TALKING ABOUT GREEK TRAGEDY

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Reprinted from **RAMUS** – Vol. 1, No. 1 – 1972

RAMUS

CRITICAL STUDIES IN GREEK AND ROMAN LITERATURE

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Publishers:

Aureal Publications (A.J.Boyle & G.J.Fitzgerald), 91, Brisbane St., Berwick, Victoria, Australia 3806.

Printers:

Printed in Australia by Monash University, Clayton, Victoria.

Subscription:

$8 (Australian) per annum. Subscribers receive two issues of *Ramus* per annum and occasional supplements. Payments should be made out to 'Aureal Publications' and sent to the editors. Price per single issue: $5 (Australian).

Advice to potential contributors:

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(Acknowledgment is here made of the generous subsidy given by the Publications Committee of Monash University to assist in the production of this journal).

TALKING ABOUT GREEK TRAGEDY

James McCaughey

I. Medium and Interpretation

Greek plays were made in the theatre. We must watch our language when we talk about them, for we too are in the theatre. Most of us receive our critical training with works of art that are constructed and exist on the written page. We study word generating word, images interacting. And when we apply these techniques to plays we learn much; the way a playwright uses language, all the hidden things that make a play what it is. And some plays, an *Ajax*, or a *Trojan Women*, read so well that we are tempted to forget, or at least disregard that they were not in the first place made for reading. Not that the words are unimportant, but they point beyond themselves to realization in performance. They are as blueprints to a finished building.

This does not mean that the critic must spend his time filling the gap between text and production. He will too soon find himself lost in speculation or tangled in archaeological problems. Rather, whatever we say of the words of a play must be conditioned by the fact that they are words for the theatre. A play cannot be something that it could not be on the stage. A sense of what it was in performance is at the same time the starting point and the final criterion of our criticism.

At first sight, this is impossible, for we have lost so much of how the plays were performed. But their most basic and striking characteristic we have not lost; that they were performed in two ways. Unlike any other form of theatre in our tradition these plays are not one medium but two, and two that are radically different from one another.

One is simply words. The actor is a talker, questioning and answering, arguing and defining, calling for our reactions and opinions. These are words as used by lawyers or philosophers or politicians. Medea's first words on stage are:

> Κορίνθιαι γυναῖκες, ἐξῆλθον δόμων,
> μή μοί τι μέμφησθ'· οἶδα γὰρ πολλοὺς βροτῶν
> σεμνοὺς γεγῶτας, τοὺς μὲν ὀμμάτων ἄπο
> τοὺς δ' ἐν θυραίοις· οἱ δ' ἀφ' ἡσύχου ποδὸς
> δύσκλειαν ἐκτήσαντο καὶ ῥαθυμίαν. (214-18)
>
> (Women of Corinth, I have come out from the house to avoid your blame. For many I know are overbearing both at home and abroad. But those who keep themselves out of harm's way are often only accused of laziness.)

She comes out because she has a case to argue.

The other medium also starts with words but these are different. They are not to be listened to and thought about, however many "ideas" they may seem to contain. For they are the basis of the dance. They generate the movement of the chorus, opening out to and creating the major theatrical effects of the play.

The two media are astonishingly different. One is austere and demanding, the other sensual and striking. In one we have to listen, in the other images assault our senses. In one the patterns are only slowly discovered, in the other they are worked out for all to see. Greek plays are not word and word, but word and dance. To our expectations, the intersection of chorus and action is as surprising as a corps de ballet bursting on to the Shakespearian stage. And if we wonder how plays so seemingly difficult could have been a popular art form, we may find the answer not in the action, but in the interwoven spectacle of the dance.

Now, while the first beginner is aware that the plays are divided in this way, it may be that our ways of talking about them have not always reflected how radical the division is. Because the plays come to us in the orderly sequence of the printed page, we expect the various parts to conform to a unity in the same way as the parts of a poem. We look for a coherence in imagery and development [1] that is rudely upset when Euripides introduces "foreign" matter into his chorus, such as the Shield of Achilles chorus in *Electra*, the Demeter ode in *Helen* or the Athens ode in *Medea.*

And because we cannot show that these stem from the action we suggest that Euripides is being decorative or escapist – or, more damagingly, that the chorus is an embarrassment to him and remains in his plays as a mannerism, a vestige of the time when it really *was* central to the drama. In fact he is revitalising it, using to the full the possibilities that it offers to throw across the development of his plays strange images, surprising tones, different rhythms. The shock of finding the search of the earthmother played out in the theatre in the middle of Helen's escape from Egypt is no greater than the potential shock every time the full medium of choral lyric, twelve or fifteen actors in dance and song, breaks across the austere formality of the rhetoric.

In every play the final effect comes from the interplay between the two media, not simply one decorated, reflected, and commented on by another. Without the choruses *Helen* is a light amusing play with a happy ending. Its central device, that the hero pretends to be dead and is buried in jest, remains a witty idea. Against this and through it the chorus brings a sense of sadness and loss that is *not* healed by any meeting of lucky husband and clever beautiful wife. They are captives of war themselves and through them we know that whether Helen went to Troy or not those who died there are really dead, like the brothers and the sons and friends of the audience who had died fighting Sparta. And somehow this casts a shadow over the ruse used by the heroine, even though it works so cheekily and triumphantly in the play. When Helen cuts her hair short, tears her face and wears black in pretended grief, she is moving into those areas about which the play is very serious. Euripides expresses this

ambiguity by drawing across the story of Helen that of Persephone. She too went down to the underworld for a time, but she could not fully return, and from then on spent her time half among the dead, half with the living, the cycle of the dying and rising year. The solemnity of the chorus does not pass judgement on action and actors. Rather, it insures that a play whose action is escape is securely based on a sense of the reality of that from which we need escape – the cruelty and loss of war. The play remains charming and happy, but it is saved from flippancy.

Of course, it is not only the chorus who use lyrics. The principal actors themselves may move from one medium to the other, at times almost covering the same ground twice. Alcestis' death-scene is worked out in each, as is Cassandra's entry of the house of Atreus. And here too our ways of talking about Greek plays frequently do not do justice to the radical break in the actor's performance. We seek organic connections between what the character says in one mood and in the other as if they were all words which worked in more or less the same way. For example, at the end of *Agamemnon* Clytaemnestra makes two different statements about the death of Agamemnon. First she claims the murder as her own.

> ἐμοὶ δ' ἀγὼν ὅδ' οὐκ ἀφρόντιστος πάλαι·
> νείκης παλαιᾶς ἦλθε, σὺν χρόνῳ γε μήν·
> ἕστηκα δ' ἔνθ' ἔπαισ' ἐπ' ἐξειργασμένοις. (1377-79)
>
> (For me I have long been training for this match,
> I tried a fall and won – a victory long overdue.
> I stand here where I struck, above my victims.)
> (Louis MacNeice)

But later she disavows the act, shuffling responsibility back on to the family's "three times gorged Genius".

> αὐχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τοὔργον ἐμόν·
> μὴ δ' ἐπιλεχθῇς
> Ἀγαμεμνονίαν εἶναι μ' ἄλοχον.
> φανταζόμενος δὲ γυναικὶ νεκροῦ
> τοῦδ' ὁ παλαιὸς δριμὺς ἀλάστωρ
> Ἀτρέως χαλεποῦ θοινατῆρος
> τόνδ' ἀπέτεισεν
> τέλεον νεαροῖς ἐπιθύσας. (1497-1504)
>
> (You say that this is *my* work – mine?
> Do not cozen yourself that I am Agamemnon's wife.
> Masquerading as the wife
> Of the corpse there the old sharp-witted Genius
> Of Atreus who gave the cruel banquet

Has payed with a grown man's life
The due for children dead.)

(MacNeice)

Naturally, we seek explanations of this change of mind. "When the old men recall the ancient evil that has haunted Mycenae, she eagerly reaches for exoneration."(J.H. Finley.)[2] Both the statements are different in medium as well as in sense. The first is rhetorical, the second lyric. Would an audience worry about the coherence of what is done in such radically different ways? When a character moves from one medium to another he is not only changing his manner of speech. The stage has become a different place. And as we shall see later, Aeschylus is particularly careful in Agamemnon to keep the two parts of the play separate.

Worse than imposing a uniformity in criticism where there is none in the theatre is to recognise the shift in the medium and ascribe psychological reasons to it. As if the medium that a character operated in expressed something about his personality or state of mind. According to this view, the lyric medium expresses a heightened emotional level. Characters move into it at that point at which trimeters are no longer adequate to the intensity of their feelings. Correspondingly, other characters will remain "trimeter bound", either because they are themselves somewhat mundane, or because they can keep a stronger hold on themselves. Masqueray puts this approach in a nutshell:[3]

> La trimètre n'a jamais été récité sur les scènes des Grecs que par des personnages qui pouvaient encore maitriser leurs émotions.
>
> (In Greek theatre blank verse is the preserve of those who can keep their emotions in control.)

From a number of points of view this will not do. It simply is not true that when people become more excited in grief, joy or anger, they naturally burst into the highly formal mode of Greek lyric dance – any more than the equally conventional medium of rhetoric represents the way people talk when they have control of themselves. These changes are switches in convention from one form of theatre to another and psychological explanations will rarely help us understand why the playwright makes a particular character change media at a particular moment. Why does Clytaemnestra start in trimeters when she enters after the murder of Agamemnon and then move into lyrics, while Cassandra (together with Alcestis, Agave and Oedipus after his blinding) make the opposite transition? Why does no character move into lyrics in *Agamemnon* until Cassandra? Medea is one of the fiercest of Greek heroic figures, and becomes the more so as the play progresses. Why does she never move into lyrics after the opening scene? Why, at the end of the *Eumenides*, is Athena caught up into the lyric – she into the mode of the Furies, not they into hers?

The two media present to the Greek tragedian not an emotional spectrum with which he can control the rise and fall in the intensity of his plays, but two different ways of exploring the action and of drawing his audience into a relationship with it.

At the heart of theatre stands the representation of action. We will best see how the two media work if we examine the way in which they approach this task. Let us take the death of Alcestis, which is, apparently, represented in turn in each media. Alcestis is first brought on during a chorus and is herself caught up into it. She sings the song of a dying woman, and by its end is, in a sense, dead. She is laid on her back, the darkness descends and she farewells the children. No sooner does this happen than the music stops, the dance stills and Alcestis rises from her couch to talk about it.

> Ἄδμητ', ὁρᾷς γὰρ τἀμὰ πράγματ' ὡς ἔχει,
> λέξαι θέλω σοι πρὶν θανεῖν ἃ βούλομαι. (280 - 81)
>
> (Admetus, you can see how it is with me. Therefore,
> I wish to have some words with you before I die.)
> (Richmond Lattimore)

The action is then worked through with words and eventually returns to the point at which the chorus ended, the farewell to the children. Now it is obvious that in a sense the same action here happens twice over, but the differences are more important than the similarities. In the lyric Alcestis actually is a dying woman and acts out for us the moment at which death descends. First she calls on what is round her and is now seen for the last time, sun, sky, and earth. Then her vision moves on to a different dimension. Figures of death stand around her. Charon waits on his oar. Hands are roughly laid on her: she is being snatched away. Finally, all vision disappears.

> σκοτία δ' ἐπ' ὄσσοισι νὺξ ἐφέρπει. (269)
>
> (Dark on my eyes
> Night creeps on.)

Now, how does this relate to the closing lines of the rhetorical scene? In them, Alcestis is given the following lines.

> καὶ μὴν σκοτεινὸν ὄμμα μου βαρύνεται. (385)
> ὡς οὐκέτ' οὖσαν οὐδὲν ἂν λέγοις ἐμέ. (387)
> οὐ δῆθ' ἑκοῦσά γ', ἀλλὰ χαίρετ', ὦ τέκνα. (389)
> οὐδέν εἰμ' ἔτι. (390)
> χαῖρ'. (391)
>
> (My eye grows dark and heavy.)

(You could speak of me as no longer being.)
(I do not want to [leave the children], but farewell children.)
(I am no longer anything.)
(Farewell.)

Here she is no longer standing in the place of a dying woman, she is talking about what it is to be one. We see this first in the line about the eyes. Alcestis no longer senses the darkness descending, she describes how her eye is growing heavy. The difference is even more marked in what follows.

Dying people do not say "You could speak of me as no longer being", let alone "I am no longer anything", but it is a thing which is reasonably said of them. It is the abiding strangeness of Greek rhetoric that the actor almost stands outside the part and says of himself what you would expect to be said by others about him. These lines do not represent death to the audience: they form a focus around which the audience can create a dying woman.

Accordingly, it is really misleading to say that Alcestis dies in both parts of the scene. Only in the lyric is there any attempt to represent the event. It is intensely stylised, but then so is the stichomythia (what could be more stylised than stichomythia?) and the question is not whether it looks as if someone really is dying in the theatre (we never really believe that something like that is happening in the theatre and are only embarrassed when a director tries to make us do so) but whether the event is in one way or another realised. No matter how much you strip away the conventions of the rhetorical dialogue you are not left with any possible representation of a dying woman. The director who attempts to use these lines as a basis for building a convincing, moving death-scene is courting disaster. Euripides has already achieved that in the lyric scene and neither wanted to nor could repeat it. Alcestis dies when she first comes on, and then, by the licence of the theatre, that death is talked through.

We are so accustomed to the idea that what happens in Greek plays happens in the rhetoric and that the chorus comments on it that it takes something of an effort to see that the reverse is closer to the truth. In the rhetoric, nothing happens. Certain actions are described, others are argued about, others again, such as recognitions or the limping arrival of Oedipus at Colonus, are worked through in words, but the audience is never given the impression that it is in fact spectator to the action described. Two exceptions, perhaps, come to mind – Ajax' suicide and the nailing of Prometheus to the rock. No doubt there are others, but by and large when the Greek playwright wants to realise on the stage a major event he does so in the medium of the chorus. It is through the chorus that the collapse of Pentheus' palace is played out and that the dance of the Bacchae is brought into the theatre. It is in lyrics that the demented Heracles is brought on stage in *Trachiniae*, that Prometheus plunges into the abyss. The madness of Agave, the frenzy of Cassandra, the torment of Io, all are realised in

this way. When in *Helen* Euripides wants to move from the crazy misunderstandings of the "recogniton" scene to express what it is for husband and wife to find one another after many years apart, he moves into the lyrics to do so. And when at the end of the play, Helen and Menelaus leave the stage to make their escape, that flight is rendered by the ode of the birds winging their way over the sea. Greek theatre moves back and forward between action focussed in words and action stemming out of the words into the patterns of the dance.

In *Understanding Media*[4] Marshall McLuhan differentiates media into hot and cool. Hot are those which present to the viewer or listener a highly finished product which assaults his senses with a defined and clear effect. The photograph, the lecture, the cinema. Cool media are those which demand of the listener that he participate in order to make them work, that he supply from his own imagination to complete the effect. The cartoon, the conversation, most theatre. Perhaps we could distinguish the media of Greek tragedy in the same way. With the chorus, the audience is called to supply little. The intersection of word, music and dance is extraordinarily intense and leaves little room for the participation of the viewer. It creates theatrical effects that assault his senses, disturbing, soothing, exciting or exhorting. The rhetoric, on the other hand, is a medium cool to the point of austerity. The audience is given almost nothing, no illusion that what is being acted out really is happening, that these actors really are Antigone, Oedipus, Dionysus. They are just words, and through them we have to supply the action. It is the imagination of the audience which creates the action of Greek theatre, which returns Alcestis to Admetus, restores Heracles to life after he has killed his children. What is given on the stage is simply enough to prompt and guide it. There is no essential difference between the messenger speech which tells of action realised off-stage and the dialogue which talks through an action on it. Indeed, in the messenger speeches this medium works at its fullest stretch, calling on the audience to enact in their imagination scenes more terrible than the most skilled director could create on the stage.

To label is not necessarily to illumine, not even when the labels are written by McLuhan. But his image may help us to see that the difference between the media is not only a matter of how action is represented, but also of the relationship of the audience to that action. McLuhan puts it this way. "Intensity or high definition engenders specialism and fragmentation in living as in entertainment, which explains why an intense experience must be 'forgotten', 'censored' and reduced to a very cool state before it can be 'learned' or assimilated...were we to accept fully and directly every shock to our various structures of awareness we would soon be nervous wrecks, doing double takes and pressing panic buttons every minute."[5] Again his language is imagistic rather than analytic. And of course people do not so much learn from the theatre as find themselves in it. But if we talk about involvement in the medium rather than learning from it, we will find the image a useful one for Greek theatre. For were the Greek theatre all chorus, it would be a fragmented and bewildering

patchwork of effects. We can only sustain experience of this intensity in short bursts. On the other hand, were it only rhetoric, it would be exhausting in the opposite way. We would be called to supply so much and be given so little to satisfy our imagination and affect our responses. The peculiar experience of Greek tragedy lies in the combination of the theatrical shock effect of the chorus with the cool rhetoric of action which the audience must help create. The plays operate on a high level of emotional and imaginative intensity, yet focus unerringly on the place where the spectator must engage and find himself.

For finally the important thing is not the variety of theatrical excitements which we have experienced but our relationship to the action and what we have learned through it. What is suggested through the rhetoric is more important than what is fully realised by the chorus, for it is what calls the audience into the play. When Greek theatre is working at its best, it is a dialogue between the way I come to terms with the action and the way the chorus would have me do so.

In *Agamemnon* Aeschylus uses these dual possibilities to the full, shaping his play as a dialogue between its two parts. In the rhetoric the characters look forward. They have a strong sense of past wrong and present evil, but they look to the events of this day, that is to say the action of the play, to deliver them. This hope unites the watchman on the roof with Clytaemnestra and the herald who announces Agamemnon's arrival. It is the hope into which we are drawn as members of the audience. Somehow, in some way, what happens in the play is going to bring a new day.

The action to which we look, around which the play revolves, is arrival. It is this which focuses and shapes everything that happens in it. It is mirrored back and forth from the moment at which Agamemnon enters the house walking on the carpet. It is prefigured in the arrival of the fire through the beacon relay and then explored in the arrival of the herald with his news of the fate of the whole expedition. Then, after the arrival of Agamemnon, it is finally and fully explored in the scene in which Cassandra enters the palace. This is the part of the play in which we are engaged, caught between our expectations of the action and the way it is fulfilled.

Against it Aeschylus sweeps the great choral odes. Unlike the rhetoric they are deeply steeped in a sense of the past. Broken by age themselves, the old men sing of the chain of wrongs that has brought the play to its present pass. The killing of Iphigeneia, the flight of Helen, the story of Paris, the sacking of Troy are all drawn into the play by them. In their dance we sense the tide of past evil encroaching on and overriding our hope that this day will bring a new dawn. But with this sense comes another, more specific. What is beautiful and appealing turns evil and destructive. The fondled lion cub grows up a lion and turns the house to shambles. It is a beautiful day on which Helen arrives at Troy but it brings the destruction of the city. Joy at the conquest of Troy turns to fears for the leader's safety. The eagles of war become the eagles who tear the pregnant hare. Our expectations are pinned on an action and one that is in its own way fair and heroic, but the chorus suggests that no action can of itself bring a new

day. It is always caught up with other actions. It will lead on to something else.

When Agamemnon enters he is the first to look to the present. He will bend everything to hold things the way they are.

> *νίκη δ' ἐπείπερ ἕσπετ' ἐμπέδως μένοι.* (854)
>
> (Now that victory has caught up with us let it stand firm.)

We have reached the moment to which the play looked. It is celebrated to the full by the theatrical spectacle of the purple carpet, by the riot of language with which Clytaemnestra accompanies the walk. But when the best has been done that can be done, the play cannot stand still and the action is discovered as one in a chain of actions. Agamemnon's arrival is followed not by a swift acceleration of the play towards his death, but by another, Cassandra's. Aeschylus carefully separates the two events and by doing so dwells upon the action of the play. Cassandra discloses its true nature in two ways. Firstly, a victim of war and a spoil of the victor, she reminds us that the arrival of Agamemnon does not stand alone. It is also the fall of Troy. He is not only the long absent king, but the eagle of war, the killer of Iphigeneia, the pillager of the defeated city. Secondly, as prophet, she brings before us the house to which the arrival is made. From the beginning of the play we have sensed that it is an abode of ills –

> *οἶκος δ' αὐτός, εἰ φθογγὴν λάβοι*
> *σαφέσταθ' ἂν λέξειεν.* (37-8)
>
> (The house itself if it took voice would speak most clearly.)

– but the crime of Atreus has not been mentioned. Now it bursts into the play in full flower. No one enters this house unscathed, its walls reek blood, phantoms of slaughtered children haunt it. When Cassandra enters the palace two chains of violence intersect. Nothing is left of the hope with which the play started.

Aeschylus does not leave us to perceive this by reflecting on the rhetoric of the play or sensing the development of its themes. At the moment at which inveterate evil overtakes the action, the media come together. Up to this point lyric was for the chorus, rhetoric for the actor, but now Cassandra is caught up into the dance. In her person the two lines of the play converge. The dance of age old wrong invades the action. From here on lyric and rhetoric are intertwined. Clytaemnestra moves from one to the other and the contradiction in what she says reflects the dialogue between them. In the trimeters she claims the killing as her own for this is the medium in which the characters have tried to fight themselves free, have at times even seemed so. In the lyric she blames the evil genius of the house, appearing, as do all the characters in this medium, as

an instrument of powers beyond, caught up in a chain of action which she cannot control. (Compare the free Agamemnon, treading the carpet into the house, with the necessity-bound figure who kills Iphigeneia.) The media converge because the day's action is now intertwined with its past and moving irrevocably towards its future. It is hopeless for Clytaemnestra to hope that now the tide will stop, that now the evil genius will agree to leave the house. Only Aegisthus remains in the trimeter, blissfully unaware of what has really happened. He bursts onto the stage with enormous confidence –

ὦ φέγγος εὔφρον ἡμέρας δικηφόρου. (1577)

(O welcome light of justice-dealing day!)

(MacNeice)

– and simply seems absurd. No one, not even Clytemnestra, can any longer look forward in these terms.

In the counterpoint between the media, the action is presented and explored.

Prometheus, like *Agamemnon*, centres on the conflict between an action and its consequences.[6] Like *Agamemnon* it is at first sight an enormously complex play and has given rise to interpretations of cummensurate scale and difficulty. We are quick to see the conflict between Prometheus and Zeus as one between organised man and nature, old generation and young, mind and brute force, rebel and tyrant, and so on. With ideas like these in the air it seems almost pedestrian to raise the practical considerations of the theatre. Indeed, we might prefer not to think of it as a play at all. Could it not more easily be taken as a long dramatic poem?

In fact it is only when we ask how the play would have worked in the theatre that we get any purchase on these enjoyable flights of intellectualising, for there it would basically have been very simple. It is fashioned throughout by a contrast between fixity and movement. At its centre is its most immovable character in western theatre until the coming of Winnie in *Happy Days*. It is a remarkable step to nail your protagonist to the stage in the opening scene of the play. From the outset the audience knows that it must revolve around that imprisoned figure. There can be no exits and entrances, not even a scene that does not concern him. Around him moves the dance of the chorus. They are perhaps one of the most mobile in Greek tragedy, "Seabirds, all wing and motion" (Robert Lowell).[7] They have travelled to Prometheus on rapid winds (κραιπνοφόροι αὖραι) with a swift rivalry of wings (πτερύγων θοαῖς ἀμίλλαις) , and throughout the play their light movement contrasts with his craggy immobility. This counterpoint expresses and focuses all the conflicts of the play, for all the characters that are brought up against Prometheus are on the move. Oceanus first, the great changeable sea, always moving, always yielding, "a soft echo rolling back and forth between tyrant and victim, explaining tyrant to

victim and victim to tyrant". (Lowell.) He not only moves, he urges Prometheus to move, to yield, to learn new ways. Then there is Io, the chief anti-type of Prometheus. If he is the most fixed of heroes, she is forever driven on. She has covered half the earth before she reaches Prometheus' peak, and afterwards she will travel what remains. And finally Hermes, the winged messenger, also coming to counsel Prometheus to change, the Διὸς τρόχω ("runnabout of Zeus"), as Prometheus calls him. He has recently improved his station and now constantly travels the world with the restless mind of Zeus.

All this is not simply a desperate throw at making an unworkable play work, keeping enough happening on the stage to stop the audience leaving the theatre. In this counterpoint is expressed the essential action of the play, the conflict between Prometheus and Zeus. It is a conflict between two powers that once were allies. Together they had fought against the older gods, now they are divided. Why? Not because of the different things they represent. Not because Prometheus has now seen through Zeus or that either has developed and become a different person. It is simply a difference in the relationship to the victory achieved, the act accomplished. Zeus has won the day and will hold to his rule at all costs, keeping the world as it was the day he won. Nothing must move, nothing change. It may have called on men of wit and invention to subvert the old order, but wit and invention have had their day and there is room for them no longer. Prometheus, on the other hand, will keep on living the same way as he had lived before. The inventiveness, the restlessness that led him to join the struggle against the old order are with him still. He turns to man and moulds him in his image. Taught by Prometheus, men begin to venture and create, to live towards a future even though he has none. Man, who is constantly becoming something new, is a fitting subject for a conflict between these gods.

It is a simple polarity, as simple as the idea of the staging of the play. But in the theatre, the images are inverted. Zeus is free to move, to drive Io across the face of the earth, to send his messengers where he pleases. But all this is only a semblance of movement. Really he is tied, bound to a moment in time, determined to hold it forever. And Prometheus who is held fixed to the spot is the one who is still able to plan and think. This is expressed in the remarkable series of speeches in which he draws into the theatre Io's wanderings, past and to come. In them we see Prometheus' mind free to travel and range across space and through time. Nothing finally holds him. Zeus can only return again and again to this one spot. There his victim holds him in his power. It is Prometheus who looks to the future, who is prepared to keep moving forward into it, even if that means still greater suffering. Zeus will hold it off at any cost.

Fixity and movement, power and creativity, old and new, so the reverberations widen, but always out from that central impulse of what it is that happens in the theatre.

II. The Question of the Audience.

Plays only exist when they have an audience. A film can be shown in an empty house and remain the same, but if only two or three people turn up the play would be better cancelled. If no one comes, it's only a rehearsal. Theatre is not the creation of a sequence of images contained by the stage and ending where the lighting finishes (the cinema can do this so much better) but a series of acts which are brought alive between the audience and actor. It is made out of a direct relationship between one person and another; the actor in a play can talk straight to the audience, the film actor never. And so it is par excellence the medium that brings people alive. For just as they invest the shadow play of the stage with life, by some magic they are given a heightened sense of it by that which they have helped create. We are not simply spectators. This is why latecomers destroy a play. They break the relationship, introducing a third figure into the theatre, and by their own "performance" call out a separate series of responses.

We are imbued with the tendency to see the magic of the theatre as that which charms us into believing that the action being played out on the stage really is happening. In fact it was only for a brief time that plays tried to achieve this. At its best the theatre is closer to the circus or the music hall, choosing and timing its material for the effect on the audience.

Midway through *Medea* Aegeus comes onto the stage. He is not summoned by anything that has happened in the play, and the problem that his arrival solves – that Medea will have a refuge at the end of the play – is not one that we would have worried about had not Euripides directed us to do so. If a character leaves the stage in the chariot of the sun, we do not ask about political asylum. Aegeus is rather like a latecomer who has slipped into the theatre by the wrong door, and finding himself on stage has decided to make the best of it by joining in the play.

If we apply traditional critical criteria, the scene cannot be saved. It has elements that connect it with the rest of the play – the childless Aegeus is promised children by Medea who will kill her own – but it is not in any real sense organic. If we demand coherence in the images on the stage, this play simply does not work.

In fact it works in rather a different way. What shapes it is not that which happens on stage but the relationship of the audience to it. At the beginning of the play we sense that Medea is planning some terrible action –

> *δέδοικα δ' αὐτὴν μή τι βουλεύσῃ νέον ·*
> *βαρεῖα γὰρ φρήν, οὐδ' ἀνέξεται κακῶς*
> *πάσχουσ'.* (37-9)
>
> (She is planning something new. I feel it.
> Heavy her rage. She will not bear it lightly.)

– and that the children are in danger.

> καὶ μὴ πέλαζε μητρὶ δυσθυμουμένῃ.
> ἤδη γὰρ εἶδον ὄμμα νιν ταυρουμένην
> τοῖσδ', ὡς τι δρασείουσαν. (91-3)
>
> (Don't let them go near her. For already I have seen her looking at them like a bull at its foe. She is going to do something to them.)

And gradually through the first half of the play we discover what that action is, first that she will murder Jason's bride, then that she will kill the children. In the second half that action is carried out. There are no tricks, no delays, no disappointments. No one threatens to obstruct or defeat Medea. The opponents that she is given, Creon and Jason, better demonstrate her complete control than the difficulty of her task.

She is driven by no madness, in no way deceived about what it is that she is doing. She is not even compelled by the events of the play. The murder of the princess is revenge and so, in terms of the theatre, in some way justified. But the killing of the children Euripides carefully keeps separate as a gratuitous act of violence, a heroic gesture which looks for nothing outside itself. Its only cause is to stop the laughter of Medea's enemies.

This is the action. We know that it is going to happen and we sit on in the theatre and watch it. What is our relationship with it?

We stay there because we want it to take place. Without ever mitigating its horror Euripides makes us participate in it. He crafts everything to achieve this impossible.

Take the role of the chorus. They are domestic and Greek and yet through the first part of the play they are deeply sympathetic to Medea. They come into the orchestra in response to Medea's cries and take up her grief as their own.

> ἄιες, ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ γᾶ καὶ φῶς,
> ἀχὰν οἵαν ἃ δύστανος
> μέλπει νύμφα; (148-50)
>
> (Zeus, earth, sky. Do you hear
> The cry the unhappy
> Bride sings?)

The first stasimon comes after Medea has told us that she will kill the princess. It is a disturbed dance, reflecting the way in which the world has been set at odds.

> ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι παγαί. (410)
>
> (Back to your sources, waters of the sacred streams!)

But the effect is not to disturb us about what Medea is going to do; rather it reflects the disturbance in the world in which she finds herself. In this world men are false, women fair. The inversion in the imagery reflects that in the normal attitude of the audience. Medea is vindicated and supported.

The next chorus follows the Jason scene. Where the first two echoed or capped Medea's fierceness, this one falls from the intensity of the surrounding action. They are afraid, afraid of the exposed level on which Medea is living. Let passion come in moderation. Medea begins to appear isolated, yet still the dance creates an aura of sympathy and support.

σὲ γὰρ οὐ πόλις, οὐ φίλων τις
ᾤκτισεν παθοῦσαν . . . (655-56)

(No city, no friend
Pitied you suffering . . .)

From midway through the Athens ode the chorus begins to part ways, at first through timidity, but finally in outright horror. When Medea disappears into the palace to kill the children they react with an angry, fearful dance of the kind that we might have expected much earlier.

Why this progression? Because the action is at first justified but later not? No, the chorus does not judge the action: it is there to affect the audience. And in this crucial early stage of the play the effect of the dance is to draw us into the action, sweep us into support and sympathy for Medea. And when they have got us there, they begin to desert us. In a sense it is us that they are shouting at in the last chorus trying to make us see what it is that we are helping to create, calling us to tear ourselves away from it.

Something of the same progression is worked in the characterisation of Medea, or rather the roles which she is made to play. Outside the theatre she is no ordinary, passionate, violent woman, she is a witch who works with spells and poisons. Yet the early scenes are carefully purged of any reference to this. If she is superior to her enemies it is not through *these* means, but through cleverness and strength of will. The play focuses on her as hurt woman and deserted wife. She first plans to kill Jason and his bride with fire and sword, and only abandons such means lest she be caught in the act. The first time her power with drugs is *explored* is in the scene with Aegeus, and there she uses it to bring children to one who does not have them. It is only at the climax of the play that she takes on something of the supernatural, in the almost magic killing of the princess and in her escape in the chariot of the sun. But as with the chorus, by then it is too late.

Action and actor are only unfolded in their true horror when we are firmly committed to their success. Through the first part of the play everything is designed to lull our fears, to arouse our sympathy and anger, to draw us into Medea's plans.

Euripides shows the same careful control of focus and sympathy in the way

he handles the scenes between Medea and other characters, especially that with Jason. In a play which centres upon marriage, love and betrayal, we would expect the confrontation between husband and wife to focus its issues, to explore its essential tensions. Now something of this *can* be drawn from the Jason-Medea scene, but if we are honest we have to admit that looked at in this light it is a disappointment. The problem lies not with Medea's speech which is specific and straightforward, but with Jason's which is, for the most part, preposterous. In the very first lines he compares his task to that of a skilful helmsman who guides his ship through the storm. The image is splendidly inappropriate, for it is precisely in his role as helmsman that Jason has precipitated the play's storm of events. After this inauspicious start, he claims that Medea only came with him in the first place because she was so overwhelmingly in love with him, an argument which scarcely sheds any better light on his present conduct. If at this point a director was still uncertain how the speech should be played, there could be no doubt in what follows. Jason has done more for Medea than Medea for him. He has after all brought her to Greece and there she can enjoy the benefit of living in a law-abiding community and *in addition* she is widely known. Had she remained in Colchis she would have been subject to the whim of violence and nobody would have heard of her. In twenty deft lines Euripides has pushed Jason over the boundaries of the absurd and made it impossible for us seriously to entertain his main argument – that his new marriage was to the advantage of Medea and of the children – even if we had wanted to. Jason is a vain and opinionated fool, and rather a nasty one at that.

> οὐδ' ἂν οὐ φαίης, εἰ' σε μὴ κνίζοι λέχος. (568)
>
> (You would not complain unless the bed were chafing you.)

With this vile line Euripides steadies the tone and the scene resumes some sort of seriousness.

Why does Euripides make it in this way? Perhaps he is passing judgement on the characters and what they are doing. H.D.F. Kitto describes Jason as an "unrelieved villain",[8] which would be true if we met him in real life. But is it in the theatre? Do we seriously regard as villainous someone who makes us laugh. We are dealing with the dynamics of the audience's reaction, not with analysis and assessment, with explosions of feeling in the theatre. We laugh at one figure because he misses the point, we take another seriously because he does not. Our sense of the situation of the play at the same time underlies these responses and is sharpened by them. But the main result of the scene is that Jason is set aside. By laughing at him we dismiss him. Attention and sympathy focus ever more intensely on Medea.

We are now in a position to return to the Aegeus scene. In a play which is consistently concerned about the relationship of the audience (an Athenian

audience) to the action, Euripides sends on to the stage the king of Athens. The audience's relationship with him is different from that with most of the figures of the Greek stage who are strikingly "other". In a sense, he represents them. It is rather as if the king of England came onto the stage in Hamlet. [9] And this representative figure accepts Medea and promises that she will find a home in Athens, the city of the audience, when the play is done. Euripides does not simply put him on stage to signal how we ought to react to Medea. "Ought" does not come into it: this play shatters every "ought". Through their identity with Aegeus the audience is drawn into making the same response. The scene is at the same time an image of what happens in the play and helps to make the play what it is.

Hence the famous, or infamous, ode to Athens which comes not exactly at the end of this scene, but after Medea has unfolded the last stage of her plans. The ode surrounds the city with an aura of fantastic sensuality. The scent of roses pervades the bright air, thronged with the muses and wisdom and love. Euripides' purpose here is not to comment on Athens; neither is it to "lend a little desired sweetness to a play which will get none from any of its characters", [10] but for its effect on the audience, on the atmosphere in the theatre. Medea has just announced that she will kill her children. The chorus responds, not with a shout of protest, but with what could best be described as a seduction piece. The audience knows that Medea will come to Athens; they have just heard the final unfolding of her plans; and then instead of being warned or alarmed or shouted at, they are wooed. It is of course true that the ode finishes hesitantly, with a sob of protest at what is going to be done. Euripides is beginning to draw chorus and action apart. But he does not start to do so where we would expect. The moment of attack is all-important and the dread comes into the dance in a half tone after the indulgence and sensuality.

By now the process is complete. Medea is ours and we are hers. There is a smell of blood in the air and we are calling for the death of the princess and the murder of the children, anything for the triumph of the heroine. And the deaths pace themselves with a slow joy through the end of the play. The tempo is carefully held, by the quiet non-chorus when Medea first disappears into the palace seemingly to kill the children, and through the spelled out and exultant violence of the messenger speech. The enemy is always at the door, but we lose nothing through haste. The crime will be played out in full and the escape made in its own good time.

The last scene, Medea in the chariot of the sun, is a fine image of what has happened. Kitto would have us take it as a sign that gods as well as men are irrational in this world, [11] but there is no time for such reflection. Medea has triumphed in the theatre, not only over her enemies, but over the sensibilities of the audience, drawing out savageries that we would prefer not to own. In the last scene that triumph is made complete.

Much remains to be said of *Medea*, of its sharp moral intensity at the height of heroic violence. But enough, perhaps, has been said to raise certain questions

for the way we talk about tragedy. It is a relatively simple play, and the question at stake was the relationship of the audience to what could clearly be seen to be the action of the play. But the action is not always so clearly delineated – and there are times when the response of the audience is not simply a matter of sympathy with the hero and approval of his actions. *Alcestis* for example seemingly floats free, moving through a sequence of theatrical events, death scene, trial scene, debate scene, drunk scene, whose order is arbitrary by the traditional standards of criticism. And in plays like this, *Heracles* and *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, we are confronted by a sequence of judgements about the tone and effect of the various scenes. The discussion of these will take us beyond areas controlled by the traditional criteria of literary criticism. It will be hard to avoid the question of how a scene should be performed: criticism will become more closely bound up with the act of creation.

Most simply – and yet, with Euripides, very importantly – the question arises from time to time, is this scene funny? Nothing could be more central in determining what a play is in the theatre than sensing the moment at which it moves from, say, laughter to fear. And yet few things are more difficult to demonstrate convincingly. Take Admetus' speech in Alcestis' death scene. One critic may say that it is intended to be ludicrous, another that it is contemptible. A fine line divides the two judgements, and yet a gulf separates the implied performances. How to decide? The question was highlighted for me by a paper by Anthony J. Podlecki on *Helen*.[12] He was concerned to show that the play is serious. I disagreed with his conclusion, but could only admire the way he reached it. In traditional critical terms the paper was impeccable, attentive to the text, sensitive in its treatment of the imagery. On the basis of the same text I could perhaps have made the opposite case almost as well. Outside the theatre how could one of us persuade the other? In the end the only court of appeal is whether you can make a scene work in a given way on the stage. And since few of us are theatricals, and practically no one who is a professional classicist is also a *professional* director, that raises more problems than it solves. (Add the likelihood that if our students have seen Greek tragedy performed, what was intended as comic will simply have become dull, and what was intended as serious will have been trembling on the brink of the ridiculous.)

But if the approach raises problems it also presents great possiblities, particularly for the criticism of Euripides. For if what determines the construction of his plays is the dynamic of the audience's response we may better be able to understand what he is trying to do. We might cease looking for thematic development in *Heracles* and see it instead as a sequence of different sorts of theatre, melodrama, burlesque (?) and naturalism. *Iphigeneia in Aulis* becomes a long series of rather easy, highly emotional responses to the simple conflicts of the play with its clearly delineated villains, its melodramatic heroes. And then these easy gut reactions are made, so to speak, to stick in our throat when Iphigeneia does the one difficult thing in the play, and goes to die for the whole selfseeking worthless pack of them. R.D. Murray Jnr. of Princeton talks of

Euripides' wiring the seats in the theatre. At the end of the *Iphigeneia in Aulis* he throws that switch and we leave not knowing where we are caught between the futility and splendour of Iphigeneia's action. Euripides always knows precisely where his audience is, and he plays them without mercy. They are the important people, not the figures on stage, and it is their experience that he controls and orders.

Perhaps this is the secret of *Alcestis*, of what brings her back at the end of the play. First we must see how through it Admetus gradually assumes the centre of the stage. At the outset he is pushed to the side, left in unspectacular trimeters when Alcestis is in lyric, scarcely referred to by her except in demands, finally discarded in the folly of his grief in something of the same way as we discard Jason. The focus is all on Alcestis. As the play progresses it slowly moves to him. In the first scene with Heracles, he tries to assume command, but the gain is slight. The stature of Heracles and the ambiguities of his own role keep him off centre. With Pheres, things improve again – if more from the failings of his opponent than any qualities of his own – but laughter still lies close to the surface. At least he is a match for his opponent, and controls half the stage – the half on his side of the coffin. When he returns from the funeral, the stage is his alone and he fills it. Even Heracles cannot dislodge him from his centrality, do what he may to deflect him with buffoonery and lies. Admetus survives the test and wins back his wife.

The progression is bound up with another. Admetus moves from being a comic to a serious character. This is worked out, not as a development in his psyche, but in the roles that he is given. It is mildly incredible that any one could take his first long speech seriously. He has nothing really to say, and he casts around desperately for ideas, each one landing him in deeper water than the last, each one in fact calling Alcestis to do still more for him. She is to appear in his dreams and comfort him. She is to prepare a house for him to live with her below. The idea of putting a statue in his bed magnificently transgresses both taste and sense, and it is brave to hear the man who has just gone to all lengths to avoid death now vowing that had he the tongue of Orpheus he would gladly go below.

And in its own way, each of the following scenes is also funny, as we watch Admetus writhe about in the attempt to maintain his untenable position. Why is it that we laugh here and do not do so later, even when Heracles tries hard to make us do so?

> τί δ'; οὐ γαμεῖς γάρ, ἀλλὰ χηρεύσῃ λέχος; (1089)
>
> (What! You will not marry, but make your bed a widow!)

(This is an inversion. Where in the first scene between them Heracles was serious, Admetus foolish, here it is Heracles who is the clown.) It is because (to put it in that somewhat leaden way that is hard to avoid when we discuss why something is funny) in the first part of the play we recognize that what Admetus

says and does, whether in trying to match the magnificence of his grief to the greatness of what Alcestis is doing for him, or bringing Heracles into the house, or arguing rights and wrongs with Pheres, is inappropriate to the situation as it really is. We stop laughing when he comes back from the burial because he has now become attuned to the central concern of the play.

When this happens, his wife is restored to him. And although we know that such things do not happen in life, we accept this as an end of the play. Partly it is a theatrical grace which crowns and symbolizes the resolution of its conflicts. The central character has assumed a role that is fitting to it. (Or, to put it another way, a play which is about something rather serious has ceased to be disconcertingly amusing.) But more it is precisely our assurance of the finality of death, that people do not return from it, that brings Alcestis back. For the recognition that returns her to the stage is *our* recognition that what Admetus now understands is true. Through our sense of the finality of death, the changes in his roles are wrung. (Think how different it would be if we wanted Heracles to win out in that last scene.)

Of course there are other things that bring the play to this happy end, the sheer theatrical vitality of anger and laughter and tears changing grief to joy and fear to comfort. But at the centre is the experience of the audience. Hence the strange tone of the play, so like that of its close cousin *Winter's Tale*. Although it has ended so satisfactorily, we leave the theatre more sad than happy. The play ends with someone coming back from the dead, but its final impact is that no-one ever will.

Finally, the *Bacchae*, a play which exploits to the full the dual possibilities of Greek theatre, and defies any interpretation which looks for sense only in what happens on the stage.

The play is much performed these days. Three productions in various guises this year in Melbourne alone. When we ask why this should be so, the first reaction is to see in the play images, not to say an allegory, of our present time – the conflict of freedom and control, instinct and reason. The struggle between god and king mirrors our own and the destruction to which the play tends is vision or warning of our own end.

Does such a reading bear any relationship with Euripides' original intentions? First we must ask what the action of the play is. Is it at heart the conflict between god and king? Two considerations contend against this description. Firstly it only makes sense of parts of the play. If this is the action which controls and focuses everything in it, what are we to make of the Cadmus-Teiresias scene? And why does Agave become so important at the end? Secondly, you can only centre a play around a conflict if the opponents are a match for one another, as are Zeus and Prometheus. From the beginning Pentheus does not have a chance. His violence only avails against the old and helpless (and even them he cannot prevent going to the mountains) and as soon as he is confronted with the god it is exposed as bluster. Even the short-lived

internment of Dionysus is balanced by the escape of the imprisoned maenads. Attacked, the god substitutes a phantom of himself; imprisoned he pulls down the palace. Throughout he is totally in control, only giving Pentheus enough power to provoke his own destruction. The interest that remains is in the *manner* of the king's final subjugation, not in the fact of it.

It scarcely needs adding that even were the play this conflict, Pentheus is no figure around which to articulate imagery of reason and control. He is the earth born spawn of the dragon, an unpleasant mixture of violence and prurience, caught between his threats to behead Dionysus and a fascination for his curls. Why does Euripides make him so utterly unsympathetic, so aggravating? He defies any attempt to identify with him in any sense.

If not this, what is the action? It is two-fold. In the first place, everyone becomes a worshipper of the god. And so we begin with Cadmus and Teiresias. Like a pair of aged clowns they play out an absurd prefigurement of what will follow. And hence the importance of Agave who returns from the worship, in whom we see its frenzy ebb. The whole play alternates between the city from which the worshippers depart and the mountain where they join the revels. Also between man and woman. All the men become women, Cadmus and Teiresias and Pentheus. Pentheus does not go to the mountain as a scout or spy but dressed as a bacchant and like them stung to madness. It is only if we understand the action that we can make sense of this. Once in the mountains the idea is forgotten. The disguise offers him no protection and we are only reminded of it at the last moment when he snatches the wig from his head. But the important thing is that he leaves the stage as a maenad. Everyone in the play becomes a worshipper.

And in the second part of the action, everyone is destroyed.

What are we to make of this? Does it pass a judgement on the first part of the action or the religion into which the characters are drawn? Again there are at least two difficulties. Firstly Pentheus does not really worship the god any more than does Cadmus or the silver-tongued Teiresias. Like the women who were driven to the mountains as punishment he is more victim than worshipper. Cadmus is carried there by his delight at the discovery that he may have a god in the family. True or false he will promote this advantageous story. Teiresias embeds his defence of the god in a farrago of speciously modern jargon which can explain all, connive at anything. He would do the same for any faith. None of these characters can be said to cast light on the religion or its god. Secondly, the destruction is indiscriminate, sweeping away all regardless of their attitude, Cadmus who had built Semele a shrine along with the women who had slandered her. There is no basis here on which to discriminate and reflect.

The play is not about Dionysianism, any more than *Oedipus* is about oracles. The story of the arrival of the God provides the material from which an action is made and the question is, what is our relationship with that action?

Through the first half of the play, where do we stand? Whom do we side with – god or king? The answer is not obvious, for while Pentheus is one of the

most unattractive figures of the Greek stage, there is no disguising the god's cold vengeance, his sinister lurking violence. Into which line of action are we drawn – Pentheus' attempt to protect the city or Dionysus' to draw all into his dance?

It is here that the dialogue between the media becomes important. For the play not only concerns the revelry of the Bacchae, it unleashes it in the theatre. The dance of the chorus is the most spectacular and exciting element in it. At one moment we are coming to terms with the god and his worship: at another we are being swayed by these violent dances. (Think how different the play would have been had the chorus been composed of elders of Thebes.) It is the chorus that determines where we stand. Not because they *tell* that Pentheus is in the wrong and persuade us by their words, but because of what they are. They establish the tone in the theatre; they set the pulse of the play. And their pulse becomes ours. We all become worshippers of the god, charmed by the follies of the two old men, fascinated by the first messenger, thrilling to the theatrical brilliance with which Pentheus is trapped and maddened. We assent to the action of the play.

But *Bacchae* is more reflective than *Medea*: it does not end there with the upbeat of energy, with the explosion of violence in the theatre. It carries us on through the second messenger speach, the fierce provocative chorus and the exultant return of the victor/victim, on to that point where the excitement dies and we are left to face what it is that has been done. It is as though Medea were brought back on to the stage to face the reality of her children's dead bodies instead of flaunting them triumphantly in Jason's face. This is why Euripides takes the enormous risk of bringing Agave on stage mad and sobering her in front of the audience. It would have been easier and perhaps more obvious for her to enter already overwhelmed with remorse. He was happy to madden Pentheus by a stroke of theatre, but he will restore Agave with painful naturalism.

He does so because recognition is central to the scene. Cadmus brings Agave to her right mind by making her recognize the head and through our participation in that action we too are compelled to a recognition.

The drum stops. The exhilaration that has swept the play ebbs. But we are not yet allowed to leave the theatre. We are made to watch a mad woman become sane, to number off the limbs of Pentheus' dismembered body. Everything that the play has been is brought before us, now not figments of the racing imagination but embarrassingly real. It is all uncomfortable and disconcerting and we would much have preferred if Euripides had not made us sit through it.

He is not of course indulging himself with flights of melodramatic pathos. He is simply making us see what we could not before. If the scene is uncomfortable it is because we face ourselves in it, ourselves in the play that we have helped to make.

The arrival of Dionysus at the end of the scene returns us to the world of illusion. He enters on the machine with all the trappings of a theatre god. But our attitude to him has changed. Where before he had held the centre of the

stage, been the focus and generator of action, now the play passes him by and the focus remains on the stricken yet for the first time noble human beings. And where before he had fascinated, charmed and finally won us we now reject him for his petulance and vindictiveness. He reenters the theatre as an embodiment of the play that we have seen and we are appalled.

At the end of a play of Sophocles, we leave feeling that we have seen something, images of men and gods, of man and woman, life and death. The experience of a play of Euripides is different. We come out of the theatre feeling that we have been somewhere, to some fairly dark reaches of existence which are yet somehow our own. In this theatre it is the audience that is discovered.

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NOTES

1. *Cf.* Shirley A. Barlow, *The Imagery of Euripides* (London) 1971, p.21. "The test of choral lyric must be whether it is organic."
2. *Pindar and Aeschylus* (Harvard) 1951, p. 264.
3. Quoted in S.A. Barlow, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
4. (London) 1964. (Sphere Books edition, pp. 31 ff.)
5. *Ibid.*, p.32
6. In writing the section on *Prometheus* I was helped by a seminar paper by Mr. David Runia, kindly lent to me by him.
7. From *Prometheus Bound* (New York) 1969.
8. *Greek Tragedy* 3rd ed. (London) 1961, p. 199.
9. The scene presents an intriguing problem for the modern director. It would have to be radically translated in order to recreate this sense of kinship. Could he risk sending someone out from among the audience on to the stage?
10. Richmond Lattimore, *The Poetry of Greek Tragedy* (Harper Torchbooks ed.), p. 118.
11. *Op. cit.*, p.201.
12. Delivered at the A.P.A. Congress in New York, January 1971.

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