CHAPTER FOUR

SPACE AND THE BODY

I challenge anyone to explain anything without the body.
—Diderot, *Eléments de physiologie*

THAT THE BODY is important in establishing and transforming space in the theater is evident. In *Antigone*, the distant bodies of Polyneices and the entombed Antigone lead to the deaths of Haimon and Eurydice and the display of their corpses, the culminating image of Creon's onstage desolation. The hero's corpse in *Ajax* turns the deserted beach where he dies into a place of contending forces, as does the diseased, talismanically charged body of Philoctetes on Lemnos. In *Prometheus Bound*, the physically ravaged Prometheus and Io testify to the tyranny of Zeus but also to the instability of his rule. The body of the *actor* also plays a transformative role: the fact that the same actor performs both Ajax and Teukros gives Sophocles' protagonist theatrical afterlife following his suicide; the fact that a single actor plays Odysseus, the Merchant, and Heracles complicates our sense of whom these fictional characters represent in *Philoctetes*.

That bodies in extremis dominate tragedy borders on a definition of the genre. As Adrian Poole says, "the physical presence of the mortal body is one of the most powerful arguments for the peculiar purchase which the theatre has on tragedy."[1] But we should consider more closely the relationship between corporeal suffering and the idea of space. In Gibson's view, we locate and orient ourselves by reference to our physical environment, an "outward move" that takes us beyond ourselves. But our ecologically based visual perception also involves an awareness of our own sensate reality, what Gibson calls "proprioception." In perceiving the world we (literally) perceive our own bodies.

Gibson's observation fits well with the ancient Greek view that the body (broadly speaking) constitutes the beginning and end of each person's existence. Unlike followers of monotheistic Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and of such polytheistic religions as Hinduism, the Greeks (excepting Plato) did not conceive of the self as an essential soul that exists beyond its immediate human incarnation. For them, what happens to one's body is what happens to oneself. We understand that Oedipus stabs his eyes because he has proved himself to be "blind," just as his name "swollen foot" conjoins physical fact with personal identity. The Achaeans maroon Philoctetes because his putrid leg offends, and his cries of pain disturb their religious rites. Philoctetes

cannot be separated from the effect that his body has on others, until the crisis at Troy overwhelms these considerations and makes a cure possible. Put simply, the fates of Oedipus and Philoctetes are inextricably "embodied"—in a sense, each one "is" his wound.

To arrive at this point, we have moved from the social and political worlds implicit in the notion of return and homecoming, to the isolated realms of *erēmia*, and finally to the place of individual physical bodies on the stage. In this chapter, we deal with the formative and transformative function of physical corporality in terms of our six spatial categories. Having glimpsed these processes in previous chapters, let us outline a basic approach that we can apply to specific tragedies: the body per se as spatial; the body as a representation or symbol of a place or places; the actor's body as a locus of conflicting spaces.

Lefebvre reminds us that "each living body *is* space and *has* its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space."[2] This situation applies a fortiori in the theater, as discussed in the introduction. In the case of choral lyric, for example, the active presence of the chorus may reveal its physical and psychological state, as when the slave women in *Choephori* mark their grief with gashed cheeks, rent clothes, veiled faces, cropped hair, and beaten breasts (*Cho.* 22–31, 82–85, 423–28). On the other hand, by harnessing the power of human bodies in a group, the song and dance of Greek lyric can evoke distant worlds (the so-called escape odes of Euripides), or reenact past events (the sacrifice of Iphigenia in the *parodos* of *Agamemnon*, or the hero's mythic labors in *Heracles*), or charge the theater with new physical energy that enables the plot to move in a different direction (the shield of Achilles' chorus in *Electra*).

Without the presence of the chorus and characters before an audience (ideally in the theater, at minimum in the imagination), Greek tragedy reverts to a text read like a novel, denied its phenomenological potential. How a dramatic character treats his or her body helps create that character's reality, establishing a dramatic context and "fleshing it out." Orestes cuts off a lock of hair and places it on his father's tomb, merging the funeral ritual with the initiatory rites of a young man becoming an adult. The bodily evidence of his footprints and hair convert the tomb into a place of reunion (*Cho.* 166–211) and a wellspring for the forces of vengeance. Other compulsions working on Orestes include Apollo's threat to infect his body if he fails to act (*Cho.* 270–90), and the news that Clytemnestra mutilated Agamemnon's corpse (439–43).[3] His mother's dream, in which she suckles a snake that drinks her milk and blood (523–25), anticipates the physical action of Clytemnestra baring her breast to her son (however represented by the original male actor), which momentarily stalls Orestes (896–99). The display of her corpse at the end of the play brings on the Furies, eager to suck Orestes' blood in a reverse image of Clytemnestra's dream (*Eum.* 183–84, 263–68). Their frightening

bodies and powerful dance release extraordinary energy in performance, enabling the no less remarkable transformation at the end of the trilogy.

The body when dressed or undressed evokes different spaces and different worlds, as the Furies' donning red robes at the end of *Eumenides* illustrates. Gibson observes that the ecological self does not equal the biological self, because we usually perceive people (including ourselves) with clothes on. By extending the body, garments can carry their own meanings, a fact the theater long has exploited, from the shield sequence in *Seven against Thebes* ("the gradual masking of the human form behind metal")[4] to the undressing and reclothing of Shakespeare's Lear, from the rags of Euripides' *Electra* to Gogo's dropped trousers in *Waiting for Godot*. Consider the jarring appearance of the Chorus wearing black at the sanctuary of Eleusis in *Suppliant Women*; the young bride Evadne and Sophocles' Antigone (in her final appearance) incongruously dressed for their weddings; Menelaus arriving alone and in rags at the Egyptian palace in *Helen*.[5] The fact that Orestes appears barefoot in *Choephori* recalls his father's homecoming, when he removes his shoes before walking on the tapestries (*Ag.* 944–46). Agamemnon's symbolic action prefigures Cassandra's removal of her prophetic robes, signaling that she abandons the god (Apollo) who has abandoned her. In the other direction, Orestes and Pylades disguise themselves with their traveling cloaks at the palace in *Choephori*, marking themselves as *xenoi* 'outsiders'. This short-lived homecoming (Orestes flees Argos for Delphi) finds its dramatic fulfillment only when the Furies, dressed in their new robes like metics at the Panathenaia, take up residence in Athens.

Transformative effects of the body multiply when recognizable gestures combine with appropriate speech and costume to open up different worlds. In tragedy, these might include the realms of supplication, sacrifice, prayer, initiation, childbirth, exile, military training, funerals, weddings. As Mary Douglas observes, "rituals work upon the body politic through the symbolic medium of the physical body," giving visible expression to the social relations enacted in the various rites.[6] Frequently these gestural worlds fit the scenic space of a tragedy perfectly—that Megara and her family in *Heracles* supplicate at the altar of Zeus Sōtēr makes sense, given that they are besieged outside their home. But when the Nurse supplicates the Tutor in *Medea*, pleading that he divulge the latest gossip (*Med.* 65), something is amiss. Euripides sets these household servants against the legendary figure of Jason, whose life-or-death supplication of Medea led to the recovery of the Golden Fleece (*Med.* 492–98).[7] By these suppliant acts (there are others in the play), Euripides' conflates the domestic and heroic worlds, questioning the assumptions that underlie them both.[8]

Dead bodies possess a special power to transform the spaces of tragedy, because the human corpse (as such) does not revert immediately to nature, but remains a part of culture.[9] The recovery of the corpses of the Seven leads

to Adrastus' funeral oration in *Suppliant Women*, moving the audience's perception of the setting away from Eleusis and toward the Athenian Kerameikos. The corpse of Eurydice, revealed on the altar of Zeus Herkeios in *Antigone*, collapses the public world of Thebes into the broken home of its erstwhile ruler. In *Ajax*, we have seen how the hero's body transforms a desolate beach into a place of protective power and public contention. In contrast, the appearance of Astyanax' corpse in *Trojan Women* (1173–99) underlines the futility of the play's political and moral debates. The Chorus joins Hecuba in preparing the body for burial (*Tro.* 1200–1250), the ritual sign that the civilization of Troy has expired, with no hope of recovery. The boy's funeral pyre merges with the burning city, and the Trojan women take their bodies—now chattel of their Greek masters—down to the ships (1260–1334).

In *Agamemnon*, the proliferation of the distant dead makes the murder of the returned king seem inevitable.[10] The Greeks burn Troy to ashes (*Ag.* 818–20), but only after the cremated remains of numerous comrades are sent home in funeral urns (433–44), and other Greeks leave their "lovely bodies" (*eumorphoi*) buried in the land they ostensibly conquered (452–55). The Herald lingers over the physical discomforts of war (heat, damp, cold, lice; *Ag.* 555–66), before reporting the storm that made the Aegean "flower with Greek corpses" (659–60). In her account of waiting at home for her husband's return, Clytemnestra emphasizes the bodily details spread by rumor:

> Again and again rumor spilt his blood
> . . . . . .
> If he were wounded so many times,
> his flesh would have more holes than a fishing net.
> Or if he had died as often as they said,
> he would be three corpses now, a second Geryon,
> and it would take three mounds of earth
> to cover his death.
>
> (*Ag.* 863–72)

These imaginary deaths, requiring three bodies to hold the wounds and three graves for the corpses, lead to the thing itself, the revelation of Clytemnestra standing over her dead husband and his concubine Cassandra. As noted in chapter 2, the presence of the king's corpse eventually transforms the mood in the theater from murderous celebration to communal grief. The full executive power of a body to transform space—effecting a change in real behavior, outside the theater—must wait for *Eumenides*, when Orestes vows that his corpse will guarantee the historical alliance of Argos and Athens.

As Cassirer observes, "The body is by no means indifferent to the place in which it is located and by which it is enclosed; rather, it stands in a real and causal relation to it."[11] But the body also "provides a basic scheme for all

symbolism," as Douglas demonstrates, and this is especially true in the theater.[12] Bodies in Greek tragedy exercise this symbolic power in three interconnected ways—via synecdoche (a part for the whole), anthropomorphism (the body extended beyond the human), and the relationship between microcosm and macrocosm (a form of synecdoche in which the "part" is a miniature).

Starting small, the tragedians employ the common Greek practice of addressing a character in terms of a key anatomical part, particularly the head (*kara*) and eye (*omma*).[13] Such habits of speech occur across cultures, varying only in regard to the favored part that stands for the person: head, hair, eyes, mouth, heart, hands, sexual organs. Moving to a wider field, tragic characters often substitute a person for his or her family: Electra and Orestes view themselves as the symbolic remnants of the house of Atreus, the saving seed (*Ag.* 235–36, 502–5) and rootstock of a royal line (260–63), the corks that keep the net afloat (506–7). Paraphrasing Andromache's speech to Hector in *Iliad* 6, Aeschylus' Electra addresses Orestes as her dead father, as a replacement for her hated mother, as the object of the love she once had for her sister Iphigeneia, and finally as the biological brother he in fact is (*Cho.* 235–44). Tecmessa characterizes her relationship to Ajax in similar terms (see chapter 3), a single body representing family members both distant and dead.

Turning from bodily synecdoche to the anthropomorphism integral to Greek culture, we begin with the ancient penchant for using the human form to describe elements in the natural world. A river, bay, or cave can have a "mouth" (*stoma*); a mountain has a "foot" (*pous*), "limbs" (*knēmoi*, either lower slopes or a projecting "shoulder"), "neck" (*deiras*, upper slope or ridge), "brow" or "eyebrow" (*ophrus*, crag), and "head" (*kara*, *karēnon*, peak); the sun has a "face" or "countenance" (*prosōpon*) and an "eye" (*omma*, *ophthalmos*, *blepharon*), as does the moon, the dawn, and the night.[14] When the Oceanids mourn for Prometheus, they imagine the peoples of the world adding their voices, until the earth herself joins in:

> And the waves of the salt sea cry out
> as they break, and the ocean depths groan,
> even the dark abyss of Hades roars underground,
> and the streams of the pure-flowing rivers
> lament your bitter suffering.
>
> (A. *PV* 431–35)

So great is Prometheus' pain that the Chorus hears the natural world joining its lament.[15] But nature also takes delight in humanlike responses, as in the myth of Orpheus, where the poet's song entices the trees and animals to move and dance like their human counterparts.

So, too, man-made artifacts can assume human attributes. In his monograph on making *auloi*, for instance, Aristoxenus identifies the differently

pitched instruments as *parthenioi* ("girl-type"), *paidikoi* ("boy-type"), *teleioi* ("grown-up-type"), and *huperteleioi* ("super-grown-up-type").[16] Architectural columns reveal metaphorical—and occasionally mimetic—links to the human form, and ceramic vases could possess lips, necks, shoulders, ears [handles], bodies, and feet.[17] Some vase shapes directly imitate parts of the human body, such as the female breast in the *mastos* (nipple) and *mastoid* cups and male genitalia as the base for some eye cups.[18] Moving from shape to painted decoration, drinking cups often bear depictions of human eyes, so that the symposiast displays a painted, masklike visage when he tilts back his *kylix* to drink. Some cups have bottoms painted with a face, so that the upturned vessel replaces the face of the drinker. Functioning like a theatrical mask, these cups emphasize the performative aspects of the symposium, a festive occasion (like the theater) tied to the god Dionysus.[19]

As well as personifying natural objects and human artifacts, the Greeks worshiped anthropomorphic deities, ubiquitous in a city like Athens with public buildings bearing their sculpted representations. By using fully human images for their pantheon, the Greeks differed from their Mediterranean neighbors, the Egyptians, Persians, and Jews.[20] On the tragic and comic stage, the Greek gods appeared "in the flesh," enacted by human performers. Not only were canonical deities humanly configured; lesser-known divinities and more abstract forces also took personified form, like "Madness" (*Lyssa*) in *Heracles*.[21] "Destiny" (*Aisa*) forges its armor like a bronzesmith (*Ag.* 646–47); the "far-seeing Curses" (*Arai*) must be grappled with like a wrestler (*Cho.* 692–93); "aged murder" (*gerōn phonos*) bears children in the house (*Cho.* 805); "time" (*chronos*) walks through the doors of the palace (*Cho.* 965–66).[22] Most significant, the spirits of vengeance in the *Oresteia* finally appear as human-shaped Furies, moving from horrific apparitions to the prosecutors of a homicide trial. By taking up residence among the autochthonous citizens of Athens, the Furies metaphorically sow the anthropomorphic impulse they represent back into the soil, guaranteeing the earth's fertility, the people's procreativity, and the health of the city as a whole. The Furies' transformation reflects the tendency of the early cosmologists (discussed in the appendix) to conceive the phenomenal world as a living being, analogous to a human body.[23]

A relationship of macrocosm to microcosm obtains when the social institutions of *oikos* and *polis* take on human features, an analogy of function rather than form. The Watchman conjures a speaking house (*Ag.* 37–38), and the Chorus hopes that it can raise itself up from its fallen position (*Cho.* 963–64). Like any mortal body, the city can fall sick, and the Chorus imagines that Argos will find its way back to health (*Cho.* 471–74). Agamemnon personifies his city as a diseased patient (*Ag.* 848–50), but he remains unaware that he is to be part of the cure, belated homeopathy for the brutality his father Atreus worked on the bodies of Thyestes' children.[24] Finally, Agamemnon's exposed corpse symbolizes the end of the old political order of Argos,

killed off by Aegisthus, who will never (as Agamemnon did) "call general assemblies and hear all sides" (*Ag.* 844–46).

What happens to a tragic body can extend to the house or city that it comes to represent.[25] In Aeschylus' *Persians*, for example, Atossa refers to "the lord of the house" as its "eye" (168–69), but Xerxes stands for more than that. When he returns from Greece with empty quiver and tattered clothes (*stolē*, 1017, both "garments" and "fleet"), the bedraggled emperor provides the physical correlative for his ruined empire, the wasted finery and useless weapons representing the lost riches of Persia (A. *Pers.* 1017–23).[26] We see a graphic demonstration of this relationship in Euripides' *Bacchae*, where the dismembered Pentheus is homologous with the fragmented city he once ruled. The symbolic extension of a ruler's body to his domain—the figurative basis for the plague in *Oedipus Tyrannus*—was not limited to tragic myth. Kimon's recovery of Theseus' bones and their reburial in Athens (ca. 475) indicates that the Athenians recognized the political power implicit in viewing a hero's body as an allegory for the *polis* at large.[27]

Turning to the presence of the actor, we discuss in previous chapters how role-doubling can call to mind an absent character previously played by the same actor: Athena (Aethra) in *Suppliant Women*, Teukros (Ajax) in *Ajax*, Athena (Clytemnestra and her "dream") in the *Oresteia*. In Sophocles' *Trachiniae*, Deianeira seems to live again through Heracles, who is carried into the orchestra lying on a litter, "racked with unceasing [labor] pains [*odunai*]," his body veiled like a woman's (S. *Tr.* 986, 1078). He "weeps like a girl" (*hōste parthenos / bebrucha klaiōn*, 1071), a "wretched womanly thing" (*thēlus . . . talas*, 1075), crying out against his wife, "a woman [*gunē*], a female [*thēlus*] unmanly by nature" who killed him "without a sword" (1062–63).[28] We know that Deianeira has, in fact, killed *herself* with a sword, in the extrascenic space of the house (915–42). By means of role-doubling, Sophocles blurs the spatial separation and social difference between men and women. Heracles suffers like a woman in childbirth, but he does so outside in the public world. Deianeira dies "in the middle of her marriage bed" (*en mesoisin eunatēriois*, 918), but she does so by driving a male weapon through her body (930–31).[29]

Certainty in role distribution frequently eludes us,[30] but it seems likely that significant male-female pairings also occur in Aeschylus' *Seven* (brother-sister, Eteocles and Antigone) and *Persians* (mother-son, Atossa and Xerxes), in Sophocles' *Electra* (Orestes and Clytemnestra), and in Euripides' *Hippolytus* (wife-husband, Phaedra and Theseus) and *Bacchae* (son-mother, Pentheus and Agave). In their different combinations, each play transforms the spaces associated with men and women, overlaying one on the other. A rough pattern emerges in which the male character returns from a distant war or adventure while the female character waits at home, but role-doubling implicitly complicates that spatial division. In the case of the *Bacchae*, the spatial inversion is made explicit.

In Euripides' *Heracles*, the doubling of Lycus and Heracles forcefully juxtaposes conflicting spaces, especially when Lycus returns to finish off Heracles' family (*HF* 701–25). Amphitryon urges Lycus to enter the extrascenic space of the house, where the family has moved to the altar of Hestia (715), discussed in chapter 2. Blindly self-assured, Lycus boasts that Heracles "is not present now nor will he ever return" (718), a spring-loaded double entendre given Heracles' presence offstage, lying in wait, and the presence of the Heracles' actor onstage, appearing as Lycus. On entering the extrascenic space, the protagonist "switches roles" and becomes Lycus' assassin. The irony turns tragic when Heracles' madness sets him against his own wife and sons, accomplishing what Lycus had planned to do from the outset.[31] Heracles forces his family to take refuge at the very altar where they had pretended to be clinging for safety from the tyrant. The infernal transformation of his home opens the abyss at the heart of the play, but Euripides suggests the basic instability earlier, by having the same actor play the usurper, the savior, and the savior-turned-destroyer.

On more than one occasion, the actor who delivers the messenger's account also plays the character whose suffering he describes.[32] In *Hippolytus*, the Hippolytus-actor returns as the Messenger, bringing news of the young man's agony on the shore. The actor who reports the miraculous sacrifice in *Iphigeneia in Aulis* has just played the heroine, departing for her death only twenty-one lines before returning as the Messenger. The Handmaid in *Alcestis*, who describes her mistress's farewell to her house and marriage-bed, is played by the same actor who enters thirty lines later as Alcestis herself. The events from the extrascenic or distanced spaces literally come together in the actor onstage; in the process the spectators become aware of the self-referential space that role-doubling implicitly exploits.

We have sketched out some of the ways the body on stage creates a sense of place, which it can then transform—via its physical presence, as a source of recognizable gesture and behavior, as a symbol of larger entities and forces (including the divine), and as a multiple-role-playing actor. Let us apply these observations to three heavily "embodied" plays, Euripides' *Hecuba*, *Electra*, and *Bacchae*.

Hecuba: The Body as Measure

> We are a landscape of all we know.
> —Isamu Noguchi

The manifold horrors of Euripides' *Hecuba* are played out on the bodies of its characters, more so than in any other tragedy.[33] After the prologue delivered by the "disembodied" ghost of Polydorus (who describes his own corpse floating in the surf), the Trojan queen enters in the rags of a slave, physically

supported by her former subjects (59–64). When Odysseus leads Polyxena off to die, Hecuba falls to the ground (438–43) where she remains through the first stasimon (444–501).[34] Hecuba recovers to hear Talthybius describe Polyxena's sacrifice, a deed of masculine brutality against a markedly female body: Polyxena awaits the blade "kneeling naked to the waist, her breasts / lovely as a goddess's statue" (560–61). Prepared to bury her daughter, Hecuba suffers a further shock when the body of her son Polydorus—hacked and dismembered (716–20, 781–82)—is brought on stage. The presence of Polydorus' corpse dominates the second half of the play,[35] prompting Hecuba's wild vengeance against Polymestor. She kills his young sons, whose bodies she exposes for all to see, and blinds her former ally, reducing him to a creature crawling on all fours. The future, too, holds corporal devastation, for Polymestor prophesies the murder of Agamemnon and Cassandra, and the metamorphosis of Hecuba into a demonic hound.

From a speaking ghost to his silent corpse, from an enslaved princess to a sacrificial victim, from a queen-turned-slave in the dust to a king-proved-thug crawling on the ground, *Hecuba* presents a memorable array of tortured and suffering bodies. They offer the human measure and physical image of the larger disasters of the play: the *hubris* of the conquering army, the betrayal of a trusted ally, the fall of a great city, the moral degradation of its queen, and the brutality that awaits its surviving women.

In the prologue the ghost of Polydorus, "youngest of the sons of Priam" (13), appears on high, far above his sea-washed body:

> I lie near the shore, tossed in the sea swell,
> borne this way and that in the waves' ebb and flow,
> unwept and unburied. Having deserted my own body,
> now I dart around my dear mother Hecuba,
> hovering here these past three days.
>
> (*Hec.* 28–32)[36]

The doppelgänger effect—a ghost describing his mortal coil—casts an eerie shadow over the postwar world of the play. Like the city of Troy, once thriving but now in ruins, the body of Polydorus is real but dead. Only his ghost, present but disembodied, can tell the tale. Polydorus' spirit also haunts the dreams of his mother, just offstage in Agamemnon's tent. In a dovetailed transition from ghostly prologue to living monody, her son departs as Hecuba enters, frightened by what she has dreamed, the nightmare version of the very ghost we have just seen. This pattern continues, as the play oscillates between living bodies who try to influence events and the disembodied dead who affect the action from the "other side."

Polydorus' ghost—that of a boy, "a child whose future does not exist"[37]—describes another specter, man-killing Achilles, who has risen from his tomb to demand the blood of Polyxena before the Greeks sail for home. Ghosts are

relatively rare in tragedy,[38] but to have one wraith invoke another is unprecedented. In so doing, Polydorus pairs the sacrifice of his sister Polyxena at the nearby tomb of Achilles (37–44) with the murder of Priam at the hearth-altar at Troy (21–24), both performed by the "son of Achilles," Neoptolemus (24, 224, 523).[39] Polydorus describes the play's other important places in terms of bodies already dead or soon to fall: the Thracian court where he was cut down for gold (7–15, 25–27); the sea where his own body floats in the surge (26–30, 47–48); the boundaries and towers of Troy that now lie in ruins (16–17), the men killed and women enslaved; the tent of Agamemnon where Hecuba is quartered (30–34, 52–58), above which Polydorus' ghost appears, and where his mother and the Trojan women will kill Polymestor's sons. In the prophecies at the end of the play, Polymestor also invokes places by their significant bodies. He introduces Cynossema ("Bitch's Grave") where Hecuba's corpse will lie, after she turns into a "bitch with fiery eyes" (1259–75), and he brings up the distant city of Argos where Cassandra will fall (1275–78) and "a murderous bath awaits [Agamemnon]" (1281).

Marking out space via the bodies of the suffering and the dead, Euripides exploits a complex interplay among the physically present (the living characters), the present but disembodied (Polydorus' ghost), the unseen but fully "embodied" by virtue of their physical actions (Neoptolemus as killer of Polyxena, Cassandra as lover of Agamemnon, Clytemnestra as butcher of Agamemnon), the unseen and disembodied (Achilles' ghost, the dead Priam), those who leave the stage only to be brought back as corpses (Polyxena, Polymestor's sons, Polydorus), and those who depart to a projected death (Hecuba and Agamemnon). This interplay of place and bodies (ranging from the nebulous to the graphically present) helps to fix the setting of the Thracian Chersonese (Dry Island) as an appropriate one for exploring the moral and social breakdown after the Trojan War.

By its very impermanence, the transit camp constitutes a "moral no-man's-land" where the civilized values of the *polis* (such as they are) cannot be guaranteed.[40] Even the Thracian ruler Polymestor, apparently on good terms with both the Trojans and the Greek invaders (858–60, 982–83), makes much of his having traveled from home to visit the Chersonese (963–67, 976–77). He is no more at ease on "dry island" than the Trojans and Greeks, as his armed arrival with attendants suggests.[41] It is significant that Euripides sets the action here, and not at the scene of the conquered city (like *Trojan Women*), or the place of triumphant return (like *Agamemnon*), or the palace of a foreign king encountered on the journey home (like *Helen*). Pericles had settled a cleruchy at the Chersonese in the 450s, which paid tribute at the City Dionysia and played an important role in supplying Athens with grain.[42] Perhaps this fact encouraged the Athenians in the audience to watch the play with an eye to their own city, much like the (fictionally) depopulated Lemnos of *Philoctetes*, discussed in the previous chapter. The Chersonese may have

been a way station in the saga of Troy, but it had direct links to fifth-century Athens.[43]

At an emotional turning point in the drama, Hecuba despairs of convincing Agamemnon to allow her to take vengeance on Polymestor:

> If only I had a voice in my arms,
> hands, hair, the steps of my feet—
> through the skill of Daedalus or one of the gods—
> so that all together they took your knees in supplication,
> weeping, moving you with every form of plea and argument.
> (837–41)

In her outburst Hecuba imagines a relationship between space and the body very different from the one outlined here. Far from aligning her physical presence with the place she finds herself, she wishes that her entire body could be transformed into a persuasive voice, uniquely multitudinous, with the emotional, supplicatory, rhetorical, and rational power to "become" the message she cannot communicate in words alone.[44] Caught without hope in a place that barely exists, Hecuba lets loose a utopian cry for a new artistic creation (fashioned out of herself by Daedalus or one of the gods), one that would prove so totally coherent—different elements harnessed to the same end—as to penetrate and overwhelm simultaneously Agamemnon's resistance.

Hecuba's wish reflects her earlier failure to persuade the Greeks to spare Polyxena. One by one, Odysseus rejects her arguments: human sacrifice makes no sense (258–61); Helen would make a more fitting victim (262–70); Odysseus should repay Hecuba for saving his life at Troy (272–78); he should pity what she has suffered (279–81); the Greeks should learn the reversibility of fortune and avoid *hubris* (282–85); they should sacrifice Hecuba herself (as the mother of Paris) rather than the innocent Polyxena (383–88); both she and her daughter should die together, offering Achilles' ghost twice the Trojan blood (391–400).[45] Not only does Hecuba fail to persuade Odysseus; he turns away from Polyxena and hides his right hand, preventing her from supplicating him like her mother (339–45). By scrupulously avoiding physical contact with the intended victim, Odysseus demonstrates his resistance to any form of Trojan pleading.

In Hecuba's subsequent appeal to Agamemnon, her body does not become an "all persuasive" totality. However, she finds him open to a different kind of bodily persuasion, arising from his carnal desire for Cassandra:

> And yet—this may seem foreign to my argument,
> bringing up sexual desire, but I'll say it nonetheless—
> my daughter has been sleeping by your side,

> Apollo's priestess, whom the Trojans call Cassandra.
> How will you reckon these nights of loving, lord?
> For those sweet caresses in bed, what thanks
> will my daughter get, or will I get on her behalf?
> Listen to me. Do you see this boy [Polydorus] lying dead?
> Do well by him, and you do well by your "new relatives."
> (824–35)

Hecuba initiates one of the more sordid exchanges in tragedy, not in vocabulary (which tends to the euphemistic) but in content. The sexual violation of Cassandra—both as Hecuba's unmarried daughter and as a priestess of Apollo—mocks the idea of the holy. The level to which Hecuba has sunk is measured on the body of her offspring, moving from the world of persuasive rhetoric and ritual supplication to the material exchange of the brothel (hinted earlier by the Chorus at 120–29).[46] Hecuba's wish for a body with irresistible persuasive power has been granted—not in her own person but in that of her daughter. Instead of a transcendent "new creation" that might convert the Chersonese into a place of unmediated communication, Euripides delivers us back to a military camp where captive women exploit their bodies for what little advantage they can.

We might compare Hecuba's "offering" of Cassandra to the sacrifice of Polyxena, a very different manifestation of the body's erotic power to affect the space around it. By using the only physical agency she has left, the virgin girl shows the Greek army to be both cold-blooded butchers and warm-blooded voyeurs. "Let no one [of you] touch my skin" (548–49), Polyxena says, keeping her person inviolable to everything except the death blow. Before the "whole crowd of the Achaean army" (521), she rips her robe from her shoulder, exposing to the blade her neck and breasts, "lovely as a goddess's statue." When Neoptolemus slits her throat and the "springs gush forth," she has the self-possession to "fall modestly / hiding what ought to be hidden from male eyes" (568–70).[47] The manner in which Polyxena meets her death has a powerful impact on her slayer, who proceeds "both willingly and unwillingly" (566). The Greek soldiers, too, are deeply affected, roaring assent when she asks not to be manhandled (553), then busying themselves with her pyre and funeral offerings after she dies (571–80). Euripides offers a variety of perspectives on the sacrifice of Polyxena: as an existential choice in the face of the inevitable; as a violent exhibition of male bloodletting; as a display of the eroticized female body, transforming men into rapt spectators unable to stop watching what they no longer want to see.

As part of the litany of the Greek conquest, Polyxena's sacrifice represents the violation of a defenseless female culled from the captive population. More specifically, her death exploits and perverts the socially sanctioned exchange of women in marriage. Odysseus refuses any other victim (Helen,

Hecuba); only the blood of the nubile Polyxena will satisfy Achilles' ghost. That the hero's unmarried son Neoptolemus wields the knife gives the act an additional nuptial charge, as does its structural similarity to the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, whom Agamemnon lured to Aulis with the false promise of marriage to the young Achilles, dramatized in Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Aulis*.[48] Details surrounding Polyxena's death refer to several aspects of the Greek wedding, converting the erotic and procreative possibilities of marriage into their fatal opposite.[49] Her murder also mocks the ritual exchange of sacrifice itself, understood as an offering to divine powers for help or in thanksgiving, discussed in chapter 1. By dedicating a human victim to a dead mortal, the Greeks collapse the essential distinction between domestic animals (the normal victims) and the gods (the normal recipients), assimilating them both to the human level of the sacrificing agent.[50]

Throughout these maimed rituals—supplication, marriage, sacrifice—Polyxena maintains her autonomy and dies a free woman, both offering and preserving her body at the moment of death. Her self-possession and self-revelation enable her to avoid what her mother cannot, a descent into the moral abyss.[51] By exploiting the eroticized body of her other daughter Cassandra, Hecuba prostitutes her family to one enemy (Agamemnon) in order to punish another (Polymestor). While not condemning her solicitation of the Greek leader, the Chorus acknowledges its strangeness:

> Strange [*deinon ge*], how things fall out for humans
> as the laws of necessity direct their course,
> making allies of the deadliest of enemies,
> and turning former friends into bitter foes.
>
> (846–49)[52]

The trade in flesh operates even more blatantly with Polymestor's murder of Polydorus, betraying the sacred *xenos* relationship under which Priam had entrusted his son. Instead of caring for and nurturing the young man, the Thracian king turned mercenary, killing him for his wealth, mutilating his body, and trying to prevent its discovery by dumping it into the sea.[53] Once again, an accepted form of social exchange suffers an obscene deformation via the commodification of the key body in question, that of Polydorus, which Polymestor "trades in" for the gold that came with it.[54]

If Polymestor abandons his human and *xenos* responsibilities for lucre, then Hecuba abandons her maternal instincts for vengeance. Earlier in the play she epitomizes motherly concern, urging her daughter Polyxena to appeal to Odysseus as a man who has fathered offspring: "You have grounds to plead, for he too has children" (340–41). When Odysseus turns a deaf ear, Hecuba tells him to kill her instead of Polyxena, because her body gave birth to Paris, the cause of the war (387–88). In her pleas to Agamemnon, she again emphasizes her bodily connection to her offspring: "You see this

corpse, over whom I shed these tears? / . . . / Once I carried him in my womb, and gave him birth" (760–62). But these arguments have no effect. Only when Hecuba exploits Agamemnon's sexual abuse of her child Cassandra does she gain his help in exacting vengeance on Polymestor.

Until this point in the play, the extrascenic space of the tent seems like a female oasis within the military camp.[55] By luring the king and his sons inside with the promise of money (1012–22), however, Hecuba and her fellow captives transform the tent into a den of death.[56] Initially the women sit on both sides of Polymestor, praising the weave of his rich cloak, holding it up to the sun's rays, and admiring his Thracian spears until he finds himself disarmed (1150–56). At the same time "all the women who had children" (*hosai de tokades ēsan*, 1157) dandle his young sons, passing them from hand to hand until they, too, stray beyond Polymestor's reach. At that point the women draw swords hidden in their robes and stab the boys, then turn Polymestor's eyes to gore with their brooch pins. The blinding of the king seems deserved, but the murder of his sons indicates how far Hecuba and the Trojan mothers have fallen, using innocent young children as the currency of revenge.

Euripides projects Hecuba's degradation onto the body of Polymestor, who comes out of the tent "on hand and foot / like a four-legged mountain beast" (1057–58), striving to sate himself "on their flesh and bones, / feasting like a savage animal" (1071–72). Agamemnon arrives in response to "no quiet sound of Echo, / child of the mountain crag" (1109–10), but to Polymestor's wild cries, *kraugē*, a term for any loud clamor, including the baying of hounds. If Polymestor resembles a beast, so too do the intended victims on whom he wishes to feed. He compares the murderous women to bacchantes who dismembered his children and threw the scraps to wild mountain dogs (1075–78), later describing how he leapt after them "like a wild beast chasing murderous hounds" (1173). We are but a short distance from the metamorphosis of Hecuba into the demon-bitch with fiery eyes prophesied at the play's close. The man we see before us—with black holes for eyes and groping on all fours—offers a proleptic vision of what Hecuba will become. Her death will then transform her into a permanent feature of the Chersonese, merging with the dog-shaped headland that will bear her name, Cynossema, "Bitch-Grave" (1265–73).[57]

The conversion of Hecuba's body into the Thracian landscape points back to other, less bizarre connections between human bodies and distanced places, particularly Troy. The living remnants of the wasted city—Hecuba, Polyxena (before her death), the Chorus, Hecuba's serving woman—remind us of Troy by their very presence. So, too, does the corpse of Polydorus, whose sea-sodden robes Agamemnon immediately recognizes as Trojan (733–35). The most powerful evocation of the distant city occurs in the third stasimon (905–52), when the Chorus relives the night of Troy's fall,

focusing on bodies both real and metaphoric. They describe the city "shorn of its crown [*stephanē*] of towers" (910–11), personifying Troy as a mourner who has cut her hair in grief, and as a woman who has lost her *stephanē* 'headpiece', 'diadem'. The phrase resembles the epic formula linking the loss of a woman's *krēdemnon* (veil, also crenellated tower) to the fall of a city and the sexual violation of its women.[58] The Trojan women also recall how they did their hair before the mirror, preparing to join their men in bed, the final intimate celebration of the city's apparent triumph (914–26). Instead of enjoying their marriage beds (933), however, the women watch the Greeks cut down their husbands, before they themselves are dragged off as slaves. From the Greek ships they gaze back on their lost city, cursing Helen and Paris whose bodies came together in a marital union that brought an end to their own (936–51). As indicated by Hecuba's "negotiation" with Agamemnon over Cassandra, the sexual violation of the Trojan women is the reality that underlies their presence onstage, living embodiments of the rape of Troy.

The captive women also conjure the distant land of Greece, imagining their possible destination as slaves (444–83), naming Doris [the Peloponnese], Phthia, Delos, and Athens, each identified by a famous geographical or cultural feature.[59] In the second stasimon they focus suddenly on the Peloponnese, imagining a young Spartan widow by the banks of the Eurotas, mourning the death of her husband at Troy (650–52). This moment of empathy for a distant enemy is remarkable in a play where friends prove hostile and moral standards collapse. Argos is the only other Greek city named in the play, when Polymestor prophesies that a "bloodbath" (*phonia loutra*, 1281) awaits Agamemenon on his return home.

Regarding other distant spaces, Thrace and the Thracian court figure in Polydorus' account of his own murder (6–9, 19–27), in Hecuba's fear of (79–82) and outrage at (681–729, 768–82) Polymestor's deceit, and most prominently in the arrival onstage of the barbarian king and his entourage (952). Polydorus' corpse literally embodies his betrayal in the Thracian palace, and the dead bodies of the king's sons mark the destruction of that royal house, just as the corpses of Polydorus and Polyxena signal the end of any future for Troy. As for Achilles' tomb, its location in the transit camp seems anomalous, for we assume that the Greeks would have buried and memorialized their hero where he fought and fell.[60] Mentioned by Polydorus and Hecuba, the tomb moves fully into focus during the description of Polyxena's sacrifice, another example of bodies in extremis creating and transforming the various spaces of the play.

Although lacking a representative onstage, Athens comes into view most clearly through the characters' participation in some form of Athenian social and political practice. The assembly that considers Polyxena's fate—with argument and debate (107–31), demagoguery from the "smooth-talking, crowd pleasing" (*hēdulogos dēmocharistēs*) Odysseus (131–40), and a decision

taken by vote (196, 218–19, 259)—seems modeled on the assembly meetings at the Pnyx. Odysseus even reports the Greek decision using the formula of an Athenian decree: "The Greeks have resolved . . ." (220).[61] Hecuba's outburst against political grandstanding is no less topical, attacking Odysseus and "the whole disgusting race of people like you, who crave / the glory of the demagogue . . . / and don't give a thought to harming your friends / as long as you say something that flatters the crowd" (254–57).[62]

Scattered through the play we also find allusions to Athenian law and legal practice. Hecuba reminds Odysseus that "your law against bloodshed [for suppliants] is the same for freemen and slaves alike" (291–92), an apparent reference to an Athenian statute.[63] The "trial" of Polymestor, with Agamemnon presiding, has some parallels with those held at the Athenian homicide courts, particularly the perfectly balanced speeches—fifty lines each—by Polymestor (1132–82) and Hecuba (1187–1237), the dramatic equivalent of equal-time allotment from the *klepsydra*.[64] Hecuba in particular delivers a rhetorical tour de force, including a formal preamble, a point-by-point rebuttal of her opponent's claims, appeals made to probability and moral law, and a recapitulating conclusion.[65] Her forensic display, mutatis mutandis, could have been written by a professional speech writer for his client, a common practice in Athenian courts from the late fifth century. Earlier Hecuba despairs that mortals study many things but fail to acquire the most important skill, persuasion, which "one can learn by paying fees" (*misthous didontes manthanein*, 814–19).[66] This allusion to Sophistic teaching for hire—made popular in Athens by Euripides' contemporaries Hippias, Gorgias, Prodicus, and Protagoras—follows Hecuba's reflection on the relative importance of heredity and education in raising a noble child (592–602), a topos of Athenian intellectual speculation.[67]

By their placement and context, these theatrical versions of political and legal practice do not simply mirror what happened in the Athenian *polis*; they call its efficacy and purpose into question. Odysseus' persuasive rhetoric before a democratic Greek assembly—an institution on which Athenians prided themselves—is in the service of human sacrifice, an act foreign to fifth-century religion. In setting up the trial scene, Euripides "creates a situation where the standards of public policy in the assembly confront the standards of private justice in the law courts," as Segal observes. By ignoring issues of guilt and innocence and appealing only to Greek self-interest, Polymestor confuses "a deliberative debate and bouleutic oratory with judicial debate and dicastic oratory."[68] While the scene evokes the public courts of contemporary Athens, it travesties the law from start to finish. The punishment precedes the verdict; the judge, in collusion with Hecuba (850–904), only feigns impartiality; the corpses of the young boys, on view throughout the scene, undermine a judicial process that ignores their physical reality in favor of verbal display. In each of these "Athenian moments," the bodies in

question (Polydorus, the Trojan women, Polyxena, Polymestor's sons) undermine the civilized practice that would normalize or excuse their violation. At the end of the tragedy, the prophesied metamorphosis of Hecuba indicates where persuasion, education, democracy, and rule of law finally lead the protagonist.

For all the civic and religious environments that the play temporarily inhabits, Hecuba's debased body has the last word, barking and glowering with the *logos* of a dog. As noted earlier, Polymestor (appearing houndlike on all fours) describes his dead children as a "banquet for the dogs," that is, for the beasts that mauled them inside the tent. In the *Iliad*, canines gone wild provide a frightful image of the breakdown of civilization, as Priam imagines the dogs he has raised devouring his corpse (including his private parts) before his own doorway (*Il.* 22.66–76). At the end of *Hecuba*, Priam's wife comes to embody that very image—a metaphorical dog in the tent, and a monstrous bitch after her theriomorphic translation. As a landmark for sailors, she will stand as a signal of the collapse of civilization at Troy and at the Chersonese.[69]

When imagining their new homes in Greece, the women of the Chorus linger over a possible life in Athens, where they picture themselves embroidering the *peplos* for the city's goddess at the Panathenaia (466–74). Conjuring the high point of the Attic festival year, the Trojan women imagine themselves playing the role reserved for virgin daughters of prominent Athenian citizens. As foreign slaves and mothers (475), however, they could never participate in the sacred weaving.[70] Their future lot will resemble that envisaged and rejected by Polyxena—bought and sold like chattel; caught in the daily grind of cooking, cleaning, and working the loom; and subject to the sexual predations of male slaves (and their masters) when their work is done (360–66). Their touching evocation of a fantasy life in Athens highlights the depth of their fall into slavery, a contrast that would not have been lost on the fifth-century audience.[71]

As befits a play so focused on captives, slavery permeates the world of *Hecuba*.[72] A slave by definition has no legal say over what happens to his or her person,[73] any more than an amphora chooses its decoration, what liquid it holds, or where it is shipped. Given the freedom-based ideology of democracy, such powerlessness struck Athenians as anathema, prompting efforts to rationalize the enforced servitude of others. In particular, a new justification for slavery emerged after the defeat of the Persians, based on a "slave-barbarian equivalence." Foreigners (particularly from the East) proved "natural slaves" because of their political subjugation to autocratic rulers, the effects of climate, and the influence of other environmental factors.[74] But this ideology was challenged almost immediately by certain Sophists—Protagoras, Hippias, Antiphon (with views anticipated by Anaximander and Anaxagoras)—popular in Athens from the mid-fifth century, who argued the natural unity of the human race.[75] A papyrus fragment of Antiphon sums up this position:

> The laws of our neighbors we know and revere: the laws of those who live afar we neither know nor revere. Thus we have been made barbarians with regard to one another. For by nature we are all in every way made in the same fashion to be either barbarians or Greeks. That is what is shown by the things which are by nature necessary to all men. . . . [I]n all this no man is marked out as a barbarian or a Greek. We all breathe the air through our mouths and nostrils, and we all eat with our hands.[76]

Athenians dealt with the institution of slavery on a daily basis, employing (and often working side by side with) slaves in the home, in the fields, on large estates, as teachers and wet nurses, as prostitutes and *hetairai*, on military and naval campaigns, at public (temple) construction sites, in the potters' quarter and other artisan workshops, in religious sanctuaries (such as Delphi), in the market, in the marble quarries, and (the most brutal situation of all) in the Lavrion silver mines. The Scythian archers who served as Athenian police were public slaves, as were the caretakers of the city's buildings, street cleaners, and so on.[77] Although no abolitionist movement emerged in classical Athens, the theater frequently raised the issue of slavery, often from the slave's perspective, exploiting the tension between slavery as natural and slavery as unjust.

Euripides, in particular, seems obsessed with the topic, and many of his characters condemn slavery's unfairness and arbitrary nature. In *Ion*, for example, the young protagonist (and future ruler of Athens) begins the play as a temple slave, and at a later point the old Tutor exclaims, "Only one thing brings disgrace to a slave / —the name. In all else a slave is no worse / than a free man, if he is honest" (*Ion* 854–56).[78] Baldry concludes "we are not far here from the thought that slavery is an artificial institution."[79] The focus on slavery here and in *Hecuba* recalls one of the most important preperformance activities at the City Dionysia, the annual announcement of manumitted slaves.[80] It seems that slaves could attend the theater (household servants accompanying their *oikos*, for instance), and the manumission ceremony might serve to keep them obedient, on the slim chance that they, too, could one day gain their own freedom. However, when a slave character in a tragedy or comedy proclaimed his inherent equality, the effect on the *douloi* in the audience may have been less pacific.

Given the prominence of Trojan slavery in *Hecuba*, it is significant that the Greeks at certain moments appear no freer than their captives. Hecuba upbraids Agamemnon for his reluctance to stand with her and Cassandra against Polymestor:

> Unbelievable!
> So there is no mortal anywhere who is free [*eleutheros*].
> He is slave [*doulos*] either to money or to chance,
> or to the city's masses, or to the law codes
> that keep him from doing what he wants.
>
> (863–67)[81]

Without straining the metaphor, Agamemnon is also a slave to his passion for Cassandra. Consider Hecuba's successful appeal to him on her behalf; Agamemnon's admission that he must avoid appearing to the Greeks to have plotted Polymestor's death for the sake of Cassandra (854–56); and the Thracian king's own prophecy of the murder of Agamemnon together with the Trojan prophetess in Argos (1275–84). Agamemnon is inextricably bound to the body of the concubine with whom he will die. We also come to view Polymestor as a slave, mastered by his lust for gold.[82] And Hecuba herself, already a slave, would prefer to wreak vengeance on Polymestor than accept an offer of freedom:

> *Agamemnon*: What do you beg for? Is it freedom [*eleutheros*] for your life? That is easily done.
> *Hecuba*: Not that. If I can take vengeance on evil men, I am willing to spend my whole life as a slave [*aiōna ton sumpanta douleuein thelō*].
>
> (754–57)[83]

Freedom extends beyond controlling one's body to exercising choice in the face of constraints both material (money, physical violence) and immaterial (public opinion, the lust for revenge). Those who choose poorly suffer a Euripidean version of Dante's *contrapasso*—an embodied poetic justice where the criminal "wears" punishment that befits the crime. Seduced by bright gold into betrayal and murder, Polymestor pays with his sight.[84] For killing Hecuba and Priam's boy and dismembering the body, he loses his own sons, whose bodies also are "divided up" (*diamoiraō* 716, 1076).[85] As a deceptive liar and unwelcome prophet, he has his mouth gagged by Agamemnon's men (1283–84). Finally, as an evil ruler and false friend, Polymestor finds himself abandoned and alone on a "desert [*erēmos*] island" (1284–86). As for Agamemnon, he pays for his lust with death (along with his concubine), killed by his adulterous wife Clytemnestra. Already dehumanized by war and enslavement, Hecuba brutalizes herself further for the sake of vengeance and suffers physical *metastasis* (1266) into a beast. In the process, the queen of Troy—a city sacked by invaders from the sea—serves as a landmark for sailors to come.

Only those who have been killed escape transformative justice, for their metamorphoses have ended. Their bodies await burial (1287–88), as the winds for Greece rise and the Trojan women make their way to the degradation that lies ahead: "Go to the harbors and tents, friends, / and discover what hardships slavery has in store. / Necessity is grim" (1293–95). In this bleak tragedy, the living body provides the space for suffering to adhere, where pain is measured and meted out, and untimely death offers the only release.

Euripides' *Electra*: The Intimate Body

> There was Snowden's secret, and he had spilled it all over the messy floor of the airplane. It was easy to read the message in his entrails. Man was matter, that was Snowden's secret. Drop him out a window and he'll fall. Set fire to him and he'll burn. Bury him and he'll rot.
> —Joseph Heller, *Catch-22*

Electra is an unsettling theatrical experience, one that depends—like its Sophoclean counterpart—on a bravura performance of its title role. Driven by surges of emotion, Euripides' heroine pursues her revenge with frightening intensity, only to realize in the event that she and her brother have simply butchered their mother. On stage for all but two hundred lines, Electra—hair shorn, unkempt, dressed in rags—provides the focus of the play, and her insistent presence transforms the traditional emphasis on Orestes' role as avenger. Although recent critics have tried to smooth away the harsh, and sometimes humorous, extremes of the play, *Electra* systematically undermines the heroic basis on which those interpretations are built. By combining the implications of the rural setting with the characters' focus on the body, we may get closer to the play's peculiar heart of darkness.

The shift in setting from the palace and *polis* center of the house of Atreus (in Homer, Aeschylus, and Sophocles) to an impoverished farmstead in the country allows for other, more intimate variations on the standard treatment of the revenge story.[86] Out of the cottage appears a Farmer whose prologue eases the audience into Euripides' version, explaining that he was given Electra in marriage but has respected her desires and not slept with her. Only rarely does tragedy reveal anything so personal about a character's sexual life, but in Euripides' play the heroine returns time and again to her anomalous status, wretchedly married, without conjugal fulfillment, and condemned by poverty to a life that is no life. Electra's virgin marriage offers the bodily counterpart to her physical isolation in the country, core elements in the play's manifold of displacements.

Although critics invariably mention the unexpected rural setting, they fail to appreciate fully what it does for the play. In spatial terms, locating the

action in the countryside decouples the site of revenge from the place of Agamemnon's murder. The physical distancing does much to make the killing of Clytemnestra seem independent of her prior act of bloodshed, as though the world had changed so thoroughly that this matricide makes little sense. To emphasize the fact, Orestes *never* truly returns from exile; neither he nor Electra set foot in their father's house during the play or in its aftermath. We learn from Castor in the *deus*-driven denouement that the son of Agamemnon will live in perpetual exile from his natal home, destined to found a new city in Arcadia (1250, 1273–75). Electra, too, must leave Argos and dwell in a foreign place, Phocis, with her new husband Pylades (1249, 1284–87). The Old Man's assurance that Orestes can "seize your ancestral home and city" (610–11) proves false. The house of Atreus—along with Troy, the most important distant place in the play—finally withers away, disembodied, with no legitimate heirs to occupy it.

The change in setting reverses the dramatic task of *Choephori*—a play that *Electra* consciously echoes—which requires that an incognito Orestes gain entrance to the palace. The challenge in Euripides' version involves luring Clytemnestra *away* from the palace and into the rustic cottage, where a reluctant Orestes lies in wait. To accomplish this, Electra invents the ruse that she has given birth to a son and needs her mother's help in performing the necessary rituals. That is, Electra uses her own body to provide the means of bridging the distance between the palace and the farm, between the lust and luxury of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus and her own "deadly marriage" (*thanasimos gamos*, 247) in the country. Vernant thinks that for the ancient Greeks it was not intercourse but the biological and socially productive act of childbirth—the baby emerging from the womb—that marked the end of *parthenos* (virgin, maiden) status.[87] By inventing a male child, Electra trades the irony inherent in her name (*a-lektron* 'without a [marriage] bed') for that of her dead sister, Iphigenia (she who causes the birth of strong offspring).

In their arrivals to the scenic space, each character emphasizes its difficult physical access and out-of-the way location. Purposefully avoiding the town, Orestes limits his return (at least temporarily) to this spot near the Argive border. The region allows for quick escape, leaving him free to find his sister ("yoked in marriage and no longer a virgin") and to learn what has transpired at the political center (94–106). The fact that he and Pylades arrive with baggage and slaves (pointedly referred to at 360 and 393–94) underlines Orestes' status as an exile, a man who must carry his belongings and servants with him. As a point of comparison, we can hardly imagine Aeschylus' or Sophocles' Orestes weighed down with baggage on his arrival home.[88] Similarly, the Old Man, sent for by Electra, labors up the steep path to the cottage, carrying wreaths, cheese, wine, and a lamb for the new guests. His difficulty in climbing (489–92), the rags that he wears (501), and the array of food he brings with him (aimed for immediate consumption, 494–99) introduce a physical reality we usually associate with Old Comedy. Did Euripides insist on a live lamb, for example, as Aristophanes doubtless did for Trygaeus' sacrifice in *Peace* (937–1128)?[89] The weighed-down arrivals of Orestes and the Old Man prepare the way for other encumbered bodies later in the play, transforming this out-of-the-way rural cottage into an incongruous scene of human violence.

For her part, Electra enters the play carrying a jug on her head to bring water from the nearby stream (54–56). On her return, she performs the first strophe, mesode, and antistrophe (112–39) of her monody with the jug still on her head, eventually setting it down to allow her more freedom to lament (140–42).[90] Perhaps this solitary jug remains in view, a silent reminder of the physical labor that Electra loves to loathe, and an image of forgotten purity—fresh water provided purification before and after sacrifice—in the midst of increasingly bloody business.[91]

The Chorus arrives to invite Electra to the festival of Hera in Argos, which it learned of belatedly from a "milk-drinking, mountain-roaming" herdsman (169–74). Like Electra, the women of the Chorus live at a remote distance from the city's political and ritual life.[92] They bring with them clothes and adornments for the body, offering Electra appropriate raiment and jewelry for the celebration (189–92). Although she complains about her rags and social isolation (181–89, 207–10), Electra refuses both the gifts and the invitation (175–80), indicating that a civic ritual like the Argive Heraia has no place in her world.[93] In contrast to the Chorus and other characters who come on foot, Clytemnestra arrives in splendor, borne in a carriage (much like her husband in *Agamemnon*) with male drivers and an entourage of Trojan slaves, "beautiful possessions of the house" (1003).[94] No matter who visits Electra's cottage, they come supplied and encumbered.

Electra's "phantom" child, invented to trap Clytemnestra, exists only in the mind, but the body of Clytemnestra's real son pulls *him* reluctantly into the plot. Orestes first sees his sister at line 112 (identified as Electra at 115–19), but he remains incognito for 450 lines until his recognition is forced on him against his will. Under scrutiny from the Old Man, Orestes reacts defensively: "Why is he staring like that, examining me / like some counterfeit coin? Is he comparing me to someone? / . . . / Why is he circling me?" (558–59, 561). Earlier Electra ridicules the tokens of Orestes' return—a lock of hair, a footprint—which the Old Man saw at Agamemnon's tomb, and she mocks the idea that her brother could still wear the clothes she wove him as a child (538–44). But when the Old Man points out the scar over his eyebrow (573–74), Electra cannot deny that Orestes has returned. In spite of his own best efforts, Orestes' body gives him away as the man born to avenge his father.[95]

Trapped in a plot he does not control, Orestes steels himself to murder Aegisthus, which he does in particularly gruesome fashion. However, when

Electra announces that Clytemnestra approaches "resplendent in her carriage and lovely clothes," Orestes balks: "What do we mean to do? Will we really kill our mother?" Electra pinpoints the source of her brother's hesitation: "Don't tell me that pity takes over, because you see the body [*demas*] of your mother!" (966–68). With sword drawn, Orestes confronts that body inside the cottage, and when he and Electra reemerge with the corpse on the *ekkuklēma*, we "experience the murder retrospectively through the postmortem shock of the killers."[96] We hear of Clytemnestra pleading for her life, baring her breast, clinging to Orestes' cheek, crying out for mercy, and finally falling back onto the "limbs that gave birth [*gonima melea*]" (1206–17). Veiling his eyes with his cloak so as not to see her body, Orestes slashes his mother's throat, and her blood spatters over her children (1172–73, 1221–23).[97] Orestes summarizes the perverted relationship that physically binds these three bodies: "You gave birth to your own murderers" (1229).

The bodies of both Aegisthus and Clytemnestra have a powerful effect on Electra, who compares their pampered life with her own physical hardships and Spartan circumstance. Describing her situation (303–13), Electra focuses on the squalor that "stables" (*aulizomai*, 304) her in rags, covers her with filth, leaves her nothing but "a naked body" (*gumnon sōma*, 308) unless she slaves at the loom. While she dwells in destitution, her mother luxuriates in the palace, indulged by Trojan slaves "decked out in Asian robes fastened with golden brooches" (314–18). In their later *agōn*, Electra taunts Clytemnestra for her "praiseworthy shape" (*to . . . eidos ainon axion*, 1062) and inner failings, which she shares with her sister Helen, another notorious adulteress. Electra accuses her mother of primping before the mirror, arranging her hair, putting on makeup, cultivating her beauty (1069–75), even *before* Agamemnon has lured their daughter Iphigenia to her death at Aulis (1020–23). She warns Clytemnestra when entering the cottage not to soil her beautiful clothes on the sooty walls (1039–40). As the matricide looms, Electra still focuses on the difference between her mother's richly adorned body and her own.

Electra also lingers over the physical features of the dead Aegisthus, whose corpse Orestes brings back with him as proof of his murder. This arrival is perhaps the strangest of all visitations to the cottage, more so even than the appearance of Castor and Polydeuces on the machine. To be sure, corpses—after falling in a distant place—frequently are conveyed back to the stage. Haimon in *Antigone*, Neoptolemus in *Andromache*, Pentheus in *Bacchae*, Menoeceus, Eteocles, Polyneices, and Jocasta in *Phoenissae*, and the dying Hippolytus in Euripides' play all are returned to the scenic space that represents their home. However, after slaying Aegisthus at a rural sacrifice, Orestes brings the body to *Electra's* home, an unprecedented conveyance of a corpse to a place it does not belong.

What's more, Orestes has decapitated his victim. As the Messenger reports,

"your brother comes, / to show you not the head of the Gorgon, / but the man you hate, Aegisthus" (855–57).[98] The comparison of Orestes to Perseus who beheaded the Gorgon recalls the image of that heroic deed on Achilles' shield (457–62), and it recurs later when Orestes cannot look at Clytemnestra at the moment of death. The Chorus asks, "How did you dare to look / with open eyes on the bloodshed? . . . ," to which Orestes responds, "I threw my cloak over my eyes / . . . / [then] buried the sword in her neck" (1218–1223).[99] According to legend, those who gazed directly at the Gorgon's head turned to stone, a mythic paradigm that lies behind Orestes' horror at his own Gorgon-like transformation at the play's end: "What host, what pious person / will look on my head [*kara*], / the man who killed his mother?" (1195–97). Indeed, the help that Castor promises Orestes in fending off the Furies (frequently linked to Gorgons, as at A. *Eum.* 48–49), will come from Athena, "stretching her Gorgon-faced shield over your head" (1254–57).

Other heads (and their adornments) are prominent in *Electra*. As noted earlier, we first see Electra balancing a water jug on her head (54–59), and we do so again when she returns from the stream having filled it (107–11). She sets the jug down (140–42) in order to strike her head with her fists (148, 150),[100] lamenting her father's homecoming, crowned by his wife not with "victory garlands" (*stephanoi*, 163) but with a deathblow. Along with his provisions, the Old Man brings garlands (*stephanoi*, 496) for the feast, probably wearing them on his head as he enters. When Orestes encounters Aegisthus in the country, he is plucking myrtle "to weave as a garland for his head" (776–79), part of his ritual observances for the Nymphs. Orestes uses the term *stephanos* metaphorically for the victory he will win by killing the usurper (613–14); after Aegisthus' murder, the slaves at the sacrifice actualize the figure of speech by winding garlands around Orestes' head (*stephousi . . . kara*, 854). Following news of his triumph, the Chorus sings an epinician-flavored ode celebrating his "garland-bearing" (*stephanaphora*, 862) victory. Electra brings out more "adornments for his hair" (*komēs agalmata*), with which she will wreathe her victorious brother (*stepsō . . . krata*, 870–72), and the Chorus applauds these "adornments for his head" (*agalmata . . . krati*, 874). On Orestes' arrival, Electra (re)crowns him with "garlands for the tresses of your hair" (*komēs sēs bostruchōn andēmata*, 882), and she offers a garland (*stephanos*) to Pylades as well. It is only after this crowning ceremony (880–89) that Orestes presents Electra with the (still garlanded?) head of Aegisthus, enabling her to "say what I [always] wanted to say right to your face [*kat' omma son*] / once I was free from the fears that now / have passed" (910–12).[101]

The image of Electra spilling out years of resentment at a head that cannot respond symbolizes perfectly the chasm between her emotional compulsion to revenge and its ultimate futility. She begins her speech with a highly rhe-

torical *prooimion*: "How will I start off my diatribe, / and how end it? What will I put in the middle?" (907–8). Later she adopts a rhetorical *praeteritio*, addressing a topic while pretending to pass it over. Claiming that intimate subjects are not fit for a maiden (*parthenos*), Electra upbraids Aegisthus for his "dealings with women," implying that he violated them (*hubristes*) by exploiting his power and "good looks" (*kallei t' araros*, 945–48). The word *hubris* has multiple meanings in the fifth century, including "sexual use under constraint," or simply "rape."[102] Electra uses the word and its cognates frequently to refer to her fear of sexual violation, emphasizing again the body as the motivational source for her vengeance.[103]

In a bizarre expression of her own sexual frustration, Electra rejects Aegisthus' "girlish beauty" (*parthenopos*), the kind that produces effeminate offspring fit for dancing; she prefers a manly man, who sires boys that long for battle (948–51). She ridicules Aegisthus' dependence on Clytemnestra, impugning him for being known in Argos as "*her* husband," and their children called after their mother rather than him (930–37).[104] Electra even claims that Clytemnestra is unfaithful, making their private life a living hell (918–25). Returning the head to its body ("To hell with you!"—*erre*, 952), she orders the corpse taken inside the cottage, so concluding a speech like none other in tragedy. In her twisted "funeral oration" over the fallen Aegisthus, Electra conjoins the art of rhetoric with the physically macabre, treating the body of her enemy like an intimate plaything to be handled and abused.[105]

One expects in any revenge tragedy that the act of vengeance per se will focus on the body, but *Electra* takes this to extremes. As noted earlier, Aegisthus' death occurs during a sacrifice performed in the country, not far from the Farmer's cottage (623, 636).[106] The text hints at a connection between the rites Aegisthus celebrates for the Nymphs and his intimate relationship with Clytemnestra, involving children born or soon on the way (625–26, 640–45, 1138).[107] Aegisthus asks the unrecognized Orestes to flay the bull-calf that has been slaughtered (779–90, 815–18), and he deftly removes the hide, exposing the animal's deformed liver. Trading the knife for a cleaver, Orestes splits the breast-bone to release the inner organs.[108] As Aegisthus bends over to examine the entrails, Orestes rises on his tiptoes and brings the cleaver down on his enemy, smashing through the backbone. Aegisthus' body shakes "with convulsions, heaving and writhing in a hard and bloody death" (839–43).[109]

The sacrificial context makes this murder particularly gruesome, as Aegisthus merges with the bull-calf that has been ritually slaughtered. Tragedy frequently employs sacrificial imagery when describing a murder, but here Euripides transforms an actual sacrifice into the brutal slaying of the man who arranged it. Recent critics have claimed that Orestes' vengeance would strike a fifth-century audience as neither ignoble nor impure,[110] but their arguments fail to convince. By describing sacrificial procedure in such detail,

Euripides creates an imaginative space of ritual propriety and community. Inviting Orestes and Pylades to join him, Aegisthus appears as a generous and open-handed host, whose voice we hear through the Messenger on five different occasions.[111] The verbatim account brings Aegisthus to life in the audience's mind, that is, until Orestes brutally splits him apart from behind. Because the murder takes place in a pastoral setting, our impression of Aegisthus differs radically from Electra's dubious picture of a drunken lout in the palace, who stones Agamemnon's grave and hurls epithets at the absent Orestes (326–31).

Delivering the mutilated corpse to his sister, the blood-crazed Orestes encourages her worst:

> I return, not by words but by deeds having killed Aegisthus . . .
> I bring to you the man himself, dead.
> If you desire, throw the body out as carrion
> for wild beasts, or impale it on a stake as prey
> for birds, the children of the air. For he is now
> your slave, whom once you called master.
>
> (893–99)

As well as inviting further mutilation, Orestes overrides Electra's (false) modesty (900–906) and sets the stage for her verbal abuse of the body of Aegisthus.

Euripides' focus on the misplaced bodies of the major players—Electra, Orestes, Aegisthus, Clytemnestra—reveals the distance separating high-minded ideals from actual behavior, a gap traditionally conceived in terms of appearance versus reality, between *logos* 'word', 'talk' and *ergon* 'deed', 'actuality'. As Orestes boasts, "It is not by words but by deeds [*ou logoisin all' ergois*] that I have killed Aegisthus" (893). Earlier he marvels at the innate nobility of Electra's husband, and he reflects on how one should judge a person's virtue. He rejects the standard means of discernment—social status, parentage, wealth, the test of battle—in favor of "moral character [*ēthos*] and the way one is with others [*homilia*]" (384–85). Orestes fails to realize that his speech applies to himself, that he stands exposed as the very sort of person he condemns, "puffed up through family repute" (*dōmatōn ōgkōmenos*, 381), "mere flesh [*hai de sarkes*], empty of insight, like a statue in the town square" (387–88).[112] Orestes even has to talk himself into accepting the hospitality that the naturally virtuous Farmer offers instinctively (391–400).[113]

From his first entry we sense that Orestes is not the noble youth of earlier versions, suggested spatially by his strategy of keeping to the margins of the territory (94–97). His refusal to step forward in his own person until compelled by the Old Man—even though he knows those around him are friends (272–73, 285–87, 553–57)—confirms our suspicions. Far from the resolute hero of Electra's imagination (524–26), Orestes proves an emo-

tionally unstable and reluctant conspirator. As for his sister, her spatial relocation to the country accounts for much of her physical and emotional demeanor, but she also demonstrates an obsessive sexual prurience that distinguishes her from earlier instantiations in tragedy and myth. Her blatant fabrications, feigned modesty, intense bloody-mindedness, and meanness to her well-intentioned husband make Electra an odd, if compelling, heroine. Euripides all but asks us to compare her with earlier Electras, especially when she derides the Old Man for believing that a lock of hair, a footprint, or a piece of woven cloth could signal Orestes' return, recalling the essential role these tokens play in Aeschylus' *Choephori*.

If the old standards have fallen for judging individual virtue, the same applies for the larger mythic order represented by the house of Atreus and its paradigmatic place in the narrative of tragic revenge. The notorious history of the house, well known to fifth-century audiences, suggests that Euripides' rural setting does *not* signal a move away from civilized values toward the intrinsically sordid. On the contrary, the scenic space of *Electra*, for all its poverty, represents an environment unaccustomed to the internecine violence associated with the Atreids. In particular, the Farmer's decency to Electra, his patience with her complaints, his forbearance under her verbal abuse, and his generosity toward her guests establish his dwelling place as a civilized oasis that has been invaded by outsiders. Some in the fifth-century audience might even have found comforting the Farmer's chauvinistic reaction on seeing Electra with strange men outside the house (341–44). The old rules of gender propriety still hold in the country,[114] a fact set up earlier when Electra insists on the spatial division of their labors:

> You have plenty to do
> working outside; my job is to take care of things
> inside the house. A man who works hard likes to find
> everything shipshape when he comes through the door.
>
> (73–76)

Explaining that the strangers bring news of Orestes, Electra turns on the charm: "Oh dearest one [*ō philtat'*], don't be suspicious of me, / for you will learn the real story [*onta muthon*]" (345–46). The Farmer immediately opens up his hearth and home to the travelers, prompting Electra to turn on him for foolishly offering hospitality to his betters (404–5).[115] But "the real story" that Electra promises to tell goes beyond her unpleasant behavior toward her husband; it involves the obtrusion of a matricidal *muthos* into his peaceful, rural world.

Significantly, this disruption of bloodshed emanates from, and returns to, the extrascenic space of the farmhouse. As discussed, the essential task facing the avengers is to lure Clytemnestra out to the country and into the cottage. As well as housing Electra's phantom child, the extrascenic space provides a

place for stowing Aegisthus' corpse and for hiding Orestes, who enters with trepidation to await his mother's arrival: "I will go inside. I start by taking a terrible step forward, / and I will do terrible things" (*eseimi· deinou d' archomai probēmatos, / kai deina drasō g'*, 985–86). After the matricide, the emergence of Orestes, Electra, and Pylades from the cottage, along with the corpses of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra on the *ekkuklēma*, offers a devastating picture of a spatial disruption. Why are all these bodies pouring out from this old farmhouse?[116] If the Farmer were to return home from the fields, as he did earlier in the play, would he take comfort in Electra's assurance that it was her job to "take care of things / inside the house" (74–75)?

The rural setting also affects the treatment of distant space, "cutting off" the house of Atreus from Orestes and Electra, *both* of whom are exiles.[117] In Electra's view, the palace is a den of physical debauchery and sexual excess,[118] manifest in Clytemnestra's ostentatious arrival from her home. But it also houses the bath where Agamemnon was killed (155–62), its rafters and stone cornices echoing his death cries (1148–54). So powerful is the palace's hold on Electra that, early in the play, she imagines that she still lives there:

> In what city, what home, oh
> wretched brother, do you wander
> leaving in your father's chambers
> your pitiful sister, caught
> in such painful circumstances?
>
> (130–34)

So, too, faraway Troy—the most significant distant space in the play—seems to Electra almost an extension of herself:

> Look at my filthy hair
> my ragged clothes—
> are they suitable for
> a royal daughter of Agamemnon,
> or for Troy, that remembers
> how my father sacked it?
>
> (184–89)

Conflating Troy with her own person, she feels that the city would take offense at her impoverished appearance. A moment's thought suggests that any Trojans left alive would celebrate her physical degradation, but Electra's Troy exists only for her.

Richly evoked by the Chorus in the first stasimon (432–86), the Trojan War manifests a peculiar and ultimately intimate relationship to the bodies onstage. The Farmer delivers his homespun aphorism on food as the great equalizer—"To fill their stomachs, rich and poor take just about the same" (430–31)—and walks out of the play. At that point the Chorus of country

girls launches into a beautiful ode on the ships that sailed for Troy, accompanied by dancing Nereiads and *aulos*-loving dolphins, who gambol at the prows (432–41). In the "bad old days" of Euripidean criticism, the Achilles Ode epitomized the playwright's predilection for irrelevant choruses; gradually, however, scholars have come to a rich appreciation of its dramatic function. Walsh, for example, compares the impact of the stasimon, with its radical shift in place and tone, to Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*, "distancing" the audience from what has just transpired.[119] The comparison is apt, for the Chorus introduces a world as far removed from a farmer's stomach as one could imagine. By shattering the mood of the previous scene, Euripides encourages us to reflect on the disparity between rural poverty and lyricized warfare, between the social and psychological reality of the characters we have seen and the aestheticized image of the Greek fleet sailing for Troy.

The destructive mission for which the ships have embarked is pushed to the background by a synaesthetic fusion of sea and sound, of music and dance; the image of a peaceable maritime kingdom (sea nymphs, dolphins, ships) in celebratory motion seems disconnected from the relentless siege of a city. The brutal realities of war seep in only later, after the Chorus turns its attention to the decorated armor that accompanies Achilles to Troy. Even here, distant places and mythic figures dominate, a virtual torrent of exotic proper names: Troy (three times), Nereiads (twice), Thetis (three times), Achilles, Agamemnon, Simoeis, Euboea, Hephaistus, Pelion, Ossa, Nymphs, Hellas, Atreidae, Nauplion, Phrygia, Perseus, Gorgon, Zeus, Hermes, Maia, Pleiades, Hyades, Hector, Sphinx, Peirene, and Tyndareus. Unnamed but evoked are Chiron, Pegasus, Bellerophon, the Chimaera, Helen, and Clytemnestra. The simple piling up of proper nouns suggests the transformative effect of this ode, a dazzling invocation of far-off places and mythic names that momentarily effaces the (comparatively) mundane figures we have seen onstage.

In the first antistrophe the Chorus describes how the sea-dwelling Nereiads bore Achilles' golden armor up from the Euboean headlands, then along Mount Pelion and the meadows of Mount Ossa, to the crags of the mountain Nymphs and the cave of the centaur Chiron, where Achilles leaves for Troy. The depiction of nature, far from the built environments of men, reflects a world radically at odds with the purpose of the Nereiad's visit, the delivery of armor for the sack of a city. In the second strophic section, the Chorus recreates the decorations on the shield (Perseus holding the head of the Gorgon, the sun surrounded by a dance of constellations), the helmet (Sphinxes with their prey), and the corselet (Bellerophon mounted on Pegasus putting the Chimaera to flight). In the epode, an offensive weapon finally appears, Achilles' sword, engraved with galloping horses that raise a cloud of black dust behind them. Here the ode begins to lean toward the situation of the play, leaving the ebullient ocean and pristine woodlands for a dust that darkens the sky.[120] In a rapid accelerando, the Chorus accuses Clytemnestra and "your bed" (i.e., adultery, *sa lechea*, 481) of killing the leader of the expedition that sailed for Troy, and they vow one day to see "the murderous blood beneath your throat [*deran*] / gush down over the iron blade" (485–86).

The description of Clytemnestra's throat lost in its own gore looks back to Achilles' shield, where Perseus holds the "throat-severed" head of the Gorgon (458–62), and ahead to Clytemnestra's actual death, when Orestes "buries the sword into [his] mother's throat [*deras*]" (1222–23). We have come a long way from dancing Nereiads and flute-loving dolphins, having caught a glimpse of the horrors at Troy in the images blazoned on Achilles' weapons and in the Chorus's desire to see the adulterous Clytemnestra cut down like she cut down her husband home from the war. The final lines of the ode return us—transformed—to the business and bodies of the play. Before the stasimon, the Farmer walked out an *eisodos* thinking of his stomach, and now the same actor—playing the Old Man—returns via the same *eisodos* laden with provisions. But an extraordinary lyric has intervened, its evocation of natural beauty giving way to the iron blade that waits for Clytemnestra's neck.[121]

The tension between the scenic space of the play and the distanced space of the myth (Troy, the palace at Argos) is never resolved, forcing the audience to synthesize disparate spaces and the bodies they inhabit. In the second stasimon, the Chorus relates how Thyestes seduced Atreus' wife "in an illicit bed" (*kruphiais . . . eunais*, 720–21), gained possession of the golden lamb of Mycenae, and seized power in Argos. This violation of both marriage and the *polis* order—two sides of the same tragic coin,[122] replicated in the adultery-based regime of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra—generates the myth that Zeus reversed the course of the sun, shifting dawn to the east and sunset to the west, and causing the wet climate of the north and arid heat of the south. Having developed the story in detail, the Chorus undercuts it in the last antistrophe:

> That's how the story goes, but it's hard
> for me to believe—
> that the sun with its face of gold
> turned and changed its torrid place,
> causing grief to mortal men
> all for the sake of their injustice!
>
> (737–42)

The Chorus views such myths as useful fictions to encourage faith in the gods (743–44). By challenging prior versions of the myth of the house of Atreus (Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles),[123] Euripides encourages a skeptical response from his audience like that the Chorus evidences toward the cosmic myth of solar reversal.

Castor delivers the coup de grace to the mythical basis of the drama,

announcing that the much-maligned Helen never betrayed her husband and never went to Troy.[124] The bodily root of the story—Helen's adultery and departure from Greece—proves to be a phantom created by Zeus to reduce the world's population (1278–83). Combining elements of Stesichorus' palinode and the *Cypria*,[125] Euripides undermines the "physical" foundation that underlies the Trojan War. In a similar fashion, the myth that Atreus' adultery and theft led to Zeus' solar reversal appears, on reflection, to be simply incredible. Electra, too, creates a phantom, an impossible child given her virginity, but one that lures Clytemnestra to her death. Bodily inventions lead to tragic displacements, and the blood flows at Troy, in the Argive palace, and in a poor hut in the country.

Focusing on such "bodily fictions" helps us understand the play's pointed references to the conventions of tragedy, to nontragic genres, and to other versions of the Orestes-Electra story. We find these self-referential deictics throughout the drama: the parody of the recognition scene from *Choephori*, in which Orestes' body inadvertently reveals his identity;[126] Euripides' inversion of the role played by Apollo in Aeschylus' trilogy;[127] the bizarre performance of an epinician ode to celebrate Aegisthus' murder, as if Orestes and Pylades had returned victorious from the Olympic games;[128] and the last-minute adoption of Stesichorus' account of the events at Troy.

A similar, but fully embodied metatheatrical moment occurs in the report of Orestes' foray against Aegisthus. A despairing Electra cries out, "We are defeated, for where is the Messenger?" (759), as if she were aware of the conventions of the messenger speech in tragedy.[129] When the Messenger arrives, however, Electra doubts his identity (765–69), a violation of those very conventions. As Gellie reminds us, "in the three tragedians there are 26 messengers and heralds who enter a play to give extended information. This is the only one who is not trusted on sight."[130] Once the Messenger identifies himself as Orestes' servant (whom we saw onstage earlier), Electra knows him. "Fear kept me from recognizing your face [*prosōpon*]" (767–68), she says, using the term that also means "theatrical mask" and (much later) "theatrical part." Given that the same actor who played Orestes probably played the Messenger as well,[131] we might construe Electra's response as follows: "Fear for your survival, Orestes, kept me from recognizing you [as actor] in the mask of your servant, whose role you now are playing." Nothing so convoluted could approximate an audience's experience in the theater. Nonetheless, by calling attention to the conventions of tragic representation, Euripides uses the bodies of his actors (playing mutually reflective roles) to create a self-referential context in which the spectators gain theatrical perspective on the drama they are watching.

The fact that Orestes heads for Athens at the end of the play (1254–72) opens up its reflexive space, anticipated earlier by a series of contemporary allusions: Electra's reference to Athenian law at 668;[132] Clytemnestra's offer to

Electra of *parrhēsia* (1049, 1056), the right of Athenians to free public expression;[133] the rhetorical elements in the set speeches of Orestes, Electra, and Clytemnestra;[134] the interest in, and criticism of, athletic competition, especially the Panhellenic games;[135] the closely observed detail of Aegisthus' sacrifice, one of the fullest accounts in fifth-century literature; the importance paid to birth ritual, a common practice that rarely surfaces in tragedy;[136] the plethora of everyday Attic expressions and vocabulary uttered by the characters;[137] and the proliferation of material objects, odd for tragedy but well suited to a play that juxtaposes the mythically ideal with down-to-earth reality.[138] Even the Dioskouroi, native to Sparta, had a sanctuary in Athens (the Anakeion), probably on the north slope of the Acropolis.[139] More than any specific reference to contemporary Athens, however, it is the play's self-referential tone, its manipulation of the mythic tradition, its overturning of expectations that remind the Athenian audience that its perception of the events enacted onstage is far more important than the events themselves.

In *Electra*, Euripides shows the space of his theater to be anything but empty. The bodies who inhabit it seem to know what has happened there before, and they use that knowledge self-consciously in representing their story. But self-referential space does not simply open up new perspectives on the past. In the prologue, the Farmer leaves us with a prospective challenge regarding his treatment of Electra's body:

> Anyone who thinks I'm a fool for taking
> a nubile virgin into the house and not touching her,
> let him know that *he* uses a bad measure
> for good judgment, and will prove to be the real fool.
>
> (50–53)

The Farmer asks us to consider his "hands off" policy as we watch the play.[140] Once exposed to Electra, we may appreciate his decision to leave bodily intimacy with her to others.

The appearance of Orestes and Electra after the matricide, "empurpled with the fresh gore / of their mother's blood" (1172–73), constitutes the play's ultimate intersection of space and the body. "The real story" (*ta onto muthon*, 346), as Electra puts it, reveals children covered with their mother's blood as if they were newborn, the reality behind the ersatz baby that Electra used to lure Clytemnestra to her death. The regrets of brother and sister over the matricide, and their bitter sorrow at the separation and exile that lies ahead, undercut Castor's platitudes about their newfound happiness.

The god offers Electra precisely what she longed for at the beginning of the play, a marriage befitting her royal status (union with Pylades, 1284–85). Castor insists that *gamos* 'marriage' (also 'mating') is now her chief concern (1342), but Electra shows no interest in her nuptial prospects, lamenting instead her imminent departure from her homeland (1314–15, 1334). She

clings not to her new husband but to the brother she is losing (1321–26, 1331–33, 1339), whose presence Electra once implored with "many messengers, of which I stand interpreter: / my hands and tongue, my suffering heart, / my razored hair" (333–35).[141] The "self-refutation within Euripidean drama" identified by John Jones applies perfectly to the close of *Electra*.[142]

Castor speaks from on high, but Orestes and Electra are finally *grounded*, now more than any other time in the play. The spatial distance between the gods on the machine and Orestes and Electra on the orchestra floor offers a telling image of the gap between the myth of matricide and its (dramatized) reality.[143] So do the corpses that remain in view after the gods fly off and mortals go their separate ways: one broken-backed and decapitated; the other covered with a shroud by a repentant son and daughter, "the last of the many great evils of the house" (1232). The line, *terma kakōn megalōn domoisin* (1232), is complex; *terma* implies an "end" but also "completion," the "turning point" and "finish line" of a race, its "goal." So the line means more than "the worst is over," for it hints that "the worst has just begun." We translate more freely, "bringing to term the last of many great evils of the house," joining space and the body in Euripidean fashion. The play gives birth to a false child and a false revenge, delivering the avengers back to the blood of their own mother. The chilling intimacy that results separates them from the myth they have tried to inhabit, even as the bloodshed that belongs to the house of Atreus has found its way to this isolated rural cottage lodged incongruously in the theater of Dionysus.

The Bacchae: The Theatrical Body

> Our body is not in space like things; it inhabits or haunts space.
> It applies itself to space like a hand to an instrument.
> —Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*

The primacy of the body in so thoroughly Dionysian a play as Euripides' *Bacchae* hardly surprises. As the (anthropomorphic) god associated with physical transformation, intoxication, and various boundary transgressions (gender, class, age, ethnicity), Dionysus works in and through the bodies of all the characters in the play, radically transforming the spaces they occupy.

The performance opens with a monologue delivered by the divine patron of the theater, in which he discloses to the audience the mortal disguise he has adopted. Tragic prologues in general, particularly those of Euripides, draw the audience from the preperformance world into the scenic space of the play. By addressing no one but the audience, however, the opening speaker also exploits the metatheatrical potential of the situation. This modality applies doubly to Dionysus, who by pointing to his disguise implicitly

acknowledges the actor behind the mask, a man playing a god pretending to be a mortal. In this theatrically charged environment, the role-playing god establishes the importance of self-referential space right from the start.

By virtue of his command over events, Dionysus resembles a playwright-director who understands the plot and everyone's role in it, especially that of the chorus. It was the chorus's instruction that defined the primary function of the ancient director as *didaskalos* 'teacher'.[144] Addressing the offstage Asian bacchantes that form his company (*thiasos*),[145] Dionysus summons them into the orchestra as if giving stage directions for their dance: "Oh you who have left Tmolos . . . , my band of women . . . lift up your tambourines" (55–59).[146] The god performs the same function later, presciently introducing the Cowherd as if he knew he were coming and what he would say: "Listen to and learn what this man comes to report, / newly arrived from the mountains with a message just for you" (657–58). Under Dionysus' direction, the infectious rhythms of the bacchic dance and the descriptive power over distant events eventually lead to the dismemberment of Pentheus, who embodies the sole resistance in Thebes to the god's invasion.

The following categories offer a rough guide for the various spatial relations achieved by different bodies in the play: juxtaposition (disparate bodies placed in proximity), contact (the physical effect of one body on another), union (the coming together of different bodies) and fusion (that process extended to the transformation of many elements into an unexpected whole), separation (the drawing apart of formerly united or fused elements), confusion (the chaotic interaction of different elements that achieves no stability), and fragmentation (the destructive division of a primary entity, breaking it apart and breaking it down). Applying these categories to the events of the *Bacchae*, we can better understand the relationship between bodies (both onstage and offstage) and the creation and transformation of the play's significant spaces.

Basically an ironic or satiric device, juxtaposition depends on the continued distinctiveness of the elements placed together. The appearance in Dionysian garb of Cadmus (Pentheus' grandfather and founder of Thebes) and Teiresias (the blind Theban seer) verges on the risible,[147] for fawnskins and ivy wreaths appear ill-suited on these venerable elders.[148] The incongruity takes on a metatheatrical aspect when Pentheus enters, for he launches a long diatribe against the cultic invasion without even noticing that his audience includes his grandfather and the Theban prophet, both dressed like young bacchants. An entrance in tragedy in which the arriving party fails to see other characters on stage is not rare,[149] but that this lack of perception continues for thirty-three lines is. While the city leader denounces the effects of Dionysus on Thebes, a group of Asian maenads and two old men who are new followers stand in the same space and watch him in silence. Pentheus' absorption reflects his inability to recognize what lies before him (a trait with

fatal results), but it also sets up a voyeuristic scenario, in which someone watches someone else without being noticed. The audience in the theater, of course, watches them both.

In his response to Pentheus, Teiresias occasions another incongruous juxtaposition. Dressed in a fawnskin and holding a thyrsus, the old man delivers a Sophistic rationalization that explains (away) Dionysus' miraculous "double birth," employing clever etymology, logic-chopping, and double entendre (266–327).[150] Euripides juxtaposes the public world of Sophistic debate with the elements of Dionysiac worship, sustaining a mood of (more or less) ironic humor. The humor leaves but the irony remains when the Chorus celebrates the hedonistic pleasures of Dionysiac cult, and then concludes with a banality better suited to the Theban elders of *Antigone*:

> It is wise to keep one's heart and mind
> from men who think themselves superior.
> Whatever the multitude of normal people
> think is the way to go and be,
> that I would accept.
>
> (427–33)

Choral identity does not require the consistency of *ēthos* and *dianoia* we might expect from named characters in tragedy.[151] Nonetheless, young Asian bacchantes who fall to the ground before a god they cannot see (600–603) and who celebrate Pentheus' dismemberment (1031–40, 1153–64) seem a world removed from these proponents of the cliché "nothing in excess."[152]

In the "dressing scene" of Pentheus, staged by Dionysus in the guise of the Stranger, the juxtaposition of opposites takes on a far more chilling effect. We laugh at the would-be voyeur who dresses and acts the role of a female bacchante, as if this would allow him to go unnoticed among worshipers of the god (recall that Cadmus and Teiresias wear a fawnskin and ivy, but make no attempt to disguise themselves as women).[153] However, when Dionysus leads Pentheus through the streets of Thebes (974–76), where the whole city will see his delusion (840–42, 854–56), the mood becomes far more disturbing. The audience members recognize in the spectacle of Pentheus a reflection of their own voyeuristic interests, as if they were watching a deluded man on his way to the electric chair who thinks he is going to a costume ball and has dressed as a convict.[154]

Moving from juxtaposition to spatial contact, we leave the "poetic placement" of bodies and consider their functional interaction. The blind Teiresias needs help in going to the mountain with Cadmus, "the only men in the land to dance for the bacchic god" (195). "Take hold of my hand," his friend says, and the prophet replies "There, clasp mine, and make it a pair" (197–98). Holding hands, and brandishing a thyrsus in the other, the two men stand as a symbol of mutual support and contact (363–65). The god's staff

provides the additional prop of a walking stick, but it also suggests, far more ominously, a potential weapon. Later we will hear of thyrsi used as spears, extending human contact from the physical help of friends to the destruction of apparent enemies at a distance (762–64, 1099–1101).

Although physical contact is the stuff of theatrical action, the constraints of the Greek stage—masked actors, a large playing area, acoustic considerations that require frontal delivery, and the sheer size of the audience—necessarily minimize human touch as a useful form of dramatic mimesis. In addition to simple physical support, exceptions include supplication (where the suppliant touches the chin or knee of the figure of authority), scenes of reunion or separation (involving an embrace), the transfer of personal props between characters (the bow in *Philoctetes*, the victory wreaths in *Electra*), and scenes in which a body is prepared for burial. In the *Bacchae*, however, characters frequently touch (or threaten to touch) the clothes, hair, and person of others, setting up the *compositio* of Pentheus' broken body at the end. When Cadmus tries to crown his grandson with an ivy wreath (suggested by Teiresias earlier, at 313), Pentheus cries "Keep your hands off me!" (341–43), anticipating Dionysus' response after Pentheus threatens to cut off his hair (493–94). However, when Pentheus demands the newcomer's thyrsus, the Stranger no longer warns him off: "Take it from me yourself—I carry it for Dionysus" (495–96). Eventually the tables turn as the god "helps" his would-be tormentor in the drag scene, physically arranging his hair and showing him how to shake his thyrsus (927–44).[155] The god's gentle touch here anticipates the violent *sparagmos* to come.

Pentheus manifests his ignorance and impiety through various forms of physical contact. To adopt the relevant vocabulary, his violation of "proxemic codes" mirrors his "discontinuity" with the dramatic situation before him.[156] Pentheus imprisons, or thinks of imprisoning, the Stranger and his followers; he vows to do violence to the bacchantes; he threatens the Stranger with decapitation, hanging, and stoning; and he assaults him with his sword, unaware that the god has substituted a phantom.[157] We actually see the Stranger bound and led onstage by Pentheus' Servant, who reports his prisoner's cooperation in his own capture, as well as the escape from prison of all his followers. The Stranger "held out his hands quite willingly" for arrest (437), while the Theban bacchantes escaped their chains and incarceration *without* physical contact: "The chains fell from their feet by themselves [*automata*] / and the door bolt flung open, moved by no mortal hand" (447–48).[158] In spite of these prodigies, Pentheus continues to use physical force, binding the Stranger onstage (503–5) and again in the palace. This last effort proves illusory, for Dionysus substitutes a bull that Pentheus hobbles (613–21). "He neither touched nor laid a finger on me" (617), the Stranger announces, demonstrating again his freedom from bodily coercion.

The varieties of tactile contact reach their horrifying culmination on Cit-

haeron with the dismemberment of Pentheus. Using branches as "levers" (*mochloi*) and then their bare hands (1103–10), the maenads bring down the fir tree in which he is sitting. Earlier Pentheus had threatened to uproot Teiresias' prophetic seat with levers (346–50), and use them (or his bare hands) to attack the glens of Cithaeron (945–50). When Dionysus destroys Pentheus' palace (585–603, 623–26, 632–34), he does not need *mochloi* or physical effort, invoking an earthquake instead.[159] By contrast, the people of Thebes remain bound to bodily exertion and suffer accordingly. With her son on the ground, Agave and the maenads pursue their gruesome work: they use "the knife edge of their own hands" against their prey (1206–7); their "blood-soaked hands play ball with Pentheus' flesh" (1135–36); his head is brought back to Thebes "in his mother's arms" (969; also 1163–64, 1237–38); and, in the final scene, his body is reassembled in the lost *compositio membrorum*.

Physical contact, sufficiently realized, can achieve the union of two—or the fusion of many—different bodies. The sexual coupling of Zeus and Semele that gives rise to Dionysus represents just such a union. Normally in Greek myth the offspring of a god and a human is a mortal hero (Achilles, Aeneas, Heracles, Sarpedon) and not a divinity.[160] Dionysus punishes Thebes precisely because Semele's sisters deny that he is a god, claiming that their sister slept with a man and used intercourse with Zeus as a cover (26–31, 41–42). Persuaded by the vindictive Hera, Semele begs Zeus to come to her in his true form (lightning), and their second union leads to her immolation (6–9, 596–99). This, in turn, produces a third union, that of Zeus and the unborn Dionysus, whom Zeus rescues from Semele's womb and implants in his own thigh (286–96, 521–29), from which the young god is finally "born," accounting for his "double birth."[161]

A bizarre form of procreation also characterizes the Theban foundation myth, in which Cadmus arrives from Phoenicia to the site of future Thebes. There he sows dragon's teeth in the soil, which give rise to the Spartoi, "sown ones," among whom is Echion (Snake Man), father of Pentheus, a genealogy referred to frequently in the play.[162] The intermixing of Asia and Greece, of earth, reptile, monster, and man, offers a Theban version of generative union and transformation that prepares the way (in Euripides' chronology) for the birth of Dionysus and his cult, marked by its own fusion of mortal and immortal elements, Greek and Asian pedigrees, and primal, biological, and supernatural forces.[163]

The physical (and metaphysical) merging that breaks down spatial separation epitomizes the experience of Dionysiac transport, evidenced in the Cowherd's description of the maenads in the mountain glen. Here, the interpenetration of nature and culture and the intermingling of animal, vegetable, and mineral worlds provide an idyllic image of oneness in action, quite different from later accounts (especially in the Christian tradition) of mystic union as inner experience. The fact that the Cowherd observes the scene

from his hiding place minimizes the subjective and ineffable in his account, making this unassuming witness (at least initially) a close relative of the "ideal spectator" who keeps his aesthetic distance, a concept famously applied by Schlegel to the Greek chorus.[164]

The Cowherd describes a space in which human agents merge seamlessly with the world around them. The sleeping maenads seem a part of the ground and leaves on which they lie (683–86); Agave is stirred by the sun's rays and the lowing of cattle (677–79, 691), as if waking in her natural environment; she rouses the others with a ritual, onomatopoetic cry *ololugē* (*ōloluxen*, 689). With their hair down and their fawnskins bound with snakes that lick their cheeks, the maenads resemble human animals (695–98), especially the new mothers among them, who suckle young deer and wolf cubs as if breast-feeding their own (699–702). The women merge with flora as well as fauna, winding ivy and oak and byrony in their hair (702–3), and they work miracles with the earth itself. Using their thyrsi, they strike water from rock and wine from the ground, and they release jets of milk from the soil by scraping it with their fingers.[165] Even their bacchic staffs of fennel bound with ivy "drip with sweet streams of honey" (704–11).

Unlike the distanced space in most messenger speeches, the maenads' glen on Mount Cithaeron—until the ambush—provides for union and fusion, a place of "amazing things, even greater than miracles" (667; also 716). Its conversion into a setting for violence involves the separation of the very elements that had miraculously come together. Earlier, Teiresias describes how Dionysus breaks down the distinctions between young and old (206–9), and the Chorus makes the same claim for the god's power to unite rich and poor (421–23). As "dwellers of the sacred mountain plateaux" (718–19), the cowherds and shepherds live close to nature and animals, and they seem content to marvel at the wonders before them. It is the townsman in their group who proposes they "hunt out" Agave, separating her from the other bacchantes in order to please Pentheus (719–21).

The process of separation begins with language—the maenads have not yet spoken words, only their ritual cry—when this "fellow who frequented the city and liked to work with words / addressed us all" (717–18). In his approach to language as symbolic action, Kenneth Burke argues that language introduces the negative into the natural world, not via "the idea of *nothing*, but the idea of *no*," the hortatory command hidden behind the human call to action.[166] Language takes us out of the natural flux by virtue of this implicit "no"—even an affirmative statement says, in effect, "yes to this (but not that)." The separation from the simple "is-ness" of nature has many compensations, not the least of which is the communicative and persuasive power of language vis-à-vis other humans. As manifest by the glib townsman, however, man's symbolic power over nature results in nonsymbolic corporeal devastation.

Just prior to the intruders' ambush, the bacchantes begin their infectious

dance, sending out their ritual cry until "the whole mountain and the wild beasts / celebrated Bacchus with them; and with their motion, all things moved" (726–27).[167] But when the Thebans attack the women, spurred on by language, what was once blissful union becomes violent separation, and the communal dance of joy turns into a deadly hunt for the enemy. Where the women drew liquid refreshment from the ground, they now cause the earth to flow with blood. In place of animals nursing at their breasts, we hear of cows, bulls, a young heifer ripped apart, "dragged down by the countless hands of girls" (745). Bits of gore clog the branches that once provided leaves for the women's beds and wreaths for their hair. Moving down to the plain, the frenzied army of maenads sweeps over civilized spaces—pasture-land, fields of grain, farming hamlets. Women who had abandoned their own children at home (217, 701–2) seize other women's children and plunder their households. While the villagers' spears fail to draw blood, the bacchantes inflict wound on wound, putting the men to flight by hurling their thyrsi like lances (748–64). The spatial reversal is complete: "Everything turns upside down" (*pant' anō te kai katō*, 753; also 741).

The transformation of the mountain glen from a *locus amoenus* to a blood-soaked battleground marks the play's most radical shift from fusion to confusion, and from unity to separation. The next intruder on the mountain has no time to observe the miraculous merging with nature of which the maenads are capable. Dressed as a woman, paraded through the town "for the mockery of all Thebans" (854–55), Pentheus is displayed even before he arrives, and once on Cithaeron he cannot watch covertly like the Cowherd before him. As Dionysus predicts, "You will hide as one ought to be hidden / who comes in hiding to spy on the maenads" (955–56). The god sets Pentheus atop a fir tree, exposed as the object of others' gaze: "He was seen by maenads far more than he was seeing them" (1075). When the women uproot the tree (turning against the natural world, 1103–10), Pentheus finds himself on the ground looking up in terror at his own mother, her eyes rolling, foaming at the mouth, blind to the identity of what she will tear apart (1115–21).[168] In *Ajax*, the maddened hero slays animals that he thinks are people; in *Bacchae*, Agave kills a son she thinks an animal. She sees the spy as a "climbing beast" (1107–9), and then, after the *sparagmos*, as a lion she has hunted down (1141–42). Where there was once a fusion across species—when the women breast-fed animal cubs and drew sustenance (as animals do) directly from the earth—there is now a fatal confusion between them.

Pentheus rips off the snood from his hair, names himself, begs for mercy, touches Agave's cheek in a gesture of supplication (like that of Clytemnestra before her murderous son in *Electra*), but Agave can only see the animal "other." The depth of her confusion ("she could not keep her thoughts on what she should be thinking"; 1123) defies the modes of sight, sound, and

touch that normally align mental perception with material reality. Pentheus himself spends most of the play in a similar state, mixing up the nature of Dionysiac union with the excesses of sexual licentiousness (221–25, 352–54, 455–59, 487–88, 686–88, 811–14, 957–58), in spite of reports to the contrary. Manipulated by Dionysus, Pentheus' disorientation takes specific physical form when he hobbles a bull and a phantom, mistaking them for the Stranger he has imprisoned. At the height of his delusion, Pentheus sees "two suns" in the sky, and "a double Thebes, a double seven-mouthed fortress" (918–19). The two suns and two cities represent the spatial contrary to the fusion of opposites brought about by Dionysiac ecstasy, when the environment and all its elements moved as one in bacchic celebration. In Pentheus' madness, the normal world he knows seems to split and multiply. Image and counterimage do not increase his mental "catch" but only add to his confusion, anticipating the physical division of his own person that lies ahead.

For a physical entity, the ultimate form of separation is the breaking apart of its own body. Pentheus suffers just this fate, and his dismemberment is lurid in the extreme (1125–43)—a shoulder ripped from its torso; a forearm held by one bacchante, a foot (still in its boot) by another; a game of catch played with balls of his flesh; bloody remains scattered in the rocks and the trees; his head impaled on a thyrsus and carried in triumph by his mother, who thinks she holds a lion's head.[169] Pentheus' vision of twin suns and cities has, in effect, invaded his body, moving from a division that doubles into a fragmentation that scatters and multiplies.

The fractured body of Pentheus spreads through the city of Thebes, literally and figuratively. Disguised ridiculously as a woman, he goes to the mountains to spy; stripped of clothes and body parts, he returns as "a clear sign for all" (967). Not only is his head brought back through the town, but his pieces are gathered as best they can and returned to the scenic space of the palace. Before this architectural image of the *polis*, Pentheus' piecemeal body symbolizes the ruined house and fragmented city that remain after the inhabitants of Thebes wake from their nightmare. In place of the dream of rejuvenation (185–89) and ecstatic union, Cadmus and his daughters face the reality of separation (1363) and exile (1350, 1354–55, 1366, 1370, 1382), an ending that recalls Euripides' *Electra*.

For Thebes' original couple, Cadmus and his wife Harmonia, even worse lies ahead, for they must endure a metamorphosis into snakes (1330–32, 1359). In their bodily transmutation, the city reverts to its autochthonous origins—one of the Spartoi who rose from the dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus was the "Snake Man" Echion, father of Pentheus.[170] After his reptilization, Cadmus must lead barbarian hordes against Greece, destroying the "altars and [hero] tombs of the Hellenes" (1355–59), including the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi (1335–38). Cadmus' foreign campaign against his own

people reconfigures the situation at the outset of the play, where Pentheus fought off an invasion of foreign bacchantes by waging war on his Theban subjects. Cadmus' invasion exists on a far grander scale, and yet Dionysus offers no explanation of its rationale or goal.[171] Cadmus speaks, I think, for most audiences when he says to Dionysus: "Your reprisals are too severe. . . . Gods should not resemble humans in their anger" (1346, 1348). In Rosenmeyer's memorable phrase, "the man has been found out, in the god's image."[172]

Dionysus promises Cadmus (and Harmonia) a final translation to the (is)land of the blessed (1338–39), which would seem to guarantee the ancestral Theban couple an eternity of bliss after a life of horror. Cadmus gains immortality by virtue of his marriage to Harmonia, daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, meaning that he (like his daughter Semele) experiences union with an immortal. For Semele, divine coupling resulted in impregnation with Dionysus, but a second exposure immolated her in an instant, when Zeus entered her body as a lightning bolt. Cadmus' marriage to Harmonia offers exactly the opposite future, endless temporal duration in Elysium. And yet Cadmus views this prospect with horror, for it denies him the Lethean oblivion that death gives to mortals (1360–62).[173]

As we shall see in the next chapter, space and memory are inextricably linked in tragedy, with characters and Chorus recalling the past by invoking a particular place, frequently associated with catastrophic dislocation. The Chorus in *Agamemnon* remembers Iphigenia singing at her father's table, as it describes her awaiting his knife blade at Aulis; Cassandra recalls Priam's altars at Troy while facing death in a perverted sacrifice at Argos; Euripides' Electra imagines the royal palace while bemoaning her rural exile; held captive in the Chersonese, the Trojan women in *Hecuba* think back to their bedrooms the night of their city's sack. In the *Bacchae*, memory plays an insignificant role until Cadmus helps Agave reconstruct the horrors on Cithaeron, and then faces himself the prospect of endless recollection.[174] His memories will include separation from his family and political exile, the barbarian invasion he will lead against his own land, his physical transformation into a crawling reptile, and—above all—his grandson's dismemberment on the mountain.

After dancing with Teiresias in honor of Dionysus on Cithaeron, Cadmus returns "back to town, having come back within the city's walls" (1223). There he learns of Pentheus' murder. The old man bravely returns to the mountain to recover his grandson's body, "torn and shredded to pieces, nothing in the same spot, / scattered through the tangled woods" (1220–21). Cadmus leaves for Cithaeron twice and returns to the city twice. Like Pentheus—but without the delusions—he sees two Thebes, before and after, and the difference between them is one he will never forget.

And what of Agave? In the most disturbing scene in the play, we watch

Cadmus lead her back to her senses, to the fact that she holds in her arms the head of her son, whom she has hunted, killed, and decapitated. As Rivier concludes, "Nulle part nous ne trouvons une peinture aussi directe, aussi *physique*, de la souffrance humaine."[175] From the simple perspective of plot, however, the scene is unnecessary. Agave has not appeared onstage before; the Messenger already has described the butchery on the mountain; Cadmus could recover all of Pentheus' body; Dionysus in his epiphany could tie up any loose ends. The very presence of Agave onstage tells us much about Euripides' dramatic method, manifesting with increasing clarity the destructive and inhuman power of a god "too close to humans in their anger."

Dressed in the fawnskin we remember him wearing earlier when he extolled his family ties to Dionysus (333–36), Cadmus returns to the palace with the pieces of his grandson. There he confronts his daughter, also in bacchic garb, holding Pentheus' head in her arms. In a scene reminiscent of *Heracles*, when Amphitryon helps his son realize what he has done, Cadmus guides Agave toward an awareness of her brutal *sparagmos*.[176] Space as a reorienting factor plays a crucial role in the recovery of her sanity (1264–82). First, Cadmus tells her to look at the sky, to see if it has changed; she responds that it "shines brighter, with more translucence, than before." Unlike Pentheus in his delusion, Agave does not see "two suns over Thebes" but a single sky that registers change over time, one of the primary "invariants underlying change" that Gibson emphasizes in his ecological approach to visual perception. Cadmus next asks to what household she came at her marriage, and what child she bore there. From the open sky to her domestic dwelling and then to the space of her own body, Cadmus relentlessly moves Agave toward the inevitable question: "Whose head [*prosōpon*] do you hold in your arms?" (1277).

Most critics agree that the object in Agave's arms is, in fact, the mask (*prosōpon*) worn by the actor who played Pentheus. In the theater of Dionysus, how better to represent the head of a character we have seen onstage?[177] By physically exploiting the verbal ambiguity of the term, Euripides cashes in on the metatheatrical possibilities introduced in the prologue, when the god of the festival addresses the audience as a character in the play. In the climactic scene, the spectators find themselves sharing a Pentheus-like moment, catching sight of two spaces—one the setting at Thebes, the other the self-referential space of the theater—as the character of Agave comes to understand what we already know, the identity behind a theatrical mask.

Euripides grounds this metatheatrical function by having the actor who played Pentheus also perform the role of his mother Agave. Earlier we watched this same actor play a man dressing up as a woman, practicing his drag act with the help of Dionysus. Now, that actor appears *as* a female character, probably wearing the same maenad's outfit that Pentheus had worn before (his recovered body—however represented—would have little

costume, because it returns in pieces). The only visual difference between Pentheus in the drag scene and his mother at the end is the presence of Agave's female mask, which we see for the first time. The fact that Agave appears holding Pentheus' mask in her arms means that the last image the audience has of the living Pentheus—costumed as a maenad—returns fully, albeit disjointedly, to the stage.

The body of Pentheus also returns in the form of the dismembered bits recovered by Cadmus, and—in the *compositio membrorum*—Agave laments over each part of the corpse.[178] Although her speech is lost, we get a sense of it by noting Cadmus' farewell to Pentheus, which includes the following pronouncement: "no longer will you touch my beard with your hand / and fold me in your arms, calling me 'mother's father'" (1318–19). We can assume that Agave also offered her own memories inspired by the remnant parts of her son. Reintegrating his fragmented limbs even as she remembers him in her (lost) speech, Agave joins the spaces of Pentheus' life with his recomposed carcass.[179]

As noted at the outset of the chapter, a king's body in tragedy extends beyond itself, symbolizing the society that he rules. Cadmus may collect his grandson's scattered parts, and Pentheus' mother may remember them literally and figuratively, but the body politic remains broken and fragmented. Separation, exile, bestial transformation, invasion, an empty palace, the end of the royal line mark the fate of the Theban *polis* at the end of the play. The only closure for the city seems to lie in the replicated pattern of dismemberment on Cithaeron, which Pentheus suffers just like his cousin Actaeon. "Where did he die? At home? Or in what other place?" Agave asks, to which Cadmus responds, "Where the dogs tore apart Actaeon before" (1290–96).[180] When Agave leaves to find her sisters—including Ino, the mother of Actaeon—and lead them into exile, she thinks again of Cithaeron: "May I go where / bloody Cithaeron cannot see me, / nor I cast my eyes on Cithaeron, / or any thyrsus dedicated to the god to remind me" (1383–86). The most important distanced space in the play towers over its ending, not only as a place to be seen but as one with the power of sight. No matter where she travels in her exile, Agave fears she may never escape its gaze, caught in her own way like Pentheus hoisted in the tree, "seen by the maenads, far more than seeing them" (1075).

Critics influenced by structuralist theory have placed the mountain at the "wild" (as opposed to the "civilized") pole of the city, part of a set of oppositions that includes (among others) the raw versus the cooked, natural objects versus man-made tools or weapons, wild vegetation versus agricultural production, gathering versus hunting, barbarian versus Greek, female versus male, nature versus culture, each pair associated with a comparable spatial component (country versus city, high versus low, periphery versus center, inside versus outside, and so on).[181] As valuable as this interpretive scheme has proved, there is something too neat about its application to the different spaces of the *Bacchae*. Consider, for example, how permeable Euripides makes the apparently firm boundary between Asian and Greek. For over thirteen hundred lines a Chorus of Asian women occupies the central *polis* area before the palace. It is to this unsympathetic group that the Second Messenger reports Pentheus' death, as if Theban citizenry had been replaced by foreigners.[182] When coming to fetch Cadmus from the palace, Teiresias emphasizes the Asian origins of the founder of Thebes (170–72), a motif repeated several times. Born of the Greek god Zeus and the Theban Semele, Dionysus possesses a perfectly Hellenic pedigree, and yet Euripides insists equally on the Eastern origins of his cult.[183] Even Pentheus, the man most closely associated with the city, makes his first entrance not from the palace but down an *eisodos*, having just returned from abroad. Far from a set of spatial oppositions, the play seems to assume the interpenetration of foreign and Theban, of Asian and Greek, suggesting a spatial scheme far broader and more flexible than that of structural polarities or of dyads "conjoined."

This same permeability applies to other spatial dualities in the play. Moving from ethnic to local boundaries, no one would deny that the distanced space of Cithaeron represents a place of natural wildness counter to the walled city of Thebes proper.[184] Nonetheless, the ambush on the mountain involves cowherds and shepherds who move their flocks between the lowland fields and the uplands (677–70), including one who frequents the town (714–18). Even the Cowherd-Messenger has enough political savvy to ask Pentheus for *parrhēsia*, freedom to speak without fear of reprisal (668–73). After the ambush on Cithaeron, the maenads descend to the nearby villages of Hysiae and Erythrae in the upland watershed of the Asopos, whose farmlands provide Thebes with grain (749–54). The Messenger who reports the death of Pentheus traces this same journey in reverse when he describes his master's ascent to the uplands (1043–45). The detail in these accounts suggests that the territory of Thebes—like that of Athens, discussed in chapter 1—represents much more a continuum than a set of isolated places in symbolic opposition to each other.[185]

Other spatial antitheses favored by structuralists prove equally unstable. The Theban females abandon their households and "their shuttles by the looms" (1236) for the mountains, where they celebrate their ecstasies. This movement marks an obvious, and heavily emphasized, reversal of traditional roles and culturally appropriate locales, manifest in striking ways: the women leave their children at home, they turn into hunters and warriors who defeat males in battle, they boast of their prowess compared with that of their men. A closer look, however, suggests that the women bring to Cithaeron much of the world they seem to have left behind, transforming it to be sure, but not in a way that establishes the mountain as the polar opposite of their domestic environment. The maenads do not indulge in sexual orgies

or drunken revels as Pentheus thinks, reflecting what Greek *men* do at their symposia. The Messenger's language implicitly contrasts the maenads' behavior to that of male symposiasts, "drunk around the wine *kratēr* to the sound of the flute, hunting the . . . delights of Aphrodite" (687–88). As Henrichs points out, Dionysiac cult offered each sex a separate attraction:

> to men the gift of wine and its ritualized consumption on a variety of social occasions such as wine-festivals and symposia; to women the "blessings of madness" within the institutional limits of ritual maenadism. . . . [T]he two major provinces of Dionysus were kept strictly separate: wine-drinking maenads are as unheard of in real life and actual cult as male maenads.[186]

After insisting that the female worshipers of Dionysus behave (when left alone) chastely and "decently" (*sōphronōs*, 686–88), the Messenger urges Pentheus to receive the god in Thebes precisely because "without wine there is no sexual pleasure, / nor other [such] delights left to mankind" (773–74).[187] Resolutely "unsympotic," the bacchantes would take no part in such male licentiousness.

The maenads on the mountain do not devour the young animals as one might expect; rather they nurse them at their breasts and procure drink for one another in a cooperative, albeit magical, fashion. When ambushed they plunder the villages, but they do not steal livestock or women as male epic heroes might. Rather, they rip cattle apart with their bare hands (frenzy rather than theft) and take as booty children and domestic goods (pots and pans), which they carry miraculously on their shoulders.[188] Balancing children and vessels uncannily on their bodies represents an extension of—not an aberration from—the behavior of Greek women in their normal domestic life. The point is not that the revels on Cithaeron represent standard Greek female practice, but that we can trace a continuity in the women's behavior at home and their actions on the mountain.[189]

In place of structuralist oppositions, I have suggested a set of spatial transformations based on juxtaposition, contact, union, separation, and fragmentation. These culminate in the disturbing scene of bodily reintegration, the *compositio membrorum*, that paradoxically signals familial, civic, and cultural breakdown. Unlike *Oedipus Tyrannus*, in which the *pharmakos* king is discovered as the source of, and cure for, the city's plague, the ritual death of Pentheus does not right the city's wrongs vis-à-vis Dionysus.[190] In the *Bacchae*, all Thebes is implicated and all Thebans punished. As for the future, the city faces (once again) destruction by invasion from without, led by one from within.

We have said little about Athens and reflexive space in the play, noting only the Cowherd's concern for *parrhēsia* and the Sophistic aspects of Teiresias' and Cadmus' response to Pentheus. Dodds and others see the influence of Protagoras, Prodicus, and Gorgias in these speeches, suggesting that

"the allusions to contemporary theories and controversies . . . are surely meant for Athenian ears."[191] Similarly, the contrast between Pentheus as the excitable man of action and Dionysus as a "quietist" (*hēsuchos*) suggests the wartime controversy among Athenians regarding interventionist strategies.[192] Far from contrasting a failed Thebes to a superior Athens, as Zeitlin suggests, the *Bacchae* seems to reflect harshly on Euripides' native city not long before the poet's death in Macedonia in 407/6.[193] Although we know little about the circumstances of his relocation to the court of Archelaus in 408, it seems reasonable to assume that the wartime situation in Athens affected Euripides' decision to leave his home at the age of seventy, never to return.

Because specifics allude us, it is difficult to pursue in depth any particular historical correspondences. The *Bacchae* treats of spatial transgression, excessive violence, and civic breakdown, each of which moves from outside in and from inside out, a suggestive summary of the situation of Athens near the end of the Peloponnesian War. In 407 (possibly the year Euripides' wrote the play), the Athenians welcomed Alcibiades back to their city, rescinding his exile, throwing the stele that carried his condemnation into the sea, restoring his property, and ordering the Eleusinian authorities to lift the curses pronounced against him.[194] Could Euripides' play reflect tangentially on Athens' about-face, opening the city to foreign influence (Alcibiades' collusion with the Persians) in order to save it? On his triumphal return, Alcibiades escorted the procession of the Eleusinian initiates from Athens to Eleusis by land, the first time since the Spartan occupation of Decelea in 413 had forced the procession to travel by sea. The cult links between Dionysus and Demeter were strong in Athens, particularly in the Eleusinian Mysteries, a fact that may reinforce the natural pairing of the two gods in the play (*Ba.* 274–83). Aristophanes' *Frogs*, performed in 405 (within a year of Euripides' death), also brings Dionysus onstage to address the situation of Athens, which then faced imminent defeat. Dionysus specifically asks what Athens should do about Alcibiades—Euripides rejects his return, Aeschylus supports it (*Ra.* 1422–33).[195]

Far more certain than any specific political allusion is Euripides' masterful exploitation of self-referential space. When Dionysus appears on the *theologeion*, not as the humanly disguised Stranger but as a divinity made manifest, the god of the theater looks down on a scene of his own making, and a city he has effectively destroyed.[196] Before him stands the Chorus of bacchantes who followed him from Asia, old Cadmus still dressed in his fawnskin, the former maenad Agave grieving over the body of Pentheus, crowned with a theatrical mask. The theater is revealed as a space where extraordinary events take place and are held up to scrutiny even as they come to presence. The audience looks at Dionysus looking at them, and in that confrontation lies the essence of the play. Although no actual bodies have been dismembered, the audience has watched its own kind break down

and tear each other apart. Offering the image of another's body while inhabiting their own, the performers in the *Bacchae* bring to life a waking dream that turns into a nightmare, where the spaces of the wide world—from the palace to the mountains and back again—come to rest in a fragmented body, through which we measure our distance from the god.

CHAPTER FIVE

SPACE, TIME, AND MEMORY:

SOPHOCLES' *OEDIPUS TYRANNUS*

The eagle, pierced by a bow-sped shaft,
saw the feathered arrow and said—
"Not by others, but by our own plumage
are we taken."
—Aeschylus, *Myrmidons*

. . . and time, that has long been my companion.
—Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*

AS WE SAW with Euripides' *Bacchae*, the body parts of Pentheus that appear onstage present a spatial nexus joining the city of Thebes (where Pentheus ruled), the distant space of Cithaeron (where his pieces were gathered), and the reflexive space of the theater of Dionysus (the *prosōpon* of Pentheus' head, and the Pentheus actor who later appears as Agave). The *compositio membrorum* prompts a series of private memories given public utterance by Pentheus' grandfather and mother. Viewed as a series of objects—dismemberment literally objectifies the body—each part generates a specific recollection, the sum of which constitutes a narrative of Pentheus' life reconstructed along with his corpse. Although we have lost Agave's speech, Cadmus recalls how the youth protected him in his old age (*Ba.* 1310–12), a detail that we would not have guessed from Pentheus' dealings with his grandfather earlier.[1] Memories of the body tell a story, but one that can be at odds with, or shed new light on, the drama as previously enacted.

In *Oedipus Tyrannus*, memory and its shadow, forgetfulness, play an essential role in driving a plot based on mistaken identity. As in the *Bacchae*, the body serves to prompt recollection; "that ancient wound, why do you speak of it?" Oedipus asks (1033), but only after the Corinthian Messenger calls attention to his once-pinned ankles. In Sophocles' play, distant places and the information they hold provide a far more immediate spur to memory than the body. Delphi, Corinth, Cithaeron, the place where three roads meet—each provides a strand of recollection whose interconnection reveals the murderer of Laius, the source of the plague, and the truth of Oedipus' identity. His *anagnōrisis* depends on his putting events in the past together to uncover what has long been occluded.

67 (cf. Griffith 1977, 1–3 and 8–13, and 1983, 31–33). Lloyd-Jones, however, strains credulity by arguing that Aeschylus and other tragedians raise no moral doubts about Zeus: "The poets talk not of the righteousness of the gods, but of their power, and of their insistence that we be righteous; they insist upon the excellence of their laws, but still more upon the foolishness of trying to oppose their will" (66). In my view, the emotional purchase of Prometheus and Io belies this claim.

266. See esp. *PV* 379–80, Thomson 1932 on 393–96, and Saïd 1985, 182–85; other references to disease and cure occur at 224–25, 249, 316, 473–83, 595–96, 606, 632–33, 698–99, 977, 1069–70. P. B. Katz, "Io in the *Prometheus Bound*: A Coming of Age Paradigm for the Athenian Community," in *Rites of Passage in Ancient Greece*, ed. M. W. Padilla (Cranbury, N.J. 1999) 129–47, stretches things to see Io's frenzy as manifesting the "wandering womb syndrome" that some ancient medical writers associated with the unfulfilled desire for children. On Prometheus and the "discovery of ancient medicine," see J. Jouanna, *Hippocrates*, tr. M. B. DeBevoise (Baltimore 1999; orig. Paris 1992) 232–42.

267. Parke 1977, 171. For the reference to the Lampadedromia in A. *Ag.*, see Fraenkel 1950 on 314.

268. After the cataclysm that entombs Prometheus, he eventually will reemerge into the light, only to have his body torn apart by eagles ("the winged dogs of Zeus") and his liver eaten, endlessly (1020–29).

CHAPTER FOUR
SPACE AND THE BODY

1. Poole 1987, 223. Shifting from the performer's body to that of the Greek audience, Segal 1986, 344–45, reminds us of the "strong somatic response to the emotional quality of poetry," evidenced from Homer to Aristotle, and magnified in the theater.

2. Lefebvre 1991, 170; also States 1985, 53, on the way bodies and language combine to create different spaces in Greek tragedy. Note that "the body," like "space," has become a postmodern buzzword, representing "the cultural product *ne plus ultra*" (Montserrat 1998, 4, whose discussion is salutary), the site where regimes of institutional power and knowledge are inscribed most graphically and legibly. Along with Norris 1993, 293–94, I remain unconvinced by this neo-Hobbesian, *Leviathan*-like reading of the world. Notions of cultural production, discipline, and punishment (in their current form) play little part in what follows.

3. See Paley 1855 on *Cho.* 431, and Jebb 1900 on S. *El.* 444ff. A murderer would cut off his victim's extremities and tie them to the corpse's armpits, hindering the ghost from taking vengeance. Commentators mention hands, feet, ears, and noses, but the male sexual organ offered prime material. See Tony Harrison, *Aeschylus: The Oresteia* (London 1981) 64, and *Od.* 22.473–76.

4. Herington 1986, 89–90 (A. *Sept.* 675–76); also H. Bacon, "The Shield of Eteocles," *Arion* 3 (1964) 27–38; Sider 1979, 572.

5. Muecke 1982.

6. Douglas 1978, 128. For gestures associated with religion (prayer, supplication, sacrifice), see Pulleyn 1997, 188–95; D. Aubriot-Sévin, *Prière et conceptions religieuses en Grèce ancienne* (Lyons 1992); van Straten 1981; Neumann 1965. For gestures and other actions linked to marriages and funerals, Rehm 1994a, 12–42 and 141–42.

7. See Vickers 1973, 439–46 and 476–78, for the suppliant motif in *Medea*.

8. Rehm 1989; 1994a, 146–49.

9. Redfield, 1975, 178–86, and Humphreys 1993, 153–56 and 161–67. For the contrast between the permanent and impermeable body of the Greek gods, and the impermanent and permeable human body, see J.-P. Vernant, "Corps obscur, corps éclatant," *Le temps de la réflexion* 7 (1986) 19–45.

10. In a comic vein, Aristophanes' Dionysos "weighs in" on Aeschylus' penchant for theatrical corpses (*Ran.* 1403–6).

11. Cassirer 1979, 135.

12. Douglas 1978, 163–64, also 114–15.

13. A character is addressed as "head" or "dear head/eye" (the literalism recovers the metonymic force of the vocative) at A. *Pers.* 169, *Ag.* 905, *Cho.* 934, *Eum.* 1025; S. *Aj.* 977, 1004, *Tr.* 527, *Ant.* 1, 899, 915, *OT* 40, 950, 1207, *El.* 903, 1264, *OC* 321, 1631; and Eur. *And.* 406 and *Ion* 1261. For the "eye" as a person's essence (what we might call "heart"), see the introduction.

14. LSJ, s.v. individual words; for geographical "mouths," S. *Ph.* 16 (see chapter 3); for personified mountains, M. Clarke, "Gods and Mountains in Greek Myth and Poetry," in Lloyd 1997 (esp. 69–71) and Griffith 1999 on 828–32; for the "face" "eye," "countenance" of the sun, S. *Ant.* 104, Eur. *El.* 740, *IT* 194; of dawn, Eur. *El.* 729–730; of night, A. *Pers.* 428 (Broadhead 1960 on 426–28), Eur. *El.* 102, *IT* 110, *Pho.* 543, A. *Th.* 390 (= the moon); of the moon, S. *Fr.* 871.6.

15. Seeing these lines as anticipating the Stoic concept of *sumpatheia*, a bond existing between all parts of the universe, Greene 1944, 109 n.35, believes that Aeschylus' anthropomorphism "sees the whole *cosmos* as alive and morally conscious" and therefore has no part in the "pathetic fallacy." Kuhn 1942, 80–88 offers other insights on the pathetic fallacy in Greek thought.

16. West 1992, 89.

17. On columns (including caryatids and atlantes), see Rykwert 1996, 128–38; on vases, B. A. Sparkes, *Greek Pottery: An Introduction* (Manchester 1991) 79, and Lissarague 1990, 56–59, 75–80, and 140–43 ("In the hands of the potters, the vase is like a body being formed").

18. J. Boardman, *Athenian Black Figure Vases* (London 1971) 188, 191, and figs. 167, 177, 274; *Athenian Red Figure Vases: The Archaic Period* (London 1975) 210 and figs. 284 and 305; M. Robertson, *The Art of Vase-Painting in Classical Athens* (Cambridge 1992) 264.

19. See G. Ferrari, "Eye Cup," *RA* 1986, 11–19, on the link between drinking cups and dramatic masks; also J. Boardman, "A Curious Eye Cup," *AA* 91 (1976), 281–90 (esp. 288). Green 1994, 95–104, explores ties between symposia and the theater; Stehle 1997, 213–57, discusses the symposium as a performance occasion.

20. On "the special character of Greek anthropomorphism," see Burkert 1985, esp. 182–89 (also 88–92, 119–81); Guthrie 1954, 27–116; Greene 1944, 10–13. A. Schnapp, "Why Did the Greeks Need Images?" *Ancient Greek and Related Pottery*, 3rd Symposium, ed. J. Christiansen and T. Melander (Copenhagen 1988) 568–74, emphasizes that the image was not only a category of figurative art, but also a means of apprehending and communicating with the divine. According to Faraone 1992, 10,

"the Greeks did not clearly distinguish between the image [statue] and thing represented [god]." Vernant's claim (1991, 35–36, 159, and generally 164–92) that Greek gods were not "conceived in the image of human beings [but] . . . rather the reverse" seems hard to imagine. If a physiognomic nonhuman model for Greek gods existed, what was it? Cf. Mussies 1988, 4–12.

21. Padel 1992, 157–59; in the visual arts, Shapiro 1993.

22. De Romilly 1971, 35–56, provides a full treatment of the personification of time in tragedy.

23. Lincoln 1986, 1–40 and 134–40, views the body and cosmos as homologous *alloforms* (alternative shapes) of one another.

24. For the analogy between politics and pathology, and for political metaphors using the body, see F. Lassere and P. Mudry, *Formes de pensée dans la collection hippocratique* (Geneva 1983) 441–82; also Zeitlin 1965, 501–3. Thucydides frequently compares cities to individuals, discussed in Morrison 1994. Less helpful is R. Sennet, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (New York 1994) 31–86, who explains the relationship between the human body and buildings in classical Athens on the analogy of hot and cold (hence his title).

25. We can trace this process back to the pre-Socratic thinkers discussed in the appendix. Regarding human life vis-à-vis the living cosmos, Heraclitus views the analogy of microcosm to macrocosm as the informing principle; see R. Dilcher, *Studies in Heraclitus*, *Spudasmata* 56 (Hildesheim 1995) 67–69 and 90–95.

26. See chapter 6.

27. A. J. Podlecki, "Cimon, Skyros and 'Theseus' Bones,'" *JHS* 91 (1971) 141–43; S. Koumanoudes, "*Theseōs sēkos*," *Arch.Eph.* (1976): 164–216; F. Brommer, *Theseus* (Darmstadt 1982) 65–76; Hartog 1988, 134–38; Garland 1992, 82–98. Kearns 1989, 48–55, and Faraone 1992, 13 n.6, discuss the talismanic and protective powers of heroes' bones.

28. For their similarities, see Rehm 1994a, 76–79 and notes. Cf. Holst-Warhaft 1992, 133: "we do not witness 'unmanly' behaviour in tragedy staged in Athens"—news to the actors who played Heracles, Admetus, Pentheus, Menelaus, Aegisthus, and others, not to mention their audiences (especially Plato).

29. Loraux 1987, 15–17, 23–24, 54–55. Hyllus negotiates the psychic gulf between his father and mother (1114–42), much as he moves between the distant places of Heracles' foreign adventures and the interior, domestic world of Deianeira (82–83, 928–42).

30. Cohen 1999; on the casting of *Antigone* (the most uncertain case), see Griffith 1999, 23–24.

31. Cropp 1986, 188.

32. K. F. Hermann, *Disputatio de Distributione Personarum inter Histriones in Tragoediis Graecis* (Marburg 1840) 34 (quoted by Cohen 1999, 18–19).

33. Zeitlin 1991, 81: "No other play forces upon us with such continuing insistence the sheer physicality of the self and its component parts."

34. Mossman 1995, 58.

35. Mossman 1995, 60–64 and 178.

36. The phrase "Having deserted my body" translates *sōm' erēmōsas emon*, suggesting that Polydorus' corpse—like Lemnos or the Scythian wilds—is now uninhabited. By the end of the play, this will prove true of the Chersonese as well.

37. Nussbaum 1986, 397–98.

38. Collard 1991 on 1–58.

39. Parallels between Priam's and Polyxena's deaths recur at 160–61, 420, and 550–52. Similarly, Polydorus predicts that his mother "will see two corpses of two children, / mine and her unfortunate daughter's" (45–46), the first of several passages linking the murders of Polydorus and Polyxena.

40. Segal 1993a, 171–72; Zeitlin 1991, 53–57; and D. J. Conacher, "Euripides' *Hecuba*," *AJP* 82 (1961) 1–26, esp. 16–18.

41. This observation undercuts the emphasis that Zeitlin 1991, 57–61—following R. Schlesier, "Die Bakchen des Hades: Dionysische Aspekte von Euripides' *Hekabe*," *Métis* 3 (1989) 111–35—puts on the play's Thracian setting and the parallels between Polymestor and Lycurgus. Just across the Hellespont from Troy, the Chersonese ("Dry Island") is barely in Thrace and hardly symbolic of it.

42. Gomme 1945–81, 1:276–78 and 380; Lewis 1988, 298 and 1992, 127–28; O. Murray, "The Ionian Revolt," in *CAH* 4:465; Figueira 1991a, 260–62; and my chapter 1.

43. On the Chersonese's Athenian connections, see note 42.

44. Nussbaum 1986, 415–16, finds Hecuba's plea "a ghastly moment. . . . Like Cassandra's body, her own is now a mere tool of the new plan [of revenge]."

45. According to Zeitlin 1991, 79–80, Odysseus' rejection of Hecuba's offer indicates his belief that "the self is a single unit," a dubious position for so slippery a self as Odysseus.

46. "It is all terribly indecent. Nothing could contrast more pointedly with Polyxena's free virgin death" (Reckford 1985, 121). Cf. Zeitlin 1991, 57 and 94 n.84, who rejects such "facile moral judgments." What makes a moral judgment "facile" in a play concerned with the breakdown of *nomos* (Nussbaum 1986) eludes me. Judgments of characters and their actions are apparently not part of what Zeitlin terms "the theater's vocation" (57).

47. Acknowledging Polyxena's vulnerability in death, Hecuba orders that "none of the Greeks touch the corpse of my child; / keep the crowd away" (604–08).

48. For the ritual irony of Iphigenia's purported marriage, see Foley 1985, 84–91, and her "Marriage and Sacrifice in Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*," *Arethusa* 15 (1982) 159–80.

49. Rehm 1994a, 167 n.34; Segal 1993a, 175–76; Rabinowitz 1993, 55–56; also R. Scodel, "*Domōn agalma*: Virgin Sacrifice and Aesthetic Object," *TAPA* 26 (1996) esp. 123–26.

50. Strangely, Rabinowitz 1993, 54–62, detects no resistance to Polyxena's sacrifice in the play: "By understanding the text's fetishism, however, we can to some extent limit its potency" (62). Cf. Foley's welcome corrective, rev. in *CP* 90 (1995) 82–86.

51. Nussbaum 1986, 405–6. Cf. Gregory 1999 on 826–30: "It is standard for parental figures in tragedy to make explicit reference to their children's sexual lives" [!]—even if your child is a priestess of Apollo?

52. War-brides handle the realities of war better than their captors, as the comparison between Tecmessa and Ajax demonstrates (see chapter 3); see R. Scodel, "The Captive's Dilemma: Sexual Acquiescence in Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Troades*," *HSCP* 98 (1998) 137–54.

53. Euripides' highlights the failed *xenos* (guest-friend) relationship by applying

the term (alone or in compounds) to Polymestor in the emphatic first or last position of lines 7, 19, 26, 715, 774, 781, 790, 794, 803, 852, 890, 1047, 1216, 1235, 1244, and 1247; also at 710. For Polymestor's mistreatment of Polydorus' corpse, see 25–30, 47–48, 697–720, 773–82, 1021–22. Nussbaum 1986, 406–9, argues that the violation of the *xenos* relationship—unaffected by links of blood or eroticism—represents the "most binding tie that exists by *nomos*, the tie that most fundamentally indicates one human's openness to another, his willingness to join with that other in a common moral world," even suspending hostilities on the battlefield (the Glaucus-Diomedes scene in *Il.* 6). Zeitlin 1991, 85–86, discusses the punishment of Polymestor via his offspring as the perfect penalty for his failure to nurture Polydorus as his own child.

54. The term *chrusos* 'gold' occurs more than twenty times, building up the distorted sense of "value" with which the play contends. See Segal 1993a, 160.

55. The shelters hide "a crowd [*ochlos*] of Trojan women" (880) and are "empty of men" (1017–18).

56. Mossman 1995, 64.

57. See Segal 1993a, 185–86; Gregory 1991, 85 and 110–11; Nussbaum 1986, 410–18, on the "retributive and mimetic" aspects of Hecuba's revenge. Michelini 1987, 170, summarizes: "The perfect revenge demands reciprocity between the wronged and the wronger, so that exactly comparable wounds are suffered by each, and each becomes the image of the other."

58. Nagler 1974, 10–11, 45–54; also Segal 1993a, 173–74, and Hanson 1990, 325–27.

59. Collard 1991 on 444–83.

60. Collard 1991, 34.

61. Gregory 1991, 88; more generally, J. C. Hogan, "Thucydides 3.52–68 and Euripides' *Hecuba*," *Phoenix* 26 (1972) 241–57.

62. "Euripides gives him the traits of a contemporary Athenian politician" (Tierney 1946 on 254, after the scholiast).

63. Demosth. 21.159; see Collard 1991 on 291–92 and Tierney 1946 on 291.

64. W. S. Hadley, ed., *The Hecuba of Euripides* (Cambridge 1904) 101.

65. See Mossman 1995, 192–93; Michelini 1987, 142–57; Buxton 1982, 181–83; Conacher 1967, 164.

66. See Conacher 1998, 58–69, on Sophistic influences in *Hecuba*; also Segal 1993a, 196–202, and Nussbaum 1986, 402–5, emphasizing the disintegration of moral community and language parallel to the *stasis* in Corcyra (*Thuc.* 3.82–83), which concluded in 424, the probable date of *Hecuba*'s premiere.

67. Collard 1991 on 592–602, with a defense of the text.

68. Segal 1993a, 210–11.

69. Cynossema was the site of an important naval victory for the Athenian fleet led by Alcibiades in 411. For canine mutilation as cultural breakdown, see Segal 1971, 32–41, and Redfield 1975, 183–85 and 190–98. Nussbaum 1986, 416, notes that Aeschylus' Furies change from doglike creatures thrilled with the scent of Orestes' blood into female divinities, dressed and escorted to their new home "according to *nomos*" (*Eum.* 1033). *Hecuba* reverses this process with the dehumanizing metamorphoses of Polymestor and Hecuba into doglike creatures, wild for vengeance. See also Forbes Irving 1990, 207–10, and D. Gall, "Menschen, die zu Tieren Werden," *Hermes* 125 (1997) esp. 405–9. While acknowledging the savage nature of Hecuba's revenge, Gregory 1999, xxxiv–xxxv, emphasizes the maternal association of a bitch, concluding that "Hecuba's metamorphosis should not be interpreted as a judgment."

70. On weaving the Panathenaic *peplos* for Athena, see Lefkowitz 1996, 79–81; McEwen 1993, 89–93; Barber 1992; Shapiro 1989, 38–39; and chapter 2, note 103. There may be an implicit irony in the Chorus's thinking of where it might sail and of Athena's *peplos*. Sometime after Salamis, the robe was displayed as the sail of a ship wheeled up to the Acropolis during the Great Panathenaia, an image all Athenians would know. See Ridgway 1992, 122–23, and J. Tobin, "Some New Thoughts on Herodes Atticus's Tomb," *AJA* 97 (1993) 87–89.

71. Mossman 1995, 79–81.

72. Daitz 1971, 217, counts twenty-seven occurrences of the words "slave" (*doulos*) and "free" (*eleutheros*) in the play. Among many discussions of the Athenian notion of *eleutheria*, see Wood 1988, 126–37; Sinclair 1988, 20–23; Farrar 1988, 30–37, 140, 236–37; McGlew 1993, 183–90 (who argues unpersuasively that the memory of the tyrants' freedom—transformed into the citizens' perception of themselves as their own masters—provided the conceptual model for Athenian democracy). Finley 1981, 77–94, discusses citizen freedom in the Greek world in terms of *isonomia*, "equality through, and before, the law." Hansen 1991, 74 and 79–85, compares the Athenian triad of *dēmokratia*, *eleutheria*, and *to ison* with contemporary notions of democracy, liberty, and equality.

73. Garlan 1988, 40–45, and MacDowell 1978, 79–83, observe that domestic slaves in Athens did have some "bodily" guarantees based on their belonging to an *oikos* as property of their masters, and on their classification as *anthrōpoi* (human beings, not animals) vis-à-vis the gods. Greek-speaking slaves, for example, could be initiated in the Eleusinian Mysteries. In the evacuation of Athens in 480, the assembly proclaimed that every Athenian should save his "children and household slaves" (*tekna te kai tous oiketas*) as best he could; most families sailed to Salamis, Aegina, and Troizen (Hdt. 8.41, and chapter 6).

74. Garlan 1988, 119–26; P. A. Cartledge, "Serfdom in Classical Greece," in Archer 1988, 32–36; Hall 1989, 16–17, 99–100; Croally 1994, 103–15; P. Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge 1996) 1–127.

75. Baldry 1965, 24–29 and 39–45; Segal 1993a, 196–98.

76. *Pap.Oxy.* 1364 fr. 2.ii quoted by Garlan 1988, 123, with the first two lines (a new papyrus join, *Pap.Oxy.* 3647 frr. i–iii) by Hall 1989, 218–21, who suggests that this addition undermines the "natural unity" claim once attributed to Antiphon; see also M. Gagarin, ed., *Antiphon: The Speeches* (Cambridge 1997) 5–6. However, the fact that barbarians are similar *by nature* (Hall's emphasis, p. 219) is precisely the point. Antiphon is not attacking the distinction between high and low birth, but the distinction introduced by different *nomoi* that separate "us" (ourselves and neighbors) and "them" (those far away). It follows that enslaving barbarians (and vice versa) manifests a failure to recognize basic human similarities. See Segal 1995b, 13–14; de Romilly 1992, 115; M. Ostwald, "*Nomos* and *Phusis* in Antiphon's *Peri Alētheias*," in Griffith and Mastronarde 1990, esp. 298–301; and Furley 1989, 75. The fact that Athenians continued to enslave Greeks during the Peloponnesian War (Toronaeans in 422, Melians in 416) indicates that nonbarbarians were fit for slavery. See Cartledge 1993, 136–38; Pritchett 1991, 226–34; F. D. Harvey, "Herodotus and the Man-Footed Crea-

ture," in Archer 1988, 43–45; and Thomas 1981, 50 ("Greeks were regularly enslaved by other Greeks"). Burford 1993, 211, notes the "egalitarianism" of Greek slavery, with no nation, region, or physical type preferred.

77. Garlan 1988, 60–73, 112–14, 145–48, and 163–73; Finley 1981, 97–115, 121–23, and 168–70; Jones 1957, 12–20, 80–81; Burford 1993, 208–22, and Jameson 1977–78 (on agricultural slaves); Hunter 1994, 70–95 (on household slaves); A. J. Graham, "Thucydides 7.13.2 and the Crews of Athenian Triremes: An Addendum," *TAPA* 128 (1998) 89–114, and P. Hunt, *Slaves, Warfare, and Ideology in the Greek Historians* (Cambridge 1998) 40–41, 83, 87–101, 175–76 (on slaves in the Athenian navy). For a review of the dominant (and mistaken) idea that Athenian democracy depended on an "idle mob" freed by means of a "slave mode of production," see Wood 1988, 1–80 and 173–80 (with sources); also Ober 1989, 24–27 and 270–79. P. Cartledge, "Rebels and Sambos in Classical Greece: A Comparative View," in Cartledge and Harvey 1985, 16–46, contrasts Athenian chattel slaves with Spartan helots, using slavery in the American South as a point of comparison. T.E.J. Wiedemann, *Slavery, G&R* New Surveys in the Classics, no. 19 (Oxford 1997), provides a useful summary.

78. The Greek Messenger in Eur. *Hel.* (728–33) expresses similar thoughts. See R. Kannicht, *Euripides, Helena*, 2 (Heidelberg 1969) on 726–33; also Papi 1987, 31–33; Eur. frr. 50–57 (from *Alexandros*), 511, and 831. Synodinou 1977 and H. Kuch, *Kriegsgefangenschaft und Sklaverei bei Euripides* (Berlin 1974), analyze these and other comments on slavery in Euripides.

79. Baldry 1965, 37. Daitz 1971, 225–26, thinks that Euripides comes close to advocating the abolition of slavery. In his *Hcld.* (788–89, 888–91), for example, Alcmene spontaneously frees the slave who brings news of Athens' victory over the invading Argives. Cf. P. Vogt, *Slavery and the Ideal of Man*, tr. T. Wiedemann (Cambridge, Mass. 1975) 14–25.

80. See chapter 1.

81. See Vellacott 1975, 213–14; Reckford 1985, 121–23; Croally 1994, 97–103 (relating this passage to the idea that no one is free in Eur. *Tro.*). Gregory 1991, 91–92, points out that Agamemnon's reluctance to help is really "a specious plea of constraint," one she compares with "the Athenians' argument in Thucydides (1.75.3) that three considerations—fear, honor, and advantage—'compel' them to retain their empire." Contemporary imperialists employ the same arguments to justify using military force: "we had no choice," "our hands were tied," "we must not be perceived as weak," "we had to send a message," etc.

82. Indicated at 775, 865, 1001–22, 1206–7, and 1245. Hall 1989, 107–10, views Polymestor as a dramatic "invention" designed to explore "vices stereotypically imputed to the barbarian."

83. Collard 1991 on 756–59 defends Hecuba's response, deleted by Diggle. Reckford 1985, 114, emphasizes Hecuba's moral collapse, leaving only her desire for vengeance: "For Hecuba nothing else matters, because nothing else of Hecuba is left."

84. See Nussbaum 1986, 406 and 410–14, and Zeitlin 1991, 66–72, on light and seeing (mutual, partial, eyeless) in the play.

85. Segal 1993a, 180–81.

86. Briefly suggested by P. Burian, "Myth into *muthos*: The Shaping of Tragic Plot," in Easterling 1997a, 179–80. For the "telescoped" natural setting, see J. Roy, "The Countryside in Classical Greek Drama," in *Human Landscapes in Classical Antiquity*, ed. G. Shipley and J. Salmon (London 1996) 104–10.

87. Vernant 1991, 202 n.15; cf. Hanson 1990, 327–28.

88. Raeburn 2000, 154–56. The single reference to Orestes' "attendants" at *Cho.* 713 (on his arrival at the palace) may reflect a later alteration geared for a more spectacular production (Taplin 1977, 341, and Garvie 1988 on 675 and 713).

89. For comedic elements here and elsewhere in *Electra*, see Michelini 1987, 181–85, 197, 205–6; Hammond 1984; and Knox 1979, 251–54, who properly observes (254) that "the comic tone is used here for a purpose which has nothing to do with comedy." On the various "realisms" in the play and the generic collisions they unleash, see B. Goff, "Try to Make It Real Compared to What? Euripides' *Electra* and the Play of Genres," in Cropp, Lee, and Sansone 2000, 93–105.

90. Cropp 1988 on 140 thinks that Electra's imperative requires a servant: "Take this jug off my head and / set it down, so that I might raise to my father / a nocturnal lament before the dawn" (140–42); the same servant would carry the food inside for the Old Man (indicated at 500). However, it seems more likely that Electra speaks lines 140–42 to herself (Luschnig 1995, 115 n.76, Hammond 1984, 378–79 and 384, G. Basta Donzelli, *Studio sull' Elettra di Euripide* [Catania 1978] 288–96), and that an attendant of Orestes takes in the Old Man's provisions (Hammond 1984, 373). A slave on the farm would undercut the impression of poverty and raise other questions: why didn't Electra send the slave for water, and dispatch him to summon Clytemnestra (rather than the Old Man)? According to Herodotus, Athenian women brought water from the well or fountain until household slaves became common (Hdt. 6.137.3, Mastronarde 1994 on *Pho.* 187); that is, slavery was invented as a substitute for female family labor (Cartledge 1993, 145).

91. Morwood 1981, 368–69, emphasizes the image of pure water (and its pollution) over the course of the play. For further symbolism regarding Electra's pot, see Luschnig 1995, 87–93 and 153–55.

92. Zeitlin 1970, 649 n.20; Gellie 1981, 3.

93. Cf. Zeitlin 1970. For Electra's "unbeautiful" appearance, see Hawley 1998, 48–50.

94. The slaves may have their own cart (Raeburn 2000, 163–64; Cropp 1988 on 988–97, 998–99, and 1135–38; and Hammond 1984, 374–75), but this seems too much even for Euripides. The most spectacular arrival comes later, when Castor appears on the machine with his brother Polydeuces.

95. Following Tarkow 1981, Goff 1991 contrasts Odysseus' "man-affirming" scar (*Od.* 19.390–475, 21.217–20, 24.331–35) with that of Orestes, which "inscribes him firmly into a childhood and a sonship that will destroy him" (267).

96. Segal 1986, 355.

97. Segal 1986, 354–57, and Murnaghan 1988, 36, discuss "the graphic somatic images of his [Orestes'] crime."

98. D. Kovacs, "Where Is Aegisthus' Head?" *CP* 82 (1987) 139–41, claims that the "mistranslation of this pair of lines constitutes the only evidence in the play for the supposition that Aegisthus' head is severed from the body." There is more evidence for decapitation, as I discuss in the text. See also Conacher 1967, 207; Halleran 1985, 22; and my note 101.

99. O'Brien 1964 details the Gorgon imagery in *Electra* and its association with

fear; my discussion owes much to his work. Without mentioning *Electra*, Vernant 1991, 111–38, offers a fascinating reading of the Gorgon as "the other of the person."

100. Electra and others frequently refer to her filthy and/or short-cropped hair (108, 148, 184–85, 241, 335), presumably reflected in the close-cut wig attached to her mask. The hair that Orestes offered at the tomb (91, 515, 520, 527–31, 546) features prominently in the "rejected" recognition, and even Clytemnestra's hair comes in for comment (1071).

101. For the dramatic use of the head in Electra's speech, see D. Sider, "Two Stage Directions for Euripides," *AJP* 98 (1977) 16–17, and Michelini 1987, 214–16. In productions I have staged and seen, the head posed none of the problems raised by commentators. It can be brought in on the same bier as the body, and both removed together after Electra puts it down near the end of her speech; the lines criticizing Aegisthus' good looks gain immeasurably if she delivers them holding the head in her hands.

102. C. Carey, "Rape and Adultery in Athenian Law," *CQ* 45 (1995) 408–10; Dover 1974, 207; LSJ, s.v. *hubris* II.2. Kovacs 1998, Lembke and Reckford 1994, and Cropp 1988 fail to suggest this possibility in their translations.

103. Electra carries her water jug to "demonstrate to the gods Aegisthus' outrage [*hubrin*] against me" (57–62). She praises her husband for "not taking advantage [*ouk enubrisas*] of me in my troubles" (68); explaining her virginity, she reiterates that the Farmer "did not think it fit to violate [*hubrizein*] my ancestry" (257), prompting Orestes to ask, "Why did Aegisthus abuse [*hubrise*] you in this way?" (266). Electra will commit suicide rather than allow "my enemies to violate my body [*sōm' emon kathubrisai*]" (697–98). She condemns Aegisthus for desecrating Agamemnon's tomb and "outraging [*hubrizetai*] Orestes in his absence" (326–31). Given the opportunity herself to "outrage a corpse" (*nekrous hubrizein*, 902), Electra unleashes a tirade of sexual abuse at Aegisthus. On Orestes' first appearance, she fears for her honor: "Stay back! Don't [dare] touch what you have no right to touch!" (253), suggesting to some scholars the "rape topos" of Odysseus appearing before Nausicaa (*Od.* 6.127–210). The theme of sexual violation returns when Castor attributes the founding of the Areopagos court (1258–63) to the trial of Ares, who killed Halirrhothius (Poseidon's son) after he raped his daughter Alcippe (Cropp 1988 on 1258–63 and Kearns 1989, 145).

104. Electra ignores the fact that Aegisthus—the sole surviving son of Thyestes—has rights of his own to rule in Argos. See A. *Ag.* 1582–1607.

105. Seaford 1994, 372–73 n.18, indicates the reciprocal perversion of the death ritual—Aegisthus toward Agamemnon's corpse, Electra and Orestes toward Aegisthus'.

106. Rivier 1975, 119–21, contrasts the idyllic setting of the scene with the actions that ensue.

107. Associated with fresh water, the Nymphs were protectors of marriage and childbirth; see R. Ginouvès, *Balaneutikè: Recherches sur le bain dans l'antiquité* (Paris 1962) 269 n.3. Burnett 1998, 233–34, stresses Aegisthus' unsuitability (as adulterer and murderer) to sacrifice to these divinites, but she fails to acknowledge that Orestes' human bloodletting is no less out of place at their rites.

108. Arnott 1973, 55–56, discusses Euripidean "red-herrings" that keep us unsure as to when the blow will fall on Aegisthus.

109. I wager that most audiences would find the murder excessive and disturbing; for Burnett 1998, 235, however, "Orestes can only gain in stature when his enemy dies with epic agonies."

110. Burnett 1998, 233–35; Cropp 1988 on 774–858 (although "an ugly event"); Lloyd 1986, 15–16; R. Aélion, *Euripide héritier d'Eschyle* 1 (Paris 1983) 131–32; Michelini 1987, 213–14, sees (here and elsewhere) only "ambiguity." Cf. J. R. Porter, "Tiptoeing through the Corpses: Euripides' *Electra*, Apollonius, and the *Bouphonia*," *GRBS* 31 (1990) 255–80, esp. 278–79 on the desecration of murder at a sacrifice.

111. See de Jong 1990, 14–19, for Aegisthus as a focal character eliciting audience sympathy. The Messenger also quotes Orestes five times, balancing killer and victim.

112. Goldhill 1986b, 166–67 (Orestes' "contemporary rhetorical postures . . . [demonstrate] a failure of human (self) awareness"); Tarkow 1981, 149; S. M. Adams, "Two Plays of Euripides," *CR* 49 (1935) 118–22 ("the young Argive aristocrat convicts himself out of his own mouth").

113. Burford 1993, 167–72, discusses Euripides' generally positive attitude toward *autorgoi* ("peasants," "self-employed"), the functional name (in the singular) for Electra's husband, which I translate "Farmer." For the contrast between Orestes and the Farmer, see Arnott 1981, 180–81; Cropp 1988 on 364ff. notes how Orestes postpones his decision to enter.

114. See Cropp 1988 on 343–44 for the sentiment in tragedy and in Athenian society at large.

115. "You wretch" (*ō tlēmon* 404), she begins, her about-face noted by Conacher 1967, 205–6, and Grube 1941, 303–4. Given such a stark contrast, recent critics—Lloyd 1986, 9 and 14–15, Cropp 1988 on 404–31, and Burnett 1998, 231 n.20—work hard to justify Electra's behavior. For Michelini 1987, 192, the contrasting tones "chime together in an exquisite dissonance" [!].

116. The Farmer's emphasis on the earth (*gē* at 1, 3, 18, 32), the fact that he prepares for spring plowing, and the nearby stream give the cottage environment a sense of impoverished purity. Only the "soot-covered walls" inside, mentioned as Clytemnestra makes her fatal exit, hint at anything different.

117. They are described (singly or together) as exiles or wanderers at 32–33, 60–61, 130–32, 139, 201–10, 233–36, 305–6, 1004–5, 1008–10, 1091, and 1112–13. The Farmer also is headed for exile at the play's end (1286–87).

118. Lines 62, 166, 212–13, 314–31, 417–19, 916–27, 939–48, 1089–90.

119. Walsh 1977, 278–79; the ode stands as "one pole of an antithesis between an ideal world of the gods' harmony and the hero's glory, and a real one of human toil and conflict represented on stage [emphasizing] the uneasy coexistence of realistic and mythological elements" (288–89). For other astute accounts, see O'Brien 1964, 15–22; King 1980; and Morwood 1981.

120. King 1980, 207: "Of all the fearful pictures on the armor, this is the grimmest, partly because Euripides has brought the whole image emphatically down to earth."

121. The blade, of course, belongs to Achilles' armor, but the accelerated pace at the end of the ode collapses objects and time. King 1980, 209–10, summarizes:

> The mythic violence of Perseus' "throat-cutting" joins forces with the epic violence of the "bloody" (*phoniōi*) sword to erupt in the "blood" (*phonion . . . haima*) that the Chorus hopes to see "gushing" (*chuthen*) from Clytemnestra's neck. . . . The ode's vision of glamorous superhuman heroes leads inexorably to an unglamorous vision of human victims.

122. Patterson 1998, esp. 150–53 on *Electra*.

123. Electra attacks Helen at 1062–64 and 1083–84; Clytemnestra does the same at 1027–29, and the Chorus at 213–14.

124. The current consensus dates Euripides' *Electra* prior to Sophocles', but the case is hardly airtight; Michelini 1987, 185–87 and 199–202, revisits the question, and Cropp 1988, xlvii–li, opts for Sophoclean priority. A variety of subjective (i.e., nonstatistical) arguments based on Euripides' stagecraft support this view: the shift from the palace to the farm as the place of Electra's emotional torture; the use of her water jug as an ironic version of the urn containing "Orestes' ashes," prominent in Sophocles; Euripides' substitution of the "phantom baby" for the "dead Orestes" ruse, found in both Aeschylus and Sophocles; the bringing of Aegisthus' corpse to the cottage and hiding it within, a variation on Sophocles' use of Clytemnestra's corpse to trap Aegisthus; the comedic Old Man (formerly Agamemnon's tutor) substituted for the sober Paidagogus of Sophocles; and so on.

125. Cropp 1988 on 1280–83 and on 1282.

126. The parody troubles some scholars so much that they delete 517–44 altogether; see Kovacs 1998, with arguments at *BICS* 36 (1989) 67–78, and D. M. Bain, *BICS* 24 (1977) 104–16. Diggle 1986–94, vol. 3, sensibly prints the text as it has come down to us; Cropp 1988 on 518–44 summarizes the arguments. See also Halporn 1983, and Davies 1998, who places Euripides' critique in a broader context, reading *El.* 672–93 as a retort to the *kommos* of A. *Cho.* Dobrov 2001, 18–19, discusses this scene as a "contrafact" (see introduction, note 121).

127. Aeschylus' Apollo unequivocally demands the matricide, delivering a clarion call (via Pylades) at the moment of crisis (*Cho.* 900–902). In *Electra*, however, Orestes brings up the oracle to *resist* killing Clytemnestra, ultimately surrendering to his fear of being called a coward rather than to orders from above (962–87). See England 1926, 103; Vickers 1973, 561–62; and Michelini 1987, 228–29. After the matricide, both Orestes (1190–93) and Castor (1244–48) confess doubts about Apollo's oracular pronouncements. See Kitto 1961, 330–31; Winnington-Ingram 1969, 128–29; Vickers 1973, 564–66; Rivier 1975, 123–24; and Cropp 1986, 194–96.

128. Euripides signals the genre via vocabulary and imagery, but also by the dactylo-epitrite meter, familiar in the victory songs of Pindar and Bacchylides (Cropp 1988 on 860–79). L. D. Myrick, "The Way Up and Down: Trace Horse and Turning Imagery in the Orestes Plays," *CJ* 89 (1994) 131–48, treats the ode as part of the play's abundant athletic imagery. Orestes and Pylades claim to be traveling to the Olympic games when they join Aegisthus' sacrifice (781–82); their lie generates another, for the Chorus and Electra receive them like victorious athletes on their arrival with Aegisthus' corpse. See Arnott 1981, 186–89.

129. Winnington-Ingram 1969, 131–32; Arnott 1973, 50–51.

130. Gellie 1981, 4.

131. Cropp 1988, xxxix n.45; Pickard-Cambridge 1988, 146; Cohen 1999, 221–22, 225–29. Cf. C. W. Marshall, "Theatrical Reference in Euripides' *Electra*," in Cropp, Lee, and Sansone 2000, 325–41, who thinks the (apparently tireless) tritagonist played the Farmer, Old Man, Messenger, Clytemnestra, and Castor (337–39). All but the Messenger would suffice. Marshall offers a useful analysis of other self-referential aspects of the play.

132. Cropp 1988 on 668, from J. H. Kells, *CQ* 16 (1966) 51–52.

133. See Barrett 1964 on *Hipp.* 421–25; Lee 1997 on *Ion* 672; Collard 1975 on *Su.* 438–41; Mastronarde 1994 on *Pho.* 391–95; Ar. *Th.* 541; Isoc. 2.28; Pl. *Resp.* 557b and *Grg.* 461e; Ober 1989, 296 (with notes); S. Halliwell, "Comic Satire and Freedom of Speech in Classical Athens," *JHS* 111 (1991) 48–70; and my comments in the introduction.

134. Goldhill 1986b; Winnington-Ingram 1969, 136.

135. See note 128. Electra praises Orestes for "not having run some pointless furlong race / but killing the enemy Aegisthus" (883–84), reflecting Athenian views regarding athletic extravagance. In 415, close to the date of *Electra*, Alcibiades had to defend his athletic interests before the assembly (Thuc. 6.16; also Arnott 1981, 188 and 191 n.30). On Euripides' criticism of athletics, see Kyle 1987, 126 and 128–32; on other ancient critics, M. I Finley and H. W. Pleket, *The Olympic Games: The First Thousand Years* (New York 1976) 113–27, and de Romilly 1992, 39–41.

136. On the ritual's specificity, see Zeitlin 1970, 652 n.26.

137. Burnett 1998, 229–30, with references.

138. Compare the legendary "golden lamb of Mycenae" (699–726) with the actual lamb that the Old Man brings on stage to feed Electra's guest, or the mythical horse Pegasus (475) with the real horses that pull Clytemnestra's cart into the orchestra.

139. Shapiro 1989, 149–50.

140. Michelini 1987, 194. Note that female sexuality (in the right context) was prized in Athens; see Ar. *Lys.*, *Pax* 716–17, 892–905, X. *Symp.* 9.3–7, and Dover 1974, 211.

141. R. Seaford, "The Eleventh Ode of Bacchylides," *JHS* 108 (1988) 135–36, notes that Electra uses the verb *diazeugnumi* 'disyoked' (1323) for her and Orestes' departure, ironically suggesting the "unyoking" of a marriage (see chapter 6, note 35). According to Luschnig 1995, 155, "the [initial] mourning of Electra for her father, her brother, and herself becomes the [final] mourning of Orestes and Electra for their mother, themselves, and each other."

142. Jones 1962, 246.

143. Wolff 1982, 256, speaks of the discontinuity "between the isolated, anguished human experience of the protagonists and a bland, divine reordering."

144. Csapo and Slater 1995, 39–42; Rehm 1994b, 25–26; Pickard-Cambridge 1988, 71.

145. *Thiasos* (56, 75, 115, 136, 221, 379, 532, 548, 558, 584, 680, 978, 1180) can mean a "group of Bacchic revelers," but also a "religious guild," "confraternity," and more generally any "company" or "troop." The term is used for the "company of the Muses" that visits the tragedian Agathon (Ar. *Thesm.* 41) and for an "actors' club" in the late fourth century (Csapo and Slater 1995, 231). For the *thiasos* of cult, Dionysiac and otherwise, see Seaford 1994, 257–75, and Leinieks 1996, 337–40 and 351–59.

146. The opening 170 lines of the play suggest the ritual return of the cult statue of Dionysus to his temple (and eventually to the theater) with which the City Dionysia began; see chapter 1, and Mussies 1988, 16.

147. On comic elements here and elsewhere, see Seidensticker 1978.

148. Both men pointedly describe their apparel—Teiresias at 176–77 and 322–24, Cadmus at 179–85.

149. Poe 1992, 142–46.

150. See Winnington-Ingram 1969, 127 and 138, and Bushnell 1988, 14–16.

151. Rehm 1994b, 59–61.

152. Cf. M. Arthur, "The Choral Odes of the *Bacchae* of Euripides," *YCS* 22 (1972) 145–80, who argues for unity of character among the bacchantes based on their concern "that their thoughts and actions be wise."

153. *Pace* Leinieks 1996, 53–54.

154. Seidensticker 1978, 310, speaks of "reciprocal intensification," where the comic seems more comic and the tragic more tragic; in my view, the comedy burns itself up. In that light, R. Seaford, "The Last Bath of Agamemnon," *CQ* 34 (1984) 252, and 1996 on *Ba.* 833, notes that Pentheus, while dressing as a woman, also dons his funeral raiment.

155. On the reversal of situation in these two scenes, see Dodds 1960 on 912–76.

156. On proxemics, Hall 1966 and Lateiner 1992; on contact and discontinuity, Mastronarde 1979 (for Pentheus in particular, 23–24, 30 n.48, 33, and 60).

157. Imprisonment at 226–32, 258–60, 355–56, 442–43, 509–18, and 615–17; threats of violence at 780–86, 796–97, and 845; decapitation at 240–41; hanging at 246–47; stoning at 356–57; assault with a sword at 627–31.

158. References to hands (*cheir* alone or with compounds) occur more than *forty times*—the audience hears the word (on average) more than once every four lines over the course of the play.

159. Above all, Dionysus works on the imagination of the audience. After the palace is reduced to fire and rubble, no one onstage—not even the sane second Messenger—notices the fact.

160. Semele originated either as an Anatolian earth-goddess who became "Bride of the Thunderbolt" (Dodds 1960 on 6–12), or as a Persephone-like figure who died and returned to life (Kirk 1970, 24–25). In the play she is sister of Agave, Ino, and Autonoe.

161. Segal 1997a, 131–32, 155–56, and 332–34.

162. Lines 265, 507, 538–44, 995–96, 1024–26, 1155, 1274–76; see N. H. Demand, *Thebes in the Fifth Century* (London 1982) 52–55.

163. The Chorus compares the chthonic Pentheus' rejection of Dionysus to the earthborn giants' rebellion against the Olympians (538–49)—Pentheus as *theomachos*, "fighter against the gods" (45, 325; also 795–96, 1255). This comparison does not preclude the "spatially transgressive" similarities that unite the stories of Theban and Dionysian origins.

164. A. W. Schlegel, *A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*, tr. J. Black, rev. A. Morrison (London 1846) 69–70.

165. The description may reflect Sophistic conjecture about the origins of life. Archelaus of Athens, Anaxagoras' pupil and Socrates' teacher, thought that the earth sent an ooze like milk to nourish the animals, themselves born of the earth. See D. L. 2.17; Hippol. 1.9.5 (A.4); and Guthrie 1965, 339–44.

166. Burke 1966, 9–13.

167. The passage recalls the fellow feeling of mortals and the whole earth for Prometheus (A. *PV* 407–24).

168. Segal 1997a, 204–6, views the *sparagmos* as the "defeat of male phallic power by the female," and "Pentheus' movement back from adult male heroism to infancy." More interesting in spatial terms is Segal's application of the psychological concept "primary boundary anxiety" (regarding the violation and deformation of one's body) in *Lucretius on Death and Anxiety: Poetry and Philosophy in "De Rerum Natura"* (Princeton 1990) 115–70.

169. We might compare the floridity of this passage with the Chorus's single-word reference to the mutilation of Agamemnon's corpse, *emaschalisthē* (*Cho.* 439); see note 3.

170. For autochthony in the play, see Segal 1997a, 128–40. It seems poetically appropriate that Dionysus, the shape changer (53–54, 920–24, and Forbes Irving 1990, 191–94), punishes Thebes by physically transforming its foundational couple.

171. Although the ending of the play suffers two lacunae—Agave's lament and the reassembling of Pentheus' body, and the opening section of Dionysus' apotheosis—neither seems to have dealt with Cadmus' transformation and military campaign. Kirk 1970, 130–31 and 133–35, and Dodds 1960b on 1300 and 1329 differ on reconstructing what has been lost.

172. Rosenmeyer 1963, 149.

173. Although Cadmus may get Elysium wrong—in the standard myth, the Blessed live forever without care—the point remains that for mortals *in extremis* the promise of eternity means their suffering will *never end*. Moreover, if Cadmus has no memory of his past, what aspects of him remain to enjoy eternal bliss? However we interpret Cadmus' response to Elysium, I doubt we are meant to think of him as "unduly fussy" (so Kirk 1970, 137).

174. The ruined house and vine-covered tomb of Semele may stand in the back of the orchestra, a constant reminder of Thebes' role in Dionysus' birth. If so, it operates more as a physical marker than a source of specific recollection.

175. Rivier 1975, 191.

176. Heracles and Agave share similar psychological states: Heracles' god-sent madness is compared with a bacchic frenzy, as Agave's literally is; the father of each helps his child come to his (her) senses; a generalized gestalt therapy operates, moving from the big picture to the specific deed; and so on.

177. See H. Foley, "The Masque of Dionysus," *TAPA* 110 (1980) 107–37, and Segal 1997a, 215–71 and 369–78. Tragic masks included the hair as well as the face, making them far more realistic than the neutral masks favored in modern productions. Other severed heads represented by masks may have occurred in Eur. (and possibly Sophocles') *Andromeda* (Medusa), and Sophocles' *Phineus* (the second wife); see C. W. Marshall, "Some Fifth-Century Masking Conventions," *G&R* 46 (1999) 201 n.49. How Euripides represented the head of Aegisthus in *Electra*—a character who appears onstage *only* as a corpse—is another matter.

178. Aspines, a third-century A.D. rhetorician, reports that "Agave, rid of her madness and recognizing that her own child has been torn to pieces, accuses herself. . . . Holding each of his [Pentheus'] limbs in her hands she laments them one at a time." See Kirk 1970, 130; Dodds 1960b on 1300 and 1329, and pp. 243–45; and C. Segal, "Lament and Recognition: A Reconsideration of the Ending of the *Bacchae*," in Cropp, Lee, and Sansone 2000, 273–91. March 1989 suggests that Agave's murder of Pentheus, her onstage recovery from madness, and the reassembling of her son's corpse were Euripidean innovations.

179. Esposito 1998, 89, offers a useful reconstruction of part of her speech.

180. The paradigmatic story of Actaeon also surfaces at 229–30, 337–41, 1227–28; see Dodds 1960b on 337–40 and J. Heath, *Actaeon, the Unmannerly Intruder* (New York 1992) 10–17.

181. C. P. Segal, "Pentheus and Hippolytus on the Couch and on the Grid: Psychoanalytic and Structuralist Readings of Greek Tragedy," *CW* 72 (1978) esp. 133–39

(= 1986, 268–93); Segal 1997a, 27–157. A binary approach to Greek culture informs Lloyd 1966 (the polarity, not the analogy); Vernant and Vidal-Naquet 1981; Vernant 1983 (esp. 127–75); Segal 1986, 21–74, and his *La musique du sphinx: Poésie et structure dans la tragédie grecque*, tr. C. Malamoud and M.-P. Gruenais (Paris 1987); Padel 1990 and 1992; Zeitlin 1996 (see A. Griffiths rev. *Times Literary Supplement*, Feb. 14, 1997); Wiles 1997.

182. On the lack of a chorus that "can speak as a community of involved fellow citizens," see C. Segal, "Chorus and Community in Euripides' *Bacchae*," in Edmunds and Wallace 1997, 65–86; also Buxton 1992, 12. That no one but foreign bacchantes is onstage to hear the Messenger reveals the civic emptiness of Thebes.

183. Structuralists emphasize Dionysus as the god who is both outside and inside, low and high, foreign and native, etc. Cf. Hall 1989, 151–54, for the possibility that the "barbarization" of Dionysus also carried political and ideological overtones.

184. A *locus amoenus* is literally a "place without walls."

185. See chapter 1, note 140. On the *Bacchae* specifically, Easterling 1991, 50, points out how "closely related Cithaeron is to the visible action through exits and entrances and props."

186. Henrichs 1984, 69–70.

187. Winnington-Ingram 1997, 99: "The Herdsman's final comment is . . . a counterpoise to the sublimity and high poetry of his own narrative."

188. The "bronze and iron" of the text (Dodds 1960 on 755–57); recall Euripides' Electra bearing the water jug on her head.

189. This possibility complicates the oft-repeated claim—Seaford 1994, 258–59; R. Friedrich, "City and Mountain: Dramatic Spaces in Euripides' *Bacchae*," 538–45, in Bauer and Fokkema 1990; March 1989, 61–62—that the movement from city to mountain in the play signals a shift from civilized values to their opposite.

190. That Euripides figures Pentheus' death as a perversion of sacrificial ritual is well established; see Segal 1997a, 37–42; Seaford 1994, 293–301; March 1989, 61–62; Foley 1985, 208–18.

191. Dodds 1960b, xl and on 201–3, 270–1, 274–85, and 890–92; also Kirk 1970, 16; Seaford 1996 on 274–85.

192. Dodds 1960b on 389–92; McDonald 1978, 267–69; generally, Carter 1986.

193. Zeitlin 1990a, esp. 131, 145, 147–48, and 153, argues that Thebes "provides the negative model to Athens' manifest image of itself with regard to its notions of the proper management of city, society, and self." Besides exhibiting an overly neat sense of "self and Other," discussed further in chapters 5 and 6, this view seems an odd one for Euripides—recently self-exiled from Athens—to embrace at the end of his life.

194. Andrewes 1992, 488.

195. See chapter 1. Earlier (ca. 416) Euripides wrote an epinician for Alcibiades' victory in a chariot race (Campbell 1982–93, 5:382–83). If the attribution is correct (Plu. *Alc.*, but cf. Haigh 1896, 277 n.1), perhaps the playwright (like many Athenians) had a change of heart regarding Alcibiades in the last decade of the war.

196. For the view that the space separating Dionysus on the roof from his human victims below marks the gulf between human and divine, see (e.g.) Grube 1941, 418–20; Conacher 1967, 71–72; and Mastronarde 1979, 96.

CHAPTER FIVE
SPACE, TIME, AND MEMORY: SOPHOCLES' *OEDIPUS TYRANNUS*

1. Segal 1997a, 211–12.

2. Vernant 1983, 353–55. As Gellie 1972, 86, puts it, "the restricted [perceptual] equipment of men converges with the unlimited vision of the gods . . . [offering] a long look into the chasm that lies between them."

3. On names as bearers of tragic destiny, see W. B. Stanford, *The Sound of Greek*, Sather vol. 38 (Berkeley 1967) 11–12, and Garvie 1998 on *Aj.* 430–33.

4. The effect builds in the Greek—each transliterated word ends its line. On Oedipus' name, see Knox 1957, 182–84; Benardete 1964, 6–7 and 12; Segal 1981, 223 ("To know 'who he is' [1036, 1068, 1184–85, 1273–74] is also to 'know where he is' [367, 413]. The 'Know-Nothing Oedipus' [297] is also the 'Know-Where Oedipus,' since the name can be etymologized as 'know where.'"); and Pucci 1991, 11.

5. On the effect of the audience's prior knowledge, see Erp Taalman Kip 1990, 21–41, 71–76, and 118–20. The comic poet has a harder task:

> Now Tragedy's a lucky sort of art.
> First the house knows the plot before you start;
> You've only to remind it. "Oedipus"
> You say, and all's out—father Laius,
> Mother Jocasta, daughters these, sons those,
> His sin, his coming punishment . . .
> (Antiphanes fr. 191, Edmonds 1959, 256–57)

6. Zeitlin 1990a, 131; also McGlew 1993, 203–6, Vidal-Naquet 1997, 113. For a useful corrective, see Croally 1994, 38–42, 188–91, 205–7, and 213–14. Note, for example, that the Athenian leader Theseus distinguishes the good city of Thebes (S. *OC* 919–23) from its evil ruler Creon, expressing surprise that enmity could spread from there to Athens (*OC* 606). See further chapter 6.

7. The play may have opened with a "canceled entry," but the suppliants have come from the local distanced space of the city, as their departure confirms. Burian 1977 suggests dramatic possibilities for the setting-up of such opening tableaux.

8. Although the date of the play remains uncertain, most scholars agree on 429–25, coinciding with the outbreak and recurrence of the epidemic in Athens. Of course, circularity here is unavoidable. See Knox, "The Date of *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles," *AJP* 77 (1956) 133–47 (= 1979, 112–24). Cf. Burton 1980, 145–46, and C. W. Müller, *Zur Datierung des sophokleischen Oedipus* (Weisbaden 1984), who dates the play to 434, before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War and the plague at Athens.

9. Translation by Wick (Crawley) 1982.

10. Jebb 1888 on 20.

11. Hall 1989, 194–95, and K. J. Rigsby, "Teiresias as Magus in *Oedipus Rex*," *GRBS* 17 (1976) 109–14. For Delphi's support of Sparta, and Athenian suspicions of the oracle and of prophets, see Thuc. 8.1; Whitman 1951, 135–37; Knox 1957, 44–45; R. Flacelière, *Greek Oracles* (New York 1965) 60–72; Nilsson 1972, 134–41; J. Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle* (Berkeley 1978) 33, 152–59, 246–47; R. Parker,

THE PLAY OF SPACE

SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION IN GREEK TRAGEDY

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