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YORGOS LANTHIMOS' THE KILLING OF A SACRED DEER: CONTEMPORARY RECEPTION OF EURIPIDES' IPHIGENIA IN AULIS

Ancient Greek subjects preserve their relevance in our times through their timeless, profound and comprehensive consideration of the human soul and interpersonal relations, which remain unchanged throughout the centuries in accordance with human nature. Euripides' tragedy Iphigenia in Aulis has not been exploited often by later writers and film makers who have focused mainly on the murder of the King of Mycenae, Agamemnon, and the destiny of the dynasty of the Atreidae in accordance with Aeschylus' trilogy. Nevertheless, one of the main reasons for the murder of Agamemnon by his wife Clytemnestra is his sacrifice of their daughter Iphigenia, the story of which is told by Euripides in his tragedies Iphigenia in Aulis and Iphigenia in Tauris. In Yorgos Lanthimos' film The Killing of a Sacred Deer (2017) the main character Steven, just like Agamemnon, is informed of the will of the gods who demand sacrifice to be given. The carefully considered reasons which led Agamemnon and Steven to face an inevitable choice highlight their common character features, with hubris the decisive one among them. Comparison of the texts under analysis shows that acceptance of the inevitability of the situation by the families of the main characters develops through the classical stages from denial to understanding that nothing else depends on them. And while in Euripides' tragedy the plot device of a "deus ex machina" is exploited, as the gods are satisfied with the acceptance of the inevitability of sacrifice, in the film one of the members of the family actually dies in order for order to be restored, because a murder presupposes atonement through the blood of another. This reception of Euripides' tragedy is of particular interest because Yorgos Lanthimos is Greek by origin who at a certain moment of his career decided to move away from his native Greek space and start creating films for a more general Western audience. This paper analyses how, in this post-modernist multimodal film text expressive means from Ancient Greek theatre are combined with elements of modern cinema.

Keywords: reception of Greek Antiquity, Euripides, Iphigenia in Aulis, Yorgos Lanthimos, The Killing of a Sacred Deer.

Introduction. Greek antiquity, having provided the historical foundations for much of European culture, remains a potent source of artistic inspiration, often provoking contemporary European playwrights and film makers to reflect afresh on ancient drama with its timeless visions of family, society and state. In the 20th century Greek myths provided Hollywood with material for spectacular epics that brought aspects of Greek antiquity closer to ordinary people for the first time. And so in the modern era the questions and dilemmas posed by ancient authors have continued to prove highly relevant in so far as human nature remains as it always was and people find themselves again and again in the same situations in terms of their personal relations and social and political connections. To give just a few examples, in Kyiv in recent years there have been several theatrical performances based on Ancient Greek tragedies, namely *Antigone* by the Koleso Theatre (2016), *MEDEA/MEDIA* (2017), termed a "metatheatrical" performance by its creators and presented in a revised version in 2019 by the Molodyy Theatre, *The Oresteia* (2019), an *épatage* performance in which according to its creators "modern technologies met with modern people to create a new modern myth", and a just premiered *Oedipus* (2023) in the Teatr na Podoli. Similarly, elsewhere in Europe and in the US a number of writers and auteurs have addressed the story of the House of Atreus, "a profound meditation on the nature of crime and punishment, innocence and guilt, vengeance, justice, good government and the relationship between humankind, the gods and the world around them" [20, p. 1] as presented in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, "the only classical Greek trilogy to survive (almost) complete" [20, p. 1].

Research methodology. The reception and exploitation of Ancient Greek myths in modern literature and cinema is also a regular object of critical consideration, and scholars often focus on the interpretation of the ancient characters in their new circumstances, investigating how similar or different they are, how a writer or director perceives and adapts an original character or work. For example, according to Kiberd [11] Joyce in his *Ulysses* refers to the myth of Odysseus to speculate on the

origin and consequences of the First World War, while Paul [16] analyses the many faces of Penelope presented in the Italian film *Ulysses* (1954). A number of modern writers have made reference to the story of Agamemnon and his murder by his wife Clytemnestra, principally in relation to Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, though Agamemnon is also the main character of Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*. The corresponding academic analyses typically reflect on "how the enduring preoccupation with one of the great tragedies of ancient Greece sheds light on the approaches to revenge and atonement in the modern world" [21, p. 161], but with a new emphasis on the reaction of a wife and mother to her husband killing their daughter. Clytemnestra's primary motivation is usually considered to be her husband's sacrifice of their daughter [20, p. 4], but in fact researchers now generally agree that the reasons why Agamemnon must die are more complex [20, p. 1].

This paper investigates the contemporary reception of Ancient Greek beliefs regarding revenge and atonement in the modern world but considers Agamemnon's killing of his daughter in terms of the revenge of the goddess Artemis. Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis* has not enjoyed a great deal of artistic and critical reflection, being retold by Jean Racine in the 17th century and then by the Greek film directors Michael Cacoyannis (Mihalis Kakogiannis) in 1977 and Yorgos Lanthimos in 2017. Cacoyannis in his film *Iphigenia* presents the story in a traditional Greek setting of the sea and ancient ruins, although views it "through the prism of political events in Modern Greece and his native home island of Cyprus" (a military junta in Greece of 1967–1974 and Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974) [4, p. 35]. Cacoyannis' *Iphigenia* turns into "a modern Greek-Cypriot heroine" [4, p. 40], "symbolises Cyprus" [4, p. 36]. Lanthimos in his film *The Killing of a Sacred Deer* exploits the plot of the tragedy to create a new basis for his vision of modern society's problems, combining the visual language of European and American cinema with the expressive resources of Ancient Greek theatre. This paper focuses on the perception of vengeance by Lanthimos and the way this Greek director presents it to his European and American audience.

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Research results. *The Killing of a Sacred Deer* is the second film of Yorgos Lanthimos' so-called British period. It was made in 2017 in the UK, Ireland and the USA, starring Nicole Kidman and Colin Farrell. Lanthimos started his career in Greece as a director of advertisements and video clips. But in 2011 he declared that there was no possibility of producing films in Greece, as people "self-sacrifice for the sake of the Art" [22], and presented his first English-speaking film *Dogtooth*, which "The Guardian" newspaper characterized as the beginning of the Weird Wave of Greek Cinema that has changed it dramatically [18]. But it also opened for Lanthimos the doors to international cinema production.

Just like the other films of the Greek Weird Wave that mainly question the value of the family as an institution [22], in *The Killing of a Sacred Deer* we see a modern family in crisis. Externally they are successful and prosperous, living in a beautiful house of a kind we typically see in the leaflets of upmarket real-estate agencies, with prestigious jobs, nice kids, etc.: but it is just a façade behind which there is emptiness, a formality without life.

The title of the film may not take its viewers to the relevant myth immediately. But at some point the auteur helps them by mentioning the essay of the main character's daughter on *Iphigenia in Aulis*, graded A+, excellent. The fact that the author of this Ancient Greek tragedy, Euripides, is well known for his enduring interest to family drama and for depicting people 'realistically' in that context may help to explain why Lanthimos chose to refer to this work specifically.

Euripides' tragedy *Iphigenia in Aulis* dated 407 B.C. is one of the versions of what happened before the Greek army was to set sail for Troy, particularly regarding Iphigenia [7]. To remind, Agamemnon, the King of Mycenae, promised his brother Menelaus to stand with him, if anything happened to his wife Helen. When she was taken away to Troy, Agamemnon, fulfilling his promise, gathers the army. While waiting in Aulis for winds to launch their expedition, Agamemnon goes hunting and kills a deer, an animal sacred to the goddess Artemis. Incensed with Agamemnon, she demands that Agamemnon sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia if they want to sail. Agamemnon asks his wife Clytemnestra to bring Iphigenia to Aulis, claiming he is going to marry her to Achilles.

As in the tragedy so in the film, we have a family consisting of a father, a mother and two children, an older daughter and a younger son. Agamemnon had two more daughters, but in Euripides' version of the story only her brother Orestes, who comes to Aulis with Iphigenia, has a role. So the father in the film, Steven, corresponds to Agamemnon, the mother Anna to Clytemnestra, the daughter Kim to Iphigenia, and the son Bob to Orestes.

Euripides is often regarded as the first Ancient Greek dramatist to focus primarily on the inner transformation of a character. In this respect *Iphigenia in Aulis* is unique for its time in its emphasis on the portrayal of the inner world of its heroine. Unlike in the tragedy, however, the main focus in the film is on Agamemnon=Steven. In the tragedy Agamemnon learns about the will of the gods regarding the sacrifice of his daughter from the prophet Calchas. In the film, when his son Bob is paralysed, Steven is informed by a teenager called Martin that his family will suffer from mysterious and horrendous symptoms until he chooses one member to sacrifice; otherwise all of them will die. First they will become paraplegic, then lose their appetite, and finally, when their eyes start bleeding, they will have only several hours to live. And they will have to undergo all of this because of Martin's father's death during an operation several years earlier, when Steven, who is a surgeon, was

drinking heavily and had undertaken the operation under the influence of alcohol.

Here we see a clear parallel between the tragedy and the film. The cause of both deaths is basically the same – vanity, or human hubris. Even the names of the main characters speak for themselves. The name *Agamemnon* is a compound meaning 'very persistent, steadfast'. Steven is a name of Greek origin. The Greek correspondent name *Στέφανος* is derived from the word *στεφάνι* meaning 'a wreath, a crown' and is connected with the verb *στέφειν* meaning 'to wreath'.

It has sometimes been argued that Euripides believed that any passion if not resisted can lead a person to tragedy and even death. Agamemnon openly speaks of his superiority as an archer over the goddess Artemis, kills the animal she considers sacred, and later, longing to consolidate his power, sacrifices his own daughter [2, p. 9]. Steven considers himself such a brilliant heart surgeon that he imagines he can operate successfully on Martin's father while drunk, and then later kills one member of his family. In this respect, we cannot but mention a comment by R. Goodkin that "Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis* is a play about order, or rather about two orders: a familial order and a heroic order which is meant to protect or insure it" [9, p. 84]. Agamemnon, in order to become a hero in the forthcoming war, first has to be strong enough to violate familial order [9, p. 85]. Steven initially behaves as a hero, considering himself strong enough to operate while drunk, and then is faced with the inevitable fatal choice undermining his familial order. In the tragedy the parents are expected just to accept the necessity of the situation and agree to the sacrifice, thus violating their familial connection with their daughter, but Iphigenia is in fact successfully replaced with a deer and remains alive (through Euripides' favourite technique of introducing a *deus ex machina*). Steven, however, has to repay the loss of a member of one family with a member of his own family, who eventually dies. Thus Goodkin's conclusion that "the play is based not only on an order to kill..., but also on one order "killing" another, the heroic order ultimately establishing its hegemony over the familiar order" [9, p. 86] is also applicable to the film under investigation.

Martin, who informs Steven but can also control the process as presented in the film, seems to be not just a messenger, but to resemble one of the lesser gods, corresponding in this respect to Artemis. In the ancient Greek construction of divinity it is generally agreed that there are three cornerstones, namely immortality, anthropomorphism and power [10, p. 37]. Artemis, depicted usually with bow, arrows, and a deer, is the goddess of hunting, and "a stern mistress of wild animals...quick to punish all who challenge or insult her in any way" [17, p. 213]. In a similar way we may say that Martin also has his sphere of influence within which "his power is unchallenged and absolute" [10, p. 36] as a symbolic guarantor of the social and physical order [7, p. 11]. Just like Artemis (and other Ancient Greek gods) he has the power to intervene and to punish so that order is restored. His divine power is neither explained nor questioned [not immediately] but simply taken for granted [10, p. 35]. In both cases we speak of the life of a living being, a deer and a man, and of human intervention in their lives leading to their deaths. Steven's guilt is not merely that someone died on the operating table but is to be found in his lack of respect for the seriousness of his duties, his irreverence towards the mystery of life. We should add here that Steven, as all the graduates of medical institutions in the US, has taken a professional oath. It is not the original

Hippocratic Oath, but one of its compulsory obligations refers to non-maleficence [5]. In this respect we find Steven violating his oath to do no harm to his patients, he profanes the temple of medicine (science). As a result, Martin, like Artemis, demands a 'cosmic' punishment for his disrespect and retribution, reciprocity for the harm caused in order to restore the ordained order, the proper balance of things. Artemis is known as "an irascible punisher of mortals" [17, p. 215], "a vengeful, capricious, dangerous deity" [17, p. 216]. Martin also demands blood. He presents to Steven only two options for how he can restore this order, this balance: either one member of the family must die or the whole family, with no further option of repentance or compunction. Here Lanthimos is faithful to the spirit of Ancient Greek tragedy: before the Christian era, a sin cannot simply be redeemed or forgiven, therefore Steven has no choice but to obey.

There is no option either of admitting his guilt, though Steven in fact does not even try to do this. Until the end of the story he instead rejects his guilt, his fault during the operation. When his wife asks him directly, he answers that surgeons never make mistakes; it is anaesthetists who make them. Steven interprets the demand for retribution as his fate, as the product of external not internal factors. He rejects Anna's suggestion that Bob's condition may be psychosomatic, i.e. internal, just as he rejects the possibility of the existence of some divine power, searching instead for a rational explanation. Before his punishment is announced, Steven meets Martin and gives him presents out of pity for his lack of a father, but he does not regret his earlier behaviour or even feel sorry that it was he himself who deprived him of his father. Martin on the other hand does say that he feels sorry for Steven.

The characters in both the tragedy and the film pass through the classical stages of facing up to the inevitable. After denial and attempts to find out what is wrong in order to fix it, they move first to anger and hysteria, after which a bargaining process follows leading finally to acceptance of the situation.

The stage of bargaining is the most vivid. It should be mentioned that "a victim's voluntary participation was an important part of Greek sacrificial ideology, which stressed that the victim was pleased to go up to the altar, sometimes could even hardly wait to be sacrificed" [6, p. 30]. That's why bargaining is of importance in the tragedy, and Lanthimos preserves this idea in the film as well. The families never gather together to discuss the situation, but each member of them speaks individually to Agamemnon/Steven trying to earn favour. Iphigenia undergoes a transformation from a young girl asking her father not to kill her into a heroine declaring that she is eager to die for the sake of the future of her homeland. Bob crawls up to his father to say he is going to water the flowers, and cuts his hair to placate Steven, who at the beginning of the film expresses dislike of its length. Clytemnestra agrees to the arguments of her daughter but holds a grudge against Agamemnon (and then kills him when he comes back from Troy). Anna admits the rightness of the imposition of punishment but though she shows her respect for Martin by kissing his feet and later letting him go, she does not demonstrate any readiness to sacrifice herself. Anna insists that she should stay alive because she can give birth to one more child. Steven seems to be of the same opinion, and even goes to school to ask the principal which of his two children he prefers, "which is the best", as a basis for making his decision about which to sacrifice.

Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, just like Steven and Anna, face "the harness of necessity" (Aeschylus,

Agamemnon). Agamemnon may have the individual freedom to choose, but he also has his duty as the leader of the expedition, which comes at the price of his daughter's life. He even thought of saving her but seeing the enraged army eager for victory and afraid they may kill his entire family, he finally decides to proceed with the sacrifice. Steven is obliged to kill one member of his family and despite the possibility of choosing who to kill, he decides instead to pull away from what is happening and leave everything to fate. Just like the heroes of Ancient Greek tragedies, the characters of the film are appalled by their situation but they do eventually bring a lamb to the slaughter, with the difference that in the film the sacrifice is random: Steven spins in a circle with a hat over his eyes and shoots randomly. We could explain this as a result of Steven's psychological state of perplexity, confusion because of the awful things happening. But it is just as likely that he admits the failure of science before the supernatural, of a comprehensible world before an incomprehensible one, accepts the unexplainable, the inevitable and is eager to put an end to the story in order to move on. There is no inner metamorphosis, his life and the life of his family remain within the framework of the 'cosmic' law: sacrifice made, with order, justice and equity restored. And he does not even have to beg for a pardon; they all just start afresh with a clean slate, with a new beginning as Martin says. At the end we see the family at a dinner in the place where Steven ate with Martin at the beginning of the film. Martin walks in, looks at the family, and leaves, leaving them be. A pure Ancient Greek tragic catharsis: a contemplation of how the principles of the universe, beyond human comprehension, can manifest themselves.

Unlike in the tragedy, where Artemis substitutes a deer for the girl at the altar so that human sacrifice is not "carried out to the bloody end" [6, p. 34] taking place by its mere acceptance [9, p. 85], in the film we do have to deal with the killing of a human being. Lanthimos in the 21st century kills an innocent human being, not a deer, nor even the family dog, because that is apparently how fate works for him. The necessary balance must be restored despite the usual insistence of modern philosophy that a human being governs his/her own destiny. (It is perhaps worth mentioning another modern parallel here, that in the *Game of Thrones* Stannis Baratheon similarly sacrifices his daughter to a sort of goddess in order to prevent his army, stuck without food in the cold region, from dying, but in vain).

In this respect we may say the film illustrates the kind of dichotomy we see between the Old and New Testament regarding the roles of justice and mercy. In modern times, the ancient worldview and the ideas of Ancient Greek writers clash with the Christian perception and interpretation of the human life. In archaic times God is omnipresent not as a bearer of good news but as the bringer of retribution for sins. Nowadays, rightly or wrongly, we like to imagine that we are free to choose our own way. But when something happens that makes you feel powerless or that you are the guilty party, you may still be ready to beg the heavens and make any sacrifice.

Lanthimos brilliantly uses the visual and auditory resources of cinematic language to convey the messages highlighted above. In his multimodal film text the traditions of the Ancient Greek theatre are intertwined with the traditions of creating suspense in contemporary Western cinema. Visually, Lanthimos highlights the helplessness of human beings against supreme external forces, the supernatural, with specific camera angles and panoramic sweeps (Fig. 1). Lack of vitality and the pretence of a lovely family are shown through schematic, theatrical movements, distracted and abstract dialogues, long pauses.



Fig. 1. Bob and Anna at the hospital. Photo credit: imdb.com

The white colour of Bob's face with his bleeding eyes (Fig. 2) goes along with the light, neutral colours of the interior of the house and of the hospital. On the one hand this allows the director to stress the idea of the senseless,

empty life the characters live, and on the other functions as a blank canvas against which we can see clearly the dominant colour of life, namely red, which in the film is almost a separate character in its own right.



Fig. 2. Bob's eyes bleeding. Photo credit: https://cinemorgue.fandom.com/wiki/Cinemorgue_Wiki

The film opens with the image of a pulsating heart undergoing a (real) operation, after which we see surgical gloves being dumped in the trash. Later we understand that it is about the life of the main character, the heart surgeon, whose character is revealed through his attitude to his job: when the operation is over, taking off his blooded gloves, he washes his hands and consigns a patient to his fate rejecting any further responsibility for it. It must be mentioned here that in the text of the tragedy, Euripides, when referring to the sacrifice, uses the word *σφάζω* meaning 'to butcher, to slaughter, with something sharp like a knife', which obviously presupposes bleeding. He also uses many words cognate with *blood* [1]. For Ancient Greeks bleeding was very important during the ceremony of sacrifice and Lanthimos preserves this, adding touches of red in a rather absurd but impressive way, as with Bob's appearance when his eyes are bleeding. It is also picked up by Martin eating spaghetti with ketchup when speaking with Anna, and by the ketchup poured on the food in the final scene, a sort of confirmation that blood has been spilled, the necessary sacrifice made. Besides Martin presents a knife as a gift to Steven when informing him that the time has come.

White and red are also dominant colours within hospitals, and one of the reasons Lanthimos decides to have most things happening inside a hospital, and to make all his characters either doctors or patients, may be that

Herr, unser Herrscher, dessen Ruhm
In allen Landen herrlich ist!
Zeig uns durch deine Passion,
Dass du, der wahre Gottessohn,
Zu aller Zeit,
Auch in der größten Niedrigkeit,
Verherrlicht worden bist!

ancient Greeks considered theatrical performances an important element of therapy. For example, the Ancient Greek theatre of Epidauros is a part of the Asclepieion, the huge Ancient Greek healing complex where diseases were cured. However cruel the film is, it eventually offers catharsis and as in the times of Euripides, such purification and release was possible only through suffering.

Lanthimos is in fact loyal to many of the traditions of Ancient Greek theatre. Even though there is no separate group of people acting as the Chorus, something analogous is still present, accompanying the events as in Euripides rather than participating in the solution of the conflict [2, p. 11], and is in fact rather eloquent. The "startling frames / shots of a real-life open-heart surgery" [19] at the beginning of the film are accompanied by Franz Schubert's *Stabat Mater D.383* with the opening chorus which actually provides a resume of the film: a mother in pain looks at her bleeding son (*Jesus Christus schwebet am Kreuze! Blutig sank sein Haupt herab, blutig in des Todes Nacht. Jesus Christ hangs on the cross. His bleeding head hangs down in the blood of the night of death*). Then their daughter Kim falls because of paralysed legs at the moment when she sings in the choir *The Carol of the Bells* (by the Ukrainian composer Leontovych) (despite the fact it is summer), and at the end of the film we hear the *Johannes-Passion* chorus *Herr, unser Herrscher BWV 245* by J. S. Bach:

Lord, thou our Governor, thou,
whose Glory in every nation glorious is!
Show us through this thy Passion,
That thou, the very Son of God,
At all times,
E'en in the greatest depths of woe,
Most glorious art become!

By choosing these particular pieces of music Lanthimos intertwines Ancient Greek tragedy and the modern, Western European cultural space. Despite the fact that Lanthimos works with Ancient Greek material, he relies as a film maker chiefly on European and American cinematic means, which can be interpreted as a desire to "intentionally repress signs of Greekness and utilise instead an allegorical and oblique storytelling style with widely understood rather than culturally specific, references and archetypal conflicts" [15, p. 183].

A 'pure' form of tragedy can be said to have existed in Ancient Greece and perhaps again in the Renaissance, but in the modern world tragedy may evolve as a kind of tragic farce. Lanthimos, a Greek director-auteur who has managed to take his place in English-speaking cinema with its potentially huge budgets and superstars, forges a balance between art-house creation and ambitious thriller, imitating many famous directors of the horror genre. The result is a very controversial film, a tragic farce with grotesque elements prevailing (like crawling crippled children).

The conflict between 21st-century rationality and ancient notions of the inexplicable and fate, a "clash between the ancient and the modern, the farcical and the fearsome" [12] "pushes an audience to the limits of unease" [3] (as with the paralysed children crawling on the floor). In Cannes, where the film was awarded a prize for the best scenario, some members of the audience boomed, while others gave it an ovation. In Kyiv, after the showing of the film, which opened the annual New British Festival of 2017, there was just silence and darkness. It's a film to watch once, but its aftertaste is long-lasting.

This existential choice of the Greek auteur to relocate to London and pursue his career as a British director on the one hand demanded from him the 'killing' of his Greekness as a 'sacred deer' on the altar of international recognition. For the last 10 years he has lived mainly in London. He does admit that the restrictions he faced in Greece, like the language, lack of money, tradition and culture, helped him to find out who he is, but cinema production is a complicated and expensive art and he says he needed to move on despite the fact that in Greece he is often considered an ambassador of Greek cinema abroad. [23]

After *The Killing of a Sacred Deer* Lanthimos has worked with British history and has produced a very successful film *The Favourite* (2018), which received many awards, including an Oscar (Olivia Colman who played Queen Anne won the Best Actress Academy Award).

In 2022 Lanthimos has presented his new short film *Βληχή/Bleat*, produced in Greece with an international cast and grounded in traditional Greek culture. Speaking to journalists he said that it is good to preserve some things but in a liberating not a didactic way. Tradition, history and such things can provide inspiration, without people becoming their slaves.

In this way we somehow come to the conclusion that the fascination and complicated life of a person who leaves for abroad to do something, is not unequivocal. Still some distance is necessary so that you could evaluate some things and I think that in the end this cycle is indispensable. [24]

Conclusions. The comparative analysis of the original tragedy by Euripides and the film by Lanthimos reveals the postmodernist character of the multimodal film text with the auteur's ironic blending of the expressive means inherent in the two different epochs, the Ancient Greek and the modern Western world. Intertextual references to the original work are enhanced with elements of magic realism, where inexplicable, supernatural forces influence human beings in an unspecified space and time. This duality

comprises thus the main thread of the auteur's belief that science is not omnipotent and that the modern world lacks effective means for persuading people to obey the 'rules' of the world they once were given. Application of the Ancient Greek matrix of world perception to the modern Western world view reveals the improbability of modern people finding happiness, as even death seems unable to prevent them from breaching the ultimate laws established when the world was created. On the other hand, this duality reflects the state of the auteur himself. He is destined to destroy that "familial order", his ties with his native Greek world, in his heroic pursuit of international recognition, but his traditional culture still prevails. Further research into Lanthimos' and other Greek directors' perception of the world, their Greek worldview, will focus on their choice of expressive means and the analysis of the existential choices and decisions of their characters.

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"УБИВСТВО СВЯЩЕННОГО ОЛЕНЯ" ЙОРГОСА ЛАНТИМОСА: СУЧАСНА РЕЦЕПЦІЯ "ІФІГЕНІЇ В АВЛІДІ" ЕВРИПІДА

Античні сюжети не втрачають актуальності й нині завдяки своєму позачасовому глибинному та всеохопному розбору людської душі і стосунків між людьми, які впродовж століть залишаються незмінними, бо така людська природа. До трагедії Евріпіда "Іфігенія в Авліді" пізніші митці зверталися нечасто, фокусуючись переважно на вбивстві мікенського царя Агамемнона та долі династії Атридів відповідно до трилогії Есхіла. Тим не менш однією з основних причин вбивства Агамемнона його дружиною Клітемнестрою якраз і є принесення ним у жертву їхньої дочки Іфігенії, історію якої розказує Евріпід у своїх трагедіях "Іфігенія в Авліді" та "Іфігенія в Тавриді". У фільмі Йоргоса Лантимоса "Убивство священного оленя" (2017) головний герой Стівен подібно до Агамемнона дізнається про волю богів, які вимагають принесення жертви. Розглянуті причини, через які Агамемнон і Стівен постають перед неминучим вибором, вказують на їхні подібні риси характеру, вирішальною з яких є зарозумілість. Порівняння текстів показує, що процес прийняття факту неминучості для родин героїв проходить класичні фази від заперечення до усвідомлення, що від них уже нічого не залежить. І якщо у трагедії Евріпіда акцентовано прийом "бога з машини", оскільки для богів достатньо самого факту усвідомлення та прийняття неминучості жертви, то у фільмі один із членів сім'ї помирає, оскільки має бути відновлений порядок і у відповідь на вбивство має пролитися кров іншої людини. Особливо цікавою ця рецепція трагедії Евріпіда є тому, що Йоргос Лантимос грек за походженням, але в певний момент своєї кар'єри він вирішив відступити від грецького простору і почав створювати фільми саме для західної аудиторії. У цій розвідці розглядається як у цьому постмодерністському мультимодальному кіно-тексті поєднано експресивні засоби, якими послуговувався давньогрецький театр, із елементами сучасного кіно. Зокрема, невизначеність щодо часу та простору і дія вищих сил, яка сприймається як належна, характерні для магічного реалізму.

Ключові слова: рецепція античності, Евріпід "Іфігенія в Авліді", Йоргос Лантимос, "Убивство священного оленя".