perversion of the end. The ambitious scope of the trilogy follows the course of the war from beginning to middle to end in a manner that epic had not attempted. Yet each of these crucial moments that should give coherence to the war conspicuously fails to do so, and the trilogy dissolves into a set of three unrelated plays.[42]

Euripides' epic project is a deliberate disaster. Its ostentatious lack of unity is evident also in the fact that it skirts the war itself, nowhere enacting an episode of the conflict and leaving instead, in Ruth Scodel's words, "the empty space the poet has placed with such emphasis in the center of his work."[43] As a result, it is also emptied of ideological importance. The Trojan War became through Homer and others the central moment in Greek culture because the conflict between united Greeks and Trojan allies helped to define Greek values. Yet Euripides manages to construct a Trojan trilogy in which the two sides never meet. In the first play, Trojans conspire against one another in a comedy of errors. In the second play, Greeks conspire against one another in a travesty of justice. And in the third play, after the war is over, the only commerce between offstage Greeks and onstage Trojans is through the herald Talthybius. The Greeks will pay for their sacrilege, and the Trojan women will suffer because they have no choice, but the mighty conflict between them has disappeared.

Finally, the symbol of this war, and the symbol of the Greek cause, is Helen's body. Because she was taken from Menelaus, the Greeks have justice on their side, and until her body is returned, the war will not be finished. I do not need to rehearse the connections between the female body and the ideology of war and conquest. Yet it is worth noting that a few years later in *Helen*, Euripides would portray her body as a phantom that men fought over and died for to no purpose. In *Trojan Women*, however, her body is very real and is the object of a bitter debate involving Hecuba and Menelaus. Now that the war is over and the city has been sacked, her body is returned to Menelaus and justice will be realized. Yet here we have a final, surprising twist. Justice will consist not in punishing the Trojans in order to repossess Helen, but in punishing Helen. And the conflict is not between two male factions disputing ownership of the woman, but between Helen and a female antagonist. Finally, the outcome of the conflict is ambiguous: Menelaus says he will kill Helen, but only when he gets back to Sparta, and the audience knows he will never do this. Just as the shape and coherence of play and trilogy have been disfigured, the figure that should give meaning to the episodes does not do so. Beautiful Helen is irrelevant. Her transcendent form, and the transcendent justification she offered for years of suffering and destruction on both sides, have no place in this play. As she leaves, Menelaus says that he pays no attention to her (τῆσδε δ᾽ οὐκ ἐφρόντισα, 1046), he jokes about her weight (1050), and concludes with a blatant falsehood: her death will teach all women to be chaste (1055–57). And as she leaves, we realize she is not worth our attention either. It is not the empty promise of the beautiful Helen but the brutal reality of the suffering and disfigured Hecuba that claims our reluctant and offended attention.

8

Erasure: *Heracles*

> Man, life, destiny, have a beginning and an end, a birth and a death; but not consciousness, which is infinite by its very nature.
>
> BAKHTIN

My third trope—and the phenomenon it intends to describe—is more subtle. In *Hippolytus*, the gestures of closure are doubled, repeated both at the beginning and at the end of the work; in *Trojan Women*, they are moved, displaced from the end of the work to its beginning; and in *Heracles* these gestures are uncertain, seeming to appear—and seeming not to appear—where we expect them. The trope, like erasure itself, is a complex one: not a simple absence, but a presence that is somehow denied or effaced or rendered uncertain. At the end of *Trojan Women*, the lyric antistrophe precludes the use of Euripides' closing gestures. The end of *Heracles*, however, both gives and takes away; the familiar closing gestures seem to be present until we look more closely and find that they have been emptied of force. Yet as we shall see, these partial or incomplete gestures are multiplied, thus "erasing" the end in a more radical manner.

An Ending Effaced

Heracles ends, as a tragedy well might, with burials, farewells, and departure. After agreeing to go with Theseus to Athens, Heracles says goodbye to his father Amphitryon (1418). He bids his father bury the bodies of his children and promises to bury Amphitryon in turn (1419–22). And then Heracles leaves the stage. These familiar closing themes, however, are in various ways robbed of their proper force. After Heracles in half a line reminds his father to bury the children (θάφθ᾽ ὥσπερ εἶπον παῖδας 1419), Amphitryon changes the subject to ask who will bury him (ἐμὲ δὲ τίς, τέκνον; 1419). Heracles answers that he will, and when his father asks how (since Amphitryon will presumably stay in Thebes to bury the children while Heracles goes to Athens with Theseus), Heracles says he will have him brought to Athens after the children are buried (1420–21). The focus has shifted from an imminent burial that will close the action of the play to a more distant and problematic event: does Heracles mean that after his father dies in Thebes, he will have the body brought to Athens for burial? Since tradition placed Amphitryon's grave in Thebes, does he mean instead

that Amphitryon, while living, will join Heracles in Athens, and that after his death, Heracles will bury him in Thebes? Or are the place and circumstances of Amphitryon's death and burial deliberately left as vague as those of Heracles? The problem cannot easily be resolved by emendation or by deleting one or more lines,[1] and perhaps it should stand, since the theme of departure is equally problematic. After father and son say goodbye to one another (1418), Amphitryon will presumably remain in Thebes and Heracles will go to Athens (although this is never explicitly stated). Yet Heracles earlier implied that he would be present at the children's funeral at Thebes ("O land of Cadmus and all the Theban people, cut your hair, join in lament, come to the children's tomb, and all with one voice lament the corpses and myself" 1389–92).[2] And a few lines earlier, Heracles asks Theseus to help him take Cerberus to Argos (1386–88). So when the hero departs at the end of the play, his ultimate destination will be Athens, but somehow he will first take Cerberus to Argos (presumably presenting the dog to Eurystheus and concluding his period of servitude), and either will be present or imagines that he will be present at the children's funeral in Thebes.

The closing theme of burial for the children is complicated by questions about the burial of Amphitryon, and the theme of farewell is complicated by questions about the hero's destination. In a similar way, the gestures of closure are unusually unsettled. As Heracles leaves the stage, his final words reflect upon his present situation:

> I've destroyed my house with shameful deeds
> and utterly ruined, I'll follow Theseus like a dinghy.
> No one in his right mind would rather have
> wealth or strength than good friends.
>
> ἡμεῖς δ᾽ ἀναλώσαντες αἰσχύναις δόμον
> Θησεῖ πανώλεις ἑψόμεσθ᾽ ἐφολκίδες.
> ὅστις δὲ πλοῦτον ἢ σθένος μᾶλλον φίλων
> ἀγαθῶν πεπᾶσθαι βούλεται κακῶς φρονεῖ. 1423–26

And as the hero departs for exile, the chorus of old Thebans concludes the play with two more lines:

> Sadly we go with many tears,
> having lost the greatest of friends.
>
> στείχομεν οἰκτροὶ καὶ πολύκλαυτοι,
> τὰ μέγιστα φίλων ὀλέσαντες. 1427–28

Taken together, the two closing passages do all we might expect to end the play: they briefly summarize the disasters to Heracles and his house (1423–24), draw a general moral from this outcome (1425–26), and empty the stage with anapests that draw attention to the chorus's withdrawal (1427–28). Yet this is, in every way, a minimal choral exit. Formally, it is the shortest possible, with a single anapestic dimeter followed by the closing paroemiac; no other choral exit is pared so short. Thematically, it says no more than is necessary, announcing departure and alluding to the theme of friendship without developing either the extra-dramatic implications of the one or the moralizing potential of the other. And in its closing role it is emptied of force by the lines of Heracles, whose (brief) summary and moral upstage the few words left to the chorus. The gesture, in other words, is unambiguously present even as its force is largely effaced.

The same is true in a more pronounced manner of the other closing gestures. Earlier in this scene, Theseus (an uncertain deus, as we shall see) tried to persuade Heracles to come with him to Athens, and sweetened his argument with very tangible inducements:

> There I will purify your hands of their crime
> and give you a house and a part of my wealth.
> The gifts I received from the people when I saved
> fourteen youths by killing the Cretan bull—
> these I shall give you.
>
> ἐκεῖ χέρας σὰς ἁγνίσας μιάσματος
> δόμους τε δώσω χρημάτων τ᾽ ἐμῶν μέρος.
> ἃ δ᾽ ἐκ πολιτῶν δῶρ᾽ ἔχω σώσας κόρους
> δὶς ἑπτά, ταῦρον Κνώσιον κατακτανών,
> σοὶ ταῦτα δώσω. 1324–28

When Theseus moves beyond these immediate offers to promise or foretell additional honors, he takes on the formal attributes of a deus, delivering a prophecy and apparently offering an aetiological explanation for sanctuaries named for Heracles:

> And everywhere I was apportioned
> precincts of land. In the future these will be
> named after you by mortals while
> you live; but after you die and go to Hades
> the whole city of Athens will honor you
> with sacrifices and rocky mounds.
>
> πανταχοῦ δέ μοι χθονὸς
> τεμένη δέδασται· ταῦτ᾽ ἐπωνομασμένα
> σέθεν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν κεκλήσεται
> ζῶντος· θανόντα δ᾽, εὖτ᾽ ἂν εἰς Ἅιδου μόλῃς
> θυσίαισι λαΐνοισί τ᾽ ἐξογκώμασιν
> τίμιον ἀνάξει πᾶσ᾽ Ἀθηναίων πόλις. 1328–33

The first lines (1328–31) apparently offer an aetiology for Attic Heracleia, shrines or sanctuaries dedicated to Heracles in various places throughout Attica,[3] and the presence of this aition is clearly marked by the array of formulaic language that regularly accompanies this gesture (ἐπωνομασμένα / σέθεν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν κεκλήσεται).[4] An aition characteristically bridges the gap between events of the play and the world of the audience by invoking the god's knowledge of what mortals will do in the future (τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν), yet Theseus is a mortal, not a god, and the future to which he alludes is not clearly outside the dramatic action, and is certainly not the world of the spectators since he describes what will happen while Heracles is still alive (ζῶντος). Thus far, the formal language heralds an aition that does not materialize.

The final lines of this passage (1321–33) look further into the future to promise honors that will be made after Heracles' death. The allusion to festivals and monuments seems to make the aetiology more concrete, establishing a specific correspondence between the action of the play and the world of the audience. But what in particular will the city of the Athenians honor? Surely not the events of this play, the hero's murder of his wife and children. And surely not his earlier career, the famous exploits of the Dorian hero whose importance is overturned by Heracles' own words (χαιρόντων πόνοι, "To hell with my labors" 575) and by his madness. Will they honor some future deeds performed by Heracles during his exile in Athens, just as the future travels of Orestes will be commemorated with the name of the town Oresteion? If so, the sequel so honored is a puzzling cipher: we are told in detail of the wanderings of Orestes that form the basis of that aetiology (*Electra* 1250–75, *Orestes* 1643–52), but the story of Heracles in Athens is not mentioned here and is not attested in any other source. (In fact, the only story connecting Heracles with Attica was the account of his initiation at Eleusis before journeying to the underworld,[5] but there is nothing to suggest that Euripides has the mysteries in mind here.) The event to be honored is so elusive that it might be better to read this passage, as ancient readers seem to have done, not as an aetiology but as a further promise and inducement by Theseus: if Heracles will come to Athens, Theseus will give him gifts and land, and will see that his friend is also honored by the city as a whole.[6] And how will this elusive sequel be honored? Not with a name or institution familiar to the audience, but with sacrifices and monuments that cannot be placed securely. The mention of sacrifices could have been used to allude to particular rites performed in Attica in Euripides' day, but the vague plural fails to do so (θυσίαισι), and the mention of monuments could have been used to bring to mind particular Athenian shrines, but the words of Theseus specify nothing more than heaps of stone (λαΐνοισί τ' ἐξογκώμασιν). Upon closer inspection, the gesture toward the world of the audience evaporates and may in fact be entirely illusory: these honors will be offered when Heracles is dead (θανόντα δ') or, lest we miss the point, when he goes to Hades (εὖτ' ἂν εἰς Ἅιδου μόλῃς)—in other words, as an audience raised on stories of Heracles' apotheosis will realize, at a time that does not really exist.[7]

This effacement of closing gestures is evident also in the entrance of Theseus. In the final scene of the play, after murdering his wife and children in a fit of madness, Heracles prepares to do the only honorable thing, to take his own life. At this climactic moment, Theseus suddenly enters, persuades Heracles not to commit suicide, and promises him gifts and honors in Athens. Theseus plays the part of a surrogate deus ex machina: he appears for the first time in the final scene, he intervenes to resolve an impasse, he delivers a command, as well as some form of aetiology and prophecy, and his dispensations are accepted by the characters onstage. But in a manner unique to this play, the surrogate deus is emptied of force. Theseus, after all, is a mortal, not a god, nor is he a mortal somehow endowed with special powers (as in the "demonic epiphanies" of Medea, Eurystheus, and Polymestor) but a mortal who lacks even the power and authority of the person he has come to save: we are constantly reminded in the latter part of the play that Heracles had earlier rescued Theseus from Hades (619, 1222, 1235, 1336, 1415). This surrogate deus likewise has no divine power to rescue Heracles from death, and must rely upon argument and persuasion.

In this exchange the would-be savior is again shown up by the man he would help: Theseus begins his speech by invoking the example of gods who manage to live with their crimes and failings (1314–19), and Heracles counters with a withering rejection of the "wretched stories" of criminal gods (1341–46).[8] And Theseus as deus has little to offer: he cannot bring or promise divine salvation, only a place of refuge for the outcast exile. Like a deus, he issues a command ("So leave Thebes, as the law requires, and follow with me to Athens," 1322–23), but this, in context, is no more than the attempt of one friend to persuade another. Even his entrance is emptied of all authority. The surrogate deus is greeted not with the exclamation of surprise or awe that attends the entrance of Thetis, Artemis, Athena, or the Dioscuri,[9] but with annoyance and frustration: "But now to foil my deadly plans, here comes Theseus . . ." (ἀλλ' ἐμποδὼν μοι θανασίμων βουλευμάτων / Θησεὺς ὅδ' ἕρπει . . . 1153–54). And instead of choosing the right moment to arrive, he seems to have come at the worst possible time: Theseus explains that he was on his way to save Heracles' family from Lycus (1163–68), but as the pile of corpses makes clear, he is far too late for that.

If the powers of Theseus are dubious, so too is the respect they earn. Usually, the authority of a deus ex machina is explicitly confirmed by the human characters, who promise to do as the god commands. When Athena orders a treaty and ritual dedications at the end of *Suppliant Women*, for example, the king ratifies this arrangement by announcing: "My Lady Athena, I will obey your words; you set me straight so I will not err" (1227–28). As we have seen, the gesture is a regular one, even if in some cases (e.g., the endorsement of Apollo's surprising settlement in *Orestes*) it seems to involve a certain degree of irony.[10] But when Heracles finally decides to live, he makes a point of casting this decision not as an acceptance of Theseus' advice but as a rebuttal, dismissing Theseus' arguments as irrelevant (πάρεργα ‹γὰρ› τάδ' ἔστ' ἐμῶν κακῶν, 1340). Each time Theseus offers help, Heracles is reluctant: "Stand up. No more tears."—"I cannot, my limbs are frozen" (1394–95); "Enough. Give your hand to a friend."—"I won't wipe blood on your clothes" (1398–99). At last Heracles tacitly acknowledges his dependence on the king ("Put your hand round my neck and I'll lead you."—"A friendly pairing, with one in misfortune" 1402–3), but he immediately reneges and turns back to embrace his father and the bodies of his children (1406, 1408). And when Theseus tries to shame him into submission ("No one who sees you playing the woman will approve" 1412), Heracles turns the tables on his benefactor by asking who saved Theseus from Hades: "Am I so lowly [ταπεινός]? I don't think I was back then" (1413). By the time they leave the stage a few lines later, Theseus' magnanimous gesture has been emptied of all authority and reduced to the verbal sparring of friends.

Horror Vacui

What do we make of this dubious ending, one that inscribes all the familiar signals of closure, only to erase them in the same stroke? Why would the poet end with these empty gestures? This question and the problem it addresses are closely related to the more familiar problem of the play's unity. The play begins with a slow and ineffec-

tual debate between Megara and Amphitryon on whether Heracles is likely ever to return from the underworld (where he has gone to bring back Cerberus as the last of his labors for Eurystheus), and it builds with increasing speed and excitement to a remarkable climax. First Lycus, who has seized power in Heracles' absence, tells the suppliants that they all must die. As they prepare for death, all dressed in black, Heracles suddenly returns from the underworld and plots revenge against the tyrant. Then in one of the shortest episodes in Greek tragedy (701–33), Lycus is lured inside the palace and killed by Heracles, but before the hero can celebrate his victory and the liberation of his family, Iris and Lyssa arrive, sent by Hera to drive Heracles mad and make him kill the wife and children he has just rescued from death. This stunning and catastrophic end, engineered with the help of the machine, apparently leaves room for little more than a brief coda in which the hero (like Agave in *Bacchant Women*) wakes up to realize what he has done and (like Sophocles' Ajax) decides to deal with the horror of his crime by taking his own life. But somehow the action stubbornly continues. Heracles' decision to commit suicide is interrupted by the entrance of Theseus ("foiling my deadly plans" 1153), who promises asylum to the infanticide, and eventually convinces Heracles to return with him to Athens. Why does the drama continue? What connects this lengthy epilogue to the climactic events that precede?

If we read Heracles' catastrophic madness as the end of the story, then the last part of the play—the final scene with its empty closing gestures—is irrelevant. For a long time, critics argued in this vein that the play reaches a premature end and is therefore defective. Algernon Swinburne called *Heracles* "a grotesque abortion," and Gilbert Murray said that it was "broken backed" and not a great work of art.[11] Critics today rally to the play's defense, and they do so by investing greater meaning in the final scene. Instead of viewing the epilogue as an awkward appendage, they discover in it a meaning that responds to, and balances, the entire first part of the play. The most eloquent statement of this view is William Arrowsmith's introduction to his translation. The first half, he says, portrays a Heracles who "is recognizably the familiar culture-hero of Dorian and Boeotian tradition: strong, courageous, noble, self-sufficient, carrying on his back all the aristocratic *aretê* of the moralized tradition of Pindar." The second half, however, shows him "reduced to tears, helpless, dependent, and in love, stripped of that outward strength which until now had exempted him from normal human necessity, and discovering both his common ground with men and a new internalized moral courage." The meaning of the play, according to Arrowsmith, somehow consists in the "conversion" or "dramatic mutation" of one figure into the other.[12] Most contemporary readings argue in various ways for a similar change or conversion. Arrowsmith's scheme is not unlike that of H. H. O. Chalk, who argues that the end of the play replaces old heroic values with a revised and more humanistic notion of *aretê*. According to Justina Gregory, the heroic Heracles, son of Zeus, is replaced at the end by a humble and mortal hero, the son of Amphitryon. Harvey Yunis argues that traditional relations between mortals and gods are replaced with a new humanistic creed. And according to Helene Foley, archaic values centered in the individual are replaced at the end of *Heracles* with newer values defined by the polis.[13] There is much of value in these readings, but they try to read too much into an inconclusive ending, attempting to construct a satisfying symmetry in which a new and coherent world is born from the ashes of the old.

The discussion that follows asks instead why the play ends with an ending erased, with an epilogue that lacks the compelling gestures and redeeming transformation that may give meaning and coherence to the whole. But this effacement of the ending does not simply leave an empty space. The trope of erasure includes both writing and un-writing, suggestion and denial. And the final scene of *Heracles* includes multiple gestures both present and absent, competing with one another and failing fully to assert themselves; as a result, the epilogue is overfull with conflicting traces of an end, yet lacks a sense of finality. To look more closely at this pregnant emptiness, I turn again to Theseus, and then to Heracles' weapons.[14]

An Ending Multiplied

In one respect, Theseus, as we have seen, is a deus manqué, a figure with many attributes of the god on the machine but with the none of the god's power and authority. Yet Theseus plays another completely different role, and again fails to do so convincingly. When he arrives with an army (1165), when he shows concern for the polluted and exiled Heracles, when he offers him a place of refuge and promises to settle him on Athenian soil, Theseus plays a familiar role as the statesman who embodies Athenian values by protecting suppliants. For example, when the children in *Children of Heracles* want to escape unlawful persecution by Eurystheus and the Argives, the sons of Theseus offer them protection in Athens. When the suppliants in *Suppliant Women* want to guard the bodies of the Seven from Theban sacrilege, it is Theseus in Athens who offers them protection and support. And when Oedipus at Colonus is threatened with violence by Creon and the Thebans, it is Theseus again who offers him refuge and military protection. Even Medea, contemplating exile from Corinth, turns to Aegeus, the father of Theseus, for a place of refuge in Athens. Medea looks forward to a reception that stands outside the action (and that she will betray by plotting against Theseus), but in the other plays, the act of receiving and defending suppliants is successfully performed onstage in an Athenian setting at Marathon, Eleusis, or Colonus. And the generous actions of Theseus and his sons, and the civic righteousness they represent, are commemorated in the resulting burials of Eurystheus, the Seven against Thebes, and Oedipus in Athenian soil.[15] When Theseus offers help to the outcast Heracles, he looks forward to a similar happy end of protection in Athens and commemoration after death (1331–33).

Yet if Theseus' role as deus is ambiguous, so too is his role as civic ambassador. Most telling is the fact that Theseus has no official, political authority. In other plays, he and his sons are invested with the authority of general or king,[16] an authority that derives from the sovereign powers of the city.[17] In this play, he comes to Heracles not as ambassador of the city, but simply as a kinsman and a friend (Θησεὺς ὅδ᾽ ἕρπει συγγενὴς φίλος τ᾽ ἐμός 1154). In other plays, Theseus or Demophon offers refuge because both divine law and the reputation of the city require it (*Children of Heracles* 236–46, *Suppliant Women* 301–31; compare *Oedipus at Colonus* 913–14, 921–23), and in *Suppliant Women*, this gesture is explicitly approved by the *dêmos* (355, 394) and defended in debate by invoking Athenian democratic values (399–455). In this play, when Theseus helps Heracles he is acting as a private citizen, and returning the private favor that Heracles performed by rescuing him from Hades. Even the con-

crete offers he makes to Heracles are private rather than public ones: houses, money, and gifts that Theseus will give to his friend (1325–28, quoted previously). In other plays, the Athenian setting is decisive. The suppliants arrive at Marathon, Eleusis or Colonus, where they are protected by the moral authority and the weapons of the Athenians, and where burial in Attic soil will bear witness to the city's virtuous deeds. In *Heracles*, however, Athens is an eventual destination—not a setting in which the crisis is resolved, but the venue for an unknown future. Nor is it a privileged site of burial; after death, the hero will be honored in Athens (1331–33), but there is no suggestion that he will be buried there.[18]

Theseus as ambassador of the city is no more effective than Theseus as deus ex machina. He has all the formal trappings of this familiar dramatic figure, but lacks the requisite civic power and authority. Rather than a mortal magnified, he is doubly deficient. Of course, this deficiency has its rewards. In the absence or erasure of Theseus' roles as deus and king, his role as friend becomes more evident: in the final scene, it is the φιλία or friendship between Theseus and Heracles that convinces the hero not to commit suicide.[19] Yet the "friend" is not a role that will compete with the deus or the king; he has no power or authority and is not defined by any formal trappings or attributes. All that defines the φίλος is a single action, an offer to repay the help Theseus received from Heracles in Hades. Because he lacks more formal roles, Theseus can make his gesture of reciprocity, but it does not follow that he becomes the ambassador of a new set of values. If Theseus is doubly deficient, then so too is the play: it lacks the presence of a deus ex machina who can resolve the action onstage before our eyes, and it lacks the presence of a civic ambassador who can guarantee a belated ending once the hero reaches Athens. The actual end and the promised end are both effaced, and all that remains is a modest and reciprocal exchange between friends.

Where does this leave Heracles? Is there something in the hero, a presence or greatness, that fills this void and compensates for the deficient Theseus? The action of the play would argue not: the great hero has been humbled, he renounces his labors (575) and his title as victor (καλλίνικος 582), he loses his wife and family, and in his madness and murder he becomes not an exemplary figure but an outcast and an exile. Having lost everything that once distinguished him, he is Theseus' perfect partner, the hero erased. This is dramatized in an interesting way in Heracles' final decision. His decision to accept the offer of asylum in Athens (1351–52) is never fully articulated, following rather abruptly upon his criticism of the wretched stories of poets.[20] But after lamenting the deaths of his wife and children and giving them a last embrace, Heracles pauses to make a more theatrical and symbolic decision, considering whether or not he should take his bow and arrows with him:

How sad the pleasure
of kisses, and sad the company of these weapons.
I'm at a loss whether to keep or give them up
since they will fall against my side and say:
"With us you killed your children and your wife; we are
your child-killers you are carrying." So shall I take
them in my hands? Saying what? But stripped of the

weapons with which I did the greatest deeds in Greece,
shall I die in shame at the mercy of my enemies?
They cannot be left, but must be kept in misery.

ὦ λυγραὶ φιλημάτων
τέρψεις, λυγραὶ δὲ τῶνδ᾽ ὅπλων κοινωνίαι.
ἀμηχανῶ γὰρ πότερ᾽ ἔχω τάδ᾽ ἢ μεθῶ,
ἃ πλευρὰ τἀμὰ προσπίτνοντ᾽ ἐρεῖ τάδε·
Ἡμῖν τέκν᾽ εἷλες καὶ δάμαρθ᾽· ἡμᾶς ἔχεις
παιδοκτόνους σούς. εἶτ᾽ ἐγὼ τάδ᾽ ὠλέναις
οἴσω; τί φάσκων; ἀλλὰ γυμνωθεὶς ὅπλων
ξὺν οἷς τὰ κάλλιστ᾽ ἐξέπραξ᾽ ἐν Ἑλλάδι
ἐχθροῖς ἐμαυτὸν ὑποβαλὼν αἰσχρῶς θάνω;
οὐ λειπτέον τάδ᾽, ἀθλίως δὲ σωστέον. 1376–85

These are the weapons with which he performed the greatest exploits in Greece, so how can he leave them behind? But they are also the weapons with which he killed his wife and children, so how can he possibly take them with him? Clearly, the weapons define the man, and the decision Heracles makes will help to define what sort of person he now is; as H. H. O. Chalk put it, "Herakles' decision here is crucial to the tragedy."[21] But what sort of weapons does he put on? And what will he use them for? "Stripped of my weapons," Heracles asks rhetorically, "shall I die shamefully at the mercy of my enemies? These [weapons] cannot be left, but must be kept in misery." He keeps them for a purely negative purpose, for self-defense. As we shall see, this does little to define a hero and does not define in a positive or constructive manner either old-fashioned, heroic virtues or new, humanistic ones.

In art and on stage, Heracles was identified with three props, three tokens of his heroic stature: the club, the lion-skin, and the bow. In this play, however, only the bow and arrows are important; they become a visual emblem of the hero, as well as a token of the labors he performed with their help. As the great ode that celebrates the Twelve Labors makes clear, it was with the bow and arrow that Heracles was able to defeat the Centaurs ("The mountain-dwelling race of savage Centaurs he scattered with deadly arrows, destroying them with his winged weapons" 364–67), kill Kyknos ("And Kyknos who slaughtered strangers by Cape Malea and the springs of Anauros he killed with his bow" 389–93) and kill Geryon ("after dipping his arrows [in the blood of the hydra], with them he killed the triple-bodied cowherd of Erytheia" 422–24). If the weapons define the hero, then in this play it is the bow in particular that represents the heroic exploits of Heracles.

But this symbol is not a simple one. Early in the play, as Amphitryon waits for his son to return from the underworld, and as Lycus the tyrant prepares to put Heracles' family to death, they have a debate on the virtues of the hero's weapons. Heracles, according to Lycus:

is especially cowardly
because he never wore a shield on his left arm
or came near a spear, but holding his bow
(that worthless weapon) stood ready to flee.
A bow is no test of a man's courage!

> . . . τἄλλα δ᾽ οὐδὲν ἄλκιμος,
> ὃς οὔποτ᾽ ἀσπίδ᾽ ἔσχε πρὸς λαιᾷ χερὶ
> οὐδ᾽ ἦλθε λόγχης ἐγγὺς ἀλλὰ τόξ᾽ ἔχων,
> κάκιστον ὅπλον, τῇ φυγῇ πρόχειρος ἦν.
> ἀνδρὸς δ᾽ ἔλεγχος οὐχὶ τόξ᾽ εὐψυχίας 158–62

In his reply, Heracles' father, instead of defending the honor of his son, simply praises the bow's expedience:

> standing far off, he wounds his enemies
> with bow-shot weapons they cannot see
> and never shows them his body. This is
> true wisdom in battle . . .
>
> ἑκὰς δ᾽ ἀφεστὼς πολεμίους ἀμύνεται
> τυφλοῖς ὁρῶντας οὐτάσας τοξεύμασιν
> τὸ σῶμά τ᾽ οὐ δίδωσι τοῖς ἐναντίοις,
> ἐν εὐφυλάκτῳ δ᾽ ἐστί. τοῦτο δ᾽ ἐν μάχῃ
> σοφὸν μάλιστα . . . 198–202

This rhetorical exchange early in the play rehearses a widespread distrust of those who rely on bow and arrows. In Homer, for example, Odysseus with his bow is a foil to Achilles with his spear—Odysseus the antihero who practiced the art of cunning survival versus Achilles the archetype of heroic courage in battle. The infamous Paris also carried a bow—the effeminate Paris who seduced Helen from Sparta, and whom Diomedes denounces in the *Iliad*: "Archer, scoundrel glorying in your bow, philanderer, if you and your weapons were put to the test that bow would do you no good, nor a host of arrows" (11.385–87).[22] And in fifth-century Athens the bow conventionally distinguished cowardly Persians from Greek soldiers with their spears (e.g., Aeschylus, *Persians* 146–49) and Scythian slaves from Athenian citizens (e.g., Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 707). Herodotus embellished this view by telling how the barbaric Scythians made quivers for their arrows from human skin:

> Whoever has the most scalps is judged the greatest man among these people. Many of them also make cloaks to wear from of the scalps, stitching them together like peasants' coats. And many also strip off the skin, nails and all, from the right hand and arm of their dead enemies, and use these to cover their quivers. (4.64)

The archer, in other words, is an outsider, a devious and suspect figure who does not subscribe to the heroic values of the Homeric warrior, or to the civilized values of the fifth-century Greek.[23] So when Heracles at the end of the play, having lost and renounced his claim to greatness, nevertheless decides to put on the bow and arrows, how does he define himself? Can we agree with George Walsh, who says, "By choosing to live and to retain his weapons, Heracles accepts his public role as a hero"?[24] If the bow and arrows represent his public and heroic exploits against the Centaurs and three-bodied Geryon, they also cast him in the role of coward and outsider. Heracles lives on, but the weapons he carries cannot tell us what this new hero will be.

The bow is also significant in another way. In the course of the play, the weapon that performed the celebrated labors also performs a less glorious task. When Heracles, driven mad by Lyssa, murders his wife and children, he uses his bow to perform the hideous deed. A messenger describes what happened in grisly detail. First, he tells us, Heracles called out "Bring me my bow!" (942). Then, after raging against an imaginary Eurystheus, "he readied his quiver and bow against his own sons, thinking he was slaughtering Eurystheus' children" (969–70). The children ran away in terror but could not escape him. He took aim at the first son and hit him by the liver (977–79). The second son was so close he could not draw the bow, so he crushed him with his club (991–94). His wife picked up the third child and ran inside the house, but Heracles tore down the door and killed son and mother with a single arrow (999–1000). This hideous and pathetic scene is recalled at the end of the play when Heracles tries to decide if he should take the child-killing weapons with him. Because it recalls their murder, the gesture of putting on these wretched weapons seems to cast Heracles as a tragic hero: if tragic knowledge, knowledge through suffering, means that through his experience the hero has come to understand a horrendous or excessive suffering, then when Heracles puts on the murderous weapons, he seems prepared to show in this theatrical gesture that he understands the meaning of what he has done.

But nowhere does Heracles find such understanding. In the epilogue as a whole there is nothing to suggest that his experience has brought new insight; he endures the gratuitous punishment of Hera but does not and cannot find a redeeming lesson in it. And the weapons in particular will be constant reminders not of a tragic truth but of shame and disgrace:

> since they will fall against my side and say:
> "With us you killed your children and your wife; we are
> your child-killers you are carrying." 1379–81

Instead of symbolizing tragic insight, they replay with every step his children's pathetic gestures, "falling against their father's knee" for attention (ὡς πρὸς πατρῷον προσπεσούμενοι γόνυ 79) and for mercy (ὁ τλήμων γόνασι προσπεσὼν πατρός . . . 986); wherever he goes, he will hear their incessant, chattering complaint.[25]

At the end of the play, Heracles has lost his family and has been crushed by the revenge of Hera; with the blood of his wife and children on his hands, there is no way he can recover his former glory, or once again embody the ideals of *aretê*. When Heracles struggles to define himself anew, and finally decides to put on the bow and arrows, he puts on a symbol both of heroic achievement and of the cowardly outsider, a symbol both of tragic suffering and of unending disgrace. The sign of the hero fails to define him in a meaningful way. Yet, at the same time, the sign is packed with multiple, contradictory meanings; it is overloaded with the many different roles the hero might want to adopt. So Heracles remains poised at a remarkable moment: armed with a sign that might mean hero or coward, tragic lesson or constant shame, there is no way to know what or who he is.[26] There is no license here for trying to construct a story of new values born from the ashes of the

old; only the unreadable future knows what or who our hero will be. Paradoxically, because he is destroyed so completely, Heracles at the end of the play enjoys a moment of unprecedented freedom: at the very lowest point in his life, he is completely free to find a new identity.

Freedom and Narrative

What does this freedom mean? Theseus, we found, was deus and not deus, statesman and less than statesman. Heracles is likewise hero and antihero, a tragic figure who transcends his sufferings and a pathetic figure who cannot escape his shame. Because the story of Heracles in Athens had never been told, he is free to play whatever part he wants: the possibilities seem endless. But for the very same reason, because the story had not been told, the possibilities are also limited: whatever may happen in Athens will not be among the hero's famous exploits. The play ends with a collapse of distinctions and a multiplication of possibilities in which almost anything—but nothing very remarkable—can happen. At this point, the relation of friendship becomes important. When Theseus enters, he is welcomed by Heracles as a kinsman and friend (1154). We are constantly reminded of Heracles' earlier favor to Theseus in rescuing him from Hades, and the play ends by replacing Heracles' bonds to his children (ἄξω λαβών γε τούσδ᾽ ἐφολκίδας 631) with bonds of friendship that now tie him to Theseus:

> I've destroyed my house with shameful deeds
> and utterly ruined, I'll follow Theseus like a dinghy
> [Θησεῖ πανώλεις ἑψόμεσθ᾽ ἐφολκίδες].
> No one in his right mind would rather have
> wealth or strength than good friends. 1423–26

This new, or newly important, relation binds individuals to one another in mutual obligations, yet it does not in any evident way characterize either figure. We do not really know who they are, except in the very ordinary and unremarkable sense that they are *philoi*.

To some extent, the emptiness and fullness of Heracles' situation extends and elaborates the unusual qualities of this mythical figure. Geoffrey Kirk has pointed out that the legendary Heracles embodies "to an unusual degree" the contradictions of the hero: humane and bestial, serious and burlesque, sane and mad, savior and destroyer, free and slave, human and divine.[27] Among this bundle of contradictions, Michael Silk has argued that one is especially pronounced: "Heracles is unique in his combination of human and divine properties," equally a god and a man, with his mortal father Amphitryon and his divine father Zeus, and worshipped both as a god and as a mortal hero.[28] Nicole Loraux adds to this list Heracles' contradictory attributes of virility and femininity, arguing that the hero's ambivalence allowed the popular imagination to explore the nature of this opposition.[29] The hero who embodies contradictions to an exceptional degree is full of possibility, available for ever new constructions and reinventions, and he is also empty, never a coherent or identifiable individual or character, but a constellation of images.[30] The ambivalent and liminal Heracles is therefore always in-between, standing outside familiar categories or devouring them all with his insatiable appetite. And as Silk reminds us, the figure who remains in-between is dangerous because he destroys the categories and distinctions that establish identity, confer status, and convey meaning. My concern, however, is not with the representations of Heracles in myth, but with the portrayal of the hero at the end of this play. In Euripides, his dangerous ambivalence threatens to destroy the very logic of drama. We have already seen that the structure of the play reduces the plot to a "grotesque abortion" or a "dramatic mutation." But the final scene, in which Heracles prepares to face an unknown future, is destructive in a different way.

I want to return to the freedom of Heracles, and in particular his freedom to fashion a new future and a new identity. In one respect, such freedom and indeterminacy seems antithetical to the designs of art. The point of writing a narrative is, after all, somehow to represent events as ordered and coherent—to suggest in Aristotle's formulation that events follow in a necessary or probable manner from one another, or to draw with Henry James a circle within which they appear to do so.[31] A moment in which a character is undefined and anything can happen is a moment at which there is no longer any story to tell. Yet in another respect, freedom and indeterminacy may be an artist's goal. In "Epic and Novel," Mikhail Bakhtin distinguishes two different impulses in narrative.[32] Those forms of narrative in which the end is known and in which events are organized so as to lead to that end, he calls "epic." In the *Aeneid*, for example, everything Aeneas does is directed toward the foundation of Rome and the establishment of the Roman Empire. Those forms of narrative in which the end is *not* known, in which characters have (or cunningly appear to have) the freedom to act in various ways, to drop in or out of the story, to follow tangents—these he calls "novel." The partition of literature into two types is rather sweeping and simplistic, but it has the virtue of focusing attention upon a particular impulse, a literary interest in reproducing or figuring the indeterminate nature of events as we live them. As we experience events, at the present moment, anything is possible.[33] Each moment of each day is pregnant with possibility: the chance encounter, the brilliant idea, the lucky Lotto ticket that has the power to transform everything that follows. On any particular day, however, nothing momentous is likely to happen and that moment of possibility will blend, in hindsight, into the featureless rhythm of everyday routine—unless, of course, that day turns out to be an especially lucky or significant or unfortunate one. In either case, a book of memoirs, ordering events in hindsight, will reduce the play of possibility in the present moment, either by reducing it to a predictable routine or by drawing attention to its decisive importance. A memoir that succeeds in preserving the real potential in every moment of a life would be formless, plotless, and unbearably long (just as a truly accurate map would be impossibly big, "on the scale of *a mile to the mile*!" in Lewis Carroll's words).[34] What Bakhtin describes is the attempt of novels, not to reproduce this play of possibilities, but to represent or imitate it. Both Tolstoy and Dickens, for example, used serial publication to give the impression of a continually unfolding story and to give their work a journalistic realism by seeming to report events as they unfolded from week to week, rather than presenting the reader with a story complete from beginning to end.[35]

Greek tragedy generally has an opposite impulse, imitating a single, complete action, reshaping already familiar legends, and regularly foreshadowing the end. *Oedipus the King*, for example, begins with an argument between Oedipus and Teiresias in which the seer hints darkly at the eventual blinding of Oedipus (412–19, 454–56). *Medea* begins with a speech in which the Nurse frets at Medea's anger and fears that she will hurt her children (36–39). And *Helen* begins, as we shall see, with the protagonist clinging in her misfortune to Hermes' promise that she will return safely to Sparta (56–59). Euripides' *Heracles* is unusual in several ways. It begins not by anticipating the end, but by entertaining different scenarios for the present situation as Amphitryon and Megara debate the likelihood that Heracles will ever return to Thebes. They are trapped in the uncertainties of the present moment, and in Megara's words, they are being eaten away by the time in-between (ὁ δ' ἐν μέσῳ γε λυπρὸς ὢν δάκνει χρόνος 94). The plot is not a single and coherent action, but a sequence of episodes leading to a series of aborted ends: first death for the hero's wife and children at the hands of the upstart Lycus, then deliverance when Heracles suddenly returns from Hades to save his family and rescue the tyrant, then crushing reversal when Heracles in god-sent madness murders his wife and children, and finally the uncertain future that awaits the hero in Athens. The final scene of the play describes a situation whose outcome is unknown, and a protagonist whose identity remains undefined. Heracles is a perfect Bakhtinian hero. All known ends have been stripped away and his final decision not to commit suicide, instead of determining what will follow, leaves both his future and his identity profoundly unclear because it commits him to the total uncertainty and total freedom of living in the present. Yet *Heracles* does not have a Bakhtinian plot. For Bakhtin, the novel is characterized by what we might call systematic openness (or "aperture," to use Saul Morson's term):[36] at any moment in the narrative, characters are free to make choices and decisions just as we do in everyday life. The action of *Heracles* is largely the opposite. At each moment, the end is clear and decisive: from the inflexible resolve of Lycus to kill Heracles' family, to the triumphant return of Heracles from Hades, to the total catastrophe inflicted by Hera, the plot navigates a series of apparent endings.[37] Only at a single point in the action, only at the moment the play ends, do we have a sense of aperture as the hero lingers on the threshold between a catastrophic past and an unknown future.

Yet this single moment of narrative freedom is enough to undo the drama. Ann Michelini and others have drawn attention to Heracles' apparent repudiation of the dramatic fiction.[38] Theseus has told Heracles to abandon the grand gesture of suicide and learn to live with his crimes; after all, even the gods have committed adultery and harmed their parents (1313–19). Heracles answers by rejecting such stories and demanding higher standards of the gods:[39]

> Ah! This has nothing to do with my troubles;
> I don't believe the gods love forbidden
> beds and fasten chains to their hands;
> I never did and never will suppose
> that one god is another's master.
> God, if he is truly god, needs nothing;
> these are poets' worthless stories.

> οἴμοι· πάρεργα ‹γὰρ› τάδ' ἔστ' ἐμῶν κακῶν·
> ἐγὼ δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς οὔτε λέκτρ' ἃ μὴ θέμις
> στέργειν νομίζω δεσμά τ' ἐξάπτειν χεροῖν
> οὔτ' ἠξίωσα πώποτ' οὔτε πείσομαι
> οὐδ' ἄλλον ἄλλου δεσπότην πεφυκέναι.
> δεῖται γὰρ ὁ θεός, εἴπερ ἔστ' ὀρθῶς θεός,
> οὐδενός· ἀοιδῶν οἵδε δύστηνοι λόγοι. 1340–46

Heracles rejects the stories of divine infidelity as wretched lies, yet he is the product of Zeus' adulterous affair with Alcmene, an affair repeatedly brought to mind by mention of Heracles' two fathers, Zeus and Amphitryon (e.g., 1263–65). Therefore, with these words, Heracles erases or crosses out the legendary premise upon which the drama rests. With even greater effect, however, the episodic plot and the indeterminate final scene erase the familiar gestures of closure and reach at the end a remarkable moment of narrative uncertainty. If the shape of this play is strange or unusual, this is not least because it finally embodies a radical openness that is antithetical to the ends of tragedy.

that it does not refer to a character in the play" (71), is an exact parallel to the prophecy of Poseidon, which concerns the Greeks rather than the Trojans.

23. *Hecuba* 1271, *Electra* 1275, *Heracles* 1330, *Ion* 1594 (κεκλῆσθαι), *Helen* 1674, and *Orestes* 1646. Compare *Erechtheus* frag. 65, line 92 (Austin), and *Suppliant Women* 1225 (κληθέντες). At *Trojan Women* 13, the manuscripts vary between κεκλήσεται (V) and κληθήσεται (PQ). For a discussion of Euripides' use of the word, see pages 383–94 in Ruijgh, "Observations sur κεκλῆσθαι."

24. On the statue created by Strongylion and dedicated by Chaeredemus, see Parmentier, "Notes sur les *Troyennes*" 46–49.

25. Wilson, "Interpolation" 205–12. It does not follow, however, that Athena's entrance has been interpolated.

26. See Kovacs, "Euripides, *Troades* 95–97" and more recently Manuwald, "μῶρος δὲ θνητῶν."

27. Especially in the prologue and in messenger speeches, but also in other parts of the play; see C. Friedrich, "Dramatische Funktion."

28. Mason, "Kassandra" 88, proposes correcting this reversal by transposing the *effect* of the moral to the end of the play: "the lesson of [lines 95–97] remains in our ears until the end of the play, so that no *deus ex machina* is required to establish justice or impose peace."

29. Wilson, "Etymology in *Troades*" recommends cosmetic surgery to eliminate this defect; see note 22 of this chapter.

30. As Poole, "Total disaster" 259 concludes, "never does a Chorus leave an emptier space at the end."

31. Conacher, *Euripidean Drama* 139.

32. Compare Poole, "Total Disaster" 259: "The play is concerned with analyzing, more coldly and clinically than most readers seem prepared to admit, the way in which people actually behave, values behave, words behave, in such a frontier situation."

33. It is now hard to maintain, as Delebecque (*Euripide et la guerre* 245–46) and Goossens (*Euripide et Athènes* 520–27) once did, that *Trojan Women* has the end or goal of attacking war in general and the Athenian expedition against Melos in particular. There is a great difference between a work depicting "the cultural and ideological crisis brought on by war" (Croally, *Euripidean Polemic* 231) and one designed to convey a particular lesson or message. As Erp Taalman Kip points out ("Euripides and Melos"), there was probably not time to compose and submit a play in response to the destruction of Melos, and the bleakness of Euripides' play consists in part in the absence of such a message. Contrast the reassuringly clear conclusion Sartre adds to his version, bringing in Poseidon to announce, "Faites la guerre, mortels imbéciles, ravagez les champs et les villes, violez les temples, les tombes, et torturez les vaincus. Vous en crèverez. Tous" (*Les Troyennes* 130).

34. See the excellent discussion in Scodel, *Trojan Trilogy*.

35. *Rhesus* is a special problem; it covers events described in book 10 of the *Iliad*, but its date and authorship are uncertain.

36. On the struggle against the poetic father or precursor, see Bloom, *Anxiety of Influence*.

37. Summary in Proclus (Allen 102–105). Homer nowhere refers directly to the story of the judgment, but a passing allusion (*Iliad* 24.28–30) may indicate that he knew the story: thus Reinhardt, "Parisurteil" and Stinton, *Euripides and Judgement* 1–4. The *Cypria*'s revision would then consist in describing at length what Homer preferred to pass over.

38. *Cypria* I (Allen 117–18) = scholiast to *Iliad* 1.5.

39. See Stinton, *Euripides and Judgement*.

40. For a reconstruction of *Alexander*, see Scodel, *Trojan Trilogy*.

41. See Sutton, *Two Lost Plays* 117–121. We cannot be sure exactly which inventions other than writing (fr. 578 Nauck) figured in Euripides' version of the legend.

42. For a much simpler view of their disconnectedness, see Koniaris, "*Alexander*, *Palamedes*."

43. Scodel, *Trojan Trilogy* 72. Compare the remarks of Croally, *Euripidean Polemic* 204 on the unmarked and temporary space the action inhabits.

Chapter 8

1. Diggle obelizes the end of 1420 and deletes 1421, while Conradt went further, deleting 1419–21. For other proposed emendations, with discussion, see Bond, *Heracles* 414–15.

2. This implication is sometimes softened by emending the text of 1391; for the manuscript reading παίδων, ἅπαντες δ' ἑνὶ λόγῳ πενθήσατε, Diggle, for example, prints παίδων. ἅπαντας δ' ἑνὶ λόγῳ πενθήσετε.

3. On altars and sanctuaries to Heracles in Attica, see Woodford, "Cults of Heracles." Herodotus (6.108 and 116) refers to a shrine of the god Heracles that existed at Marathon in the year 490.

4. See chapter 4.

5. Earlier in this play, Heracles alludes to an initiation: "I was lucky enough to see the rites of the *mystai*" (τὰ μυστῶν δ' ὄργι' εὐτύχησ' ἰδών 613), and a story of his initiation at Eleusis before descending to the underworld seems to lie behind Aristophanes' *Frogs*; possible earlier sources in poetry and art are discussed by Lloyd-Jones, "Heracles at Eleusis" and Boardman, "Herakles, Peisistratos." Isolated reports that Heracles was initiated at the instigation of Theseus (Plutarch, *Theseus* 30) or that the Lesser Mysteries in Athens were established in his honor (Diodorus 4.14.3) seem to be late attempts to improve upon this tradition by forging the close connection between Heracles and Athens that is lacking in Euripides.

6. Later tradition regards both τεμένη (Philochorus 328 F18.3 = Plutarch *Theseus* 35) and a βωμός (Aelian *VH* 4.5) as gifts from Theseus himself to Heracles. As Jacoby points out, Philochorus seems to follow and correct the account of Euripides (*FGrH* IIIB, supp. I, 307–8).

7. On the prevalence of stories of Heracles' apotheosis, see March, *Creative Poet* 72–75 and Holt, "End of *Trachiniai*" 70–74. If the words of Theseus are ironic (he does not know, as the audience does, what the future holds) and partially true (Heracles will be honored after his "death" even if he does not really die), they still betray the ignorance of a speaker who otherwise seemed to have privileged knowledge.

8. On this notorious exchange, see Halleran, "Rhetoric, Irony"; Heracles' reply is quoted at the end of this chapter.

9. *Andromache* 1226–30, *Hippolytus* 1391–93, *Ion* 1549–52, *Electra* 1233–37; compare discussion in chapter 3.

10. *Orestes* 1678–81; compare *Hippolytus* 1442–43, *Andromache* 1276–77, *Iphigenia among the Taurians* 1475–76, *Ion* 1606–7, *Helen* 1680–81.

11. Swinburne quoted by Verrall, *Essays* 136; Murray, "Heracles" 112, endorsed by Norwood, *Essays* 47.

12. Arrowsmith, Introduction to *Heracles* 49–50.

13. Chalk, "ἀρετή and βία"; Gregory, "Euripides' *Heracles*"; Yunis, *New Creed*; Foley, *Ritual Irony*.

14. See further Dunn, "Ends and Means." The trope of erasure is used in a different way at the end of Michelini's useful chapter on *Heracles*.

15. On problems with these apparent burials, see discussion in chapter 4.

16. ἄναξ *Children of Heracles* 114; *Suppliant Women* 113, 164, 367; προστάτης *Children of Heracles* 206; ἀλκιμώτατον κάρα *Suppliant Women* 163; compare *Oedipus at Colonus* 67, 549.

17. ἐλευθέρα *Children of Heracles* 62, 113, 198, *Suppliant Women* 405, 477; self-government *Children of Heracles* 423–24, *Suppliant Women* 403–8; compare *Oedipus at Colonus* 557–58. On the contrast between *Heracles* and *Oedipus at Colonus*, and Euripides' emphasis upon friendship, compare Kroeker, *Herakles* 99.

18. Compare *Medea*, in which Aegeus enters not as a king but as a friend, and Athens remains a future destination. An important difference is that the story of Medea's exile in Athens, unlike that of Heracles, was apparently known to the audience; see for example Gantz, *Early Greek Myth* 255–56.

19. On φιλία in *Heracles*, see Conacher, *Euripidean Drama* 83–88.

20. The digression on the gods (1340–46) is followed with mention of his fear of seeming a coward (1347–48) and with a proverb on endurance (1349–50) that introduce his decision to go to Athens. Compare Bond, *Heracles* 401: "Heracles' change of mind is rapidly indicated and given one single motivation, fear of the charge of cowardice."

21. Chalk, "ἀρετή and βία" 14.

22. Aeneas likewise taunts Pandarus the bowman, who curses his bow, *Iliad* 5.171–78, 204–16; compare Hera taunting Artemis the archer, *Iliad* 21.483, 491.

23. On the portrayal of archers as barbarians in Attic vase-painting, see Vos, *Scythian Archers*. If Lycus endorses the civic solidarity of hoplites, it does not follow that Heracles endorses an opposing set of values. Foley, for example, wants Heracles' bow to represent an older, individualistic heroism, while Michelini wants it to represent a newer, sophistic heroism: Foley, *Ritual Irony* 167–75; Michelini, *Euripides and Tragic Tradition* 242–46. Neither is correct. Odysseus' personal and domestic vendetta against the suitors is hardly an archetype of heroic warfare, while the sophistic tone of Amphitryon's debate with Lycus does not necessarily characterize Heracles. Otherwise, both have good observations on the bow and its connotations, as does Hamilton, "Slings and Arrows."

24. Walsh, "Public and Private" 308. George, "Euripides' *Heracles*" likewise sees the bow as endorsing civic values.

25. It is possible that the strange conceit of talking weapons alludes to the chattering Kerkopes who stole Heracles' weapons and, as he carried them off, remarked upon his hairy backside; for their story, see Nonnus in Westermann, *Μυθογράφοι* 375; *Suda* s.v. Κέρκωπες and s.v. Μελαμπύγου τύχοις; Brommer, *Herakles II* 28–32; *LIMC* s.v. Kerkopes; and Gantz, *Early Greek Myth* 441–42.

26. Michelini, *Euripides and Tragic Tradition* 272 draws attention in a more general way to "the kaleidoscopic fragmentation of Herakles' image, as we are continually presented with different and contradictory versions of the hero."

27. Kirk, "Methodological Reflections" 286.

28. Silk, "Heracles and Tragedy" 120.

29. Loraux, "Herakles."

30. It is worth noting that Prodicus elaborated a moral conflict between virtue and vice in the figure of Heracles; see, e.g., Kuntz, "Prodikean Choice." I would suggest that the failure of this story (as reported by Xenophon) to tell which choice Heracles made is more significant than Kuntz allows, and although Arete has the last word, Heracles' career was equally renowned for noble and for self-indulgent deeds.

31. Chapter 5, notes 1 and 2.

32. Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination* 3–40.

33. Compare the discussion of Morson, "For the Time Being."

34. Carroll, *Sylvie and Bruno* 169.

35. Compare Davis, "Social History."

36. On "aperture" see Morson, "For the Time Being"; on ethical freedom, compare Rubino, "Opening up the Classical Past."

37. See Dunn, "Ends and Means."

38. Michelini, *Euripides and Tragic Tradition* 275; Lesky, *Greek Tragic Poetry* 281; Conacher, *Euripidean Drama* 89–90; see also Halleran, "Rhetoric, Irony."

39. In line 1340, I give Barnes' supplement; for a brief discussion, see Bond, *Heracles* 398.

Chapter 9

1. Shaw, *Pygmalion* 115 and 124.

2. Shaw, *Pygmalion* 9, from his preface.

3. The genre has been dubbed "tragi-comedy" by Kitto, *Greek Tragedy* 311–29, and "romantic tragedy" by Conacher, *Euripidean Drama* 265, while its affinities with the novel have been pointed out by Winkler, "Aristotle's Theory." On the larger class of "intrigue plays," see note 62 of this chapter.

4. τὴν καινὴν Ἑλένην, as Aristophanes describes Euripides' protagonist, *Thesmophoriazusae* 850.

5. With a variation in the first line in *Medea*; on these lines and their authenticity, see chapter 2.

6. Compare Rees, "Euripides, *Medea*" 180–81.

7. In the preceding lines (1666–69, quoted later in this chapter), the Dioscuri prophesize that Helen will be called a god and will share the worship of her brothers. The passing allusion to offerings made to the Dioscuri (1668) is too vague to class as an aition, but as Foley, "*Anodos* Dramas" 145–48 points out, there are hints of Spartan cult elsewhere in the play, while at Therapne there was a cult of Helen that might have been introduced as a closing aetiology—but was not.

8. There is an allusion to the aetiology of Oresteion at *Electra* 1273–75, following the more explicit judicial aetiology in 1265–69.

9. Euripides apparently conflates his novel account of the phantom with prior attempts to place this island on Helen's route to (Homer, *Iliad* 3.443–46 with Strabo 9.1.22) or from Troy (Hecataeus *FGrH* 1 F128); compare Kannicht on 1670–75.

10. Compare Dale, *Helen* on 1673: the cult aetiology "has shrunk here to a mere perfunctory insertion, and the philology, if indeed ἑλ- is to be connected with κλέψας, κλοπάς, 'taking' by stealth, is more than usually far-fetched." Austin, *Helen of Troy* 186 is a bit far-fetched in stating that Helena means "The Stolen."

11. Diggle follows F. W. Schmidt in deleting parts of lines 1667–68.

12. Ring-composition emphasizes the difficulties: the play begins with Hermes' announcement of Apollo's scheme to restore Ion in Athens by deceiving Xuthus (69–73), and it ends with Athena's announcement of an almost identical scheme (1601–2).

13. For my purposes, the identity of the servant is not important. The manuscripts assign this part to the (female) chorus leader, while Clark attributed them to a male servant (δοῦλος ὢν 1630). Clark's attribution is followed by Stanley–Porter, "Who opposes Theoclymenus?" and by Diggle; for a defense of the manuscripts, see Dale, *Helen* 165–66 and Kannicht, *Helena*, vol. 1, 422–24.

14. In *Antiope*, Page restores a similarly abrupt intervention and command of Hermes, who enters to prevent Amphion from killing Lycus in revenge: Page, *Greek Literary Papyri* 68.

15. Thus, Way, *Tragedies of Euripides*, vol 3, xxi and Grube, *Drama of Euripides* 75–76.

Tragedy's End

Closure and Innovation in Euripidean Drama

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