

**Graduate Seminar: Mind and Body in Greek Tragedy**  
**16:190:564**  
**Mon 5:00-7:40pm; RAB 003, Douglass Campus**

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Office Hours: Thursdays 3:45-5:45pm (and by appt.)

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**Learning Goals:**

- to provide students with a greater familiarity and optimal language skills in order to enable them to read ancient Greek tragedy in the original with ease
- to lead students to reflect on the cultural, social, and political impact of ancient Greek tragedy in its time and beyond
- to give students the tools and exposure necessary to consider aspects of ancient drama ranging from the relationship of theater to the polis, to modern reception of ancient tragedy
- to enable students to come to grips with the scholarship pertaining to ancient Greek tragedy past and present
- to encourage students to consider the dynamics of human psychology, social organization, and politics and their role in shaping Greek tragedy and its impact
- to give students an opportunity to appreciate the ways in which individual poets and the community relate to, shape, and affect one another in different historical periods

**Course Description**

The goal of this course is to provide the advanced Greek student with an opportunity to read a selection of Greek tragedies closely and to reflect on a variety of topics central to our understanding of the genre. We will read plays closely in the Greek (or in translation for non-Classacists), as well as modern plays based on or inspired by the ancient tragedies. Throughout the seminar, themes addressed will range from the poetic to the cultural; particular focus will be accorded to aspects of the mind and the body and their interrelationship in Greek tragedy, and to ways in which the genre reflects some of the central political, cultural, social and religious preoccupations of fifth-century Athenians.

Instruction regarding the above issues will be combined with translation, commentary, and discussion of focus passages. Though the course is in part designed to assist Classics graduate students in preparing for the MA and PhD exams, the class also welcomes advanced undergraduate and graduate students from other literary fields, who will receive adjusted assignments and requirements as appropriate. Classics graduate students will read relatively large amounts of Greek for each meeting; non-Classics graduate students will read the primary text in translation, along with secondary literature, and be asked to submit a final paper, or to submit one shorter and take a final exam, at the end of the term.

**Course Website**

The course website is accessible through the Sakai homepage. Go to <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/> where you can log in with your NetID and password. The website will likely be used for communication purposes and for posting of any digital materials. You will receive an e-mail notice whenever a new item is posted.

**Other Websites:**

To be discovered during the semester. There are new and useful additions constantly. Please share your discoveries with the rest of us.

## Greek Tragedy General Bibliography:

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/modules/gktrag/bibliography/>

(Link available on course Sakai)

Further select bibliographical references will be given as we go along.

### Required Texts (for our first sessions)

Jebb, R. C. (1898 [2004]) *Sophocles: Plays*. Philoctetes. London.

Available at the Rutgers bookstore (Barnes and Noble), and online from Perseus. Also downloadable as a free e-book (pdf on course Sakai), and on reserve at Douglass library.

Note: regular consultation of Webster's Cambridge ("Green and Yellow") commentary is recommended, as is that of Pucci (in Italian). Both should be available on reserve at Douglass library. *For these and all other reserves, see the Rutgers library webpage (try both Allen Hornblower and Allen-Hornblower). Books are available for loans of up to 5 hours and overnight.*

### Recommended Translations:

Mitchell-Boyask, R. (2005). Euripides: *Hecuba*. Newburyport.

Schein, S. (2003). Sophocles: *Philoctetes*. Newburyport.

### Evaluation:

1. Class participation and presentation: 30%
2. Translation exams: 30%
3. Remaining 40% = "Final Project," namely a choice between
  - a. one final research paper (10-15 pages, Times New Roman 12 pt, double-spaced): 40% or
  - b. one shorter research paper (6-10 pages Times New Roman 12 pt, double-spaced) + a final examination (translation examination based on all focus passages covered during term): 20% each
  - ⇒ Please inform me of your choice (a or b) by e-mail before Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>
  - ⇒ I encourage you to meet with me at least one or two weeks before your presentation and at least three weeks before the due date for your final paper to discuss the topic and relevant bibliography together. Just send me an e-mail to make an appointment.

The research paper should be an expanded version of the oral presentation, with full scholarly apparatus of citations, footnotes, and bibliography. Your paper should take into account the discussion of the oral paper following your presentation, and input from the class.

*Should you decide to write on a different topic, you may do so, provided you let me know by October 24<sup>th</sup>.*

### Organization of the seminar:

Each class meeting will run roughly as follows:

- a brief (10 minute) **translation exam** on the readings (**focus passages**) for the **previous** session.
- an examination (and translation) of the **focus passages** assigned for that day, considering various aspects of the poetics (including, time allowing, language and meter), while also opening the discussion to broader considerations. Each focus passage should be prepared in careful, regular consultation with commentaries and lexica (along with any other tools the student deems useful).
- Following our close reading, starting week 5 or so, **one of you will offer a presentation of ca.20-25 minutes** on a topic related to the primary reading assigned for that day, or, more broadly, to the play being read at the time. The topic is to be determined in consultation with me, and should ideally serve as the basis for the writing of a **final research paper (or, if the student chooses, for the shorter, 6-10 page paper).**

Your presentation must take into account our readings for the course. It should demonstrate that you have done thorough research into the topic and spent time

reflecting on it; that you have carefully considered the major questions raised by your topic, and how past scholarship has addressed them; and that you have a sense of where you stand in relation to the latter scholarship. You should strive to present the results of your research to your peers in as lucid and exciting a fashion as possible. Be sure to include a handout for your peers, with relevant citations and bibliography, and, if relevant, any charts or outlines you deem helpful.

- After a collective discussion of the student presentation, we will address the **secondary readings** for the day. One student will be responsible for summarizing and providing a critical assessment (5 mins. maximum) of each of the secondary readings (article or chapter) for any given meeting; all others will be expected to prepare a response and reactions to the reading (and to their peer's reaction to the piece) as well, for ensuing discussion.

### **Tentative schedule: 15 sessions total**

The following is merely indicative; we will adapt the syllabus (and our speed) to your needs, interests, and comfort level as we go. *All assignments are to be read for the day on which they are listed.*

I. **Thursday, Spt. 8<sup>th</sup>**: Introductory session. Organizational meeting.

II. **Monday, Spt. 12<sup>th</sup>**:

- Sophocles, *Philoctetes* lines 1-316. Focus passage: lines 254-316.
- Read the entire play in translation.
- Goldhill, S. (1990) "The Great Dionysia and Civic Ideology," in J. Winkler and F. Zeitlin, eds., *Nothing to do with Dionysos: Athenian Drama in its Social Context*. Princeton.
- Griffin, J. (1998) "The Social Function of Attic Tragedy," *CQ* 48: 39-61. *Available on course Sakai, under "Resources"*
- Segal, C. (1981) "*Philoctetes*: Society, Language, Friendship," 328-361 in C. Segal, *Tragedy and Civilization: An Interpretation of Sophocles*. Cambridge, MA.

*Presentation Topics: Discussion and Selection.*

III. **Monday, Spt. 19<sup>th</sup>**:

- *Philoctetes* 317-881. Focus passages: 649-725; 730-881
- Worman, N. (2000) "Infection in the Sentence: the Discourse of Disease in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*," *Arethusa* 33: 1-36.
- Blundell, M. (1989) "*Philoctetes*" 184-225 in M. Blundell, *Helping Friends and Harming Enemies: A Study in Sophocles and Greek Ethics*. Cambridge.
- Hawkins, A. H. (1999) "Ethical Tragedy and Sophocles' *Philoctetes*," *CW* 92: 337-357. *Translation Quiz 1.*

IV. **Monday, Spt. 26<sup>th</sup>**:

- *Philoctetes* 882-1062. Focus passages: 882-975; 1004-1062
  - Gould, J. (1996) "Tragedy and Collective Experience," 217-243 in M. Silk, ed., *Tragedy and the Tragic*. Oxford.
  - Kosak, J. Clarke (1999). "Therapeutic Touch and Sophocles' *Philoctetes*," *HSCP* 99: 93-134
  - Lada-Richards, I. (1993) "Empathic Understanding: Emotion and Cognition in Classical Dramatic Audience-Response," *PCPS* 39: 94-140
- Translation Quiz 2.*

V. **Monday, Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>**:

- *Philoctetes* 1062-end. Focus passage: 1081-1217
- Heaney, S. (1991) *The Cure at Troy*. New York.

- Budelmann, F. (2007) "The Reception of Sophocles' Representation of Physical Pain," *AJP* 128: 443-467.
  - Rehm, R. (2002) "Eremetic Space" (focus on "Philoctetes: the Island *êrêmia*") 138-155 in *The Play of Space: Spatial Transformation in Greek Tragedy*. Princeton.
- Translation Quiz 3.*

VI. **Monday, Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>:**

- Euripides, *Hecuba* 1-378; focus passages: 1-58; 239-378
- Read the entire play in translation.
- Mossman, J. (1995) "The Death of Polyxena" 142-163 in J. Mossman, *Wild Justice. A Study of Euripides' Hecuba*. Oxford.
- Nussbaum, M. (2001) "The Betrayal of Convention: a Reading of Euripides' *Hecuba*," 397-422 in M. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*. Cambridge.
- Scodel, R. "Δόμων ἄγαλμα: Virgin Sacrifice and Aesthetic Object," *TAPA* 126 (1996) 111-128.

*No Quiz. Revision of choral passage in Philoctetes assigned for last time.*

VII. **Monday, Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>:**

- Euripides, *Hecuba* 1-863; focus passages: 403-443; 534-608; 785-863
- Alexiou, M. (2002) "Tradition and Change in Antiquity," 4-14(23) in M. Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Lanham.
- Dué, C. (2006) "The Captive Woman's Lament and Her Revenge in Euripides' *Hecuba*" 117-135 in C. Dué, *The Captive Woman's Lament in Greek Tragedy*. Austin.
- Rehm, R. (2002) "Hecuba: The Body as Measure," 175-186 in R. Rehm, *The Play of Space. Spatial Transformation in Greek Tragedy*. Princeton.
- Also have a look at readings for Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, you may want to get a head-start on both primary and secondary readings (Zeitlin piece is long as always!)

*Translation Quiz 4.*

VIII. **Monday, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>:**

- *Hecuba* 864-end. Focus passages: 905-51, 981-1022, 1035-82, 1132-82, 1240-95 (end)
- Meltzer, G.S. (2006) "The Body's Cry for Justice in the *Hecuba*" 104-145 in *Euripides and the Poetics of Nostalgia*. Cambridge.
- Zeitlin, F. (1991) "Euripides *Hekabe* and the Somatics of Dionysiac Drama," *Ramus* 20: 53-94.
- Recommended, optional: Foley, H. (2001) "The Politics of Tragic Lamentation" 19-56 in H. Foley, *Female Acts in Greek Tragedy*. Princeton.

*Translation Quiz 5.*

IX. **Monday, Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>:**

- Review all of *Hecuba* (the Greek focus passages), particularly 1132-82, 1240-95 (end) especially if we did not get around to them on the 24<sup>th</sup>
- Meltzer, G.S. (2006) "The Body's Cry for Justice in the *Hecuba*" 104-145 in *Euripides and the Poetics of Nostalgia*. Cambridge.
- Discussion of Zeitlin, continued (brush up on your notes / sections you thought were important)
- wrap-up discussion of mind/body in *Philoctetes* and *Hecuba*; think of two or three ways in which these are used, interconnected, dramatized in each play
- And we begin...
  - o Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*: read Lloyd-Jones' translation of the *Oresteia* in full

- beginning of *Agamemnon*: in Greek, lines 1-257; focus passage: lines 1-71 (watchman and part of *parodos*): see Fraenkel text and commentary online on Sakai; also on reserve at Douglass
- Anne Lebeck, *The Oresteia: A Study in Language and Structure* (Cambridge, Mass. 1971) 1-24: forthcoming on Sakai

**Additional, optional reading for background and discussion – skim:**

Colin Macleod, “Politics and the *Oresteia*,” in *Collected Essays* (Oxford 1983) 20-40, forthcoming on Sakai.

*Translation Quiz 6.*

X. **Monday, Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>**

- Aeschylus *Agamemnon*, up to line 616. Focus passages: 140-183; 205-293; 456-487; 586-616
- Patricia E. Easterling, “Tragedy and Ritual,” *Mètis* 3 (1988) 87-109 Brian K.
- Nuts and bolts:
  - structure of the *Agamemnon*: comments? (look at meter and its relation to structure): any changes to the expected structure? *Scott B.*
  - Aeschylus, life and times *Chris M.*
  - choices for forthcoming nuts and bolts:
    - theatrical effects in *Agamemnon*: props, staging, etc (use Taplin’s *Stagecraft of Aeschylus* for instance)
    - the *skene* in Aeschylus
    - Sophocles, life and times
    - Stage resources in 5<sup>th</sup>-century theater
    - structural differences between the *Oresteia* and Aeschylus’ earlier plays? (based on West, below)

*Translation Quiz 7.*

**Additional, optional reading for background and discussion – skim when you can, based on your interests:**

Martin L. West, “The Formal Structure of Aeschylean Tragedy,” in *Studies in Aeschylus* (Stuttgart 1990) 3-25

Albert Henrichs, “Drama and *Dromena*: Bloodshed, Violence, and Sacrificial Meta-phor in Euripides,” *HSCP* 100 (2000) 173-188

Richard Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual: Homer and Tragedy in the Developing City-State* (Oxford 1994) 368-375

Froma I. Zeitlin, “The Motif of the Corrupted Sacrifice in Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*,” *TAPA* 96 (1965) 463-508

More general:

Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass. 1985) 55-73, on sacrifice and libation

XI. **Monday, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>**

- Aeschylus *Agamemnon*, up to line read up to 974 (as much as you can; as always, e-mail me lines you find problematic for our final, translation-only meeting). Focus passages: 717-62; 810-974
- Oliver Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus: The Dramatic Use of Exits and Entrances in Greek Tragedy*, Oxford 1977: Introduction, 1-39.
- Nuts and bolts:
  - theatrical effects in *Agamemnon*: spectacle in Aeschylus; props, staging, and/or use of theatrical space (the *skene* in particular): use Taplin’s *Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, and/or his *Greek Tragedy in Action*, Berkeley 1978
  - stage resources in 5<sup>th</sup>-century Athens (use Taplin, *SA*, above; request scan): *ABS*

Translation Quiz 8.

**XII. Monday, Nov 21<sup>st</sup> :**

Shorter research paper Due **Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>** (for those who chose 3.b.) **NO CLASS.**

**XIII. Monday, Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>:**

- Aeschylus *Agamemnon*, finish the play (as much as you can; as always, e-mail me lines you find problematic for our final, translation-only meeting). Focus passages: 1085-1263, 1372-1536
  - o Make note of how Cassandra evokes and connects past, present, and future; find at least two passages from elsewhere in the play that reflect and elaborate on whatever point she is making (metaphor, prediction), Lebeck-style
  - o What are Clytemnestra's arguments in defense of her action(s), and what is the Chorus's response to them?
- Nuts and bolts:
  - o Sophocles, life and times (use *OCD* and a Cambridge "green and yellow" introduction; e.g. Easterling's *Trachiniae*, and Easterling's introductions to the [Cambridge translations from Greek drama](#) series (including *Antigone*); and her *Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, available on Sakai)
  - o The origins of Tragedy: Tragedy and Religion (ritual); using S. Scullion, "Tragedy and Religion: The Problem of Origins" in J. Gregory, ed. *A Companion to Greek Tragedy* (Oxford 2005): 23-38
- **Reminder: longer research paper due Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>; shorter research paper due today**

Translation Quiz 9.

**XIV. Monday, Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>:**

- Euripides, *Electra* to line 698; focus passages: 1-63, 112-289, 300-338, 513-44, 608-76
- C. Pelling, "Tragedy, Rhetoric, and Performance Culture" in J. Gregory, ed. *A Companion to Greek Tragedy* (Oxford 2005): 83-102, on Sakai
- Read Giraudoux's *Electre* in translation, on Sakai
- Nuts and bolts:
  - o mocking tragedy? lines 518-44: the improbable recognition scene (use D. Kovacs, "Euripides, *Electra* 518-44: Further Doubts about Genuineness," *BICS* 36 (1989) 67-78)
  - o tragic playwrights and their styles: Aeschylus vs. Sophocles vs. Euripides

Translation Quiz 10.

Longer Research Paper Due.

**XV. Monday, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>:**

- Euripides, *Electra*, to the end; focus passages: 699-726; 774-858; 874-987; 1004-1146; 1165-1229
  - o use Roisman for helpful vocabulary and notes (on reserve at Douglass, 2-hour loan periods), and Cropp for commentary
- Read Sophocles' *Electra* concurrently, in translation (use Jebb for good commentary, and Jenny March's edition with facing translation for reference to the Greek)
- Nuts and bolts:
  - o mocking tragedy? lines 518-44: the improbable recognition scene (use D. Kovacs, "Euripides, *Electra* 518-44: Further Doubts about Genuineness," *BICS* 36 (1989) 67-78)
  - o Euripides, life and times: *Aaron B-S*
  - o tragic playwrights and their styles: Aeschylus vs. Sophocles vs. Euripides

- Optional, recommended: Martin J. Cropp, "Heracles, Electra and the Odyssey," in Cropp, Fantham and Scully (eds.) *Greek Tragedy and its Legacy: Essays Presented to D. J. Conacher* (Calgary 1986): 187-99, on Sakai

**XVI. Translation Marathon meeting, and discussion of Reception: Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>, 1-4pm.**

- remarks on meter: cf Cassandra's exchange with the chorus; *Hecuba* key passages; Electra's kommos and passages from *Oresteia* kommos
- MS tradition
  - o e.g., speech of Orestes in Eur. *Electra*, ll.367-400
  - o e.g., lines that are problematic in Ag.?

**Final Examination:** For those who choose the shorter paper, the Final Examination will be a self-administered test to be taken during exam week. It will include translation of prepared and sight passages as well as some analysis of syntax.

**Topics List for Greek Tragedy Seminar Fall 2011**

*Note: topics are general; you will choose a topic that is more specific to address the more general topic selected among those below.*

***Philoctetes***

*Logos* in *Philoctetes*

Neoptolemus, Odysseus, and ethics in *Philoctetes*

Odysseus in *Philoctetes* (fifth-century Athenian society and politics)

Concepts of the hero in *Philoctetes*

The Chorus in *Philoctetes*: function and role

Heracles' *deus ex machina* in *Philoctetes*: the problems of the ending

Seamus Heaney's *Cure at Troy*

Fénelon's *Télémaque*

***Hecuba***

Power in *Hecuba*

Persuasion in *Hecuba*

Other Greek versions of the fall of Troy (with a focus on the women) – Euripidean and other *Hecuba* and Aristotelian theory

Human Sacrifice in Euripides (reactions to Aeschylus in particular)

The reception of Euripides in antiquity

Jean Giraudoux's *La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu* (*The Trojan War Will Not Take Place*/ Tiger at the Gates)

***Agamemnon***

The sacrifice of Iphigeneia from the Hesiodic *Catalogue* to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*

Ag. and Atreid legend in the tradition of Greek tragedy

Sacrifice and perversion in *Agamemnon*

Tragedy and ritual

Imagery and metaphor in *Agamemnon*

The figure of Agamemnon in Greek tragedy (or merely in tragedies pertaining to the sacrifice of Iphigeneia)

***Electra*** (Euripides)

*Electra* and Atreid legend in the tradition of Greek tragedy

Euripides' and Sophocles' *Electra*

Clytemnestra in *Electra*

Jean Giraudoux's *Électre*