NEW VOICES IN CLASSICAL RECEPTION STUDIES
Issue 9 (2014)

SHATTERED ICONS AND FRAGMENTED NARRATIVE IN A POSTMODERN WORLD OF CRISIS: *HERAKLES MAINOMENOS* BY THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF GREECE AT THE EPIDAURUS FESTIVAL 2011

© *Vicky Manteli, the Hellenic Open University*

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses a postmodern revival of the rarely staged Euripides' *Herakles Mainomenos* produced by the National Theatre of Greece and directed by Michael Marmarinos for the Epidaurus Festival 2011. The paper highlights the collective forms of textuality and the performance context in order to argue that the production has political underscores and timely messages for its audience. More specifically, I will argue that Heracles may be read as a metaphor for Greece and the chorus as a metaphor for the Greek people in present times of world economic crisis. I will discuss how this twofold metaphor can be interpreted in the context of the Epidaurus Festival 2011, the space of the ancient theatre, and its contemporary audience. I will then closely discuss the shattered images of Heracles and the multiple identity of a most subversive chorus. As regards the text and the performance levels my paper explores metatheatrical aspects, narrative constructions and irony in order to emphasise Marmarinos's politicised conceptualisation of Euripides' tragedy. The paper concludes that except for a rich theatrical postmodern experience, *Herakles Mainomenos* of the National Theatre of Greece can be interpreted as a paradigm of experience in a postmodern world of crisis.