

McDonald and McKinnon have aptly observed (1993, 233) that Michael Cacoyannis uses Euripides to fit modern times “from the civil war in Greece, to abuse of the colonels, to power corruption in the church, to Vietnam and revolution in L.A.” Furthermore, as McDonald has recognized (1991, 130), there exists an affinity between Cacoyannis' *Iphigenia* and his documentary *Attila 1974*, where he commemorates the invasion of Cyprus by the Turks in 1974. Indeed, the last film of Cacoyannis' trilogy finds many parallels in the intertwined history of Greece and Cyprus, especially with regard to the unsolved issue of the island's occupation, as Cacoyannis confesses, when asked about the relationship between *Iphigenia* and the Cyprus situation: “Every major crisis or conflict, every tragic situation that happens in the world can be related to Greek tragedy” (McDonald 1991, 167-68). The aim of the present paper is to pursue the gendered reading of the 1976 film, where I investigate how Iphigenia, an adolescent girl, offers up her body to save Greece from the ignominy of losing the (Trojan) War even before its inception. In Cacoyannis' cinematic vision, the body of Iphigenia, who under a pretext is to be offered to Achilles in marriage, is transformed into the body politic, upon which the victorious future of Argives is inscribed. By representing, reflecting, and mapping the much tortured island of Cyprus onto the body of Iphigenia, Cacoyannis offers us a darker version of Euripides' tragedy whereby one may ponder the ominous future of the violent Greek army, whose return is preemptively doomed.

From the outset of *Iphigenia*, we hear the army protesting for a solution (θέλουμε απόφαση), a slogan (ab)used by the powerful leaders and distorted into a catchphrase for liberating Greece from the ill-repute heaped on them by Eleni's abduction from Sparta. Agamemnon's proclamation “I speak as a Greek who above all I put Greece” or “Greece is more powerful than both of us” is eventually transformed into the certainty that out of the sacrificial victim “Greece will triumph” (θυσία, θυσία, να πάρουμε την Τροία). The only heroism is the victim's (McDonald 1983, 184), while Iphigenia consciously assumes the responsibility of helping the body politic's unity by surrendering to the powers of those high above. The film lends itself to such an interpretation, when we consider the colonels' irresponsible actions in putting forward Cyprus to a bloody sacrifice, just as Calchas synergistically colludes with a powerless Agamemnon for the girl's slaughter. Clogg (1992, 168) points out that the Greek junta was desperately seeking “to bolster the regime's popularity by bringing about a spectacular nationalist triumph, namely the union of Cyprus with Greece,” which the Cypriot president Makarios was opposing, only to find himself exiled after a coup. Iphigenia's disappearance and envelopment into the cloud at the end of the film foreshadows Cacoyannis' bleak landscape (cf. Michelakis 2001 on cinematic landscapes) concerning a solution: divine intervention is absent, and the regeneration of violence becomes the most viable way for revenge (cf. Moschovakis 1995, 43 and Michelakis 2006, 223-24).