



SCHOOL OF ART HISTORY, CLASSICS & RELIGIOUS STUDIES

*Te Tari Ahuatanga Onamata*  
CLASSICS

CLAS 406  
SPECIAL TOPIC:  
DEATH, DYING AND DISPOSAL IN ANCIENT GREECE

TRIMESTERS 1 & 2 – 2012

5 March – 17 November  
CRN 872



Thanatos (Death) on a marble column drum from the Temple of Artemis at Ephesos,  
mid 4<sup>th</sup> cent. BC. London, British Museum.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Trimester dates:

Teaching dates: 5 March to 19 October 2012

Mid-year break: 11 June–15 July 2012

Study week: 22–26 October 2012

Examination/Assessment Period: 26 October to 17 November 2012.

Students who enrol in courses with examinations must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal examination period.

**Withdrawal dates:** Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

**Lecturer:** Dr. Diana Burton (course convener), OK 512, ph. 463 6784  
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**Office Hours:** Any time the door is open, or ring/email for an appointment time. I am unlikely to be there on Fridays.

**Class hours:** Monday 2:10–4:00pm

**Location:** Classics Museum (OK 526).

**Course delivery:** The course will be delivered in a seminar format, with questions and discussion to follow each seminar.

**Additional information:** Any additional information will be posted on Blackboard and also on the Classics notice-boards, opposite room 505 on the fifth floor of Old Kirk building. A notice giving examination times and places for all Classics courses will also be posted there when this information is available.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

### Course prescription:

We will consider how the ancient Greeks interpreted dying, death and the afterlife. Topics include 'good' death, ghosts, infanticide and suicide, the evasion of death and various afterlives, examined through ancient sources including myth, philosophy, art, and archaeology. We will also examine ancient and modern methodologies and debates.

### Course content:

The aim of this course is to give you an understanding of the ways in which ancient Greek culture interpreted death and dying and what happens to the body and soul afterwards. Main areas of study will include funerary rites, burial practices, grave goods and so forth – what they gave their dead, and why – as well as depictions in literature, art, myth and philosophy of death, covering such areas as what makes a good or bad death, how to deal with ghosts, infanticide and suicide, how to be reincarnated and how to evade death altogether, or at least ensure a better deal in the afterlife.

We will be drawing on a wide range of different sources: literature, myth, philosophy; art, archaeology and religious practice.

Clearly this is a very broad topic. We will focus most specifically on aspects of death and dying in the fifth century BC, but will also be looking at areas outside of this. Part of the point of this course is to acquaint you with a range of different types of evidence, and to give you the tools to deal with them. In addition, it is useful to look at a few examples of non-Athenian practice simply in order to get some idea of the variations in Greek approaches to death.

**Learning objectives:**

Students who pass this course should be able to:

- show a broad understanding of ancient Greek attitudes and practices regarding death and dying;
- demonstrate familiarity with a range of different types of sources and material culture, with an understanding of context;
- examine sources critically and draw conclusions from them about aspects of Greek beliefs regarding death and the afterlife;
- demonstrate an understanding of modern methodologies and debates on the topic.

**Texts:**

Robert Garland, *The Greek Way of Death* (London 1985)

Required readings for each week will be placed on Blackboard.

Also highly recommended reading: Emily Vermeule, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (Berkeley 1979); Ian Morris, *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge 1992).

All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 13 February to 16 March 2012, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or can email an order or enquiry to [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz). Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

**Expected workload:**

Students can expect to commit *on average* 12 hours a week to this course. This includes doing assigned readings, preparing for and attending seminars, researching and writing assessed work, and studying for the final exam. Remember this is a rough guideline only. Some students may need to put in more time, others less, and the time commitment will be greatest just prior to due dates for assignments.

## ASSESSMENT

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities in exams and other assessment procedures. Students with disabilities should contact the course convenor and Student Support Services to let them know in case there are any special arrangements that should be made.

The course will be assessed 50% internally and 50% by 3-hour exam.

The goal of the assessment is to establish the extent to which a student can demonstrate his/her understanding of the development and context of Greek attitudes and practices concerning death and the afterlife. The essays are intended to allow students to research an aspect of Greek death through critical examination of primary and secondary sources. The exam tests the depth of students' knowledge of the subject gained from lectures and readings.

**Internal assessment (50%)**

Seminar/essay, 30%

Other essay, 20%

Every week a different topic will be investigated (as in the Schedule attached). Each student will be required to present a **seminar** of c. one hour on one topic. This will be based on an **essay** of c. 3000 words. The paper will be presented in class, commented on by staff and students, and then the essay will be due two weeks later. Well ahead of the time of presentation, students should consult the course convenor regarding appropriate readings and methods of treating the topic. After presentation, students should also consult the course convenor for feedback on their seminar and adjustment or focussing of the topic for the written essay.

The **second essay**, of c. 3000 words, is to be on a topic of the student's own choice. They should consult the course convenor before finalising their topics.

Please hand in **two copies** of your essays; one goes to the external examiner at the end of the year.

**Due dates:** for those doing their seminar/essay in the first trimester, the second essay is due on Monday 10 September (after the mid-trimester break). For those doing their seminar/essay in the second trimester, the other essay is due at the end of the first trimester (Friday 8 June).

Extensions must be applied for from the course convenor in advance of the final date for acceptance. Late work may be penalised 5% per day or part thereof overdue.

The **exam** will consist of three essays (specific format to be discussed in class), and will take place between 26 October and 17 November 2012.

## MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To gain a pass in this course each student must:

- a) present the seminar and submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work);
- b) sit the final exam

Although there is no formal attendance requirement, it is expected that students attend all classes and do the readings in preparation for each one.

## CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the course convenor and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

## WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study). Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress). Most statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy), except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx) (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic).

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Try the following for further material:

**L'Année Philologique** (go to the Library homepage > Recommended Resources > Classics) – this is an invaluable bibliographical resource, listing all publications in Classics, and should be your first port of call.

**Gnomon Online**, <http://www.gnomon.ku-eichstaett.de/Gnomon/en/Gnomon.html>, another bibliographical database

**JSTOR** (also available through the Library) which is quick and easy and does give you the actual article as well as the reference, but will limit you to a small number of journals.

**Periodical abbreviations**

*AION* *Annali dell'Istituto universitario orientali di Napoli* (not in the library; see Diana)

*AJA* *American Journal of Archaeology*

*BICS* *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*

*BSA* *Annual of the British School at Athens*

*CAJ* *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*

*CJ* *Classical Journal*

*ClAnt* *Classical Antiquity*

*CSCA* *California Studies in Classical Antiquity*

*CW* *Classical World*

*G&R* *Greece and Rome*

*GRBS* *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*

*HSCP* *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*

*JHS* *Journal of Hellenic Studies*

*MH* *Museum Helveticum*

Ahlberg-Cornell, G. *Prothesis and ekphora in Greek Geometric art* (1971)

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Andersen, Ø. 'The widows, the city and Thucydides (II, 45, 2)' *Symbolae Osloenses* 62 (1987) 33-49

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- Rohde, E., *Psyche: The cult of souls and the belief in immortality among the Greeks* (1972)
- Roller, L. E. 'Funeral Games in Greek Art', *AJA* 85 (1981) 107-119
- Root, M. C. 'An Apulian volute krater by the Gioia del Colle Painter. Aspects of context, attribution, and iconography' *Bulletin of the Museums of Art and Archaeology of the University of Michigan* 7 (1984-1985) 1-25
- J. Rudhardt, 'Concerning the Homeric Hymn to Demeter', in H. P. Foley (ed.), *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Princeton (1994) 198-211
- Schefold, K., *Gods and Heroes in Late Archaic Greek Art* (1992)
- Schweitzer, B. *Greek Geometric Art* (1971)
- Segal, C., 'Dionysos and the Gold Tablets from Pelinna', *GRBS* 31 (1990) 411-419
- Shapiro, H. A. 'Exekias, Ajax, and Salamis: A Further Note', *AJA* 85 (1981) 173-5
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'Hērôs Theos: The Death and Apotheosis of Herakles', *CW* 77 (1983) 7-18
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'The Iconography of Mourning in Athenian Art' *AJA* 95 (1991) 629-656
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Personifications in Greek Art*, Zurich (1993)
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Myth into Art. Poet and Painter in Classical Greece* (1994)
- Simon, E. 'Polygnotan Painting and the Niobid Painter', *AJA* 67 (1963) 43-62
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Festivals of Attica: An Archaeological Commentary* (1983).
- Smith, C. 'Vase with Representation of Herakles and Geras', *JHS* 4 (1883) 96-110
- Snodgrass, A. M. *Homer and the Artists: Text and Image in Early Greek Art*. (1998)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'The Archaeology of the Hero', *AION* 10 (1988) 19-26

- Sourvinou-Inwood, C. 'To Die and Enter the House of Hades' in *Mirrors of Mortality*, ed. J. Whaley (1981), 15–39
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'Crime and Punishment: Tityos, Tantalos and Sisyphos in *Odyssey* 11', *BICS* 33 (1986) 37–58
- \_\_\_\_\_ *'Reading' Greek Death to the End of the Classical Period* (1995)
- Spivey, N., *Understanding Greek Sculpture* (1995)
- Stager, J. "'Let No One Wonder At This Image": A Phoenician Funerary Stele in Athens', *Hesperia* 74 (2005) 427-49
- Stansbury-O'Donnell, M. D. 'Polygnotos' Ilioupersis: A New Reconstruction', *AJA* 93 (1989) 203-215
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'Polygnotos' Nekyia: A Reconstruction and Analysis', *AJA* 94 (1990) 213-35
- Stears, K. 'Death Becomes Her: Gender and Athenian Death Ritual', in A. Suter (ed.) *Lament: studies in the ancient Mediterranean and beyond* (2008) 139-55
- Stevens, S. T. 'Charon's Obol and Other Coins in Ancient Funerary Practice', *Phoenix* 45 (1991) 215-229
- Stewart, A., *Greek Sculpture, an exploration*, 2 vols. (1990)
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Art, Desire and the Body in Ancient Greece* (1997)
- Ucko, P. J. 'Ethnography and Archaeological Interpretation of Funerary Remains', *World Archaeology* 1 (1969) 262-280
- Uhlenbrock, J. P. *Herakles: Passage of the hero through 1000 years of classical art* (1986)
- Ure, P. N. 'Excavations at Rhitsóna in Boeotia', *JHS* 30 (1910) 336-356
- Vermeule, E. and S. Chapman, 'A Protoattic Human Sacrifice?' *AJA* 75 (1971) 285-293
- Vermeule, E., *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (1979)
- Vernant, J.-P., 'Feminine figures of death in Greece', *Diacritics* 16 (1986) 54-64
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Mortals and Immortals* (1991).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'The Refusal of Odysseus', in S. L. Schein (ed.) *Reading the Odyssey: Selected Interpretive Essays*, Princeton (1996) 185-89
- van Gennep, A. *The Rites of Passage*, trans. M. B. Vizedom and B. L. Caffey (1909)
- van Hooff, A. J. L. *From Autothanasia to Suicide: Self-killing in Classical Antiquity*, London 1990
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'Female suicide between ancient fiction and fact', *Laverna* 3 (1992) 142-172
- Visser, M. 'Vegeance and Pollution in Classical Athens', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 45 (1984) 193-206
- von Bothmer, D., 'The Death of Sarpedon', in *The Greek Vase*, ed. S. L. Hyatt (1981), 63–80.
- Warren, J. I. 'Democritus, the Epicureans, Death, and Dying', *CQ* 52 (2002) 193-206
- West, M.L., *Greek Lyric Poetry* (1993).
- Whaley, J., *Mirrors of mortality : studies in the social history of death* (1981).
- Whitley, J., 'Early States and Hero-Cults: A Re-Appraisal', *JHS* 108 (1988), 173–182.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'The Monuments that Stood before Marathon: Tomb Cult and Hero Cult in Archaic Attica', *AJA* 98 (1994) 213-30
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'Objects with Attitude', *CAJ* 12 (2002) 217-32
- Wiencke, M. I. 'An Epic Theme in Greek Art', *AJA* 58 (1954) 285-306
- Woodford, S. and M. Loudon, 'Two Trojan Themes: The iconography of Ajax carrying the body of Achilles and of Aeneas carrying Anchises in black figure vase painting', *AJA* 84 (1980) 25-40
- Woodford, S. 'Ajax and Achilles Playing a Game on an Olpe in Oxford', *JHS* 102 (1982) 173-85
- \_\_\_\_\_ *The Trojan War in ancient art* (1993)
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Images of Myths in Classical Antiquity* (2003)
- Younger, J. G. 'Women in Relief: "Double Consciousness" in Classical Attic Tombstones', in N. Rabinowitz and L. Auanger (eds), *Among Women*, Austin (2002) 167-210

## LECTURE SCHEDULE

**Week 1: 5 Mar Introduction I: sources...**

*Primary sources and their pitfalls*

**Week 2: 12 Mar Introduction II: ... and methods**

*Some modern approaches, and their pitfalls*

**Readings:**

D. Felton, 'The Dead', in D. Ogden (ed.) *A Companion to Greek Religion* (2008) 86-99

E. Vermeule, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (1979) ch. 1

C. Sourvinou-Inwood, 'To Die and Enter the House of Hades' in J. Whaley, ed. *Mirrors of Mortality* (1981) 15-39

I. Morris, 'Attitudes towards Death in Archaic Greece', *ClAnt* 8 (1989) 296-320

**Week 3: 19 Mar Introduction III: Homeric epic and the Archaic period**

*Essential background: heroes and aristocrats*

**Readings:**

R. Garland, 'The Causation of Death in the *Iliad*', *BICS* 28 (1981) 43-60

J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (1980) ch. 3

J. W. Day, 'Rituals in stone: early Greek grave epigrams and monuments', *JHS* 109 (1989) 1-28

J. Boardman, *Greek Sculpture. The Archaic Period* (1978); excerpt on archaic funerary reliefs

A. Stewart, *Art, Desire and the Body in Ancient Greece* (1997) 63-70

**Week 4: 26 Mar The funeral and its aftermath**

*An introduction to the funeral and the subsequent rites, and discussion of the religious beliefs that underlay it, such as miasma (ritual pollution) and a belief in the afterlife – or perhaps simply a wish to console the living and smooth their transition back into society. Conspicuous expenditure on funerals, and legislation restricting it.*

**Readings:**

R. Garland *The Greek Way of Death* (1985) ch. 3

H. A. Shapiro, 'The Iconography of Mourning in Athenian Art' *AJA* 95 (1991) 629-656

I. Morris, 'Law, Culture and Funerary Art in Athens, 600-300 BC', *Hephaistos* 11/12 (1992/3) 35-50

R. Garland, 'The well-ordered corpse: an investigation into the motives behind Greek funerary legislation', *BICS* 36 (1989) 1-15

K. J. Hame, 'Female Control of Funeral Rites in Greek Tragedy: Klytaimestra, Medea, and Antigone', *CPh* 103 (2008) 1-15

K. Stears, 'Death Becomes Her: Gender and Athenian Death Ritual', in A. Suter (ed.) *Lament: studies in the ancient Mediterranean and beyond* (2008) 139-55

**Week 5: 2 April The Kerameikos in the classical period**

*The best studied cemetery in ancient Greece: its layout, different areas for burial, changes over this period, other uses.*

**Readings:**

U. Knigge, *The Athenian Kerameikos* (1991) 35-48

S. C. Humphreys, 'Family tombs and tomb cult in ancient Athens', *JHS* 100 (1980) 96-126

D. Kurtz & J. Boardman, *Greek Burial Customs* ch. 6

**Easter break**

**Week 6: 23 April      The classical grave I: grave goods**

*What to bury with your dead and why: grave goods as an index of social status; as indicators of sex, age, profession, ethnicity and so forth; their potential to be misleading.*

**Readings:**

J. Boardman, 'Sex Differentiation in Grave Vases', *AION* 10 (1988) 171-9

P. J. Ucko, 'Ethnography and Archaeological Interpretation of Funerary Remains', *World Archaeology* 1 (1969) 262-280

J. Whitley, 'Objects with Attitude', *CAJ* 12 (2002) 217-32

**Week 7: 30 April      White lekythoi**

*The white lekythos became the most common choice for grave goods from c. 470-430 BC, to the extent that it was used solely as a grave-good in this period. It was accordingly often decorated with iconography suitable for the dead, although the exact nature of this remains debated.*

**Readings:**

J. Oakley, *Picturing Death in Classical Athens* 215-31

J. Reilly, 'Many brides: "mistress and maid" on Athenian lekythoi', *Hesperia* 58 (1989) 411-44

D. C. Kurtz, 'Mistress and Maid', *AION* 10 (1988) 141-49

**Week 8: 7 May      The classical grave II: Grave stelai**

*Renewed popularity of figured grave stelai in the late fifth and fourth centuries; cost, choice and conspicuous consumption; differences between epitaphs and images; stelai as social documents.*

**Readings:**

K. Stears, 'The Times They Are A'Changing', in G. J. Oliver (ed.), *The Epigraphy of Death* (2000) 25-58

G. Oliver, 'Athenian Funerary Monuments: Style, grandeur and cost', in G. J. Oliver (ed.) *The Epigraphy of Death* (2000) 59-80

T. H. Nielsen, et al. 'Athenian Grave Monuments and Social Class', *GRBS* 30 (1989) 411-420

W. E. Closterman, 'Family Ideology and Family History: The function of funerary markers in classical Attic peribolos tombs', *AJA* 111 (2007) 633-52

R. Leader, 'In Death Not Divided', *AJA* 101 (1997) 683-999

J. G. Younger, 'Women in Relief: "Double Consciousness" in Classical Attic Tombstones', in N. Rabinowitz and L. Auanger (eds), *Among Women*, Austin (2002) 167-210

**Week 9: 14 May      The war dead & the funeral speech**

*The treatment of the war dead, who are brought back to Athens to be buried at an annual ceremony; the conventions of the funerary speech, and its implications for Athenian social practice.*

Thucydides 2.34-46

The Demosion Sema excavation: <http://www.archaeology.org/online/features/athens/index.html>  
Follow the links under 'Story of the Bones'

C. Clairmont, 'New Evidence for a Polyandron in the Dêmosion Sêma of Athens?', *JHS* 101 (1981) 132-134

N. Loraux, *The Invention of Athens*, Cambridge, MA (1986): excerpts from ch. 1

**Read at least one of:**

Ø. Andersen, 'The widows, the city and Thucydides (II, 45, 2)', *Symbolae Osloenses* 62 (1987) 33-49

L. Hardwick, 'Philomel and Pericles: Silence in the Funeral Speech', *G&R* 40 (1993) 147-62

B. Bosworth, 'The historical context of Thucydides' Funeral Oration', *JHS* 120 (2000) 1-16

**Week 10: 21 May      *Biaiothanatoi*: Suicide and murder**

*The biaiothanatoi (those who die by violence); personal, legal, and social reactions to suicide and murder.*

- D. D. Phillips, *Avengers of Blood: Homicide in Athenian Law and Custom from Draco to Demosthenes*, Stuttgart 2008 ch 2
- W. Reiss, 'Private Violence and State Control: The prosecution of homicide and its symbolic meanings in fourth-century Athens', in C. Brélaz and P. Ducrey (eds), *Sécurité collective et ordre public dans les sociétés anciennes*, Geneva (Fondation Hardt Entretiens 65) 2008: 49-101
- J. Barea, 'To be or not to be? Suicide and euthanasia in ancient Greece and contemporary Western democracies', *Ancient History* 30 (2000) 1-18
- E. P. Garrison, 'Attitudes towards suicide in ancient Greece', *TAPA* 121 (1991) 1-34
- A. J. L. van Hooff, 'Female suicide between ancient fiction and fact', *Laverna* 3 (1992) 142-172

**Week 11: 28 May      Child mortality and exposure**

*Two major and interrelated controversies: how prevalent exposure was, and whether the frequency of child mortality decreased parents' emotional response to it.*

- R. Oldenziel, 'The Historiography of Infanticide in Antiquity: A literature stillborn', in J. Blok and P. Mason (eds), *Sexual Asymmetry*, Amsterdam (1987) 87-107
- D. Engels, 'The Use of Historical Demography in Ancient History', *CQ* 34 (1984) 386-393
- M. Golden, 'Demography and the exposure of girls at Athens', *Phoenix* 35 (1981) 316-31.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'Did the ancients care when their children died?', *G&R* 35 (1988) 152-163
- A. Cameron, 'The exposure of children and Greek ethics', *CR* 46 (1932) 105-114

**Week 12: 4 June      Ghosts, hero-cult and *defixiones***

*The continued influence of the dead in the land of the living; which dead are most likely to be restless; the type and limits of their power as ghosts or as cult heroes; *defixiones* (curse-tablets) and how the dead may be gainfully employed.*

**Readings:**

- R. Garland *The Greek Way of Death* (1985) ch. 6
- D. Felton, *Haunted Greece and Rome*, Austin (1999) ch. 2
- J. G. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* 1-41
- D. Ogden, 'The Ancient Greek Oracles of the Dead', *Acta Classica* 44 (2001) 167-95
- D. Burton, *The evasion of death in early Greek myth* (PhD thesis), ch. 5 (excerpt)

**Mid-year break****Week 13: 16 July      Tragic deaths**

*Deaths in tragedy: conventions of men's and women's deaths, virgin sacrifice, stage conventions such as messenger speeches and the display of bodies.*

**Readings:**

- N. Loraux, *Tragic Ways of Killing a Woman* (Cambridge, MA 1987) ch. 1
- J. M. Bremer, 'Why Messenger-Speeches?', in J. M. Bremer, S. L. Radt, C. J. Ruijgh (eds.) *Miscellanea Tragica in honorem J. C. Kamerbeek*, Amsterdam (1976) 29-48 (excerpt)
- F. Macintosh, *Dying Acts*, Cork (1994) chapter 5 (excerpt)
- In addition, I have provided a range of other deaths and messenger-speeches: please all read at least five of these excerpts (again, preferably more).
- Eur. *Alcestis* and Soph. *Ajax* show, unusually, deaths on stage, although *Alcestis* is brought back to life at the end. Eur. *Electra* and Soph. *Electra* deal with the same mythical material – Aegisthus and Clytemnestra killed by Orestes and Electra – as Aes. *Choephoroi*, though in very different ways.

Other killings within families: Heracles' inadvertent killing of his first wife (Eur. *Heracles* – note the reluctance of Madness to act) and inadvertent death at the hands of his second wife (Soph. *Trachiniae*); Hippolytus' death as a result of Aphrodite's envy and Theseus' curse (Eur. *Hippolytus*); Pentheus' god-induced descent into madness and spectacular death at the hands of... well, if you don't know you should read it (Eur. *Bacchae*). Eur. *Hecuba* and *Trojan Women* both feature Hecabe as central character, and include the death of Astyanax and departure from Troy (*Tro.*) and the death of Polyxena and Hecabe's revenge on Polymnestor for killing her son Polydoros (*Hec.*). Virgin sacrifice is covered by Aes. *Agamemnon*, Eur. *Iphigenia in Aulis* (Iphigenia); Eur. *Hecuba* (Polyxena); Eur. *Heraclidae* (Macaria); Eur. *Phoenissae* (Menoceus, the only male); note the differing attitudes of the victims. On suicide, it is interesting to compare the motivations of Ajax in Soph. *Ajax* and Evadne (widow of Capaneus, one of the Seven Against Thebes) in Eur. *Suppliants*. On 'special' deaths, Capaneus is struck by lightning, requiring special burial (Eur. *Suppliants*; Aes. *Seven against Thebes*); Oedipus is granted a death by the gods that will establish his status as cult hero (Soph. *Oedipus at Colonus*). The non-burial of Polynices, dealt with in Soph. *Antigone*, is also cited at the end of Aes. *Seven against Thebes*.

#### **Week 14: 23 July      Hades**

*The god of the underworld; his ambivalent status between death, as lord of the underworld, and fertility, as consort of Penelope; his attributes and their significance (in particular the cornucopia). Some aspects of his associates: Charon, Hermes, Thanatos, the Erinyes.*

W. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, Cambridge, MA (1985) excerpts

J. Rudhardt, 'Concerning the Homeric Hymn to Demeter', in H. P. Foley (ed.), *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Princeton (1994) 198-211

D. Burton, 'Hades: cornucopiae, fertility and death', in A. Mackay (ed.), *ASCS 32 Proceedings*, [asc.org.au/news/ascs32/Burton.pdf](http://asc.org.au/news/ascs32/Burton.pdf) (2011).

C. Sourvinou-Inwood, 'Reading' *Greek Death to the End of the Classical Period* (1995) chapter 5 excerpts

H. A. Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, Zurich (1993) excerpt on Hypnos and Thanatos

A. L. Brown, 'The Erinyes in the *Oresteia*', *JHS* 103 (1983) 13-34

#### **Week 15: 30 July      Mystery cults, gold leaves**

*The hope for a better afterlife: the Eleusinian Mysteries (Demeter and Kore) in Attica; the Orphic and Dionysiac mysteries (Orpheus, Dionysos-Zagreus) and the gold leaf 'road-maps', particularly in Magna Grecia.*

F. Graf & S. I. Johnston, *Ritual Texts for the Afterlife*, Abingdon (2007) 4-49

F. Graf, 'Dionysian and Orphic Eschatology' in *Masks of Dionysus*, ed. T.A. Carpenter and C. Faraone (1993) 239-258

W. Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (1987) 21-29 (but I have given you the whole of ch. 1, as you may find it a useful introduction)

H. Bowden, *Mystery cults of the ancient world*, Princeton (2010), pp. 22-3 and chapter 7

#### **Week 16: 6 Aug      Philosophical views**

*Pythagoreans, Stoics, Epicureans on death and the afterlife, suicide and reincarnation. And a little of Heraclitus the Obscure to finish off*

G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Cambridge (1983) chapter 7 excerpts

J. N. Bremmer, *The Rise and Fall of the Afterlife*, London (2002) chapter 2

J. I. Warren, 'Democritus, the Epicureans, Death, and Dying', *CQ* 52 (2002) 193-206

M. T. Griffin, *Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics*, Oxford (1976) chapter 11

C. H. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, Cambridge (1979) excerpts

**Week 17: 13 Aug     Mythical evasions of death**

*How the mythical hero becomes immortal, or (usually) dies in the attempt: abduction, fire and lightning, food and drink, human stupidity; how these themes refract attitudes towards death.*

**Readings:**

E. Vermeule, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (1979) ch. 4

J.-P. Vernant, 'The Refusal of Odysseus', in S. L. Schein (ed.) *Reading the Odyssey: Selected Interpretive Essays*, Princeton 1996: 185-89

M. Davies, 'The ancient Greeks on why mankind does not live forever', *Museum Helveticum* 44 (1987) 65-75

**Week 18: 20 Aug     Conclusion**