3

Machine: Authorizing an End

> Help, neighbors! Come here, come here!
> My master is rising into the air
> like a horseman on a dung beetle!
>
> ARISTOPHANES, *Peace*

The credits begin to roll, the curtain falls, or the curl of a *koronis* adorns the page, and we are reassured that the performance has ended or that the book is finished. But is such a gesture necessary? Or is a mere gesture sufficient? If the drama is complete, then surely the gesture is an empty one: formal but redundant confirmation that the action has been wrapped up in a satisfactory manner. However, if the action remains open, then the gesture is ironic, like Ionesco's curtain or Estragon's decision to go: not an agent of closure but an informer that betrays the work's incompleteness. In either case we have, or seem to have, an opposition between form and content, between the "internal" completeness or incompleteness of the action and the "external" flourishes that advance or subvert this closure. This opposition shifts the question of closure from the outside to the inside, from the empty gestures of the stage to the "real" completeness of the plot or action that these gestures may or may not endorse. Once we turn our attention from the outside to the inside, and try to judge the completeness of the action, the question seems to have a simple answer: the deus ex machina, the god on the machine, enters at the end to tie up loose ends, resolve all problems, and guarantee that the action is complete. But in so doing, the deus formalizes the closure of the plot and turns this reassuring ending into yet another gesture. The opposition between inside and outside, meaning and gesture, collapses and renders closure deeply problematic.

The formalized closure provided by the deus is relatively violent and dangerous. Curtain, *koronis*, and "Finis" are innocuous markers, simply confirming the end of the performance, but more drastic measures are required to wrap up the plot and bring it to a convincing end. At the end of *The Beggar's Opera*, for example, when it turns out that the entertaining musical will end with the hero being hanged, the author himself, the beggar who wrote the opera, steps in to write a different and more satisfactory ending:

> PLAYER: Why then, Friend, this is a down-right deep Tragedy. The Catastrophe is manifestly wrong, for an Opera must end happily.
>
> BEGGAR: Your Objection, Sir, is very just; and is easily remov'd. For you must allow, that in this kind of Drama, 'tis no matter how absurdly things are brought about.—So—you Rabble there—run and cry a Reprieve—let the Prisoner be brought back to his Wives in Triumph.
>
> PLAYER: All this we must do, to comply with the Taste of the Town.[1]

Such intervention in the content, in the events of the play, is much less common than the intervention of a curtain in its form or staging, and it suggests that things are more seriously amiss. It is an index of crisis, a signal that the action is somehow so wrong that nothing else can correct it. It is also an apparent signal of the playwright's loss of control: it seems that because he has failed to keep the plot in check and has allowed the catastrophe to go wrong, he or a divine surrogate must step in to produce a satisfactory end. According to the comic poet Antiphanes, the deus ex machina covers up the incompetence of tragic poets:[2]

> when they don't know what to say,
> and have completely given up on a play,
> just like a finger they lift the machine
> and the spectators are satisfied.
> There is none of this for us . . .
>
> ‹ἔπει›θ' ὅταν μηθὲν δύνωντ' εἰπεῖν ἔτι,
> κομιδῇ δ' ἀπειρήκωσιν ἐν τοῖς δράμασιν,
> αἴρουσιν ὥσπερ δάκτυλον τὴν μηχανήν,
> καὶ τοῖς θεωμένοισιν ἀποχρώντως ἔχει.
> ἡμῖν δὲ ταῦτ' οὐκ ἔστιν . . . fr. 189.13–17 *PCG*

Power and authority are therefore crucial issues, both in the author's failure to keep the plot under control, and in his belated attempt to correct it. Equally important, as we shall see, is the issue of propriety, of willingness or ability to conform to generic or cultural norms, and to comply with the "taste of the town." But again this closing gesture is paradoxical. The particular form of the deus in Euripides, and the almost mechanical reproduction of this figure from one play to the next, contains and domesticates it. Rather than a violent intervention to address a dangerous crisis, the deus ex machina is often a reassuring and unthreatening figure, one whose comforting gestures leave open at the end the question of how tragedy should end.

Before turning to particular ways in which the deus authorizes an end to the action, I must begin with a definition. The term *deus ex machina* (in Greek, θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς), whether in scholarly or colloquial usage, has freely been used to describe everything from divine intervention to a surprising turn of events.[3] In Euripides, however, the term can and should be used much more narrowly. "Deus ex machina" literally means "god from the machine," referring to his or her entrance through the air upon some form of crane. We might reasonably limit use of the term to divine entrances that make use of this stage property, but for many plays the surviving text does not indicate whether or not it was used.[4] These texts do indicate, however, a remarkably consistent pattern: nine plays by Euripides end with the entrance of a

god who issues a command, explains what has happened or resolves an impasse, and foretells the future. I call this regular epilogue and its speaker a "deus" or "deus ex machina" even if we cannot show that a crane or machine was used. One borderline case I often include as a deus: the surprising entrance on the palace roof by Medea, a mortal with divine prerogatives who departs on the Sun god's chariot with the help of a crane. I shall mention for comparison other epilogues that share one or more features with the deus (e.g., 'demonic epiphanies' in *Hecuba* and *Children of Heracles*)[5] without describing these as examples of the deus ex machina. So regular are the formal features of the deus that I shall deal with two of these—a prophecy of events yet to come and an aetiological explanation of a name or institution—separately in following chapters.

In this chapter, I shall look more closely at the entrance and intervention of the deus, asking in particular how the deus goes about concluding the action and in what sense this intervention is formalized. The example of *The Beggar's Opera* shows that there are many different ways of stepping in to wrap up the ending. There the author, the beggar-poet, breaks into the action and rewrites it, substituting a reprieve for the hanging of MacHeath in a light-hearted, almost capricious manner. In Euripides, as we shall see, it is a god who both belongs and does not belong to the action who intervenes, without an overt breach of dramatic illusion, and doing less to alter events than to interpret them to characters and audience. In Shakespearean drama we often find an epilogue speaker who neither alters nor interprets the action, but simply promotes its reception by the public. In *As You Like It*, the actor who played Rosalind steps out of the action to court the spectators:

> It is not the fashion to see the lady the epilogue; but it is no more unhandsome than to see the lord the prologue. If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue; yet to good wine they do use good bushes, and good plays prove the better by the help of good epilogues. What a case am I in then, that am neither a good epilogue, nor cannot insinuate with you in the behalf of a good play! I am not furnished like a beggar, therefore to beg will not become me: my way is, to conjure you. . . . If I were a woman I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me, complexions that liked me, and breaths that I defied not; and, I am sure, as many as have good beards, or good faces, or sweet breaths, will, for my kind offer, when I make curtsy, bid me farewell.

The epilogue is entirely irrelevant to the plot, and the gratuitous nature of this appeal is driven home by a double conceit: the epilogue speaker says that a good play needs no epilogue, and in flirting with male spectators, he reminds them that he is only dressed as a woman. Far from trying to alter or correct the play, the epilogue speaker enters in order to solicit approval and applause, even as he exposes his meretricious designs.

It is worth noting that in Gay and in Shakespeare the play itself is exposed or unmasked; the intervention at the end lays bare the role of the author in writing the drama, or that of the actor in impersonating its characters. This is not true in Euripides, at least not true to the same extent. The god who enters, Athena or Apollo or Thetis, is not a thespian but a familiar inhabitant of the legendary past, one that literature regularly represented as interfering in mortal affairs, ever since the Olympians took

opposing sides in the Trojan War, and Athena and Poseidon meddled in the homecoming of Odysseus. Of course, the distinction is not absolute. The deus may in fact be a surrogate for the poet, a convenient divinity smuggled in, as Antiphanes implies, to do his dirty work for him. Likewise in *The Beggar's Opera*, it is not really the author, John Gay, who steps in to issue MacHeath's reprieve, but his surrogate the beggar, a factitious author first introduced in the prologue. Nevertheless an important difference remains: whereas the epilogue speaker in Gay and Shakespeare explicitly breaks the dramatic illusion by exposing an actor or author, the deus in Euripides is a more conventional participant in the action; if there is a breach in dramatic illusion, it is only implied.

This difference has something to do with tragic decorum. The comic stage generally likes to play with removing masks, whether exposing the male actor playing a woman in Shakespeare, or revealing the author of the play in the parabasis of Aristophanes.[6] Tragedy does not allow such liberties, and if Euripides goes further in this direction than his predecessors, he is careful not to go too far.[7] But aside from this negative constraint, the deus allows Euripides to play a double game, introducing at the end a figure within the plot who enters from outside it, a god who suddenly and unexpectedly invades the mortal realm. This double game is peculiarly Euripidean. It would be impossible, for example, on the stage of Aeschylus, where gods and mortals may rub shoulders with one another (as in *Eumenides*), and where divinities may make up the chorus (e.g., *Cabiri*, *Nereids*, *Prometheus Unbound*) or the entire cast (*Prometheus*, *Psychostasia*).[8] Euripides, however, strictly reserves the action of the play for mortals, allowing gods to appear, if at all, in the prologue and epilogue that frame it.[9] Nor would this game be possible if the god who enters as deus has already made an appearance in the prologue. But in Euripides' surviving plays the prologue speaker is never the same as the epilogue speaker,[10] and the god's introduction at the end marks the first incursion of this privileged figure—who might therefore betray the role of the author as a god in Homer or Aeschylus would not. This role of the deus as authorial figure is reinforced in two ways. The god within the action regularly delivers an extended prophecy, foretelling, for example, Electra's marriage to Pylades, Orestes' exile and trial in Athens, and the arrival of Menelaus from Troy (*Electra* 1249–87); so the deus in a sense writes or narrates a sequel to the plot. And just as regularly the god explains names or institutions familiar to the audience, revealing, for example, that a city in Arcadia will be named for Orestes (*Electra* 1275); so the learned deus presents the audience with a just-so story (on prophecy and aetiology, see the following chapters).

To see how this ambiguous figure brings the action to an end, I turn to two sets of attributes. The first, gestures of authority, help to establish the privileged position of the deus, and his or her power to bring events to a close. The second, gestures of efficacy, register the god's effectiveness in concluding the action.

Gestures of Authority

A most effective, and most theatrical, way to underscore the superior power and knowledge of the epilogue speaker is by use of the machine, or μηχανή. We cannot

be sure exactly what this property looked like, but we do know that it allowed gods to make an impressive entrance or exit through the air, sometimes depositing an entering actor on the roof of the skene-building and sometimes holding him suspended in midair. (Whereas the modern stage uses a harness attached to the actor, the machine seems to have been a platform for actors to stand on, raised and lowered by a crane behind the skene-building.)[11] The effect of the μηχανή is registered in the reactions of the chorus when Thetis appears at the end of *Andromache*:

> Ah, ah!
> What is happening? What godly presence
> is this? Women, look! watch!
> Some divinity is crossing the pearly
> heavens and landing on the horse-rich
> plains of Phthia!
>
> ἰὼ ἰώ·
> τί κεκίνηται, τίνος αἰσθάνομαι
> θείου; κοῦραι, λεύσσετ' ἀθρήσατε·
> δαίμων ὅδε τις λευκὴν αἰθέρα
> πορθμευόμενος τῶν ἱπποβότων
> Φθίας πεδίων ἐπιβαίνει. 1226–30

We cannot be sure that every deus arrived by machine; comments such as these indicate an aerial entrance or exit in several plays (*Andromache*, *Electra*, *Ion*, *Orestes*; compare *Medea*),[12] but in other cases it is possible that the god simply appeared standing on the roof of the skene-building. The standing epiphany would be less spectacular, but it still creates an effective contrast between mortals at ground level and gods above.[13] In the "double epiphany" at the end of *Orestes*, both the palace roof and the machine are used in this way: Menelaus at ground level is startled by the triumphant entrance of Orestes on the roof, and then Orestes is surprised in turn by Apollo's sudden entrance on the machine.[14]

The spectacular effect of the god's entrance upon the machine[15] is sometimes reinforced by exclamations from the chorus. We have seen the reaction of the chorus at the end of *Andromache*, and there are similar expressions of awe and amazement at the entrance of Athena in *Ion* (1549–52), and at the entrance of the Dioscuri in *Electra*:[16]

> But here above the roof of the house
> we see some divinities or heavenly
> gods, for this is no mortal path!
> But why do they come in full
> sight to mortals?
>
> ἀλλ' οἵδε δόμων ὕπερ ἀκροτάτων
> φαίνουσί τινες δαίμονες ἢ θεῶν
> τῶν οὐρανίων· οὐ γὰρ θνητῶν γ'
> ἥδε κέλευθος. τί ποτ' ἐς φανερὰν
> ὄψιν βαίνουσι βροτοῖσιν; 1233–37

Of course, when the deus appears suddenly with no exclamation, it does not follow that the entrance was less impressive or that the machine was not used;[17] it may be that surprise is of the essence (*Medea*), or that the urgency of the situation requires that the god should have the first word (*Suppliant Women*, *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, *Helen*, *Orestes*). In *Hippolytus*, this verbal expression of awe is postponed; the clumsy Theseus has no words of recognition for Artemis, who must wait for proper acknowledgement until the dying Hippolytus is brought onstage: "Ah! Breath of divine fragrance! Even in my misfortune I sense you and my body is lightened, for the goddess Artemis is here" (1391–93).

Entrance on high and expressions of awe reinforce the god's stature and authority; so too does a proclamation of identity. Artemis in *Hippolytus* may enter unannounced, but this does not prevent her from commanding attention and proclaiming to Theseus her name and pedigree:

> You the well-born son of Aegeus,
> I command you to listen.
> I Artemis, daughter of Leto, speak to you.
>
> σὲ τὸν εὐπατρίδην Αἰγέως κέλομαι
> παῖδ' ἐπακοῦσαι·
> Λητοῦς δὲ κόρη σ' Ἄρτεμις αὐδῶ. 1282–85

The deus regularly begins with a self-introduction of this sort, establishing her or his divine authority from the start.[18] In *Helen* (1643–45) and *Orestes* (1625–26) an urgent command precedes this formal introduction, while in *Andromache* it is more personal. God above and mortal below are in this case woman and husband as well, but she still proclaims her identity and divine lineage as daughter of Nereus:

> Peleus, remembering our marriage long ago,
> I Thetis am here, leaving the house of Nereus.
> And first of all in these present evils
> I advise you not to bear things hard.
>
> Πηλεῦ, χάριν σοι τῶν πάρος νυμφευμάτων
> ἥκω Θέτις λιποῦσα Νηρέως δόμους.
> καὶ πρῶτα μέν σοι τοῖς παρεστῶσιν κακοῖς
> μηδέν τι λίαν δυσφορεῖν παρήνεσα. 1231–34

Finally, a god's own power and prestige are further reinforced by the larger order he or she represents, the authority of Zeus or the designs of fate that warrant or legitimate this divine intervention. Thetis concludes her speech to Peleus by saying, "You must endure what has been fated; that is what Zeus wills" (τὸ γὰρ πεπρωμένον / δεῖ σ' ἐκκομίζειν, Ζηνὶ γὰρ δοκεῖ τάδε, *Andromache* 1268–69). In *Orestes*, a command from Zeus authorized Apollo's rescue of Helen (1633–34), and in *Helen*, the appeals to a larger authority become a refrain: "you rage for a marriage that was never fated" (οὐ γὰρ πεπρωμένοισιν ὀργίζῃ γάμοις 1646), "but we are weaker than both fate and the gods, to whom it seemed well this way" (ἀλλ' ἥσσον' ἦμεν τοῦ πεπρωμένου

θ' ἅμα / καὶ τῶν θεῶν, οἷς ταὐτ' ἔδοξεν ὧδ' ἔχειν 1660–61), "this is the will of Zeus" (Ζεὺς γὰρ ὧδε βούλεται 1669).

This final gesture of authority is potentially most significant. Given the jealous and independent nature of Euripides' gods, a divine epiphany does not guarantee a satisfactory ending: the god may have full authority to proclaim an end, but what if he or she is acting from partisan or selfish motives? The assurance that the deus is acting in accord with the larger purposes of Zeus and the fates would seem to make the resolution of the action more intelligible. So it is worth noting that these assurances are largely formulaic. In the examples just given, "you must endure what has been fated" or "this is the will of Zeus" are conventional platitudes rather than signs of a grand design, while the command of Zeus invoked by Apollo (Zeus authorized him to save Helen's life) has little to do with the characters onstage. And in *Electra*, as Orestes and Electra struggle to make sense of what has happened, Castor's answer rings especially hollow:

> And Phoebus, Phoebus—but he's my lord, so I
> am silent; although wise he prophesied unwisely to you.
> One must approve what's done, and in the future
> do what Fate and Zeus ordained for you.
>
> Φοῖβος δέ, Φοῖβος—ἀλλ' ἄναξ γάρ ἐστ' ἐμός,
> σιγῶ· σοφὸς δ' ὢν οὐκ ἔχρησέ σοι σοφά.
> αἰνεῖν δ' ἀνάγκη ταῦτα· τἀντεῦθεν δὲ χρὴ
> πράσσειν ἃ Μοῖρα Ζεύς τ' ἔκρανε σοῦ πέρι. 1245–48

Here is an obvious hierarchy of power: mortals appealing to demigods (Castor and Pollux) who answer to an Olympian (Apollo) who is subject in turn to Fate and Zeus. But if Castor cannot explain or condone what his own master Apollo has prophesied, there is little reason to take seriously his warnings that mortals must obey Fate and Zeus.

The god has all it takes to authorize an end: name and pedigree, imprimatur of Zeus or Fate, and a privileged entrance on high. But are these sufficient, or are they the empty trappings of authority? Does divine authority really bring an end?

Gestures of Efficacy

We might say that the answer, again, is easy: the god's effectiveness in wrapping up the plot is clearly signaled in three ways. The first and most emphatic is the command with which the deus intervenes in the action. In her first words onstage, Artemis says to Theseus, "I command you to listen" (*Hippolytus* 1282–83), and every surviving deus likewise begins with a command to mortals.[19] But what is the effect of this command? Often the entering god does nothing more than call for attention: "I command you to listen," Artemis says to Theseus; "Listen to these words," says Athena to Theseus (*Suppliant Women* 1183); "Hear me, child of Agamemnon," Castor proclaims to Orestes (*Electra* 1238); "Listen to my words," says Athena to Thoas (*Iphigenia among the Taurians* 1436). A similar appeal is couched in negative terms

in *Ion*, "Do not flee; I am no enemy" (1553), while Thetis more gently urges Peleus to set aside his grief before she launches into her speech (*Andromache* 1233–34).

Only in three plays does the god begin with a command to action. In *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, the command to listen (1436) is followed at once with a more direct injunction to Thoas (παῦσαι διώκων, "stop chasing" 1437); in *Helen*, the very first words of the Dioscuri enjoin Theoclymenus from killing his sister (ἐπίσχες ὀργάς, "restrain your anger" 1642); and in *Orestes*, Apollo begins by commanding Menelaus not to storm the palace (Μενέλαε, παῦσαι, "stop, Menelaus" 1625). But in the first two cases, the action is already complete when the deus intervenes. In *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, Iphigenia and Orestes have set sail on seas made calm by Poseidon when Athena enters, and the threats of Thoas will not alter the outcome, and in *Helen*, Menelaus and Helen have killed the Egyptians and made their escape when the Dioscuri appear before Theoclymenus. In each case, the sideshow of deus and barbarian king ratifies the conclusion with a demonstration of divine authority but without a meaningful intervention by the god. Only in *Orestes* does the god's command alter the course of events. As Orestes prepares to kill Hermione and fire the palace, and Menelaus prepares to attack the palace and kill the conspirators, Apollo commands them both to stop (1625–28) and resolve their quarrel (νείκους τε διαλύεσθε 1679): Orestes must remove his knife from Hermione's neck and marry her, while Menelaus, instead of putting Orestes to death, must make him king of Argos. The divine command has a direct and tangible effect only when the result it produces is least plausible.

Injunctions issued later by the god also tend to be empty gestures. The speech of the deus may be punctuated with a command to listen (*Andromache* 1238, *Ion* 1570), while the god's forecast of the future is often cast as a command, as when Orestes is told: "when you come to Athens, embrace the holy image of Athena" (*Electra* 1254–55).[20] Less rhetorical but no more tangible in its effect is the parting instruction intended to ratify events onstage. Since the Athenians recovered the bodies of the Argive soldiers, Athena leaves instructions for an oath of friendship (*Suppliant Women* 1185–90); since Ion's mother has been found, Athena reminds her to name him heir at Athens (*Ion* 1572–73); and since the body of Neoptolemus has been brought onstage, Thetis reminds his grandfather to give him burial (*Andromache* 1240). In each case, the command will be realized in the future, and rather than intervening in the action, it gives formal confirmation to what has happened. In *Hippolytus*, a similar command is realized onstage when Hippolytus forgives his father (1442). He does so not because he was ordered to by Artemis (1435), not because a god has intervened and made him do it; as critics have noted, the point is that the young man displays a kindness or humanity that the god cannot.[21]

If the god's authority is squandered upon empty and ineffectual commands, there are many different ways this can happen; the irony of a god commanding mortals to do what she cannot and will not do (*Hippolytus*) is an interesting example. It might be instructive to explore such variations in detail, but I simply note a general distinction. In earlier plays, the god's command, however empty, tends to suggest completeness—reconciliation (*Hippolytus*), burial (*Andromache*), and treaty (*Suppliant Women*)—while in later plays it tends to halt an ongoing action (by Thoas, Theoclymenus, or Orestes) and thus remove a threat to closure. The emphasis, in

other words, is more negative and its effect is more open-ended; we shall find the same is true of other closing gestures.

The second sign of the god's effectiveness is the explanation of what has happened, by which the god's privileged knowledge can resolve remaining doubts and render events of the play intelligible. The explanation, like the command, is a sign both of the god's authority and of the drama's insufficiency: only an action that is somehow unresolved will require a god to correct it or to explain it. In some cases this privileged account does not go very far, as when Thetis reveals that "all men must die" (*Andromache* 1271–72), Artemis explains to Theseus that "gods punish evil men" (*Hippolytus* 1340–41), Athena tells Creusa that "gods will have their way in the end" (*Ion* 1614–15), and so on.[22] Some explanations are slightly more useful, explaining to a stupid or stubborn character what the audience already knows. Thus Athena must explain to the barbarian king Thoas that Apollo sent Orestes to bring back his sister (*Iphigenia among the Taurians* 1437–41b);[23] the Dioscuri must remind the Egyptian Theoclymenus that Hermes brought Helen to Egypt for safekeeping (*Helen* 1646–55), and Athena must persuade the stubborn and skeptical Ion that he is—as the priestess has already shown—the son of Apollo (*Ion* 1559–62). Other explanations are essentially irrelevant. In *Orestes* (1639–42) and *Electra* (1278–83), the deus explains that the gods started the Trojan War to reduce overpopulation,[24] and in *Orestes*, Apollo goes on to explain how Helen made her surprising escape earlier in the play: "I saved her and snatched her from your sword, thus commanded by father Zeus" (ἐγώ νιν ἐξέσωσα χὑπὸ φασγάνου / τοῦ σοῦ κελευσθεὶς ἥρπασ' ἐκ Διὸς πατρός, 1633–34). In *Electra*, Castor is about to provide a more useful explanation of all that has happened by letting Orestes know why the oracle told him to kill his mother—but at this crucial moment the god cuts himself off: "and Phoebus, Phoebus—but he's my lord, so I am silent; although wise he prophesied unwisely to you" (1245–46).

Only in *Hippolytus* does the god's explanation of past events play a more substantial role in resolving the action. Artemis explains to Theseus at considerable length (1282–1341) Phaedra's love for Hippolytus, the role of the nurse, Phaedra's false accusation, the hasty curse of Theseus, and the responsibility of Aphrodite. After the entrance of Hippolytus, she repeats her explanation of Aphrodite's role to the dying boy (1400–6) before concluding with a forecast of the future (1416–39). Some explanation may be needed to undeceive Theseus and to allow him to forgive his son, but why at such length and why at the hands of a god? (Seneca and Racine, for example, allow a repentant Phaedra to reveal the truth herself.) The intervention of the deus does double duty, summarizing what has happened for the benefit of Theseus, who was absent for most of the play, and also revealing to Theseus and his son the hidden agenda of Aphrodite (announced to the audience but not to the characters by Aphrodite in the prologue). This apparently exhaustive explanation goes too far and not far enough. Artemis is so eager to assign responsibility for what has happened that she leaves us with a surfeit of conflicting accounts. She demonstrates the justice of Hippolytus (1298–99, 1307), as well as the nobility and innocence of Phaedra (1300–1, 1305), the guilt of Theseus (1320), and the responsibility of Aphrodite (1327). But if Aphrodite is to blame then Theseus may be excused (δεὶν' ἔπραξας, ἀλλ' ὅμως / ἔτ' ἔστι καί σοι τῶνδε συγγνώμης τυχεῖν 1325–26, 1334–37), and if

Hippolytus is innocent, then Phaedra is guilty of a terrible deceit (ψευδεῖς γραφὰς ἔγραψε καὶ διώλεσεν / δόλοισι σὸν παῖδ' 1311–12). We might try to resolve these conflicting judgements, but the deus does not help us do so. Artemis has no stake in a fair assessment of blame or in truth for its own sake; she has her own axe to grind. Her long speech to Theseus is intended not to enlighten him but to make him squirm—to let the one who caused the death of Hippolytus suffer also: "Hear, Theseus, how your evils stand, and if I gain no advantage, at least I will hurt you" (1296–97; compare 1313–14). In the remainder of the scene the deus exonerates Theseus and Phaedra, as well as Hippolytus, and instead blames Aphrodite (1327, 1400, 1406). But rather than explaining the ways of gods to men, this exposé of Aphrodite serves to rescue herself from embarrassment (1331–34), and to justify the revenge she is plotting against her rival:

> Not even beneath the gloom
> of earth shall Aphrodite's willful anger
> hurtle against you unavenged,
> thanks to your good and pious heart.
> With my own hand and these relentless
> arrows I will be avenged on one of hers,
> whatever mortal is most dear to her.
>
> οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲ γῆς ὑπὸ ζόφον
> θεᾶς ἄτιμοι Κύπριδος ἐκ προθυμίας
> ὀργαὶ κατασκήψουσιν εἰς τὸ σὸν δέμας,
> σῆς εὐσεβείας κἀγαθῆς φρενὸς χάριν·
> ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτῆς ἄλλον ἐξ ἐμῆς χερὸς
> ὃς ἂν μάλιστα φίλτατος κυρῇ βροτῶν
> τόξοις ἀφύκτοις τοῖσδε τιμωρήσομαι. 1416–22

In the one play of Euripides in which divine explanation plays the greatest part in resolving the action, the god offers not a single authoritative account but a series of accounts vitiated by contradictions and ulterior motives. Between human folly and divine spite we find many reasons but no reliable, privileged explanation.[25]

A third sign of the god's effectiveness in concluding the action is the acceptance or endorsement of the command and explanation by the actors onstage. At the end of *Suppliant Women*, for example, Athena delivers from the machine a series of instructions binding Argos to Athens, and Theseus responds by endorsing what she has said:

> My Lady Athena, I will obey your words,
> for you set me straight so I will not err.
>
> δέσποιν' Ἀθάνα, πείσομαι λόγοισι σοῖς·
> σὺ γάρ μ' ἀπορθοῖς ὥστε μὴ ξαμαρτάνειν. 1227–28

Almost every deus is greeted with a similar gesture of acceptance, even if the god's command is largely rhetorical or the explanation is conventional. "Queen Athena," replies Thoas in *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, "only a fool would hear these godly words and not believe" (ἄνασσ' Ἀθάνα, τοῖσι τῶν θεῶν λόγοις / ὅστις κλύων

ἄπιστος, οὐκ ὀρθῶς φρονεῖ, 1475–76); after Apollo's spectacular intervention at the end of *Orestes*, Orestes exclaims "Prophet Apollo, what oracles! You weren't a false prophet; you spoke the truth" (1666–67); and even Peleus answers his wife Thetis at the end of *Andromache* with formal words of acquiescence: "I end my grief as you command, goddess, and I will go to the dales of Pelion to bury him [Neoptolemus]" (1276–77). Here and elsewhere (*Hippolytus* 1442–43, *Ion* 1606–7, *Helen* 1680–81) the gesture is a signal that the god's intervention has served its purpose. The gesture is somewhat different in *Bacchant Women*, in which Dionysus concludes his fragmentary speech by telling Cadmus that he must go into exile and will be turned into a snake. Cadmus responds not with a speech of acceptance but with an exchange in stichomythia (1344–51), in which he admits his guilt and acknowledges the god's power to punish mortals, but appeals in vain for more lenient treatment. The gesture plays a double role, confirming the authority of Dionysus and his right to demand worship, while questioning the manner in which he has used this authority.

Finally, in *Electra*, the speech of the Dioscuri is greeted not with acceptance but with interrogation as Orestes and Electra[26] question the conduct both of the Dioscuri and of Apollo:

> Since you are both gods and brothers
> of this dead woman, how
> did you not keep this doom from the house?
>
> πῶς ὄντε θεὼ τῆσδέ τ' ἀδελφὼ
> τῆς καπφθιμένης οὐκ ἠρκέσατον
> Κῆρας μελάθροις; 1298–1300
>
> What kind of Apollo, what sorts of oracles
> ordained that I be murderous to my mother?
>
> τίς δ' ἔμ' Ἀπόλλων, ποῖοι χρησμοὶ
> φονίαν ἔδοσαν μητρὶ γενέσθαι; 1303–4

The deus, however, simply responds with riddles and platitudes ("necessity led where it must, and the unwise cries of Apollo's tongue" 1301–2;[27] "common deeds, common fates, and a single ancestral ruin crushed you both" 1305–7), leaving Orestes and Electra to share their grief together and make their sad farewells. In this case (and here alone) the gesture that normally deflects the problem of the god's intervention with a formal endorsement is replaced by questions that draw attention to the problem: How can it be right to kill one's mother? What can any god do or say to make it right?

The example of *Electra* can and should remind us that the gestures that accompany the deus vary considerably from one play to the next (interesting examples of such variation will be explored in part II). It is worth noting also that Euripides' later plays tend to differ from earlier ones. In general, when a god intervenes to resolve the action, its purpose is in some way to create or to restore order. In the earlier plays, this project is positive in emphasis: Artemis reconciles Hippolytus to his father Theseus, Thetis arrives to commemorate Neoptolemus and to console her husband

Peleus, and Athena establishes a lasting concord between the Argive suppliants and the Athenians who came to their aid. In the later plays, the god's purpose is essentially negative: rather than actively attempting to dispose and order the affairs of the drama, the deus intervenes only to remove a threat or obstacle to order. Thus in *Electra* and *Ion* the god seeks to appease the persistent doubts and dissatisfactions of the protagonist, while in *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, *Helen*, and *Orestes* the goal is to neutralize the opposition of Thoas and Theoclymenus or to defuse the conflict between Orestes and Menelaus. Also, in later plays, the intervention of the deus becomes more overtly inadequate. In *Electra*, the god makes a loyal effort to make sense of the oracle and matricide, but fails; in *Helen*, the god is superfluous as Helen and Menelaus continue on their adventures while the deus settles a dispute between Theoclymenus and his sister; and in *Orestes*, the god imposes an ending that is clearly implausible, turning a disastrous showdown into a double wedding. There are other variations as well, but for my purposes the differences are less significant than the similarities—the formal gestures, spectacular entrance, rhetorical command, and trite explanation that betray the god's inability to intervene in a more than formal manner. This consistently formalized deus stands in clear contrast to what we find in Aeschylus, in Sophocles, and even in some other plays of Euripides.

Other Interventions

We tend to think of the deus ex machina as typically Euripidean, and with good reason: neither Aeschylus nor Sophocles makes much use of the device. The closest thing to a deus in the surviving plays of Aeschylus is the entrance of Athena in *Eumenides*: the goddess enters near the end of the trilogy to decide the case of Orestes and resolve the conflict between Apollo and the Furies.[28] Because the case is so difficult to decide (Is the matricide of Orestes justifiable when undertaken at the command of Apollo, and to avenge the murder of his father the king?), the intervention of a god is required, and in the process of helping to resolve this dispute, Athena provides an aetiology for the court of the Areopagus and the shrine of the Eumenides.[29] Yet this is far from a deus ex machina as we find it in Euripides. Athena is onstage for nearly two-thirds of the play (651 out of 1047 lines). It can hardly be called a divine epiphany when she enters to mediate a dispute among gods, and her role in the resolution is ambiguous. Does Athena herself resolve the conflict by casting the deciding vote? Or is the action resolved not by divine fiat but by the human, civil institution of trial by jury?

The final play of the trilogy involves a search among various possible means of resolution. At the end of *Libation Bearers*, Orestes, pursued by furies, left for Delphi to be purified by Apollo. The expectation that Apollo's divine authority will resolve the action is reinforced by the opening scene of *Eumenides*, in which the Pythia traces the authority of Apollo's oracle back to Themis and to Earth her mother (1–8). This image of an eternal order is suddenly overturned as the priestess crawls out of the temple in horror at the monstrous creatures inside. Apollo can order the Furies to leave his temple, but he cannot overrule them in the case of Orestes, and he therefore defers to Athena, sending Orestes as a suppliant to Athens. The conflict between

Apollo and the Furies will be decided by Athena not because her power or authority transcends theirs, but because she is an equal whose wisdom they trust. Yet the effectiveness of her settlement is qualified by her reliance upon threats (826–28) and bribes (804–7), and most significantly by her refusal to decide the issue herself, entrusting the case instead to a jury of citizens. In a sense we have come full circle, returning from the divine to the human plane and leaving resolution of the action to the civic institutions of Athens; at the same time, of course, the jurors are evenly divided, and Athena must cast the deciding vote. There is thus in *Eumenides* no figure comparable to a deus ex machina, although the whole play in a sense takes us on a search for someone able to authorize an end. The end result is somewhat uncertain and ambiguous, forcing us to wonder how successfully Athena or the jury has resolved events, but this is entirely different from the formal and mannered intervention of the deus.

The situation is quite different with Sophocles, who employs a full-scale deus ex machina in *Philoctetes* and may have used the deus in other lost plays.[30] Since the only surviving example is from the end of Sophocles' career, it is likely that his use of the deus was influenced by poets such as Euripides.[31] In *Philoctetes*, Heracles intervenes at the last minute to rescue the scheme of Odysseus and return the action to the familiar account of legend: Philoctetes and Neoptolemus must return to Troy with Heracles' bow, where Philoctetes will be cured of his wound, and the two young heroes will bring about the sack of Troy. As in Euripides, the deus begins by issuing a command (μήπω γε 1409; repeated in 1417, σὺ δ' ἐμῶν μύθων ἐπάκουσον), identifying himself (1411–12), invoking the authority of Zeus (τὰ Διός τε φράσων βουλεύματά σοι 1415), and announcing his own divine stature (ἀθάνατον ἀρετὴν ἔσχον, ὡς πάρεσθ' ὁρᾶν 1420), before launching into a prophecy of events to come (1423–40). There is no explanation of past events; this prophecy is enough to reinforce the command and to secure the acceptance of Philoctetes (1445–47) and Neoptolemus (1448). This forceful intervention has its closest parallel in the *Orestes* of Euripides. In each play, the action is about to make a surprising departure from the familiar legend, when a god intervenes to return events to their traditional course. In each case, the intervention is abrupt and troubling and seems to negate or overturn a prior ending that had already been reached: the departure for Greece of Neoptolemus and Philoctetes in Sophocles, and the triumphant entry of Orestes in Euripides.[32] In other words, not only is this Sophoclean deus similar to those of Euripides, with all the formal gestures of command, divine authority, and mortal acceptance, but it resembles the most extreme intervention in Euripides, in which the god reverses the situation onstage.

However, the epiphany of Heracles in *Philoctetes* differs in several ways from the Euripidean deus ex machina, suggesting a different intent in Sophocles. First, for all the divine authority of Heracles, his intervention does not juxtapose the mortal and divine realms. Heracles has now joined the gods, but it was as a mortal that Philoctetes befriended him and as a mortal that he gave the bow to Philoctetes in gratitude. This act of mutual friendship is a premise of the entire plot and is visually represented onstage by the bow and the struggle to possess it. When Heracles enters to resolve the impasse, his authority stems from the fact that the bow is his and that he (as a mortal) gave it to Philoctetes; this authority is further reinforced by the fact

that he, like Philoctetes, has endured great troubles and hardships (1418–19). The effect at the end is of an off-stage character finally making his belated entrance; his presence has constantly been felt through allusion, through the presence of the bow, and through analogies between the stories of Philoctetes and Heracles,[33] but only at the end can the hero be seen and heard directly (φάσκειν δ' αυδὴν τὴν Ἡρακλέους / ἀκοῇ τε κλύειν λεύσσειν τ' ὄψιν 1411–12). This is not so much the incursion of a god into mortal affairs as the entrance of a mortal agent, the owner of the bow and the friend of Philoctetes, now decked out in the trappings of a deus.

If Sophocles' deus does not arrive from outside the action, the role he plays is also less extraneous. As we have seen, the deus in Euripides usually intervenes in a formal manner, commanding silence or halting the empty fulminations of a Thoas or Theoclymenus. The exception is *Orestes*, in which the god resolves a real impasse but does so in an implausible manner, replacing both the triumphant escape of Orestes and his death at the hands of Menelaus and the Argives with a third ending altogether, the traditional exile of Orestes, and the marriages of Electra to Pylades and Orestes to Hermione. Heracles in *Philoctetes* also resolves a real impasse in a manner that is not entirely plausible, but he does so within the premises of the plot. The entire drama has revolved around whether or not Philoctetes will go to Troy. In this regard, the play is exceedingly simple: either he will or he won't, and the play is a series of attempts to persuade him, by deception, force, friendship, and finally by divine command. There is something artificial about bringing in the god where all else has failed, but at least the god simply tips the balance: Philoctetes wavered before ("What shall I do? How can I reject his advice when he treats me like a friend?" 1350–51), and now a deus decides the issue. In *Orestes*, however, Apollo negates the action onstage, sweeping away both dramatic alternatives, Orestes' victory and escape, or his death at the hands of the Argives. Interpretation of *Philoctetes* has rightly drawn attention to the "Euripidean" nature of its ending;[34] but we should also be aware that the intervention of Heracles is less formal or gratuitous than the usual deus. In fact, we might emphasize not the debt of Sophocles' deus to Euripides but the way in which Sophocles has revised or corrected his younger rival. If the deus has a place onstage, Sophocles seems to say, it is not to scatter gestures of closure and give the action a specious sense of completeness; let the deus really resolve a crucial issue. Divine intervention then leaves us with a problem, but a different one. Sophocles leaves us wondering why only Heracles can persuade Philoctetes; Euripides leaves us wondering what purpose is served by his flourish from the machine.

Our scanty remains of Greek tragedy make generalization risky, but it is reasonably clear that neither Aeschylus nor Sophocles used the deus ex machina as a regular closing device, and it is likely that Aeschylus never used the device at all, although the search for an agent able to untie the knot of the *Oresteia* may well have influenced later authors. The single extant example in *Philoctetes* suggests that Sophocles experimented with the deus late in his career, but also that he used it in a different way, not to advance a largely formal resolution, but to focus upon a real and precarious one.

If Euripides has a model, it is to be found not in drama but in epic, in Athena's intervention to end the battle between Odysseus and the suitors' relatives in the last book of the *Odyssey*. Now that the story is over, now that Odysseus has returned and

the suitors have been punished, a new conflict is introduced, as in *Helen*, prompting the entrance of a god to resolve the impasse. Athena, like a Euripidean deus, intervenes with a command, inspires awe in those who see her, and ratifies with a truce the warring parties' acceptance of her dispensations. The similarities are obvious, but so too are the differences: Athena does not enter from outside the narrative, but has long inhabited it both as a god and as Odysseus' fellow conspirator, and the divine intervention, here aided by Zeus' thunderbolt, is not an index of crisis but a recurring motif seen earlier when Zeus sends Hermes to Calypso, when Hermes brings moly to Odysseus, and when Poseidon turns the ship of the Phaeacians to stone. The battle with the suitors' relatives, provoked by the angry Eupeithes, is nevertheless somewhat gratuitous, and its resolution by Athena seems contrived, thus pointing to the problem of narrative closure: the apparent end of the plot with the deaths of the suitors cannot really be the end, since the newly returned king must somehow negotiate his place among the other people of Ithaca. This problem of closure in the public and political sphere has a counterpart in the personal sphere: Odysseus' reunion with his wife and family cannot really be the end for the wandering hero, but as Teiresias told Odysseus (and as he tells Penelope), he will go on further travels until he reaches people with no knowledge of the sea. Only then, in some remote place at some remote time, will he finally allay the anger of Poseidon and clear the way for a peaceful death. Just as the entrance of Athena anticipates the Euripidean deus, the prophecy of Teiresias anticipates the Euripidean prophecy of events to follow, and although Teiresias stands at the center, not the end, of the epic, his forecast likewise reminds the audience that the end of this poem will not really be the end of the story.

There is a curious contrast between the novelty of the deus that Euripides brings onstage and the venerable prototypes that we find in the *Odyssey*. If Euripides borrowed from Homer, he also created for the Athenian stage a striking innovation with no precedent in Aeschylus or in Sophocles. His debt therefore consists in turning to a poem of remarkable narrative sophistication,[35] adapting devices that convey the provisional nature of narrative closure and creating a figure whose spectacular, and spectacularly formalized, entrance throws open the problem of concluding the plot.

It is worth noting, to conclude this section, that despite Euripides' relatively consistent approach in his use of the deus ex machina, a few plays stand somewhat apart. In nine of his extant plays, Euripides uses a deus ex machina, while in three early plays he concludes with a related device that I call the "demonic epiphany." In *Medea*, *Children of Heracles*, and *Hecuba*, the epilogue is marked by a new presence, a human character who assumes unusual power and authority; in each case this figure, who is somehow more than human, destabilizes the ending by portraying a passion that the drama cannot contain. Medea comes closest to playing the part of a god on the machine. At the end of the play, as Jason besieges the palace doors determined to rescue his children, Medea suddenly appears on the roof above, commands him to stop, explains that she will bury them in Corinth, and finally departs upon the machine, carried off in the chariot of her divine grandfather, the sun. Medea, like a deus, foretells the future (the death of Jason, 1386–88) and offers an aetiology (rites for the children, 1382–83), and like a god, she inflicts ferocious and uncompromising revenge.[36] Medea's consuming passion—which destroys her friends and family, alienates the sympathetic chorus, and eventually renounces her own human nature—

makes a spectacle of transgressing all bounds: she does violence to the norms of human conduct and violates the norms of drama.[37] The demonic epiphany literally embodies Medea's inhuman fury, which cannot be contained on the human stage.

In the other two plays, the excessive passion of the protagonist elicits from the antagonist an expression of superhuman authority. In *Children of Heracles*, Alcmene finally prevails over Eurystheus her persecutor, who is defeated in battle and captured by the Athenians. But rather than showing Athenian moderation, Alcmene is driven by her sufferings to demand the unjust murder of Eurystheus in revenge. Yet Alcmene's violent transgression is suddenly and unexpectedly answered by Eurystheus, who acquiesces in his death and foretells that his place of burial will protect Athens from descendants of the children of Heracles. In foretelling the future, offering an aetiology, and using his special authority to effect a resolution, Eurystheus approaches the stature of a deus. But he does not intervene from outside the action; rather, Alcmene's excessive passion elicits a spectacular conversion of her antagonist, turning the hated king into an almost supernatural savior. In *Hecuba*, the queen's uncontainable suffering, driven beyond all bounds by the murders of Polydorus and Polyxena, similarly spills over into a terrible revenge against Polymestor. Hecuba's brutality in blinding Polymestor and killing his children likewise transforms the shameless tyrant into a prophet of destruction. With superhuman authority worthy of a deus, he foretells the deaths of Hecuba and Agamemnon, offers an aetiology for a promontory near Troy, and corrects the vengeful triumph of Hecuba. Violent passion alters and transforms, and excessive, uncontainable passion can transform human subjects into voices of divine authority. In *Medea*, the woman's passion transforms her into something like a deus, while in the other two plays the epiphany is displaced: as too much suffering turns Alcmene or Hecuba from victim into avenger, it is the new victim and past oppressor who finds a privileged voice.

In these plays, passion that cannot be contained transforms a mortal vessel into a figure of divine authority; the "demonic epiphany" is a signal that the human action onstage can no longer contain its own terrifying energies. Yet as the playwright becomes less interested in these plays of passion, he stages a different problem and a different kind of epiphany. The problem will no longer be passion that cannot be contained, but a plot that cannot be closed or contained by the bounds of the drama. The epiphany that signals and confirms this crisis will not arise from characters within the action, but will intrude from a privileged sphere outside it.

Bending the Rules

By contrast with the series of divine and human authorities in *Eumenides* and with the human credentials of Sophocles' Heracles and of Euripides' demonic epiphanies, the Euripidean deus ex machina is clearly defined as a figure outside the action, belonging to a different realm, and intervening in a formal manner. The formal qualities of the deus have troubled scholars ever since A. W. Verrall, who drew attention to

> the singular stiffness, formality, frigidity, and general artlessness which often appear in [Euripides'] opening and conclusion. The final scenes in particular, the *coups de*

> *théâtre* with which the action is wound up or cut short, have almost always a conventionality of manner, a perfunctory style . . . [that contrasts] with the originality, terseness, energy, and passion displayed in other parts of the work.[38]

But for Verrall, and for the critics who took up his challenge, the problem of the deus was one of reason versus piety, and the perfunctory intervention of the deus was a signal, variously understood, of the gulf between men and gods. Those who give greater precedence to the secular action of the play (e.g., Verrall, Nicolà Terzaghi, Kurt von Fritz) will see the formal intervention of the deus as a direct or indirect critique of the gods and of myth.[39] Those who give precedence to the divine frame, however (e.g., Andreas Spira, Anne Burnett, David Kovacs), will read the same intervention as a reprimand designed to chasten erring mortals.[40] A third, more interesting, approach is that of Wieland Schmidt, who regards the conflict between divine and human action as aporetic, challenging viewers to make sense of a problem that cannot be resolved.[41] There is much to be said for Schmidt's argument, especially in *Ion* or *Electra*, where divine authority is a locus of debate throughout the play. But the same formal or mannered deus is found in many other plays—in plays such as *Hippolytus* and *Bacchant Women* in which the god's authority is never in doubt, in a play such as *Suppliant Women* with its strong political interest, as well as in many plays now lost (e.g., Hermes in *Antiope*, Dionysus in *Hypsipyle,* and Athena in *Erechtheus*).[42] So whatever the playwright's views on traditional religion, we need to take a new approach, examining the deus as one among several closing gestures in Euripides and paying attention to what we might call the rhetoric of closure.[43]

The choral exit and the deus ex machina both formalize closure, introducing external signals that the performance is finished or the action is complete. As such, both are disruptive: lowering the curtain to end the play or landing onstage to tie up the plot. And both disruptions betray apparent problems in the play: an unfinished performance and an incomplete plot. We might conclude that the gestures serve to disguise or conceal these problems, creating the illusion of an ordered whole. As H. D. F. Kitto observes:

> The real end of the story . . . neither makes a satisfactory dramatic close nor completes the poet's idea. . . . Therefore, in the absence of a logical climax, there must be more or less of deliberate contrivance in the ending; a feeling of finality has to be created. To meet this difficulty was the function of the *Deus ex machina*."[44]

I suggest instead that the disruptive deus serves to expose this incompleteness, and as I shall argue in the final chapters, this disruption goes deeper, challenging not just the aesthetic unity of the play, but the privileged role of tragedy as a literary and cultural model. The god on the machine is the most spectacular agent of this subversion, and I conclude by noting that this Euripidean invention may have performed its job too well: in the Western dramatic tradition, the deus is rarely found, and then not in tragedy but in comedy, where it again performs a subversive role.

These descendants of the deus are few and far between, but they share an important feature with one another and with Euripides: they mark not just a lack of completeness in the plot itself, but a loss of bearings in the drama as a whole that threatens to violate literary and cultural norms. The earliest surviving comic deus is the final entrance of Jupiter in Plautus' *Amphitryo*, the only extant Roman comedy based on a plot from tragedy, and the only one that dares to portray the adultery of a married woman.[45] If the mythical and tragic plot gives the playwright this unprecedented license to challenge Roman tabu, it also rescues him at the last minute from this dangerous game. At the end of the play, after Amphitryon discovers he has been cuckolded and righteously threatens to kill everyone in the house, it is the mythical god Jupiter who restores the happy ending required by comedy, commanding Amphitryon to love his wife as before and promising him eternal fame through his stepson's deeds (1135–43). Only the deus can hold in check this dangerous and unusual play with adultery.

Perhaps the most famous and most controversial "deus" in comedy is the officer of the king who rescues Orgon at the end of *Tartuffe*. In this remarkable play, Molière turns his comic demon inside out. Whereas the obsessions of a Harpagon or an Alceste destroy the character from within, rendering him both ridiculous and essentially harmless, Tartuffe's obsession with status and power spins out of control, threatening to overturn the entire social and political order. Comedy is thus upstaged by satire, which becomes most dangerous and unsettling when Tartuffe deals his final blow by arresting Orgon. In this extreme situation, the tables are suddenly and unexpectedly turned when the king's officer arrests Tartuffe instead.[46] Only this double agent of king and author can restore order to the realm and propriety to the drama.

The Beggar's Opera more boldly confuses the boundaries among comedy, satire, and burlesque, as this "pastoral among the whores and thieves" lampoons high society and its pretensions, while also mocking the current vogue of Italian opera.[47] This witty travesty of the contemporary scene becomes most subversive just as it approaches a moral conclusion, for if MacHeath must pay for his crimes, countless members of the upper classes should hang as well:

> Since Laws were made for ev'ry Degree,
> To curb Vice in others, as well as me,
> I wonder we han't better Company,
> Upon *Tyburn* Tree![48]

At this point, as MacHeath is carried off to execution, the sobering finale carries a very real threat for "better" criminals—until the beggar-poet resolves the crisis by rescuing both the protagonist and the comedy:

> Your Objection, Sir, is very just; and is easily remov'd. For you must allow, that in this kind of Drama, 'tis no matter how absurdly things are brought about.—So—you Rabble there—run and cry a Reprieve—let the Prisoner be brought back to his Wives in Triumph.

More recent versions of the deus ex machina include adaptations of Plautus and Gay in Brecht's *Threepenny Opera* and Giraudoux's *Amphitryon 38*. Both reinforce the artificial and theatrical quality of the deus, Brecht by insisting that the reprieve be announced by an actor on horseback,[49] and Giraudoux by casting Jupiter as a stage manager calling the cues for actors, lights, curtain, and audience:

> And we must all disappear, gods to our zeniths, extras to your cellars. And you, audience, must file out without a word, with an affectation of total indifference. Now let Alcmena and her husband appear one last time, alone in a circle of light, where my arm will be seen no more save as a pointer in the direction of happiness; and now, on this couple which no adultery has touched nor ever will, which will never know the taste of sinful kisses, now, to enclose this glade of fidelity in a wall of velvet, now, curtains of the night, who for nearly an hour have held back—now fall.[50]

In Euripides, the deus is equally theatrical, making its spectacular landing upon the palace roof, and it is equally dangerous, drawing attention not just to a local problem of closure (How can this plot reach an end?) but to a broader problem of genre (How has the drama embraced issues or questions that it is not equipped to resolve?). Seen in this light, Euripides' regular use of the deus ex machina is remarkable. Where later playwrights use the deus only rarely to test and expose the limits of their work, for Euripides this is not the exception but the rule. If the tragedian, as Antiphanes claims, can use the deus as a convenient gesture to keep the audience happy and safely reaffirm the taste of the town, this is only because he also insists on challenging and subverting its beliefs and assumptions.

4

Vestige: Traces of the Past

> Over Greek locales and the body of their ancient legends, Euripides swims and sails like a bead upon a sea of quicksilver.
>
> GOETHE

The most obvious closing gestures in Euripidean drama are the choral exit and the deus ex machina. They are also the most controversial: choral exits are frequently considered spurious, while the spectacular deus invites sharply conflicting interpretations. These visible and problematic gestures, as I have argued, are specifically formal answers to the basic questions of dramatic closure: how to end the performance and how to conclude the action. I turn now, in this chapter and the next, to further closing gestures that are less visible but every bit as important: the aition and the concluding prophecy regularly spoken by the deus ex machina (or by another figure playing a similar role). In so doing, we not only get a closer and more detailed look at Euripidean endings, but approach the problem of closure from a different angle. Choral exit and deus ex machina, after all, address what we might call the minimum formal requirements of closure: in one way or another, the stage must be emptied and the action must end. Aetiology and prophecy, however, explore continuities that might resist such closure: the historical and the narrative continuum enacted by the drama. It would perhaps be convenient to bring in again the contrast between form and content, arguing that these continuous threads are the content or matter that dramatic form attempts to shape or confine. This neo-Aristotelian model certainly has its uses (as we shall see in the following chapter). But its emphasis upon the continuum as stuff to be shaped or moulded does not give sufficient weight to the nature or logic of this continuum.

Unlike modern drama, Greek tragedy was essentially historical: it reenacted episodes from the past. For us, the past of myth and legend is radically different from the "factual," recorded past of history, and both are entirely different from the invented, factitious events portrayed in drama. Greeks in the fifth century, however, did not share our clear distinction between "myth" and "history." The Battle of Marathon and the Trojan War differed less in kind than in distance; both were "real" or historical events in the recent or not-so-recent past. And in describing this past, tragedy was less an exercise of the imagination than a reenactment of a shared, public history.[1] Hence the striking differences in staging. Modern drama is understood to be a fiction, requiring the spectators—even in ostensibly "historical" plays—to

28. *Seven* comes last in its trilogy, and *Persians* is not related to the other plays produced with it (*Phineus* and *Glaukos*). This leaves *Suppliant Women* and *Prometheus Bound*. In the former, the fears of the chorus (1031–33, 1043–46, 1052–53) anticipate their abduction in the following play, but the situation itself is closed, as the women withdraw in safety to the city. *Prometheus*, however, ends with the protagonist describing the imminent cataclysm (1080–93), just as Orestes describes the approaching Furies. But although this conclusion looks forward, there is no continuity such as that between *Libation Bearers* and *Eumenides*, for *Prometheus Unbound* could not open with the start of a cataclysm; the prolonged punishment of Prometheus (μακρὸν δὲ μῆκος ἐκτελευτήσας χρόνου 1020) marks a clear divide between the plays.

29. The possible exceptions are *Oedipus the King*, where the scholiast assigns the final lines to Oedipus, and *Women of Trachis*, where some manuscripts give the last lines to Hyllus. Some scholars delete the final lines of *Oedipus the King* altogether; see Dawe, *Studies*, vol. 1, 266–73. For a defense of their authenticity, see Arkins, "Final Lines" and Lloyd-Jones and Wilson, *Sophoclea* 113–14.

30. A possible exception is *Women of Trachis*, where some manuscripts give the last fifteen lines to Hyllus; thus Davies, *Trachiniae* while Easterling, *Trachiniae* gives them to the chorus.

31. *Ajax* concludes with a simple moral; *Oedipus the King*, *Antigone*, and *Women of Trachis* include both summary and moral; *Electra* combines congratulations with a summary; and *Oedipus at Colonus* ends with a command to cease lamenting and a brief moral.

32. Only two plays, *Electra* and *Antigone*, end with a metrically distinct choral exit; in the other plays, the lines of the chorus are preceded by up to twenty-six lines (*Oedipus at Colonus*) in the same meter. *Philoctetes* alone concludes with simple words of departure (quoted later), and there is no farewell such as we find in Euripides.

33. If Sophocles gives hints of other stories to follow, this is quite different from Euripides' suggestion that the story has not yet ended; see Roberts, "Sophoclean Endings."

34. "Ein Dichter wie Euripides würde doch wohl etwas Besonderes und Eigenthümliches dem Chor in den Mund zu legen gewusst haben," Hartung, *Alcestis* 189.

35. Barrett, *Hippolytos* 417–18. Barrett is answered in full by Katsouris, "Formulaic End" 253–54; see also Kannicht, *Helena*, vol. 2, 438–40, and Kovacs, "Treading the Circle" 268–70.

36. Diggle prints the final lines of *Alcestis* (attested in papyrus) and *Andromache*, but deletes those of *Medea*, *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, *Helen*, *Phoenician Women*, *Orestes*, and *Bacchant Women*, and reports doubts about those of *Children of Heracles*, *Hippolytus*, and *Electra*.

37. The only textual uncertainty is at the end of *Hippolytus*, where the scholiast reports that sometimes the prayer to Nike is added, and where Barrett reports that in one manuscript the prayer to Nike was added and erased. If this shows that such an error could occur, it also shows it did not.

38. "Scilicet, ut fit in theatris, ubi actorum partes ad finem deductae essent, tantus erat surgentium atque abeuntium strepitus, ut quae chorus in exitu fabulae recitare solebat, vix audire possent. Eo factum, ut illis chori versibus parum curae impenderetur," Hermann, *Bacchae* 163, followed by Dodds, *Bacchae* 242.

39. Compare the discussion in Rees, "Euripides, *Medea*" 177–78.

40. "Der Dichter setzt mit diesen Worten seines Chores ein persönliches, urkundliches Siegel unter sein Werk. Sein Bekenntnis hat sich in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten seines Lebens nicht geändert, hat also immer gegolten. Jeder Mythos, den er gestaltete, war für ihn eine neue Bestätigung seiner Gesamtansicht über Gott, Welt und Menschen," Mewaldt, "Heroische Weltanschauung" 13.

41. Rees, "Euripides, *Medea*" 178–81.

42. Mayerhoefer, "Über die Schlüsse" 38.

43. Roberts, "Parting Words" 56.

Chapter 3

1. Gay, *Beggar's Opera* 111.

2. Compare Samuel Johnson's criticism of Shakespeare's endings: "When he found himself near the end of his work, and, in view of his reward, he shortened the labour to snatch the profit. He therefore remits his efforts where he should most vigorously exert them, and his catastrophe is improbably produced or imperfectly represented" (*Johnson on Shakespeare* 21).

3. The phrase is applied to mortals as well as gods (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1454 a.37–b.2; scholiast on Lucian, *Philopseudes* 29), is used more loosely to mean savior (scholiast on Plato, *Clitophon* 407A), and is used figuratively to mean "unexpectedly" or "irrationally" (Suda s.v. ἀπὸ μηχανῆς). Duncan's broad use of the term includes the drinking of poisoned wine by a dove in Euripides' *Ion*; Duncan, "Deus ex Machina" 127–28.

4. It is often assumed that use of the μηχανή is a Euripidean innovation, but it was probably used for the entrance of Okeanos in *Prometheus* and may have been used in Aeschylus' lost *Psychostasia*; see Dunn, "Euripidean Endings" 132–39. Use of the crane for Athena's entrance in *Eumenides* cannot be excluded.

5. We might also compare the "savior figures" at the end of *Alcestis* and *Heracles*. The latter (Theseus' arrival to help Heracles) is discussed in chapter 8.

6. For a recent discussion of the latter, see Hubbard, *Mask of Comedy*.

7. Bain, *Actors and Audience* is looking only for unambiguous breaks in dramatic illusion; he is therefore uninterested in Euripides' very fruitful technique of testing this illusion without breaking it.

8. Compare Rosenmeyer, *Art of Aeschylus* 348, who observes that "we cannot after all think of Athena [in *Eumenides*] as a deus ex machina, for the good reason that the principal agents of *Eumenides* are themselves gods. For a machine god to be effective, he has to be shown breaking in upon a snarl of human confusion." On *Psychostasia*, see Plutarch, *Moralia* 16f *de audiendis poetis* = p. 375 *TrGF*.

9. The exception that proves the rule is *Heracles*, in which Iris and Lyssa appear *ex machina* in the middle of the play, producing a decisive break in the action; see discussion in chapter 8.

10. This is true even in *Bacchant Women*, which begins with Dionysus in his mortal guise as the "Stranger" and ends with his entrance as a god.

11. For an excellent discussion, see Mastronarde, "Actors on High." For a good review of earlier scholarship, see W. Schmidt, "Deus ex machina" 36–64.

12. *Electra* 1233–37, *Ion* 1570, *Orestes* 1682–85, *Medea* 1321–22.

13. "The gods appearing in divine epilogues, by almost universal agreement, distinguish themselves from the mortals they confront by standing on a different level," Mastronarde, "Actors on High" 278. Pollux also mentions a διστεγία (4.129) and θεολογεῖον (4.130), and this has been taken as evidence for a structure or platform above the palace roof by Pickard-Cambridge, *Theatre of Dionysus* 54–55, and Hourmouziades, *Production and Imagination* 33–34. In the fifth century, however, the skene roof was probably flat; see Mastronarde, "Actors on High" 254–58.

14. See chapter 10 for full discussion.

15. On the problematic nature of the epiphany as the visible staging of an invisible god, see Pucci, "Gods' Intervention" 22.

16. In lines 1233–34, I give Diggle's punctuation, retaining the manuscripts' φαίνουσί.

Diggle emends to βαίνουσί (following Hartung), while Murray breaks into a question: φαίνουσι τίνες-δαίμονες ἢ θεῶν / τῶν οὐρανίων;

17. The argument of P. Arnott, *Greek Scenic Conventions* 74–76, that the machine was only used when an exclamation could "cover" its deployment has not found favor; see for example Hourmouziades, *Production and Imagination* 166–68.

18. Compare *Andromache* 1231–32, *Suppliant Women* 1183–84, *Electra* 1238–40, *Iphigenia among the Taurians* 1435–37.

19. *Andromache* 1234, *Suppliant Women* 1183, *Electra* 1238, *Iphigenia among the Taurians* 1436, *Ion* 1553, *Helen* 1642, *Orestes* 1625; compare *Medea* 1319.

20. Compare *Andromache* 1266–67, *Iphigenia among the Taurians* 1446, *Helen* 1662–63, *Orestes* 1638.

21. Knox, "*Hippolytus* of Euripides," 228.

22. Thus also *Electra* 1354–56, *Helen* 1678–79; compare *Heracles* 1425–26. Of course, morals and *sententiae* are a common feature of tragedy, frequently occurring in messenger speeches and choral odes, as well as in the speech of the deus and the exit lines of the chorus; see C. W. Friedrich, *Dramatische Funktion*.

23. Athena also reports on concurrent events offstage (1442–45), but although this information is helpful to the audience, it does not explain anything that has happened onstage.

24. One might compare the irrelevant aition in *Iphigenia among the Taurians* (1469–72 on the Areopagus) and the irrelevant prophecy in *Orestes* (1654–57 on the death of Neoptolemus).

25. "The authoritative voice appears after all to be only provisional, unable to pass the judgement that will make sense out of the story and thereby complete it," Goff, *Noose of Words* 108.

26. According to the manuscripts, Electra and Orestes both question the Dioscuri in the course of this exchange (1292–1307); Murray and Diggle assign their questions to the chorus and Electra instead, leaving Orestes silent.

27. This is the general meaning of the lines, although editors cannot agree on how to emend the text of line 1301 (μοίρας ἀνάγκης ἡγεῖτο χρεών).

28. The only other figure in Aeschylus who resembles a deus is the ghost of Darius in *Persians*. This is a supernatural figure with knowledge of the future (foretelling defeat at Plataea, 816–17) who unlike Athena makes his epiphany among purely human characters. Yet he appears only in the middle of the play; he does not intervene but is summoned so the chorus may tell him of Xerxes' defeat, and rather than resolving the action, the old man's shade offers moral reflections on the hybris of Xerxes (805–12, 818–22, 827–31). As for other plays of Aeschylus, it is always possible that he used the deus in a work now lost, but the fragments offer no convincing examples, and Aeschylus' readiness to involve gods in the drama greatly limits the space available for an effective deus ex machina. Athenaeus reports that Aphrodite appeared onstage in *Danaids* (13.600b = F 44 *TrGF*), but it does not follow that she played the role of dea ex machina, as claimed, for example, by Murray, "Excursus" 347. Compare discussion with note 8 of this chapter.

29. For discussion, see chapter 4.

30. No deus can be reconstructed with certainty, but the most likely candidates are the entrance of Thetis in *Syndeipnoi* (F 562 *TrGF*) and the prophecy of Demeter in *Triptolemos* (F 598 *TrGF*). The intervention of Thetis reported by Dictys (*Cret.* 6.9) may derive from a *Peleus* by Sophocles (p. 391 *TrGF*), but the prominence of Acastus suggests Euripides' version (scholiast on *Trojan Women* 1128; p. 390 *TrGF*). The departure of Oedipus at the end of *Oedipus at Colonus* has some interesting similarities to the "demonic epiphanies" discussed later.

31. Euripides' contemporary Xenocles "δωδεκαμήχανος" ("equipped with twelve cranes," Suda s.v. Καρκίνος) was notorious for his use of the machine; it is pointless to speculate on Xenocles' debt to Euripides.

32. On the aborted ending of *Philoctetes*, and the cues, metrical and otherwise, that signal this ending, see Hoppin, "Metrical Effects." On the overturned ending of *Orestes*, see Dunn, "Comic and Tragic License" and chapter 10.

33. On the story of Heracles as a model for Philoctetes, see Hamilton, "Neoptolemos' Story." On the play's stories more generally, see Roberts, "Different Stories."

34. See, e.g., Hoppin, "Metrical Effects" 142, 151, 160.

35. On the narrative sophistication of the *Odyssey*, see esp. Peradotto, *Man in the Middle Voice*.

36. See Cunningham, "Medea" 158–60 and Knox, "*Medea* of Euripides" 304–5.

37. The *locus classicus* is Aristotle: "It is obvious that the resolution of a story should arise from the plot itself and not, as in *Medea*, from the machine," *Poetics* 1454 a.37–b.2.

38. Verrall, *Euripides the Rationalist* 166.

39. Verrall, *Euripides the Rationalist* sees the deus as a direct, rationalistic challenge to the traditional, anthropomorphic gods; Terzaghi, "Finali e prologhi" 309 sees the mannered intervention as an easy and convenient way to *avoid* spelling out the contradictions between his plot and the fragile religious edifice in which myth resides (compare Pohlenz, *Griechische Tragödie* vol. 1, 436); and von Fritz, *Antike und moderne* 316 and 312 finds in Euripidean realism a direct challenge not to religious belief but to the optimistic and romantic assumptions of myth.

40. Spira, *Untersuchungen zum Deus* 76: "Die Erscheinung Athenes öffnet Ion und Kreusa unmittelbar die Augen für die Hintergründe ihres Schicksals, zeigt ihnen, daß, was ihnen als Leid, Unrecht und Verwirrung erschienen war, in Wirklichkeit sorgender Plan von Apollo gewesen ist. Es ging uns daher darum, zu zeigen, daß der Dichter diesen Schluß des Dramas wortwörtlich verstanden wissen will, ohne Nebensinn und Ironie." Burnett, *Catastrophe Survived* 128–29; Kovacs, *Heroic Muse* 71–77.

41. W. Schmidt, "Deus ex machina" 217: "Die Verhinderung der Katastrophe durch den Machinengott sowie die Aufhebung des Pathos und der Schuld durch den Epilog sind gleichermaßen aus der Absicht des Dichters zu erklären, die emotionelle Katharsis beim Zuschauer zu vermeiden und ihn statt dessen zur Reflexion über die ungelöste innere Problematik zu veranlassen."

42. *Antiope* in Page, *Greek Literary Papyri* (pp. 68–70, fr. 10.64–97), *Hypsipyle* in Bond (p. 48, fr. 64.152), and *Erechtheus* in Austin (pp. 33–41, lines 55–117). If the hypothesis to *Phaethon* has correctly been restored (εθ]εσπισ[εν 16), this play apparently ended with a prophecy delivered by a deus. Countless other examples are proposed, on slender grounds, by Webster, *Tragedies of Euripides*.

43. For a survey of criticism on the deus ex machina, see W. Schmidt, "Deus ex Machina" 23–28, and Dunn, *Euripidean Endings* 162–67.

44. Kitto, *Greek Tragedy* 285.

45. *Amphitryo* apparently parodies a tragedy produced the previous year ("etiam, histriones anno quom in proscaenio hic / lovem invocarunt, venit, auxilio is fuit," 91–92), perhaps an *Alcmene* by Ennius or Pacuvius. On the daring treatment of adultery, see E. Segal, *Roman Laughter* 171–91.

46. See Jagendorf, *Happy End* 93–100, who concludes that "because of its specific public theme, *Tartuffe* is ultimately not an independent structure as a comedy" (100).

47. On political satire and musical burlesque, see, for example, Lewis in Gay, *Beggar's Comedy* 1–23; Swift's letter to Pope, proposing that Gay write "a Newgate pastoral, among the whores and thieves there," is cited on page 1.

48. Gay, *Beggar's Opera* 109.
49. Brecht, *Threepenny Opera* 225 and 331.
50. Giraudoux, *Plays* 91.

Chapter 4

1. Aristotle mentions Agathon's fictional *Antheus* as an exception that proves the rule, *Poetics* 1451 b.21. Compare Vernant, "Historical Moment."

2. On tension between the private and public spheres in Greek tragedy, compare C. Segal, "Theatre, Ritual."

3. *Chester Mystery Cycle*, vol. 1, 55–56.

4. *Chester Mystery Cycle*, vol. 1, 123–24.

5. The term *aition* (or αἴτιον) may be used more generally to denote any aetiological explanation; I adopt a restricted usage as I did with the term *deus ex machina*.

6. At *Phoenician Women* 1703, 1705, and 1707, the departing Oedipus announces that the oracle is fulfilled that said he would die at Colonus near Athens. There may be an allusion to a tomb of Oedipus, but given its mysterious location in *Oedipus at Colonus*, we cannot regard this as a reference to the contemporary world; compare discussion with note 34 of this chapter. The authenticity of *Phoenician Women* 1703–7 has been contested; see chapter 11, note 20.

7. On *Iphigenia at Aulis*, see West, "Tragica V" 73–76.

8. Such punning derivations, or ἔτυμα, are quite common in the tragedians, especially in Aeschylus and Euripides; see Fuochi, "Etimologie," Looy, "Παρετυμολογεῖ ὁ Εὐριπίδης," and a briefer survey in Kannicht, *Helena*, vol. 1, 13–15. For a broader discussion of aetiological tendencies in Greek literature, see Codrignani, "L'aition."

9. Diggle follows Paley in deleting line 1647.

10. On the authenticity of these lines, see chapter 6, note 7.

11. Tournier and others have deleted 958–60.

12. See Hamilton, *Choes and Anthesteria* 24–25 and 118–19.

13. On the details of this connection between Hecuba and a light tower at Kynossema, see Burnett, "Hekabe."

14. Parmentier suggests that there may be a more topical allusion to a recently dedicated statue of the horse: Parmentier, "Notes sur *Troyennes*" 46–49.

15. She may be celebrated "in Sparta, when the Carneian month comes around," or "in shining, wealthy Athens," and since we know of no specific commemoration for Alcestis in either city, this seems to be a polar expression (in Sparta and in Athens) indicating the extent of her fame. On textual problems, see Dale on *Alcestis* 448–51.

16. τὸ λοιπόν, *Medea* 1383; δι' αἰῶνος μακροῦ . . . κοὐκ ἀνώνυμος, *Hippolytus* 1426–29; ὄνομα . . . κεκλήσεται, *Hecuba* 1271; τοῖσι λοιποῖς . . . τεθήσεται, ἐπώνυμος · · · κεκλήσεται, *Electra* 1268, 1275; ἐπωνομασμένα . . . τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν κεκλήσεται, *Heracles* 1329–30; ὀνομάζει, ἐπώνυμον, τὸ λοιπὸν ὑμνήσουσι, *Iphigenia among the Taurians* 1452, 1454, 1457. Compare *Ion* 1577, 1587–88, 1590, 1594; *Helen* 1667, 1674; *Orestes* 1646–47; *Erechtheus* fr. 65, lines 92–93 (Austin).

17. The traditional version is given by Pindar, *Paean* 6.109–20, Pausanias 1.4.4 and 4.17.4, Strabo 9.3.9, and others, and is alluded to earlier in the play at *Andromache* 50–55. The rehabilitation of Neoptolemus begins with Pindar, *Nemean* 7.42–48, although Euripides goes much further.

18. Craig prints the variant "As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie."

19. In 1427, Diggle follows Valckenaer in emending to καρπουμένῳ.

20. On the honors promised to Heracles after his death, see discussion in chapter 8.

21. These two most common types do not exhaust all examples. See later on *Suppliant Women*, in which (apparently fictional) relics commemorate the impending treaty between Argives and Athenians, and *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, in which a ritual at Halae (we are told) commemorates the sacrifice of Orestes that did *not* take place.

22. See Schmid, *Klassische Periode*, vol. 3, 336–37, who cites many metrical and stylistic studies.

23. Dodds, *Bacchae* 235, claims that "the ox-wagon of 1333 must have been brought into the story to account for the name of the town Βουθόη, mod. Budua, on the coast of Montenegro, which Cadmus was said to have founded," but there is no aition in the portion of the epilogue that survives.

24. The extent of Aeschylus' innovation is contested. He certainly departed from tradition by placing the origin of the Areopagus in the trial of Orestes for the murder of Clytemnestra, rather than in the trial of Ares for the murder of Halirrothius (Euripides, *Electra* 1258–63, scholiast on Euripides, *Orestes* 1648 [= Hellanicus *FGrH* 4 F169], Demosthenes 23.66). He may have invented Orestes' trial on the Areopagus altogether (thus Jacoby, *FGrH* 323a F1 and F22), or he may have altered a story of his trial by twelve gods (Demosthenes 23.66, scholiast on Aristides 108.7 [p. 67 Dindorf], Euripides, *Orestes* 1650–52) to a jury trial by Athenian citizens; thus Lesky, *RE* s.v. Orestes, and Stephanopoulos, *Umgestaltung des Mythos* 148–52; compare Radermacher, *Das Jenseits* 133–40.

25. For burial by Sciron's Rocks, see Pausanias 1.44.6 and 10, and Apollodorus 2.8.1, a version alluded to earlier in the play at *Children of Heracles* 849–53; for burial at Thebes, see Pindar, *Pythian* 9.81–83 with scholiast; and for burial of Eurystheus' head at Tricorynthus in Marathon and his body at Gargettus, see Strabo 8.6.19 and Stephanus s.v. Γαργηττός. Gargettus and Pallene both lie on the road from Athens to Marathon, but they are not the same, and no other source mentions Pallene or Athena Pallenis in connection with Eurystheus.

26. On possible allusion to the treaty with Argos signed in 420 or to the negotiations that preceded it, see Collard, *Supplices*, vol. 1, 10–11 and his note 35. For burial of the Seven at Eleusis, see Herodotus 9.27.3, Lysias 2.7–10, Plutarch *Theseus* 29.4–5, Pausanias 1.39.2. For burial at Thebes, see Pindar, *Olympian* 6.15–17 and *Nemean* 9.22–24, Apollodorus 3.7.1, Diodorus 4.65.9.

27. On *Medea*, see discussion in chapter 6 with notes 21–23. On *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, see discussion at the end of this chapter.

28. The authenticity of *Prometheus* is still contested. The fullest arguments for and against are those of Herington, *Author of Prometheus* and Griffith, *Authenticity of Prometheus*, respectively. Hammond, "More on Conditions" 13–16 adds that a spurious *Prometheus* could not easily have replaced the well-attested Aeschylean drama. My comparisons with Prometheus serve to clarify Euripidean technique, and therefore need not presume that our play was written by Aeschylus.

29. On audience address here, see Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Aischylos Interpretationen* 185. On audience participation, see Herington, "Old Comedy."

30. On the Danaid trilogy, for example, see Robertson, "End of Supplices Trilogy" and on the Prometheus trilogy, see Thomson, *Prometheus Bound* 34–35.

31. Compare Zeichner, *De deo ex machina* 6: "At tamen ratio, qua Aeschylus αἴτιον introduxit atque probavit, multum differt a ratione Euripidis, apud quem actium saepe extra actionem adhibetur."

32. Mentioned by Strabo 13.1.30, Diodorus 17.17.3, Pausanias 1.35.4–5.

33. Compare Aeschylus F 25c.13–14 *TrGF*: Εὐβοΐδα καμπὴν ἀμφὶ Κηναίου Διὸς / ἀκτήν, κατ' αὐτὸν τύμβον ἀθλίου Λίχα.

34. We have no sure evidence for a surviving tomb of Oedipus at Colonus. Euripides mentions an oracle that Oedipus would die at Colonus (*Phoenician Women* 1705–7), Androtion is reported to have said (scholiast to *Odyssey* 11.271 = *FGrH* 324 F62) that Oedipus died at Colonus and that his tomb remained a secret, and Pausanias mentions a shrine for four heroes including Oedipus (1.30.4). The traditional account was that Oedipus was buried at Thebes (*Iliad*

Tragedy's End

Closure and Innovation in Euripidean Drama

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New York *Oxford*
Oxford University Press
1996