

Essay on the CDG (by Martin Boyne):

In 1998 the Classics Department at Trent celebrated its 30th anniversary. To mark that occasion the Department produced a volume of essays authored by former and current members, including one by Martin Boyne on the history and aims of the Classics Drama Group from 1993 to 1998. With Martin's permission we reproduce this essay below.

M.R. Boyne, "Old and New Directions: 'translating' Euripides on a modern stage", in J.P. Bews et al. (edd.), *Celebratio: thirtieth anniversary essays at Trent University* (Peterborough 1998) 122-33

One of the great and well recognized challenges for the director of ancient plays is to strike a balance between preserving the conventions of the original and adapting to fit those of the modern theatre. Greek tragedy presents particular challenges in this regard: few ancient theatrical conventions remain current today; audience expectations of theatre have changed (we presume) since ancient times; and the demands placed upon the ancient and modern actor are completely different. Yet what has endured is the notion of the "great theme": the key issues raised by Aeschylus, Sophokles, and Euripides are uncannily similar to the "great themes" of today, e.g., war, human nature, justice, religion, and relationships between men and women. Euripides addresses all of these themes, and more, in a way which strikes the first-time reader as amazingly "modern". He is, therefore, arguably the most accessible of the canonical three tragic poets, and it is for this reason more than any other that I have focused on him in my productions with the Classics Drama Group (CDG) at Trent University.¹

My goal in this paper is to illustrate some of the techniques with which the CDG has addressed the modern-day challenges of ancient drama. It will become clear, through the following collection of thoughts and observations on producing Greek be sacrificed for the sole purpose of pleasing a modern audience unaccustomed to the unorthodox nature of the ancient stage. But just how can we assess or define "authenticity"? Therein lies the challenge.²

The Classics Drama Group began in 1993 as an extra-curricular activity housed within the (then) Department of Classical Studies at Trent University. The first production, Euripides' *Hippolytos*, was produced for a three-night run in March 1994. The enthusiastic response from the audience (coupled with **my** own surprise that the endeavour succeeded) led to a second and more ambitious production, Euripides' *Elektra*, in March 1995, and so the tradition began. Euripides' *Medea*, in February 1996, was the next production, followed by the group's first departure from Euripides, Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, in November of

the same year. The group returned to Euripides with *Hecuba* in March 1997, and the 1998 production of *Bacchae* is in rehearsal at the time of writing, its two-weekend run scheduled for January and February. I have directed all six productions, with co-direction provided by C.W. "Toph" Marshall (*Medea*)³ and Arlene Allan (*Bacchae*), who, along with Ian Begg, was instrumental in the early productions too. All the actors are amateurs, being drawn primarily from first-year classics courses; indeed, a first-year student has played the lead role in all six productions.

The group's rather unplanned origins dictate that many of the reflections on the first production, *Hippolytos*, are just that -- reflections. Since I had no idea that the group would continue for as long as it has, the first production was literally "thrown together" with little thought to the problems of theatrical conventions, staging, or audience expectations. Even so, there is much in the first production which served as the foundation for future productions, and so I plan to use certain elements from *Hippolytos* as a framework for this exploration of the five Euripidean tragedies (with an occasional passing reference to Prometheus) produced by the CDG. Beginning with a discussion of the acting space used for the plays, I will proceed to discuss the treatment of the chorus, which I see as one of the most challenging (and interesting) aspects of the entire process. In addition, I will examine the "authenticity" of costuming and music, illustrating that, clearly, attempts at authenticity cannot begin to replicate the experience of the Greek theatre; our theatre has seating for 50 rather than 17,000; the plays are not produced only once as part of a religious or civic festival, but rather for a set number of nights, as is the twentieth-century norm; and many of the audience are not as intimately familiar either with the myths, or with the conventions of tragedy, as were those in the fifth-century audience. The authenticity of a modern production comes, instead, from the way it conveys the author's monumental theme, one with which the modern-day audience can relate just as much as the audience could 2,500 years ago.

A major problem in the history of ancient theatre at Trent is the lack of a suitable acting space.⁴ Since there is no theatre programme, no drama programme per se, and no fine arts to speak of, there is a lamentable dearth of decent theatre space. The largest lecture-hall, the Wenjack Theatre has been used for theatrical and musical shows in the past, but its seating capacity of nearly 400 made it unattractive for a first-time undertaking; even now audiences would be lost in that space. What was eventually selected was The Pit, a sunken common room in Lady Eaton College, one of Trent's five residential colleges. It is an intimate space, ideal for small-group gatherings, meetings, and receptions, but until 1994 it had not been used as a theatre. Ian Storey describes The Pit well in his review of *Medea*, so I shall not go into detail here, except to say that the central square acting space [A] is surrounding on four sides by seating [B], with staggered levels on the west [C] and south [D], connected to the Pit by stairs [E]. A concrete fireplace [F] provides a commanding focal point, and there are two entrances: a powerful upper door [G] and a lower door [H], which doubles as the general audience entrance to the theatre (see figure above). The audience sat on the four lower couches [B] and on benches on the open east side [J]. The most striking implication of this space, from both the actors' and the

audience's perspective, is the proximity with which both groups must share this space. This leads to some tricky staging and manoeuvring, and also to some rather unsettling moments for an audience ill at ease with such a close involvement with the action. It was, therefore, perfect for our purposes.

How the Pit space is used for each production is an important consideration. It seemed natural that the clear division between the worlds of Aphrodite and of Artemis in *Hippolytos*, for example, be reflected in the staging, so Aphrodite's prologue was spoken from the top level [C], with Artemis' lines delivered from the opposite side of the fireplace [D]. Throughout the play, when Phaidra spoke, Aphrodite came forward silently; during Hippolytos' speeches, Artemis mirrored her rival goddess's actions. Phaidra made her entrances from the "Aphrodite" side, Hippolytos from the "Artemis" side, and even when on stage the actors kept to these sides of the 'stage'. Theseus commanded 'centre stage' [A] during his initial tirade, his exchange with his son, and his final scene with *Hippolytos*. This system allowed the stage to reflect the central tension of the tragedy in more than words alone, and in some senses reflected the ancient convention of the thematic significance of the *eisodoi*.⁵

While the staging of *Elektra* was much less problematic, it became clear in this production that the fireplace [F] was a natural substitute for the *skene*-building of the ancient theatre. It acted as the farmhouse of *Elektra*, with the central acting space being the area outside the farmhouse, where most of the action takes place. This time, the upper entrance was used for the entrance of Klytemestra, both because it gave the sense of distance required by the pivotal exchange between Orestes and Elektra which precedes their mother's arrival, and because it was large enough to accommodate a rather makeshift chariot. In *Medea*, the fireplace-*skene* was Jason's Corinthian palace, while in *Prometheus* it became the desolate rock to which Prometheus was chained, the fireplace's grey, concrete facade being more than suitable for the purpose. More flexibility was needed, however, in *Hecuba*, since the events inside Agamemnon's tent near the end of the play are crucial for the final scene involving the blinded Polymestor and his dead sons. Therefore, for the first time, a piece of functional scenery was added to the stage, and the fireplace lost its centrality; a cloth and burlap tent was erected, removing the west side of the Pit's seating [B] and thus ending the "theatre-in-the-square" effect of the acting space. The intimacy was not lost, however, since the remaining three sides of the Pit were still at "stage level". Moreover, the upper and lower entrances were still used to full effect. The upper entrance [G], physically above the tent itself, provided the entrance for Odysseus, Talthybius, and Agamemnon; its elevated location also gave the ghost of Polydorus an excellent vantage-point in the prologue from which to view his mother's entrance from the tent. Similarly, as Polyxena was led away by Odysseus, the sight of a devastated Hecuba screaming after her daughter as she rose to the upper exit was one of the most moving in the play.

Just as it was natural for the fireplace in the centre of the Pit to become the focal point of the space, so was it natural for this convention eventually to become rather "tired".

What began as an attempt (albeit accidental) to achieve a degree of authenticity, with the fireplace serving as a type of *skene*, became clearly too constraining in later productions. Granted, *Hecuba* could have been produced using the fireplace (with its hidden space behind) as the tent, but the intimacy gained by conserving the four-sidedness of the audience area in the Pit would have been lost by having to bring the dead sons and their blinded father on from one of the conventional entrances, and not from within the Pit itself. Now given that the intimacy of the Pit cannot be compared to the vastness of the ancient theatre, it could be argued that authenticity in dramatic space cannot be achieved. Yet almost ironically, what is not conveyed in the Pit by the grand gestures and wonderful acoustics of the ancient theatre is captured instead in the intimacy achieved by the constraints of the acting space. Perhaps the “message”, if there is one, comes across just as readily in the Pit as it did in ancient Greece, regardless of the size or layout of the theatre. The CDG's challenge has been to use the Pit to convey that message as successfully as possible, allowing the acting space to evolve just as the ancient stage itself evolved throughout the fifth century and beyond.

Perhaps the audience of *Hecuba* more readily accepted the staging of the play because there appeared, for the first time in that space, to be a central “stage” which almost all the audience faced. In *Bacchae* the acting area has been turned around, dispensing with the fireplace altogether, turning the audience gallery [J] into the *skene* and placing benches for seating in the upper and lower galleries [C, D]. However, what a modern audience accepts less readily is the chorus. The popular conception of a chorus is based heavily in the twentieth-century musical, or perhaps occasionally in opera. Having a chorus in what is essentially a *non*-musical piece seems rather strange and incongruous, so “translating” the Greek chorus for a modern audience is perhaps the director's greatest challenge. First, for those unfamiliar with tragedy, the director must make the chorus make sense; otherwise much of the play's meaning (and beauty) is lost. Second, for those somewhat familiar with tragedy (first-year students, for example), the director must dispel the unfortunate belief that the chorus is dull and unnecessary (a belief which is, admittedly, much more commonly voiced about Aeschylean than Euripidean choruses). Third, for those more intimately familiar with tragedy, the director must present a chorus that is true to the essence of the playwright's intended chorus, since that group is likely to be the most critical of all. For different reasons, then, each group is difficult to please, and perhaps it is impossible to satisfy all three, since producing an “authentic” chorus might confuse or unsettle an unfamiliar audience, while adapting it to fit that group would certainly annoy the purists. The CDG has sought, nevertheless, to strike a balance, creating a range of choruses that work with the space provided by the Pit, attempting both to convey the original purposes of the playwright, and to maintain the audience's attention through a combination of words, music, and movement.

The chorus of *Hippolytos* was a rather primitive beginning, but once again it provided a strong foundation on which to build. For that production, I conceived the chorus as a highly formal group of three. They entered in a procession, to musical accompaniment, and remained static on the steps leading to the upper entrance [E] for the duration of the

play. When they spoke, they did so stiffly and with only some gesturing. While this chorus was perhaps a little unimaginative, it suited the needs of the play quite well, since the chorus of *Hippolytos* involves itself rather minimally in the action of the play. For *Elektra*, partly for variety but primarily in an attempt to better capture the emotional levels of that play, I chose to make the chorus (this time four) move around, and their speeches were more unpredictable; the division of strophe-antistrophe was less strict, and there was a clear chorus leader with whom Elektra frequently interacted. When the messenger announced the death of Aegisthus, Elektra shrieked with delight, engaging in spontaneous dance with the chorus (which made her earlier self-pitying comments about not being able to enjoy herself all the more ironic). Thus the chorus became part of the action, instead of innocent bystanders. And while the movements of the chorus were still a little stiff, the fact that they would frequently change location (from along the wall to by the fireplace, to the bench close to the upper level of audience seating) not only integrated the chorus with the audience, but it also made it a fluid and dynamic part of the action. In this sense and to a limited extent, then, choral "authenticity" was achieved.

Building strongly on the leaps made between *Hippolytos* and *Elektra*, the chorus of *Medea* was the beginning of an exciting new direction for the CDG chorus. Complete credit for this is due to Toph Marshall, the co-director of that production, who was entirely in charge of choral work. His vision of the chorus was refreshingly different from mine -- I think I was too tied by the division of the chorus into rather formal strophes and antistrophes to know what to do with it next -- and future productions have been clearly influenced by Marshall's expertise in that area. In retrospect, the choral movement of *Medea* unwittingly evolved out of the primitive movements of the *Elektra* chorus, but it was in the chorus's use of language that the greatest advances were made. Instead of having large chunks of text spoken by one character, Marshall, who also translated the choral parts especially for this production, shifted the voice of the chorus in unexpected places, marked frequently -- but not always -- by punctuation. The chorus also became physically fragmented, which increased the unpredictability of the chorus, unsettling the audience even further, I suspect. Instead of remaining as a group (which was my way of having them speak as one) the *Medea* chorus members took on individual positions around the Pit, frequently reuniting and then fragmenting in a different fashion for the next *stasimon*. Occasionally speaking individually, while at other times in unison or in groups of various sizes, they made the activity of watching and listening to the chorus an engaging experience; the effect achieved was ostensibly random and arbitrary, but at the same time it was imbued with a striking sense of grace and orderliness. Simply put, *Medea* "flowed" in a way that neither *Hippolytos* nor *Elektra* had done, since the chorus was now an identifiable part of the ensemble, and not an awkward add-on, something which, incidentally, should have appealed to all three groups of audience members identified above.

After an interesting experiment with a two-member chorus in *Prometheus Bound*, the chorus grew to six for *Hecuba*. Perhaps initially by accident -- but now by design -- the chorus has never contained the same number of members in any two productions

(*Bacchae*, for example, has a chorus of seven). This is not an attempt to come close to the composition of the chorus in the ancient theatre, since even seven is verging on being unwieldy for the Pit; rather, it is an illustration of the fact that a Greek chorus can work in a number of different formulations. A two-person chorus worked well for the small cast of the *Prometheus* (which contrasted nicely with the “greatness” of the tragedy). Three seemed manageable (and somehow “natural” at the time) for *Hippolytos*, while five in *Medea* fitted Marshall's general preference for multiples of five or fewer. The larger the chorus, of course, the greater the challenges for choreography; correspondingly, the more intricate the choreography, the greater the challenges placed upon the actors' memorization skills. Clearly, the chorus can make or break a tragedy, but experience has shown that the more involved a chorus is with the action (and in the Pit this implies a natural level of involvement with the audience), the greater the chances of success. How “authentic” this is perhaps not an important issue; instead, what is important is how to ensure an involved and engaging chorus.

For explication I turn to the chorus of *Hecuba*. The choral parts were once again translated by Toph Marshall as part of his new translation of the entire play, which received its premiere performance with the CDG. He followed a similar pattern to his *Medea* choral division, with breaks between individual chorus members marked by punctuation or a solid dot, viz:

Hecuba, I've come away • to you, in haste,
leaving behind • my master's tent,
where I was allotted, assigned •
as a slave. Driven away • from Ilium's
city, by javelin point,
spear-captured • by the Achaeans. (98-103)

This permits, in the first six lines of the *parodos*, fourteen separate “chunks” of choral dialogue, usually spoken by individual members, but often in groups of two or three. This form of choral division allows for a more rapid delivery of lines than is possible in unison speaking, and also allows individual chorus members to gesture as if they were individual characters.⁶ Indeed, the identity of the chorus -- captured Trojan slaves -- effects a great degree of audience sympathy when the actors speak singly, something which maintains audience interest in the long and unfamiliar choral odes. Later in the play, at 1026ff., before the “victorious” Hecuba emerges from the tent, the chorus takes great pleasure in the deeds she is committing. As a way of heightening the emotional tension of this scene, the chorus take on animalistic qualities, something made possible by unison speaking, crowding together in “centre stage”, and having their speeches accompanied by loud and emotionally charged music (see below for more on this topic). The chorus is now, more than ever, with Hecuba, and their siding with her after so heinous a crime so obviously creates the potential for audience sympathy to be now with Polymestor more than with

Hecuba. A similar effect should be achieved in *Bacchae*, where the chorus of Asian followers of Dionysus is clearly “with” the stranger throughout the play, but their emotional intensity -- coupled with Agave's delirium -- could create increasing sympathy for the fate of Pentheus as the tragedy unfolds.

The varied nature of the Euripidean chorus, of course, has to contribute something to the range of effects which the chorus can achieve in a modern production. Euripides gave each of his choruses a unique flavour, and it is crucial for the success of the play for this flavour to be captured effectively on stage. For example, a chorus which does not accentuate the unfortunate position of Medea when she bemoans her lot at the beginning of that play, or which does not let Elektra wallow in her own self-pity and suffering, or which does not amplify the wild and unrestrained nature of the Dionysiac spirit -- none of these allows the true feeling of the play to be conveyed. The chorus is, despite the apparently huge obstacles which it throws in the director's path, the nucleus of the dramatic action. Without it, Euripides (not exclusively, of course, but specifically in this paper) cannot convey his message as clearly. The extent of this phenomenon varies from play to play, but in two of his greatest plays from different points in his career -- *Medea* and *Bacchae* -- as well as in the less appreciated *Hecuba*, the chorus' pivotal role is undeniable. Neither the sufferings of Medea or *Hekabe* nor the power of Dionysus could be transmitted as well in dramatic terms were it not for the choruses of their respective plays. Consequently, the chorus as vehicle for textual “authenticity”, i.e., the author's central “message”, cannot be overstated.

While the chorus is, for many in the audience, a somewhat unexpected element in Greek tragedy, there are many typically theatrical effects upon which a modern-day audience comes to rely. Translating costuming and music, for example, from the ancient theatre (or, more appropriately, from the ancient text) to the modern is not an easy task, possibly because we know very little about these conventions in fifth-century Athens. The issue of authenticity is once again quite fuzzy, and this has led the CDG to explore a number of ways of addressing the confusion.

In terms of costuming, *Hippolytos* was perhaps the most “authentic” attempt of all. Some rather “ancient”-looking robes were obtained for the entire cast, Hippolytos being dressed appropriately in green, Phaidra in white with red sashes, and Theseus in purple. The chorus had earthy, brown robes, perhaps both to indicate their subservience and to help them to blend into the background. Perhaps the most “authentic” touch was the use of white half-masks for both chorus and actors. The performers reported discomfort in wearing them for any length of time, but responded well to the challenge of relying more on gesture and verbal inflection for dramatic effect. The effect on the spectator was considerable and the tragedy of Hippolytos became universalized to no small degree. In *Elektra*, the costuming became eclectic, reflecting no particular time period at all. Elektra herself was dressed in rags, her peasant husband in farm overalls and boots, and Orestes in a cloak and hat (and equipped with heavy baggage) to indicate his nomadic position as the play opens. The chorus was in red and black, the red designed to point at the endless cycle of bloodshed in the House of Atreus. Yet what was most unusual was the

appearance of the Dioskouroi in smart business suits and carrying briefcases. My intention in this production was to capture the essence of each individual character without adopting a particular period or theme for the costuming. While much of this is attributable to a lack of budget and resources for good costuming, it is also an indication of the timelessness of tragedy which the CDG has been endeavouring to portray since its inception. Our lack of “uniformity” in costuming has been criticized in student reviews from time to time, I always enjoy the rather unsettling and often amusing reactions which the costuming provokes. While perhaps not “authentic”, the costuming of *Elektra* was unusual and unpredictable. As such, it spoke to the audience in a way in which “authentic” dress cannot, at least within the CDG's unique context. Attempting, for a modern audience, to capture every nuance of the ancient stage is less important than capturing every nuance of the playwright's text, and it is the latter that the CDG emphasizes most of all.

Indeed, the costuming of later productions continued the eclectic tradition started in *Elektra*. In *Medea*, while the title character was dressed in rather wild and colourful “barbaric” dress, Jason sported jeans, an open-necked shirt, and a leather jacket. With a cigarette hanging from his mouth he could easily have passed for the “bad boy” of any recent decade. In *Hecuba* the Greek generals Odysseus and Agamemnon wore shirts, ties, and army capes, while the less senior Talthylus appeared in army fatigues. This theme contrasted with the rags of Hecuba and her daughter, and also with the garish gold gowns of Polymestor and his sons. In *Bacchae*, Dionysus wears a flowing gown, which is imitated in a sense by Kadmus, Teiresias, and the transformed Pentheus. The chorus wear animal prints, while to contrast the wildness of the Bacchic frenzy, Pentheus and his followers wear conservative turtlenecks which conceal almost all their flesh, together with gold neck-chains with an Apolline sun-burst. Interestingly, the original period intended for the costuming of *Bacchae* was the 1960s; this soon gave way to the now traditional mix of periods and styles which allows each character to develop her or his own character in hue with both the author's original intentions (insofar as we know them) and the director's “vision” of those intentions. This could be viewed as an easy way out of the perennial problems of costuming, but I prefer to see it as a compromise -- one that works.

The music which has opened and accompanied our tragedies has followed a similar pattern, although the shift to the eclectic came much earlier. “Authentic” ancient Greek music was the first music heard by the audience of *Hippolytos*⁷, but by the time the play ended, that same audience was filing out to the sound of Simon and Garfunkel's “Mrs Robinson”, with its Hollywood-style “Potiphar's Wife” overtones. This began a tradition of combining the haunting chants and tunes of the ancient music with classical and popular pieces from a range of periods. For example, in a segment added to *Elektra* to allow time to elapse before Klytemestra's body was brought on stage, de Falla's “Ritual Fire Dance” accompanied a frenzied dance by the chorus; the short, stabbing notes at the end of the piece reflected very well the murder of Klytemestra behind the scenes. *Elektra* opened with the first movement of Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, which set the rustic scene very nicely, its calmness at once soothing and eerie; the play ended with Eric Clapton's “Nobody Loves You When You're Down and Out”, a comment not only on *Elektra*'s pitiful existence,

but also on those down and out humans so universally portrayed in Euripidean tragedy. Albinoni's *Adagio* set the scene for a candlelit procession that opened *Prometheus Bound*, and in *Hecuba* Britten's *Four Sea Interludes* accompanied Polydorus' prologue and the frantic scene where the chorus anticipates Polymestor's blinding. Clearly, then, the "authentic" Greek music is only half the story; just as costuming from a range of periods reflects the timeless, enduring message of the tragedy being acted out on stage, so too does music from across the ages illustrate that Tommaso Albinoni, Manuel de Falla, and Eric Clapton are all equally suited to capturing that same message.

So why is Euripides so adaptable to a modern stage? In short, it is because he has given us themes and issues to which modern actors and modern audiences can relate without the need, on the part of the director, to modernize the plays beyond recognition.⁸ Of course, "freer" adaptations than those of the CDG have worked successfully; similarly, productions which have attempted to be more "authentic", either through open-air staging in Greece or through performance in the original Greek, have also been known to work very well.⁹ The CDG is far from being able to claim that its approach to Greek drama is the best -- but, at least for Euripides, it seems to work. Euripides appears, at times, to be writing for a modern audience accustomed to plot twists and extremes of emotion. His greatest tragedies are unquestionably horrific; yet at the same time they are often coupled with moments of dark (but often riotously funny) humour. The Old Man in *Elektra*, for instance, contributes to a wonderfully parodic three-way scene with Orestes and his sister in which the recognition tokens of Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* are mocked; a modern audience need not know their Aeschylus to appreciate the humour in the scene, and they also need not have it explained that the horrific outcome of that same scene is Elektra's final plotting to kill her mother and her lover. In *Medea*, too, the scene between Medea and Aegeus can be played for comic effect, an effect which is immediately juxtaposed most horribly with Medea's decision to kill her children. And in *Bacchae*, the ridiculous sight of Pentheus fussing about his hemline and the state of his coiffure is outrageously funny, but also pathetic when followed by the king's brutal *sparagmos* at the hands of his mother. The denouement of the tragedy at the very point when the audience's emotions are being stirred most strongly (whether by humour or great sadness) is cruel and unsettling, but this is exactly the desired effect. Yes, the CDG sets out to provide an evening's entertainment - an escape from reality, perhaps -- but it also forces people to ask themselves uncomfortable questions as they leave the Pit, to challenge their own expectations of theatre, and to have the feeling that on some level they are not entirely satisfied with what has just unfolded. After all, it is tragedy, and in tragedy nothing is pleasant, and little is straightforward.

Notes:

1 This paper builds upon a presentation given as part of a round-table discussion on modern productions of ancient theatre at the conference “Crossing the Stages: the Performance, Production, and Reception of Ancient Drama” in Saskatoon, 25 October 1997. For enabling me to participate in that conference, I gratefully acknowledge Desmond Conacher, John Porter, and Ian Storey, each of whom was instrumental in his own way.

2 Taplin addresses a similar question in his engaging but not entirely convincing Greek *Tragedy in Action*. Partly to reflect the CDG's humble and non-scholarly roots, I will not refer to a range of sources in this paper. However, certain seminal and recent works on ancient theatre of relevance to my topic are listed in the bibliography.

3 Marshall also directed an open-air production of Plautus' *Curculio* at Trent in March 1996. While that production was not strictly part of the CDG, many former and future CDG cast and crew were involved.

4 The CDG was not the first group to perform ancient drama at Trent. Among others an *Antigone* was produced in the late 1960s, and I remember a *Lysistrata* in the mid-1980s. Also in the 1980s Peter Arnott presented several of his Greek dramas performed as puppet-shows. His *Hippolytos* was particularly effective and asked the audience to accept dramatic conventions of quite a different sort.

5 The extent to which this convention was observed in the 420s is unclear, but regardless, The Pit provides an excellent space in which to convey such dichotomies as city vs. country, nature vs. culture, etc. The Pit is thus "structurally" ideal. Wiles [1997] 134-60 explores the “binary opposition” of the *eisodoi* with some fascinating interpretations of the implications of entries and departures on either side

6 Many recent discussions have concentrated on the larger role of the chorus, its number and composition, its purpose in the drama and its effect upon the audience, the importance of dance, and the carrying of larger themes (e.g., Ley 48-56, Arnott [1989]: ch. 9, Rehm [1992] 51-61, Wiles [1997] ch. 4 & 5). Ewans xxii-xxiv assigns lines of choral dialogue to different *choreutai*, but does not discuss the delivery of the lyrics. David Raeburn (at the Saskatoon conference - see n. 1) conducted a workshop on the performance of *Hecuba* 444ff. (in Greek) in which the lines were divided in a manner rather like that of Marshall's chorus.

7. *Musique de la Grèce antique*, Atrium Musicae de Madrid/Gregorio Paniagua.

8 On the “interface” between ancient dramas and modern audiences see Taplin 172-81, Walton 170-3, Walcot 1 - 10, and Ewans xv-xxxvii.

9 It was interesting to observe that while the Stratford (Ontario) Festival's 1997 production of *Oedipus Rex*, a re-staging of its highly acclaimed 1955 production, tended heavily toward the authentic, at least in terms of costuming and general atmosphere, the addition of a "satyr-play", a twenty-minute farcical romp through the Oedipus myth before the play opened, was a modern touch designed to acquaint unfamiliar modern summer audiences with the famous story. The extent to which the satyr-play was successful is difficult to assess.