The socially sanctioned actions of virgins contrast those of the vengeful wives who murder in an attempt to restore domestic order. Both Aeschylus' Clytemnestra and Euripides' Medea remind us that unlimited female autonomy cannot sustain itself, ultimately destroying the very social fabric it seeks to protect. In the final section, Foley turns to another positive model of female authority: the virtuous older mothers who attempt to persuade men to act on behalf of their children, Aethra in Euripides' *Suppliants*, Hecuba in *Hecuba*, and Jocasta in *Phoenissae.* Building on the previous chapters, Foley argues that because women cannot act autonomously to challenge male positions, the art of persuasion comprises a 'critical moral activity' for women. Foley's articulation of the importance of social status for interpreting the actions of tragic women—virgins, wives, and mothers make different ethical choices based on their stages in the female life cycle—makes an essential contribution to the field.

It should be noted that among the examples cited by Foley, the ethical deliberations of female agents are not dramatized, with the notable exception of Medea. Thus we do not witness Clytemnestra agonizing over her decision to kill Agamemnon, in contrast to the lengthy deliberations of Orestes in *Choephori.* Euripides does not dwell on Alcestis' decision to sacrifice her life in exchange for her husband's, but presents it as a *fait accompli*. Sophocles also does not portray the decision-making process of Antigone, but only her defiant resolve to carry out her plan. Even a putative scene of deliberation, such as the agon between Clytemnestra and Electra in Euripides' play of the same name, does not result in action, but merely showcases contemporary attitudes toward proper female behavior.

This reservation notwithstanding, *Female Acts* provides a welcome challenge to recent analyses of tragic women that emphasize their status as powerless objects of male exchange. By focusing on women as moral agents capable of ethical intervention, Foley compellingly identifies moments of resistance that potentially critique and even mitigate male patterns of control. Her work is part of a growing trend in the study of women in antiquity that emphasizes, in Linda Gordon's words, resistance over domination. At the same time, Foley's nuanced and evocative readings repeatedly demonstrate the particular ways in which tragedy deploys women, albeit indirectly, as a vehicle for exploring contemporary social, political, and philosophical issues debated by men. Indeed, *Female Acts* suggests that the tragic female, constrained by her dependency, perhaps best incarnates tragedy's central dilemmas—the fragility of the human condition and the limits of human action.

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TRAGEDY AND RITUAL

S. GÖDDE: *Das Drama der Hikesie: Ritual und Rhetorik in Aischylos'* Hiketiden. Pp. viii + 300. Münster: Aschendorff, 2000. Paper, DM 68. ISBN: 3-402-05414-0.

Susanne Gödde's book on Aeschylus' *Suppliants* is a welcome contribution to a long line of interesting but uneven studies about the connection between ancient Greek ritual and tragedy, going back at least to G. Murray's 'Excursus on the Ritual Forms Preserved in Greek Tragedy' in Jane Harrison's *Themis* (London, 1921), if not to Aristotle's comment about tragedy as a form of *katharsis*. While other studies of this kind, like Murray's, have drawn not always convincing parallels between the texts and

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Greek rituals, G.'s main thesis, namely that the Danaids in Aeschylus' play are portrayed as *hiketides* or suppliants, will be uncontroversial. G. has added significance to this connection between the supplication ritual and the play by arguing that Aeschylus was the first to portray the Danaids as such, and by demonstrating the importance of the structure of the ritual to the structure of the plot.

G.'s book also distinguishes itself favourably from (most) other drama and ritual studies in displaying an equal interest in both the ritual as ritual and the drama. G. never loses sight of the fact that the ritual allusions in the play are not the ultimate goal of the author but serve to give the play deeper meaning. At the same time, through her analysis of the *Suppliants* and other literary texts that play upon the supplication ritual (Chapter 3), she provides important new insights into the ritual. In particular, she demonstrates with the help of these texts that it was not enough for suppliants to appeal to divine protection; in addition, they had to provide substantive arguments about why they deserved asylum: they had to pair ritual with rhetoric, just as Aeschylus seems to pair 'rhetoric' (in the sense of poetry) with ritual in the *Suppliants*; hence the subtitle of the book.

The book is based on G.'s dissertation (Wilhelms-Universität Münster, 1998) and consists of five chapters. The first chapter deals briefly with previous scholarship on the *Suppliants* and on the relationship between tragedy and ritual, as well as with the myth of the Danaids before Aeschylus. Chapter 2 analyses the Greek rituals of supplication, in which G. recognizes three important movements: the flight leading to a place of asylum, followed by a spoken request to be taken in as a suppliant and a transition to the new home. (It would be interesting to check if the same three movements can be identified in visual representations of the supplication ritual.) In Chapter 3, G. discusses other early Greek literature in which supplication plays a prominent rôle: the Homeric epics and six tragedies, including Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, Sophocles' *OC*, and Euripides' *IA*, *Hecuba*, *Suppliants*, and *Heraclidae.*

Chapter 4, the longest in the book, deals with the text of Aeschylus' play, in which G. recognizes the same three movements as in the ritual of supplication: 'images of flight', 'the rhetoric of supplication', and 'boundary-crossing'. In lieu of a conclusion, the final chapter contains a discussion of the complex relationship between Greek literary texts and rituals, illustrating this relationship through the use of ritual in three other plays of Aeschylus: lament in the *Persae*, the description of the shields in the *Septem* (a 'ritual' only in the broadest sense of the term!), and sacrifice in the *Oresteia.* The book is richly documented with elaborate footnotes, which are up to date even on such side issues as the exact meaning of the term 'ainos' (p. 68 n. 183), and concludes with an extensive bibliography and three indices.

There is very little in this book with which I can disagree, but inevitably there is some. In her general interpretation of the play, G. follows wisely the suggestions of Froma Zeitlin and Richard Seaford, who argue that the tragedy comments on Greek marriage practices. Consequently, G. tries to compare the acceptance of the Danaids as suppliants in Argos at the end of the play to the transition of the bride into her new home, but for the Danaids at this stage Argos is not the residence of their future husbands but more like a second parental home, to which they claim to belong through their descent from Io (on which see now also C. Calame, *Poétique des mythes dans la Grèce antique* [Paris, 2000], pp. 117–44). Only in the subsequent parts of the trilogy will the Danaids have been forced to make the transition from their (new) home to the marriage beds of the sons of Aegyptus—with disastrous consequences. One may also question G.'s (trendy) use of the term 'rhetoric' for Aeschylus' poetry and her extension of the term 'ritual' to include the description of the shields in the *Septem.* Overall,

however, this is a highly convincing and well-argued study, both of Aeschylus' *Suppliants* and of the complex relationship between Greek rituals and tragedy.

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EURIPIDES REVIEWED

M. Cropp, K. Lee, D. Sansone (edd.): *Euripides and Tragic Theatre in the Late Fifth Century*. (Illinois Classical Studies 24–25.) Pp. xiii + 525. Champaign: Stipes Publishing, 2000. Cased.

This volume consists of the proceedings of a conference held in Banff in the spring of 1999. Cropp and Lee's introduction sets out the objective of the conference, which was to 'provide a[n] . . . occasion for reviewing and synthesising progress in research since the 1960s', on the grounds that 'a proper assessment of tragic drama is central to our attempt to understand the life and culture of fifth-century Athens'. The result is a widely ranging but disciplined collection of papers, in which the contributors have conscientiously carried out their brief. All have thoroughly surveyed and vigorously engaged with research in their field, and the resultant papers have the liveliness of the paper/response format often used for other conference proceedings. Scholars frequently cited are: Michelini, Taplin, Goldhill, Foley, Zeitlin, Segal, and Seaford. One should also note the specialists whose work has made possible much understanding: conspicuous are the names of Van Gennep, Burkert, Graf, Sourvinou-Inwood, Kahil, and Simon. Some papers acknowledge the useful comments and suggestions of conference participants, thereby providing an inkling of the richness of discussion.

Helene Foley, in the keynote address, engages immediately with the question of the value of modern performance for understanding of the plays in Euripides' own time. There is a full and informed discussion of such performances, taking into account the full range, from those that strive for authenticity to those that serve as a springboard for the interpreting artist, whether writer, actor, or director.

There follows the group of papers on 'Tragedy and Other Genres', with an introduction by Donald Mastronarde outlining the key points of each one. In so doing he occasionally takes issue with a point made, or suggests an alternative view; this also makes up for the lack of recorded discussion. These essays in different ways examine Euripides in relation to other genres, particularly that of comedy. Mastronarde's own paper points up the problems inherent in the application of modern terminology to elements in tragedy; Ann Norris Michelini, in a most interesting paper, looks at *Iphigeneia at Aulis* to identify the registers of genre in Euripides' plays with registers of past and present as evoked by the plays. Justina Gregory contributes an examination of passages in Euripides that have struck commentators as incongruous at best, with the timely reminder that absurdity may lie in the response rather than the intent. John Gibert discusses the reconstruction of *Andromeda* as romantic tragedy, while showing the difficulties of distilling the original from the parody of Aristophanes. In an incisive paper on *Electra*, Barbara Goff comes to grips with the thorny question of realism, concluding that the only 'reality' in the play is the 'materiality of class'. Sheila Murnaghan, in a very interesting discussion of *Alcestis*, considers tragedy as a genre concerned with mediating death through the responses of survivors. John Davidson

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