

**PHILOSOPHY 177**  
**WINTER 2016**

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Lectures are on Tuesday and Thursday, 5:00-6:20, SOLIS 110. Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 4:00-5:00 and by appointment.

The course will focus on the relation between tragedy and philosophy. That there was a connection between the two was taken for granted by ancient philosophers, especially Aristotle, and it has been defended by some philosophers of the modern era, e.g., Hegel and Nietzsche. We will critically examine the philosophical theories about tragedy in the ancient and modern eras and discuss several ancient tragic plays by the Greek tragic dramatists against the background of these theories and the objectives and intellectual aims of the dramatists.

**Texts:**

- Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*
- Aristotle, *Poetics*
- B. Williams, *Shame and Necessity*
- Aeschylus, Vol. II, *Oresteia*
- Sophocles, Vol. I (*Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone*)
- Euripides, Vol. I (*Medea, Hippolytus*)
- Euripides, Vol. V (*Bacchae*)
- Materials on BLACKBOARD (TED)

**READINGS**

**Tragedy vs. Tragic Vision of Life and World**

- a. M. Krieger, "Tragedy and the Tragic Vision" (Blackboard)
- b. L. Abel, "Is there a Tragic Sense of Life?" (Blackboard)
- c. M. Unamuno, "The Hunger of Immortality" (Blackboard)
- d. S. Kierkegaard, "The Ancient Tragical Motif as Reflected in the Modern" (Blackboard) \*

**Theories of Tragedy**

- a. Plato, *Republic*, from Book X (Blackboard)
- b. Aristotle, *Poetics*, pp. 1-42, 58-59.
  - P. Woodruff, "Aristotle on *Mimesis*" (Blackboard)
  - R. Janko, "From Catharsis to the Aristotelian Mean" (Blackboard)
- c. Hegel, "From *The Philosophy of Fine Art*" (Blackboard)
  - A.C. Bradley, "Hegel's Theory of Tragedy" (Blackboard) \*
  - T. Nagel, "The Fragmentation of Value" (Blackboard)
- d. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, Sections: 1, 2, 7, 8, 10-13, 16, 17, 21, 22, 24, 25
  - S.L. Sorgner, "Nietzsche [on Music]" (Blackboard) \*

**Our Understanding of/Relating to Greek Tragedy**

- a. B. Williams, Chapters I and II.

### **Some General Issues in Greek Tragedy**

- a. P.E. Easterling, "Introduction to the Greek Theatre" (Blackboard)
- b. D. Cairns, "Values" (Blackboard) \*
- c. P. Wilson, "Music" (Blackboard) \*
- d. D. Mastronarde, "The Gods" (Blackboard) \*

### **Aeschylus, *Oresteia*.**

- a. S. Said, "Aeschylean Tragedy" (Blackboard) \*
- b. B. Williams, Chapters. III and VI.
- c. A. Lesky, "Decision and Responsibility in the Tragedy of Aeschylus" (Blackboard)
- d. H. Lloyd-Jones, "The Guilt of Agamemnon"
- e. P.E. Easterling, "Presentation of Character in Aeschylus" (blackboard)

### **Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* and *Oedipus at Colonus*.**

- a. R. Scodel, "Sophoclean Tragedy" (Blackboard) \*
- b. Nietzsche, "Sophoclean Tragedy," (Blackboard)
- c. S. Freud, "Oedipus Rex" (Blackboard)
- d. E.R. Dodds, "On Misunderstanding the *Oedipus Rex*" (Blackboard)
- e. H. Rosenberg, "The Riddles of Oedipus" (Blackboard)

### **Sophocles, *Antigone*.**

- a. C. Segal, "Sophocles' Praise of Man and the Conflicts of the *Antigone*" (Blackboard)
- b. P.E. Easterling, "Character in Sophocles" (Blackboard)

### **Euripides, *Hyppolytus* and *Medea*.**

- a. J. Gregory, "Euripidean Tragedy" (Blackboard) \*
- b. G.M.A. Grube, "Euripides and the Gods" (Blackboard)
- c. E. Schlesinger, "On Euripides' *Medea*" (Blackboard)
- d. Aristotle on *Akrasia* (moral weakness), from his *Nicomachean Ethics* (Blackboard)
- e. H. Lorenz, "Aristotle's Analysis of *Akratic Action*" (Blackboard)
- f. D. Davidson, "Paradoxes of Irrationality" (Blackboard)

### **Euripides, *Bacchae*.**

- a. H. Diller, "Euripides' Final Phase: The *Bacchae*" (Blackboard)

### **Books on Reserve:**

- M. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*.
- B. Vickers, *Towards Greek Tragedy*.

### **Writing Requirements for the Course**

The writing requirements for the class will be two papers, each about 8-10 pages long. The first paper will be due in class on Tuesday of the sixth week (February 9); the second will be due by Wednesday of Finals Week (March 16), 5:00 pm, in my mailbox (HSS 7<sup>th</sup> Floor). Topics for the papers will be handed out in class at least two weeks before each paper is due. Each paper will be worth 45 points. The remaining 10 points will be distributed as follows: 5 points for two brief in-class quizzes (2.5 points each); 5 points for your participation in and contribution to class discussion.