goodman and Grotowski in his 1993 work on ritual. He explains that in their performances, physical exercises are drained of cultural specificity. Schechner explains that "there is an awakened desire spawning an exploitable market for religious experiences, for 'spiritual knowledge' outside the religious establishments".[621] This has led to a process in which

---

[619] Schechner (1993).

[620] Schechner (1993) 258. Even Turner, he claims, recognized that rituals are conservative, but Turner chose to focus on their subversive qualities: introducing new behaviours or undermining established systems.

> all but extinct cultures are exoticized and felt to contain people with 'ancient' or 'original' sacred knowledge that can be taught, transferred, and experienced. This exotification – whatever its political and ideological ramifications – indicates also a certain state of mind, a receptivity, a desire for a change of life, mind, and feelings. In Ehrenzweig's language, many people feel the need to experience primary process.[622]

This "need" actively downplays cultural specificity for those who are dissatisfied with their religions of birth. In particular, Schechner explains that for Goodman and Grotowski (two men who he describes as dissatisfied with their religions of birth), "what is universal are doable acts of the body; and these acts are nonideological, not culture-specific".[623] Schechner notes that in rejecting the belief system and original cultural context of a ritual and merely performing the actions, there is an implication that experience equals knowledge. However, seeking experience without knowledge, he says, is to commodify the process.[624]

Schechner identifies the commodification process of ritual borrowing and the "need" behind it, and he shows that ultimately he has grown uncomfortable with the process that he describes. Of course, this demonstrates an immense (though not necessarily permanent) reversal from his own previous use of ritual in the choruses of *Dionysus in 69,* which was influenced by Grotowski. For instance, the Birth Ritual described in the previous chapter was appropriated from the Asmat people of New Guinea and inserted into *Dionysus in 69*. In fact, Schechner's production was probably an important influence in the move *toward* this commodification process he later criticizes.

---

[621] Schechner (1993) 253.
[622] Schechner (1993) 253. Here, he refers to Ehrenzweig (1970).
[623] Schechner (1993) 253.
[624] Schechner (1993) 252.

It is difficult, however, to overestimate the importance of these problematic intercultural adaptations to the revitalization of the collective chorus. Fiona Macintosh explains that despite the advances in dance and the chorus before World War I as well as during the inter-war period, "it wasn't until new inter-cultural perspectives were afforded from the east from the 1950s onwards that the ancient chorus found a role in performances of ancient plays".[625] An important part of this movement, Ariane Mnouchkine's *Les Atrides* also provides a complementary example to that of Schechner. There are many similarities between the influential productions of Schechner and Mnouchkine: both attempt to involve their audience, offer a central role to the ensemble, and construct performances based on the rituals of other cultures. In Mnouchkine's case, this includes "the use of ritual forms of theatre coming from the East (Noh for Cassandra, Kathakali for the chorus of the *Agamemnon*)".[626]

Interestingly, both also aim to use these rituals to encourage feelings of identification and involvement in audiences, with the hope of leading to feelings of complicity. However, there is a differerence in both the conception and communication of complicity in Mnouchkine's production. McDonald, writing about this production, explains that "we are complicit in the performance from the moment we give our ticket to Mnouchkine and accept food from her in the dining room (which is also a reading room) next to the room that houses the performance. She enters our life as we enter her ritual".[627] This use of the term "complicity" does not seem to imply any negativity or require any feelings of distance – it merely hints at active engagement in the performance. Similarly, Sallie Goetsch describes her experience of *Les Atrides* as provoking this type of complicity:

---

[625] Macintosh (2010) 13. In particular, she identifies Ninagawa's *Medea* and Mnouchkine's *Les Atrides*. It also seems to be no coincidence that in the journal *Arion* in 1996, articles revolved around the ancient chorus, and appeared alongside reviews of *Les Atrides*.

[626] de La Combe (2005) 283.

[627] McDonald (1992) 13.

> The audience of *Les Atrides* was invited to form a relationship with the actors, to speak with them while they dressed, to be seen by them, a move simultaneously ancient and innovative. Like the Athenian audience, those who came to *Les Atrides* were in some way complicit in, responsible for, the production. And it is difficult to be simultaneously accomplice and critic.[628]

Here, as above, complicity loses its associations with negativity and distancing, and comes to mean a sense of active involvement in ("responsibility" for) the production. Goetsch's comment that she could not be both an accomplice and a critic indicates that although the production's construction was intended to be acknowledged, there was also a lack of critical distance encouraged throughout. This use of the term "complicit" to mean "actively involved participant" is not uncommon in descriptions of audience experiences of intercultural productions and choruses. I will engage in further discussion of this particular use of "complicity" with regard to intercultural adaptations below and in the case study of Farber's *Molora.*

Despite the fact that Schechner subsequently attempts to distance his audience, as I demonstrated above, he initially encourages audience identification with the chorus through involvement or participation in rituals, which are sometimes borrowed from other cultures. A similar situation occurs in *Les Atrides.* Although the complicity involved in *Les Atrides* may not lead audiences to view their role negatively by being subsequently distanced, this complicity does involve the provocation of a sense of identification between audience and chorus, promoted through the use of ritual. McDonald describes how "as we take our seats and the performance starts, we feel that a ritual has begun, and we, the audience, become active participants. We function as an alternate chorus whose applause adds to the repertoire of instruments".[629]

McDonald continues by explaining that this involvement "as an alternate chorus" culminates in the conclusion: "with the applause which becomes rhythmic at the end of the performance, we participate in the ultimate dance […] By erasing the thin line between actor and audience, we suddenly realize we are also actors […] In any case, we are passionately involved and implicated”.[630] Despite the fact that Mnouchkine – unlike Schechner - employs dancers who are trained in the dance forms she “borrows”, Mnouchkine has also been criticized for her intercultural practices[631] – though interestingly, criticism in classical scholarship tends to focus on other aspects of the production.[632]

---

[628] Goetsch (1994) 78.

[629] McDonald (1992) 14.

In the 1970s, Schechner had declared that “theatre historians will regard tourism as of as much importance to twentieth-century theatre as the exchange between England and the Continent was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries”.[633] Schechner had no idea how correct he would be, but in ways he could not have imagined. At the time he recorded this, he was excited about intercultural exchange and the sharing of rituals. By the 1990s, however, postcolonial theory and postcolonial theatre would be important cultural movements, and the similarity between “ritual tourism” and the exchange between England and the Continent would be viewed as similar because both would come to be seen as potentially damaging to the host culture.

---

[630] McDonald (1992) 19. Note that again, as in Brecht’s production, the term “implicated” is used. In the case of his *Antigone,* Creon used this term to describe the chorus (and implied its application to the audience). Here, an audience member described the feeling of implication in the production’s action and ritual first-hand. However, as with her use of the term “complicity”, she does not seem to be using this term negatively.

[631] Patrick Lindsay Bowles, the critic for *The Hudson Review* (1992) stated that “one best understands what is going on inside Mnouchkine’s theatre by understanding something of what’s going quietly on all around it” (128). By this, he means that the blending of cultures is an “official policy, universal and epic in inspiration, of the French ministry of culture, by whom Mnouchkine is subsidized”. He continues, “For Ariane Mnouchkine, whose internationalism – costumes, choreography and cast – also stems, at least indirectly, from the Internationale, has now produced, without, perhaps, fully understanding why, something that is quite frankly arrière garde” (129). For more recent criticism, see Bharucha (2000) 48-50. In dialogue with Fischer-Lichte (October 12, 2010), Bharucha stated: “Personally, I am tired of the practice of ‘intercultural theatre’ along the lines that you have historicized (Brook, Mnouchkine, etc). I think, it was important at some point in time – in the late 1970s and 1980s; and, perhaps, there are still residues and variants of those practices, which continue to exist today. All the examples that you mentioned, and the use of ‘Oriental’ stage devices like the *hanamichi*, have ultimately been incorporated into specific theatrical traditions. You’re right to mention that they were used to make those traditions more ‘interesting.’ Of course, they were also used in exotic, Orientalist, and neo-colonialist ways as well” (Available at: http://texturesplatform.com/2011/08/dialogue/). See also Peterson (2001) 205-207.

[632] Oliver Taplin’s review of *Les Atrides*, (1996; published alongside a critical review by Herbert Golder), offers interesting insights about the relationship between scholars and practitioners (210-15). Goldhill (2007) criticizes the production based mainly upon use of space. De La Combe (2005) is not critical of the production, but acknowledges the reason for his positive perspective honestly from the beginning of his piece: “My point of view is not totally neutral since I was involved for many months with the preparations for the production” (274).

[633] Schechner (1976) 214.

Schechner's reversal of opinion between the 1970s to the 1990s - from appropriation of ritual to critical thought on intercultural exchange – is emblematic of the change in discourse surrounding performance. Although postcolonial and intercultural drama has existed for as long as cultures have been interacting,[634] it began to be more consistently defined and discussed in scholarly literature in the 1980s and 1990s.[635] Gilbert and Tompkins, in their work on postcolonial drama, explain that "most post-colonial criticism overlooks drama, perhaps because of its apparently impure form: playscripts are only a part of a theatre experience, and performance is therefore difficult to document".[636] This deficiency, of course, they hoped to rectify with their 1996 work on postcolonial drama.

The role of Greek drama in the postcolonial theatre tradition – especially in the theatre of the last thirty years – is now also being acknowledged. Hardwick notes that in the theatre of the last three decades, Greek drama has "assumed major importance as an arena for the articulation of anti-colonialist ideas and as a forum for the exploration of post-colonial debates about the relationships between cultural and political identities".[637] Not only has postcolonial drama in general begun to receive scholarly attention, but scholars have also become increasingly interested in how different cultures have adapted "colonial" texts like Greek tragedy. Greek tragedy and various theatre traditions around the world share numerous characteristics, including choruses. The chorus is often included in intercultural adaptations by cultures that are accustomed to singing, dancing, and collective ritual in performance.[638] Although the chorus has received attention in some studies – mainly to illustrate equivalences - there has been no in-depth study of the role of the chorus in intercultural adaptations.

---

[634] Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) explain that "when Europeans settled a colony, one of the earliest signs of established culture/'civilisation' was the presentation of European drama which, according to official records, obliterated for many years any indigenous performance forms" (7-8). However, they also note that these indigenous performance forms were still occurring underground (n. 9).

[635] In her second edition of *Theatre Audiences,* Bennett adds a chapter entitled "Spectatorship Across Culture", in which she argues that the fascination of the 1980s with issues of ethnicity and race "has shifted in more recent years into an obsession: audiences have increasingly confronted their Other(s) in the theatre" (167). Balme (1999) explains that since the 1980s, two important factors for studying intercultural theatre have emerged: first, the 'discovery' of postcolonialism in the United States, and second, the "metamorphosis of the term 'post-colonial' from a general epithet with temporal and spatial coordinates, however ill defined they may be, into the 'invention' of a critical approach or methodology" (vii).

[636] Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) 8.

[637] Hardwick (2004) 219.

The Ancient Chorus as Collective and Other

The rise of interest in intercultural and postcolonial drama was mirrored by a related reversal which was taking place in the description of the ancient chorus. Between the 1970s and the 1990s, the question of the chorus' relationship with the protagonists of tragedies – and how this impacted their relationship with the audience - particularly captured the interest of scholars. In attempting to define the role of the chorus, the debate became centred around issues of reception: How did the original audience view the chorus in relation to the protagonists? And how did this affect whether they interpreted the choruses as members of their collective community or as exoticized others? The work of these scholars shows that a simple understanding of the role of the chorus is complicated by the nuances of performance, even in the original Greek tragedies.

Like the work of Schechner, the scholarly arguments concerned with the ancient chorus from the 1970s to 1990s also contain an important reversal, from "collectivity" to "otherness". It seems fitting that issues of "otherness" would arise at a time when those like Schechner were beginning to think about intercultural exchange in a new way. Briefly reviewing these arguments will show that although the scholarly discussion of the ancient chorus since the 1970s has become increasingly conscious of the nuances of performance, the terms employed are often either structured as a dichotomy (collective/other), or so intertwined that terms like "authority" cease to be useful in isolation. Throughout this chapter, the term "authority" and its relation to other terms (in particular, "agency" and "authenticity") will be of crucial importance to understanding both the ancient and modern chorus. At a time when Greek tragedy can be called a "global medium",[639] terms like "collective" and "other" – as well as "authority", "agency", and "authenticity" - provide a point from which to begin discussing issues faced by the modern, intercultural chorus, rooted in the these choruses' ancient counterparts.

---

[638] Budelmann (2005), for instance, discusses the similarities between African and Greek theatre. One of these similarities is the inclusion of a chorus. There is a chorus in all of the West African adaptations he considers, although they often speak in individual voices (134).

The Chorus as "Collective" in the 1970s

As discussed in the previous chapter, in his structuralist interpretation of the role of the chorus,[640] Vernant argued in the early 1970s that the chorus stands in opposition to the hero. This opposition is essential to the tension in tragedy between the mythic past and democratic present. Tragedy "brings to stage an ancient heroic legend", and for the city, this world is the past. However, it is "a past still close enough for the clash of values still to be a painful one and for this clash still to be currently taking place".[641] It is this debate with the past that manifests itself in the tension felt in the opposition between chorus and protagonist. It is essential here to repeat this central argument, as it is subsequently re-phrased by Vernant:

> This debate with a past that is still alive creates at the very heart of each tragic work a fundamental distance that the interpreter needs to take into account. It is expressed, in the very form of the drama, by the tension between the two elements that occupy the tragic stage. One is the chorus, the collective and anonymous presence embodied by an official college of citizens. Its role is to express through its fears, hopes, questions and judgements, the feelings of the spectators who make up the civic community.[642]

---

[639] Hall (2004a) 2.

[640] Vernant (1972: 1981). Vernant quickly dismisses the question of the origins of tragedy, which he says has been at the centre of "the enquiries of Greek scholars" for the previous half-century (he states that "the problem of origins is, in a sense, a false one"[1]). For a contextualization of the work of Vernant and Vidal-Naquet in the structuralist tradition, see Csapo and Miller (2007) and Leonard (2005). Leonard's work in particular contextualizes the work of post-War French scholars in the political climate of their own time. She offers an important reminder about the "dangers of separating out the history of classical scholarship from a wider history of ideas. Rethinking the relationship between classics and theory, classics and its reception forces us to rethink, *re-politicize,* the distance between the modern reader and the classical text" (21).

[641] Vernant (1972: 1981) 9.

[642] Vernant (1972: 1981) 10.

Vernant defines the chorus in opposition to the protagonist, and this opposition is a formal way of expressing the tension between the mythic past and the present.

Although Vernant mentions a “fundamental distance”, he is indicating that the opposition of chorus/protagonist points to the tensions inherent in the tragedy, and that this tension is felt by the spectators. He does not mean that there is a distance between the chorus and the audience, for he equates the chorus - the “official college of citizens” - with the “civic community”, connecting the chorus to the audience. As I have argued, it is for this reason that Vernant’s conception of the chorus has been compared to that of Schlegel.

The chorus not only opposes the protagonist in order to show the tension between the past and present, but the chorus also stands in opposition to the “otherness” and heroic excess of the tragic heroes. In place of this “otherness”, the chorus offers the audience a “collective truth”. Gould summarizes this aspect of their argument concisely:

> For them, tragedy is for its audience the experience of a double vision of traditional myth, in which the chorus embodies ‘the collective truth, the truth of the mean, the truth of the [democratic] city’. This ‘truth’ is set against ‘the excess’ of the heroic figures of the tragic fiction, who, by contrast, belong to an ‘absent’ world, ‘separated’ from the city, and represent the ‘otherness’ of the heroic code as it appeared to the fifth-century dramatists of the Athenian *polis* and to their audience.[643]

In their formulation, the chorus is a collective that is connected to the democratic city, and which opposes the “otherness” of the individual tragic hero. Although this model would later come under attack, it was nevertheless influential in the study of the chorus, as it placed importance on the chorus’ presence in tragedy and attempted to give an in-depth account of the chorus’ role.

---

[643] Gould (1996) 219. Gould’s quotes are taken from Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1986).

The Chorus as "Other" in the 1990s

The model described by Vernant in his work with Vidal-Naquet came under heavy criticism twenty years later in two companion pieces - an article on the chorus written by Gould, and a complementary piece by Goldhill, both published in the same volume.[644] Gould explores his disagreement with what he sees as Vernant's assumption that by opposing the hero, the chorus automatically becomes representative of the *polis.* The tragic chorus' fictional identity, he points out, is not that of Greek citizens, but is instead "characteristically composed of old men, women, slaves and foreigners", figures that are socially marginal in the world of the play.[645] Gould believes that there are many types of "otherness" that the chorus can represent while remaining a collective, and that the specific type of "otherness" a chorus embodies is based on their fictional identity in a given tragedy – that is, their role in the inner frame of the action. By combining more than one aspect of social marginality, "to produce a chorus, say, of female non-Greek slaves, the chorus may indeed be perceived by the citizen audience as doubly, or even triply, marginal".[646]

The chorus, then, still always opposes the hero (as in Vernant and Vidal-Naquet's work), however, for Gould, it is through their role as a group of "others". This opposition between chorus and protagonist can be accomplished in a "bewildering" variety of ways: "the choral experience may constitute an image of stability and rootedness, of threatening disorder, of human vulnerability, to stand against the experience of the protagonists".[647] The axis of the opposition can be shifted by the playwright – which allows for creativity and flexibility – but it cannot be removed.

---

[644] Silk (ed.) (1996) *Tragedy and the Tragic,* Oxford and New York.

[645] Gould (1996) 220. Gould relates his remarks to a variety of examples: in particular, the two *Suppliant Women* plays, (by Aeschylus and Euripides), Euripides' *Phoenissae* and *Electra,* Sophocles' *Trachiniae,* and Euripides' *Bacchae* and *Medea.*

[646] Gould (1996) 220. On the "barbarian" Greek choruses, see also Hall (1989), especially 113-16. Her work in *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* can be considered a part of the movement toward examining otherness in Greek tragedy.

[647] Gould (1996) 233.

The fundamental basis of Gould's argument is that the chorus must be examined from its place *within* the tragic fiction of the inner frame. His concern is the dramatic role of the chorus within the fictional world, despite potential interpenetrations between the "real" and the "fictional", which he acknowledges but ultimately dismisses as less important.[648] Gould proposes that the "otherness" of the chorus does not enable them to stand outside of the fictional world of the play,[649] because "we misread them as soon as we think of them as in any sense a privileged presence within the tragic fiction, not bounded by its lack of closure but guiding us, the audience, step by step, in the 'correct' perception of events as yet incomplete".[650] The chorus members are instead responding to tragic events in the moment, and sometimes, their interpretations of events are incorrect,[651] proving (to Gould, at least) that they do not have any special status outside of the fiction.

In asserting the importance of the chorus' fictional context in what I have called the inner frame, Gould is attempting to overcome two major theories of the chorus. The first, which I have discussed previously, is Schlegel's model of the "ideal spectator"; Gould clearly states that he is opposed to the model laid out by Schlegel.[652] However, not only does he engage with this longstanding influence, but he spends even more time engaging with another influential theory: the assumption that the chorus represents the voice of the playwright. This theory remains so prevalent that Gould adds a note stating that "the 'poet's voice' reading of the chorus's role has had an even longer run than Schlegel's 'ideal spectator'".[653] As Goldhill explains, this overarching theory of the chorus claims that "it is through the chorus that the author expresses what he actually believes: their authority is from the author".[654] The theories of the "ideal spectator" and the "poet's voice" both focus on the chorus' role in the outer frame of the action, and Gould's article argues against both, in favour of more focus on the chorus' role as dramatic characters in the inner frame of the performance.

---

[648] In Gould's argument (218), he does acknowledge the contributions of others, including Henrichs (1994), to the understanding of the chorus in the context of the *polis* and its ritual processes. Gould states that although his concern is the dramatic role of the chorus within the fictional world of the play, "as Henrichs has convincingly demonstrated, that fictional world is itself interpenetrated by echoes, resonances, and reflections of the 'real', that is, the ritual, functions of the performances, and therefore I cannot pass by these issues altogether without comment" (218). Later, Gould argues that it is difficult – if not impossible - to imagine a 'civic discourse' which is perceived as giving authoritative voice to the *polis* placed in the mouths of groups of marginalized others. He adds, "That, I think, remains true whether or not we believe, as Winkler argues, that such collectives within the fiction are in reality being performed by a structurally significant segment of the male population, the ephebes, or are in some sense perceived, as Henrichs suggests, as engaged in ritual action on behalf of the *polis.* It is their fictional identity, their dramatic persona within the overall fiction of the play, that must determine our response" (220).

[649] Gould (1996) 232.

[650] Gould (1996) 231.

[651] Gould gives the example of the chorus of *Medea,* who claim "You will not be able to wet your hand in blood when your children fall before you in supplication" (862-5).

Choral Authority

The issue of "otherness" became so important in the 1990s because what is truly at stake in the debate about collectivity/otherness is in fact the chorus' authority.[655] The question of the authority of the chorus arises in this period in conjunction with the question of choral identity precisely *because* scholars are attempting to dismantle theories such as the "ideal spectator" or the "poet's voice". As the chorus began to be more prominent both onstage in adaptations as well as in classical scholarship, scholars moved away from these generalizing and reductionary theories. Both the theories of the "ideal spectator" and the "poet's voice" emphasize the chorus' role outside of the fictional action, which afford it a unique view as an "authority" on the action (for example, as I quoted Goldhill above, "their authority is from the author"). Once scholars such as Gould begin trying to replace these theories, and instead acknowledging the importance of the chorus' identity within the inner frames of the plays, they struggle to define and locate the source of what they called the chorus' "authority".

---

[652] In a note, he also adds that Schlegel's "ideal spectator" model "was always open to the objection that it ignored far too much in the songs that choruses actually sing, and at the very least grossly oversimplified the choral role. Some of the uses made of the concept have been more reductionist still" (235 n.2).

[653] Gould (1996) 240 n. 81. Despite its prominence, the origin of this theory is unknown. Gould continues, "it is already taken for granted; e.g., by the recent scholiast on Eur. *Med.* 823." (240 n. 81) The theory continues to be applied, as Gould also notes: "The most sophisticated formulations of the 'poet's voice' reading of the tragic chorus is undoubtedly that of T.G. Rosenmeyer's essay, 'Elusory Voices: Thoughts about the Sophoclean Chorus' (*Nomodeiktes: Essays in Honor of Martin Ostwald* [Ann Arbor 1993] 561-71" (240 n. 81). It is possible to conjecture that scholars have found it tempting to connect the chorus with the voice of the playwright because of the convention of the comic *parabasis,* in which the chorus of Old Comedy directly addresses the audience to speak about a topic relevant to Athenian life, though separate from the action of the play. This convention, however, is not present in tragedy, and so an equivalence of this nature would be forced.

[654] Goldhill (2007) 52. This view, along with the "ideal spectator" model, comprise what Goldhill identifies as the two main schools of thought on the chorus through the twentieth century, which have both had a strong influence on modern performance styles.

[655] Most overtly, the title of Goldhill's 1996 companion piece shows the importance of this issue in the debate about choral identity: "Collectivity and Otherness – The Authority of the Tragic Chorus".

In Goldhill's "response" to Gould's paper, he praises Gould for challenging Vernant's model and its implicit acceptance of the chorus' role as ideal (or idealized) spectator. Goldhill praises Gould's questioning of this model in favour of a more careful understanding of the interaction between the audience and the chorus. However, he also explores Gould's categorization more critically – in particular, Gould's categories of "the collective" and "the other". Goldhill is concerned about Gould's connection between social marginality and whether this necessitates a "lack of authority of voice".[656] Goldhill emphasizes that not being the poet's voice does not mean having no authority.

Goldhill argues that the chorus speaks with the weight of a *collective* authority, which is one way that a tragedy discusses the nature of authority itself. The ritual role of the chorus and its connection with myth give it this authority, yet this is at odds with the social marginalization based on its fictional identity. Goldhill states that it is, in fact, this tension *within* the chorus regarding its own authority that makes the chorus unique: "It is, in short, the tension between authoritative, ritual, mythic utterance and specific, marginal, partial utterance that gives the chorus its special voice in tragedy".[657] However, this again locates the authority of the chorus in the outer frame of the action, in their connection with myth and ritual. Goldhill essentially reconciles theories that place the chorus outside of the action with Gould's insistence on their social marginality as fictional characters. Central to Goldhill's position, however, is precisely this merging of identity and role that occurs at the point I referred to in chapter one as the "convergence" of the frames: he believes that the chorus asks the audience to constantly renegotiate where the authoritative voice lies, and that this questioning of the authority of collective wisdom is one of the important ways ancient tragedy engaged with its political and democratic context.[658]

---

[656] Goldhill (1996) 252.

Examining this issue of choral otherness using the terminology afforded by the model of concentric frames shows that the problem of defining and accounting for the chorus' "authority" is, in part, a problem of reception. Looking for the source of the chorus' "authority" is a question of identifying their relationship to both the fictional world and the interpretation of the audience. This is in fact what differentiates choral "authority" from choral "agency"; the chorus' "agency" might be considered their role "within the dramas"[659] - their ability to act and effect change within the fictional world of the inner frame (and therefore connected with their fictional identity, emphasized by Gould). Their authority, as I stated above, might be considered an issue of reception, connected with their role in relation to the audience in the outer frame.

Although Gould's argument mainly concerns the chorus' role in the inner frame of performance, when he reverses the understanding of the chorus from a "collective" (as in

---

[657] Goldhill (1996) 254. Goldhill uses the example of Euripides' chorus in *Hippolytus* to show how this authority can be used: when the nurse and the chorus tell the same story differently, Euripides is using the authority of the chorus to emphasize the nurse's partiality.

[658] I will return to the question of choral "voice" subsequently in this chapter.

[659] Foley (2003) 1. In fact, Foley states that she will discuss the chorus' identity, while setting aside the issue of their authority, as it is "a term hard to define, and ideally addressed in more detail in another paper" (2). However, although she states that she will not look at choral authority, she cannot entirely avoid doing so, because of her interest in choral performance.

Vernant's model) to a group of "others", he in fact proposes a fundamental change in audience reception. Although Gould retains the opposition between chorus and characters that Vernant described, his argument that the chorus is socially marginal in the world of the play alters the way the audience would have interacted with the performances. However, he does not fully engage with the implications of this for the reception of tragedy.

Gould argues that the audience understands the chorus as other in relation to the tragic hero – but how does this affect the chorus' relationship with the audience? Will a group of old men truly be interpreted as other? It would certainly depend on the age or other characteristics (gender, ethnicity, etc.) of the audience members,[660] as well as societal perceptions of old age. In other words, "otherness" cannot be understood to function separately from "collectivity"; in what ways the chorus seems "other" to the audience depends on how we understand the audience's sense of identification and feelings of "collectivity". The question, as in the previous chapter, remains focused on *who* is a part of the collective, and how this collectivity is shared and expressed. In a discussion that takes into account the chorus' fictional otherness, however, there are additional issues associated with how identification and collectivity might operate in relation to the audience. Kitzinger seems cognizant of some of these implications for reception when she sums up the debate between Goldhill and Gould, stating that it "hinges on how important the dramatic identity (e.g. old women, old men, sailors, young girls) of the chorus is in determining how its performance is received by the audience" .[661]

Just as there was a reversal in Schechner's thinking about "community" and collective ritual, Gould's arguments also created a reversal: the group that was once thought to represent the audience as a collective could now be considered socially marginal in the world of the play.

---

[660] See the Introduction to this study for a discussion of the composition of the Greek audience.
[661] Kitzinger (2008) 4.

Gould's arguments (and Goldhill's response) contributed to the process of re-focusing scholarly attention on tragedy as a fictional performance genre, and on the chorus' performance in particular. Although he emphasized the chorus' "otherness", Gould also argued for the necessity of the chorus' collective presence to the performance of tragedy. Central to Gould's argument, as he himself states, is "the proposition that the chorus is an essential part of that fiction, and that equally of the essence of the chorus's role is the theatrical and dramatic fact of its collective presence".[662] The chorus' role is essential to tragedy, and Gould also acknowledges the flexibility afforded to the playwright in determining the identity and "otherness" of the chorus.

Gould's arguments thus make major strides toward studying the chorus from the perspective of performance, however, he relies on dichotomies that all too often are called into question in performance, and which cannot always account for the complexities of reception.

Performance and Reception

As I have stated previously, it is only recently that scholars interested in the ancient chorus have truly begun to examine the chorus from the angle of performance.[663] This, as I have argued, is of crucial importance to any discussion of the chorus, whether ancient or modern. In the case of collectivity and otherness, looking at the chorus from the angle of performance makes it clear that audience members might identify with the chorus as part of a collective, and *simultaneously* feel that the chorus is other – either to him/herself, the protagonist, or both. So, for instance, on the stage in classical Athens, a male audience member may feel a sense of identification with the chorus, perhaps having participated in a chorus himself at some point. In the context of choral culture of Athens, which has been amply discussed in recent years, many people would have participated in a chorus of some kind, even if only as part of their education.[664] Since the chorus was performed by male members of the community, a male citizen in the audience might feel some sense of identification with the actor. However, if the chorus' fictional identity is that of an other to himself (say, a female slave), then he may have a conflicting or paradoxical response. It would be overly-generalizing to argue, as Gould does, that "it is their fictional identity, their dramatic persona within the overall fiction of the play, that must determine our response".[665] As my discussion of the self-referentiality of the chorus in previous chapters has shown, theatre allows for – and indeed often encourages – such simultaneous and contradictory reactions, as well as the wide variety of reactions felt by different individual members of the audience.

---

[662] Gould (1996) 232.

[663] Especially Foley (2003), who looks at the issue of choral identity and Kitzinger (2008), who examines the choral character. Both integrate aspects of performance into their discussions, and stress the varied usage of the chorus from play to play.

The problem of the chorus' identity and its impact on the chorus' role (as well as on audience reception) has been considered by Helene Foley.[666] Foley's emphasis on the chorus' role in performance leads her to discover new reasons for the chorus' otherness, which are particularly useful here. Foley's article offers an important reminder that scholars must consider the impact of the context of Greek tragedy's initial performance at *competitive* festivals. Performance concerns are sometimes overlooked in scholarship, but Foley suggests that considerations of performance may have played a role "equal to or even more important than issues relating to content in determining the poet's free choice to define choral identity in individual plays and in assessing the role and dramatic effect of tragic choruses".[667] In other words, when choosing the chorus' identity and determining their role, playwrights would have been influenced by performance possibilities.

---

[664] Wilson (2000) offers the reminder that recontextualizing drama through the *Khoregia* "also highlights, as Plato's discourse on *khoreia* further shows, the status of drama as a choral production, in a cultural tradition which know of many different choral types" (4). Emphasizing the choral culture of Athens has now become a standard way of understanding choruses. See the Introduction to this study for further discussion and examples of this trend.

[665] Gould (1996) 220.

[666] Foley (2003).

[667] Foley (2003) 25.

The expected or anticipated reception of plays thus becomes an important factor in the creation of the chorus and its identity. Foley argues that choral performances greatly influenced the evaluation of tragedies by judges and audiences, remarking that choral performance can "easily compete with or even overshadow actors and action".[668] Since plays were evaluated based on their performance, playwrights would have felt encouraged to select identities for their choruses that allowed the chorus members to exhibit their skills.

Foley explains that the need to create an impressive choral performance seems to have led playwrights to often select choruses of "other" groups, such as women, old men, and foreigners. Foley suggests that both actors and chorus members were "probably judged on their success in representing the Other in performance".[669] Choosing a group of others meant that the chorus members could prove their virtuosity through exotic forms of dance and song, as well as exoticized stage elements such as costuming. In order to further impress judges and the audience, playwrights would have felt encouraged to alter the chorus' identity throughout a trilogy. Aeschylus, for instance, would not have sufficiently impressed his audience by employing the same chorus throughout the *Oresteia.*[670] In his trilogy, Aeschylus not only provides three very different choruses (old men, slave women, and the Furies), but in the final play, *Eumenides,* the chorus in fact alters their identity in the presence of the audience.

---

[668] Foley (2003) 4.

[669] Foley (2003) 5. Foley engages with evidence stating the importance of voice training and later, acting (including walking, glancing, and gestures appropriate to the chorus' fictional identity, like supplication for women and old or foreign men) (6).

[670] Foley (2003) 7. She notes that Aeschylus was known for his "spectacular dramaturgy" with respect to choral performance, and "indeed, the rest of Aeschylus' prominent extant choruses, which consist of virgins who initially rush frantically onto the stage in *Seven Against Thebes,* exotic Persians, dark-skinned Danaids from Egypt in *Supplices,* and divine, winged Oceanids in *Prometheus Vinctus* (if the play is by Aeschylus) make my point about how choral identity may have contributed to a tragic victory quite handily" (8). Sophocles, she explains, preferred to use more male than female choruses, however, she argues that he increasingly permitted them to "engage in a higher proportion of exciting lyric dialogues with the actors (see his late *Electra, Philoctetes,* and *Oedipus Coloneus*)" (8). In comparison with his predecessors, Euripides may have reduced the prominence of choral *stasima* or revised the way they were integrated into the action, however, he "seems to have made up for it in performance with a preference for female and other more exotic foreign choruses as well as the exciting 'new music'" (8).

Looking at the chorus' role in the context of a competitive performance offers new insights about the chorus' potential role as other. Foley focuses not on the general fact of the "otherness" of the chorus, but on *how* and *why* this otherness would have been appealing to Greek playwrights, judges, and audiences, and how this aspect of choral role would impact performance. Thinking about the intended reception of socially marginal choruses, especially in terms of their potential relationships with the audience, will prove beneficial to the study of modern intercultural adaptations of the chorus.

4.2 Intercultural Choral Identity

In the previous chapter, I explored Foley's argument that modern directors are often drawn to Greek choruses – especially Euripidean choruses – "either to express group suffering in the wake of twentieth-century wars or group complicity in historical events".[671] I argued that not only are choruses being depicted as complicit, but that this sense of complicity is also often communicated to the audience, regardless of whether the chorus is a suffering collective or participates in causing the tragic events to occur. In this latter case, which applies to the productions of Brecht and Schechner, the audience is intended to feel, by the conclusion of the production, that they have been complicit along with the chorus in causing the tragedy. In cases in which the chorus expresses "group suffering" and is composed of members of victimized communities, the audience is still often led to feel complicit. For this to occur, the process is as complex as in the cases examined in the previous chapter.

As I have argued, implicating the audience and making them complicit in the action is often a strategy of modern practitioners who incorporate a collective chorus in adaptations in order to communicate a particular political ideology or message. In intercultural adaptations, which often deal even more directly with current political issues, complicity is also often a goal of the chorus/audience relationship. Although in many cases, these productions attempt to call for an end to the audience's complicity in the real-life suffering of victimized communities, these choruses are generally not used to *confront* the audience with this complicity (as they are in Brecht's work, for example). Instead, there is a focus on identification with the victimized chorus in order to foster feelings of empathy in the audience, and it is through this identification that the productions build collectivity with the audience. This hopeful, empathetic collectivity is often the goal of the performance, intended to communicate the political message.

---

[671] Foley (2007) 361.

As I explored briefly above, in the case of intercultural adaptations, this goal of involvement and empathy is sometimes simply called "complicity". However, this means that "complicity" loses both its negative connotation as well as its relation to distanced or self-reflexive evaluation. For instance, in Mnouchkine's production, although there was initial distancing from action of the inner frame (by allowing the audience to interact with the actors as they prepared for the performance), this led to feelings of increased involvement in the performance. Both McDonald and Goetsch state that they were made complicit in the *production* or *performance,* not in the cause of the tragic action in the inner frame. As in Guthrie's production described in chapter two, the use of distancing techniques in fact led to increased involvement in ritual. This goal of involvement sometimes leads adapters to use the term "complicit" to mean "actively involved in the performance", and this will also be the case in Farber's *Molora,* examined below. In order to build audience identification and empathy, adapters seem to feel that intercultural choruses must overcome any distance or otherness in relation to the audience, and prompt a sense of identification and collectivity.

This is in fact the opposite movement from the choruses explored in chapter three. In the cases of Brecht and Schechner's choruses, the movement was from the establishment of collectivity and identification to distance, in order to prompt the audience to consider their involvement as a form of complicity in the tragic action. Here, choruses seem to already be considered distanced – as fictional or real-life "others" – and adapters instead utilize a variety of strategies to help the audience overcome this distance and identify with the chorus. In intercultural adaptations, often, the very act of bridging the dialectic of otherness/collectivity is itself an important aspect of the ideology of a particular play, in both the creation of the production, as well as in the reception of its particular message. However, as I will show, as intercultural choruses attempt to portray otherness and encourage identification and/or involvement from the audience, interesting issues arise.

As I have described, looking at the chorus from the perspective of performance shows that the ancient chorus might have represented both the socially marginal other, as well as prompting feelings of identification and collectivity. Yet how do choruses in these productions overcome their cultural differences with the audience in order to cease being "other" and begin to build identification and collectivity - which is sometimes referred to simply as "complicity"? In what follows, I will examine these issues in relation to performances that have been received internationally. Although it is not always possible to identify a production's *intended* audience, the adaptations I will examine have all been performed on stages in Europe and/or North America, regardless of their countries of origin. Some of these productions also feature a group of creators/actors of mixed cultural backgrounds. For instance, in the example of *Molora,* the director Yael Farber is white (as is one of the actors), and the remainder are black men and women of South Africa. Due to the intermingling of cultures involved in both the creation and reception of these productions, I will often favour the term "intercultural"[672] rather than "postcolonial",[673] despite the fact that some of the adaptations deal directly with postcolonial issues. Budelmann and Hardwick have recently shown that labelling all adaptations connected with formerly colonial areas "postcolonial" is a rather imprecise way of explaining the relation of an adaptation to its source text, not to mention its international audience.[674] In what follows, I examine the fictional (and in some cases, "real life") identities of these intercultural choruses more closely, as well as the potential reasons for these choices of identity and how they affect the reception of the chorus by the audience.

---

[672] Regarding the term "intercultural", Pavis (1992) explains that "it is no longer enough to describe the relationships between texts (or even between performances) to grasp their internal functioning; it is also necessary to understand their inscription within contexts and cultures and to appreciate the cultural production that stems from these unexpected transfers. The term *interculturalism*, rather than *multiculturalism* or *transculturalism*, seems appropriate to the task of grasping the dialectic of exchanges of civilities between cultures" (2). For more on the difference between these terms see Pavis (1996) 5-8. See also Bharucha (2000), who discusses the term in relation to multiculturalism and nationalism, and Lo and Gilbert (2002) 32 for a very useful diagram and explanation of the sub-categories of cross-cultural theatre, among which is intercultural theatre. They state that "put simply, intercultural theatre is a hybrid derived from an intentional encounter between cultures and performing traditions" (36).

It is important to also note that some have used the term "intercultural" in a negative way, based on its application in the 1990s to productions in the 1960s and 1970s that appropriated rituals to be inserted into Western performances (for the application of this term to the work of Brook, Mnouchkine, and others, see Pavis [1996]). Balme deals with this legacy of the term "intercultural" by differentiating between the use of rituals in what he calls "intercultural theatre" (by which he means the work of Western directors like Schechner and Grotowski), and the use of ritual in syncretic theatre (which I discuss below). While interculturalism and intercultural theatre – as he defines these - have received a lot of attention, "ultimately their experiments engage directly with the question of representing and perceiving the Other" (271). Syncretic theatre is also intercultural, but approaches the confrontation of cultures from the opposite position. I would argue, however, that this does not absolve syncretic theatre from dealing with questions of the "other". Not only does this theatre deal with encounters between two cultures (no matter which "end of the continuum" it emerges from), but questions of "otherness" and ritual are especially significant in a modern international context in which productions (like *Molora*, explored below) tour extensively.

[673] When it is applicable, I use the term "postcolonialism" as it is outlined in a "working definition" by Quayson (2000): postcolonialism "involves a studied engagement with the experience of colonialism and its past and present effects, both at the local level of ex-colonial societies as well as at the level of more general global developments thought to be the after-effects of empire" (2). Quayson notes that postcolonialism involves the discussion of experiences of various kinds (slavery, migration, race, gender, etc.) as well as the conditions that existed under imperialism (not just after the "end" of colonialism): "However the term is construed, a central underlying assumption is that a focus on the discourse and ideology of colonialism is as important as one on the material effects of subjugation under colonialism and after" (2). A similar explanation can be found in Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) 2. See also Quayson (2012).

For a summary of the issues surrounding the decision of whether to hyphenate the term "post-colonialism", see Quayson (2000) 1, and Hardwick and Gillespie (2007) 4. My practice of eliminating the hyphen follows Quayson's, and is intended "to distinguish it from its more chronologically inflected progenitor" (1), and to understand postcolonialism "*as a process of postcolonizing*" (9, his italics).

[674] Both Budelmann (2005) and Hardwick (2004) have recently noted that in the dichotomy of European/African, Greek tragedy play a complex role. In discussing West African adaptations of Greek tragedy, Budelmann (2005) notes that "Greek tragedy plays a complicated role in canonical counter-discourse. Greece appears not to be the same as Britain" (133). Thus, not all adaptations engage with their source material in a confrontational manner, nor do they all use this material to discuss colonial/postcolonial issues. Therefore, "classifying plays as postcolonial is reductionist" (138). Hardwick (2004) notes that some adaptations have "stripped away easy assumptions about the 'western identity' of ancient Greek culture" (242). Hardwick extends this argument to state that in many ways, Greek drama has not only contributed to decolonization, but has itself been decolonized (242).

Choral Identity/Identities

The chorus' identity in intercultural productions is often used in one of two ways: to either *broaden* or to *narrow* the scope of the play's subject matter, by emphasizing certain aspects of the play's modern applicability. For instance, in some productions, the chorus represents a specific cultural group, narrowing the focus of the play to show how the action and performance of a Greek tragedy relates to the experience of a modern and (relatively) homogeneous group. The homogeneity of the group and its cultural identity often allows the chorus to perform rituals closely associated with their culture or religion.

The chorus can also be used to broaden the scope of the play, using their identity as signifiers of the wider modern implications of the tragedy's subject matter. These latter choruses often contain members of different cultural or ethnic identities with the hope of universalizing the action, and broadening the tragedy's message (or what the adapter believes is the message). It is important to note that a chorus of mixed identities is in fact a departure from the use of the chorus by the Greek playwrights (whose choruses shared defining attributes such as age, gender, class, etc.).[675] However, it is one modern strategy of using the chorus in an attempt to overcome the distance of "otherness" and to build identification and collectivity. The chorus' variety of identities illustrates the universal applicability of the tragedy's subject matter. This was the case in multiple productions in the last twenty years, of which I will offer three examples, which each raise different but related issues about the use of this type of chorus.

---

[675] There are few exceptions to this convention, including the split chorus in Aristophanes' comedy *Lysistrata,* which divides into two choruses, male and female.

Mixed Identity Choruses

The chorus of mixed identities is often used to refer to a variety of modern wars and conflicts. The ethnic identity of choral actors is sometimes the only indication of the modern applicability of fictional tragic action, although these choruses also appear in fully adapted tragedies. In any case, the use of mixed identity choruses is a tactic of the outer frame, and might be considered in many cases to be self-referential due to the distancing involved in calling attention to the actors' identities in order to communicate the modern relevance of the action in the inner frame. However, as I show in this section, this distance, established at the outset of the play, is intended to be subsequently overcome by the indication of universality implied by the variety of performing bodies. Mixed identity choruses have appeared in a variety of contexts, can operate in many different ways, and raise interesting issues of representation.

For instance, in 1995, Annie Castledine directed a production entitled *Women of Troy* at the Royal National Theatre.[676] In her production, the women of the chorus were represented by a multi-ethnic group. Regarding this production, one reviewer noted that "the chorus are not the women of one ruined city, but a multi-ethnic group representing all defeated humanity, and the Americans are the murderous baddies".[677] While Menelaus had the accent of an American Southener, the rest of the cast studied the victims of modern conflicts: "to help the cast make connections between Euripides' concerns and contemporary warfare [Castledine] showed them footage of forced movements of people, the diaspora, the situation in the Balkan states, the Kurds, Iraq, Iran".[678] Even though in reality, most of the audience was likely ethnically and culturally similar to the American "baddies", the audience's identification and empathy is clearly intended to be directed toward the sympathetic chorus. In an interview with *The Independent*,

---

[676] This version should not be confused with Katie Mitchell's staging with the same title in 2007.

[677] Peter (March 26, 1995).

[678] Brown (March 15, 1995).

Castledine stated that “our priority then and now is to extend our hands across cultural barriers to grasp our common humanity. If we ignore that, we are condemning the whole human race; I think that's what Euripides thought”.[679]

However, in the case of this production, using the chorus to broaden the scope of the modern referents seems to have sacrificed the specificity of the Trojan setting of the play entirely, as another reviewer noted that the production “refers to every modern war but not the one the play is about”.[680] The issue that this production most obviously points to is the precarious balance between using the chorus to indicate a play’s “universal relevance” and the preservation of the specific time and/or location of the action. The focus on the outer frame appears to have sacrificed the specificity of the fictional action in the inner frame.

My second example of this trend in choral identity relies on Hardwick’s description of a Cuban translation from 1968, by Antón Arrufat, entitled *Los Siete contra Tebas* (*Seven against Thebes).*[681] Although written in 1968, this play did not premiere until November 2001 in an English translation in Glasgow.[682] In this production,

> the costume of the chorus of women evoked images of women in conflict zones – Central America, Eastern Europe, Palestine. They were given specific characters and relationships with the Champions [...] The programme notes (by Mike Gonzalez) invited the audience to judge for themselves what response Arrufat was offering to the Cuban experience and added, ‘it seems particularly significant to be presenting this play about the resolution of conflict by violent means when Afghanistan is being bombed daily...”.[683]

The issue that I wish to highlight through this example can be noted in the use of the word “costume”. Although it is of course impossible to know the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of actors, it is important to acknowledge that while sometimes, the *real* identities of the actors are the focus, in other productions, it is enough that the *fictional* identities of the chorus members are ethnically or culturally diverse.[684] The difference lies in whether it is the creation of the play that is being emphasized, or simply the final product of the production. For instance (and by way of contrast), in a recent Israeli ensemble production entitled *Mythos* (2003)*,* the actors were drawn from several different cultures of Israel (Israeli, Ethiopian-Israeli, Palestinian-Israeli), in order to relate the action of the *Oresteia* to those affected by a conflict such as that of modern-day Israel.[685] In this case, the creation process of the play is emphasized – the peaceful and collaborative interaction between these actors is itself important. This is in contrast to the "costumes" of the women in the Cuban/Scottish example above, which serve in the production to emphasize universality. Their real-life identity is not important to the reception of the production. It is clear that both productions are focused on relating the relevance of the action to the audience in the outer frame, but this comparison illustrates that even in the outer frame, the bodies of actors can be used to signify in a variety of ways.

---

[679] Brown (March 15, 1995).
[680] Gore-Langton, (March 17, 1995) p. 6.
[681] Hardwick (2004).
[682] Hardwick (2004) 223.
[683] Hardwick (2004) 223.

My final example is a recent Toronto production entitled *If We Were Birds,* a play that draws on the tragic story of the sisters Procne and Philomela from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Although not based on a Greek tragic play, this production remains relevant to this discussion because a chorus was *added* to this production. This production is therefore not an example of a writer and director finding an innovative way to deal with the chorus when adapting a tragedy; instead, it is an example of a writer choosing to add a chorus because she recognizes its potential usefulness to the communication of her show. In this case, as in the examples above, the chorus appealed to the creator because of its ability to broaden the modern applicability of the myth. In a *NOW Magazine* (Toronto) preview of the production, Jon Kaplan explains that "the chorus of five women are slaves captured by Tereus and given as a gift to Pandion".[686] He interviews the director, Alan Dilworth, who discusses the playwright's use of the chorus:

---

[684] This type of costuming can be problematic, as Lo and Gilbert (2002) state: "A politicized reading of costume is similarly necessary to the formulation of a more comprehensive theory about intercultural performance. It seems that part of the attraction of interculturalism has to do with the fantasy of stepping into "native" costume in a process of cultural transvestism that does anything but subvert power hierarchies" (48).

[685] Although not strictly a chorus, in the Itim Ensemble production of *Mythos* in 2003 (an Israeli production conveying the myth of the house of Atreus, including the events of the *Oresteia*), ensemble members were drawn from Israeli, Palestinian, and Ethiopian-Israel communities. See the Itim Ensemble website (http://www.itimtheatre.com). For a review of the production in Israel, see Kustow's article in *The Guardian* (January 7, 2003). For information about its performance in New York, see Goldman (July 4, 2003) or Backalenick (August 8, 2003). Several additional materials are available at the University of Oxford's *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama*.

> 'Erin [Shields] links each chorus member to a conflict of the last century: Rwanda, Bangladesh, Nanking, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Berlin. The women not only reflect on the story but also facilitate it for their own means.'
>
> The five women, ranging from an adolescent to a grandmother, are a blend of races and socioeconomic backgrounds.
> 'What they share is a history of being ravaged and raped, a political act of violence against them. As the play shows, there are some horrific deeds that occur both in a war and in a family.'[687]

Shields decides to add a chorus to her production, because she finds the chorus' ability to broaden and modernize the action useful in the communication of her play's ideology. With the addition of the chorus, the play is not only focussed on the ancient myth of a particular family, but it is also more focussed on the deeds themselves that might "occur both in war and in a family", in any era. The issue that I wish to highlight through this production is the fact that this tactic of first emphasizing and then overcoming "otherness" by incorporating a heterogeneous group of others (whose very heterogeneity indicates universality) has made the chorus an appealing addition to adapters not necessarily working in the medium of tragedy.

The tactic of using a chorus of mixed identities to broaden or universalize the particular action that occurs between characters seems to be a common way of dealing with the Greek chorus in intercultural adaptations. Although these choruses and productions might ultimately be attempting to call for an end to the audience's real-life complicity in structures of power that cause tragedies, they do so by communicating empathy and universalism rather than implication or guilt. Each of my examples illustrated different issues raised by this type of chorus, however, these examples also have several important things in common. First, and most obviously, they all include a chorus of victims of modern conflicts. However, despite their different source plays (Euripides' *Trojan Women,* Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes,* Ovid's story of *Procne and Philomena),* the three choruses are also all composed entirely of women. This serves to not only universalize the play's relevance – as many creators intended – but also runs the risk of over-generalizing the experiences of women of very diverse conflict zones. In garnering sympathy for these women, it runs the risk of over-emphasizing their victimization, and downplaying the role that women can play in politics and war. Despite these (perhaps unintended) consequences, all three of these choruses build collectivity with the audience by emphasizing the universal applicability of their situation, regardless of their identities as diverse and socially marginal – and in this case, victimized - "others". They overcome their otherness precisely through the diversity of the otherness they represent.

---

[686] Kaplan (April 15-22, 2010). This article is a Preview for the re-mount of this production, which occurred at the Tarragon from April 21 – May 23, 2010. The production premiered at Toronto's Summerworks festival in 2008.

[687] Dilworth quoted in Kaplan (April 15-22, 2010).

Culturally Homogeneous Choruses

Choruses that represent one specific cultural or religious group – the opposite of the mixed chorus described above - are also common in intercultural adaptations. There are several reasons I would propose to account for the use of a culturally homogeneous chorus. First, as mentioned above, choruses of Greek tragedy had one unifying identity (despite being individuals with potentially different opinions[688]), so if an adapter is hoping to maintain points of equivalence, he/she might choose to include a chorus with one identity. Second, sharing one cultural, ethnic, or religious identity allows the chorus to engage in rituals particular to that group, capitalizing on the ritual function of the ancient chorus. On the modern stage, having a group of characters of mixed identities perform the same religious ritual could potentially be offensive. Maintaining a unified choral identity seems to allow adapters to include rituals that are more natural or "authentic".

---

[688] For instance, the chorus members divide into individual voices and express different opinions in *Agamemnon*, lines 1348-1371. This division, however, is rare, and despite having different opinions, they are still all identified by their identity as elderly male citizens.

4.3 Yael Farber: *Molora*

The inclusion of culturally-specific choruses is more complex than the mixed identity choruses I explored above, especially because they are more likely to perform rituals specific to their cultural or religious identity. Because of this complexity, I will now proceed to a more specific and in-depth case study, in order to look more closely at these issues. In the study of postcolonial and intercultural works, Hardwick has recently emphasized the methodological importance of letting authors speak for themselves, and focusing on case studies.[689] In what follows, I will focus my comments on the chorus of Yael Farber's *Molora,* a South African production that uses Aeschylus' *Oresteia* trilogy to comment on the legacy of apartheid. *Molora* in particular is a suitable subject for this investigation, because not only did the playwright/director specifically articulate audience complicity as a goal of the production, but the production's extensive touring will help to relate issues of otherness and collectivity with audience complicity in an intercultural context.

---

[689] In Hardwick and Gillespie (2007), the authors explain that one aim of the conference that their book is based on was to "develop case studies to bring together classicists' scholarly traditions of working closely with texts and contexts and the need for post-colonial analysis to avoid overarching theories and generalizations" (2). Hardwick (2004) states that one of the main problems of studying the postcolonial use of the Classics is that theoretical frames like "post-colonial" have in effect subjected African and Caribbean writers to a new wave of colonialism. Partly for this reason, she announces that she will try "to let the writers speak for themselves and will draw on their critical writings as well as their creative work (221). On this issue, see also Stone-Peters (1995). On the other hand, Lo and Gilbert (2002) argue that a "reluctance to engage with the 'big picture' arguably runs the risk of consolidating the ideological premises of interculturalism as a Western-dominated form of knowledge production. By privileging content specificity, the false dichotomy between praxis and theory is maintained; this also has the effect of relegating issues of ethics to the particular and the 'one off' rather than relating these to larger issues of knowledge formation within institutional, national, and global contexts" (37). I have attempted to balance these approaches.

Complicity, as I have shown, is a goal often connected to the transmission of political ideology or a particular political message, and this is further complicated by intercultural exchange – not only the exchange involved in the creation of productions, but also in the intercultural *reception* of the chorus in adaptations of Greek tragedy. Farber explicitly states that her production is intended to lead to feelings of complicity from the audience, however, she uses the term similarly to the way it is used by McDonald and Goetsch (above) in their descriptions of the audience experience of *Les Atrides*. In the published version of the play, Farber prescribes a stage design that she believes will allow optimal communication with the play's audience. She specifies:

> The work should never be played on a raised stage behind a proscenium arch, but on the floor to a raked audience. If being presented in a traditional theatre, the audience should be seated on stage with the action […] Contact with the audience must be immediate and dynamic, with the audience complicit – experiencing the story as witnesses or participants in the room, rather than as voyeurs excluded from yet looking in on the world of the story.[690]

Farber insists here on the stage design's impact on the audience's "complicit" experience of the play.[691] The space is designed in this intimate way in order to allow the actors – especially the chorus - to have "contact with the audience". Farber's definition of the audience's ideal role as "witnesses or participants" in fact makes complicity seem positive, especially since, for Farber, being a witness is an empowered and essential role, as I will discuss further below. Here again in an intercultural production "complicity" has lost both its negative connotations as well as its reliance upon distancing and self-reflexivity. However, once again it is also a complicity *in the production* (rather than the tragic action in the inner frame), and it is still through the audience's relationship with the chorus that Farber hopes to accomplish this complicity. It is the formation of a collective – and thus, the bridging of the dialectic of otherness/collectivity – that Farber in fact refers to with the term "complicity". Complicity in this production, and in the other intercultural productions described above, requires a *lack* of distance and instead, the promotion of identification.

---

[690] Farber (2008a) 19.

[691] This demand that the theatre space be altered to defy naturalistic norms is common in postcolonial productions. Balme has noted two different strategies for creating new spatial forms in syncretic theatre. The first strategy is the attempt to "create different *physical performing conditions* in keeping with indigenous spatial concepts", while the second is a "*dramaturgical* strategy which can be realized on a Western proscenium stage" (227). Balme explains that despite different strategies and results, the common factor amongst the many different spatial arrangements for syncretic theatre is the requirement that heterogeneous spatial concepts are recombined in new forms (227). In the quote above from the published version of *Molora*, Farber's ideal might be considered to fit within the first strategy – the creation of new staging conditions - but she also explains how her play might be staged in a more traditional theatre. Farber acknowledges both Western staging conventions and limitations ("If being presented in a traditional theatre…") as well as her play's departure from them ("the audience should be seated on stage"). Farber's design must be flexible, for it toured to different theatres (a process I will elaborate later), and could not always ensure an ideal theatre space.

In *Molora,* Farber uses a chorus to aid in creating a collective with the audience, despite the fact that they represent a group of "others" – in this case, Xhosa tribeswomen. Their fictional and real-life identity as Xhosa women "authenticates" their use of ritual, which is the main way they attempt to connect with the audience and create a sense of identification and what she calls "complicity". As in the case of the mixed choruses above, Farber attempts to initially establish – and then subsequently overcome - the otherness of the chorus in order to create a collective composed of chorus and audience. However, as I will show, this process also raises important questions and concerns.

Molora transports the action of revenge and reunion found in Aeschylus' *Oresteia* trilogy to the setting of post-Apartheid South Africa. Farber, an independent and award-winning South African director,[692] was born and raised in Johannesburg, South Africa, and currently resides and teaches in Montreal, Quebec, as the Director of the Directing Program at the National Theatre

---

[692] Farber had previously directed numerous productions including *A Woman in Waiting* (1999) *He left Quietly* (2002), and her adaptation of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar,* entitled *SeZaR* (2001). *Molora* (2008a) was published separately from three of Farber's "testimonial" plays, *A Woman in Waiting, Amajuba: Like Doves We Rise,* and *He Left Quietly,* which were published together in the volume *Theatre As Witness* (2008b).

School of Canada. *Molora* was first performed in 2007 at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg, South Africa, and subsequently toured internationally.[693]

The cast of *Molora* includes just three main actors, who each portray one character. Klytemnestra, a white female farmer, has murdered her black husband Agamemnon for the violence he inflicted upon her and for the sacrifice of her daughter Iphigenia. Elektra has sent away her brother Orestes when he was a baby to be raised by a group of women in secret. Klytemnestra tortures her daughter in an attempt to extract information regarding the location of her son, whom she fears will return for vengeance. Klytemnestra uses torture techniques upon her black daughter which were common during apartheid, including the use of a wet bag for suffocation, cigarette burns, and whipping. These violent events of the play are recalled as testimony by Elektra and her mother, as well as acted out in flashback scenes.

The testimony of the two female characters takes place at tables with microphones in order to recall the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings that took place in South Africa in the 1990s. Between 1995 and 1998, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission - set up by the new democratic government - investigated human rights violations committed by both proponents and opponents of the apartheid regime. The TRC was not a court of law and therefore did not conduct trials. It was instead intended to operate "side by side" with the criminal justice system,[694] conducting hearings aimed at discovering the full truth about violent events and disappearances that occurred during apartheid. The Commission heard testimony from both perpetrators of human rights violations during apartheid as well as from victims and their families. Many perpetrators were given amnesty in exchange for their full testimony.[695] The granting of amnesty was one way the TRC tried to balance a victim-centred approach to justice with their goal of allowing the truth about past acts to emerge.

---

[693] Although the Farber Foundry website indicates this date, Stathaki (2009) states that the play was written in 2003, and performed at the Grahamstown National Arts Festival during that year. These earlier dates likely account for the initial development of the play.

[694] Boriane (2000) 69.

The chorus of *Molora* serves a triple function as they oscillate between the frames of performance. First, they are fictional characters within the inner frame of the action. They represent the tribe that raises Orestes to adulthood, after Elektra gives him to the group in scene three.[696] This fictional identity impacts the rituals they perform within the action, which I engage with further below.

The chorus not only acts as characters, but more broadly, they are also intended to represent the "ordinary" people who gathered in halls at Truth and Reconciliation hearings to hear the details of their loved ones' deaths at the hands of the state. Just as I considered Brecht's production above to have an added third frame encompassing his audience's experiences of WWII, it is useful to think of this production similarly. Although the chorus (as characters in the inner frame) might be considered to be attending a particular hearing, it is important to Farber's political message that the audience also consider them emblematic of the TRC process more broadly.

---

[695] Mezzabotta (2000) 247. Alex Boraine (2000), a former commissioner of the TRC, explains that the granting of amnesty was an important and contentious aspect of the TRC's process. Although the Commission was not a court of law, the amnesty that it could grant was legally upheld in courts. Perpetrators who made applications of full disclosure (and whose applications passed through an investigative process) might be granted amnesty, which meant that they could not be held criminally or civilly liable for their acts. It also protected those who would be vicariously liable, whether it might be the state or any other body, organization, person, or political party (118). Steinmeyer (2007) also offers the reminder that the process was complicated by the fact that a person could be both a perpetrator and victim (103). Boraine explains that several parties disagreed with allowing the committee to grant amnesty, and appealed to the constitutional court, stating that the granting of amnesty denied victims their rights. The court, however, ruled that granting amnesty was an essential aspect of the TRC, because without it there would be no incentive for offenders to disclose the truth about past atrocities. The court agreed with the TRC Commissioners that "the need for reconciliation in South Africa was clear and without truth this would not be possible" (119). Providing closure for both victims and offenders was one of the TRC's main goals. Boraine states that "memories that were locked in frozen minds were unlocked, bringing a measure of relief and the possibility of fresh beginnings" (9). Truth, reconciliation, and amnesty – a form of forgiveness and closure - all went hand-in-hand during the process undertaken by the TRC, and it is this balance that Farber engages with in *Molora.*

[696] Only one member of the chorus is given a character name: Mama Nosomething. She might be considered the Chorus Leader, although the chorus is also accompanied by one male who acts as the "translator".

During the testimony scenes, the chorus does not exit, but sits in a row of chairs at the back of the stage. They seem somewhat removed from the action, as they do not react or respond to the testimony. However, Farber has stated that the chorus is meant to seem connected with the greater experience of apartheid and the TRC; in effect, they become "everywomen". In Farber's belief, it is the strength of such people, represented by this chorus, that prevented the cycle of vengeance from continuing with an 'eye for an eye' mentality. Farber states that "in the epic eye of South Africa's storm, it was not the gods – nor any *deus ex machina* - that delivered us from ourselves. It was the common everyman and everywoman who – in the years following democracy – gathered in modest halls across the country, to face their perpetrators across a table and find a way forward for us all".[697] Perhaps their calmness and the fact that they seem "removed" is intended to cue this third frame – a memory of, or association with, the TRC process. While Klytemnestra and Elektra share their testimony, the chorus sits at the back of the stage, serving as a community of witnesses that contextualize this particular hearing, as well as evoking a much broader community.

The third function of the chorus – which is in fact a link between the first two - is to provide the soundtrack for the production. For the creation of *Molora,* Farber collaborated with the Ngqoko Cultural Group from rural Transkei, who perform as the chorus. These individuals are not trained as stage actors, but are a cultural group that formed in 1980, devoted to maintaining the indigenous music, songs and traditions of rural Xhosa communities. Many of these are incorporated into the production. The introduction to the play explains that "In [Farber's] quest to find a group that could represent the weight and conscience of the community – as she believes is the Chorus' purpose – she happened upon the unearthly sound of the Ngqoko Group's

---

[697] Farber (2008a) 7.

UMNGQOKOLO (Split-Tone Singing)".[698] Split-tone singing is a highly-developed form of overtone singing, in which one voice can produce several tones simultaneously.

Although I will further consider the chorus' musical role below, it is important to note here that the chorus members' abilities to use a singular voice to produce multiple tones can be related to the scholarship on the ancient chorus, particularly with regard to the issue of "choral voice".[699] M.S. Silk has explained that "the different varieties of choral lyric style that a given chorus presents, even perhaps within a single ode, themselves constitute different voices, *de facto.* These 'different' voices *are* the chorus".[700] Silk does not mean that the voices are individualized, but rather, that the chorus as a unit speaks and sings in different styles and with different levels of authority throughout the play. The split-tone singing of *Molora*'s chorus might be said to be similar: there is division even amongst a singular voice, but this does not divide their unity as a chorus. The chorus' split-tone singing might be considered symbolic of their ability to exist as "the weight and conscience of the community" on both levels of the action described above: both as characters in the drama, and as witnesses at the TRC hearing.

Agency and Authority

Farber's chorus demonstrates an extraordinary amount of agency. Both in the creation of this play, as well as within the action, the chorus prevents the final murder, ending the cycle of violence.[701] In this adaptation, Klytemnestra is not murdered by her children - not only because of their personal decisions, but also because of the chorus' decision to step in and prevent the murder. When the siblings are finally faced with their mother, Orestes throws down the axe, stating "I cannot shed more blood".[702] Elektra argues with her brother, demanding that he slay their mother. Frustrated with his refusal, she grabs the axe and runs at Klytemnestra. At that moment, the chorus steps into the action. They physically overpower the enraged Elektra, cradling her as she begins to weep, and then whispering encouragements as she "slowly finds her stillness".[703] Then, Elektra emerges from the group of women, and she and Orestes go to their mother, who is "still cowering centre stage".[704] Although she is terrified at their approach,

---

[698] Farber (2008a) 12. An excerpt can be heard on Farber Foundry's "Molora" page of their website: http://www.farberfoundry.com/molora-photos.html.

[699] The concept of choral voice can, of course, be interpreted in more than one way. One interpretation is literal, referring to vocal performance. Like the ancient choruses, the chorus of *Molora* is highly trained and vocally virtuosic. Foley (2003) states "all sources agree that the actor's use of his voice was critical to his performance" (5). The idea of "choral voice", however, can also be understood textually in terms of style; it can connote what the chorus is saying, and how they are saying it. It is in this latter way that Silk explores choral voice, and this is also the way I am using it here.

[700] Silk (1998b; his italics). This comment might be considered an interesting complement to Goldhill's argument that the chorus asks the audience to constantly renegotiate where the authoritative voice lies, and that this questioning of the authority of collective wisdom is one of the important ways ancient tragedy engaged with its political and democratic context (see above discussion).

> as they reach her, they slowly stand together and extend their hands to help her to her feet. She is a broken woman. She backs away, humbled – and leaves the performance platform, resuming her place at the Testimony Table. The Women of the Chorus explode into song, circling brother and sister. Elektra and Orestes embrace, spent and weeping. The cycle has been broken. The Diviner of the group steps forward. She prays, as the others chant in response.[705]

Here, not only is the chorus' agency emphasized within the action, but in this "prayer", the chorus' authority – which stems from their real-life identities – becomes an essential part of the chorus' communication.

Farber notes in the programme and the published play text that within the Ngqoko group there are two "spiritual diviners" who are trained in the channelling of ancestral powers. These women are restrained in their use of their skills on the stage; however, Farber states that "their authority in spiritual conduct allows a moment in which the audience may experience a deep participation in a prayer to our ancestors for an end to the cycle of violence in South Africa – and indeed the world”.[706] By contrast to the Cuban/Scottish production of *Los Siete contra Tebas*, in a production of *Molora,* it would not be enough to costume the actors who play the chorus so that they look like Xhosa tribeswomen.[707] Their authority – stemming from their real-life identity as a homogenous cultural group – is intended to lead to audience participation (what she deems “complicity”) through authentic prayer. It is Farber’s hope that the chorus’ ‘real-life’ spiritual roles will help them to engage the audience in a way that extends beyond the space and time of the performance.

---

[701] The impact of this group is not only felt in the performance, but also apparently impacted the adaptation process; it was these women who convinced Farber to alter the ending of the trilogy. In an interview with Byron Woods (2010), Farber recounted that "there was this ongoing dialogue, because we hadn't reached that point in the staging yet; everyday they would say to me, 'What are the children going to do?' And I would say, 'They're going to kill their mother.' Then they would say to me, 'No, they're not.' *(Laughs.)* 'They're not going to do that.' They made it very clear to me that they were simply not going to allow Elektra or Orestes to kill their mother. They made it clear what would be unacceptable to them as witnesses".

[702] Farber (2008a) 83.

[703] Farber (2008a) 85.

[704] Farber (2008a) 85.

[705] Farber (2008a) 85.

Syncretism and Reconciliation

Farber claims that her adaptation of the chorus is in fact a reinvention of the classical chorus. She states that “in *Molora* the device of the ancient Greek Chorus is radically reinvented in the form of a deeply traditional, rural Xhosa aesthetic”.[708] Although Farber calls this chorus a “reinvention”, she also states that through their participation, she was hoping to rediscover the role of the original Greek chorus; Farber suggests that she “chose to collaborate with The Ngqoko Cultural Group with the intention of rediscovering the original power of the device of the Chorus in ancient Greek theatre”.[709] As mentioned above, Farber hoped that their skill in traditional overtone singing would help her to rediscover the ancient chorus’ role. This attempt at “rediscovery” seems to contradict her goal of “reinvention”, for here she is arguing for fidelity to the chorus’ original role (or what she imagines to be their original role) in performance.

---

[706] Farber (2008a) 13.

[707] It is interesting to note that the production tours with the original actors and chorus, and although the play is published, to my knowledge no other production of the play exists.

[708] Farber (2008a) 12.

[709] Farber (2008a) 12. Some critics found this successful; Grode (2011), the reviewer for *The New York Times,* wrote that “the guttural plainsong and other vocals performed by this extraordinary septet of Xhosa musicians, who also accompany themselves on indigenous South African instruments, offer a rare conduit to the incantatory rituals that made the Greek dramas so essential.”

However, Farber's contradictory remarks about her "reinvention" and "rediscovery" of the chorus' role as community can perhaps be resolved by understanding her production as an example of syncretic theatre. Her chorus should not be understood as either a reinvention or a rediscovery, but a syncretic combination of Western inherited material and indigenous cultural forms.

Farber is, of course, part of a long tradition of adapting Greek tragedy in South Africa.[710] Van Zyl Smit notes that many productions of Greek drama in South Africa since the late twentieth century have been in a style categorized as "indigenous South African hybrid" or "syncretic theatre".[711] In his explanation of syncretic theatre, Christopher Balme argues that

> the 'decolonization' of the stage can be examined through a number of formal strategies which involve the combination and amalgamation of indigenous performance forms within the framework of the Western notion of the theatre. The process whereby culturally heterogeneous signs and codes are merged together can be termed 'theatrical syncretism'.[712]

The term "syncretic" seems suitable for application to Farber's *Molora,* because the adaptation does not wage assault upon inherited European texts and conventions, but attempts to make them useful by transforming them. Although scholars such as Gilbert and Tompkins have argued that Greek tragedy is an "important target for canonical counter-discourse" in Africa,[713] Budelmann has offered the reminder that using texts in a "counter-discourse" manner does not always suggest a confrontational mode.[714] Farber's attempt to both "reinvent" *and* "rediscover" the role of the chorus makes her approach formally syncretic, a blending that mirrors her call for truth and reconciliation.[715]

---

[710] For overviews of Greek tragedy's adaptation in South Africa, see Mezzabotta (2000), McDonald (2000), and Van Zyl Smit (2008). Van Zyl Smit (2010) compares *Molora* to other adaptations of the Orestes myth in South Africa.

[711] Van Zyl Smit (2008) 374. The first term is attributed to Hauptfleisch (1997) 67-81, and the second to Balme (1999) 13-15. She explains that this style is cross-cultural, because adapters make use of elements of formal, classical western traditions, as well as South African township musical, performance poetry and traditional storytelling. In addition, they often attempt to reflect the multilingual reality of South Africa by using more than one language. Van Zyl Smit even notes the connection between Aeschylus' *Oresteia* trilogy and the popular and highly relevant theme of reconciliation in South Africa. Aeschylus' work has "evoked responses in different generations of South African productions" (376).

[712] Balme (1999) 1. Balme's work aims to illustrate the potential for comparative study of these formal strategies. Many of his examples are in fact drawn from South Africa, although he generally does not engage in depth with adaptation of Greek tragedy, with a few exceptions: he makes passing reference to Soyinka's *The Bacchae of Euripides,* and he briefly discusses Rotimi's *The Gods Are Not to Blame* (133-4). He also occasionally relates Greek tragedy to productions on a more theoretical level, which is especially notable in his comparison between the relationship of drama and ritual in Greek drama and the Nigerian theatre (41-2).

[713] Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) 38.

If the adaptation of the chorus formally mirrors her ideology, how is this ideology – of truth and reconciliation – communicated to the audience as a message? Although the chorus' style of performance is foreign to those not familiar with Xhosa culture - and the chorus never speaks in English - they are still the primary tool of communication with the audience. The communication of *Molora*'s peaceful message in fact *depends upon* the chorus' ability to bridge the dichotomy between collective/other; the message of reconciliation depends on the chorus' ability to encourage identification and form a collective of witnesses with a group of cultural "others", making them feel involved in the action. As I stated above, it is this involvement that Farber in fact indicates in her use of the term "complicit".

Above, I explained that the chorus is often included in intercultural adaptations because there is an equivalence with the theatre tradition of a particular culture, which might be more inclined to stage collective groups, song, and dance. The staging of ritual is a related equivalence: cultures more accustomed to attending collective ritual events might capitalize on the connection between the ancient chorus and its ritual role in adaptation.[716] Productions in the 1960s and

---

[714] Budelmann (2005) 138. He suggests that "the project of making Greek tragedies into something African adopts a complex range of modes, often all at one time: rejection and protest (against old and new powers or ideologies), alignment, blending, demarcation, and much else. Negotiating what is African against what is Greek and what is European has turned out not a purely oppositional process" (138).

[715] It is important to note that although Farber emphasizes her production's connection to the *Oresteia* (both its similarities and its departures), she in fact incorporates material from a variety of sources, including the *Electra* plays of Sophocles and Euripides. The material from the *Electra* plays often enhances the back-story and contributes to the psychology of the characters. More important, however, is her inclusion of other colonially-inherited texts, such as quotations from the Bible and Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice.* The particular colonially-inherited texts that Farber has chosen to weave into her adaptation (the Bible, Shakespeare), and the way in which they are incorporated into the play, emphasize and amplify the postcolonial nature of the way she deals with her major colonially-inherited source, Greek tragedy.

[716] Budelmann (2005), for example, has noted that the use of ritual was one way that Greek tragedy and West African drama are compatible: "playwrights writing in West African traditions, which are so rich in the use of ritual, can to some degree 'feel at home' in Greek tragedy" (137).

1970s (including *Dionysus in* 69) benefitted from appropriating these rituals with the same intentions for which they remain useful: building identification and collectivity. Balme explains that the inclusion of rituals "offers considerable potential for identification. The convergence of the religio-spiritual horizon of the spectator with the ritual practice shown is a necessary ingredient for a more intense theatrical experience which goes beyond a voyeuristic delectation of the rites performed".[717] The idea of going "beyond" voyeurism (or as I have argued, distanced acknowledgement of "otherness") toward "identification" is directly reminiscent of Farber's above comment that in her production, voyeurism is the opposite of complicity.

The chorus' role of leading rituals with the intention of overcoming theatrical "otherness" or distancing (and thereby encouraging identification, or what Farber refers to as audience complicity) is a popular strategy, used by practitioners like Schechner as well as Farber. In modern intercultural adaptations, however, the boundaries that need to be crossed between chorus and audience are often greater, and therefore this process has greater implications.

Ritual

Budelmann explains that rituals in Greek tragedy occur on two levels:

> Most classicists would probably agree that ritual in Greek tragedy does two things at a time.[718] First, by recalling cult practices, it creates, for want of a better term, a religiously charged atmosphere; it involves and affects spectators; it is perhaps not efficacious in the way ritual is in its normal context, but it is highly emotive. On the other hand, secondly, it is part of a play, shaping, and shaped by, the rest of the play. It is just one element of the play, and resonates with the rest of the play, just as other elements do.[719]

Ritual is thus an aspect of the "atmosphere", but also occurs within the fictional action. Like the chorus' role both within the inner frame of the play and in relation to the audience (for instance, their ability to have agency and authority), ritual plays a part in the fictional action as well as the overall reception of the production.

---

[717] Balme (1999) 105.

[718] He cites Easterling (1993), Gödde (2000), Krummen (1998), as important recent discussions in support of his point.

[719] Budelmann (2005) 140.

Balme also describes several ritualizing strategies of syncretic drama, which are highly compatible with the levels outlined by Budelmann. The first strategy is to frame the entire performance as ritual, as some Maori theatre practitioners of New Zealand have with the *marae*-theatre.[720] The second (and more common) strategy is incorporating rituals into a production. He argues that this "ritual dramaturgy" is more widespread, and that "in such texts there is seldom, if ever, a genuine attempt to involve the audience as though they were present at a ritual ceremony. Ritual elements are used as integral parts of the dramatic action, but remain contained within the overall fictional frame of theatrical performance".[721] This differentiation is of course very similar to the differentiation outlined by Budelmann with regard to the ancient Greek use of ritual in performance, in which rituals can be a part of the action of a play, or lend the play itself a "religiously charged atmosphere". Others have also made similar distinctions with regard to the postcolonial incorporation of ritual.[722]

---

[720] Balme explains that "here the rituals of encounter of the *marae,* the traditional meeting-place, are employed to frame the entire theatrical experience" (66).

[721] Balme (1999) 77. Balme explores a third category, the depiction of possession - a specific form of liminality that is a part of ritual practice in many Caribbean cultures (mainly influenced by African practices). Since this is more of an example than a separate category, I will not engage with it, although he raises interesting questions about the inclusion of religious rituals within fictional frames. He notes that rituals within the fictional drama remain aesthetic, and do not become the ritual itself (105). Gilbert and Tompkins argue that the overlap between ritual and drama is so complex in the postcolonial context that "a consideration of ritual in post-colonial contexts requires a reconsideration of drama itself. While western drama is based, to some extent, on the principles of Aristotelian mimesis, African drama is not. Kacke Götrick's analysis of the Apidan theatre of the Yoruba people leads her to determine that existing definitions of drama predicated on mimesis are demonstrably false in relation to most African theatre forms; 'instead, a new definition of drama is needed, which includes enactments that are at the same time presentational and representational, that are efficacious, and that are conceived of as a duality by the appropriate spectators, comprising reality and fiction simultaneously' (1984:130–1)" (56-7).

[722] Including Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) on post-colonial theatre. They explain that "ritual in post-colonial plays can be generally associated with at least one of two categories (aside from the references to a ritual at the end of a play to purify the community or repair the damage following the performance event). The first type of drama centres on a ritual (or sometimes a number of related rituals) which determines and structures the action, and often impacts upon the style of the performance. […]While the texts we have discussed foreground ritual, even if the specific rituals are not entirely staged for the audience, a second type of play uses ritual more as an incidental activity, a backdrop for the action. Rather than being the central thematic and/or structural focus, ritual supports the action in such a play and tends to be used as part of a larger recuperation of tradition/history, as an expression of hybridisation, as a device to establish setting/ context, or as a performative model for various sections of the action/dialogue" (66-73).

Of course, these "strategies" or "levels" of ritual are made even more comprehensible through their relation to the model of the concentric frames of performance and reception outlined in this study. We might say that ritual can exist – like the chorus – in either frame of the action: it can be a part of the outer frame, indicating to the audience that the performance (or some aspect of the performance) is a ritual, or it can be performed within the fictional action, as a ritual within the context of the fictional action of play. It is interesting that both ritual and the chorus can occupy different frames of performance, and this echoes earlier discussions about the intimate connection between the chorus and the performance of ritual. As I explained in chapter two, Henrichs connects the choral technique of self-referentiality with the chorus' ritual role: choral self-referentialty enables the audience to to cross the boundaries between "the cults of the *polis* and the rituals performed in the plays".[723] In other words, the chorus' ritual role relies upon their ability to be self-referential and oscillate amongst the frames of performance.

Like other adaptations influenced by ritualism (including Guthrie's *Oedipus Rex* and Schechner's *Dionysus in 69), Molora* attempts to use the chorus to capitalize upon the re-ritualizing potential of tragedy; a London reviewer even stated that the production is a "performance characterised by ritual".[724] As I have shown above, the desired effect of a "complicit" (involved) audience in *Molora* in fact relies on the chorus' ability to bridge the gap conferred by otherness in order to build collectivity. In order to encourage collectivity with the audience, the chorus performs rituals and other "cultural texts"[725] on several levels of the action, which are congruent with the different levels or strategies outlined by both Budelmann and

---

[723] Henrichs (1994) 70.

[724] Gardner (2008).

[725] Balme quotes the definition of the cultural semiotician Yuri Lotman, who states that a cultural text is "any carrier of integral ('textual') meaning including ceremonies, works of art, as well as 'genres' such as 'prayer', 'law', 'novel', etc". Balme likes this broad definition for its conceptual flexibility, which overcomes logocentric focus and includes "not only linguistic, but also iconographic and performative, cultural manifestations" (Balme 3-4).

Balme as occurring in both classical Greek tragedy and modern syncretic drama.[726] In the case of *Molora,* the differentiation between these two types of ritual is not only useful in discussing Farber's intentions with her chorus, but they also provide a structure in which to discuss associated issues of reception.

As with the examples of Mnouchkine's *Les Atrides* and Schechner's *Dionysus in 69,* when a production presents itself as a ritual in the outer frame (rather than only containing rituals in the inner frame), this is often how audiences are made to feel like active participants - sometimes referred to as "complicit" - in the performance. In the case of *Molora,* while the rituals *within* the action maintain the chorus' otherness (which can be interpreted as exoticism), the ritual of the TRC hearing that *frames* the play serves as the attempt at collectivity with the audience, which would ideally lead to Farber's conception of "complicity". In what follows, my analysis will address these two levels of choral ritual. I will offer one example of each, and supplement this with my own analysis of the rituals, as well as criticism that Farber has faced from other scholars.

In addition, I will comment upon how this criticism relates to the third frame cued for the audience: the historical TRC process undertaken in South Africa. *Molora* has been criticized from a postcolonial perspective (in particular in the recent work of Stathaki[727]), and other classical and postcolonial scholars have raised issues more generally relevant to the reception of intercultural adaptations of the chorus. The challenges of understanding the reception of *Molora* and the attention it has recently received are in large part what make it so useful to my discussion of the chorus. Relying on my own qualitative experience of the play as well as the analyses of others will allow me to engage with the implications of such criticism for intercultural adaptations of the chorus.

---

[726] Although these levels and strategies proposed by Budelmann and Balme are being discussed in the context of intercultural and syncretic theatre, they also have wider application, because of the frames of performance, to other productions that attempt to be "ritualistic". For instance, in my discussion of Schechner's production of chapter three, I analyzed the production both *as* a ritual, as well as analyzing the rituals it contains.

[727] Stathaki's dissertation, *Adaptation and Performance of Greek Tragedy in Post-Apartheid South Africa* was completed in 2009.

The Chorus as Other: Rituals Within the Action

When the chorus acts as fictional characters in *Molora,* they represent members of Elektra and Orestes' tribal community, as Mama Nosomething and members of her Tribe.[728] The chorus' identity as these characters determines its involvement in rituals that occur *within* the action of the play. One example occurs in scene nine, as Orestes prepares to return to his mother Klytemnestra's home. The chorus and Orestes engage in actions which Farber calls "the initiation":

> The chorus, in full voice, sings the traditional song for young Xhosa men returning from their initiation in the mountains. Orestes is wrapped, and with his face shrouded, in the striking white and red initiate's blanket, holding a stick over his shoulder […] He takes up his new blanket and begins the slow, graceful 'Dance of the Bull'. The women of the Chorus ululate. They sing rapturously, and encircle him – bumping him (as tradition dictates) to test his strength.[729]

This ritual song and dance is performed by the chorus and Orestes within the action of the play. It is a part of Orestes' coming-of-age experience with the chorus of women who raised him; their pride in Orestes is apparent in their physical contact with him. This is a scene of ceremonial joy, and the chorus' identity and relationship to Orestes is fundamentally connected to their role in the ritual.[730] However, they undoubtedly appear "other" to an international audience; although this ritual offers information about traditional Xhosa culture through the relationships between characters, the ritual is performed *for* the audience, not *with* the audience. It is one of many moments in which I, in the audience, appreciated the virtuosity of the performance, but did not feel like more than a voyeur.

---

[728] For example, in scene three, the audience watches as Electra gives her baby brother to the women so that they can raise him to adulthood in safety away from Klytemnestra. Elektra, holding the blanket that symbolizes Orestes, calls into the dark "Mama Nosomething? Mama Nosomething…" (30). The woman with this name emerges and takes the baby, agreeing to "raise him until he is grown" (30). Mama Nosomething immediately returns to the other women of the chorus, who gather around the baby, kissing and touching the bundle. Elektra explains, "I gave him to the women of our Tribe to grow him like a tree in the mountains, until he became a man"(31).

[729] Farber (2008a) 49 - 50.

[730] This dance might be compared to a circular dance performed in *Eumenides,* in which Foley (2003) notes that the chorus "ominously encircle Orestes during their binding song" (9). The Furies surround Orestes, and the violent nature of the dance is indicated by their self-referential description: "Men's conceit of themselves, however proud while under the bright sky, dwindles and melts away into worthlessness when beneath the earth, thanks to our black-garbed assaults and the angry dancing of our feet;

This type of ritual unsurprisingly prompts criticism of exoticism, one of the major problems that Budelmann and others acknowledge as a risk inherent in all theatre that travels between cultures. These questions of exoticism are not far removed from the questions being asked about the "otherness" of the classical Greek chorus. As I have shown above, although Foley states that choral identity does not necessarily determine choral role, concerns of performance (such as voice, costume, gesture, dance and musical mode) do influence the playwright's choice of the chorus' identity. In the context of a competition, she argues, choruses that depict "other" or exotic groups offer the chorus a chance to distinguish their talents by impressing the audience and judges with their virtuosity.

This is an interesting statement when considered with regard to the reception of intercultural productions. Although they are of course not competing in the same manner as the Greek productions, intercultural theatre productions can be driven by competition for commercial success or recognition in an international market. *Molora* was first performed at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg (South Africa) in 2007, but was also performed in Oxford/London 2007 and 2008, and has toured - amongst other places - to Holland, Athens, Montreal, and recently,

---

for I give a great leap and then bring down my foot from above with a heavy crash, a leg to trip even a runner at full stretch and cause unendurable ruin": δόξαι δ᾽ ἀνδρῶν καὶ μάλ᾽ ὑπ᾽ αἰθέρι σεμναὶ / τακόμεναι κατὰ γᾶς μινύθουσιν ἄτιμοι / ἁμετέραις ἐφόδοις μελανείμοσιν / ὀρχησμοῖς τ᾽ ἐπιφθόνοις ποδός / μάλα γὰρ οὖν ἁλομένα / ἀνέκαθεν βαρυπετῆ /καταφέρω ποδὸς ἀκμάν, σφαλερὰ καὶ τανυδρόμοις /κῶλα, δύσφορον ἄταν (368-6). The ritual nature of this dance is emphasized when they refer to Orestes as a "sacrificial victim", τῷ τεθυμένῳ (328), and through the fact that the performance has a desired outcome, which they indicate with their warning, "You will now hear this song sung to bind you"; ὕμνον δ᾽ ἀκούσῃ τόνδε δέσμιον σέθεν (306). Like the dance of the Xhosa women in *Molora,* this circular, ritual dance is dictated by the chorus' identity within the play and their relationship with Orestes. As the Furies, it is their intention to drive Orestes mad as punishment for his crime of matricide, using their song to inflict insanity (see especially lines 328-333).

New York City (July 2011).[731] In describing *Molora* in particular, Stathaki writes that the indigenous devices "are planted into the play as markers of authenticity and 'South African-ness' especially directed to Western, non South African audiences, rather than explored in their cultural and historical context and significance".[732]

This illustrates one of the dangers of syncretic drama itself: within the frame of Western performance styles, the "otherness" of the indigenous can be *emphasized* for the audience in opposition to the Western elements: "the aesthetic 'homophony' between the characters' identities and their on stage representation, results in what [Holledge and Tompkins] describe as a 'fear of conflict' (ibid. 114) between two cultural categories: indigenous cultural elements are placed alongside western performance styles within the larger political context only to imply the otherness of the indigenous".[733] The touring of the production itself raises the question of whether non-South African audiences, like the ancient judges, are merely impressed by exotic virtuosity – including the otherness of the choral rituals – or truly felt involved in the action.

"Complicit" Collective: Ritual Framing

It is on the level of the outer frame – the ritual framing of the play - that the chorus attempts to involve the audience as a collective of witnesses. One of the important functions of a chorus onstage in an ancient tragedy is witnessing: the chorus generally remained onstage throughout entire performances.[734] The group served as witnesses who survived the tragic events, and lived on after the conclusion of the play. This witnessing function of the chorus is emphasized through the use of a metatheatrical setting such as a trial or hearing, including those of both the *Oresteia* and *Molora.* The hearing that frames *Molora* might be considered a ritual event, especially when Farber's focus on listening and witnessing is noted.

---

[731] Although the Farber Foundry website indicates these touring dates, Stathaki (2009) states that the play was written in 2003, and performed at the Grahamstown National Arts Festival in that year. As I suggested above, these earlier dates likely account for the initial development of the play.

[732] Stathaki (2009) 202.

[733] Stathaki (2009) 202-3. She argues that this "homophony" "'reduces the body of the performer and the performing body' to a single cultural paradigm" (202-3; she quotes Holledge and Tompkins [2000] 119).

[734] The chorus often voices its desire to leave, but very rarely exits the stage. Such statements occur in Sophocles' *Trachinae* and Euripides' *Hippolytus* and *Medea*. See Revermann (2003) 791 for further examples.

Above, Farber was quoted as stating that "complicity" means that the audience experiences the story "as witnesses or participants in the room". I argued that her notion of complicity lacks negativity and an association with audience distancing, and this is especially evident when Farber's extremely positive conception of the activity of "witnessing" is analyzed. In describing the post-apartheid hearings, Farber states that "the power of having a listener was evident during the TRC…to own the events of one's life and share these memories is to reclaim one's self and offer your community, your witnesses, a collective possibility to do the same".[735] The seemingly passive role of witnessing takes on renewed ritual importance in Farber's production.

Emphasizing the importance of witnessing is also one way Farber encourages identification between audience and chorus. When the audience enters the theatre, the chorus - as well as the two characters who will "testify" – are seated amongst the audience members. In the stage directions of the published version, Farber makes clear her intended and initial involvement of the audience. When the play begins,

> along the back of the playing area, upstage and facing the audience, are seven empty, austere-looking chairs, upon which the Chorus of Women – who will come to hear the testimonies – will sit. The audience is seated in front of and around the performance area, as if incorporated into the testimonies. They are the community that provides the context to this event. Seated amongst the audience members are the seven Chorus members, as well as Klytemnestra and Elektra.[736]

The show begins with one chorus member entering the stage space from the audience, and pulling aside the plastic sheet that covers the stage. She then takes a position near the grave, and begins to play a traditional instrument (the “uhadi” or calabash bow). While she plays and sings, the other members of the chorus emerge from the audience to join her.

---

[735] Farber (2000) 10.

[736] Farber (2008a) 19.

Whether presented in a traditional theatre or one designed entirely to her specifications, the entrance of the chorus from out of the audience is an attempt to connect both groups as one community. The subsequent entrance of Elektra and Klytemnestra (the two who will testify at the TRC hearing that frames the show) from the audience shows the importance of the community context of the hearing. By foregrounding community and the audience’s part in it, the audience is symbolically informed that the conflict of the play will not only revolve around the individuals, but will include their relationship with the community and a much greater political struggle.

Throughout the play, as I have described, the chorus’ split-tone singing and instrumental music underscores much of the action of *Molora*. The music often functions as a link between the scenes that take place at the hearings and those that occur in flashbacks.[737] It is not, in these cases, performed strictly within the frame of the fictional action. In connecting these scenes, the music reminds the audience that all of the action of the play is framed within the context of the TRC hearings. When the chorus performs, the audience remains consciously aware of their presence and therefore also mindful of the play’s frame as TRC hearing. Additionally, because they have been connected with the chorus as witnesses as described above, Farber also intends the audience to remain aware of *their own presence* – what she calls their “complicity” - as community members, whose role provides the context for the re-enactment of past events.

The question of a production’s community, which I have returned to at many points in this chapter, here becomes of concern. Since collectivity is necessary to Farber’s conception of complicity, the question of the *intended community* of an adaptation is important, and indeed affects the strategies used by the chorus to communicate with the audience. In the case of a production like *Molora,* which toured internationally, this question of community is particularly important. As early as the mid 1990s, South African scholars such as Ian Steadman were already becoming concerned that 'adversarial' and 'oppositional' theatre was being created with one eye on the international scene. Steadman notes that theatre for the export market is "made out of the struggles of the people but not consumed by the people".[738] In preparing theatre for international consumption, there is the danger of misrepresenting South Africa, for the image of South African culture that is prepared for outsiders is highly selective and often reinforces the very stereotypes that it seeks to undermine.[739]

---

[737] For example, at the end of the first scene, in which Klytemnestra offers testimony, the chorus breaks into song. The music provides a connection with the following scene, a flashback in which Klytemnestra murders her husband and drags his body, wrapped in a plastic sheet, past her young daughter.

Although I have stated that the audience is meant to remain aware of their own involvement during the performance, the audience is not intended to evaluate the potentially negative consequences of this involvement (and its reliance upon identification), as they were in the productions of Schechner and Brecht explored in the previous chapter. In those productions, the adapters intended to provoke identification and then to distance in their audiences, hoping to prompt a self-reflexive attitude and allow the audience to acknowledge their former collective action as complicity in the tragic action. In an opposite movement, Farber attempts to overcome the distance inherent in the "otherness" of her chorus in order to emphasize identification and collectivity in the outer frame. However, it is especially through the cuing of the third frame – the real-life historical TRC process - that the chorus/audience relationship becomes problematic.

In this touring production, accomplishing identification and collectivity proves challenging with relation to the third frame, for several reasons. First, although many in her audiences are white, the only role available for a white South African in the performance is that of the perpetrator. We see Klytemnestra physically harm her husband and daughter, and although the audience recognizes that she too is a victim of an unjust system, in the context of the trial, she is clearly the perpetrator of apartheid violence. There is no room in Farber's trial for a white victim of Apartheid violence or white "choral" witnesses, which means that the division between victim and perpetrator is drawn along the lines of race. White audience members are initially aligned with Klytemnestra, and therefore enter the play from a place of guilt. In addition, since this production claims to be emblematic of the TRC process – cued in the third frame – it is problematic that the complexities faced by the TRC process with regard to race are lost.

---

[738] Steadman (1994) 30.
[739] Steadman (1994) 30.

Secondly, although I have argued that a white audience member may still in fact be intended to identify with the chorus (and not Klytemnestra), this too raises difficulties. Although Farber uses the chorus and its rituals in order to overcome the distance inherent in their "otherness", the use of the same chorus for rituals in all of the frames is also problematic in terms of accurately reflecting the TRC process. In particular, it is her use of this same chorus in all *three* frames of this performance that over-simplifies her portrayal of the South African experience. First, as I have explored, she uses the chorus as characters who perform religious and cultural rituals within the inner frame of the action. Secondly, they also serve a civil and political role in the outer frame as witnesses at the trial. In addition, in this witnessing role – and in the emphasis placed on their real life identities - they encourage the audience to see this trial as emblematic of the TRC process, which is the association Farber hopes to prompt for her audience in the third frame. In her use of the same chorus for these religious and civic functions in all three frames, Farber in fact invests the chorus with what is perhaps an *excess* of authority. Their authority in this play – due to their fictional as well as real life identities - encourages the audience to overlook the historical inaccuracies and over-simplifications of the production. To borrow Steadman's terminology from above, this highly selective view of the TRC reinforces the very stereotypes that it seeks to undermine.

The chorus' role in the ritual framing of the play – the TRC hearing – and their attempt to build collectivity with the audience also comes under attack in Stathaki's analysis. Despite Farber's focus on the act of witnessing, Stathaki argues that Farber's production evades the problem of authentically re-creating testimony on the stage by "stripping the testimonies of both their factual and emotional dimensions and by entirely overriding the function of testimony as a site of witnessing".[740] Her argument, directly relevant to this section, is worth quoting at length:

> the act of witnessing is either altogether absent or reversed. It is altogether absent as far as the 'audience' (who, the stage directions suggest, is the chorus of Xhosa women and the actual audience of the performance) is concerned: the chorus of women who sit at the back of the stage as 'witnesses' to the testifying process do not interfere with the action at all and have no reactions whatsoever. Ironically the TRC has been repeatedly compared to tragedy, with the audience of witnesses as the chorus-reacting, commenting, shouting, sympathizing, condemning or consoling the testifiers. In this case the lack of participation on the part of the chorus robs them of their function of witnessing inherent in their role both as auditors and as a tragic chorus. Equally, the audience of the performance cannot act as witnesses although the stage directions suggest they should [...]: by virtue of their status as a paying audience they cannot be expected to act as 'authentic listeners' and partake in the 'joint responsibility' of witnessing. They have come to watch a theatre performance to which the testimony is only incidental therefore they do not come predisposed to get actively involved in the act of witnessing. While witnessing is absent with reference to the audience and the chorus it is reversed with reference to the one-on-one relationship between victim and perpetrator: oddly, it is not the victim but the perpetrator who is being witnessed and acknowledged.[741]

Stathaki argues that the chorus of *Molora* is ironically deprived of the important role of witnessing, and that it is not possible for even the audience members to act as "authentic" witnesses. In the context of a more general discussion of intercultural choruses, the following question can be raised: "Is it possible – or even desirable – for a chorus to create an authentic collective with the audience?"

---

[740] Stathaki (2009) 186.
[741] Stathaki (2009) 188-9.

4.4 Authenticity, Universalism, and the Future of the Intercultural Chorus

Authenticity

The term "authentic" is an important descriptor connected with the performance of ritual in intercultural adaptations. Above, I explained the difference between the terms "agency" and "authority", and before moving forward, I would like to add "authenticity" to this group of terms essential to understanding the role of the chorus. Whereas agency refers to the chorus' involvement in the inner frame's fictional action, I argued that authority was a matter of reception, of the audience's perception of the choral role. Adding the term "authenticity" further acknowledges the role of reception, especially in intercultural productions. As I will show, authenticity is not just a matter of choral ritual, but audience experience.

Above, I explained Foley's argument that the Greek chorus would have been judged on their ability to perform as "exoticized others". In fact, she is arguing that they will be evaluated based on their ability to impress with what will be perceived as "authentic" uses of costume, ritual, etc. The attraction to authenticity has also greatly affected the adaptation of the chorus in intercultural productions, especially those choruses that are culturally homogeneous and connected with the performance of ritual. For instance, Lee Breuer's influential *Gospel at Colonus* combined its source play with the format of a Pentecostal church service, complete with sermons and call-and-answer segments. The "authenticity" of this ritual setting is often the cited or implied reason that the show is praised.[742]

However, "authenticity" is dangerous, for several reasons. First, it implies a notion of both culture and ritual as "fixed" and unchanging. Stone Peters has stated that the claim of "authenticity" is

> closely akin to the kind of purist cultural self-identity (representation of one's 'own' group as fixed and uniform) that is bound up with nationalist ideologies, with an us-versus-them mentality, and with the kind of protective attitude toward cultural property that even Bharucha reveals when he writes that Brook 'should focus his attention on *his own* cultural artefacts, the epics of western civilization like the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*.[743]

Authenticity is a factor impacting not only adapters (who are creating the "representation of one's 'own' group"), but more importantly, it is a criterion of judgement used by audience members presented with a chorus of "others" – whether they are a mixed group of victims or a particular cultural group.

In fact, when adapters mix these two strategies (for instance, when a chorus of mixed identity performs rituals or cultural texts), the question of authenticity does not disappear, but can be amplified. For instance, in Soyinka's *The Bacchae of Euripides: A Communion Rite* (1973)*,* the playwright added a second chorus of slaves, a group composed of members with mixed ethnic identities. The chorus' mixed identity complicates questions of authenticity when real-life cultural texts or rituals are incorporated into the production. For instance, Soyinka himself explains in the published text of the play that "the Slaves, and the Bacchantes should be as mixed a cast as is possible, testifying to their varied origins. Solely because of the 'hollering' style suggested for the Slave Leader's solo in the play it is recommended that this character be fully negroid".[744] Hardwick explains this decision using the term "authenticity": the chorus had "a black Leader (to ensure authenticity in the 'hollering' style required for the Leader's solo)".[745] In this case, the lack of a chorus with a homogeneous identity meant an increased focus on the identity of the chorus leader to ensure the authenticity of the ritual. The universalizing nature of a chorus of mixed identity is counterbalanced by a culturally specific Leader who can "authentically" perform the ritual.[746]

---

[742] Foley (2007) explains that Breuer's adaptation "deliberately exploited theatrical elements of the African-American religious tradition: gospel musicals, as well as elements of Pentecostal church services such as chanted sermons, call-and-response, active engagement of the congregation in the service, and the participation of a range of musical groups throughout" (371). She adds, "this is the only adaptation of Greek tragedy known to me that attempted to make the choral engagement in the story grow logically out of a contemporary ritual setting and which contained a version of the full mixture of speech, act-dividing song, and shared lyrics between actor and chorus contained in the originals" (371-2). The production's attempts at "authenticity" are also the reason the production is criticized: Rich (1988), the reviewer for *The New York Times,* argued that "however much of Sophocles can be shoehorned into a church service, the matching up of Christian theology with Greek mythology remains a marriage of glib intellectual convenience that distorts and dilutes both. Instead of liberating its singers, 'The Gospel at Colonus' seems to hem them in - gratuitously requiring that Afro-American artists worship at a shrine of Western culture before they can let loose with their own, equally valid art".

[743] Bharucha (1991) 231, quoted in Stone Peters (1995) 208, her italics. Similarly, Bennett (1997) argues – not unproblematically - that "it is the endurance of the concept of nation that has underwritten the project of multiculturalism within which ideas such as colour-blind casting become possible" (175).

However, authenticity is dangerous as a criterion of both creation and evaluation, for it establishes the expectation that an audience member will have sufficient knowledge about a particular culture to judge the accuracy of the ritual or cultural text being performed.[747] In the case of Soyinka's production, performed for a predominantly white British audience, the use of a black chorus leader might encourage the audience to regard the actor's race as a guarantee of authenticity. In that case, his role of "authenticating" the ritual in fact serves to ensure the audience's comfort with the ritual. Because his race ensures its authenticity, the audience might feel confident that they are not watching a cultural appropriation (whether or not that is the case).[748]

---

[744] Soyinka (1973) 234.

[745] Hardwick (2004) 236. Hardwick notes that this play was commissioned by the National Theatre in the UK and staged in August 1973 at the Old Vic in London (236).

[746] It should be noted that although I am only discussing the chorus leader's ritual of hollering, the entire production is centred around a scapegoat ritual in which a slave is selected for flogging. My interest here, however, is in the rituals drawn from real-life culture and their impact on choral identity. There is much material on Soyinka's work and its relation to Classics and postcolonialism: see for instance Soyinka (1976), Hardwick (2004), Budelmann (2005), Balme (1999), Goff (2005), Gilbert and Tomkins (1996).

[747] Not only can productions lead audiences to assume that they have the ability to judge authenticity, but they can also lead audiences to feel they have mastery or ownership over the material: Bennett raises the criticism of the film *Paris is Burning,* in which the intertitles offer "the spectator a promise of mastery. It enables an audience to imagine that it has, as a result of the film, a working vocabulary in/of black/Latino gay male drag" (186).

Not only has this term been used in the adaptation and evaluation of the chorus, but it has been extended to an expectation of collective audience experience. Therefore, it is now not only applied to both the chorus' role as "others" (ie. how "authentic" is their split-tone singing or hollering?), but also to their role with regard to the audience. Stathaki notes that her discussion of the lack of authentic witnessing in *Molora* "raises the problem that Libin (2003) has accurately posed: in cases where testimony is conditioned by otherness, who can be an authentic listener? Can a member of the dominant group have a respectful and productive response to the other's trauma?".[749] In the case of this chapter, this question has been re-phrased: "is it possible – or even desirable - for the chorus to create an authentic collective with the audience?".

Budelmann has offered the reminder that authenticity is fraught with complications and underlying questions in the context of intercultural performance:

> Europeans and Americans look for some form of authenticity in foreign culture, but the authenticity they find is a matter of their imagination rather than any knowledge about, or even interest in, the African, South American, or Caribbean source material. Does that matter? Is it Schechner's responsibility to be in any sense 'faithful' to his New Guinean source material any more than Rotimi or Osofisan should be to their Greek texts?[750]

Budelmann here questions the validity of using authenticity as a criterion of judgement, but his very questioning of this criterion indicates its current importance in intercultural theatre and adaptation. Budelmann accurately concludes with the important reminder that "what classicists and European audiences find attractive is what was put there for them".[751] The ability of an audience to not only evaluate a ritual based on its "authenticity", but to also seek an *experience* of the ritual that is authentic, in fact illustrates the importance of another underlying issue related to the performance and reception of the intercultural chorus: the attraction to universalism.

---

[748] Indeed, visual markers are important to the perception of authenticity, as illustrated in the example of the costumes of the Cuban/Scottish production above. Bennett also writes: "the visuality of identity is, then, all-important and the notion of authenticity produces an apparently always contested site" (175).

[749] Stathaki (2009) 193. She refers to Libin (2003).

[750] Budelmann (2005) 143. Similarly, Lo and Gilbert note that "debates about hybridity in postcolonial theory tend to go hand in hand with discussions of authenticity. Griffiths reminds us that 'authenticity' is a politically charged concept rather than a 'natural' or preexisting attribute. While it may be politically exigent for non-Western peoples to deploy discourses of authenticity in order to bolster their cultural authority, in the hands of Western critics and commentators, the sign of the 'authentic' can easily become a fetishized commodity that grounds the legitimacy of other cultures 'not in their practice but in our desire' (Griffiths 1994:82). That much intercultural theatre has been driven by an intense interest in harnessing "traditional" performance forms suggests we should treat authenticity with caution, recognizing that it registers, and responds to, hierarchies of power. In this context, the ability to manipulate markers of authenticity becomes another measure of agency" (46).

Universalism

Universalism underpinned much of the utopian and anthropologically-based theatre of the 1960s, including Schechner's *Dionysus in 69*. Gilbert and Tompkins have stated that the anthropological approach to theatre

> moves perilously close to universalist criticism whereby a text is said to speak to readers all around the world because it espouses, for example, universal principles of life. Texts which apparently radiate such 'universal truths' have usually been removed from their social and historical setting. Although it is a favourite catch-cry of theatre critics, the 'universal theme' allows no appreciation of cultural difference.[752]

This quote, now fifteen years old – and written with regard to the theatre of the 1960s – still feels very relevant today. Although in the first part of this chapter, I outlined Schechner's reversal of opinion - from appropriating rituals to critical thought on intercultural exchange - this does not seem to be a reversal shared by all adapters and audience members of Greek tragedies. The universal nature of Greek tragedy still remains a "favourite catch-cry of theatre critics". This is because, to a certain extent, universalism underlies the very desire to produce adaptations. The decision to adapt a Greek tragedy is often based on the aspiration of showing the tragedy's modern relevance.[753] Inherent in all adaptations is an underlying tension between the desire to use/express the universality of the source material and the particularities that make it specifically relevant to a new time and place.

---

[751] Budelmann (2005) 144.

[752] Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) 10.

[753] Budelmann (2005) argues that it is the myth underlying Greek tragedy that makes it universal (and more immediately relevant) than, for instance, the historical plays of Shakespeare. Budelmann argues that while on the one hand, universalist notions of myth have their fair share of imperial connotations, on the other hand, since myth has no author, it is separate from the colonial heritage: "the notion of the universality of myth is not directly linked to the canon" (131). This (rather unconvincing)

As I argued above, choruses with mixed cultural identities often aim to convey the universal applicability of their experience and situation. However, Farber's production – with its culturally homogeneous chorus - is also a prime example of an intercultural production with a universal message. In the introduction to the published text of the play, the simple prescription of forgiveness is encouraged universally: "From the ruins of Hiroshima, Baghdad, Palestine, Northern Ireland, Rwanda, Bosnia, the concentration camps of Europe and modern-day Manhattan – to the remains around the fire after the storytelling is done…".[754] *Molora* offers a conclusive and hopeful ending for her international audience, one in which Farber seems to be claiming that if we can all forgive one another, our political and social troubles will end. Despite her focus on the horrific crimes of apartheid, these are framed through the hearings as past events, and no post-apartheid issues are approached. She offers no criticism of the results of the TRC's process and conclusions.[755]

Farber also does not offer any acknowledgment within the structure of the performance of the issues raised by its intercultural performance context. This is a strategy suggested by several scholars, who argue that the complexities of intercultural spectatorship can be problematized within a production. By contrast to Farber's production, Lo and Gilbert (2002) have suggested a self-reflexive framing strategy that acknowledges and problematizes intercultural spectatorship. They argue that

---

argument helps him to account for the complicated status of Greek tragedy in postcolonial adaptations – how it can be useful to adapters not only because of its canonical status, but also because it contains equivalences that make it ripe for adaptation.

[754] Farber (2008a) 8.

[755] See Jeffery (1999), *The Truth about the Truth Commission* as an example of such a critique. Jeffery claims that "overall, the commission has done as much to distort as to disclose the truth. Distortion arises from two main factors – the methods it used, and the aspects of violence it left out" (2). Jeffery states that the TRC received a total of 7, 127 amnesty applications, but that only 102 had received a public hearing and had been confirmed as accurate (resulting in the granting of amnesty) at the time the TRC compiled its report (9).

> if intercultural theatre means to address the potential inequities involved in Western appropriations of other cultural traditions, then its adherents must conceive of a theatre that somehow engages with its own established 'looking' relations. Interventionary frameworks and other metatheatrical devices—these might range from direct audience address to self-conscious role playing to forum discussion—can be used to problematize the implicitly imperialist object-relations model of cross-cultural spectatorship. Within the self-reflexive theatre that we envision, the hybridizing of cultural fragments would be far from seamless: cultural tensions would not be hidden nor difference naturalized.[756]

Although the authors do not include the chorus as a strategy, they mention terms (such as "metatheatrical" and "self-reflexive") and techniques ("direct audience address" and "self-conscious role playing") that I have referred to throughout this study in describing the potential role of the modern chorus in relation to the audience. As I have argued, in the conceptions of the chorus by Brecht and Schechner, the audience was intended to not only identify with the chorus, but also to be distanced in order to evaluate their earlier collective action as complicity. By contrast, Farber's positive conception of complicity (as witnessing and participation) is in fact emblematic of her production's lack of engagement with its own processes.

Although Farber does employ several aspects of tragedy that can oscillate between the frames of the action (such as the chorus and its rituals), she does not use these potentially self-referential tools to their full potential: they neither complicate nor problematize aspects of her production (such as the power relations of spectatorship or the complexities of the TRC process, for instance). Although Brecht and Schechner encountered problems of reception, as I have shown, they both attempted to prompt a self-reflexive attitude in the audience. If Farber had attempted to use her chorus not only for identification, but also for subsequent (or alternating moments of) self-referential distance, she might have not only capitalized on the potential of the modern chorus, but also addressed some aspects of her production that otherwise remain uninterrogated.

---

[756] Lo and Gilbert (2002) 48. Similarly, Bennett (1997) argues from the perspective of audience reception that "if intercultural theatre is to extend its own processes and questions into fields of meaning produced by the spectators, then the compromises and conciliations, as well as the translations, need to find a language in performance – to draw attention to themselves, as it were, and to find their complexity embedded in the receptive processes that the performance stimulates" (200).

The omission of such tactics that would complicate Farber's message is likely a consequence of her need to focus only on the positive aspects of reconciliation, in order to universalize her message. Farber's desire is to elevate South Africa as a role model for an international community. To do so, she over-simplifies the connections between the action and the third frame, as I described above, asking audiences to accept the action of her play as representative of the TRC process. She also focuses only on the "universal" and positive aspects of both the TRC process and the ancient material, simultaneously overlooking the racial complexities and the negative aspects of the TRC process. She thus over-emphasizes the universal applicability of the South African experience of reconciliation. Because of her focus on universalism, she does not deal with either the problems of the TRC's process, nor the potential problems of intercultural reception.

Reception and "Universal Truth"

Stathaki in fact considers Farber's work to be an example of South African "reconciliation" theatre. As Angove explains, in reconciliation plays "the reality of a polarized society is defied to present human beings from all racial groups communicating, sharing and understanding".[757] Focusing on reconciliation is a popular way of presenting South Africa to the world; indeed, Van Zyl Smit has noted that theatre practitioners in South Africa who adapt the *Oresteia* often "attempt to show the role SA can have as an example of forging a peaceful transition to a globalized world".[758] Farber's message of reconciliation seems to have been received (and in many cases, taken to heart) by members of *Molora*'s audiences; one reviewer noted, "in a show that gets standing ovations in South Africa and now Oxford there has to be a universal truth".[759]

---

[757] Angove (1992) 44, cited in Stathaki (2009) 168.

As I have shown, the chorus can be a useful tool in communicating a tragedy's relevance by creating a collective with the audience. In the previous chapter, I explored how this collective could be used – and questioned – in order to communicate a political message to the audience. In intercultural adaptations, the chorus often seems attractive to adapters for its ability to not only communicate the Greek play's message (or what the adapters have deemed its message), but to show the universal applicability of this message.

This goal can be identified in both approaches to the chorus' identity in intercultural adaptations discussed above – either a group with mixed identities, or with one homogeneous identity. In both cases, the chorus attempts to overcome their distanced status as "other" to the audience in order to create a collective that can communicate their message. In the case of the choruses described earlier - of mixed cultural identity - the very function of the chorus *is* its identity: they are present in order to communicate a similarity of victimized experience. Although ultimately, this technique may be used in order to call for an end to the audience's participation in the real-life structures of power that cause such experience, this is communicated through the promotion of audience identification and empathy. As I have argued, these choruses can run the risk of over-generalizing the material, in two ways: sometimes, the historical specificity of the time/space of the play is lost, or it is sometimes the real-world equivalence itself that becomes over-generalized (for instance, the experiences of female victims of modern conflicts).

---

[758] Van Zyl Smit (2008) 374-5. It should be noted that there are productions of the *Oresteia* - even from the 1990s - that do in fact deal with the complexities of the TRC. For instance, Steinmeyer (2007) describes *In the City of Paradise,* a 1998 South African adaptation of the *Oresteia,* which included characters who were unhappy with the TRC process, and refused to accept the verdict. In this version, Electra and Orestes do kill their mother, and at the trial, they are indeed found guilty of murder – but worthy of amnesty. However, Clytemnestra's parents Tyndareus and Leda are included in this adaptation, and they stand for victims for whom the revelation of truth does not offer the comfort of consolation. They "cannot come to terms with the amnesty and the fact that the murder of their daughter remains unatoned for" (112). However, despite engaging with some of the problems of the TRC, the theme of reconciliation still becomes universalized in this production through the omission of certain aspects of the TRC process. Steinmeyer gives several potential reasons for the exclusion of these aspects, but concludes by noting that "by underplaying the political aspect, the question of reconciliation gains a wider, unrestricted dimension; the problem becomes more humanitarian and universal. But at the same time it loses to a certain extent its link to the TRC and its specific South African background" (118).

[759] Doolan (2007), "Molora". Critics in New York, however, seemed especially interested not in the message of the production, but in whether the TRC process was compatible with Aeschylus' play. *The New York Times* reviewer Grode wrote that "this parallel is an extremely flawed one: the concept of closure, of letting even ghastly bygones be bygones, runs counter to Aeschylus's cycle of retribution. And Ms. Farber is forced to rewrite the ending of her play completely in order to accommodate this idea" (2011). Fitzgerald (2011) concurred: "While Aeschylus' tragedy presents the story as it transpires, 'MoLoRa' frames it as a re-enactment, robbing it of its dramatic tension. Farber's central question—when is it right to forgive the most horrible of crimes?—is postponed until the final 15 minutes, when it is answered rather suddenly and inconsistently (the murder of Klytemnestra's lover goes unexcused, for example). I left the production wanting to see Farber tackle Aeschylus' third act as written, in which not compassion but the rule of law and the founding of a new state are the source of grace." This suggestion of this latter critique – a more complex conclusion, inspired by Aeschylus – should be understood as compatible with my criticism of Farber's universal message, above.

In the case of choruses of homogeneous cultural identity, as I have shown with *Molora,* there are added complications, often related to these choruses' use of "authentic" ritual. Even in such plays with culturally specific choruses, audiences often seem ready to jump to universal conclusions. Regarding the chorus of *Molora*, one reviewer wrote,

> they could be the Greek chorus, they could be the observers at a Truth and Reconciliation Commission Hearing but, with their sombre faces and plaid shawls, they seem most of all to represent those grieving women who are a constant in conflict zones around the world.[760]

Whether choral identity is mixed in order to indicate the universality of the chorus' experience, or they represent a homogeneous group of cultural or ethnic "others", audience members seem eager to overlook otherness in favour of collectivity and universality.

The Future of the Intercultural Chorus

In order to begin to draw conclusions, I would like to return to my previous question: is it possible – or even desirable - for the chorus to create an authentic collective with the audience? Although it remains a popular strategy for reviewers, looking for an "authentic" or "universal" experience has come to seem inappropriate as well as appropriative, as Schechner himself noted in the 1990s. However, I do not wish to suggest that intercultural productions are not worthwhile projects – indeed, their increasing popularity indicates the contrary. I would, however, argue that a shift is in progress that will affect the way that we understand and evaluate these intercultural productions. Although this shift has not yet affected the goals of all adapters and their reception by critics, the transition begun in the 1990s away from universalism continues to the present day.

---

[760] Hemming (2008).

The scholarship on intercultural theatre in the 1990s was extremely contradictory about the future of its subject. For instance, in a volume edited by Pavis in 1996, *The Intercultural Performance Reader,* Pavis anticipates a move away from universalism, which he sees as a construction of the West:

> The generalizing on a global scale of economic and cultural exchanges sometimes leads us to think that a 'one-world culture' is in the process of emerging. But it is, rather, a standardization of social practices dominated by the capitalist West. Its so-called universality, which subsumes all individual cultures, is in fact only a construction of the dominant West.[761]

However, not all of the contributors to his volume agree with him. Many of the contributors see intercultural theatre as a precursor to a utopian future of intercultural cooperation. For instance, in this same volume, Erika Fischer-Lichte concludes that unlike the intercultural theatre of the previous era, "the intercultural in contemporary world theatre cannot exhaust itself through culturally specific functions. It is aimed far more towards the idea of a future world culture-to-be, which will be won by these means. In this respect, theatre functions in one sense as the aesthetic beacon of Utopia".[762] Schechner, interviewed by Pavis in the same volume, discusses the appropriate (and inappropriate) ways for sharing to occur between cultures. However, he believes that the methods he outlines will lead to a utopian future that holds “ethnicity without racism”: in the future, it will be possible “to have difference which is chosen and which is culture specific, without it necessarily being hierarchical and authoritarian”.[763] Although Pavis attempted to counter and contextualize the universalism of his contributors, the volume as a whole shows that there was a divergence of opinion (amongst both scholars and practitioners) on the function and future of intercultural theatre from the very moment of its emergence as a topic of study.

---

[761] Pavis (1996) 16-7.

[762] Fischer-Lichte (1996) 38. She makes this conclusion after evaluating the theatre of Robert Wilson, Peter Brook, Tadashi Suzuki, and Wole Soyinka. Bharucha's (1996) contribution to the volume ("Somebody's Other: Disorientations in the cultural politics of our times") questions intercultural performance in the wake of globalisation, particularly with regard to India. However, he too concludes with a utopian prescription: in this case, to "reconstitute, reconfigurate new narratives and languages that are pertinent to the secular culture of our times" (211). He acknowledges the difficulties that will be inherent in this process,

The utopian and sometimes universalizing nature of these early attempts at theorizing intercultural performance continues to be challenged. This is clear in the analyses of those like Barry Freeman, who are currently studying and creating intercultural performances. Freeman has stated that like Rustom Bharucha,[764] he too feels that

> there are many reasons – both historical and contemporary – to be sceptical about the potential of intercultural work. But is it not the case that at least some of its limitations or bleaker prospects are the inevitable conclusions of critical approaches that are no longer well-suited to it?[765]

In the case of my project, the question is more precise: is there a way to analyse intercultural adaptations of the chorus without emphasizing their “limitations or bleaker prospects”? Is there another way to evaluate these choruses, rather than based on either their authenticity (the success of their “otherness”) or the overly-generalizing universalism inherent in attempts to create unquestioned collectivity?

---

but concludes that “it is through these attempts that we can begin to counter the constructions of the Other imposed by others and occasionally endorsed by ourselves” (211).

[763] Schechner (1996) 50.

[764] Bharucha’s famous critique of intercultural theatre came in his work *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture* (1990: 1993). See also *The Politics of Cultural Practice: Thinking Through Theatre in an Age of Globalization* (2000).

[765] Freeman (2009) 76.

"*Messiness" and Intercultural Production*

Although intercultural performance theory has continued to evolve from its earlier universalizing stance, there is no one theory that has emerged to offer a way of sufficiently analyzing and evaluating intercultural performance, let alone its impact on the intercultural adaptation of the chorus.[766] Thus, the transition that began in the 1990s is still underway. However, some new trends in analyzing intercultural performance are becoming clear. Pavis noted in 1996 that his volume was appearing at a time when the future of intercultural performance was unknown; referring to the work of Brook, Barba, and Mnouchkine as the "tip of the iceberg", Pavis introduces his volume by wondering whether the intercultural movement might in fact already be over: "we are still uncertain as to whether this visible portion signals a depth of startling proportions hidden from view, or whether it is already in the process of melting away under the spotlights of our (post)modernity".[767]

In a sense, both of his seemingly contradictory predictions have proven correct. It has become clear that there is a (very significant) "depth" to be studied, however, his description of this "melting away" has also in a sense become clear: new studies of intercultural performance are beginning to attempt to account for the pluralities inherent in the seemingly singular concepts of "culture" and "cultural identity". As early as 1995, Stone-Peters commented on the complications of defining a "cultural identity", by explaining that "purist versions of cultural identity are fabrications, sometimes dangerous ones".[768]

---

[766] Lo and Gilbert (2002) analyze the state of scholarship, and state that "despite the apparent trendiness of cross-cultural work— as witnessed on the international festival circuit, in actor training institutions, and in academic discourse— there is not yet an integrated body of theory that sets up the perimeters of the field of cross-cultural theatrical practice. With the exception of Richard Schechner's pioneering work and Patrice Pavis's more recently developed model of intercultural theatre, most of the existing critical work tends to concentrate on particular instances of cultural exchange. Viewed collectively, the various attempts to conceptualize the field reveal a contested terrain where even the terminologies are woolly, to say the least" (32). They offer their own model, which attempts to politicize the production of intercultural theatre. However, as I discuss below, their focus is on production and not reception.

[767] Pavis (1996) 1.

[768] Stone Peters (1995) 209.

However, not only has the concept of cultural identity been called into question, but so has its connection with performance – especially intercultural performance. What Freeman has recently called the "messiness" of both theatre and culture is becoming an important aspect of the debate. Freeman has contrasted "orderly and coherent accounts of intercultural theatre with the more messy and confusing experiences of it", and this has led him to explore a methodology of "postmodern ethnography".[769] He explains,

> I make virtues out of the messy, provisional, and incoherent qualities of theatre work because I believe culture to have these same qualities. For me, these are not qualities to be fixed or ordered, but rather defining features of intercultural theatre work with creative and emancipatory potential.[770]

For Freeman, the "messiness" of theatre and culture are positive features that are essential to the potential of intercultural theatre.

Lo and Gilbert, however, warn against postmodernism's potential effects on intercultural theatre. They argue that "it is vital that intercultural theatre's potential to cross cultures is not co-opted and neutralized by the 'weaker' forms of postmodernism, which tend to result in an abstract, depoliticized, and ahistorical notion of 'difference,' or, in effect, a masked 'indifference'".[771] In their work, they analyze the state of scholarship on intercultural theatre practice, and argue for a new model of intercultural theatre that addresses some of the deficiencies they identify in Pavis' work.[772] In their model, "intercultural exchange is represented as a two-way flow. Both partners are considered cultural sources while the target culture is positioned along the continuum between them".[773] However, to counter the de-politicizing nature of some postmodern scholarship, their model is also influenced by the politicizing aspects of postcolonial performance and scholarship.[774] They argue that “in an age where cultural boundaries are continually traversed and identities are becoming increasingly hybridized, an intercultural theatre practice informed by postcolonial theory can potentially function as a site where this intersecting of cultures is both reflected and critiqued”.[775] Although this model is extremely useful to examining intercultural theatre production, it does not address major issues of reception.

---

[769] Freeman (2009) 58.

[770] Freeman (2009) 65. Freeman acknowledges the limitations of this approach, the most significant being that it depends upon the researcher having direct access to (or even being implicit in) the production process that serves as his/her subject (77-8).

[771] Lo and Gilbert (2002) 49.

[772] In particular, his hourglass model of intercultural theatre. Lo and Gilbert (2002) explain – quoting Pavis - that "his hourglass model depicts, in its upper bowl, the foreign or source culture, 'which is more or less codified and solidified in diverse anthropological, sociocultural or artistic modelizations'" (41; they quote Pavis [1992] 4).

[773] Lo and Gilbert (2002) 44.

“Messiness” and Reception

The move toward acknowledging the “messiness” of culture, cultural identity, and performance is already beginning to impact the understanding of creation and reception in the theatre.[776] The impulse that drives Stone Peters and Freeman to acknowledge the messiness of both culture and performance can also be noted in Erika Fischer-Lichte’s recent arguments about performance reception. Fischer-Lichte’s model of the “temporary community” seems to offer a solution to the problem of accounting for the “messiness” of culture and performance while acknowledging the collective that can form in the theatre between performers and audience members. In discussing several theatre experiments that manipulate the roles of performer/spectator, she argues that performance prompts a "temporary community" to develop: "communities brought forth by these collective actions constituted a temporary social reality".[777] Her description of the collective that occurs in theatre is useful for interpreting intercultural performance, because she argues that "the conditions for success did not depend on sustained deliberations and convictions that had to be shared by all members of the community. They merely required that two otherwise clearly distinct groups – actors and spectators – to engage in common activities for the duration of the performance".[778] This theory seems to offer a way to allow for the formation of collectives between chorus and audience, regardless of ethnic and cultural differences. It seems to also account for the reviewers' feelings of "universality" by acknowledging the community that exists in the theatre during performance.

---

[774] Lo and Gilbert (2002). A diagram of their proposed model appears on page 45 of their article.

[775] Lo and Gilbert (2002) 49. They explain further that “positioned at the tension between source cultures, intercultural exchange is characterized both by gain and by loss, attraction and disavowal. This dialogism is represented by the centrifugal and centripetal forces indicated in the diagram above. The proposed model locates all intercultural activity within an identifiable sociopolitical context. This serves not only to foreground the inseparability of artistic endeavors from sociopolitical relations but also to remind us that theory and reading strategies are themselves deeply imbricated in specific histories and politics” (45).

[776] The use of the term “messiness”, for instance, might be considered connected to Bharucha’s (2000) use of the term “indeterminacy” in his discussion of how to evaluate the work of other cultures. Bharucha discusses Susan Wolf’s use of the term “indeterminacy” (which she uses in the context of pluralism in ethics), arguing that it acknowledges that although there might be no right answer, that doesn’t mean that there are no wrong answers. He continues, “the seeming equivocality of the pluralist position does not mean that it is without commitment; nor does it fear the finality of answers. However, it is aware that, in certain contexts, the ‘question of what is right…lacks a unique and determinate answer’: ‘rightness’ in such cases is, as Susan Wolf puts it succinctly, ‘neither relative to anything’, nor ‘a matter of perspective’; it is simply ‘indeterminate’” (41; here, he quotes Wolf [1992] 789). In the following section, he further articulates the disjunction between intercultural theory and practice, including the under-studied phenomenon of rejection by the Other (43). Although he offers no real solution to problems of evaluation, his discussion is interesting alongside this discussion of processes of creation and reception.

However, there are two main factors that militate against this theory's usefulness as a theory of reception for the chorus. First, as I have explored above, there are several problems with asking audiences to overlook cultural differences in order to form a community. The difficulties I explored above in relation to *Molora* were certainly at the forefront of my own experience of Farber's play.[779] Although I admired the virtuosity of the performers and felt that the chorus' message of community healing might serve as an example to me (as it might when I watch the *Oresteia*), I felt that I did not share any part of the South African experience and would not be comfortable appropriating it.[780] Setting aside for a minute the issues of the production's particular representation of South African history and culture, it seems clear that no matter what the representation had been, my associations with the “third frame” – the TRC hearings – would be different than if I had lived in South Africa (or anywhere else, for that matter). My associations with the third frame could also be affected by a variety of other factors, including my level of knowledge about South African history. Although the action in the inner and outer frames of the performance might remain the same even as the production travels to different countries, new audiences will call up different configurations of the third frame.[781] Different relationships to the third frame of performance will influence the audience’s relationship to the chorus and the other elements of the performance, affecting their ability to become part of a “temporary community”.

---

[777] Fischer-Lichte (2004: 2008) 55.

[778] Fischer-Lichte (2008) 55. These "activities" do not necessarily need to be participatory to the same degree as in Schechner's production.

[779] I attended the performance at Place des Arts in Montreal, Quebec, on January 24th, 2009. The show's run in Montreal was brief. The published reviews were generally positive, especially Donnelly (January 24, 2009), writing for *The Gazette.* However, I did speak with several dissatisfied audience members. One reviewer, Szpajda, wrote, "as one audience member noted, 'you know something is wrong when the actor yells 'noooooo!' and you ask yourself, 'again?'" (January 26, 2009).

[780] Similarly, Bennett (1997) describes her personal response to watching "Inma", (an aboriginal Australian performance) by explaining that when watching a completely unfamiliar form of performance, "audience expectations translate into an expectation without expectations, a spectatorial gaze unmoored from its anchors of knowingness. The operation, then, becomes one of translation grounded by a willing failure to know" (195).

In Fischer-Lichte’s theory of the temporary community, the communities she describes also “disappeared as soon as the actions were performed”.[782] In fact, this is the second factor that militates against using her theory to explain the phenomenon of the intercultural chorus. The disbanding of the community at the conclusion of the show is an essential part of her theory; the “temporary” swiftly becomes the “ephemeral”. In part, she believes this is necessary because of the community’s loose structure, and this structure “highlights why this community must fall apart after a short period”.[783] Although at first glance this might not appear to be problematic, I wish to offer the reminder that most of the productions I have described have a political ideology or message that they wish to convey, and conveying it is one of the very reasons for attempting to build a collective between the chorus and audience. Thus, the argument that the community is temporary means that productions – including *Molora* - wishing to have lasting effects on their audiences are doomed to failure.

---

[781] For instance, *Molora’s* reception in Oxford was extremely successful. However, I would argue that it was not only the altered stage design or seating arrangements (because of the change of venue) that contributed to these feelings. Those viewing the play in England also had an extremely different relationship to the colonial legacy of apartheid than those viewing the play in Canada; it was perhaps easier for that audience to feel complicit, as was suggested to me by Edith Hall in 2010. The associations of different audiences (and audience members) with the third frame will affect the audience’s ability to identify with the chorus.

[782] Fischer-Lichte (2008) 55.

[783] Fischer-Lichte (2008) 55. This community can also break down during the performance, since “this experience may be disrupted at any time by the community members or by the uninvolved spectators” (55).

Conclusion

Although at present, I have argued that universalism still underlies the intercultural adaptation of the chorus, we seem to be at a moment of transition. The period of the 1970s to the 1990s brought about a new understanding of the "otherness" inherent in both the ancient chorus and intercultural theatre practice, and it is possible to state that in our own era, we are still reacting to the influence of these reversals. We are still undergoing the transition from universalizing tendencies to an acknowledgement of the messiness "culture" and its reception.[784] Scholars such as Freeman and Fischer-Lichte are beginning to propose models in which to analyse intercultural performance production and reception, although these models still face many challenges.

Although the present transition is most notable in scholarly works on intercultural performance more generally, it will no doubt prove to be intertwined with changes in the performance and reception of adaptations of Greek tragedy. It will undoubtedly continue to affect both the study of the ancient chorus as well as its adaptation and reception. In adaptations, the transition from universalism to the acknowledgement of the "messiness" of culture, performance, and reception will likely affect what aspects of the ancient chorus adapters choose to emphasize in their productions. For instance, with the focus on the messiness of culture, will we continue to see collective choruses with homogeneous cultural identities? Or will this aspect of the Greek chorus become unfavourable, leading to more choruses of mixed identities? How would this affect the chorus' role in leading rituals?

---

[784] The fact that we are at a moment of transition can also be clearly noted when considering the two diverse roles that spectators play in Bennett's work on reception. First, she argues that audiences are important to theatre as a commodity. According to Bharucha's reading of Brook's production of the *Mahabharata*, "audiences in the West are complicit with the commodity enterprise; audiences in India are equally caught up in the impulses of a global economy" (174). Complicity here is not related to my use of the term as a goal of reception. Instead, she uses this term to show how audiences can be complicit in the *production* of theatre by creating a market for certain types of intercultural theatre. The commodification of culture outlined by Schechner (and discussed above) is related to this type of audience complicity in theatre production. However, Bennett concludes her analysis on a more hopeful note, similar to Freeman's reflection on the "emancipatory" qualities of intercultural theatre. She describes that it is at the "location of 'new meaning' that intercultural performance holds out its promise, which includes, among other things, a liberatory potential for all its participants and perhaps especially the audience" (196). There are several potential outcomes of intercultural theatre for the spectator, and it is not yet possible to conclude whether audiences in the future will be considered to be complicit in a commodification process or liberated by new theatre experiences. This is likely dependent on the nature of future processes of collaboration and production.

As I have demonstrated throughout this study, there is a connection between the scholarly interests of classicists and trends in adaptation. Advances in intercultural performance will therefore also likely affect the particular aspects of the *ancient* chorus that are the focus of scholarly attention. Hopefully, the performance and reception of the ancient chorus (including its "otherness") will continue to be a major focus, as it has been here and in the work of classicists such as Foley.

In addition, acknowledging the messiness of culture, performance, and reception is also a step toward acknowledging a diversity of audience experience in increasingly multicultural and globalized communities, which constantly re-combine the local and the global in new ways. Above, I discussed the tension between universalism and the particular/local that inspires the production of adaptations. I argued that inherent in all adaptations is an underlying tension between the desire to use/express the universality of the source material and the particularities that make it specifically relevant to a new place and time. This dialectic is in fact related to another: there is a tension between multiculturalism and the global that is now essential to not only understanding production, but also reception. In the production and reception of adaptations, not only is the "individual" in a relationship with the "collective", but collectives themselves are colliding in a variety of interesting ways.

Despite its flaws, Fischer-Lichte's theory of the "temporary community" is a gesture in the direction of acknowledging these new contexts of reception; it is a way to account for the creation of a community in the theatre despite the diversity of audience members. Bennett similarly acknowledges the connection between the diversity within a nation and within an audience: discussing intranational performance (performance that incorporates diverse identities within one nation), she notes that one of the effects of this type of performance is "to detect foreignness inherent to the imagined community of nation and of audience itself".[785] Drawing attention to – or even problematizing – spectatorship itself, as described above, will perhaps lead to more distancing choruses, which acknowledge their otherness (rather than merely attempting to overcome it), and which might successfully encourage the audience to self-reflexively evaluate their own role. Or on the other hand, choruses might find new ways of building collectives altogether. Perhaps recognizing the diversity within the *audience* will lead adapters and critics to focus less on producing an "authentic" experience of choral ritual, and instead, to focus on acknowledging a plurality of experiences of a singular production and its chorus.

CONCLUSION

---

[785] Bennett (1997) 177.

This study began as an investigation not only of adaptations of the Greek chorus, but also the historical, political, and aesthetic contexts that give rise to these adaptations. Influenced by recent work in the field of Classical Reception Studies (especially Classical Performance Reception) and Linda Hutcheon's work on adaptation, the chapters were designed not around a set of case studies, but around a variety of research questions, including: the current definition of "the chorus" and how it might include the "one-person chorus"; the techniques of mediation used by modern choruses and how they might relate to techniques of the ancient chorus; the connection between political adaptations and the encouragement of audience "complicity"; and the complexities involved in the production and reception of intercultural choruses. Below, I will offer a brief summary of the observations of each chapter, before engaging with several "through-lines" or recurring themes that carry throughout the study. In these final remarks, I will also suggest some areas for further research.

I began by challenging August Wilhelm Schlegel's conception of the chorus as an "ideal spectator". I argued that although this remains the most persistently popular model of understanding the chorus, it should be replaced with a new model based on the concentric frames of performance described by Susan Bennett. I explored this model in chapter one, noting that if the chorus' role in performance is described according to this model, it is possible to more clearly describe its "location" in relation to the fictional action as well as the audience. Using this model to examine the one-person chorus of Anouilh's *Antigone,* I showed that the chorus can be differentiated from figures such as the prologue and *confidant(e)* based not on generalizations about collectivity, but instead, on its location within the frames of performance. I argued that although the ancient choruses were grounded in the inner frame of the action because of their fictional identity as characters, choruses can oscillate amongst the frames of performance, and this aspect of the choral role makes the chorus attractive to modern adapters.

In chapter two, I used this model to show how the theatrical self-referentiality of the chorus manifests itself as the chorus oscillates between the frames of performance. I argued that this self-referentiality can be emphasized to different degrees in adaptations, often depending upon how the techniques of mediation are employed. Focusing on the use of mask, dance, and media, I argued that the same technique can be used for both distancing the audience or for encouraging audience identification, and that regardless of the intention, these techniques can emerge from either frame of the performance. In this chapter, I began to focus more on the confrontation between the intentions of adapters and the response of spectators. This emerges as especially important in chapter three, in which I extend the model to a discussion of adaptations that attempt to communicate political ideology or messages to the audience.

In chapter three, I discussed how the dialectic of individuality/collectivity often emphasized in tragedy can be understood as complementary to that of distance/identification. I note that encouraging audience "complicity" has become a major goal of adapters, and that productions seeking to make the audience feel complicit with the cause of the tragic action often utilize the chorus to create a balance between the audience's sense of identification and distance. The chorus is often first used to encourage identification, and then is subsequently intended to be distanced from the audience. Through this process the audience is intended to self-reflexively evaluate their earlier collective action (or inaction) as complicity. The successful communication of a production's political message often relies upon the audience's ability to clearly understand how their role is being framed by the production.

In order to engage with the complexities of reception faced by of the productions of Brecht and Schechner, I found it useful to add concentric frames to the model. However, these frames represented the challenges posed to context-specific "audiences" of each production: in Brecht's case, the third frame represented the audience's recent experience of World War II, while in Schechner's case, a third frame allowed an understanding of reception by the actors themselves. In order to complement these case studies, I also examined the more recent choral theatre of Einar Schleef, especially his adaptation *The Mothers*. In this production, the tension between the individual and the collective is located within the chorus itself. However, I argued that this chorus – unlike the choruses of Brecht and Schechner – attempts to communicate only an ideology, and not a message.

In the final chapter, I began by exploring two complimentary transitions: from the chorus' conceptualization as "collective" toward a focus on its "otherness" (in the field of Classics) and the rise of intercultural and postcolonial theatre (in both scholarship and performance). Building on the previous chapter, I explored how intercultural adaptations often use their choruses to engage with the dynamics of two related dialectics - collectivity/otherness and identification/distance - with regard to the audience. I argued that when it is employed, the term "complicity" is described and accomplished in a different way in intercultural adaptations, often losing its negative connotations and its associations with distanced self-reflexivity. Complicity is instead used to mean "active involvement" in a production, and this seems especially prominent in cases in which the intercultural adaptation itself is framed as a ritual.

Complicity is therefore not communicated through the same process used by other political productions (such as those of Brecht and Schechner), in which the production attempts to elicit feelings of collectivity, followed by feelings of distanced self-reflexivity. On the contrary, in the examples I explored in chapter four, adapters often use the chorus in an attempt to *overcome* the distance inherent in the chorus' "otherness". The audience's progression throughout a performance is thus from feelings of distance and appreciation of the chorus' "otherness" to a sense of empathy, identification, and collectivity. As in the case of *Molora,* the political message of an intercultural adaptation often relies upon the chorus' ability to overcome the distance inherent in its cultural otherness.

Although intercultural choruses have been essential to the renewed interest in adapting the chorus, I argue that they also raise difficult questions. For instance, the question of whether an audience can become part of a "collective" with the chorus – or whether the chorus must remain "other" - is not only of interest to scholars of the ancient chorus, but is of utmost importance to understanding the production and reception of intercultural choruses. I found that choruses of mixed cultural identity are often used to communicate the universality of the tragic action, precisely through the diversity of the "otherness" they represent. Further complications arise in the use of choruses of homogeneous cultural identity, such as the chorus of Farber's *Molora,* who are often used to "authenticate" rituals in both frames of performance, as well as cue a third frame for the audience. I concluded with comments on the future of intercultural choruses, noting that we are at a time of transition in which acknowledging the "messiness" of both production and reception are beginning to gain attention.

Although the chapters above were composed around different research questions and topics, there are obvious through-lines and recurring themes of this study. As they re-emerge in different chapters, their juxtaposition with different case studies and research questions has caused interesting discoveries and challenges. One such theme is collectivity. I began this study by arguing against the usefulness of Schlegel's "ideal spectator" model by illustrating that collectivity is no longer either a defining feature of the chorus, nor does it offer a sufficient explanation for the chorus' relationship with the audience. However, many of my examples – most notably those that use the chorus in an attempt to create feelings of complicity – are of collective choruses. Regardless of its definition, audience complicity seems to require an identification between chorus and audience, and some members of the audiences that I have discussed (especially with regard to the productions of Brecht and Schechner) had a tendency to over-identify with these choruses. Therefore, it might seem tempting to return to Schlegel once more to state that in fact, collective audiences *do* have a tendency to identify with collective choruses, and this leads to them to an "ideal" reaction (which in this case, might be considered complicity).

However, I hope that I have adequately proven that this is incorrect, based on several discussions and conclusions reached throughout this study. First, I have shown that even when both chorus and audience are composed of collective groups, identification between chorus and audience cannot be considered an assumption or a "given". In fact, identification occurs due to the use of complex and carefully-orchestrated techniques. Collectivity is therefore not required for identification; indeed, as I have shown, a single chorus figure can also draw the audience into the inner frame (for instance, through the use of media). Secondly, I have demonstrated that the ideal reaction to a political adaptation is rarely only audience identification. There is often a message that is intended to be understood, and in some cases, correctly understanding this message also requires the self-reflexivity offered by distance. I have been critical of intercultural choruses whose main goal is merely to provoke audience identification; I have suggested that adaptations like *Molora* would in fact benefit from encouraging some amount of audience distance in order to engage with issues such as the power dynamics of spectatorship, as well as the more complex aspects of its political material (and third frame), the TRC process.

In addition, I have also shown that "collectivity" is no longer associated only with the chorus, nor is "individuality" aligned only with protagonists. I have explored how adapters often complicate the simple binary of individual/collective through the use of a variety of strategies. For instance, adapters may include a one-person chorus or add different singular figures which can take on aspects of the choral role: for example, a *confidant* (in the case of Anouilh), a Prologue (in the case of Brecht), and a messenger (in the case of Schechner). I have also noted that some adapters choose to "collectivize" by adding collectives: Anouilh adds the collective of guards, and Miyagi collectivizes several of his adaptation's protagonists. Adapters regularly displace aspects of the traditional choral role as they manipulate the dialectic of individuality/collectivity and its relation to the audience (as well as its relation to the dialectic of distance/identification), through the use of the chorus as well as other aspects of the production.

Perhaps the most obvious through-line in this study is my proposal of a particular model of performance and reception that offers both a spatial conception of the chorus' role, and yet is flexible enough to be useful to discussions of very different adaptations – and receptions - of the chorus. In addition to taking into account the work of theatre scholars such as Pfister and the scholarship on other liminal figures of performance (such as prologues), I utilized Bennett's conception of performance and reception as the major source for my model. Bennett explains that there is an inner frame of performance as well as an outer frame, and that "the audience's role is carried out within these two frames and, perhaps most importantly, at their points of intersection".[786] I have argued that this model of concentric frames is useful to understanding both the liminal "space" inhabited by the chorus as well as its role in performance. The chorus' recent popularity, I have argued, is largely based on its ability to oscillate between the frames of performance, mediating the action for the audience. As I have discovered, this often also includes self-referentially commenting upon its own oscillation.

---

[786] Bennett (1997) 139.

Beginning with Bennett's concentric frames means that the process of performance and reception is emphasized as the central focus of the model. Throughout the chapters above I have built upon and challenged Bennett's model, leading to my own proposed model for understanding the nuances of the performance and reception of the chorus. In this process of analysis and modification, I have attempted to tackle the theoretical issues outlined in my introduction above. For instance, rather than idealizing the source text by evaluating adaptations of the chorus based on fidelity to the source text (a fundamental issue in scholarship surrounding adaptations), I take into particular account the context of a performance, and this becomes essential to understanding the reception of a chorus – and indeed, of an adaptation more generally.

While my proposed model places emphasis on the experience of the audience, it does not expect the audience to have a uniform experience of a performance, nor does it preclude the possibility of the audience's response changing throughout the course of a single performance. Utilizing documents of reception such as reviews and interviews throughout has allowed a realistic understanding of the variety of responses a single performance and its chorus may evoke, depending upon its social, political, and aesthetic context. However, in analyzing the contexts of particular performances, I also found that often, two concentric frames were not sufficient for understanding the full effect of a performance. As in the cases of the productions of Brecht, Schechner, and Farber, I found that the action in the inner frame and the oscillation of the chorus (and sometimes, other elements of the performance) between frames was intended to cue a third frame of performance. Although audience members may receive the action of the inner and outer frames (and the chorus) differently, the third frame is especially susceptible to diverse audience interpretation. Often referenced and explained only indirectly in a performance, this third frame might be configured differently by audience members in diverse geographical/political contexts, as well as by individual audience members (or in the case of Schechner, the performers themselves), according to their own personal associations with the material that makes up the third frame.

Based on my theoretical goals and the observations of my case studies, the model I have proposed is reception-focused and contains both an inner and outer frame. However, it is also situational and context-specific. At its core is the potential for the chorus and other elements of the performance to oscillate between frames, to emphasize this oscillation, as well as to cue additional frames of reception while mediating the action for the audience.

The model I have proposed thus differentiates between aspects of choral performance that I have argued are often conflated in scholarship surrounding the chorus: it offers more precise terminology for describing and differentiating between the space that the chorus inhabits in performance, its style of communication, and the reception of the chorus by the audience. In using this model to discuss the scholarship surrounding the ancient chorus, I was able to explain more precisely the conflicts between scholars such as Gould and Goldhill, or Nietzsche and Schlegel, which are often based on different understandings of the types of distancing that are acknowledged by my model. The flexibility of this model also proved useful in my analyses of the goals of adapters working in different contexts.

The model (and the terminology arising from it) has been valuable throughout this study precisely because it not only offers a method of organizing the reception of the chorus by the audience, but also because it does not *force* choruses and audiences into these tidy, discrete categories. Instead, it points to instances of overlap and complications. For instance, in chapter one, using this model allowed me not only to differentiate singular chorus figures from prologues and *confidants*, but also to note how adapters such as Anouilh can capitalize upon and emphasize the ways in which these figures overlap. In chapters three and four, the model's flexibility proved useful through the addition of extra frames to the productions, which allowed a more full understanding of the complexity of the adapters' goals and the challenges they faced in reception. In chapter four, the model also allowed me to pinpoint more clearly how the goal of complicity operates in intercultural choral performance, and in what particular ways it can be problematic in an intercultural context of reception. Without the model as the basis for analysis, different strategies of identification and distancing would simply have been blurred, as they often are in scholarly discussions of the ancient chorus as well as in discussions of adaptations.

However, this study is not intended to function as one long proposal of a model. The model is simple, and in some chapters, it has operated almost entirely in the background. Its simplicity and flexibility are in fact its virtues; the model's usefulness lies in the fact that it has allowed me to note and more accurately describe the many observations listed above. However, proposing a model that is precise yet flexible leads me to hope that it will be useful for other discoveries about the chorus in the future. As I stated in the introduction, there are many other cultural and linguistic contexts in which adaptations are being created, and it would be interesting to see how this model may be useful in describing these chorus/audience relationships. Based on my conclusions regarding the use of media by chorus figures in chapter two, it would also be interesting to see how this model might be a springboard for discussing other aspects of theatre and performance that are "choral", though not necessarily embodied. And lastly, it would be interesting to see whether this model is useful to studies of the choruses of other genres of ancient performance that are often adapted, including perhaps the choruses of comedy, which engage in more direct relationships with the audience.

The final through-line I wish to discuss is the theme of “ritual”, as it has not only been prominent throughout this study, but it will also lead to concluding comments regarding the future of the tragic chorus. Ritual was first discussed in relation to masks in chapter two (in the cases of Guthrie and Hall), in which I noted the impact of the Cambridge Ritualists on the revitalization of both collective choruses and their non-naturalistic techniques of mediation. Ritual returns as a topic of discussion in chapter three, in two ways. First, I examined “borrowed” rituals that were inserted into productions such as Schechner’s *Dionysus in 69*. Secondly, I also discussed how avant-garde theatre performances of the 1960s and 1970s (including Schechner’s production) incorporated these rituals as they attempted to become rituals themselves. Ritual returns once more in the exploration of intercultural ritual in chapter four, in which I note the changing attitudes towards the process of “borrowing” rituals, but the (comparative) lack of change in critical reception. It seems that the majority of critics and audiences are still hoping to have “authentic” ritual experiences in which “complicity” means only active involvement - and some adapters still aim to provide this experience.

It has become clear that ritual is an important tactic that can be used in both frames of the action (as well as potentially draw attention to a third frame of reception) in order to create audience identification and collectivity. However, this can also cause many difficulties to arise. For instance, in the case of Schechner’s *Dionysus in 69*, the use of ritual led to an overly-involved audience who could not subsequently be distanced enough to apprehend the message of the play. In the case of Farber’s *Molora*, while the rituals in the inner frame proved overly-distancing (exoticizing the other), the ritual framing of the production led to unquestioned identification and collectivity. This allowed the chorus and the production to over-simplify the South African TRC experience (cued in the third frame) in an attempt to universalize the applicability of its message. It will be interesting, as I note at the conclusion of chapter four, to see whether choruses of homogeneous cultural identities will continue to be popular in the future. If they disappear as attitudes to "authenticity" and "universalism" change, it will certainly affect the incorporation of ritual into adaptations of tragedy.

Although it is provisional, it seems important to expand on the above comment by noting that the future of the tragic chorus remains uncertain at this time. However, it will undoubtedly be affected by trends in intercultural scholarship and performance. As I have stated, scholars and theatre practitioners are currently at a moment of transition toward the acknowledgement of the "messiness" of culture as well as theatrical production and reception. Both classical and theatre scholars continue to grapple with the legacy of issues such as identity, authority, agency, authenticity, and universalism in intercultural performance.[787] We can be sure that trends in intercultural performance will continue to affect both the study of the ancient chorus as well as the adaptation of its modern counterpart, and I intend that my flexible model will continue to be useful in describing and analyzing the "messy" experiences of the chorus that are sure to come. In the future, choruses will no doubt negotiate – and perhaps reject - audience complicity in new and diverse ways.

---

[787] For example, the International Federation for Theatre Research (FIRT/IFTR) held its annual conference in 2011 on the topic "Tradition, Innovation, Community" (conference information from 2011 was viewed at www.firt2011osaka.org. It can now be viewed at http://www.days-i.com/firt/?page_id=16). One suggested theme was "Globalization and Tradition", which encompassed the following sub-topics: "How have inherent traditional cultures been maintained in the era of globalization? How have the tradition of theatre and traditional theatre been modified through the exchange of different cultures? How have traditional theatre been influenced by different cultures? How have the traditions of theatre changed as globalization progresses?". These questions remain at the forefront of theatre scholarship at present, especially (as emphasized by this conference) in a world of increasing access to technology.

Bibliography

Ackerman, Robert (1991). *The Myth and Ritual School: J.G. Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists,* New York and London.

Added, Serge (1996). "Jacques Copeau and 'Popular Theatre' in Vichy France", Trans. Robin Slaughter, in Berghaus (ed.) (1996), 247-259.

Aeschylus, *Oresteia: Agamemnon, Libation Bearers, Eumenides.* Transl. Alan H, Sommerstein (2008), Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge and London.

Ameriks, Karl (2000). "Introduction: Interpreting German Idealism", in Ameriks (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism,* Cambridge.

Anderman, Gunilla (2005). *Europe on Stage: Translation and Theatre,* London.

Angove, C. (1992). "Alternative Theater: Reflecting a Multi-Racial South African Society?", *Theatre Research International* 17.1, 1-5.

Anouilh, Jean (1944: 1957). *Antigone.* Ed. W. M. Landers (1957), London.

Anouilh, Jean (1944: 1951). *Antigone: A Tragedy by Jean Anouilh,* Trans. Lewis Galantière, London.

Anouilh, Jean (1944:1946). *Antigone, Adapted by Lewis Galantière, From the Play by Jean Anouilh,* Trans. Lewis Galantière, New York.

Antigone (Broadway Theatre Archive) (1974). Dir. Gerald Freedman. Perf. Geneviève Bujold, Stacy Keach, Leah Chandler, James Naughton, Fritz Weaver. Image Entertainment, 2001. DVD.

Aristotle, *The Poetics,* Trans. Stephen Halliwell (1995), Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA, and London.

Author Unknown. "Greek Chorus", *TV Tropes*. Available at: http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/GreekChorus. Accessed on July 19, 2010.

Aylen, Leo (1964). *Greek Tragedy in the Modern World,* London.

Backalenick, Irene (2003). "Mythos" in *BackStage,* August 8, 2003. Available at http://www.allbusiness.com/services/amusement-recreation-services/4572009-1.html. Accessed June 20, 2011.

Bagg, Robert (1978). *The Bakkhai: By Euripides,* Amherst.

Balme, C. (1999). *Decolonizing the Stage: Theatrical Syncretism and Post-Colonial Drama*, Oxford.

Barber, John (1981). "Marathon in Masks", *The Daily Telegraph,* November 30, 1981.

Barnes, Clive (1969). "Theater: 'Bacchae' in '69." *The New York Times,* 15 March, p. 24.

Baur, Detlev (1999). *Der Chor im Theater des 20. Jahrhunderts: Typologie des theatralen Mittels Chor,* Tübingen.

Beard, David (2010). "'Batter the Doom Drum': The Music for Peter Hall's *Oresteia* and Other Productions of Greek Tragedy by Harrison Birtwistle and Judith Weir", in Brown and Ograjenšek (eds.) (2010), 369-397.

Beard, Mary (2000). *The Invention of Jane Harrsion,* Cambridge and London.

Ben Chaim, Daphna (1984). *Distance in the Theatre: The Aesthetics of Audience Response,* Ann Arbor (Michigan).

Bennett, Susan (1997). *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception,* 2nd ed., London.

Berghaus, Gunter (ed.) (1996). *Fascism and Theatre: Comparative Studies on the Aesthetics and Politics of Performance in Europe, 1925-1945,* Providence.

Berlau, Ruth (1985:1987), *Living for Brecht: The Memoirs of Ruth Berlau,* Trans. Geoffrey Skelton, Ed. Hans Bunge, New York.

Bharucha, Rustom (1990: 1993). *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture,* London.

------ (1991). "A View From India", in David Williams (ed.) (1991), 228-52.

------ (1996). "Somebody's Other: Disorientations in the Cultural Politics of Our Times", in Pavis (ed.) (1996), 196-212.

------ (2000). *The Politics of Cultural Practice: Thinking Through Theatre In An Age of Globalization,* Hanover, NH and London.

------ and Erika Fischer-Lichte (2010). "Dialogue: Erika Fischer-Lichte and Rustom Bharucha", *Interweaving Performance Cultures Journal* (Dialogue on October 12, 2010; transcribed and ed. Katrin Wächter on August 6, 2011). Available at http://texturesplatform.com/2011/08/dialogue/. Accessed on April 5, 2012.

Bial, Henry (ed.) (2007). *The Performance Studies Reader,* 2nd ed., London.

Bierl, Anton (2005). "The Chorus of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* in Modern Stage Productions: Towards the 'Performative Turn'", in Macintosh et al. (eds.) (2005), 291-306.

------ (1991). "Dionysos und die griechische Tragödie. Politische und 'metatheatralische' Aspekte im Text", *Classica Monacensia* 1, Munich.

Billings, Joshua (2009). "Misreading the Chorus: A critical *Quellenforschung* into *Die Geburt Der Tragödie*", *Nietzsche Studien* 38, 246-68.

------, Felix Budelmann, and Fiona Macintosh (eds.) (Forthcoming). *Choruses Ancient and Modern*, (2013), Oxford.

Billington, Michael (1981). "Masks That Obscure a Tragedy", *The Guardian,* November 30, 1981.

Blau, Herbert (1990). *The Audience,* Baltimore.

Boraine, Alex (2000). *A Country Unmasked,* London.

Bordwell, David (1985). *Narration in the Fiction Film,* Madison (Wisconsin).

Bowles, Patrick Lindsay (1992). "The Atrides in Vincennes", *Hudson Review*, 45.1 (Spring 1992), 129.

Brady, Martin (2006). "Brecht and Film", in Thomson and Sacks (eds) (2006), 297-317.

Brecht, B. (1913-56: 1990) *Bertolt Brecht Letters,* Trans. Ralph Manheim, Ed. John Willett, London.

------ (1934-55: 1993). *Bertolt Brecht Journals (Arbeitsjournal),* Trans. Hugh Rorrison, Ed. John Willett, London.

------ (c. 1935: 1964). "On the Use of Music in An Epic Theatre", Trans. Willett, in Willett (ed.) (1964), 84-90.

------ (c. 1936: 1964). "Theatre for Pleasure or Theatre for Instruction", Trans. Willett, in Willett (ed.) (1964), 69-77.

------ (1948). *Antigonemodell 1948,* Berlin.

------ (1948: 2003). "Antigone" (poem). *BFA 15, p.191,* in Kuhn and Constantine (trans. and eds.) (2003), 202-3.

------ (1948: 1964). "Masterful Treatment of a Model", Trans. Willett, in Willett (ed.) (1964), 209-15.

------ (1949: 1964a). "A Short Organum for the Theatre", Trans. Willett, in Willett (ed.) (1964), 179-205.

------ (1949: 1964b). "From the Mother Courage Model", Trans. Willett, in Willett (ed.) (1964), 215-22.

------ (1950: 1964, written c.1938). "The Street Scene", Trans. Willett, in Willett (ed.) (1964), 121-9.

------ (1951: 2003). “New Prologue to ‘Antigone’”, *BFA 8, p.242,* in Kuhn and Constantine (trans. and eds.) (2003), 218.

------ (1951: 1964, written c.1940). “Short Description of a New Technique of Acting which Produces an Alienation Effect”, Trans. Willett, in Willett (ed.) (1964), 136-147.

------ (1959: 2003). *The Antigone of Sophocles,* in Kuhn and Constantine (trans. and eds.) (2003), 1-51.

Brecht, Stefan (1969). “Review: ‘Dionysus in 69’, from Euripides’ ‘The Bacchae”, *The Drama Review* 13, 156-168.

Brooker, Peter (2006). “Key Words in Brecht’s Theory and Practice of Theatre”, in Thomson and Sacks, (eds.) (2006), 209-24.

Brown, G. (1995). “Trojan Women”, *The Independent,* March 15, 1995. Available at: http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/trojan-woman-1611307.html. Accessed June 10, 2011.

Brown, John Russell (ed.) (1995). *The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre,* Oxford.

Brown, Peter and Suzana Ograjenšek (eds.) (2010). *Ancient Drama in Music for the Modern Stage,* Oxford.

Bruster, Douglas and Robert Weimann (2004). *Prologues to Shakespeare's Theatre: Performance and Liminality in Early Modern Drama,* London and New York.

Bryant-Bertail, Sarah (2000). *Space and Time in Epic Theater: The Brechtian Legacy,* Rochester, NY and Woodbridge, UK.

Budelmann, Felix (2000). *The Language of Sophocles,* Cambridge.

------ (2005). “Greek Tragedies in West African Adaptations”, in Goff (ed.) (2005), 118-46.

------ and Johannes Haubold (2008). “Reception and Tradition”, in Hardwick and Stray (eds.) (2008)*,* 13 – 25.

Calame, C. (1997). “De la Poésie Chorale au Stasimon Tragique: Pragmatique de Voix Féminines”, *Mètis: Anthropologie des Monds Grecs Anciens* 12, 181-203.

------ (2005). *Masks of Authority: Fiction and Pragmatics in Ancient Greek Poetics,* Trans. P.M. Burk, Ithaca.

Calder, William M. (ed.) (1991). *The Cambridge Ritualists Reconsidered,* Atlanta.

Camus, Albert (1955:1962). “Conférence prononcée à Athènes sur l’avenir de la tragédie”, in *Théâtre, récits, nouvelles,* Paris (1962), 1699-1709.

"Clod Ensemble: About the Company", *Clod Ensemble Website.* Available at: http://www.clodensemble.com/clod/about.htm. Accessed on April 2, 2012.

Cocteau, Jean (1957). *La Machine Infernale,* Ed. W. M. Landers, London.

Coll, Mary (2003). "Power and Glory", *Independent Magazine,* February 21, 2003.

Constantine, David (2001). "Introduction", *Hölderlin's Sophocles: Oedipus and Antigone*, in Hölderlin (2001), 7-13.

Cornford, F.M. (1912). *From Religion to Philosophy,* London.

------ (1914). *The Origin of Attic Comedy,* London.

Csapo, Eric and William J. Slater (1995). *The Context of Ancient Drama,* Ann Arbor.

Csapo, Eric (2005). *Theories of Mythology*, Malden, MA.

Csapo, Eric and Margaret Miller (eds.) (2007). "General Introduction" in Csapo and Miller (eds.) (2007), 1-38.

Csapo, Eric and Margaret Miller (eds.) (2007). *The Origins of Theater in Ancient Greece and Beyond: From Ritual to Drama,* Cambridge.

Cushman, Robert (1981). "Masked Tragedy", *The Observer Review,* December 6, 1981.

Davies, Robertson (1954). "Oedipus Rex", in Davies, Guthrie, and McDonald (eds.) (1954), 107-141.

------ ,Tyrone Guthrie, and Grant McDonald (eds.) (1954). *Twice Have the Trumpets Sounded: A Record of the Stratford Shakespearean Festival in Canada,* Toronto.

------ (1955). "King Oedipus", in Davies et al (eds.) (1955), 31-43

------ et al. (eds.) (1955). *Thrice the Brinded Cat Hath Mew'd: A Record of the Stratford Shakespearean Festival in Canada 1955,*Toronto.

------ (1965). "The Cherry Orchard at Stratford – For Chekhov: 87 per cent", *Peterborough Examiner,* July 31, 1965.

Dawkins, Richard (1976:1989). *The Selfish Gene,* New York and Oxford.

De La Combe, Pierre Judet (2005). "Ariane Mnouchkine and the French *Agamemnon*", in Macintosh et al. (eds.) (2005), 273-89.

Delattre, Charles (1998). *Jean Anouilh, "Antigone",* Paris.

De Marinis, Marco (1982 :1993). *The Semiotics of Performance,* Trans. Áine O'Healy. Bloominton.

Dennis, John (1693: 1973). *The Impartial Critick*, New York.

Dessen, Alan (1995). *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary,* Cambridge and New York.

Dickin, Margaret (2009). *A Vehicle for Performance: Acting the Messenger in Greek Tragedy,* Lanham, Maryland.

Dionysus in 69 (1970). Film Dir. Brian De Palma. Play Dir. Richard Schechner. Perf. Remi Barclay, Samuel Blazer, John Bosseau, Richard Dic, William Finley, Joan MacIntosh, Vicki May, Patrick McDermott, Margaret Ryan, Richard Schechner, William Shephard and Ciel Smith. Sigma III. 1970. DVD.

Dodds, E. R. (1966: 1983). "On Misunderstanding the Oedipus Rex", in Segal (ed.) (1983), 177-88.

Donnelly, Pat (2009). "Molora: Greek Tragedy Transformed and Audience Transfixed", *The Gazette,* January 24, 2009.

Doolan, Lita (2007). "Molora", *Daily Info, Oxford,* June 14, 2007. Available at: http://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/reviews/feature/2022/Molora. Accessed June 22, 2011.

------ (2008). "Clod Ensemble: Red Ladies", *Daily Info, Oxford,* May 30, 2008. Available at: http://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/reviews/feature/2973/Clod_Ensemble_Red_Ladies. Accessed on April 12, 2012.

Durst, David C. (2004). *Weimar Modernism: Philosophy, Politics, and Culture in Germany 1918-1933,* Lanham.

Eagleton, Terry (2007). *Ideology: An Introduction* (Updated edition), London and New York.

Easterling, P.E. (1993). "Tragedy and Ritual", in Scodel (ed.) (1993), 7-24.

------ (1997). "A Show for Dionysus", in P.E. Easterling (ed.) (1997), 36-53.

------ (ed.) (1997). *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, Cambridge.

Ehrenzweig, Anton (1970). *The Hidden Order of Art,* St. Albans.

Euripides, *The Bacchae.* Trans. and Ed. David Kovacs (2002), Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA, and London.

Falb, Lewis W. (1977). *Jean Anouilh,* New York.

Faraone, C. A. and T.H. Carpenter (eds.) (1993), *Masks of Dionysus,* Ithaca.

Farber, Yael (2008a). *Molora,* London.

Farber, Yael (2008b). *Theatre As Witness,* London.

Farber Foundry (n.d.). "Molora". Available at: http://www.farberfoundry.com/molora-info.html. Accessed on June 1, 2012.

Felski, Rita (ed.) (2008). *Rethinking Tragedy*, Baltimore.

Fenton, James (1981). “The Magic and the Murder That Made Greece”, *The Sunday Times,* December 6, 1981.

Fischer-Lichte, Erika (1996). “Interculturalism in Contemporary Theatre”, in Pavis (ed.) (1996), 27-40.

------ (2004). “Thinking about the Origins of Theatre in the 1970s”, in Hall, Macintosh, and Wrigley (eds.) (2004), 329-60.

------ (2004: 2008). *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics,* Trans. Saskya Iris Jain, London and New York.

------ (2005). *Theatre, Sacrifice, Ritual: Exploring Forms of Political Theatre,* London and New York.

FIRT/IFTR: International Federation for Theatre Research, n.d. “Themes and Topics”. *Annual Conference Osaka 2011, Japan.* Available at: http://www.firt2011osaka.org/. Accessed on August 1, 2011.

Fitzgerald, Jason (2011). “MoLoRa: The Farber Foundry and Culture Project’s Women Center Stage at the Ailey Citigroup Theater”, *Backstage.com,* July 6, 2011. Available at: http://www.backstage.com/bso/content_display/reviews/ny-theatre-reviews/e3i316910e00f0b72c2594caeb13d80ae5a. Accessed on April 5, 2012.

Flashar, Hellmut (2009). *Inszenierung der Antike*, 2nd ed., München.

Flügge, Manfred (1994). *Jean Anouilhs 'Antigone' : Symbolgestalt des französischen Dilemmas, 1940-1944*, 2nd ed., Rheinfelden.

------ (1982). *Verweigerung oder Neue Ordnung : Jean Anouilhs "Antigone" im politischen und ideologischen Kontext der Besatzungszeit 1940-1944*, Rheinfelden.

Foley, Helene P. (2003). “Choral Identity in Greek Tragedy”, *Classical Philology* 98: 1-30.

------ (2007). “Envisioning the Tragic Chorus on the Modern Stage”, in Kraus et al. (eds.) (2007), 353 – 378.

------ (2011). “Millenial *Antigone* in the USA: Anouilh Revisited”, in Foley and Mee (eds.) (2011), 373-391.

Freeman, Barry (2009). “Navigating the Prague-Toronto-Manitoulin Theatre Project: A Postmodern Ethnographic Approach to Collaborative Intercultural Theatre”, *Theatre Research in Canada,* 30.1-2, 58-78.

Friedrich, Rainer (1983). “Drama and Ritual”, in Redmond (ed.) (1983), 159-223.

Freud, Sigmund (1910: 1962). *Two Short Accounts of Psycho-Analysis,* Trans. and ed. James Strachey, Middlesex.

Fricker, Karen (2003). "Antigone", *The Guardian,* February 27, 2003.

Fuchs, Elinor (2008). "Postdramatic Theatre (review)", *The Drama Review* 52, 178-83.

Fuegi, John (1987). *Bertolt Brecht: Chaos, According to Plan,* Cambridge.

Gainor, J. Ellen (ed.) (1995). *Imperialism and Theatre: Essays on World Theatre, Drama and Performance,* London and New York.

Gamel, Mary-Kay (2010). "Revising 'Authenticity' in Staging Ancient Mediterranean Drama", in Hall and Harrop (eds.) (2010), 153-70.

Gardner, Lyn (2008). "Theatre: Molora", in *The Guardian,* April 14, 2008.

Ghiron-Bistagne, Paulette (1988). "Acteurs de la Transe dans L'Antiquité", *Cahiers du GITA* 4, 63-78.

Gilbert, Helen and Joanne Tompkins (1996). *Post-Colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics*, London.

Gillett, Robert and Godela Weiss-Sussex (eds.) (2008). *Verwisch die Spuren! A Re-Assessment of Bertolt Brecht's Work and Legacy,* Amsterdam and Atlanta.

Gödde, S. (2000). "Zu einer Poetik des Rituals in Aischylos' *Persern",* in S. Gödde and T. Heinze (eds.), 31-47.

------ and T. Heinze (eds.) (2000). *Skenika: Beiträge zum antiken Theater und seiner Rezeption: Festschrift zum 65. Geburtstag von Hans-Dieter Blume,* Darmstadt.

Goetsch, Sallie (1994). "Playing Against the Text: 'Les Atrides' and the History of Reading Aeschylus", *TDR* 38.3, 75-95.

Goff, Barbara (ed.) (2005). *Classics and Colonialism,* London

------ (2005). "Dionysiac Triangles: The Politics of Culture in Wole Soyinka's *The Bacchae of Euripides",* in in Pedrick and Oberhelman (eds.) (2005), 73-88.

------ and Michael Simpson (2007). *Crossroads in the Black Aegean: Oedipus, Antigone, and the Dramas of the African Diaspora,* Oxford.

Goffman, Erving (1974). *Frame analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience,* London.

------ (1979). *Gender Advertisements,* London.

Goldhill, Simon (1990). "The Great Dionysia and Civic Ideology", in Winkler and Zeitlin (eds.) (1990), 97-129.

------ (1996). “Collectivity and Otherness – The Authority of the Tragic Chorus: Response to Gould”, in M.S. Silk (ed.) (1996), 244-56.

------ (2007). *How to Stage Greek Tragedy Today*, Chicago.

Goldman, Julia (2003). “Staging Vengeance”, *The Jewish Week,* July 4, 2003. Avaliable at: http://www.thejewishweek.com/arts/arts_guide/staging_vengeance. Accessed on June 20, 2011.

Götrick, K. (1984). *Apidan Theatre and Modern Drama,* Stockholm.

Gore-Langton, Robert (1995). “U.S. Marines Play their Part in a Greek Travesty”, *The Daily Telegraph,* 17 March 1995, p. 6.

Gould, John (1996). “Tragedy and the Collective Experience”, in M.S. Silk (ed.) (1996), 217-43.

Graf, F. (ed.) (1998). *Ansichten griechischer Rituale: Geburtstags-Symposium für Walter Burkert,* Stuttgart.

Greenfield, Thelma N. (1969). *The Induction in Elizabethan Drama,* Eugene.

Griffith, Mark (1999). *Antigone / Sophocles,* Cambridge and New York.

------ (2007). “Gilbert Murray on Greek Literature: The Great/Greek Man’s Burden” in Stray (ed.) (2007), 51-80.

Griffiths, Gareth (1994). “The Myth of Authenticity: Representation, Discourse and Social Practice”, in Tiffin and Lawson (eds.) (1994), 70-85.

Grode, Eric (2011). “Greek Tragedy and Revenge Through South African Eyes”, *The New York Times,* July 7, 2011. Available at: http://theater.nytimes.com/2011/07/08/theater/reviews/molora-at-ailey-citigroup-theater-review.html. Accessed on April 5, 2012.

Grotowski, Jerzy (1968). “American Encounter: interview with Grotowski by Schechner and Hoffman” in Grotowski (ed.) (1968), 243-54.

------ (ed.) (1968). *Towards a Poor Theatre,* Holstebro.

------ (1988). *Workcentre of Jerzy Grotowski – Centro di Lavoro di Jerzy Grotowski,* Pontedera, Italy.

Gunner, Liz (ed.) (1994). *Politics and Performance: Theatre, Poetry and Song in Southern Africa,* Johannesburg.

Gurr, A. (1992). *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642,* 3rd ed., Cambridge.

Guthrie, Tyrone (1956). Program, “Oedipus Rex”. Viewed at University of Oxford’s *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama*.

------ (1959). *A Life in the Theatre,* New York.

Hall, Edith (1989). *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition Through Tragedy,* Oxford.

------, Fiona Macintosh, and Oliver Taplin (eds.) (2000). *Medea in Performance, 1500- 2000,* Oxford.

------ (2004a). "Introduction: Why Greek Tragedy in the Late Twentieth Century?", in Hall, Macintosh, and Wrigley (eds.) (2004), 1-46.

------ (2004b). "Towards a Theory of Performance Reception", *Arion* 12, 51-89.

------, F. Macintosh, and A. Wrigley (eds.) (2004). *Dionysus Since 69: Greek Tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millenium,* New York and Oxford.

------ and Fiona Macintosh (2005). *Greek Tragedy and the British Theatre, 1660-1914,* Oxford.

------ and Stephe Harrop (eds.) (2010). *Theorising Performance: Greek Drama, Cultural History, and Critical Practice,* London.

Hall, Peter (1983). *Peter Hall's Diaries: The Story of a Dramatic Battle,* Ed. John Goodwin, London.

------ (2000). *Exposed by the Mask: Form and Language in Drama,* London.

Hardwick, L. et al. (eds.) (2000). *Theatre, Ancient and Modern: Selected Proceedings of the January Conference 1999: Theatre Ancient and Modern*, Milton Keynes. Available online at www.open.ac.uk/Arts/CC99/. Accesson on April 5, 2012.

------ (2003). *Reception Studies,* Oxford.

------ (2004). "Greek Drama and Anti-Colonialism: Decolonizing Classics", in Hall, Macintosh, and Wrigley (eds.) (2004), 219-42.

------ and Gillespie, C. (2007). *Classics in Post-Colonial Worlds,* Oxford.

------ and Christopher Stray (eds.) (2008). *A Companion to Classical Receptions,* Malden, MA and Oxford.

Harrison, Jane Ellen (1913). *Ancient Art and Ritual,* London.

------ (1912). *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion,* Cambridge.

Harrison, Tony (1981). *The Oresteia,* Trans. Tony Harrison, London.

Hartigan, Karelisa V. (1995). *Greek Tragedy on the American Stage: Ancient Drama in the Commercial Theater 1882-1994,* Westport, Conn.

Haslett, Moyra (2000). *Marxist Literary and Cultural Theories,* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire.

Hauptfleisch, T. (1997). *Theatre and Society in South Africa: Reflections in a Fractured Mirror,* Pretoria.

Haylin, Liam (2003). "Opera House Doesn't Fail in Portrayal of Historic Play". No date available. Hard copy viewed at University of Oxford's *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama*.

Hegel, G.W.F. (1835: 1975). *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art,* Trans. T.M. Knox, Oxford.

Hemming, Sarah (2008). "Greek Tragedy, The Xhosa Way", in *The Financial Times,* April 15, 2008.

Henrichs, Albert (1994). "'Why Should I Dance?': Choral Self-Referentiality in Greek Tragedy", *Arion* 3.1, 56-111.

Hewes, Henry (1954). "Triple 'En Tente,' Stratford, Ontario", *The Saturday Review,* July 31, 1954.

Higgins, Charlotte (2007). "The Cutting Edge", *The Saturday Guardian,* November 24, 2007.

Hoad, T. F. (1986). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology,* Oxford.

Hölderlin, Friedrich (1804: 2001). "Notes to Antigone", in Hölderlin (2001), Trans. David Constantine.

Hölderlin, Friedrich (2001). *Hölderlin's Sophocles: Oedipus and Antigone*, Trans. David Constantine, Highgreen, Tarset, Northunberland.

Holledge, J. and J. Tompkins (2000). *Women's Intercultural Performance,* London and New York.

Howarth, W.D. (1983). *Anouilh: Antigone, (Studies in French Literature No. 33),*London.

Hutcheon, Linda (2006). *A Theory of Adaptation,* New York.

Innes, Christopher (1995). "Theatre After Two World Wars", in John Russell Brown (ed.) (1995), 380-445.

Jeffery, A. (1999). *The Truth about the Truth Commission.* Braamfontein (Johannesburg).

Johnston, Kati (2010). "Here to Help: TV's Most Memorable Assistants", *MSN Entertainment.* Available at http://tv.msn.com/tv/galleryfeature/tvs-top-assistants/?silentchk=1&. Accessed on April 2, 2012.

Kaplan, Jon (2010). "Preview: If We Were Birds", *NOW Magazine*, Vol. 29, No. 33, April 15-22, 2010.

Kerr, Walter (1968). "'Come Dance with Me.' 'Who, Me?'". *The New York Times,* 16 June 1968, Section 2.

Kitzinger, Margaret Rachel (2008). *The Choruses of Sophokles' Antigone and Philoktetes: A Dance of Words*, Leiden and Boston.

Klein, Alvin. "Theater Review; Star-Crossed Lovers' Long Night in Verona", *The New York Times,* November 7, 1999. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/1999/11/07/nyregion/theater-review-star-crossed-lovers-long-night-in-verona.html. Accessed on April 2, 2012.

Kraus, Chris et al. (eds.) (2007). *Visualizing the Tragic: Drama, Myth, and Ritual in Greek Art and Literature,* Oxford.

Krummen, E. (1998). "Ritual und Katastrophe: Rituelle Handlung und Bildersprache bei Sophokles und Euripides", in Graf (ed.) (1998), 296-325.

Kuhn, Tom and David Constantine (2003). "Introduction" in Kuhn and Constantine (trans. and eds.) (2003), ix – xxv.

Kuhn, Tom and David Constantine (2003). "Editorial Notes" in Kuhn and Constantine (trans. and eds.) (2003), 219 – 222

Kuhn, Tom and David Constantine (trans. and eds.) (2003). *Bertolt Brecht Collected Plays, vol. 8,* London.

Kurke, Leslie (2007). "Visualising the Choral", in Kraus et al. (eds.) (2007)*,* 63 – 101.

Kurup, Shishir (2010). Interviewed by: Rich, A., May 7th 2010.

------ (2000). *An Antigone Story: A Greek Hijack,* unpublished script.

Kustow, Michael (2003). "Theatre of War", in *The Guardian,* January 7, 2003.

Lacan, Jacques (1997). *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis,* Trans. Dennis Potter, London and New York.

------ (1986). *Le séminaire, VII; L'Ethique de la psychanalyse,* Paris.

Landers, W. M. (1957). "Introduction", in Cocteau (1957), xi-xxxix.

Lech, Marcel Lysgaard (2011). "Review: David Kawalko Roselli, *Theater of the People: Spectators and Society in Ancient Athens*", *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, December 19, 2011.

Lehmann, Hans-Thies (1999: 2009). *Postdramatic Theatre,* Trans. Karen Jürs-Munby, Abingdon and New York.

Leonard, Miriam (2005). *Athens in Paris: Ancient Greece and the Political in Post-War French Thought,* Oxford.

Leslie, Struan (2010). "*Gesamtkunstwerk:* Modern Moves and the Ancient Chorus", in Macintosh (ed.) (2010), 411-19.

Ley, Graham (2007). *The Theatricality of Greek Tragedy: Playing Space and Chorus,* Chicago and London.

Libin, M. (2003). "Can the Subaltern be Heard? Response and Responsibility in South Africa's Human Spirit", *Textual Practice* 17.1, 119-140.

Lo, Jacqueline and Helen Gilbert (2002). "Toward a Topography of Cross-Cultural Theatre Praxis", *TDR* 46.3, 31-53.

Macintosh, Fiona (1997). "Tragedy in Performance: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Productions", in P.E. Easterling (ed.) (1997), 284-323.

------ et al. (eds.) (2005). *Agamemnon in Performance, 458 BC to AD 2004,* Oxford and New York.

------ (2008a). "Performance Histories", in Hardwick and Stray (eds.) (2008), 247 – 258.

------ (2008b). "An Oedipus for Our Times? Yeats's Version of Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannos*", in Revermann and Wilson (eds.) (2008), 524-47.

------ (2009). *Sophocles: Oedipus Tyrannus,* Oxford.

------ (2010). "Introduction", in Macintosh (ed.) (2010), 1-15.

------ (ed.) (2010). *The Ancient Dancer in the Modern World: Responses to Greek and Roman Dance,* Oxford.

------ (2011). "Irish *Antigone* and Burying the Dead", in Foley and Mee (2011), 90-103.

Malina, Judith (1984). *Sophocles' Antigone: Adapted by Bertolt Brecht; Based on the German Translation by Friedrich Hölderlin and Translated into English by Judith Malina,* New York.

Martin, Richard P. (2007). "Outer Limits, Choral Space", in Kraus et al. (eds.) (2007), 35–62.

McDonald, Marianne (1992). "The Atrocities of *Les Atrides:* Mnouchkine's Tragic Vision", *TheatreForum* 1.1, 12-19.

------ (2000). "Black Dionysus: Greek Tragedy from Africa", in Hardwick et al. (eds.) (2000). Available at: www.open.ac.uk/Arts/CC99/. Accesson on April 5, 2012.

McNamara, Brooks, Jerry Rojo and Richard Schechner (1975). *Theatres, Spaces, Environments: 18 Projects,* New York.

Meany, Helen (2003). "A Tragedy That Keeps Repeating", *The Irish Times,* February 8, 2003.

Mee, Erin B. and Helene P. Foley (2011). "Mobilizing Antigone", in Mee and Foley (eds.) (2011), 1-47.

Mee, Erin B. and Helene P. Foley (eds.) (2011). *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage,* Oxford.

Mezzabotta, M. (2000). "Ancient Greek Drama in the New South Africa", in Hardwick et al. (2000) (eds.). Available at: www.open.ac.uk/Arts/CC99/. Accessed April 5, 2012.

Meineck, Peter. "The Neuroscience of the Tragic Mask", *Arion* (third series) 19, 113-158.

Michelakis, Pantelis (2005). "Introduction: Agamemnons in Performance", in Macintosh et al. (eds.) (2005), 1-20.

Minaud, Marie-Françoise (2007). *Étude sur Jean Anouilh* Antigone, Paris.

Mittman, Barbara G. (1984). *Spectators On the Paris Stage in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Morley, Sheridan (1977). "Playing with Words", *The Sunday Times Magazine,* 28 August 1977.

Morris, Steven Leigh (2000). "Cause Without a Rebel: A Beautiful, Pointless Antigone Story", *LA Weekly,* August 18-24, 2000.

Müller, K. O. and Donaldson J. W. (1858). *A History of the Literature of Ancient Greece,* Vol. 1, London.

Mumford, Meg (2001). "Gestic Masks in Brecht's Theater: A Testimony to the Contradictions and Parameters of a Realist Aesthetic", in van Dijk (ed.) (2001), 142-71.

Murnaghan, Sheila (2005). "Women in Groups: Aeschylus' *Suppliants* and the Female Choruses of Greek Tragedy", in Pedrick and Oberhelman (eds.) (2005), 183–98.

Murray, Gilbert (1912). "Excursus on the Ritual Forms Preserved in Greek Tragedy", in Harrison, *Themis* (1912), 341-63.

Murray, Oswyn (1981). "The Drama of Justice", *The Times Literary Supplement,* December 11, 1981.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (1872: 1956). "The Birth of Tragedy" in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals,* Transl. Francis Golffing, New York.

Novick, Julius (1969). "Here's a God for Our Times." *The New York Times,* March 23, 1969, D11.

OED Online (2012). "complicity, n.". Available at: http://www.oed.com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/Entry/37715. Accessed June 25, 2012.

OED Online (2012). “complicit, adj.”. Available at: http://www.oed.com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/Entry/250771?redirectedFrom=complicit. Accessed June 25, 2012.

Oedipus Rex (1957). Dir. Tyrone Guthrie. Perf. Douglas Campbell, Eleanor Stuart, Robert Goodier, William Hutt, Donald Davis, Douglas Rain. Image Entertainment, 2002. DVD.

Osinski, Zbigniew (1991). “Grotowski Blazes the Trails: From Objective Drama to Ritual Arts”, *TDR* 35.1, 95-112.

O’Toole, Fintan (2003). “Antigone”, *The Irish Times,* February 26, 2003.

Palmer-Sikelianos, Eva (1993). *Upward Panic: The Autobiography of Eva Palmer-Sikelianos,* Ed. John P. Anton, Chur and Philadelphia.

Parker, Robert (2007). “Gilbert Murray and Greek Religion”, in Stray (ed.) (2007), 81-102.

Parker, Stephen (2008). “Brecht and *Sinn und Form*: Generating Cultural Capital in the Cold War” in Gillett and Weiss-Sussex (eds.) (2008), 239-59.

Pavis, Patrice (1992). *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture,* Trans. Loren Kruger, London.

------ (1996). “Introduction”, in Pavis (ed.) (1996), 1-21.

------ (ed.) (1996). *The Intercultural Performance Reader,* London.

Patterson, Michael (1994). “Brecht’s Legacy”, in Thomson and Sacks (eds.) (1994), 273-87.

Pedrick, Victoria and Steven M. Oberhelman (eds.) (2005). *The Soul of Tragedy: Essays on Athenian Drama,* Chicago.

Peter, John (2007). *The Times Online,* December 9, 2007.

------ (1995). “Women on the Edge”, *The Sunday Times,* 26 March 1995.

Peterson, William (2001). *Theater and the Politics of Culture in Contemporary Singapore,* Middletown, CT.

Pfister (1977: 1988). *The Theory and Analysis of Drama,* Trans. John Halliday, Cambridge.

Pickard-Cambridge, A. (1927). *Dithyramb, Tragedy and Comedy,* Oxford.

------(1988). *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens* (rev. J. Gould and D. M. Lewis), Oxford.

Pietropaolo, Domenico (ed.) (1999). *The Performance Text,* New York and Ottawa.

Pope, Karl Theodore (1966). *An Historical Study of the Stratford, Ontario Festival Theatre,* Diss., Wayne State University (Detroit, Michigan).

Porter, James (2008). “Reception Studies: Future Prospects”, in Hardwick and Stray (eds.) (2008)*,* 469-81.

Prendergast, Monica (2008). *Teaching Spectatorship: Essays and Poems on Audience in Performance,* Amherst, New York.

Preston-Dunlop, Valerie and Ana Sanchez-Colberg (2002). *Dance and the Performative: A Choreographical Perspective – Laban and Beyond,* London.

Pronko, Leonard Cabell (1961). *The World of Jean Anouilh,* Berkeley.

Quayson, Ato (2000). *Postcolonialism: Theory, Practice or Process?,* Cambridge.

------ (2012). “Introduction: Postcolonial Literature in a Changing Frame”, in Quayson (ed.) (2012), 1-29.

------ (ed.) (2012). *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature,* Vol. I and II, Cambridge.

Racine, Jean (1677: 1968). “Préface”, *Phèdre,* Ed. Jean Salles, 34-6.

Redmond, James (ed.) (1983). *Drama and Religion,* Cambridge.

Rehm, R. (2002). *The Play of Space: Spatial Transformation in Greek Tragedy,* Princeton and Oxford.

------ (2003). *Radical Theatre: Greek Tragedy and the Modern World,* London.

Revermann, Martin (2003). “Spatio-Temporal Dynamics in Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King”, University of Toronto Quarterly* 72, 2003, 789-800.

------ (2006). “The Competence of Theatre Audiences in Fifth- and Fourth-Century Athens”, *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 126, 99-124.

------ (2008). “The Appeal of Dystopia: Latching onto Greek Drama in the Twentieth Century”, *Arion* 16, 97-117.

------ and P. Wilson (eds.) (2008). *Performance, Iconography, Reception,* Oxford.

------ (Forthcoming). Billings, Budelmann, and Macintosh, F. (eds.) (2013).

“Reviews”, *The Actors Trade Weekly* (August 3 – August 9, 2000).

Rich, Frank (1988). “Review/Theater; A Musical of Sophocles and Pentecostalism”, *The New York Times,* March 25, 1988. Available at: http://theater.nytimes.com/mem/theater/treview.html?res=940DEEDB1F38F936A15750C0A96E948260. Accessed on April 5, 2012.

Riemer, Peter and Bernhard Zimmermann (eds.) (1998). *Der Chor im antiken und modernen Drama*, Stuttgart and Weimar.

Robinson, Annabel (2002). *The Life and Work of Jane Ellen Harrison,* Oxford.

Roesner, David (2003). *Theater als Musik : Verfahren der Musikalisierung in chorischen Theaterformen bei Christoph Marthaler, Einar Schleef und Robert Wilson*, Tübingen.

Rosen, Ralph M. and Joseph Farrell (eds.) (1993). *Nomodeiktes: Essays in Honor of Martin Ostwald,* Ann Arbor.

Rosenmeyer, T. G. (1993). "Elusory Voices: Thoughts about the Sophoclean Chorus", in Rosen and Farrell (eds.) (1993), 561-71.

Roselli, David (2011). *Theatre of the People: Spectators and Society in Ancient Athens,* Austin.

Rossi, Alfred (1977). *Astonish Us in the Morning: Tyrone Guthrie Remembered,* London.

Savage, Robert (2008). *Hölderlin after the Catastrophe,* New York.

Savage, Roger (2010). "Precursors, Precedents, Pretexts: The Institutions of Greco-Roman Theatre and the Development of European Opera", in Brown and Ograjenšek (eds.) (2010), 1-30.

Schechner, Richard (1966). "Approaches to Theory/Criticism", *The Tulane Drama Review* 10, 20-53.

------ (ed.) (1970). *The Performance Group: Dionysus in 69,* New York.

------ (1973). *Environmental Theatre,* New York.

------ (1976). "From Ritual to Theatre and Back", in Schechner and Schuman (eds.) (1976), 196-222.

------ and Mady Schuman (eds.) (1976). *Ritual, Play, and Performance: Readings in The Social Sciences/Theatre,* New York,

------ (1977). "From Ritual to Theatre and Back: The Structure/Process of the Efficacy-Entertainment Dyad (1974-1976)", in Schechner, *Essays on Performance Theory: 1970-1976,* New York, 63-98.

------ (1988). "From Ritual to Theater and Back: The Efficacy-Entertainment Braid", in Schechner, *Performance Theory,* New York and London, 106-52.

------ and Willa Appel (eds.) (1990). *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual,* Cambridge.

------ (1990). "Magnitudes of Performance", in Schechner and Appel (eds.) (1990), 19-49.

------ (1993). *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance,* London and New York.

------ (1996). "Interculturalism and the Culture of Choice: Richard Schechner interviewed by Patrice Pavis", in Pavis (ed.) (1996), 41-50.

------ (2003). "From Ritual to Theater and Back: The Efficacy-Entertainment Braid", in Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 2nd edition, London and New York, 112-169.

Schiller, Friedrich von (1803: 1962). *The Bride of Messina; or, The Enemy Brothers, A Tragedy with Choruses. William Tell. Demetrius; or, The blood Wedding in Moscow, a fragment*, Trans.Charles E. Passage, New York.

Schleef, Einar (1997). *Droge Faust Parsifal,* Frankfurt.

Schlegel, August Wilhelm (1809-11: 1876). *Lectures on Dramatic Art in Literature,* Trans. John Black, London.

Schmidt, Christina (2010). *Tragödie als Bühnenform: Einar Schleefs Chor-Theater*, Bielefeld.

Schmidt, Jochen (1994) (ed.). *Hölderlin: Sämtliche Werke und Briefe,* Frankfurt a. M.

Scodel, R. (ed.) (1993). *Theater and Society in the Classical World,* Ann Arbor.

Seaford, Richard (1994). *Reciprocity and Ritual: Homer and Tragedy in the Developing City State,* Oxford.

------ (1993). "Dionysos as Destroyer of the Household: Homer, Tragedy, and the Polis", in Faraone and Carpenter (eds.) (1993), 115-46.

Segal, Charles (1982). *Dionysiac Poetics and Euripides'* Bacchae, Princeton.

Segal, Erich (ed.) (1983). *Oxford Readings in Greek Tragedy,* Oxford

Segal, Robert (ed.) (1996). *Ritual and Myth: Robertson Smith, Frazer, Hooke, and Harrison*, New York.

Shephard, William Hunter (1991). *The Dionysus Group,* New York.

Shirley, Don (2000). "Ancient Politics for Our Time", *The Los Angeles Times,* July 23, 2000.

Silk, M. and J.P. Stern (1981). *Nietzsche on Tragedy,* Cambridge.

------ (ed.) (1996). *Tragedy and the Tragic,* Oxford and New York.

------ (1998a). "'Das Urproblem der Tragödie': Notions of the Chorus in the Nineteenth Century", in Riemer and Zimmermann (eds.) (1998), 195-226.

------ (1998b). "Style, Voice and Authority in the Choruses of Greek Drama", in Riemer and Zimmerman (eds.) (1998), 1-26.

Smethurst, Mae (2000). "The Japanese Presence in Ninagawa's *Medea*", in Hall, Macintosh, and Taplin (eds.) (2000), 191-216.

------ (2002). “Ninagawa’s Production of Euripides’ *Medea*”, *American Journal of Philology* 123, 1-34.

------ (2011). “The Ku Na’uka Theatre Company’s *Antigone* in Tokyo*”,* in Mee and Foley (eds.) (2011)*,* 221-34.

Smith, Emma (ed.) (2002). *King Henry V,* Cambridge.

Smith, Greg (2006). *Erving Goffman,* Abingdon, Oxon and New York.

Sommer, Elyse (2001). “A Curtain Up Review: Troilus and Cressida”, Available at: http://www.curtainup.com/troiluscressida.html. Accessed on July 19, 2010.

Sophocles, *Antigone.* Trans. and Ed. Hugh Lloyd-Jones (1998), Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA, and London.

Soyinka, Wole (1973). “The Bacchae of Euripides: A Communion Rite”, *Soyinka: Collected Plays,* Vol. 1, Oxford.

------ (1976). *Myth, Literature, and the African World,* Cambridge.

Sprague, Arthur Colby (1966). *Shakespeare and the Audience: A Study in the Technique of Exposition,* New York.

Stathaki, Aktina (2009). *Adaptation and Performance of Greek Drama in Post-Apartheid South Africa,* Diss., University of Toronto.

Steadman, Ian (1994). “Towards Popular Theatre in South Africa”, in Gunner (ed.) (1994), 11-34.

Steiner, George (1984). *Antigones,* Oxford.

------ (1979). *Antigones*, The Twelfth Jackson Knight Memorial Lecture. Delivered at the University of Exeter, 1979. Printed in Somerset.

Steinmeyer, Elke (2007). “Post-Apartheid Electra: *In the City of Paradise*”, in Hardwick and Gillespie (eds.) (2007), 102-118.

Steinweg, Reiner (1972). *Das Lehrstück. Brechts Theorie einer ästhetischen Erziehung,* Stuttgart.

Stern, Tiffany (2004). *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page,* London and New York.

------ (2009). *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England,* Cambridge.

Stone Peters, Julie (1995). “Intercultural Performance, Theatre Anthropology, and the Imperialist Critique: Identities, Inheritances, and Neo-Orthodoxies” in Gainor (ed.) (1995), 199-213.

------ (2008). “Jane Harrison and the Savage Dionysus: Archaeological Voyages, Ritual Origins, Anthropology, and the Modern Theatre”, *Modern Drama* 51, 1-41.

Storytellers' Theatre Company Website. No longer active. Available in hard copy at University of Oxford's *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama*.

Stray, Christopher (ed.) (2007). *Gilbert Murray Reassessed: Hellenism, Theatre, and International Politics,* Oxford.

Szalwinska, Maxie (2005). "The Red Ladies", *The Guardian,* June 13, 2005.

Szpajda, Stefan (2009). "South African Theatre in Montreal: Molora", *Midnight Poutine.* Available at: http://www.midnightpoutine.ca/theatre/2009/01/south_african_theatre_in_montreal_molora/ Accessed on April 30, 2012.

Taplin, Oliver (1978). *Greek Tragedy in Action,* London.

------ (1995). "Greek Theatre", in John Russell Brown (ed.) (1995), 13-48.

------ (1996). "Putting on the Dog: *Les Atrides* by Ariane Mnouchkine" (Review), *Arion* (third series) 4.1, 10-15.

------ (2001). "Masks in Greek Tragedy and in Tantalus", *Didaskalia* 5.2. Available at: http://www.didaskalia.net/issues/vol5no2/taplin.html. Accessed on September 25, 2011.

------ (2005). "The Harrison Version. *So long ago that it's become a song?*" in Macintosh et al. (eds.) (2005), 235-51.

Taxidou, Olga (2008). "Machines and Models for Modern Tragedy: Brecht/Berlau, Antigone-Model 1948", in Felski (ed.) (2008), 241-62.

Taylor, Paul (2007). "Pitiless and Perfect: The Art of War", *The Independent,* November 30, 2007.

Thomson, Peter and Glendyr Sacks (eds.) (1994). *The Cambridge Companion to Brecht,* Cambridge.

Thomson, Peter and Glendyr Sacks (eds.) (2006). *The Cambridge Companion to Brecht,* 2nd ed., Cambridge.

Tiffin, Chris and Alan Lawson (eds.) (1994). *De-scribing Empire: Post-colonialism and Textuality,* London.

Turner, Victor (1982). *From Ritual to Theatre*, New York.

------ (1990). "Are There Universals of Performance in Myth, Ritual, and Drama?" in Schechner and Appel (eds.) (1990), 8-18.

van Dijk, Maarten (ed.) (2001). *New Essays on Brecht: The Brecht Yearbook* 26, Detroit.

van Zyl Smit, Betine (2008). "Multicultural Reception: Greek Drama in South Africa in the Late Twentieth and Early Twenty-First Centuries", in Hardwick and Stray (eds.) (2008), 373-385.

------ (2010). "Orestes and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission", *Classical Receptions Journal,* 2.1, 114-35.

Varakis, Angeliki (2008). "'Body and Mask' in Performances of Classical Drama on the Modern Stage", in Hardwick and Stray (eds.) (2008), 259-273.

Vernant, Jean-Pierre (1990). *Mythe et Pensée chez les Grecs,* Paris.

------ and Pierre Vidal-Naquet (1986). *Mythe et tragédie en Grèce ancienne II*, Paris.

------ (1972: 1981). "Tensions and Ambiguities in Greek Tragedy", Trans. Janet Lloyd, in Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1972:1981), 6-27.

------ and Pierre Vidal-Naquet (1972: 1981). *Tragedy and Myth in Ancient Greece.* Trans. Janet Lloyd, Sussex and New Jersey.

Völker, Klaus (1971:1975), *Brecht Chronicle,* Trans. Fred Wieck, New York.

Wagner, C. (1978-80). *Cosima Wagner's Diaries,* Trans. G. Skelton, London.

Walstad, Alicia (2009). "Playing Puck: Tim Huey '10 Discusses 'Midsummer Night's' Character", *Hartwick College – News.* Available at: http://www.hartwick.edu/x28949.xml. Accessed on April 2, 2012.

Wardle, Irving (1981). "An Outline of Grandeur", *The Times,* November 30, 1981.

Weisstein, Ulrich (1973). "Imitation, Stylization, and Adaptation: The Language of Brecht's *Antigone* and its Relation to Hölderlin's version of Sophocles", *German Quarterly* 46, 581-604.

Wiles, David (1997). *Tragedy in Athens: Performance Space and Theatrical Meaning,* Cambridge and New York.

------ and Vervain, C. (2001). "The Masks of Greek Tragedy as Point of Departure for Modern Performance", *New Theatre Quarterly* 17, 254-72.

------ (2001). "Why did Greek Actors Wear Masks?", *Omnibus* 42, 27-9.

------ (2004a). "The Use of Masks in Modern Performances of Greek Drama", in Hall, Macintosh, and Wrigley (eds.) (2004), 245-63.

------ (2004b). "The Mask in Greek Tragedy", *Dioniso* 3, 206-13.

------ (2007). *Mask and Performance in Greek Tragedy,* Cambridge.

------ (2008). "The Poetics of the Mask in Old Comedy", in Revermann and Wilson (eds.) (2008), 374-92.

Williams, David (ed.) (1991). *Peter Brook and the Mahabharata: Critical Perspectives,* London and New York.

Williams, Raymond (1966: 2006). *Modern Tragedy,* New Edition, Ed. Pamela McCallum, Peterborough, Ontario.

Willett, John (ed.) (1964). *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic,* New York and London.

------ (1998). *Brecht in Context*, Revised Edition, London and New York.

Willson, Suzy and Helen Eastman (2010). "*Red Ladies:* Who are They and What do They Want?" in Macintosh (ed.) (2010), 420-30.

Wilson, Peter (2000). *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage*, Cambridge and New York.

Winkler, John J. and Froma I. Zeitlin (eds.) (1990). *Nothing to do with Dionysos? Athenian Drama in its Social Context,* Princeton.

Wise, Jennifer (2003). "Chapter One: The Ancient Theatre", in Wise and Walker (eds.) (2003), 1-7.

------ and Craig S. Walker (eds.) (2003). *The Broadview Anthology of Drama: Plays from the Western Theatre,* Peterborough, Ontario.

Wolf, Susan (1992). "Two Levels of Pluralism", *Ethics* 102, 785-98.

Woodcock, Matthew (2008). *Shakespeare,* Henry V: *A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism,* Hampshire and New York.

Woods, Byron (2010). "MoLoRa: The Independent Interview with Yael Farber", *Indyweek.com,* March 17, 2010. Available at: http://www.indyweek.com/artery/archives/2010/03/17/molora-the-independent-interview-with-yael-farber. Accessed on May 27, 2011.

Yeats, W. B. (1928: 1969). "Sophocles' *King Oedipus,* a Version for the Modern Stage" in Rajan (ed.) *Sophocles'* King Oedipus, Toronto.

------ (1966). *The Variorum Edition of the Plays of W. B. Yeats*, Ed. R. K. Alspach, London.

Zeitlin, Froma (1989). "Mysteries of Identity and Designs of the Self in Euripides' *Ion", PCPhS* 35, 144-97.

------ (1991). "Euripides' *Hekabe* and the Somatics of Dionysiac Drama", *Ramus* 20, 53-94.

------ (1993). "Staging Dionysos Between Thebes and Athens", in Faraone and Carpenter (eds.), (1993), 147-82.

------ (2004). "Dionysus in 69", in Hall, Macintosh, and Wrigley (eds.) (2004), 49-75.