CHAPTER SIX

SPACE AND THE OTHER

> The first idea one infers from two things is that they are not the same; often much time is needed to observe what they have in common.
> —Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality*

IN RECENT THEATER scholarship, the presentation of "the Other" has received so much attention that we stand in danger of being "othered out." Scholars dealing with representation in fifth-century Athens have proven particularly adept; women, barbarians, Persians, Spartans, Amazons, Thebans, metics, slaves, bastards, Centaurs, satyrs, children, the noncitizen, the private (repressed) self, animals, and gods have achieved (in various quarters) the status of the "Other." For Vidal-Naquet, "every Athenian tragedy is a reflection on the foreigner, on the Other, on the double." Whitehead thinks of the Athenian metic as an "anti-citizen," the negative image of what it meant to be a real Athenian. Zeitlin views the Thebes of tragedy as its own "anti-Athens," and she construes tragic acting (particularly of female characters) in terms of "playing the Other," where women represent the antipody to, and construction of, male patriarchy. For Hall, Attic tragedy played a crucial role in *inventing* the barbarian as "Other" to the Greek, marking the onset of European Orientalism analyzed by Edward Saïd. In a similar vein, Castriota claims that Aeschylus (and Herodotus after him) conceived the Persian "only as an antithesis: an other and an inferior, a foil designed to assert and validate the moral or cultural superiority of those [Greeks/Athenians] who had defeated them." According to Cartledge, anyone not empowered by law and political franchise constituted the "Other" for an Athenian citizen male, but none more thoroughly than the slave. Adopting a psychological model, Segal argues that "the other side of the palace wall [i.e., extrascenic space] is also the side of the Other," like "the invisible graphic space of the dramatist's text and the hidden, interior space of the self." For Segal, Euripides' Pentheus hears in Dionysus "what Lacan calls a Discourse of the Other, the language of his repressed unconscious self."[1]

Looking outside the human, Katz asserts that "among the Greeks . . . the realm of beasts constitutes a domain of the Other." Some scholars extend this notion even to the gods, in spite of the anthropomorphic basis of Greek religion (discussed in chapter 4). Writing on Artemis, for example, Vernant focuses on her association with animals and childbirth (newborns are animal-like in relation to culture), concluding that the goddess "embodies culture's distinctive capacity for integrating what is foreign to it, and for assimilating the other without the risk of itself turning savage." Expanding the category to that which defies integration ("the monstrous"), Vernant speaks of the "terrifying horror of that which is absolutely other, . . . the confrontation with death."[2]

The impetus for such thinking derives from many sources, including Levinas' notion of alterity, where a dominant group defines itself negatively in terms of an idealized opposition, such that the two terms are "mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive."[3] It lies beyond our scope here to determine if such an operation actually accounts for group identity and self-definition, although students of history recognize that powerful elites traditionally exploit the oppositional shorthand of stereotyping to rally the population against enemies whose humanity has been denied. To take an example close to home, the United States government rails against "international terrorists," deflecting attention from the far more pervasive terror it engineers directly or through its clients in much of the Third World.[4] Given what we know about modern ideological systems, there can be no excuse for naiveté in dealing with ancient Athens, or the play of space in Greek tragedy.

But perhaps the concept of the "Other"—whether in political, psychological, ethnic, religious, or ontological terms—participates too fully in the binarism we have questioned regarding structuralist readings of space. The limitations of such conceptual dualism become clear in the theater of ancient Athens, which was simply too large and encompassing for hegemonic "othering" to work.[5] Although generally limited to stories based on mythic figures, Greek tragedy nonetheless has a great many people from different places entering its real and imaginary space. The barbarian-woman-slave Cassandra unleashes a flood of impressions in *Agamemnon*, but few would see her as embodying the stereotypes of oriental luxury, feminine deception, or the mentality of a natural slave.[6] In *Ajax* another barbarian-slave, Tecmessa, speaks with wisdom born of enormous suffering to her Greek husband, who refuses to respond compassionately to her situation. In the same play we meet the half-breed Teukros, a bastard born of an Asian mother, who stands by his dead brother and exposes Agamemnon's barbarity, both in the past and the present. Teukros' response to Agamemnon's assault on his background represents a recurrent motif, in which a foreign character charged with savage, uncivilized behavior stands accused by a Greek whose actions condemn him (or her) of even worse. Torture, mutilation, incest, human sacrifice, *hubris*, tyranny, ruthlessness, emotionalism, lying, deception, licentiousness, prurience—these qualities are integral to the myths that lie behind Greek tragic characters. In our discussion of *Hecuba*, for example, we saw how Euripides' treatment of slavery undermines any notion of moral superiority among the apparently "free" Greeks, and the same applies to *Trojan*

Women, where the enslaved Trojan Andromache recognizes that the real barbarians are her Greek captors.[7]

In *Antigone* and *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the idea that mythical Thebes represents the defining opposite of democratic Athens opens interesting interpretive possibilities, but adopting such a scheme in production makes for an inert theatrical experience. Perhaps Athenians enjoyed watching their identities confirmed via the suffering of Theban "Others," and they reveled in their cultural and political superiority over the benighted specimens on stage. In these (and other) "Theban" plays, however, things move too freely between Athens and the fictional setting for any such rigid opposition to hold. Does the city of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*, for example, really represent "the obverse side of Athens, its shadow self," as Zeitlin claims?[8] Or is the Thebes of Aeschylus' play not Athens' "Other" but its analogue, where the Athenian recollection of the Persian invasion is given mythic scope? The city is described as "Greek-speaking and free," one that resists the yoke of slavery (*Th.* 72–75, 792–94) and fights off invasion by a "foreign-speaking army" (166–70). Havelock suggests that "language like this recalls the Persian threat, not a situation in which Greek meets Greek as in the Theban story."[9] The dual threat of foreign invasion and internal faction allowed the scenic space of Thebes to provide a useful mythical space in which Athenians could consider their own circumstances in 467.

If theater history teaches us anything, it is that the machine of ideological reproduction is not particularly well served by live performance. The theater traditionally has had a difficult relationship with authoritarian regimes, as its frequent association (at least in the West) with social movements and political tumult suggests. As outlined in chapter 1, tragedies at the City Dionysia included a large and diverse audience (the antithesis, for example, of an elite, ideologically secure court masque); a festival environment of broad popular appeal, with many kinds of plays featuring rich poetic narrative, music, and dance; and a drawn-out production process that offered several avenues for input and engagement. To expand on the phenomenological views quoted in the introduction, live performance with several characters enacting a complex linguistic narrative in an open space before a large audience lets too many cats out of the bag to serve effectively the ends of ideological propagation based on clearly drawn cultural, ethnic, class, gender, political, and geographical differentiations. As States puts it, the theater finally is "a place of disclosure, not a place of reference."[10]

This chapter views the representation of the "Other" in tragedy through our set of spatial lenses, focusing on Aeschylus' *Persians* and Euripides' *Medea*. In the former, the place of the "barbarian" comes to the fore; in the latter, the position of women looms large, and to a lesser extent that of slaves and children. By attending to the role of space and its transformations in these plays, we may better see the limitations of the "Other" as an interpretive category for understanding the way tragedy worked in the ancient theater.

Persians

> Reason respects the differences and imagination
> the similitude of things.
> —Shelley

> It is hardly possible to overestimate the importance for Western literature of the *Iliad*'s demonstration that the fall of an enemy, no less than of a friend or a leader, is tragic and not comic.
> —Northrup Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*

Our earliest surviving tragedy (dated to 472), Aeschylus' *Persians* is anomalous in many ways, most notably for dealing with a near-contemporary event, Xerxes' defeat at Salamis (480) and the disastrous retreat of his expedition back to Persia (479).[11] In part because of its historical focus, the setting of *Persians* also defies expectations, and scholars remain divided as to precisely where the play takes place. The scenic space clearly lies within Susa, the capital of Persia, but after that uncertainty reigns. Initially the Persian elders of the Chorus seem to gather outside their chamber, perhaps represented by the *skēnē*. When they "sit down in the ancient building" (140), however, they seem to have moved indoors; the queen (unnamed in the play, but traditionally called Atossa, the wife of Darius and mother of Xerxes) arrives in a chariot, which takes us back outside; then we find ourselves transported to Darius' tomb; after the ghost-raising sequence—reminiscent of the *kommos* in *Choephoroi*—the grave effectively disappears, and the rest of the play takes place in an open area somewhere in the capital.[12]

On the basis of this variability, and lacking clear evidence to the contrary, Taplin draws the unlikely (but now generally accepted) conclusion that the pre-*Oresteia* theater of Dionysus lacked a *skēnē*.[13] However, such a facade proves perfectly viable for *Persians*, providing the backdrop for the Chorus's gathering, and the logical place (given the resources of the Greek theater) for the appearance of the ghost of Darius, who speaks like a god from on high.[14] As with Agamemnon's tomb in *Choephori*, his grave would have been located in the center of the orchestra; the unexpected appearance of his ghost on the roof—behind the immediate focus of dramatic attention—spatially highlights the power of the supernatural, lending Darius' appearance and pronouncements added significance.[15]

Scholars rightly emphasize that *Persians* shares the typical tragic concern with an important family, in this case the house of Darius and the

Achaemenid line.[16] However, by *not* placing the action before the royal palace, Aeschylus "communalizes" the situation. In spite of the hierarchy and tyranny represented by Xerxes, his disaster signals more than the fall of a house. In this context we can compare the *nostoi* of *Agamemnon* and *Heracles* discussed in chapter 2, where a triumphant eponymous hero returns to his own home, only to meet unexpected disaster within its walls. Aeschylus in *Persians* alters this pattern: first, the king returns in utter defeat and, second, he arrives not at his own home but at a public area, where he is met not by his own family (as hinted at earlier in the play) but by the community he has failed, its importance signaled by the play's title. Recall that at the end of *Agamemnon* Aegisthus stands before the threshold of his new dwelling with Clytemnestra at his side, commanding the Argive elders to leave them alone and retire to their own houses. At the end of *Persians*, however, both Xerxes and the Persian elders leave the orchestra together and make their way to the palace. No one owns the scenic space, for no one lives there.

Lacking clearly defined scenic and extrascenic spaces, *Persians* directs our attention to the distant land of Greece, particularly Athens. In previous chapters we have discussed other plays that focus on the distance—in *Antigone*, the *erēmiai* defined by Polyneices' corpse and Antigone's tomb eventually dominate the play, and in *Agamemnon* Troy comes to life in the language of the Chorus and characters (Clytemnestra, the Herald, Agamemnon), until the fallen city finally appears in the person of Cassandra. *Persians* concentrates even more fully on the far away, as those left behind in Susa convene in the orchestra to wait for the news from Greece. Although the totality of the defeat becomes fully clear only with Xerxes' arrival, the play does not depend on suspense for its dramatic impact, because the original audience knew firsthand the results of Xerxes' expedition. Instead, the tragedy works incrementally, building disaster upon disaster, grief on grief, until the size of the wave that already has broken is manifest by its negative image, the single tattered figure of Xerxes home from afar, the symbolic remnant of a once great empire.

By keeping the local setting flexible and nonspecific, Aeschylus encourages the audience (along with the characters) to concentrate on the "beyond," which for the Athenian spectators meant their own city. They hear about Greece and Athens from various sources: Atossa's dream, with its memorable image of the yoked sisters, Persia and Greece, the latter rebelling against the yoke of tyranny (181–99); the Queen's inquiry about Athens' geographical and political situation (230–46); the Messenger's account of Salamis and Psyttaleia (250–472); Darius' warning that Persia never invade Greek soil (ignoring his own invasion and defeat at Marathon ten years before), and his prediction of the Persian disaster at Plataea (790–831). During these long narrative sections with Greece and Athens as their focus, where did the audience actually look? Some critics believe that they zeroed in on the exotic

strangeness of the onstage Persians, their foreign costumes, customs, and unspeakable names; that Aeschylus arranged for the Athenian audience to delight in their moral and military superiority over these representative barbarians.[17] Such a response may well reflect what Athenians of 472 wanted to feel, but the play's spatial dynamics suggest that Aeschylus had something else in mind, and presented something different on stage.

Avoiding a defined scenic focus, and utilizing no extrascenic space (whether a *skēnē* was available or not), Aeschylus encouraged his audience to look elsewhere. Outside the theater stood evidence of the Persian occupation, which had ended only seven years before. Themistocles' plan to trust the city's safety to the "wooden walls" of its navy required that Athens evacuate the women and children, open the city to the Persian invaders, and then defeat them at sea. Herodotus and Thucydides describe the havoc the invaders wreaked on Athens, putting the countryside to the torch, razing all but isolated portions of the city walls, destroying most of the homes (except those that quartered the Persian leaders), pillaging and burning the Acropolis (temples, altars, sacred shrines, cult statues).[18] At the time of the first production of *Persians*, the theater of Dionysus overlooked a section of the "new" walls, thrown up hastily using the rubble from temples, public buildings, and houses. The defensive structure surrounded the inner city with reminders of the Persian sack,[19] offering visual confirmation just outside the theater of the Athens evoked by the characters onstage.

It is worth keeping this devastation in mind when evaluating the Greek "invention" of the barbarian. If the invasions of Greece by Darius and Xerxes had not occurred, or if they had not been so massive in scale, if Xerxes and Mardonius had not ravaged the city and countryside of Attica, if their armies had not burned the holiest places of Athens and Eleusis, if their abandoned or captured possessions (gold, silver, couches, sumptuous fabrics, horses, camels, a bronze manger, Xerxes' tent) had not surpassed anything the Greeks had seen before, then we might be surprised at the emergence of Persians as *the* barbarian enemy in Greek art and literature after 480 B.C.[20] As it stands, it seems remarkable how restrained the Greek artistic response was, with Aeschylus' *Persians* the most remarkably restrained of all.

To risk a near contemporary analogy, Vietnam suffered a massive foreign invasion from the United States from 1961 to 1975, this one country bombed more heavily than *all* countries in World War II put together. Six million Vietnamese peasants were rounded up in "strategic hamlets" for their "protection," others were targeted directly in "free-fire zones," or simply slaughtered as at My Lai. A rain of napalm and other chemical "defoliants" led to the further destruction of people and the environment. By the end of the war, some two million civilians had been killed. Seven years after the Nixon-Kissinger "peace initiative" of 1972, the United States continued its oppressive involvement in the region, propping up the military government

in Thailand, blocking international aid to Vietnam, and arming its immediate enemies. In 1979–80, responding to anti-Vietnamese pogroms from the genocidal Pol Pot regime, Vietnam invaded and occupied neighboring Cambodia, bringing an effective end to the rule of the Khmer Rouge, which the United States proceeded to support politically and financially. If the Vietnamese of 1980 viewed Americans as their enemy, exposed the horrors of the U.S. invasion and occupation, made films that stereotyped American GIs—drugged, scared, coddled with fancy equipment, cruel, corrupt, lascivious (unleashing the sex industry that has since burgeoned in the region)—who would say they created a false image, given what they had experienced? To put it bluntly, sometimes chauvinist rhetoric is justified, particularly when confronting an enemy whose dominance threatens to be total.[21]

The situation in Greece in 472 B.C., seven years after the Greeks defeated the Persians at Plataea and drove them out of mainland Greece, was not dissimilar. The giant power of Persia continued to pose a significant threat, and in response Athens helped to forge (and eventually dominate) the Delian League. Persians began to appear prominently in Athenian visual art, and entered literature as the "barbarians" analyzed so thoroughly by Edith Hall. However, as suggested earlier, the representation of these foreign "Others" avoids the obvious chauvinism we might expect. Unlike the Persian sculptures at Bisitun, for example, depicting an oversized Darius lording it over a row of human captives linked by ropes at the neck, the metopes on the Parthenon (to take a rough Athenian parallel) depict Greeks and Trojans, Lapiths and Centaurs, in single combat, each pair ineluctably bound together. For Trojans, read Persians; for Centaurs, read the barbaric other. But even the Centaurs are half human, prompting one critic to see in their popularity in Athenian art "a concept of humanity so broad that even elements of bestiality have their place within it."[22] Returning to Aeschylus' *Persians*, Pelling notes that "it is the similarities [between Persians and Greeks] rather than the differences that come to be felt as most challenging." And Goldhill reminds us how remarkable it is "to write a *kommos* for a defeated enemy," especially one to be performed in a public Athenian festival.[23]

In that performance, the Chorus learns that the myriad Persians who "have departed" (the oft-repeated *oichetai*) are, in fact, "gone forever."[24] The threnodic leitmotiv—"gone, dead and gone"—pulls the audience back into the theater, away from the remnants of Persian occupation to the common ground that joins their own losses to those of the enemy. A sensible rule of thumb for constructing ideologically useful stereotypes is to concentrate on living examples, rather than on those who are past recovery. If death is the "absolute Other," as Vernant claims,[25] then that absoluteness arises in part from the fact that death dissolves boundaries, that its leveling embrace has the potential to draw inimical peoples together, even those who claim to share nothing but mutual hatred. From the trenches in World War I to the

outpouring of sympathy after natural disasters today, history provides countless instances of death bringing mortal enemies together. But we need not rely on modern examples, for Greek tragedy offers its own repository. Recounting the fallen at Troy, the Chorus in *Agamemnon* proclaims "The same, the same / Greeks and Trojans" (*Ag.* 66–67). The Trojan women in *Hecuba* recall the disasters they have suffered "from the spear and slaughter and ruin in the home" and suddenly think of a Spartan girl mourning her beloved who died at Troy, or a Greek widow with children tearing her hair and cheeks, grieving for her lost husband (*Hec.* 647–57). By setting the play in Persia, but having those present invoke the distant, absent dead, Aeschylus moves his Greek audience beyond local color and ethnic differences, conjuring in the space of the theater that place from which there is no escape, for anyone.[26]

It seems reasonable that a culture engaged in inventing an oppositional Other—"'the barbarians' as fully fledged anti-Greeks," as Hall puts it—would leave the dead out of it, for fear of touching this common human chord. Barring that, an ideologically driven representation might choose to depersonalize the Other's dead, converting them into numbers: Gideon and the Israelites cut down "a hundred and twenty thousand men that drew sword," we learn from the Hebrew Bible (Judges 8); "the body count numbered 280 enemy killed, 47 wounded," General Westmoreland's staff boasts from Saigon; "collateral damage may have included 50 Iraqi non-combatants," the Desert Storm command admits after another night bombing Baghdad. While ceaselessly evoking the Persian dead, Aeschylus adopts the very different mode of "individuating" those who have died. A total of 51 Persians are called out by name, a litany of the leaders killed by the Greeks.[27] Hall refers to these lists as "cacaphonous catalogues," but a Greek familiar with Homer (as the Athenians certainly were) might recall similar lists in the *Iliad*, where heretofore unknown Trojans enter the poem by name, nominated into existence only to be cut down in battle, a form of epic unforgetting that makes their dying immortal.[28]

To be sure, the Greeks felt a great sense of accomplishment and pride in slaughtering the "barbarians" who invaded their homeland, as the accounts that have come down to us make patently clear. But what remains extraordinary about Aeschylus' tragedy is precisely the opposite response—respect for the enemy dead and their grieving survivors. Far from emphasizing "Oriental otherness" in a chauvinistic fashion, the play *ignores* well-known differences between Persians and Greeks. In the dirges and threnodies, for example, the audience saw and heard lamentation similar to that uttered by Greek characters in other tragedies, and very close to that of their own funereal practice.[29] The offerings Atossa brings to the grave of Darius are indistinguishable from those offered at Attic gravesites and hero cults, suggesting that her onstage ritual struck the original audience as neither exotic nor barbaric.[30] In fifth-

century Greece, the Persians were notorious for erecting no altars to the gods, worshiping instead natural elements like the sun and moon, in fundamental contrast to the Greeks, whose religion required sacrificial offerings at the altars of anthropomorphic deities.[31] And yet, in Aeschylus' drama the Persians worship Greek gods, most importantly Zeus (532–36, 740, 762, 827, and 915), and do so in a manner compatible with Athenian practice, as when Atossa prepares to offer sacrifice and libations at Apollo's altar (201–10).[32]

A contemporary anthropologist might protest that Aeschylus denies his Persians their cultural distinctiveness, forcing them into the hegemonic discourse of Athenian-like grief and the religious tyranny of Greek gods. Such a judgment would mistake the purposes of anthropology for those of the theater. A play aims to affect the audience immediately and powerfully, usually from a variety of first-person perspectives; it does not strive to present an objective picture of closely observed reality, in which the prejudices of a single observer become part of what is under investigation. As Raymond Williams reminds us, "the form is inherently multivocal," freeing the theater from the dominance of authorial stance as represented by a privileged narrator.[33] By opening up the space of Greek religion and ritual to include the Persians, Aeschylus validates barbarian suffering and makes their grief available to an audience who might otherwise wish to denigrate or minimize it.

Similarly, in his representation of barbarian excess, Aeschylus focuses on general moral principles relevant to Greeks and foreigners alike, rather than on specific cultural practices and peculiarities. We see this manifest in the spatial image of yoking that dominates the play, applied to animals, chariots, peoples, and continents. A common agricultural implement in the ancient world, yokes were used by Attic farmers who could afford draft animals for plowing. Carts and wagons also were drawn by yoked teams, and we hear of numerous chariots among the Persian forces.[34] In her first entrance, Atossa herself arrives by chariot (150), and we may assume that the yoked team remained at the edge of the orchestra until the Queen remounted and departed (531). In addition to its practical uses, the yoke provided a simple but powerful metaphor for various interactions and social institutions. Most prominently, marriage in Athens was understood as a yoke that the wedded couple put on together.[35] This symbol of marriage reflects its agricultural roots, implying sexual union for children, but it also suggests collaboration in a common task, like a team of horses pulling a cart.[36] And so, when the Chorus sings of the grieving wives of Persia left alone, the Athenian audience knew exactly what it meant:

> Marriage beds overflow with tears, longing for their men;
> Persian women, softly grieving, each with deep longing
> for the bedmate she sent off with his war-raging spear
> is abandoned, yoked alone [*monzux*] in her marriage.
>
> (*Pers.* 134–37)[37]

In a less cooperative sense, the Greeks also use the image for slavery, configured as a yoke put on against one's will, with the tacit understanding that a human is not an animal. In its catalog of Persian forces, the Chorus sings of the Lydians and their subjects "set on casting the yoke of slavery [*zugon doulion*] onto Greece" (49–50). When they learn of Xerxes' defeat, the elders predict that the Asian peoples will reject Persian rule, now that "the strong yoke [*zugos alkas*] has been removed" (585–93). Various aspects of this image come together in the Queen's dream (181–200), where Greece and Persia appear as two sisters, both with heroic qualities (perfect in loveliness, larger than life), initially distinguished only by their clothing and their dwelling places: "The one [from] Greek, . . . the other barbarian land" (186–87). Atossa's statement introduces the word *barbaros* into the play, her usage consistent with later occurrences where it means "non-Greek" and not "a set of degenerate attributes."[38] However, conflict arises between the two sisters, and the Queen's son harnesses and yokes them to his chariot. The Greek sibling rebels, tearing off the harness straps and smashing the yoke in the middle, causing Xerxes to fall. As his father Darius watches, the young man tears the clothes from his body in shame. Xerxes' effort at subjugation meets with open rebellion, and the physical image of yoking takes on obvious political significance.

In spatial terms, Atossa's dream retrospectively interprets the continental yoking that Xerxes accomplished by spanning the straits that separate Asia from Europe (67–72, 128–31). The Queen describes how their son "yoked the Hellespont" and "closed up the great Bosporos" (722–23) on his way to Greece, and then escaped in flight with few survivors "back over the bridge that yoked the two continents" (734, 736). Darius condemns Xerxes for thinking he could "bind the sacred flowing Hellespont in shackles like a slave, / and alter the divine flow of the Bosporos with hammered links of chain, / . . . / a mortal who would master all the gods, / even Poseidon" (745–50). An image complex that begins with productive agriculture and symbolizes marital union gives way to war chariots, slavery, and political repression, culminating in Xerxes' violence against nature when, in his passion for territorial conquest, he unites what the sea god has kept apart. By this wrongful conjunction, Xerxes in effect dissolves his own kingdom; he "unyokes" the wedded couples of Persia (61–64, 133–39, 287–89, 537–45), and even the seed from the earth, as Darius proclaims: "For *hubris* flowered forth and produced a crop of ruin, / and from it reaped a harvest of endless tears" (821–22). Xerxes has emptied Persia of its natural growth, "this flow-

ering of men, nourished by the whole land of Asia, dead and gone" (59–62), "the flower of Persia fallen, dead and gone" (252).[39]

In the play, the Persians view Darius as a deity, reflecting the actual Persian cult practice of worshiping the emperor after his death.[40] However it was originally staged, the appearance of his ghost resembles a theophany, and his pronouncements have the authority of words from a god.[41] Darius looks out over the distance at Xerxes' disastrous fall, just as Atossa's dream foretold; he connects his son's defeat at the hands of the Greeks with divine prophecy from Zeus; and he predicts the future, from his son's return in rags (831–36) to the disaster awaiting the Persians at Plataea (796–818). He asserts that any future Persian invasion of Greece is doomed, for "the Greek earth herself fights by their side" (790–92). We learn as much from the Messenger's account of the Persian retreat, where the land joined in resisting the invaders. Many Persians died in Boeotia for want of "glittering spring water" in that parched land (482–84), while others expired from hunger and thirst in Thessaly (488–91). The bedraggled army in the north crossed over the "sacred flowing Strymon," frozen and appearing to offer a solid path, the language similar to that used of the Bosporos and Hellespont yoked by Xerxes. But again the deities work through natural phenomena, as the sun god rises and melts the ice, drowning most of the party (495–507). We have the Red Sea story in reverse, a retreating army walking over frozen water, until the river's own natural bridge melts away, and the army drowns in the current below. Darius' oracular pronouncement about the land of Greece fighting with its people extends to the divinities linked to that land: "The violator of natural boundaries has in the end found retribution from Nature herself."[42]

Xerxes' yoking of the Hellespont and invasion of Greece serve the ends of imperialism, pure and simple. Territorial conquest means the subjugation of people; bridging continents forges the yoke of slavery; military invasion threatens tyrannical rule. *Persians* explores the relationship between horizontal expansion and vertical domination, clear to any population under foreign threat, as the Greeks were in 472, but strangely of little interest to contemporary critics of the play. Because he encounters unyielding resistance, as Atossa's dream suggests and events make clear, Xerxes meets with disaster, configured (like that of Capaneus in *Suppliant Women*) as a fall from high to low.[43] Nearly everywhere along the way, Xerxes brushes against the power of the gods—in the elements and their divinities, in the predictions of the deified Darius, and in the will and prophecy of Zeus, manifest in the Persian debacle at Salamis. Xerxes' invasion assails the Greeks but, more than that, it assaults a principle, one that the play is at pains to bring home to the audience. By extending too far, one reaches too high, and the gods ensure that the fall is inevitable and catastrophic.[44]

Although thrilled at the cleverness and bravery of the Athenian victory, Aeschylus focuses far more dramatic energy on the series of spatial reversals

that afflict the Persians. Having yoked the straits separating Asia and Europe to enable a massive land invasion (65–72, 126–32), Xerxes watches as his fleet finds *itself* trapped in a narrow channel off Salamis. The Persian boats run afoul and ram each other, while the Greek fleet stays outside the narrows, picking off enemy forces as they try to escape (412–28).[45] Not only are Persians hacked in the water like tuna caught in a net (424–26), but their bodies are left as carrion rotting in the surf (272–77, 302–16, 419–21, 962–66, 975–77), an utter reversal of their former status as masters of the sea, who crossed it as if walking on dry land. Now the barbarian troops provide fodder at the bottom of the food chain; for challenging the gods, the Persian armada feeds the fish (576–78).[46]

The Themistoclean naval strategy featured in Aeschylus' narrative echoes that adopted earlier in the Greek land defense, where a sizable contingent of Greek hoplites met the Persian army in the narrow pass at Thermopylai. Aeschylus' failure to mention the Greek defeat there may reflect contemporary understanding of the event, which was far more a botched defense mounted by the Spartan Leonidas than the noble self-sacrifice of later popular imagination.[47] Save for one exception, Aeschylus consigns his treatment of the land war to Darius' ghost, who predicts the battle at Plataea, where the Greek army defeats the remaining Persian forces. The single exception involves the garrison Xerxes stations on the small island in the straits off Salamis (which Herodotus calls Psyttaleia, probably modern Lipsokoutali). Placed there to slaughter shipwrecked Greeks who might swim to safety, the Persian soldiers find themselves besieged after the naval debacle. Their defense of Athenian soil proves (as one would expect) disastrous. Surrounded by Greek hoplites, every Persian to a man is killed by stones, arrows, and finally the inescapable onslaught of swords and spears (448–64). This spatial reversal anticipates the situation faced by the Athenians at Sphacteria in the Peloponnesian War, where they found themselves defending Spartan land against a Spartan attack mounted from the sea.[48]

These specific reversals serve the general principle dramatized in *Persians*—imperialism linked to territorial expansion offends the gods, and catastrophe results. Such "spatial morality" may appear broad and unsubtle, but it has certain theatrical advantages, including its relevance across a wide range of situations, people, and places. As Meiggs points out, "Athenian audiences knew from the tragedies which they watched each year that prosperity was unstable, and that reversals of fortune could be swift and sudden."[49] In that light, it seems reasonable to assume that Xerxes' fall offered an example not only to the Persians but to Aeschylus' audience as well.

At the time of the play's performance, Athens was consolidating its power and influence, based on naval supremacy in the Aegean and its leadership in the Delian League, formed in 478 to provide common defense against the ongoing Persian threat.[50] After Salamis and Plataea, the Aegean islands and

the Ionian cities along the coast of Asia Minor threw off Persian rule and joined the league, a foregone conclusion for the Chorus, who sings of them as already lost to Xerxes' rule (880–907). In the person of Aristides, Athens set the first assessment of tribute to the league, payable either as ships or as money contribution.[51] Thucydides provides most of our information about the early years of the league, and we should be wary of uncritically adopting his teleological view on the development of the Athenian Empire. Nonetheless, after the capture of Eion from the Persians in 476, the Athenians sent settlers to reestablish their influence in the area, which was rich in timber and metals.[52] The Athenian fleet drove out pirates from Scyros, recovering the bones of Theseus (which Cimon brought back to Athens; see chapter 4), and settling cleruchs on the island. These expeditions probably raised no protest among other league members, but the same may not be said for Athens' decision to force Carystus (a port in eastern Euboea) into the league, and to suppress the revolt of Naxos, which tried to pull out of it.[53] In Thucydides' words, "The Naxians revolted; the Athenians besieged and reduced them. Naxos was the first allied city to be enslaved contrary to the original structure of the league."[54] Although the date of the Naxian episode cannot be fixed precisely, its occurrence (between 476 and 467) close to the premiere of *Persians* is suggestive. If Aeschylus helped to invent the barbarian as a symbol of political tyranny and moral *hubris*, then he did so at a time when his own city was on the verge of emulating those very qualities.[55]

In its long final sequence, the play leaves the distant space of Greece to focus on Xerxes' return. In his absence from the stage, we imagine him as an arrogant tyrant and brutal conqueror, the paradigm of barbarian excess, and we would expect Aeschylus to exploit his audience's natural disgust at the despot who burned their city.[56] We get something quite different, however, a defeated man who wears the destruction he has wreaked on his own body. In this (perhaps first) appearance on the tragic stage of a man in rags, we see the symbolic epitome of the Persian fall, the culmination of the play's extraordinary interest in how Xerxes will appear when he returns.[57] At Darius' suggestion (832–36), the Queen retires to the palace to bring her son a robe: "Oh god, how cruel is the anguish / that invades me—but this disaster / bites deepest, hearing that shame's clothing / hangs on my son's body" (845–48). According to Hall, this passage indicates "the Athenians *thought that* Persian queens were psychopathically heartless, status-conscious and obsessed with sartorial display," another example of the play's contribution to "the dangerous myth of the Orient as decadent, effeminate, luxurious and materialistic, . . . a corner-stone of western ideology."[58]

Hall may be right about Western ideology, although some of us think there is more than one. As for the passage from the play, a simpler interpretation suggests itself: the tyrant's clothes are a symbol. The theater frequently uses symbolic objects—the crown in Shakespeare's history plays, the glass of water in Pinter's *Homecoming*, the bow in *Philoctetes*—and clothes operate quite effectively in this mode (Lucky's hat in *Godot*, the "lendings" in *King Lear*). As discussed in chapter 4, clothes are extensions of the body, and when Xerxes responds to the disaster at Salamis by rending his garments, he registers the empire's destruction on his own person. Xerxes' raiments are as close to the tyrant's body as the play can get and still maintain its link to history (Xerxes survived the invasion, and he did not commit suicide on his return). Moreover, the torn robes he shows to the Chorus (*stolai*, 1017) share the same root as the armed expedition sent against Greece (*stolos*, 795), in particular the fleet (*stolos*, 400) caught in the straits, where the "ships' beaks" (*stoloi*, 408, 416) ram one another in a scene of chaotic self-destruction.[59] The Queen's distress over her son's tattered appearance is not finally about sartorial indecorousness or Oriental effeminacy, but about the dishonor of defeat and loss writ on the body of Persia. Xerxes' return in rags offers an effective theatrical image of his shredded empire, torn apart by his own hands, and worn on his body to mark his shame and culpability.[60]

This is precisely how the elders of the Chorus receive their ruler, when he finally achieves his *nostos* (8, 935) walking down an *eisodos* into the orchestra.[61] Keeping their physical distance, the elders greet Xerxes as the one who "killed the youth of the land, cramming Hades full of Persians" (922–24). Unlike their previous response to royalty—obeisance to the Queen, frightened reticence before Darius' ghost—the elders address Xerxes freely and forcefully.[62] Instead of prostrating themselves on his arrival (as they do with the Queen and her husband), they insist that the "land of Asia / terribly, terribly has been brought down on its knees" (929–30).[63] The Chorus delivers a litany of those Xerxes has left behind (955–1001), echoing its opening invocation of the departing host (21–58) and verifying the Messenger's catalog of the dead (302–330).[64] The evocation of such unmitigated disaster in the presence of its cause and representative sole survivor is a daring theatrical move, undermining Michelini's claim that Xerxes, although "central to the theme of the play, is peripheral to its dramaturgy."[65] In productions of the play I have seen and directed, Xerxes' arrival and his *kommos* with the Chorus constitute the essential, devastating climax.[66]

Initially, Xerxes' lyric expression is overwhelmingly self-involved, filled with first-person singular verbs and pronouns (*egō*, *emōn*, *moi*, *emoi*). However, a change occurs at 1002 and continues to the end, when single lines or short phrases and exclamations of grief replace the longer stanzas. This rapid exchange alternates between Xerxes, who leads the *thrēnos*, and the Chorus, who responds to his commands. Confrontation gives way to communal sorrow, represented by a new physical relationship on stage. When Xerxes first arrives, he faces the elders from the opposite side of the orchestra, moving toward them only gradually until he is in their midst.[67] The elders draw Xerxes into their world of loss, and he acknowledges his place there, adopt-

ing for the first time the first-person plural: "We have been struck down [*peplēgmetha*, 1008] from our lifelong good fortune," to which the Chorus answers, "Yes, we have been struck down" (1009).[68]

Although the play has little to say about Xerxes' psychology, the tyrant moves from a position of self-pity to one of responsibility for his community, both the myriad dead left in Greece and those still alive in Persia. In the presence of such losses, Xerxes does the only thing appropriate for one in his position; he leads the survivors in a ritual lament for the dead, using a call-and-response pattern familiar to the Greeks. He bids the elders accompany him to his home, telling them to rend their clothes (1061) as he has done (1030), uniting leader and led in the physical expression of grief and defeat.[69] Xerxes' reintegration into the community reestablishes him as leader, but in a context that the Greek audience would recognize as fitting, a funeral procession home from the grave. Moving as one, the Persians exit together out of the orchestra, demonstrating that human sorrow (at least temporarily) can break down differences based on status, wealth, age, and power. That an Athenian audience could respond with sympathy suggests that grief and loss can draw together even mortal enemies, opening a space that preempts, rather than defines, a category like "the Other."

Twice in the last seven lines (1070, 1074), as the elders of the Chorus follow Xerxes toward the *eisodos*, they sing out, "Ah! Ah! the Persian earth is hard to tread." But the Persians who walk away are Athenian performers in disguise, crossing the beaten earth of their own city's orchestra. They represent the return of the Persians to Athens, but they come only to mourn. Theatrical and scenic space merge with the reflexive and the real, and no one is laughing. *Persians* is not a tragedy of partisan triumph but of total defeat, a play of profound sadness about enormous waste and loss: Persia, its ambitions, its sons—gone, dead and gone.

Persians is also a play about empire, as noted earlier, a warning that imperial designs eventually lead to ruin. I can think of few Greek tragedies more pertinent to the situation of my own country, the United States, a "superpower" consumed with its own Persian-like hubris: our continental yoking at Panama; the bloodbaths countenanced and paid for in Central America; the military dictators installed and armed in South America, the Middle East, Africa, southeast Asia; our support across the globe for the repression of democratic yearnings in favor of a world safe for corporate profit. From politicians and CEOs to postmodernists and cyber critics, a contemporary chorus claims that "globalization" and "terrorism" have changed everything, obliterating the old human scale with a new concept of space. Perhaps. But it has not touched the relevance of Aeschylus' *Persians* to our own imperial expansion. *If* they were the original barbarian "Other," then we have taken their place. We are the nation that needs to heed the play's stern warnings against empire, that needs to acknowledge the sacred inviolability of other

people's land, resources, and aspirations. When the day comes that we stand defeated and judged for our manifold aggression, may there be a compassionate space for us like that which Aeschylus offered the Persians in his simple, profound play.

The Other Medea: Woman, Barbarian, Exile, Athenian

> But Time & Space are Real Beings,
> a Male and a Female. Time is a Man
> Space is a Woman & her Masculine
> Portion is Death.
> —William Blake, "A Vision of the Last Judgment"

According to Zeitlin, women for the Greeks possessed "a more dramatic threat and allure than any of the other 'others,' constituted from the beginning both in the linguistic fact of gender and in a world inhabited by gods of both sexes."[70] In this view, the gender of Greek nouns and adjectives signals a basic distinction between human females and males, both of which laid claim to power as immortals in the pantheon. Other essential elements in this mix of "threat and allure" include the social and biological compulsions to childbearing and family; the powerful force of male and female erotic attraction;[71] and the desire for private intimacy and companionship, supported by the Athenian idea that an adult life lived outside of marriage was incomplete.[72]

Just as Saïd locates (wrongly, in my opinion) the origin of Orientalism in Aeschylus' *Persians*, feminist scholars have found in Greek tragedy a powerful source for misogynist views that have dominated Western cultures. However, as Ortner and others point out, male conceptions of women's "inferiority" sadly have infected most human societies—west, east, north, and south—for much of recorded history.[73] Issues of gender have been so heavily "theorized" in contemporary scholarship that the critic who finds herself drawn to Greek tragedy as a powerful (and progressive) form of theater must walk through a maze of interpretive positions before finding a clearing from which to speak. Suffice it to say that some feminist critics of Greek tragedy find the genre nothing but a univocally male discourse, written by men and for men, interested only in male citizens and their self-image. As regards women, these texts provide both source and seedbed for offensive stereotypes, either denigrating female characters as irrational, vindictive, dangerous, intemperate, untrustworthy, wild, and worse, or validating female passivity, motherhood, uncomplaining self-sacrifice, willing subjection to male authority, social conformity, and the like. In Case's provocative formulation, Greek tragedy and comedy were little more than "drag shows" that

paraded such stereotypes before an audience of males, who lapped them up as confirmation of their misogynistic prejudices.[74]

We might compare this conception with the view of George Steiner that Greek tragedy presents "in speech and action a constellation of women matchless for their truth and variousness."[75] One critic's "variousness" may be another critic's "occlusion of the denial of difference." Nonetheless, I am loathe to abandon Steiner's point about women in tragedy in favor of adopting a metadiscourse of tragic sameness, an "always already" phallologocentrism, or a theoretical position that views tragedy as producing fictional "Others" that serve to keep real women silent and submissive. Perhaps by applying our spatial categories to Euripides' *Medea*, we can move through the minefield of "woman as Other" to reach higher but no less dangerous ground, a theater that looks at its own values with such a searing gaze that it seems both foreign and true.

Regarding Medea, we immediately run into the problem of identifying what sort of "Other" she is. An older school of criticism, which has its recent adherents, sees her as a barbarian, a non-Greek savage from the East, an Oriental witch.[76] Others point out how Euripides works *against* this mythic stereotype, presenting his protagonist in terms of a recognizable fifth-century Athenian woman.[77] This impression arises in no small part from the domestic tone of the play, which opens with a scene between household servants, closer to Attic comedy than tragedy. The presence of Medea's children, returning home after playing "hoops," lends a tone of contemporary familiarity, as does the Tutor's overhearing the news of Medea's exile from old men playing *pessos* in the town square.[78] This familiar tone continues in the treatment of women in the play, whose situation resembles—sometimes quite specifically—that of their fifth-century Athenian counterparts.

Euripides sets the drama before Medea's home in Corinth, formerly shared with her husband Jason, their children, and the household slaves; two slaves open the play (1–95) and another acts as Messenger later (1116–1230). The royal palace, Jason's new home as the bridegroom of Creon's daughter Glauke, lies in the (local) distanced space, vividly evoked in the report of the princess' death. At the outset, the Nurse enters from inside the house to deliver the prologue; she then is joined by the Tutor and Medea's two sons, entering from an *eisodos*. This configuration sets the pattern for the rest of the play: a woman (Medea) stands onstage, and a series of males—Creon, Jason (three different times), Aegeus, the Tutor with her sons, the Messenger—arrives from the distance to engage her. Unlike Clytemnestra in *Agamemnon*, Medea does not control the threshold, for we learn that she faces immediate exile from Corinth. Nonetheless, once she enters the scenic space, Medea dominates it as a nearly constant presence.[79] When the Messenger arrives from Creon's palace, for example, Medea is already onstage: "And

look now—I see the servant of Jason / approaching. He's panting, out of breath, / which means he has some fresh evil to report" (*Med.* 1118–20). Like Dionysus anticipating the Herdsman's arrival (*Ba.* 657), Medea knows the Messenger's news before he speaks.[80]

The extrascenic space of the interior presents a rich dramatic resource that complicates any simple notion of Medea as "Other." Let us focus on the doors of the house, and their symbolic extension beyond the playing area. On his arrival, the Tutor rather grandly queries the Nurse about her absence from their mistress inside: "Oh time-honored possession of my mistress' house, / why do you stand alone like this, outside / the gates [*pulai*]?" (49–51). The Nurse bids the children "go inside the house", but she admonishes the Tutor to "keep them isolated from / their mother; don't let them draw near her in her distress" (89–91). Medea's offstage cry prompts the Nurse to repeat her warning: "Hurry, quickly inside the house / but don't draw near her sight, / don't approach her" (100–102). Euripides offers a verbal *gestus* for the breakdown of domestic space in a (well-off) fifth-century Athenian home: the Nurse outside the gates, apart from her mistress; the children trundled off inside but kept away from their mother; the wife, mother, and mistress of the house crying in despair from within and facing imminent exile when she comes out.[81]

Medea's cries behind the doors carry far into the distance (131), attracting the Chorus to the orchestra: "Even within my double-gated [*amphipulos*] house I heard her cry out" (134–35). Alienated from her own home, Medea draws the women of Corinth out of theirs. House gates and doors seem permeable and open to women, allowing them to respond to each other's voices with sympathy (the Chorus never speaks of Medea as foreign). This spatial relationship extends to the play's climax, marked by the offstage cries of Medea's children (1271–79). Not only do the women hear through the closed gates, but those crying out from behind the *skēnē* hear the Chorus:

> Chorus: Shall we go inside the house? We must stop the children's murder.
> First Son (off): Yes! In heaven's name, stop it. Now is the time.
> Second Son (off): The net of the sword draws near us.[82]
>
> (1275–78)

With Jason's arrival, however, it becomes clear that Medea has barred the doors from within. In the pre-Euripidean version of the myth, the Corinthians killed Medea's children to punish her for murdering Creon and Glauke.[83] It is this scenario that Jason anticipates when he races onstage to save his sons from the Corinthian relatives of the king (1301–5). However, the Chorus enlightens him on the true state of affairs: "Open the gates [*pulai*], and you will see your slaughtered sons." Jason calls out to the ser-

vants he presumes are still inside, "Remove the bars [*klēidai*], fast, so that I can see this double horror" (1313–15), and we expect the doors to swing open, revealing his dead sons on the *ekkuklēma*.

Instead, Medea appears on high with the corpses of those she has slain, mounted in the chariot of the sun, ready to fly to freedom in Athens. Transcending the materiality of walls and doors, she taunts Jason for trying to enter the house:

> Why do you try to smash through the gates [*pulas*]
> seeking out the dead, and me who killed them?
> Stop trying. If you want something from me, speak up,
> but your hands will never touch me again.
> Such is the chariot my father's father has given
> to me, a sure defense from the hand of my enemy.
>
> (1317–22)

The woman soars over the house and city that exiled her, while the man is stuck on the ground, locked out of the home he had previously abandoned, longing to touch his dead sons who remain forever out of reach.[84]

The idea of doors, gates, and entrances plays an important role in *Medea*, beyond simply affording a passage or presenting an obstacle to the extrascenic space. On the first entrance through the doors, the Nurse invokes the mythic passageway of the Symplegades (Clashing Rocks), which led Jason and the Argo to Colchis and allowed Medea, "heart stricken with passion [*erōs*]," to accompany him on the voyage back with the golden fleece (1–11). Hearing Medea's offstage curses on the man who betrayed her bed (205–9), the Chorus recalls the "murky saltwater passage and gateway [*klēis*, also "lock," "key"] to the Black Sea, so hard to cross" (211–12). The Chorus in *Hippolytus* sings of "Eros holding the key [*klēidouchos*] to Aphrodite's chamber," and in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* the Chorus praises Hera, "who guards the keys [*klēidas*] of marriage [*gamos*]."[85] The Corinthian women again juxtapose the narrow straits with Medea's passion and her union with Jason: "heart mad with desire, you divided the twin rocks / of the Black Sea," only to lose "your marriage bed, and your husband's love" (431–37). In their final reference to the Symplegades, the Chorus links the straits indirectly to Medea's body, knowing that she is about to kill her children: "In vain the labor of childbirth, / in vain you bore beloved offspring, / you who left the dark blue rocks / of Symplegades, most inhospitable entranceway" (1261–64).

The door as metaphor for the dangerous straits of *erōs* and for the physical passage of childbirth initially draws on the natural gateway of the Symplegades as its distant correlative. However, in the second stasimon, the Chorus sings of Aphrodite's power (627–44) and its effects on Medea (645–58), cursing anyone who "does not honor his friends and fails to open the

pure lock [*katharan / anoikzanta klēida*] of his mind" (660–61). As if on cue, the Athenian Aegeus enters unexpectedly, "unlocking his mind" to Medea by opening his city's gates and offering her asylum (709–58). Athens replaces the Symplegades as the distant gateway for Medea, one that appears to lead away from her troubled past.

Cursed with childlessness, Aegeus arrives onstage with this response from the Delphic oracle: "Do not unloosen the wineskin's [*askou*] jutting foot / . . . / until you return again to your hearth and home" (679–81). The prophecy relates to Aegeus' impending sexual intercourse with Aethra, the wife of his friend Pittheus, whom he is on his way to visit in Troezen (683–88). The bastard son whom Aethra will bear (unknown to Aegeus) is Theseus, the Athenian hero who will prove the unwitting murderer of his father—hence the warning "Do *not* unloosen . . ." From other sources we learn that Medea marries Aegeus in Athens, and she tries to have him kill Theseus when the young man visits from Troezen.[86] The recognition between father and son saves the day, and Aegeus drives Medea out of his city. However, the old man commits suicide later when Theseus (himself besotted by a foreign woman) fails to change the color of his sails on his return from Crete. Thinking his son has died, Aegeus hurls himself from the cliffs into the sea that takes his name.[87]

Combining these prospects, we see that the doors leading to the extrascenic space of Medea's house take on a complex set of associations, linked to other passageways, entrances, and obstacles: Jason and Medea's journey through the Symplegades; the doorways of the Corinthian women's homes; Medea's erotic passion for Jason, and her labor in childbirth; Aegeus' sexual congress and his hopes for a child; Medea's sanctuary in distant Athens and its catastrophic results; the shutting out of Jason from his former home, and the death of his offspring. We can posit no one-to-one relationship between the *skēnē* door and a specific part of the human anatomy (unlike Aegeus' wineskin, for instance), nor view the extrascenic space as a consistent symbol for the unconscious or the womb, although there are moments when such ideas come into play.[88] Rather, we witness a variety of ways that extrascenic space extends into the distance, manifest both in action (Medea's cries from within gather the Chorus) and as a metaphor that joins Medea's past (the gates of the Black Sea, her erotic longing, childbirth) to her present (a forsaken marriage bed, her exile from home and Corinth), and points to her future (an open-minded and open-doored city offering a new home and marriage).[89]

The play forges an even stronger link between the extrascenic space of Medea's home and its counterpart in Creon's palace.[90] Few tragedies create such a vivid picture of an interior space located in the distance, and it is worth examining Euripides' motives for doing so. Initially, these two places seem worlds apart—Glauke and Jason's palatial bedroom, ready for festivity,

and the loveless chamber of Medea, where the night goddess Hecate dwells in the "recesses of the hearth" (395–97).[91] However, the Tutor and children physically link them together, bearing gifts out of Medea's house and into the home of her rival, a procession that mirrors part of the Athenian wedding ritual.[92] Their physical action marks an essential step in the transformation of these paired interior spaces into the dead core of their respective *oikoi*.

After gaining a day's reprieve from exile by supplicating Creon, Medea lays out her plans for vengeance. Perhaps she will set the "new bride's marriage chamber [*dōma numphikon*] on fire," or "enter the palace in secret [*sigēi domous esbasa*] where the marriage bed is made and ready," and, using a sword on the newlyweds, cut them down where they lie. Realizing that discovery on "entering the house" (*domous huperbainousa*) would mean defeat and mockery, Medea chooses a more indirect method—poison—to penetrate the palace (378–85). Unlike her onstage supplication of Creon, where she takes him directly by the hand (324–56), Medea's revenge requires intermediaries capable of entering both her and Glauke's world. She decides that her children will bear poisoned gifts from her broken home to the one celebrating a wedding.

In our mind's eye we see the contrasting images of Medea's quarters and those of Glauke. We hear of Medea's "barbarian bed" (591, Medea's own sarcastic description) and "bed of death" (151–54); a bed betrayed (207, 1338) and dishonored (265, 999, 1354); one that causes suffering (1291–92); a bed rejected by her husband (286, 436–37, 568–71, 697) and ruled by another woman (443–45). In contrast, Glauke's "royal bed" (18, 140, 594) is fresh, new, and different (489, 641, 1367); it lies ready for the wedding night (41, 380, 886–88, 985) with a bedmate (555–56, 953, 1001) who longs for it (491). In addition to these poetic glimpses at two different worlds, the Messenger as a servant of Jason allows us an extended look inside the palace. He reports Glauke's acceptance of Medea's presents, the reversal of her children's exile, and the transformation of the royal house into a place of joy, and then into an inferno. The gift-bearing males (Jason, the children, the Tutor) "enter the bridal house" (*parēlthe numphikous domous*, 1137) where the servants attached to Jason, now serving in his new home, celebrate the end of his quarrel with Medea and greet his children with affection (1138–42). The embassy then proceeds into the "women's quarters" (*stegai gunaikōn*, 1143), where Jason persuades his bride (initially displeased at the sight of Medea's children) to accept the gifts and plead with her father to rescind their exile. Taken with the alluring robe and crown (1144–57), Glauke agrees, and when they leave she tries them on, admiring herself in the mirror, checking how the garment falls on her calf, and prancing through the room in delight (1158–67).

Once the poison goes to work, however, the bedroom frames a very different scene. Glauke's chair breaks her fall as she collapses to the floor; she

foams at the mouth and cries in pain; the servants scurry through the house for help. As I have described elsewhere, the scene represents a perversion of the wedding ritual, with Glauke becoming her own nuptial torch.[93] When she falls on the ground and expires, the servants know better than to touch the corpse, but not so her father Creon, who "stumbles over the body when he enters the room" (*aphnō parelthōn dōma prospitnei nekrōi*, 1205). Embracing his daughter, he wails in grief and cries out that he wishes to die with her. Once he has done with lamentation, however, he tries to rise from the ground, only to find that the corpse has taken him literally and will not let him go. Glauke's charred body clings to his, ripping off his flesh until Creon, too, perishes on the bedroom floor (1206–21). The death of father and daughter in her wedding chamber locks the natal family forever within,[94] presaging the death of Medea's children in the interior of their home. But as we shall see, their corpses do not end up as ashes on the floor; they rise on high with their killer in the chariot of the sun.

Other prominent distanced spaces in *Medea* include the town square of Corinth by the Priene spring, where the men play *pessos* and gossip about politics (66–72); the sacred spot dedicated to Hera Akraia, across the bay from Corinth in Perachora, where Medea establishes rites for her sons (1378–83);[95] Delphi, from which Aegeus returns (667–81), and Troizen, where he is heading (683–87); Colchis, with its near impossible access (1–8, 209–13, 478–85, 1330–35); and Athens, which we will discuss in the context of reflexive space. This leaves one final distant place of importance, Hades, tied closely to Medea's revenge. Reporting Creon's reversal of her sons' banishment, the Tutor assures Medea that one day they "will bring you home [*katei*] from exile," to which Medea responds, "Before that, in my despair there are others I will bring home [*kataxō*]" (1015–16). The verb literally means "bring or lead down," as in "lead to the underworld." Later Medea swears "by the avengers of Hades" not to leave her children alive for others to harm (1059–61),[96] prompting the Corinthian women to consider the futility of having children at all. At any moment "death can carry the bodies of your offspring straight to Hades" (1109–11), a possibility confirmed by the appearance of the corpses at the end of the play.

Their presence on high is doubly shocking—not only do we see a triumphant mother with the sons she slew, but we witness the dead (who belong to the underworld) borne aloft in the chariot of the sun. For the Greeks, looking on sunlight provided *the* point of contrast with the gloomy space of the dead, memorably captured by Euripides' Alcestis in her death lyric:

> O sun god [*Halios*] and daylight,
> whirling eddies of sky-high clouds
> . . . . . .
> Hades draws near,

shadowy night creeps over my eyes.
Children, children,
your mother is no more.
Farewell, children—look on the daylight, which is yours.
(*Alcestis* 244–45, 268–72)

Medea's children, unsettled when alive—sent inside but kept from their mother, exiled from Corinth, used as go-betweens to the palace—are no less out of place in death. Their corpses appear incongruously in the theophany that reveals them caught in the full light of the sun, monstrous by-products of Medea's revenge. If "Others" are outsiders with no say in the forces that shape their lives, then these Hades-bound children exhaust the category.

Earlier in the play, the underworld casts its dark shadow over the living. The Chorus describes Glauke's gifts as "adornments of Hades" (980–81), suggesting their double function as instruments of her imminent death and as the funeral raiment she will wear below.[97] Drawn from the recesses of Medea's room (where the goddess Hecate dwells, 395–97), the golden crown and gorgeous robes allow Hades to burn brightly in the palace, leaving the charred royal corpses as spent fuel. After donning the gifts, Glauke "looked in the bright mirror and arranged her hair, / smiling at the lifeless image [*apsuchon eikō*] of her own body" (1161–62). The princess sees her death reflected back at her, but she does not recognize it. Creon stumbles over his daughter, not knowing that her death is contagious, that it is his own corpse he sees lying on the ground. In their meditation on childbirth, the Corinthian women briefly share this "perspective of Hades." A newborn baby embodies the certainty of its demise, for at any time death can carry it off "straight to Hades" (1111). As Beckett's Pozzo puts it, "They give birth astride the grave, the light gleams an instant, then it's night once more."[98] Euripides in *Medea* would agree. What binds his characters to life—a husband, an oath, a bond, a home, a gift, a new wife, children—is the bright side of a deadly illusion, waiting to come into its own as a "terrible sight" (*deinon theama*, 1167, 1202).

In this context, what are we to make of Medea's epiphany on the machine and her departure for Athens? Spatially dwarfing Jason, she exposes him as a shadow-hero, fated to die a "miserable coward, / struck [*peplēgmenos*] on the head by a piece of the Argo" (1386–87). By prophesying his ignoble end, Medea closes off once and for all the distant space beyond the Symplegades [*sun* + *plēgas*], the "striking" rocks. At the same time, she opens up the city of her future: "But for me, I am going to the land of Erechtheus, / where I will make my home [*sunoikēsousa*] with Aegeus, son of Pandion" (1384–85). In fifth-century Athens, the verb *sunoikeō* 'I dwell with' signified "living as a married couple," used of those who "build their *oikos* together."[99] However, the Athenian audience knew the mythic consequences of Medea's marriage to

Aegeus. Like the other marital unions in the play, its promise sits only on the surface, while underneath it lies a tale of dissolution and disaster.

Although set in Corinth, Athens features prominently in *Medea*, calling attention to the play's fifth-century resonance. The domestic tone that permeates Euripides' version pulls it from its heroic moorings in the direction of Athenian daily life ("Would that the Argo . . . had *not* sailed," the Nurse begins). The crisis at home is domestic, involving a husband and wife's disaffection (no wartime absence as in *Agamemnon*, no fearful oracle as in *Oedipus*); the women (Nurse, Medea, Chorus) discuss childbirth, their children's education, the uncertain future when they leave home; Medea describes the life facing a woman in marriage (214–51), perhaps the most revealing account we have from the perspective of a fifth-century (upper-class) wife. The contemporary flavor of her opening speech encourages us to say—as Wilamowitz did of Sophocles' Deianeira—Medea "ist eine Athenerin." Knox points out "there is no suggestion . . . that anyone regards Medea as a barbarian, except of course . . . Jason."[100] This helps explain the immediate sympathy between Medea and the Corinthian women, who express solidarity with her both verbally (148–59, 173–83, 205–12, 410–45, 576–78, 654–62, 996–1001, 1231–32) and in their actions (131–38, 267–70).

Given the close connection between *oikos* and *polis* in Athenian society, the play's focus on domestic turmoil cannot help but open up public issues and public spaces. Jason's new marriage to Glauke, for example, puts Medea in a situation like that faced by foreign wives after the enactment of Pericles' citizenship law of 451/50. Limiting citizenship to those children *both* of whose parents were Athenian, the law discouraged Athenian males from taking foreign-born wives and led to the dissolution of some unions with non-Athenians. This situation seems to inform the exchange at 591–97, when Medea accuses Jason of spurning a "barbarian marriage" and he responds by claiming the advantages of power otherwise denied to him.[101] If we assume (as do most scholars) that the citizenship law was not retroactively applied to those born of mixed marriages before 451/450, then its impact on such preexisting marriages would have been strongest ca. 433/432 B.C., the year before *Medea*'s first production. At that date a "mixed" son born just after the law was passed would have reached the age of 18 without political franchise, and a "mixed" daughter would have arrived at marriageable age with little hope of finding an Athenian husband.[102] As noted, the law primarily affected those born of Athenian fathers and foreign mothers, considered *nothoi*, a word usually translated "bastards," but more accurately "those born of mixed parents," whether illegitimate (like Theseus), or with a foreign mother (like the victims of the citizenship law), or the product of a union between a god and a mortal (like Heracles).[103] In fact, the *temenos* of Cynosarges, associated with Heracles, served as a meeting place for "bastards" of mixed marriages

after the citizenship law, and the site was probably visible from the upper part of the theater.[104]

In terms of more mainstream public spaces, scholars note Jason's resemblance to a fifth-century rhetorician, particularly in his first scene with Medea. Jason calls their encounter a *hamilla logōn*, a "battle of words" (546), suggesting any number of "situations in contemporary Athenian life which provided a formal context for the conflict of arguments."[105] These included trials at the lawcourts, political and diplomatic debates, and lectures by Sophists on the theory and practice of argumentation. Earlier in the play, Medea describes the disadvantages of being educated and considered "clever" (the word *sophos* occurs five times in ten lines), charged by the ignorant with useless knowledge, and by the envious with a false sense of superiority (294–305).[106] Having "set the table," Euripides offers a full-blown *agōn* when Medea first confronts Jason. The two deliver speeches of roughly equal length, employing the formal rhetorical divisions of proem (a self-referential introduction), *narratio* (development of the argument), and gnomic conclusion. They express concern for ordered logic (*taxis*, 476, 536, 545–46, 548–50); they utilize fully developed hypothetical syllogisms ("if . . . then . . .; but in fact . . ."); and, in the case of Jason, the speaker seems fully aware that he is giving a performance.[107]

Why at this point in the play should Euripides evoke Athenian situations where words are contested in such a self-conscious fashion? The term *hamilla logōn* can mean both "a battle consisting of words" and "a battle about words";[108] that is, about what *logoi* mean, how they are used, and what they are used for. The elaborate structure and technical vocabulary of this Medea-Jason exchange call attention to its fifth-century character, particularly the ideology of Greekness that it explicitly sustains. In a key passage, Jason boasts that he has brought Medea from a barbarian backwater to civilized Greece, where law prevails instead of force, and where Medea has gained a certain reputation (534–46). Had he not rescued her from obscurity, Jason insists, "there would be no *logos* [words, civilization, renown] for you" (541). Being among Greeks and their *logoi* makes Medea "count." As Medea knows from experience, however, she can count on that same *logos* to "count her out," to strip her of her family, home, and city.

Jason flouts the civilized customs that might make Greek *logos* something of value, a means to serve justice and not simply to justify. Judged by Jason's actions, the cultural complex of language, oaths, supplication, marriage, and law are self-serving instruments of the moment. In fact, Jason goes so far as to blame Medea for her present predicament (446–58 and 605), while denying her agency in having saved him in Colchis (Aphrodite and Eros *made* her do it, 526–31). Preparing for a new wedding night with a young bride, he insists that sexual desire plays no part in his union with Glauke, that he is, in fact, doing everything *for* Medea's sake and for their children (547–68, 593–97). Medea's only problem, according to Jason, is that she cannot recognize her own good fortune (600–602).

If Euripides has constructed "Medea as a 'special Other,'"[109] then he has done so in a way that exposes her systematic mistreatment by the Greek males she is ostensibly the "Other" to. As we have seen, however, the situation facing Medea resembles that of women in Athens generally, and she is not without Greek mythic prototypes in her response to it. After the murders, Jason shouts "No Greek woman would ever dare such a thing" (1339–40). But just before Jason's entrance (at 1297), the Chorus sings of Ino who killed her own sons, and Greek myth knows of other such women (Agave, Alathaea, Procne).[110] Examples from Greek mythology do not explain Medea's vengeance, but when we examine the reasons she gives for murdering her children, her ostensible "Otherness" disappears, and she proves all too Greek.

Jason accuses Medea of sexual jealousy, pure and simple, and at the end of the play she agrees that this issue is no small matter (1367–68). But her betrayed bed is only a starting point for explaining why she murders the children. On seven separate occasions, and twice in the closing section, Medea makes it clear that she takes revenge for reasons *directly connected* to Greek (male) *logos*: "Do I want to earn the laughter of my enemies [*gelōt' . . . echthrous*] by leaving them unpunished?" (1049–50). "You were not about to dishonor my bed and lead out your life in pleasure by mocking [*eggelōn*] me" (1354–55). "My grief [over the children] dissolves, if you cannot laugh [*mē 'ggelais*] at me" (1362). Working out her plans, Medea fears capture and execution if she breaks into the palace, forcing her to endure "the laughter of my enemies" (*tois emois echthrois gelōn*, 383). Urging herself to action, she insists, "You must not endure the mockery [*gelōs*] of Jason's wedding" (404–5). Revealing her plan to kill the children, Medea boasts "I will be the conquering hero over my enemies" (*kallinikoi tōn emōn echthrōn*, 765). "I will endure this unholiest of acts; / for I can endure even less the laughter of my enemies" [*gelasthai . . . ex echthrōn*] (796–97). "I will be hard on my enemies and kind to my friends, / for such a life is filled with the greatest renown" (809–10). Medea's professed reasons for killing her children align perfectly with a basic creed that pervaded Greek popular thought—be kind to your friends (*philoi*), harsh to your enemies (*echthroi*), and avoid the mockery of those who hate you.[111]

The notion that Medea is an emotional wild woman acting on jealous impulses, or a savage barbarian naturally drawn to child murder, fails to account for her consistent reference to this code of conduct. Medea may represent a gendered and foreign Other, but Euripides has her react like an Athenian male besieged by enemies, who lashes out in the perverse logic of a popularly accepted guide to behavior.[112] Moral issues aside, the principle works well enough so long as the distinction between friends (*philoi*) and

enemies (*echthroi*) remains clear. The term *philoi* also means "those tied by blood," its etymology suggesting spatial proximity, those "near and dear."[113] That is, *philoi* and *echthroi* function as mutually exclusive categories provided that sufficient space separates them, precisely what is missing in *Medea*, where they overlap and merge. When the means to hurt enemies and avoid their mockery involves killing one's own *philoi*, then the principle is hopelessly compromised and self-destructive, by definition.

If Medea's intentional filicide was not part of the mythic tradition, why does Euripides introduce it? Some critics think that the playwright does so to confirm Athenian male prejudices about the inherent barbarity of women, and the excessive barbarity of barbarian women.[114] Others see the play as a *pièce à thèse*, demonstrating the consequences that result when a woman transgresses her socially defined space (the house, the interior) and enters the public sphere.[115] More supple critics appreciate how Euripides presents Medea's situation with sympathy, while remaining true to the dramatic realities she faces. As Foley puts it, "Medea is not so much hostile to her children as politically helpless to achieve any form of revenge which is not destructive of herself and her maternal identity."[116] This judgment, however, overlooks the fact that Medea could simply kill Jason, along with Glauke and Creon, and take her children with her to Athens, a path Medea herself considers (1044–45, 1057–58).[117] More seems to be going on here, and we might better understand it by looking at our final spatial category, self-referential or metatheatrical space.

More than other Euripidean tragedies (with the possible exception of *Ion* and *Heracles*), *Medea* calls into question the function and effect of poetry and song. The Nurse criticizes traditional poets who compose for banquets but fail to produce music that can help in times of grief. Consoling songs might profit mortals when they need it, unlike "upbeat" tunes written for occasions festive enough without them (190–203). The Nurse asks the audience to consider (if only briefly) the form and function of artistic representation, preparing the way for a more extended treatment later. The terms she employs—*humnoi* (hymns or songs, 192), *mousē* (music, 196), *poluchordoi aoidai* (many-lyred songs, 196–97), *molpai* (songs linked to dancing, 200)—can refer to sung poetry generally, but seem to indicate lyre accompaniment, with the implicit contrast to the *aulos*-led lyric of tragedy that the audience has just heard from the Chorus.[118]

The Corinthian women raise the topic again in the first stasimon (410–45), identifying the male bias in traditional poetry that treats of female perfidy. "Backward to their source the sacred rivers flow" is a locus classicus of what we now call the politics of representation. If women were writing the story, the Chorus insists, then men's dishonesty and deception would emerge as prominent, and a different set of responses would result: honor would come to women instead of ill-sounding fame (419–20). Because they have so

little access to song, however, women cannot answer the charges leveled against them by men (424–30). As it performs in the orchestra, the Chorus asks the audience to imagine an alternative poetics from the perspective of women, one more closely aligned to the truth. The word "truth" is not hyperbolic, for at issue is the fact that men have made meaningless the oaths sworn to the gods (415–16), referring to the broken oaths of Jason condemned earlier (21–22, 160–63, 168–70, 206–9). The Chorus returns to this point in the last antistrophe: "The grace of oaths has departed, no longer in all of Greece / does shame before oaths remain" (439–40). They set the stage for the arrival of the oath-breaking Jason (446), who sings the praises of Greek *logos* while using it to justify his own lies, and his rejection of his wife.

The idea of an alternative poetics requires a poet, and Medea appears the most likely candidate; she commands attention, and she shapes the plot of the play from material she has inherited. Her opening speech eloquently lays out the situation of women in a patriarchal society, converting the scenic space into a place for expressing contemporary concerns from a woman's perspective. In a transformative passage, Medea reassesses the bravery of women in childbirth compared to men in battle:

> Men say that we women live a calm, safe life
> staying at home, while they do battle with the spear.
> They have it wrong. I would prefer to stand three times
> at the front with a shield than give birth once.
>
> (248–51)

In a male-dominated world, a woman must convert her valor into military terms for it to register. By appropriating the "social space" of war for the private act of childbirth, Medea becomes a model for the poet who tells the story in such a way that "honor might come to the female race" (419), as the Chorus hopes.

Although trapped by circumstance, Medea does more than describe. She asserts herself as an agent in what transpires, while confessing the difficulty of escaping her situation and the assumptions about women that it replicates: "We are by nature / women, on the one hand the most deprived of means [*amēchanōtatai*] to do good / but the cleverest architects [*tektones*] of all things evil" (408–9). The word *tektōn* also refers to an artist, designer, or poet, suggesting that Medea has begun to craft her own play.[119] The fact that she claims women can do only evil shows how far she has internalized the negative image of women, reflecting their lack of access to "the means" (*mēchanē*) to do good. The Chorus's ode on the need for female poets offers a more positive view of what women might be able to create.

The tension between inherited self-image and creative potential erupts after the Aegeus scene, when Medea reveals that she has decided to kill her

children in order to harm her enemies and avoid their laughter. In the ode to Athens that follows (824–65), the Corinthian women introduce a strikingly different tone from that of Medea's pronouncement, their language drawn from the tradition of erotic and woman-centered poetry epitomized by Sappho. Elements from this tradition—which the Chorus applies to Athens as Medea's destined haven—include references to Aphrodite as Cypris (836); personified love (Erōtas, 844); the Pierian Muses (831) and their mother, "golden tressed Harmonia" (833); the phrase "stepping lightly" (*bainontes habrōs*, 830), a Sapphic favorite; "beautiful flowing waters" (835); "wafting, sweet-scented breezes" (839–40); and "fragrant garlands of roses" (841).[120] Coming after Medea's "male" speech, the Chorus's language recalls with some poignancy its search for a female voice. It is as if the audience were taken out of the play and (to use the Chorus's metaphor from the first stasimon) carried upstream in a poetic river, finding at its source an idealized and poetically "feminized" Athens. But the child-killing Medea will shatter this dream on her arrival, polluting the city's wellsprings. Instead of "stepping lightly through the air" (830), Medea offers deadly blows against her children (851); for garlands of roses (841), the Chorus sings of blood and more blood (*phonos* and cognates at 852, 855, 862, 864); in place of Aphrodite (836) and her sons, the Erotes (844), we hear of Medea *paidoleteira* 'child destroyer' (849).

In spite of the impression Medea gives when announcing her plan, Euripides does not present her as a cold-blooded, calculating killer. On the contrary, he dramatizes a character caught in the throes of passionate indecision, wavering consciously and instinctively in a manner never before seen on the tragic stage. In her first scene with Jason, for example, Medea alternates between Sophistic self-control and naked emotion, which differentiates her from the nauseating self-righteousness of her husband. In their second encounter, she sublimates her anger and feigns a change of heart, enlisting the help of the unsuspecting Jason. However, on two occasions Medea breaks down and weeps (904–5, 922–28), threatening the success of her efforts, for Jason wonders why she is crying when she is getting what she asked for. Medea does not weep to deceive; her instinctive bodily reactions almost betray her, in spite of her efforts to control them.

This tension between intention and instinct complicates the terms in which scholars usually frame her famous monologue (1021–80), namely as a debate between reason and passion. At the end of the speech (1078–80), Medea states that her "spirit" or "wrath" (*thumos*) is stronger than her "calculations" or "deliberations" (*bouleumata*), generally taken to mean that her irrational anger supersedes her rational capacity for self-control.[121] Certainly, the choice Medea considers is straightforward—will she kill her children or not? But the answer has less to do with reason and passion than with the battle between instinct (figured in and through the body) and passionate commitment to an internalized *logos*. In Medea's "divided self," to use the

title of Foley's important article,[122] her natural revulsion at filicide competes with a cultural value system that makes an enemy's laughter *the* outrage that must not be endured.

Nowhere in Greek tragedy, as Lesky observes, is an inner conflict so fully dramatized, and the pull of competing choices conveyed with such immediacy:

> The intensity with which inner experiences are portrayed here is unequalled in Attic tragedy; it also reveals human tragic potentialities from a new angle. We are not shown, as in the death of Sophocles' Ajax, a rigid predetermination rooted in his *phusis* [nature] but a human being as a prey to the contending play of forces which have their source in his soul, and are struggling for mastery over it.[123]

We watch Medea fight to break free from her murderous vengeance and the ideology that drives it.

She acknowledges that the loss of her children will remove all joy and meaning: "deprived of them / I will lead out a desolate and painful life" (1036–37). As the Chorus predicts (860–65), the sight of her children—their look, their smile, their bright faces (1040–45)—causes her to weep and abandon her plan, at least momentarily. She understands that *she* will be the victim of the violence she does to them in order to get at Jason: "Why must I, to cause your father grief, acquire for myself twice the evils?" (1046–47). The financial language (*ktasthai* 'acquire', 'possess', 1047) indicates Medea's awareness that her vengeance converts human beings into commodities, the very thing that Jason has done to her.[124] "I will lead my children out of this land" (1045), she proclaims, imagining that she will take them to Athens, where they will live together in happiness (1057–58). However, each time Medea abandons her decision to kill the children, she is drawn back by the specter of her enemies' mockery: "Do I want to earn the laughter of my enemies by leaving them unpunished?" (1049–50).[125] After the murder of Glauke and Creon, the thought that anyone would ever *laugh* at Medea seems preposterous. Her fears reveal the dominance of a socialized value system that overpowers even her delight in her youngsters. She enjoys their "sweet touch," their "soft skin and fragrant breath" (1074–75) one last time before lapsing into the discredited *logos* she has made her own. By thinking only of her enemies, Medea dooms herself to think just like them, and like them she destroys those she claims to love.

Euripides holds out the possibility that his protagonist will not be able to perform what she has planned, that "the river" will miraculously run uphill. "If the children must die," the Athenian audience may have thought, "it will be the Corinthians who kill them in the end." Instead, they find themselves implicated in the crime, for it is Aegeus' offer of sanctuary in Athens that encourages Medea to exact revenge by filicide. This new *logos*—as in "Euripides' new version of the story"[126]—brings the metatheatrical and reflexive

spaces of the play into collision. The potential creator of a new song for women opens up her thoughts in a way unmatched in the ancient theater, only to opt for the old story ("women are dishonest and perpetrate evil"), rationalized in terms of a traditional code of male heroic conduct. Although the play entertains alternatives to the violence that males perpetrate on their *philoi* and rationalize through their *logos*, it abandons them when Medea takes on the role of a twisted warrior.

With the collapse of the play's metatheatrical potential for a new *logos*, the reflexive space of fifth-century Athens returns to prominence. Here, Euripides tapped the contemporary war fever that pitted the Greek cities of Corinth and Athens against one another in the early days of the Peloponnesian War.[127] Medea does not "take up the sword" in a historical vacuum. Rather, she imitates those warriors—some of them in the audience, including the Athenian generals (the *stratēgoi*, discussed in chapter 1)—who already had embarked on the great destructive conflict of the Greek fifth century.

In chapter 2, we discussed the spatial axis in Greek tragedy based on *nostos*, when characters (usually male) come home from adventure or foreign war. Aeschylus' *Oresteia* adapts the story pattern, moving from Agamemnon's fatal return to Argos to the arrival of the Furies at Athens, nonnatives coming to a new home, bringing life-affirming blessings for their adopted city. Medea inverts that pattern, bringing to her new home in Athens the gift of *phonos* 'spilled blood', that of her children and of those about to die in a war that her twisted militarism reflects, the full-scale realization of broken oaths and of *logos* run amok.[128]

In chapter 3, we dealt with tragedy's use of *erēmia*, both onstage and in the distance, places desolate of people that force us to examine the kinds of places we make for ourselves. Although no eremetic space emerges in *Medea*, the protagonist on several occasions describes herself as *erēmos* (255, 604, 712), bereft of the normal supports of human society. Her exile from Corinth offers a political analogue to the destruction of her *oikos*, leaving her cityless (*apolis*, 255, 644; *ou polis*, 656) and friendless (*aphilos*, 604; *ou philōn tis*, 656), as well as homeless. The murder of her children alienates Medea from the women of Corinth, formerly her strong supporters, and from most members of the audience. The play's final image—the chariot of the sun with Medea and her dead children, rising high above the living—suggests a kind of cosmic *erēmia*, in which only Medea can dwell.

In chapter 4 we examined how bodies onstage create and alter the theatrical space they inhabit. This process operates with particular force in regard to Medea's children and their relationship to their mother. The boys appear early in the play with the Tutor, serve as the gift-bearing ambassadors from Medea's inner sanctum to Glauke's, remain onstage through Medea's monologue, are heard crying for help from offstage, and finally appear as corpses in the chariot of the sun. But their presence extends beyond themselves, for

the play returns time and again to their natal source. By valorizing childbirth over battle, the creative over the destructive, Medea heroizes the common—and unique—spatial transformation that takes place within a woman's body, where nothing becomes something and enters the world. Medea would rather stand in battle three times than give birth once, reflecting the fact that in ancient Greece (as in many societies today) pregnancy was far more dangerous to women than war was to men.[129] By the end of the play, however, she has transformed these living symbols of her own bravery into the murdered image of her enemy's laughter.

When the women of the Chorus consider the advantages of never having children, they think of the suffering of their offspring and all that could go wrong in raising them—the unpredictability of character, the problem of securing a livelihood, and the tragic possibility of untimely death (1090–1115).[130] Importantly, the Corinthian women preface their thoughts with the assertion that "women also possess a Muse" (*alla gar estin mousa kai hēmin*), that a few at least are "not without that creative / intellectual spark" (*ouk apomouson*, 1085–89). The juxtaposition of childbearing with the Muses reflects the Chorus's earlier description of Athens as a place of art and culture, where "the nine Pierian Muses gave birth to fair-haired Harmonia" (831–34). It was not uncommon for Greeks to understand intellectual, artistic, and even cosmic creation by comparing it to a woman giving birth,[131] making it doubly important that the "new story" women tell includes their role in procreation, in a way that upholds its intrinsic value. However, the city whose theater seeks a *logos* where "honor comes to women," this home of the Muses and birthplace of "Unity" (Hamonia), has opened its doors to a "child-destroying" mother (848–55, 1393). As Medea puts it, "In vain [*allōs*] have I raised and nurtured you, my children, / in vain [*allōs*] did I go into labor, wracked with pain / in the throes of childbirth" (1029–31). She takes the "creative step" that makes her labor truly "other" (the root meaning of *allōs*), rejecting the creations of her body by emptying them of life.

In Euripides' *Trojan Women*, Andromache utters the same line, "In vain [*allōs*] did I go into labor" (*Tr.* 760), when the Greeks seize her son Astyanax and kill him. She describes her infant son's "sweet breath of skin" (*Tr.* 758), much like Medea does in her monologue, "Oh your sweet touch! / Oh the soft skin and fragrant breath of my children" (*Med.* 1074–75).[132] As reflections of the mothers who bore them, and as physical presences in their own right, the children's bodies create an intimate space, calling forth a poetical discourse tied to proximity and sensuous detail. Jason himself adopts such language when the full impact of his loss hits home: "oh god, how I long for the lovely smiles / of my children, to hold them again in my arms. / . . . / I beg you, let me touch again / the soft skin of my children" (1399–1403). These evocations of young bodies share basic qualities with the poetics of Sappho mentioned earlier—sensual, proximate, emotionally intimate, vul-

nerable, private, feminine—a prototype for Greek women gaining the power to tell a different story. By converting her young *philoi* into targets of violence, however, Medea substitutes the intimacies of bloodshed and the *logos* of war. In place of her screams at childbirth and the squalling of new life, Medea offers the cries of her children fleeing her sword and the lamentation of those who mourn their deaths.

In chapter 5 we looked at the interrelationship of space, time, and memory, focusing on Oedipus and his eventual return to Cithaeron. Tapping his way with a stick, the blind Theban lives out the human riddle by marking his identity through time via his progress over the ground. As with Oedipus (in Sophocles' posthumous *Oedipus at Colonus*), Medea's ultimate destination is Athens; however, cut off from earthly contact, she leaves in a chariot of the sun. Euripides' spellbound Pentheus sees "two suns over Thebes" (*Ba.* 918–19), but at the end of *Medea*, it is the audience members who have this double vision. They see the chariot of Helios carrying Medea, and the real "chariot of the sun" higher in the sky, the celestial orb that characters invoke throughout the play to look down on injustice and stop mortals from committing it.[133] By juxtaposing these two suns, Euripides reminds us that Medea is *not* a natural force. Driven by the fear of mockery, she plans her revenge, but nature knows no such fear and always has the last laugh. Although Medea in her chariot loses touch with the earthly realm of the human, she is a human product nonetheless, a blown-up image of an internalized *logos* that we have seen elsewhere in the play, assaulting what is natural by warring on its own.

According to some scholars, *Medea* supports the idea that the Athens of tragedy can incorporate all comers, as if the city possessed an innate antibody to any virulent exoteric strain. On this reading, tragedy celebrates and replicates Athenian ideology in contrast to that represented by the Other: Athens is anti-Thebes, anti-Corinth, antirepressive, antityrannical, antibarbarian, antiproblematic. That the city of the audience does not (and will not) repeat the errors of other places and practices is, according to Zeitlin, precisely what Athens represents ideologically, a place that "escapes tragedy," that can "have it all ways." Considering Medea's future in the same vein, Mills asserts that the "ideal city will never be damaged by an enemy like this," because "the basic principles of the Athenian mission are so sound, . . . and 'typical' Athenian courage will remove any threat of danger."[134] But what if Medea is not some assimilable Other, but an accurate (albeit fictional) image of the city itself? Such enemies pose a far greater threat, for they do not benefit from spatial distance, political borders, and other neat boundary distinctions. They are already Athenian; they mouth its ideology; they offer a real (or potentially real) image of the *polis* to the *polis* in the theater.

In Greek tragedy, the Other is sitting in the audience, and the play of space allows the spectators to see themselves in that role.[135] But this self-

seeing is more than a glimpse into a psychological heart of darkness inherited at birth. An art that explores where and how it is made—the function of the theater as a reflexive and self-referential space—is one that shows a world that can be changed.[136]

We return to the theater of Dionysus as a place of instruction, which is the most one can ask of the theater, a space always nested within other, greater spaces. Tragedy acts only by showing action within a fiction; it cannot act directly on the world outside itself. And yet, with the vista of Athens before them and their community visible around them, the Athenians knew that any story worth telling in this place always looks beyond it. Through the play of space in Greek tragedy, they saw moving images of a world strange enough to be their own, and enough their own to be transformed.

the Experience of Time"). See also J. L. Borges, "A New Refutation of Time" (1946), in *Labyrinths*, ed. D. A. Yates and J. E. Irby (New York 1964) 217–34: "Time, if we can intuitively grasp such an identity, is a delusion: the difference and inseparability of one moment belonging to its apparent past from another belonging to its apparent present is sufficient to disintegrate it" (226–27).

69. M. Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, tr. A. Hofstadter (Bloomington 1982) 266.

70. Halliburton 1988, 254–56.

71. Augustine, *Confessions* bk. 11.18, 20.

72. Quoted by Poulet 1977, 3–4; see Bergson 1991, 69–71, 141–50; also Jaynes 1976, 59–61.

73. Heidegger 1962, 236; Wolz 1981, 117.

74. J.-P. Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, tr. G. J. Becker (New York 1948) 90.

75. Jones 1962, 203.

76. Halliburton 1988, 265, who correctly observes how Oedipus' attitude toward what lies ahead differs fundamentally from the "'willed futurity' of the present day." In that vein, R. P. Winnington-Ingram, "Tragedy and Greek Archaic Thought," in *Classical Drama and Its Influence*, ed. M. J. Anderson (New York 1965), 31–50, emphasizes the "daimonic" in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, noting that "our deliberate acts are themselves in large measure the product of innumerable causes in the past over which we have no control" (47). Developing the argument (1983, 173–78), he points out that the Chorus needs "the influence of a *daimon* [*OT* 1300–1302] to explain his deliberate act [of self-blinding] . . ., a recognition that there is a given factor in human character which is no less a part of man's destiny than those events which character may (or may not) help to mould."

77. De Romilly 1971, 79–99.

78. Kant 1998, 174–84, also 41–44 (= 1787, B 37–58). Whitehead 1927, 30–40 and 49–73, tries valiantly to determine "whether time is to be found in nature or nature is to be found in time." For the standard critique of Kant's view of time, see Nietzsche 1962, 97–98, quoting A. Spir.

79. Dodds 1973, 75; also Henrichs 1995, 65–73, and Knox 1957, 46–47. Winnington-Ingram 1980, 179–204, offers an insightful analysis of the ode as a whole.

80. B.M.W. Knox, "Oedipus Rex," *Grand Street* 4 (1985) 203–5.

81. Gardiner 1987, 105–6.

82. On this aspect of choral performance, see H. Bacon, "The Chorus in Greek Life and Drama," *Arion* 3.1 (1995), esp. 13–20. Henrichs 1996 distinguishes the passage in the second stasimon (choral self-reference) from that in the third stasimon (choral projection).

83. Taplin 1983, 157–58, who observes that "the *orchestra* is a fateful place . . . where journeys converge and culminate." See also the discussion by contributors, pp. 181–83.

84. Benardete 1964, 3; Bushnell 1988, 85, writes of Oedipus' "abandonment of the city's cause in the search for his own identity and autonomy."

85. On choral presence, see Gardiner 1987, 97–109. Seale 1982, 246–47 discusses the public nature of Oedipus' punishment. Foley 1993, 529–30, emphasizes how the oracle condemning the murder of Laius—a divine prerequisite for the city's purification—resurfaces in the play's closing sequence (at 1410–12 and 1449–50).

CHAPTER SIX
SPACE AND THE OTHER

1. Vidal-Naquet 1997, 119; Whitehead 1977, 19 and 70; Zeitlin 1978, 153 (= 1996, 90), 1990a, 131–32 and 144–50, and 1990b; Hall 1989, esp. 1–6, 10–12, 17–19, 76–133, and 1996, 6–7, 11–13, 18–19; Said 1978, 5–7, 9–10, 20, 56–58; Castriota 1992, 27 and 31–32; Cartledge 1993, 11–12; Segal 1986, 99–100 and 302.

2. M. A. Katz, "Buphonia and Goring Ox," in Rosen and Farrell 1993, 157; Vernant 1991, 202 and 213 (Artemis), 196 and 205 ("death, the absolute Other"). On animals, slaves, barbarians, children, and women as "standard forms of the Other," see F. Zeitlin, "Introduction," in Vernant 1991, 20–22. Lissarague 1990, 10–13, discusses the experience of wine as encountering "the Other," especially the satyr, whom he calls "a countermodel to humanity" (in his contribution to Halperin, Winkler, and Zeitlin 1990, 66).

3. Cartledge 1993, 2 and 11. See E. Levinas, *L'humanisme de l'autre homme* (Montpelier 1972), and T. Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, tr. R. Howard (Norman, Okla. 1999; orig. Paris 1982) 247–54 (also 42–44, 75–77, 127, 190–94, and 239–41).

4. It is most important, and usually most difficult, to see through the propaganda of one's own society. For the modern development of propaganda, its promotion, and its mind-numbing effects in the United States, see the invaluable work of Noam Chomsky, including *Media Control: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda* (New York 1997); *World Orders Old and New* (New York 1994); *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies* (Cambridge, Mass. 1989); 1987, 121–36; and, with Edward Herman, *Manufacturing Consent* (New York 1988).

5. "Freak shows" in the old circus and carnival world, or the portrayal of the African in Jacobean masque (to take two disparate examples), created and exploited stereotypical notions of the "Other," against which the particular audience ("non-freaks," the English court) found itself legitimated and confirmed. But can such a process account for the representation on the ancient stage of barbarians, women, Thebes and Thebans, Persians, bastards, slaves, animals, satyrs, and gods?

6. However, McClure 1999, 92 and 96, faults Cassandra's "conformity to Greek social norms" and "to conventional female behavior." For McClure, Cassandra is simply not "Other" enough.

7. Synodinou 1977, 49–58, argues that in Euripides the concept "barbarian" evolves into a category based on behavior, independent of national origins or ethnicity. In *Andromache*, for example, the Greek Hermione's diatribe against "barbarians" (esp. lines 173–77) underscores her own viciousness, as Grube 1941, 201, and others point out.

8. Zeitlin 1990a, 144.

9. Havelock 1982, 293–99 (quotation at 295). Aeschylus' *Seven* was performed in 467, only thirteen years after the Athenians evacuated their women and children in the face of Xerxes' invasion. From the ramparts of the Acropolis, the Athenians who stayed behind held off the invaders for several days before succumbing. A year later, the Athenians evacuated their city again, and the Persians under Mardonius sacked Athens a second time (see note 18). The Persian threat continued until Cimon's victory at Eurymedon, probably the year after *Seven* premiered (Meiggs 1975, 75–86).

10. States 1985, 4.

11. The other fifth-century tragedies we know with nonmythic subjects, Phrynichus' *Capture of Miletus* (492) and *Phoenician Women* (476), also dealt with the ongoing Persian-Greek conflict (Hall 1989, 63–64, and 1996, 7–9, and Haigh 1896, 42–45).

12. For clarity in these muddy waters, see Broadhead 1960, xliii–xlvi; Dale 1969, 119 and 259–62; and Hall 1996 on 140–41.

13. See chapters 1 and 3.

14. Although modern productions shed (at best) weak light on ancient practices, this staging of Darius' appearance proved successful in my production of *Persians* in Atlanta in 1990.

15. Working back from the infamous Carcinus' incident (Arist. *Po.* 1455a 26–29), Green 1990, 283, suggests that Darius' ghost might have appeared at the central doorway; I think this would have been confusing.

16. G. Paduona, *Sui Persiani di Eschilo: Problemi di focalizzazone drammatica* (Rome 1978) 85–103 ("una tragedia di famiglia").

17. E. Hall 1989, 77–86, followed by J. Hall 1997, who bemoans (46–47) stereotyping in "the derogatory way that Aiskylos . . . practise[d] with regard to the Persians."

18. See chapter 1 and in this chapter, note 9; Hdt. 8.50–53, 8.109, 9.65.2; Thuc. 1.89; Hignett 1963, 200, 203, and 211–13; Lazenby 1993, 152–55 and 212–13; and Balcer 1995, 280–82 (the siege of Athens by Xerxes in 480, by Mardonius in 479). Shapiro 1989, 38–39, and W. Gauer, *Weihgeschenke aus den Perserkriegen, Istanbuler Mitteilungen* supp. 2 (Tübingen 1968) 103–7, discuss the destroyed and rebuilt statue of Athena Promachos (originally a votive for Marathon, and rebuilt by funds derived from Persian booty, noted by Paus. 1.28.2 and 10.15.4).

19. On the new walls, see Thuc. 1.90. One can *still* see *spolia* from the Persian's destruction of the old Acropolis temples on the exterior north wall of the sanctuary.

20. On booty seized from the Persians, see Hdt. 9.80–83; J. P. Barron, "The Liberation of Greece," *CAH* 4:609–10 and 616–20; and O. Broneer, "The Tent of Xerxes," *UCPClArch* 1.12 (1944) 305–11.

21. By setting his production of *Persians* in Iraq after the "allied" bombing campaign of 1990–91, Peter Sellars skewed the power relationships on which the play depends. In spite of Western propaganda to the contrary, Iraq (unlike the Persian Empire under Darius and Xerxes) was crushed by an infinitely stronger force, with far greater resources than it could muster. In the period 480–472—and long before, and long after—Persia was the elephant, Greece the mouse, not the other way around. For the United States during its "withdrawal" from Vietnam as a better modern parallel, see M. Ewan, ed. and tr., *Suppliants and Other Dramas* (London 1996) xxix.

22. S. Woodford, "More Light on Old Walls," *JHS* 94 (1974) 162; see also Scully 1962, 91 and 183. For the highly programmatic "art in service of the state" of the Achaemenids, see T. C. Young, "The Persian Empire," in *CAH* 4:40 and 109–11; *CAH, Plates to Vol. 4*, ed. J. Boardman (Cambridge 1988), 16–19 and pls. 11–17 (Bisitun relief, showing Darius trampling a rebel, with nine named rebels, hands bound and roped at their necks), and 32, 40–44 and pls. 27, 40a–c (procession of tributaries at Apadana in Persepolis). On Persepolis, P.R.S. Moorey (25) quotes with approval Curzon writing in 1892: "Everything is devoted, with unabashed repetition, to a single purpose, viz. the delineation of majesty in its most inspired sense, the pomp and panoply of him who was well styled the Great King." See also M. C. Root, *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art: Essays on the Creation of an Iconography of Empire, Acta Iranica* 19 (Leiden 1979), esp. 1–4, 15–28, and 131–61. Boardman 2000, 216–20, summarizes the monumental Persian art of the period:

> Persepolis was designed to demonstrate to Persians and subject peoples that the king was effortlessly all-powerful, and for this was its imagery created. The Parthenon . . . demonstrated to Athenians and allies that Athens . . . was top dog in the comparatively small kennel of Greece. But the defeated barbarian as such was not represented at all, nor the armed forces as such; this was not Bisitun . . . [which was] very much the art of a Great Dictator.

23. C. Pelling, "Aeschylus *Persae* and History," in Pelling 1997, 18; Goldhill 1988, 193. Pelling's section "Ideology and National Stereotypes" (13–19) ends with an apt phrase from Stephen Greenblatt on the "discovery of Self in Other and Other in Self." For similar judgments on the play, see Finley 1955, 209–10; Jacqueline Duchemin, "Réflexions sur la tragédie des *Perses*," *Information littéraire* 8 (1956) 15–18; and Thalmann 1980, 281–82. Cf. Harrison 2000, 55, who finds "only . . . themes highlighted . . . which stress the devastation wrought on the Persians, not their common humanity."

24. Winnington-Ingram 1983, 198–99.

25. Vernant 1991, 205.

26. The underworld opens briefly (688–92, 839–42) for Darius, underlining Hades' role as the final destination for all.

27. In particular, lines 21–54 (Chorus), 302–31 (Messenger), and 957–61, 967–73, 979–85, 992–1001 (Chorus).

28. On Persian names, see Broadhead 1960, 318–21, and Sidgwick 1903, 66–68; on their purported impact, Hall 1989, 77–78. The fact that no one utters the proper name of a Greek suggests their unified collectivity in contrast to the invaders (Goldhill 1988, 192). For Homeric naming as creation from the void, see George Seferis, "The King of Asine," in *Collected Poems*, tr. and ed. E. Keeley and P. Sherrard (Princeton 1971) 135–37.

29. Broadhead 1960, 310–17, and Rehm 1994a, 184 n.32; Hall 1989, 83–84, emphasizes its excessive nature, without acknowledging the enormity of the loss that prompts such grief.

30. On the "Greekness" of Atossa's offerings, the ghost-raising scene, and also Darius, see Hall 1989, 89–90, and Broadhead 1960, xxvii–xxi.

31. Hdt. 1.131–32; A. *Pax* 406–11; on Greek sacrificial practice, see chapter 1.

32. Winnington-Ingram 1983, 1–15 (Zeus in *Persians*); Broadhead 1960 on 204 and 607–10 (Atossa's offerings); Hall 1989, 143–49 ("Aeschylus did not explicitly differentiate the religious beliefs of his Persians from those of Greeks"). As well as Apollo and Zeus, the Persians refer by name to Athena ("the gods protect the city of the goddess Pallas," 347), Hermes (629), Hades (Aidoneus, 649–50), Poseidon (750), Ares (942), Olympian irregulars Gē/Gaia (Earth, 499, 523, 629, 640) and Ouranos (Sky, 499), and the non-Olympian Pan (449).

33. R. Williams, "Afterword," in Dollimore and Sinfield 1994, 287.

34. Burford 1993, 126, reminds us that the poor in Attica harnessed donkeys, or

themselves, to the plow. Hesiod (*Op.* 436–40) describes yoked animals quarreling and breaking the plow, a farmer's-eye-view of elements in Atossa's dream; on Persian war chariots, see *Pers.* 29, 45–48, and 84.

35. Both man and woman yoked together (A. *Pers.* 139, Eur. *Med.* 242, Arist. *Pol.* 1253b9–10); spouse as "yokemate" (*suzugos*) (Sappho fr. 213.3, A. *Cho.* 599, Eur. *Alc.* 314); Iphis wishes he had remained "unyoked in marriage" (Eur. *Su.* 791); "unyoked" used for unwedded girls (Eur. *Hipp.* 1425, *Ba.* 694) and unwedded men (Eur. *Med.* 673, *IA* 805, *Kresphontes* 66.23 [Austin 1968 = Collard, Cropp, and Lee 1995, *Kres.* line 50]); one of Hera's cult titles as goddess of marriage was Zygia (Yoker) (Rehm 1994a, 201 n.48), etc.

36. In a nonmarital context, Agamemnon speaks of his former allies at Troy offering "the mirror of companionship, an image of a shadow," while Odysseus alone "took up the yoke [*zeuchtheis*] and pulled at my side [*seiraphoros*]" (*Ag.* 839–42). At *Il.* 13.703–8, Homer compares the two Ajaxes standing together in battle to yoked oxen plowing fallow land.

37. It strikes me as oversubtle, and insensitive to the realities of war, to view this passage (and others featuring the absence of men) as evidence of the systematic "effeminisation of Persia" (Hall 1996, 13). Xerxes' expedition accomplishes what foreign wars generally do, empty beds and fill graves. If Aeschylus represents "Asia as Woman," as Hall argues, then he does the same for Greece and Europe (Eurōpē, 799), both grammatically feminine, the latter actually named *for* a woman. In the Queen's nightmare (*Pers.* 181–200), for instance, Greece is the sister of Persia, sharing both her gender and her genealogy.

38. The fact that *barbaros* is used by Persian characters of themselves speaks strongly against Hall's claim (1989, 5 and 9–11) that the term in *Persians* connoted a non-Greek inferior. Of course, by retroactively assigning the word its later pejorative sense, we could interpret its use in Freudian terms, suggesting unconscious self-loathing on the part of the Queen (and the Chorus and Messenger later). Podlecki 1970 on 187 suggests a better approach: "The text says 'barbarian,' which to a Greek meant simply 'non-Greek.' Because to us it has a strong pejorative flavor, I have translated it 'foreign' or 'foreigner' generally throughout the play." As we know, chauvinists of various stripes depersonalize the offending group with dehumanizing epithets—"gooks," "Huns," "Arab extremists," "rogue states," "Reds," "faggots," "niggers," "bubbas," "wetbacks," "kikes." But terms like "Communist," "anglo," "Jew," "Gentile," "lawyer" *can* operate descriptively, without derogation; so, too, "barbarian," at least as used in Aeschylus' *Persians*.

39. See Wilson 1986, 51–52, and Hall 1996, 21, for the land's loss of her men. Xerxes empties Persia (119, 718, 730, 761) and fills Hades instead (922–25). He even "unyokes" his mother's chariot; after learning of his defeat, Atossa makes her second entrance (598) on foot (clear from 607–9). On the image of yoking in the play, see duBois 1982, 87–90.

40. Indicated at lines 157, 634, 643, 654–55, 711, 856; also Hall 1989, 90–93, and Podlecki 1970 on 643.

41. Broadhead 1960, xxviii–xxix.

42. Wilson 1986, 57. When Xerxes invaded Greece, Thrace was under Persian control; after his defeat, the Delian League drove out the Persian governors and expelled their garrison from Eion at the mouth of the Strymon in the winter of 477/6 (Hdt. 7.106–7, Thuc. 1.98.1, Balcer 1995, 308–10). The melting of the river's ice, whether fact or Aeschylean invention, fits the notion that Thrace was part of Greece (but under Persian rule).

43. On *hubris* figured in spatial terms, see Zoja 1995, 113–14, 127–29, and 174–75; Hartog 1988, 331; and my introduction, notes 158–59. Momigliano 1975, 130, points out that "Darius preaches the doctrine of *hybris*, which to us may seem very Greek; but to Aeschylus and Herodotus it was objectively true and therefore accessible to any wise man, Greek or not."

44. Writing from the perspective of Persia, and as an apologist for its empire, Balcer 1995 (esp. 329–30, also 255–56, and 261–89) construes the Persian defeat in logistical terms. The real cause of the disaster was the "issue of distance" (329) and overextended supply lines; people fighting for their homeland played, at best, a secondary role. Balcer's work brings to mind military historians of the Vietnam War discussing how the United States faced tough geographical obstacles, but with sufficient coordination and commitment could have "won the war." Here, as elsewhere, when the human consequences of foreign wars are diminished, spatial *hubris* lurks in the background, however occluded.

45. Hignett 1963, 193–239, and Broadhead 1960, 322–38.

46. Hdt. 8.89 explains the massive drowning of the Persians on their inability to swim. The fish eating the dead recalls Achilles' famous words to the Trojan Lycaon, on whom the fish will feed (21.122–27), a prediction that follows Achilles' insistence that he himself will fall in battle.

47. Hignett 1963, 105–48, 371–78; cf. Lazenby 1993, 130–48.

48. Thuc. 4.12; Paus. 4.36.6; and chapter 1. For the paradox in Thucydides of land battles fought at sea, and sea battles fought on land, see S. Flory, "The Death of Thucydides and the Motif of 'Land on Sea,'" in Rosen and Farrell 1993, 113–23. We find a similar spatial inversion in the *Iliad*, when the Greek invaders find *themselves* besieged by the Trojans behind the defensive wall they built to protect their ships; see Crotty 1982, 109–12; Taplin 1992, 197; and J. V. Morrison, "Thematic Inversion in the *Iliad*: The Greeks under Siege," *GRBS* 35 (1994) 209–27.

49. Meiggs 1975, 387; see also Finley 1955, 214, and Zoja 1995, 98–101. Cf. Harrison 2000, who rejects categorically the argument that the play dramatizes anything so "naive, intellectually simplistic" as *hubris* (19–20). Rather *Persians* may represent "the high-water mark of Athens' conviction in her imperial project" (108–10). "To observe the centrality of patriotism to the play is not to mark out Aeschylus and the Athenians as uniquely chauvinistic—but only as unexceptional" (115). If so, *Persians* has little to recommend it to the contemporary theater.

50. Thuc. 1.96–97; Meiggs 1975, 42–49.

51. Meiggs 1975, 50–67.

52. Thuc. 1.98–100, 4.108; Meiggs 1975, 83.

53. Meiggs 1975, 68–81, offers an excellent summary, including problems in dating; also Rosenbloom 1995, 96–98.

54. Thuc. 1.98.4. As Zoja 1995, 75, puts it, "the last of the Greeks' efforts to defend themselves slipped seamlessly over into the first of their acts of conquest" (see also 81–84 and 109–12).

55. Rosenbloom 1995, 93–98. As Raaflaub 1991, 575, points out, Athens "learned" ideas basic to its empire from the Persians—lasting subjection of defeated

poleis, including their obedience to authority; paying tribute (the Chorus of *Persians* fears this will stop with Xerxes' defeat, 584–87); and supplying troops and material for military campaigns.

56. Note, however, that we also hear of Xerxes as a foolhardy youth (782–83, 829–31), a mother's son (211, 227, 453, 473, 476), and the victim of bad political counsel (753–58). The prominent role played by Atossa as Xerxes' mother proves effective in dedemonizing her son, as Michelini 1982, 153, and Podlecki 1970, 12–13, point out.

57. Thalmann 1980, and Garvie 1978, 65–70.

58. Hall 1996, 6–7 (original emphasis); for a similar view on the Queen's response, see Sidgwick 1903, x and on 847.

59. Thalmann 1980, 274–75 and 278, traces a parallel development of the word *kosmos* through the play, meaning both "adornment" and "political/military order," the loss of the latter figured in terms of the former.

60. Thalmann 1980 demonstrates how Xerxes' torn garments draw together other images to symbolize self-directed grief, royal humiliation, divine punishment, and the end of the empire.

61. For Xerxes' entrance on foot, see Taplin 1977, 121–23, who notes that the Chorus's lines at 1001–2 suggest its astonishment at the lack of attendants and carriage both. Moreover, the presence of an animal-drawn cart conflicts with the image of a man "stark naked [*gumnos*] of escorts" (1036). Without a driver or attendants, how would the "tent on wheels" leave the orchestra once Xerxes dismounts? His entrance on foot also fits better with Atossa's dream, in which Xerxes is thrown from the broken chariot and rends his clothes. Cf. Hall 1996 on 999–1001 and Broadhead 1960 on 1000–1001 for the standard view.

62. On the Chorus's newfound *parrhēsia*, see Broadhead 1960, xxv–xvi; Podlecki 1970, 13, sees hints here and elsewhere of political resistance to the Achaemenid dynasty.

63. On the Chorus's *proskunēsis* before Atossa (152) and Darius (694–96), see Hall 1989, 96–97; more generally, Pulleyn 1997, 157–58 and 191–94. Earlier the Chorus fears that the Persians will refuse to prostrate themselves before Xerxes after Salamis (588–90), anticipating the Chorus's own behavior on his return.

64. Finley 1955, 216–17, and E. B. Holtsmark, "Ring Composition and the *Persae* of Aeschylus," *SymbOs* 45 (1970) 19–20.

65. Michelini 1982, 128–29; cf. Garvie 1978, 67, on the power of the final scene.

66. "As Xerxes enters . . . we are confronted with the brute fact of present suffering" (P. Mitsis, "Xerxes' Entrance," in Pucci 1988, 113). The scene's emotional effect would have multiplied if, as M. McCall suggests, Aeschylus (who acted in his own productions) played the roles of Atossa and Xerxes ("Aeschylus in the *Persae*," in Cropp, Fantham, and Scully 1986, 43–49).

67. Garvie 1978, 71. Compare the long scene between Athena and the Furies (A. *Eum.* 777–1047), which moves from oppositional confrontation to physical proximity and inclusion, manifest in the memorable closing lyric.

68. H. C. Avery, "Dramatic Devices in Aeschylus' *Persians*," *AJP* 85 (1964) 181–82. The translation (following West's emendation) is Hall's (1996); for textual problems, see Broadhead 1960 on 1008–9, and his appendix on 1008.

69. Herington 1986, 71–72, tracks the imagery of torn clothing, from vague premonition to specific dream; then from reported fact to onstage manifestation; and finally to enactment before the audience. Whatever splendor the original costumes possessed, their wearers defiled them in the end.

70. F. I. Zeitlin, "Introduction," in Vernant 1991, 21. See also duBois 1988, 176 ("in Greek culture, so repressive to women, . . . women were the paradigmatic 'others'"), and 1982, 104 ("a civilization which excluded women from humanness and made them both invisible and analogous to animals"). Bassi 1998, 140–41, and again at 229 totalizes the dyad: "woman, the universal other." Cf. March 1990, particularly 64–65, who raises sensible objections to the assumption that Greek society either considered or constructed women as a "race apart." See also Faraone 1999, 165–67.

71. On heterosexual erotic attraction, consider the numerous myths involving heroes (Paris and Helen, Achilles and Penthesileia, Theseus and Ariadne, Odysseus and Penelope, Heracles for Iole, Phaedra for Hippolytus, Nausicaa for Odysseus, Agamemnon for Chryseis, Achilles for Briseis), gods (Ares and Aphrodite, many male gods for Aphrodite), and gods and humans (Zeus for any number of mortal women, Boreas for Oreithyia, Aphrodite for Anchises, Eos for Cephalus, Calyspo for Odysseus, Peleus for Thetis). The erotic compulsion for (re)union is captured memorably in Aristophanes' speech in Pl. *Smp.* 189c2–d6. On female sexuality and the "mutual *charis* of sexual gratification," see S. *Aj.* 522, Blundell 1989, 46, and MacLachlan 1993, 156–60. Podlecki 1998, 109–17, discusses the (real-life) passion between Pericles and Aspasia. Faraone 1999, 160–72, effectively challenges the standard view that the Greeks found females to be more passionate, lascivious, and irrational regarding sexual desire. See also Sultan 1999, 55–56.

72. For marriage conceived as a mutual activity and not simply male dominance, see note 35; as the telos of Athenian *men's* lives, see Rehm 1994a, 32 and 165 n.14. Widowed and divorced men in Athens usually remarried, even if they already had a male heir for the *oikos*; see W. E. Thompson, "Athenian Marriage Patterns," *CSCA* 5 (1972) 212–25 (esp. 223–25), and S. Isager, "The Marriage Pattern in Classical Athens: Men and Women in Isaios," *C&M* 33 (1981) 81–96 (esp. 82–84).

73. Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?" in *Women, Culture and Society*, ed. M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (Stanford 1974) 67–88, and Versnel 1987 (two anthropological perspectives); from a political and economic viewpoint, Marilyn Waring, *Counting for Nothing: What Men Value and What Women Are Worth*, 2nd ed. (Toronto 1999).

74. Case 1985; see also Keuls 1993, esp. 1–15 and 329–48; Cantarella 1987, 38–71; duBois 1988, 140–66; Just 1989, 153–93; Rabinowitz 1993; Seidensticker 1995.

75. Steiner 1984, 237.

76. Hall 1989, 35 and 203–4; duBois 1982, 112 and 116–20; Page 1971, xviii–xxi; Hourmouziades 1965, 17 n.2.

77. Mead 1943, 15; Conacher 1967, 188–98; Easterling 1977, 180; Synodinou 1977, 32 n.2; Knox 1979, 306–11; Rehm 1989, 98–100.

78. Regarding *pessos*, Aristotle (*Pol.* 1253a1–18) describes an *apolis* (cityless) person as "an isolated piece in a game of *pessos*." If the simile were popular earlier, as seems likely—see Eur. *Erechtheus* fr. 360, 8–10, and Collard, Cropp, and Lee 1995, p. 178 on 9—then Euripides forges a clever link between the game the Tutor saw the men playing (*pessos*) and the political gossip he heard from them regarding Medea's

exile. See also the introduction, note 137. For domestic slaves, see chapter 1, note 70, and Griffith 1999 on *Ant.* 437–40.

79. Medea remains continually in view from 214 until 1250, if Reckford 1968 is correct. Kovacs 1994, 371, 395, and Gredley 1987, 33, 36–37, have her exit into the house at 823 and again at 1080; the case for the latter exit is more compelling. After her monologue Medea seems to have decided to kill her children, and her exit at 1080 would lead the audience to expect their offstage death cries to interrupt the Chorus's anapests, much like Agamemnon's cries break up the anapestic ruminations of the Chorus at A. *Ag.* 1331–42. When this does not eventuate, Medea's return to the stage (at 1116, in advance of the Messenger) would leave the audience with the sense that the Corinthians will, as the tradition had it, kill the children (see note 83).

80. When reporting violence or death from the distance, a Messenger usually speaks to the Chorus alone (A. *Th.*, *Ag.* [the Herald], S. *Aj.*, *OC*, Eur. *Su.*, *Ion*, *Ba.*). Alternatively, he may summon a character from offstage to hear the news (S. *Ant.*, Eur. *Hipp.*, *Hec.* [Hecuba, from under her cloak], *IT*, *Pho.* [first Messenger], *IA*). If the character already is onstage, the Messenger identifies himself first (S. *Tr.*, *El.*, Eur. *Hcld.*, *Hec.*, *Tro.*, *El.*, *Hel.*). The sole exception I can find—besides Dionysus and Medea—is Creon in Eur. *Pho.* (1632–34).

81. The Nurse doubts the advantages of so wealthy a house (125–28), another aspect of the play's "domesticated" tone.

82. On the lyric play between inside and outside, see Segal 1997b, 170–75, and Arnott 1982, 39.

83. A number of scholars agree that Euripides introduced Medea's intentional filicide, and that earlier versions had the Corinthians murder her children, or (in a different context) Medea kills them accidentally. See Segal 1997b, 168–69; Rehm 1994a, 100–101 and 198 n.18; Boedeker 1991, 109; Lesky 1983, 218 and 457 nn.20–22; Knox 1979, 295–96; Page 1971, xxi–xxv and xxx–xxxvi; Buttrey 1958, 13–14; Haigh 1896, 289–90; and schol. *Med.* 273 (Schwartz 1891, 159–60).

84. Knox 1979, 303–4; Arnott 1973, 59; and Luschnig 1992, 38, who concludes (her emphasis), *"There is no more inside."*

85. For its erotic significance, see Barrett 1983 on *Hipp.* 535–41. Sophocles uses a cognate *klēithra* for the door bolts that Oedipus smashes to break into his bedroom (*OT* 1262), discussed in chapter 5 (cf. Dawe 1982 on 1262, who thinks the word means "door" and not "bolts, hinges, or sockets"). From the same root comes *kleitoris*, first attested in the second century A.D. On Aristophanes' sexual use of gates and passageways, see J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse*, 2nd ed. (New York 1991) 137–38.

86. These include fragments of Euripides' earlier *Aegeus* (Mills 1997, 239–45, and Webster 1967, 77–80), and the version by Sophocles (Mills 1997, 234–38, and Sutton 1984, 5–6). At Plu. *Thes.* 24, Theseus inquires at Delphi about his father's identity; as with Aegeus in *Medea*, *askoi* figure in the oracular response.

87. In Jason-like fashion, Theseus abandons Ariadne on his way home from Crete (besotted with Aegle, according to Hesiod) and neglects to change his sails, a prearranged sign of his survival. Other myths treat Theseus as a Jason-type, especially in his seduction-abduction of the amazon Antiope, whom he abandons for Phaedra. Mills 1997, 13–18 and 30–33, discusses these versions (with sources), but she denies their presence in tragedy and in Athenian mythic consciousness, effaced by the young democratic hero we find in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, and Euripedes' *Suppliant Women* and *Heracles*. However, this does not apply to Euripides' *Hippolytos*, and possibly to his lost *Theseus* (Webster 1967, 106–9) and Sophocles' *Minos* (Sutton 1984, 75–78).

88. In Euripides' *Cyclops*, for example, Silenus' dung-sweeping prologue (1–35), Cyclops' buggery of Silenus (576–89), and the monster's blinding (654–62) suggest other anatomical-scenic links, memorably captured by San Francisco set designer William Eddelman's phallic-like Aetna and anal-esque cave mouth for the musical version of the satyr play I staged in 1983.

89. Cf. Wiles 1997, 121–22, who sees the *skēnē* in *Medea* operating (beyond its indicative function) as "a 'meta-space' . . ., an alternative representational system" in which the orchestra represents the sea, the doors the Symplegades, and the rooftop the cliff from which the Scylla pounces (Medea at the end with her sons' bodies). Jason calls Medea a lioness more savage than the Scylla (1343–44), and Medea accepts the names (1358–59). However, both specify the Scylla of the Tyrrhennian Sea, between Sicily and Italy, seriously straining the link to the Symplegades that stand at the entrance to the Black Sea.

90. For the dynamic relationship in the play between scenic and offstage spaces, see Gredley 1987, 28–29.

91. Shrines to Hecate (a goddess often syncretized with Artemis, and associated with pathways, magic, and the moon) belong outside, frequently at crossroads; the location in the heart of the household bodes ill (Page 1971 on 397, Lee 1997 on *Ion* 1048). That is, reference to Hecate (a Greek, not a "barbarian" goddess) is not disturbing per se, only the location of her shrine gives pause. Knox 1979, 308, underlines the fact that Medea does not operate as an Eastern witch or barbarian; her use of poison has a long pedigree among Greek tragic heroines, including the most Athenian of them all, Creusa in *Ion*.

92. Rehm 1994a, 103 and 199 n.30.

93. Rehm 1989, 107–8 and 111–12, and 1994a, 103–5.

94. In their fatal union, the daughter never leaves the father, reversing the virilocal pattern of a Greek marriage, in which the bride leaves her parents and natal home to establish an *oikos* with her husband (Segal 1996, 34–35). It seems that Jason had moved into the palace and planned to live there after his marriage, also a break from standard practice. Hawley 1998, 44–48, examines the scene of Glauke's death in terms of her "destructive narcissism," a phrase that applies equally well to Jason.

95. See F. M. Dunn, "Euripides and the Rites of Hera Akraia," *GRBS* 35 (1994) 103–15; S. I. Johnston, "Corinthian Medea and the Cult of Hera Akraia," in Claus and Johnston 1997, esp. 46–52.

96. Kovacs 1994 brackets lines 1056–64; Diggle 1986–94, vol. 1, brackets 1056–80; for a defense of the text (including other sources), see Rehm 1994a, 143–45, and B. Seidensticker, "Euripides, *Medea* 1056–80, an Interpolation?" in Griffith and Mastronarde 1990, 89–102.

97. In lines bracketed by most editors (1233–35), the Chorus again calls up the underworld, lamenting the fate of Creon's daughter, who "has gone to the house of Hades on account of your marriage to Jason."

98. S. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (New York 1954) 57 (b).

99. Rehm 1994a, 18 and 159–60 n.34.

100. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Griechische Tragödien*, vol. 4 (Berlin 1923) 357; Knox 1977, 210 (= 1979, 310).

101. See chapter 1. One of Jason's few defenders, R. Palmer, "An Apology for Jason," *CJ* 53 (1957) 49–55, argues that the audience would have understood Jason's position in terms of fifth-century Athenian law. For other ideas about the law's relationship to the play, see Mead 1943, 15–20; E. M. Blaiklock, *The Male Characters of Euripides* (Wellington 1952) 21–22; Reckford 1968, 346 n.26 and 353–54; and Davies 1977–78, 111–12.

102. On the retroactive application of the law (unlikely), see Rehm 1994a, 197 n.5.

103. Patterson 1990, and 1998, 89–90, 110, and 199. The theme of "illegitimacy," whether within or outside marriage, moves from Medea's offspring with Jason to Aegeus' future child Theseus, and on to Theseus' bastard son Hippolytus, subject of two plays by Euripides. See Barrett 1964, 32–34.

104. Plu. *Them.* 1.3; Kyle 1987, 88–91 and 99; Humphreys 1974; and chapter 1 on the location of the *temenos*.

105. Lloyd 1992, 2–5; C. Collard, "Formal Debates in Euripides' Drama," *G&R* 22 (1975) 58–71; Solmsen 1975, 26–28.

106. For the fifth-century flavor of the passage, see Page 1971 on 304, and Reckford 1968, 350.

107. Lloyd 1992, 32–33 and 41–43; de Romilly 1992, 86–87; Page 1971 on 465ff. and 476; Finley 1938, 32–33.

108. Greek allows the genitive to express both possession and "that which the substantive concerns."

109. The phrase appears as a section heading in both Sourvinou-Inwood's and McDonald's contributions to Clauss and Johnston 1997 (253, 297), adapted from Zeitlin 1990b, 68–69: "in Greek theater . . . the self that is really at stake is to be identified with the male, while the woman is assigned the role of the radical other." For a compelling counter to Zeitlin's (and others') claim that Greek tragedies are never *about* their female characters, see Griffin 1998, 45–46.

110. See Knox 1979, 310; Hall 1989, 198; and Segal 1997a, 174–77.

111. See Blundell 1989, esp. 26–59; Bond 1981 on *HF* 585–86; Shaw 1975, 262–63; Dover 1974, 180–84; Page 1971 on 809–10; Knox 1966, 30–31; A.W.H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values* (Oxford 1960) 153–71 (esp. 154–56). Without referring to this code of behavior, Pucci 1980, 152, asserts that "the drive to take revenge rules all her being."

112. See Rehm 1989 and 1994a, 146–49, for this idea. J. de Romilly, *L'évolution du pathétique d'Eschyle à Euripide* (Paris 1961) 120, describes Medea as among those "qui obéissent plus qu'ils ne décident et souffrent plus qu'ils n'agissent."

113. The I-E root **phi-* means "nearby or next to." See M. Schwartz, "The Indo-European Vocabulary of Exchange, Hospitality, and Intimacy," *Proceedings of the Berkeley Linguistic Society* 8 (1982) 188–204.

114. See, e.g., Cantarella 1987, 66 ("Euripides confirms with utmost certainty the old commonplace of the woman as 'scourge, infamous race, unspeakable misfortune'"), and Case 1985, 327. Although Just 1989 points out that "Medea is presented as typically feminine and typically Greek" (269), he concludes the message of the play is "that with women and the passions one is still playing with fire" (276).

115. Williamson 1990; Shaw 1975, 258–63.

116. Foley 1975, 35 n.26.

117. Burnett 1973, 10, summarizes: "The child-murder . . . is disturbing because it is child-murder; it is distressing because it follows the other murders [Glauke / Creon] and so appears gratuitous and unnecessary; it is infuriating because it seems to have replaced the true vengeance act, the killing of Jason." As foreigners in Athens, Medea's children (including future offspring with Aegeus) would live as noncitizens (Hall 1989, 175–76), but that hardship seems preferable to their death.

118. See Stanford 1983, 49, and G. Lanata, *Poetica preplatonica: Testimonianze e frammenti* (Florence 1963) 163; on the "escapist" motif in such songs, Griffith 1999 on *Ant.* 150–51.

119. LSJ, s.v. *tektōn*, 3 and 4. Not attempted in my translation is the pronounced rhymes of her closing lines, a formal device rarely found in Greek tragedy and nowhere else in the play. The sound of *amēchanōtatai* (most deprived of means) / *sophōtatai* (most clever) gives the couplet the tone of a formal, poetic declaration. The Chorus later prays never to know the "helplessness" (*amēchania*) that comes from exile (645–48), a reference to Medea's situation.

120. Pucci 1980, 122–25, points out the ode's "exclusive femininity" and the "marked absence of the male and of insemination." Rehm 1989, 106 n.33, lists verbal correspondences between the first strophe and antistrophe of Euripides' ode and the Sapphic corpus. Cf. Hall 1989, 83 and 99, who takes the five occurrences of compounds beginning with *habros* in A. *Pers.* as evidence of the play's Orientalizing bias. What of the word used by Sappho and by Euripides (at *Medea* 830 applied specifically to Athens)? Note that Glauke also "steps lightly" (*habron bainousa*, *Med.* 1164), admiring herself in Medea's robes.

121. See J. J. Walsh, *Aristotle's Conception of Moral Weakness* (New York 1963) 16–22; B. Snell, *Scenes from Greek Drama* (Berkeley 1964) 45–52; E. Schlesinger, "Zu Euripides' Medea," *Hermes* 94 (1966) 26–53 (= Segal 1983, 294–310, tr. W. Moskalew); H. Diller, "*Thumos de kreissōn tōn emōn bouleumatōn*," *Hermes* 94 (1966) 267–75; W. W. Fortenbaugh, "Antecedents of Aristotle's Bipartite Psychology," *GRBS* 11 (1970) 233–50; C. Gill, "Did Chrysippus Understand Medea?" *Phronesis* 28 (1983) 136–49, and 1996, 216–26; Lesky 1983, 227; G. A. Rickert, "Akrasia and Euripides' *Medea*," *HSCP* 91 (1987) 91–117; Rehm 1994a, 147–49. Holding a principle is one thing, but holding it passionately such that it leads to action is quite another, as the Platonic concept of *thumoeidēs* (connecting emotion to principle) attempts to explain. Medea's "emotion" is not raw but shaped in certain directions—which includes the principle "help friends, harm enemies, and above all don't let them laugh at you."

122. Foley 1989.

123. Lesky 1967, 146.

124. Jason is fond of commercial language and financial metaphors (454, 461–62, 532–35, 542, 559–61, 565–67, 609–15, 960–63, 1348). Conacher 1967, 189, speaks of his "niggling sums in settling the accounts."

125. Knox 1966, 224.

126. This "new plot" possibility may be adumbrated as early as line 37, when the Nurse says "I am afraid she may come up with something new [*ti bouleusēi neon*]." See E. McDermott, "*Medea* Line 37: A Note," *AJP* 108 (1987) 158–61. In fact, this im-

pulse for a new and different story begins the play, as Solmsen 1975, 66–67, observes. The Nurse utters a utopian wish that the Argo had never sailed (line 1), meaning that a very different story would eventuate if the originating circumstances had been different.

127. Thuc. 1.50–66; Meiggs 1975, 201–2; P. Deane, *Thucydides' Dates, 465–31 B.C.* (Don Mills, Ont. 1972) 74–89. The battle of Athenian and Corcyran ships with the Corinthian fleet in 433 (two years before *Medea* premiered) was "the greatest sea battle that Greeks had ever yet waged against other Greeks" (Thuc. 1.50.2).

128. See Poole 1994, 8–9, on the connection between broken oaths in *Medea* and truce violations before and during the Peloponnesian War, epitomized by Thucydides' account (3.82) of the breakdown of language and other social systems in the revolution on Corcyra. For duBois 1982, esp. 120–21, 123–24, and 129–30, the war precipitated a crisis in language and in other "categories of difference."

129. On death in labor and the risks of childbirth in the ancient world, see Blundell 1995, 110–12; N. Demand, *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece* (Baltimore 1994) 71–86; A. Rousselle, "Body Politics in Ancient Rome," in Pantel 1992, 297–99, 318, 323 (on Rome, but the conclusions apply all the more strongly to ancient Greece).

130. The Chorus's sentiments recall those of *Kresphontes* fr. 449: "It would be better for us to gather together and lament / a newborn infant, given all the evils he is entering."

131. For female procreativity used metaphorically by the Greeks, see duBois 1988, who takes a very dim view of the practice. More descriptively, see Furley 1989, 227–32, on the Greek cosmologists' use of the idea, and my comments in the appendix.

132. The comparison of the two situations is instructive: as a prisoner of war, Andromache is powerless to stop the Greeks from killing her son; Medea, however, cannot stop *herself* from taking up arms against her own children, acting like an "enemy within."

133. Oaths and appeals to the sun occur at 148, 746, 752, 1251–52, 1258, and 1326–28. At line 56–58, the Nurse speaks of telling her mistress's troubles to the earth and the heavens.

134. Zeitlin 1990a, 131, 144–45, and 165–67, and 1996, 337; Mills 1997, 229 and 243.

135. In a highly "theorized" argument, Bassi 1998, 248, concludes that the Greek theater spectator, by virtue of "his passivity and inactivity, at least in principle, is defined by his failure to live up to the requirements of a normative masculinity." The [male for Bassi] Greek in the audience became "otherized" because he had to sit and watch. If the spatial approach to tragedy I have offered here has merit, then passivity and inactivity had little to do with the audience's experience. What the spectators watched, and the place in which they watched it, involved those gathered in the theater of Dionysus in an active and challenging play of space, opening new vistas and affordances.

136. As Wohl 1998, xvii, frames it, "what is shown to be constructed is open to reconstruction, rearticulation, reimagination." Brecht says, more simply, "human behaviour is shown as alterable," in *Brecht on Theatre*, ed. and tr. J. Willett, 2nd ed. (London 1978) 86.

APPENDIX
THEORIES OF SPACE

1. In *The Rediscovery of the Mind* (Cambridge, Mass. 1992) 12–26, John Searle also criticizes the mental versus physical dichotomy: "Dualists asked, 'How many kinds of things and properties are there?' and counted up to two. Monists, confronting the same question, only got as far as one. But the real mistake was to start counting at all" (26).

2. Chomsky 1996, 41–42. Oudemans and Lardinois 1987, 43–44, link the philosophical challenge (from Hegel onwards) to Cartesian "separative thinking" with a renewed philosophical interest in Greek tragedy. On contemporary physics, Jammer 1993, 246–47, offers the comforting reminder that advanced mathematical models (e.g., eleven-dimensional superstring) may make theoretical sense but are visually unimaginable.

3. Sambursky 1987, 241–42.

4. Vernant 1983, 284–86, who draws on the seminal study of A. Koyré, "Du monde de l'à-peu-près' à l'univers de la précision," *Critique* 4.28 (1948) 806–23. Cf. Lloyd 1987, 215–84, who substantially qualifies the standard view that Greek science lacked an interest in, or capacity for, measurement.

5. The rising and setting of the stars indicate temporal and seasonal change at H. *Il.* 5.5, 18.486–89, 23.226–28; Hes. *Op.* 383–93, 564–73, 582–88, 597–600, 609–23, 663–72; Pl. *Resp.* 527d.

6. The stars offer navigational guidance at H. *Od.* 5.271–77 (sailing) and S. *OT* 795 (terrestrial orientation at night). See Heidel 1937, 8–11.

7. DK 22 B 100 (Kahn 1979, 155–56). Rihll 1999, 10–12, notes the importance of such "pattern recognition" for Greek science.

8. Hes. *Op.* 582–88; Alcaeus F 347 Voigt. The common Hesiodic construction *ēmos / tēmos* (when . . . / then . . .) establishes the relationship generally.

9. Jones 1962, 175, describes this simile as "a deep-toned reality, up there for all to see, a living power as were all the stars to the Greeks, active in bringing the seasons and not merely coming and going with them." See also de Romilly 1971, 81–84. Greeks may have begun and ended their day with a prayer to the rising and setting sun; see Hes. *Op.* 339, Pl. *Smp.* S. *OC* 477, Ar. *Plut.* 771. At S. fr. 871 (Radt), Menelaus compares the fate of mortals to the changing faces of the moon (Sutton 1984, 166–67).

10. Cropp 1988 on *El.* 727–36, and chapter 4.

11. Onians 1951, 343–48, links *kairos* to the idea of an opening, a passage through, or a division, as at Eur. *Hipp.* 386; also Wheelwright 1966, 322, and Rosenmeyer 1963, 156–57 and 164–66. Race 1981 emphasizes the normative connotations of the term in tragedy—what is appropriate, effective, fitting, and *only then* "timely." In a similar vein, see R. T. Otten, "Metron, Mesos, and Kairos: A Semasiological Study" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1956, 60–79 and 155–60, and Vernant 1983, 291. For *chronos*, Onians 1951, 248–51 and 451–53; Fraenkel 1955, 1–22; for *aiōn*, E. Degani, *Aiōn da Omero ad Aristotele* (Padova 1961); for time in tragedy, de Romilly 1971.

12. Cyclical patterns based on natural cycles also inform the epic; Austin 1975,

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