

escorted you [through life] and set you on the path of manhood . . .’, begins the epitaph; such a protasis, apparently hypothetical since its addressee has died, should certainly introduce a counterfactual condition. Yet the apodosis is an indicative statement: ‘in hope, at least, you *were* great and in your potential, Macareus, to be charioteer of tragic composition for the Greeks’ (reviewer’s translations). H. indicates that the condition is not structurally counterfactual, but leaves open the connection between protasis and apodosis, which seem directly at odds. While emending γ[ε] to κ[ε] would be relatively straightforward, it would confuse the pathos of ἐλπίδι and τῷ μέλλειν; as H. says, ‘there *was* real hope for Macareus’ (p. 80). Perhaps the simplest interpretation construes the two clauses as syntactically disconnected, separable by an *ano teleia*: ‘If (only) Fortune had sent you on your way (etc.)! You were great in hope . . .’ (so P. Ghiron-Bistagne, *Recherches sur les acteurs dans la Grèce antique* [1974], p. 112). The arresting garden-path sentence, with its broken condition, underscores the dramatic interruption of Macareus’ life by his premature death.

Metre receives attention primarily where a verse is faulty and where it produces a stylistic effect. H. is perhaps overzealous in prosecuting violations of Naeke’s Bridge – cases such as 18.5 and 33.9 are exempted, rather than mitigated, by their proclitics, while a few genuine metrical faults, including 34.5, 59.1, 70.7 (Naeke’s Bridge) and 39.5, 80.3 (Hermann’s Bridge), are spared censure. As the introduction highlights, irregularities like the intrusive pyrrhic at 33.18 and iamb at 56.2 offer less certain ground for emendation in epigraphic than literary texts; these have been used to reconstruct stages in a poem’s production, speculative but appealing conjectures that help bring these texts to life. It is less clear how we should interpret the non-observance of Callimachus’ exacting standards for elegiacs, such as Hermann’s and Naeke’s Bridges, by Hellenistic composers of scannable verses; before drawing conclusions about an anonymous author’s poetics, we must remember that we have only a small sample of their output – often fewer than six verses at a time: even Homer nods occasionally, Callimachean ὄρτυνῆ notwithstanding.

While some readers might mourn Christian epitaph’s exclusion from the volume, there are constraints of space to be considered and a very rich world of pagan epitaph to be explored. As it stands, the collection spans a millennium, beginning in the seventh century BCE and concluding in the third century CE. This wide chronological scope allows readers to survey the length and breadth of Greek antiquity through its eloquent dead; it is an exciting and enlightening *nekylia*, which no passer-by should pass by.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO GREEK TRAGEDY

FLETCHER (J.) *Classical Greek Tragedy*. Pp. xii + 161, ill. London and New York: Methuen Drama, 2022. Paper, £14.99, US\$19.95 (Cased, £45, US\$61). ISBN: 978-1-350-14456-9 (978-1-350-14457-6 hbk).

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Students and non-specialists seeking a quick and seamless introduction to Athenian tragedy should look no further than this handy little book. In four chapters F. covers the

basics of tragedy's origins and development over the course of the fifth century BCE, while also attending to the intricacies of its performance through three case studies: Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and Euripides' *Helen*. A brief epilogue considers fourth-century tragedy. Despite the book's condensed nature, F. manages to draw attention to the flexibility and innovative nature of the tragic genre.

The introduction and general discussions of the three case studies effectively balance general facts about tragedy with detailed attention to the specific themes and concerns of particular plays. The chapter on Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, for example, examines the tragedy's connection to war and enemies and how this is elaborated throughout the drama, from prologue to exodos. Likewise, the chapter on Sophocles weaves in detailed discussion of the wider mythic tradition around Oedipus, including lost tragedies by other playwrights beyond the canonical three, whereas the examination of *Helen* considers the issue of religion and the role of women in tragedy. In this way F. provides both a careful consideration of individual plays and a basic overview of the salient features and structures of the tragic genre.

One of the main strengths of the book is its emphasis on performance. Throughout her discussions F. continually draws attention to performance realities. The chapter on *Seven Against Thebes* contains sections on the specifics of tragedy's production in Athens, such as the introduction of the third actor and the role of objects, song and dance. Attention to performance continues in the *Oedipus* chapter with two concluding sections addressing matters relating to spectacle and audience. The first discusses how certain elements such as stage placement and proxemics 'energize the performance space' (p. 86), whereas the second explores audiences past and present in a wider discussion of Oedipus' appeal in the ancient and the modern worlds. For *Helen* F. additionally draws attention to the role of costumes in tragedy as well as other spectacular elements such as the *mēchanē*. In this way the book is anchored in the practicalities of the stage.

What this reviewer especially enjoyed is F.'s seamless weaving of scholarship in both Classics and Theatre and Performance Studies. Besides discussion of seminal scholarship on Greek tragedy by scholars such as S. Goldhill, O. Taplin and F. Zeitlin, F. includes references to critical work in Theatre Studies. For example, the book successfully discusses the application of R. Schechner's concept of 'sociometric' space to the rapport between actors and chorus (p. 9), A. Sofer's thoughts on the 'invisible' dimension of theatre (p. 22) and G. McAuley's insights on performance space (p. 42). Moreover, F. does not hesitate to travel beyond the tragic realm: she examines other relevant and thematic areas in Greek literature including Homer and lyric, which results in more nuanced discussion.

More learned audiences, however, might quibble with certain aspects of the book. The discussion of the Oedipus myth is, for instance, myopically focused on Oedipus, which is curious when a fuller consideration of his children would have facilitated a better link to the previous chapter on *Seven Against Thebes*. Despite recognising that it is 'unscientific' to generalise based on what is effectively 3% of surviving fifth-century output (p. 95), F. structures her account on the same stereotypical headlines that have continually plagued the genre since Aristotle. This is evident from the chapter titles: whereas Aeschylus is an example of 'early tragedy', Sophocles represents its 'mature form', and Euripides is the young controversial artist who valued 'innovation', even though Sophocles and Euripides were contemporaries. Finally, the book ends with a strange statement of tragedy's 'timeless' nature (p. 141), a note that rings false in what is effectively a thorough examination of the genre in its fifth-century context and in which tragedy's modern rich reception is only mentioned in passing (p. 92). A few cited items are also missing from the bibliography (e.g. K. Valakas [2002]).

Despite these few shortcomings the book has much to offer, especially for a general audience. Published in Methuen Drama's 'Forms of Drama' series, this slim volume is intended for non-specialists. In effect, the book is extremely accessible. The Greek, always quoted in transliteration, is minimal; when cited, it is employed to great effect, for example to illustrate the onomatopoeic effects of *hoplokup'ōti* in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* 83 (p. 23). F. likewise keeps notes to a minimum. Complicated matters such as the authenticity of certain scenes are summarised concisely and clearly and used to draw attention to the challenges of interpreting and understanding Greek tragedy today. Notwithstanding this simplicity, F. provides an updated and informed account of tragedy, one that includes the latest research on Greek tragedy, from S. Nooter's work on the soundscape of tragedy to L. Jackson's examination of fourth-century chorus. In short, this is a clear and engaging book that successfully outlines the essentials of Greek tragedy and its performance in fifth-century BCE Athens.

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GENDER AND POLITICS IN SOPHOCLES

SEFERIADI (G.) *Gendered Politics in Sophocles' Trachiniae*. Pp. xii + 196. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022. Cased, £85, US\$115. ISBN: 978-1-350-26031-3.

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Sophocles' *Trachiniae* revolves around several gender-related themes, such as male/female reversal and domesticity versus wildness. Scholarly interpretations have remarkably often dismissed the play's female protagonist, Deianeira, as helpless, foolish and naive. Third-wave feminism interpreted this tragedy as a patriarchal product *par excellence*, in which Deianeira's turn to action (her application of a love potion to a robe for Heracles) is an unforgivable transgression (on this trend see e.g. B. Heiden, 'Trachiniae', in: *Brill's Companion to Sophocles* [2012], p. 130). What S.'s book offers is a feminist counter-interpretation, in which she tries to show that the play does not conform to, but rather subverts, patriarchal structures.

In the introduction S. lays the groundwork for one of the central arguments of her book: Deianeira is a political figure, and the οἶκος in which she operates is not a private but a civic entity crucial to the stability of the *polis*. In S.'s eyes Deianeira offers a 'female locus' from which patriarchy is criticised. The concept of the 'female locus' is left undefined, as are other (theoretical) terms. At some points the introduction's dense prose is difficult to understand (see e.g. the unexplained reference to 'cracks' within Deianeira's speech on p. 8, repeated on pp. 16, 93).

The first chapter offers a lucid discussion of the pre-texts of *Trachiniae* and shows how vase paintings can provide us with an insight into other versions of the play's myths. In this chapter S. aims to support her view of Deianeira as a political figure by arguing that she is an Amazon living within the Greek *polis*. According to S. her position contrasts with that of the monsters of the play, who occupy a 'liminal' and 'extra-political' status. In her endeavour to prove that an ancient audience primarily considered Deianeira as Amazonian, S. supplements the scant evidence that is usually brought up (such as