

GC350 GREEK AND ROMAN CIVILIZATION ESSAY PROJECT 2019-2020

Professor David Scourfield
Greek Tragedy (relates to GC204)
Deadline: Monday 27 April 2020

Word Count: c. 5,000 words, please write word count at the end of your essay.

Compare and contrast the treatments of the story of Orestes' and Electra's revenge for the murder of Agamemnon in the *Electra* plays of Sophocles and Euripides, and show how each treatment relates to that of Aeschylus in the *Libation Bearers*.

GUIDELINES

In the *Libation Bearers* (or *Choephoroi*, to give it its Greek name, sometimes Latinized as *Choephoroi*), the second play in Aeschylus' *Oresteia* trilogy of 458 BC, Orestes returns home to Argos after many years to take vengeance on his mother Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus for the murder of his father Agamemnon. He is first reunited with his sister Electra, and in the great *kommos* in the first half of the play Orestes, Electra, and the chorus of slave-women engage in lament for Agamemnon and call on his spirit to assist them in the revenge. Orestes then sets the vengeance plot in motion, and succeeds in killing both Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, before having to flee from the scene. Electra is not directly involved in the killings, and indeed does not appear at all in the second half of the play.

Some forty years or so later, both Sophocles and Euripides wrote plays on the same story. We do not know the exact dates of these plays, or even which of them was written first, but in both *Electra* is a much more prominent character than in the *Libation Bearers*, as their titles (both are called *Electra*) reflect. Your task is to compare and contrast these two tragedies, and to explore what relationship each of them might be considered to bear to the *Libation Bearers*. Though all three plays are based on the same myth, you will find striking differences in the ways in which the dramatists handled the material, as well as obvious similarities.

The first thing you should do to get started on this topic is to read the plays with care and attention: however much secondary material you may read, it is essential that your essay be based firmly on the texts of the plays themselves. I would begin with some very basic, factual questions about each play, such as:

- Where is the play set? What does the *skēnē* represent? What characters are represented in the play? What does the chorus consist of?

As you answer questions such as these, ask yourself additionally what the *effect/s* might be of setting the play in one location rather than another, including this character but omitting that character, and so on: this is a good route into *interpretation* of the play, which is a very important part of the exercise. After confronting these basic questions, you should consider wider issues, such as how the plot develops and how the main figures are characterized.

For example, if the key events of the story are the plotting and carrying out of the revenge against Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, you might usefully ask questions such as:

- Who is the main motivating force behind the revenge? How is it effected, by whom, and in what circumstances? What can be said about these things in terms of interpretation of the play as a whole?

On characterization, you might get your bearings by considering how far and in what ways the figures of Orestes, Electra, Clytemnestra, and Aegisthus in the Sophoclean and Euripidean plays resemble their Aeschylean counterparts (in the other plays of the *Oresteia* trilogy as well as the *Libation Bearers*: although the action of the *Electra* plays maps on to the *Libation Bearers* specifically, the whole *Oresteia* is relevant). For example, are Clytemnestra/Aegisthus configured as strong/weak (masculine/feminized) as they are in Aeschylus? How sure of himself is Orestes? Does he find himself in the same kind of dilemma as in the *Oresteia*? How do the main characteristics of Electra compare with her Aeschylean incarnation? What characters do Sophocles and Euripides foreground the most, and what are the consequences of this for our understanding of the play?

Going beyond plot and characterization, you need to consider the Sophoclean and Euripidean dramas in terms of that key question of the *Oresteia*, justice. In the *Oresteia*, in addition to other reasons for avenging his father, Orestes is under divine orders from Apollo to do so; but in order to avenge his father he has to kill his mother, and in consequence of her death is pursued by the Furies, themselves divine agents of vengeance. The matricide is *both* right and required *and* wrong, and the issue is not resolved until Orestes' trial in the *Eumenides*, when the closeness of the conflict is reflected by the tied vote of the jurors. The question for you is: how far is the question of justice implicated in Sophocles' and Euripides' plays? Is the moral issue much simpler than in the *Oresteia* – or not? Is any kind of sequel to the action of the play implied, or does the revenge produce complete closure? What actually happens in consequence, and how can that be understood?

What is suggested above is, of course, intended only to give you *an idea of how you might proceed with the work for the essay*: a jumping-off point, in other words. It is only by reading and thinking about the plays themselves and engaging thoughtfully and critically with the secondary material that you will be able to build up a good essay with a personal 'take' on the question, which should be your aim.

This module is worth 5 ECTS credits, which means that it carries a notional workload of about **100 hours**. Your essay will be expected to reflect an input of time and effort of that order.

PRESCRIBED TEXTS

The **recommended translations** of the three plays which are **the essential texts** for this topic are:

Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers*, tr. C. Collard (in Aeschylus: *Oresteia*; Oxford, 2003 [Oxford World's Classics]).

Sophocles, *Electra*, tr. H. D. F. Kitto (in Sophocles: *Antigone, Oedipus the King, Electra*, ed. E. Hall; Oxford, 1998 [Oxford World's Classics]).

Euripides, *Electra*, tr. J. Davie (in Euripides: *Electra and Other Plays* [introduction and notes by R. Rutherford]; London, 1998, updated 2004 [Penguin]).

The Aeschylus translation is the one prescribed for the Greek Tragedy module in 2018-2019 (and again this year). The translation of Sophocles' *Electra* is in the same volume as the translation of *Oedipus the King* also prescribed for the Greek Tragedy module in 2018-2019 (and this year). Copies of the Euripides translation may be purchased from the University Bookshop, and are in any case widely available.

You should use these specific translations if at all possible. If you use a different translation, you must be sure to supply its bibliographic details in the bibliography at the end of your essay.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

All the items listed in this bibliography are either available on the Library bookshelves or accessible electronically through LibrarySearch or the traditional Library catalogue or via the 'eBooks and eJournals' link on the Library home page. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are those which seem to me especially helpful or important, but that is a very rough judgement call and you should **on no account** think that if an item is **not** asterisked it is therefore not worth reading: that is simply not the case. Equally, **do not be lazy and confine your reading to material accessible electronically**; many good things are available only in hard copy.

Using the index of a book is a very good way to track down further helpful material: try it in the case of Easterling (1997) or Hall (2010), for example.

Please do not under any circumstances be tempted to lift material from 'cheat sites' on the internet and pass it off as your own. I mention this because (and only because) in recent years one or two students who have written a GC350 essay for me have done exactly this. Such 'borrowings' are normally very easy to spot and even easier to verify, and a student who submits an essay which includes such material risks serious consequences (see the University's policy document on plagiarism, which may be found under 'Policies & Regulations' at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/information-students>).

N.B. Most of the bibliography is organized text by text, but you should bear in mind that discussions of one of the *Electra* plays often have things to say about the *other* play too, and about Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*.

Greek tragedy: general

P. E. Easterling (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1997). [Very good; chapters by various scholars on a range of different topics.]

S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1986). [Excellent general study by a lively and influential critic; see further below.]

E. Hall, *Greek Tragedy: Suffering under the Sun* (Oxford, 2010). [Recent introduction, engagingly written and with plenty of useful detail; contains brief summary-discussions of all the surviving Greek tragedies.]

R. Scodel, *An Introduction to Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 2010). [A shorter introduction to the subject than Hall; has a chapter on the *Oresteia* and a few pages briefly comparing the *Libation Bearers* with the *Electra* plays.]

I. C. Storey and A. Allan (eds.), *A Guide to Ancient Greek Drama* (Malden, MA and Oxford, 2005), esp. chs. 1-2 (pp. 1-155). [Helpful background book.]

O. Taplin, *Greek Tragedy in Action* (London, 1978). [Outstanding on the visual dimension of Greek tragedy; the *Oresteia* is among the texts on which the author focuses.]

Aeschylus: *Oresteia*

On the *Libation Bearers* specifically, the best starting-point is:

*C. W. Marshall, *Aeschylus: Libation Bearers* (London, 2017). [Includes some discussion of the *Electra* plays: see esp. pp. 47-50, and use the index.]

See also the following, bearing in mind that (as I said above) the whole *Oresteia* is relevant:

D. J. Conacher, *Aeschylus' Oresteia: A Literary Commentary* (Toronto, 1987) (102-138 on *Libation Bearers*). [A bit ploddy, but will help you on specific points in the text.]

*P. E. Easterling, 'Presentation of Character in Aeschylus', *Greece & Rome* 20 (1973), 3-19 [= I. McAuslan and P. Walcot (eds.), *Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 1993), 12-28].

*S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1986), 1-56.

S. Goldhill, *Aeschylus: The Oresteia* (2nd edn., Cambridge, 2004). [Available through the Library catalogue as an e-book; 1st edn. (Cambridge, 1992) available on the Library shelves.]

A. Sommerstein, *Aeschylean Tragedy* (2nd edn., London, 2010), 121-212.

O. Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford, 1977), 276-415 (333-361 on *Libation Bearers*). [Fundamental on staging, and offers much more besides.]

R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *Studies in Aeschylus* (Cambridge, 1983), 132-153, esp. *132-145.

Sophocles: *Electra*

*M. W. Blundell, *Helping Friends and Harming Enemies: A Study in Sophocles and Greek Ethics* (Cambridge, 1989), 149-183.

H. P. Foley, *Female Acts in Greek Tragedy* (Princeton and Oxford, 2001), 145-171.

*J. Jones, *On Aristotle and Greek Tragedy* (London, 1962), 141-159. [Focuses on comparison with *Libation Bearers*.]

B. M. W. Knox, *The Heroic Temper: Studies in Sophoclean Tragedy* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1964), 1-61. [On the Sophoclean hero in general, with little specifically on the *Electra* and its central heroine, but nonetheless useful.]

*M. Lloyd, *Sophocles: Electra* (London, 2005). [A very good, reader-friendly discussion of the play, synthesizing a lot of current scholarship. But a **warning**: when a book of this type is available it can be very tempting to rely on it and not to bother with other material. **That would be a serious mistake**: you need to formulate your own views on the basis of the play itself and of a good range of secondary reading, and an essay that shows over-dependence on this or any other single book will be marked down.]

L. MacLeod, *Dolos and Dike in Sophokles' Elektra* (Leiden, 2001). [Pp. *1-20 are particularly valuable for their account of previous scholars' views on the play's main issues.]

K. Reinhardt, *Sophocles* (Engl. tr., Oxford, 1979), 135-161.

D. Seale, *Vision and Stagecraft in Sophocles* (Chicago, 1982), 56-83.

*C. P. Segal, 'The *Electra* of Sophocles', *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 97 (1966), 473-545.

C. Segal, *Tragedy and Civilization: An Interpretation of Sophocles* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1981), 249-291.

*P. T. Stevens, 'Sophocles: *Electra*, Doom or Triumph?', *Greece and Rome* 25 (1978), 111-120.

*R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *Sophocles: An Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1980), 217-247.

T. M. Woodard, '*Electra* by Sophocles: The Dialectical Design', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 68 (1964), 163-205; and '*Electra* by Sophocles: The Dialectical Design (Part II)', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 70 (1965), 195-233.

Euripides: *Electra*

There is much less good material available on Euripides' play than on Sophocles', but you should not on that account pay less attention to the Euripidean version – in fact you may find that when it comes to writing the essay you have more to say about Euripides' *Electra*.

*W. G. Arnott, 'Double the Vision: A Reading of Euripides' *Electra*', *Greece & Rome* 28 (1981), 179-191 [= I. McAuslan and P. Walcot (eds.), *Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 1993), 204-217].

H. P. Foley, *Female Acts in Greek Tragedy* (Princeton and Oxford, 2001), 234-242.

*S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1986), 162-165, 244-259. [Particularly helpful on some Aeschylean connections.]

J. Jones, *On Aristotle and Greek Tragedy* (London, 1962), 239-245.

*M. Lloyd, 'Realism and Character in Euripides' *Electra*', *Phoenix* 40 (1986), 1-19. [Accessible via the Library's 'eBooks and eJournals' link; N.B. this is *not* the social-science journal *Phoenix*

published in Dublin and listed in the Library catalogue, but a Classics journal published in Toronto, Canada.]

*R. Rehm, *The Play of Space: Spatial Transformation in Greek Tragedy* (Princeton, 2002), 187-200.

F. I. Zeitlin, 'The Argive Festival of Hera and Euripides' *Electra*', *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 101 (1970), 645-669 [= J. Mossman (ed.), *Euripides* (Oxford, 2003), 261-284].

TECHNICALITIES

Essays in this module should be approximately **5000 words** in length. They should be submitted in **typed form**, with good margins all around and double (or 1.5) spacing between lines. **Only one copy** need be submitted. Please provide a **full word-count** at the end.

The **due date** for submission of the essay is **Monday 27 April 2020 (by 17:00)**. Please note the Departmental regulations on the late submission of essays, as set out in the Student Handbook for third-year Greek and Roman Civilization (which you should also consult for other regulations relating to essays, and for information and guidance on how essays should be presented).

David Scourfield
January 2020

Dr Gordon Campbell
Herodotus' Egypt (relates to GC307)
Deadline: Monday 27 April 2020

Word Count: c. 5,000 words, please write word count at the end of your essay.

'However, they [the Egyptian priests] did tell me that four times during the period in question [i.e. the 11,340 years of human kings of Egypt] the sun changed its usual procedure for rising: twice it rose from the place where it currently sets, and twice it set in the direction where it currently rises. They told me that nothing in Egypt was altered at these times – nothing growing in the earth or living in the river was any different, and there was no change in the course of diseases or in the ways people died.' Herodotus, *Histories*, 2.142.

Discuss the ways in which Herodotus' view of Egypt as culturally static, illustrated in this passage, informs his account of the country in Book Two of his *Histories*. How does it fit in with the dynamic nature of other aspects of Egypt such as the Nile?

Herodotus tells us both more and less about Egypt than we could reasonably expect. Less because we hear little from him about important matters such as clothing, food, art, music, and Egyptian culture generally, and more because we hear Egypt is incredibly ancient, and, buried under the weight of antiquity, nothing ever changes there, and that the Egyptians do everything backwards compared to the rest of humanity. He claims to have visited Egypt and to have received information at first hand from the priests. Whether this is true or not his account presents Egypt as an otherworldly place, a land outside ordinary time, and even outside normal geography; as the, 'gift of the Nile', Egypt is neither in Libya nor in Asia, but is an in-between land.

One problem that ancient ethnographies have presented traditionally is that often there is no way of knowing if the information in them is accurate. One approach has been to see what in the account is stereotypical and could be from any ancient ethnography of a 'barbarian' people (e.g. nomadism, skin-wearing, human sacrifice etc.) and leave that aside and see what is left as true. Francois Hartog's advance on this in his *Mirror of Herodotus* book was to not worry too much about whether what the ethnographer says is true or false but to see how it fits into the narrative that he tells. I recommend that an approach similar to Hartog's should be taken: we should not worry too much if a detail is not obviously a part of the ethnographic tradition and so therefore may be real. We can still see how it fits in with the sort of story ethnographers might like to tell. Any story, however true or false, is always a view from somewhere.

Remember also that ancient ethnographers like to work 'by contraries' and parallels. Herodotus is a good example. His ethnographic technique is by symmetry and inversion, parallels and contrasts. This is particularly true in Book Two of the *Histories* where Egypt becomes a mirror world to Europe, as if a mirror had been placed along the Mediterranean from west to east in which Greeks could view themselves, imagining that they were viewing the Egyptians. The Nile and its backwards behaviour, flooding in summer rather than winter, provides Herodotus a touchstone for all of Egypt; just as the river behaves in the opposite way to all other rivers, so Egypt itself becomes a mirror world. Herodotus' Egypt is an extreme case of the use of the mirror technique.

The Nile is mystery for Herodotus both in its behaviour and its source, and it is not only a river that flows *through* the country of Egypt; Egypt is, as he says, the *product* of the river itself, formed as it deposits silt into the sea. This makes Egypt mysterious and problematic. It is an in-between land that does not fit into traditional Greek ideas of geography, in which the world is divided into Europe, Asia and Libya. Egypt is either a fourth continent in itself, or it is half in Libya and half in Asia, or perhaps it is part of neither, but floats between both.

Because it is still being formed, it is the youngest of countries, but has the oldest of peoples living there. Herodotus comes to the odd conclusion that the Egyptians pre-exist their country, even though they have always lived there. The Nile is the force that nourishes Egypt as well with its regular summer floods, but it also washes away the Egyptians' land, so that they have to continually repair their fields and boundaries. It is a unique river as well in that Egypt has no other rivers. They do, however, have a vast number of canals that they use both for irrigation and transport. The grid pattern that the canals have imposed on the land surface of Egypt has, however, caused the use of carts to die out. This illustrates another paradox of the Nile: that it is both a dynamic, creative force, but also tends to impose a sort of cultural and historical stasis on Egypt, a land where nothing ever changes, except for the eerily regular yearly pulse of the Nile's floods. Thus, Egypt has a vast history stretching back over 11,340 years in a line of three hundred and thirty human kings, but most of them did nothing and left no trace, seemingly sunk in a cultural torpor, while a few, like Moeris, Psammetichus and Sesostris, were manically active and built vast monuments that are the wonders of the world.

The Nile's effects then are not simply geographical, but also cultural, historical and political, and even though the world may suffer occasional cosmic cataclysms in which the rising and setting of the sun are reversed, Egypt is unaffected and life carries on as normal. Egypt is, as Gustave Flaubert noted, 'always young because nothing changes', but at the same time incredibly ancient. It is as if the time of the outside world flows by, leaving Egypt undisturbed.

Prescribed text:

Herodotus, *The Histories*, translated by Robin Waterfield, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford, 1998). ISBN: 9780199535668

Suggested Bibliography

Almagor, E., and Skinner, J., (eds.), 2013, *Ancient Ethnography: New Approaches*, London, Bloomsbury. A useful collection of essays on ancient ethnography. See esp. part 1 Beginnings: 'The Invention of the Barbarian in the Late Sixth Century BC', and 'The Stories of the Others: Storytelling and Inter-cultural Communication in the Herodotean Mediterranean'.

McDonald, Angela , 'Animals in Egypt', in G. L. Campbell (ed.), 2014, *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life*, Oxford, OUP, 441-460. A very useful study of Egypt as characterized by its animals, wild, domestic, and imaginary.

Dewald, C. and J. Marincola, 2006, *The Cambridge Companion to Herodotus*, Cambridge. Has no chapter directly on Egypt but various chapters will be useful, e.g. 13. 'Herodotus and Greek religion', and 19. 'Herodotus and foreign lands'.

Hartog, F., 1988, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, Berkeley. This is the book that identified the mirror technique. Very useful, even if Hartog's style can be hard going at times. See esp. ch. 6. 'A Rhetoric of Otherness', and ch. 7. 'The Eye and the Ear'.

- 2002, ‘The Greeks as Egyptologists’, in T. Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and Barbarians*, Edinburgh, 2002, 211-228. A more concise study by Hartog.
- Lloyd, A. B., 1994, *Herodotus Book Two*, vol. 1 Introduction, Leiden. See esp. ‘Herodotus’ attitudes and intellectual affinities’. Well worth consulting.
- 2002, ‘Egypt’, in Bakker, E., de Jong, I., and van Wees, H., 2002, *Brill’s Companion to Herodotus*, Leiden. A good place to start.
- 2004, ‘Herodotus on Egypt and Ethiopia’, in Karageorghis, V., Taifacos, I. (eds), 2004, *The World of Herodotus*, Nicosia, 43-52. Another good starting point.
- Murphy, T., 2004, *Pliny the Elder’s Natural History: the Empire in the Encyclopedia*, Oxford. See esp. 77-128 on the ethnographic tradition.
- Munson, R. V., 2002, *Telling Wonders: Ethnographic and Political Discourse in the Work of Herodotus*, Ann Arbor. Good on Herodotus’ ethnography generally.
- Pelling, C., 1997, ‘East is East and West is West – Or Are They?: National Stereotypes in Herodotus’, *Histos* 1 (1997) online at <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/histos/documents/1997.04PellingEastIsEast5166.pdf>
- Very good on how stereotypes can move about and attach themselves to different peoples.
- Skinner, J., 2012, *The Invention of Greek Ethnography: from Homer to Herodotus*, Oxford. The latest book-length study. The most advanced approach, so should be consulted.
- Thomas, Rosalind, 2000, *Herodotus in Context: Ethnography, Science and the Art of Persuasion*, Cambridge. See esp. ch. 5 ‘Wonders and the Natural World’. Good on Herodotus’ focus on wonders.
- Vasunia, P., 2001, *The Gift of the Nile: Hellenizing Egypt from Aeschylus to Alexander. Classics and Contemporary Thought*, 8. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. See esp. ‘Writing Egyptian Writing’, ‘In an Antique Land’, and ‘Space and Otherness’. Very advanced analyses. Sometimes difficult but well worth persevering with.

Dr Maeve O'Brien
***Aeneid* (relates to GC309)**
Deadline: Monday 27 April 2020

Word Count: c. 5,000 words, please write word count at the end of your essay.

‘Virgil's *Aeneid* is in its basic structure a poem of journey and foundation.’ Discuss the ways the *Aeneid* is a ‘poem of journey’ and the significance of this journey motif in the poem as a whole.

TEXT: Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. D. West (London: Penguin 1991) MAIN 878.01 VIR AEN: This translation of *Aeneid*, by David West (London: Penguin Classics, 1991) includes a brief introduction by the translator, two appendices dealing with the parade of future Romans in Book VI and the shield of Aeneas in Book VIII, and a map and index of place names. For the ‘basics’ see, for example, K. Quinn, *Virgil's Aeneid: A Critical Description* (Routledge: London 1968) pp. 23-65 SHORT 878.01 VIR AENc.

Adler, E. *Virgil's Empire: Political Thought in the Aeneid* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 2003) MAIN 878.01 VIR AENc Chapter 11 ‘World Empire’, 193-216.

Bettini, M. ‘Ghosts of Exile: Doubles and Nostalgia in Vergil's ‘Parva Troia’ [i.e. ‘Little Troy’] (*Aeneid* 3.294ff.)’ *Classical Antiquity* 16 (1997), 8-33 (on Moodle). Compare, on the ‘migration’ book of the poem, R. Hexter, ‘Imitating Troy: A reading of Virgil's *Aeneid* 3’ pp. 64-79 in C. Perkell (ed.) *Reading Vergil's Aeneid: An Interpretative Guide* (Oklahoma 1999).

Bloom H. (ed.) *The Hero's Journey*, New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism (2009). 398.2 BLO

Cairns, F. *Virgil's Augustan Epic* (Cambridge University Press 1989) MAIN 878.01 VIR AENc Chapter 5 ‘Geography and Nationalism’, 109-128.

Edwards, C. *Writing Rome: Textual Approaches to the City* (1996). 870.932 ROM On the founding of a city the ‘ktistic’ theme, note especially pp. 10-15, 31-2, 63-66, 86-88. On Evander's ‘tour of Pallanteum’: see Sophia Papaioannou, ‘Founder, Civilizer and Leader: Vergil's Evander and his Role on the Origins of Rome’ *Mnemosyne* LVI Fasc.6 (2003), 680- 702; also available online – www.brill.nl

Fletcher, K. F. B. *Finding Italy: Travel, Nation and Colonization in Vergil's Aeneid* (2014), on the significance of the journey motif: Aeneas tell Dido he loves Italy, but how? He has never seen that country. F. explores how Aeneas' journey makes him fall in love with an idea, a mental image of Italy: Chapter 1 ‘Introduction: Why Directions Matter’ pp.1-32.

878.01 VIR AENc

Hardie, P. *The Last Trojan Hero: A Cultural history of Virgil's Aeneid* (2014), Chapter 2 ‘Underworlds’, 21-49. e-book and Kindle.

Harrison S.J. (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Virgil's Aeneid* (1990) Chapter 20 by R.G.M. Nisbet, 'Aeneas Imperator: Roman Generalship in an epic context', 378-389. 878.01 VIR AE

Hexter, R. 'Imitating Troy: A reading of Virgil's *Aeneid* 3' pp. 64-79 in Christine Perkell (ed.):1999.

Martindale, C. *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil* (1997): Virgilian epic', Duncan F. Kennedy, 145-154; and 17. Virgilian narrative: (a) 'Storytelling' Don Fowler, 259-270. 878.01Virc MAR

Perkell, C. (ed.) *Reading Vergil's Aeneid: an interpretive guide* University of Oklahoma Press (1999) MAIN 873.01 PER

Powell, A. 'The people of the Underworld', 85-100 in Stahl, H.-P. & Fantham, E. (eds.) *Vergil's Aeneid: Augustan epic and political context* London: Duckworth (1998). 878.01 VIR AENc

Reed, J. D. *Virgil's Gaze: Nation and Poetry in the Aeneid* (2007) eBook.

Roberts, D.H. Dunn, F.M. & Fowler D. (eds.) *Classical Closure* (Princeton 1997) MAIN 880.9 ROB See especially chapter 7 'Closure in Latin Epic' pages 139-162 by P. Hardie, where he discusses the 'endings' of *Aeneid*, *Thebaid* and *Punica*.

Rossi, A. 'The *Aeneid* revisited: the Journey of Pompey in Lucan's *Pharsalia*', *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 121, No. 4 (Winter, 2000), pp. 571-591 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1561727>

Rudd, N. *The Common Spring: Essays on Latin and English Poetry* (Exeter 2005) MAIN 871.0109 RUD Niall Rudd takes account of modern critical concerns without abandoning 'traditional' modes of argument. See also by the same author, article on reception: 'Reception: Some Caveats (With Special Reference to the *Aeneid*)', *Arion*, 14.2 (Fall.2006), 1-20 (JSTOR/Moodle).

Stahl, H.-P. (ed.) *Vergil's Aeneid: Augustan epic and political context* (London: Duckworth) 878.01 VIR AENc Chapter 3 'Political Stop-overs on a Mythological travel Route' 33-84 by Stahl.

Thomas, R. *Virgil and the Augustan Reception* (Cambridge 2001) eBook.

Van Nortwick, T. *Somewhere I have never Travelled: the Hero's Journey* (Oxford University Press 1996) ebrary. 'Introduction: Metaphors' 3-7; Chapter 4 'Deserts of the Heart: The *Aeneid* (1)' 89-123, and Chapter 6 'Buried Selves: The *Aeneid* (3)' 162-182.

Dr. Maeve O'Brien maeve.obrien@mu.ie

Dr Jonathan Davies
(relates to GC217)

Deadline: Monday 27 April 2020

Word Count: c. 5,000 words, please write word count at the end of your essay.

“Does Tacitus’ *Annals* have a problem with powerful women?”

In the Early Imperial period, power in Rome became personal; and, wherever power becomes personal, access to it opens up to those who have historically been excluded from it. Our accounts of the early Roman emperors (central among which is Tacitus’ *Annals*) contain many stories, in particular, of powerful women, usually close relatives or spouses of emperors who come to wield a tremendous degree of influence at court and over the emperor. Such a situation, where informal “influence” and formal “power” can be hard to distinguish, is at odds with conventional Roman understandings of a woman’s role, which is centred on the domestic rather than the political (and is symptomatic of broader changes in the Roman political structure, where politics is becoming increasingly domestic, i.e. centred on one *domus*). Tacitus, whose reservations about the increasing “personalisation” of power in this period seem fairly clear, predictably has much to say about these aberrant women, who transgress beyond the limits imposed on female behaviour and find themselves increasingly central in traditionally masculine spheres. At the same time, Rome’s expanded geographical reach means that the Romans are in contact with foreign peoples whose understandings of masculine and feminine roles do not fully map on to traditional Roman views. And so, at the same time as Tacitus is depicting and exploring examples of female political power at home, he is also able to examine female power in other contexts: the figure of the barbarian warrior queen is an obvious, and instructive, point of comparison for the figure of the transgressive Roman imperial woman.

In this essay, you will be closely examining Tacitus’ depiction of women, power and powerful women. You should focus your readings on for case-studies:

- **Agrippina the Elder:** granddaughter of Augustus, mother of the future emperor Caligula, and wife of Tiberius’ (allegedly) murdered heir Germanicus, who feuded publicly with the emperor Tiberius after the death of her husband and was sent into exile.
- **Agrippina the Younger:** sister of Caligula, wife (and niece) of Claudius, and mother of Nero, who is often represented as the poisoner of Claudius, and who ended up being killed on the orders of her son.
- **Messalina:** wife of Claudius and alleged conspirator against him.
- **Boudica:** British queen who led a rebellion against Roman rule.

In particular, you should carefully read our ancient accounts of these women and consider how the ways in which they are described illuminate the author’s apparent attitude to female power. Are powerful women *always* transgressive and abhorrent? Or are there situations in which female leadership is appropriate or desirable? Do these women demonstrate any qualities which might have been seen as positive or admirable? Is Tacitus using the depiction of powerful women as a way of making broader points about power, domination, empire and liberty? Are

Tacitus' powerful women merely comprised of a list of misogynistic tropes, or is there more to them than that?

Here are a few things you might like to consider in your answer:

- How and why does Tacitus use the language of traditionally masculine spheres (e.g. politics, the military) to characterise these women? Are Tacitus' powerful women masculinised, and does that correspond to a feminisation of the men around them? If so, what points might Tacitus be making?
- What parallels, and what differences, do you note between the way in which Tacitus depicts powerful Roman women (the two Agrippinas and Messalina), and the way he depicts a powerful barbarian woman (Boudica)?
- Considering the importance of exemplarity in ancient history, do these women serve as examples of how *not* to behave as a woman? Or are there aspects of these figures which can serve as positive *exempla*?

Remember, the question is not asking for a simple narrative of these women's lives, or a re-statement of what Tacitus says about them. To answer the question well, you will need to lead with analysis, show an ability to situate what Tacitus writes within the context of elite Roman male thinking about issues of gender and femininity, pay close attention to the language and the authorial techniques used by Tacitus in creating an impression of these women, and come to a conclusion which clearly and explicitly provides an answer to the title question.

Reading List

You need to base your essay on your reading of Tacitus' *Annals*. Copies of the revised edition of Michael Grant's translation in the Penguin Classics series are available in the library.

Women and power in the Roman world:

D'Ambra, E. (2007), *Roman Women* (Cambridge) A good, reader-friendly introductory textbook to the topic. You will need to read more than this, but it's a good place to start.

S. Pomeroy (1975), *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York). A classic study and an old warhorse in this field: chapter 8 is likely to be of most value to you.

S. L. James and S. Dillon (eds.) (2012), *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (Malden, MA). A collection of essays on a wide range of topics relating to the places and roles occupied by women in antiquity. The essays in Part 4 are most relevant to this title.

General works on women in Tacitus:

K. Mihor (2011), "Women and Domesticity", in V. Pagán (ed.), *A Companion to Tacitus* (Malden, MA), 458-475. A good introduction to some of the key issues in Tacitus' thinking about gender.

F. S. Santoro L'Hoir (1994), "Tacitus and Women's Usurpation of Power", in *Classical World* 88(1), 5-25. Looks at a range of different women in Tacitus' works, all of whom took and wielded power in one way or another.

E. O'Gorman (2000), *Irony and Misreading in the Annals of Tacitus* (Cambridge). Read chapter 6, "The Empress's Plot", on the voices and characterization of a number of important imperial women in the *Annals*.

Agrippina the Elder:

Agrippina appears fairly frequently throughout the first six books of Tacitus' *Annals*. Especially important mentions are at *Annals* 1.33, 1.40-1.44, 1.69, 2.72, 2.75, 3.1-5, 4.52-54, 5.3-5.

M. R. McHugh (2012). "Ferox Femina: Agrippina Maior in Tacitus's *Annales*", in *Helios* (39), 73-96. On the perception of Agrippina as a "difficult" character, and on the ways in which she positively exemplifies some key traditional female virtues.

L. W. Gillison (2003), "Agrippina, *Laborum Periculorum Socia*", in *Syllecta Classica* 14, 121-141. On (positive) "masculine" traits in Tacitus' depiction of Agrippina.

J. I. McDougall (1981), "Tacitus and the Portrayal of the Elder Agrippina", in *Echos du Monde Classique* 25(3), 104-108. Rather brief, but it does contain some interesting suggestions about this figure.

Agrippina the Younger:

Read Tacitus, *Annals* 12.1 – 14.12.

A. J. Barrett (1996), *Agrippina, Mother of Nero* (London). A full-length modern biography of this important imperial woman.

C. G. Gillespie (2014), "Agrippina the Younger: Tacitus' *Unicum Exemplum*", in C. Pieper and J. Ker (eds.), *Valuing the Past in the Greco-Roman World*, Brill: Leiden, 269-293. On some unique qualities of Tacitus' Agrippina the Younger, in comparison with other imperial women.

Ginsburg, J. (2005), *Representing Agrippina: Constructions of Female Power in the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford). A book-length study of different ways in which the younger Agrippina came to be represented, considering both literary and non-literary sources.

Messalina:

Read what survives of Tacitus, *Annals* 11.

S. R. Joshel (1995), "Female Desire and the Discourse of Empire: Tacitus' Messalina", in *Signs* 21(1), 50-82. An interesting piece on the connection between sexual and political transgression in Tacitus' Messalina.

C. Nappa (2010), "The Unfortunate Marriage of Gaius Silius: Tacitus and Juvenal on the Fall of Messalina", in J. F. Miller and A. Woodman (eds.), *Latin Historiography and Poetry in the Early Empire: Generic Interactions* (Leiden), 189-204. A reading of Tacitus' Messalina as a female equivalent of her husband, Claudius.

Boudica:

Tacitus, *Annals* 14.29-39.

C. G. Gillespie (2018), *Boudica: Warrior Woman of Roman Britain* (Oxford). A short biographical study, but one which pays much attention to literary aspects of the ancient sources.

C. G. Gillespie (2015) “The Wolf and the Hare: Boudica’s Political Bodies in Tacitus and Dio”, in *Classical World* 108(3), 403-429. The material on the Greek historian Dio is not relevant to this title (although you may find it helpful to get a sense of how a different ancient author approached Boudica); the discussion of Tacitus is excellent and thought-provoking.

Dr William Desmond
Homer's *Iliad* (relates to GC213)
Deadline: Monday 27 April 2020

Word Count: c. 5,000 words, please write word count at the end of your essay.

Discuss the figure of Odysseus in the *Iliad*.

The hero of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is also an important figure in the *Iliad* also, even though this epic revolves around Achilles, a very different kind of hero. Odysseus appears in many roles throughout the *Iliad*—as an advisor, king and proxy for Agamemnon, diplomat, warrior. His character is bound up with the story of the Trojan War more generally, as the “sacker of cities” by whose cunning scheme the city of Troy was finally taken: here the *Iliad* may make more indirect reference to Odysseus’ role in events which it does not directly narrate and which are taken up more explicitly in the *Odyssey* (e.g. Trojan Horse). This question invites you to explore the figure of Odysseus in the *Iliad* and by extension its treatment of the Trojan War: what role does he play, and how significant is he in the poem? You should focus primarily on the *Iliad*, though supplementary references to the *Odyssey* are welcome.

Some questions that you might address include the following:

1. What are the prominent characteristics of Odysseus in the *Iliad*? Is he brave? A good fighter as in his *aristeia*? Or is he sometimes a coward, a shirker? Is he honest, honourable, noble? Or duplicitous, lying, dishonourable? Kingly? Plebeian? Is he the same as, or similar to the many-sided (*polytropos*) man that Homer portrays in the *Odyssey*? Or is he depicted in a different way?
2. How is Odysseus brought into juxtaposition with other figures—Achilles, Agamemnon, Diomedes, Thersites, for example? How do such juxtapositions affect our view of him? Here you would do well to concentrate on *one* such comparison (e.g. Diomedes and Odysseus): do not overextend yourself.
3. What kinds of epithets and similes does Homer use to describe Odysseus? How many does he use? Are they significant in context, or do they tend to be formulaic? Are they the same as those used in the *Odyssey*?
4. What stories about Odysseus does Homer choose to tell, selecting them from the larger mythological tradition? How much is told about the “history” of Odysseus? His past and future lives in Ithaca? His involvement in the wooing of Helen, or the recruitment for the war? Would you argue that Homer had “an *Odyssey* in mind while composing the *Iliad*” (Scott).
5. How significant is the relationship of Athena and Odysseus in the *Iliad*? Does Athena show the same favour to him as she does in the *Odyssey*? How do such divine epiphanies happen? Is Odysseus’ relation to the gods similar to, or different from that of Achilles and Helen?
6. What kind of language does Odysseus use? Is his manner of speaking peculiar to him (as Achilles’ is special to *him*), and if so does it reinforce his more general characterization? What “classic” patterns and exemplars might later orators find in Odysseus’ speeches (such as the Embassy speech in *Iliad* 9)? Does his rhetoric vary from context to context (e.g. Thersites in *Iliad* 2, Embassy in *Iliad* 9).

You won’t be able to address all the themes here, so you should make a selection that *you* would like to pursue, and build a coherent interpretation or argument around this.

Select bibliography

Your main “source” will be Homer’s *Iliad*, and you should work primarily from this, using secondary works as secondary—for background, further discussion, corroborating or contrasting views, and further inspiration.

The most helpful place to begin would be the analytic index of names at the end of several translations, particularly that of Rieu (Penguin): these will help you to jump straight to passages relevant to your essay. Use this to your advantage, while not forgetting that individual passages need to be interpreted in their immediate contexts, and in the context of the epic as a whole. Here is Rieu’s entry for “Odysseus”—for your convenience! He gives the book (e.g. 2) and starting line number (e.g. 173) in his references (e.g. 2.173). In citing line numbers yourself, if you are using a verse translation, give the translator’s line numbers (e.g. Fagles 3.15-20); if using a prose translation, then make your best estimate given the lines that the translator cites on each page. You might note that Lattimore’s verse translation follows the Greek original fairly closely, and the Loeb Classics translation (with facing Greek) is available on the Library website .

“ATHENE: advised by ATHENE 2.173, 5.676; closeness to ATHENE 10.278; helped by ATHENE 2.279, 11.438, 23.770; offers spoils to ATHENE 10.460.

“Battlefield: advises the army must eat before battle 19.155, 230; boasts over Socus 11.440; coward? 8.94; kills his man 4.498, 5.677, 6.30, 11.322, 335, 420, 422, 425, 426, 447; night attack on Trojans 10.273; rallies Greeks 2.284, 11.312; retreats 11.461; retreats, failing to hear Diomedes 8.97; stops Greek flight 2.182; troops 2.631; wounded 11.437.

“Other: attacks Thersites 2.246; brings men to order 2.188; complimented by Diomedes 10.243; described by Priam and Helen 3.191; father of Telemachus 2.260, 4.354; foot-race 23.755; has prize threatened 1.138, 145; old 23.790; insulted by Agamemnon 4.338; leads expedition to Chryse 1.311, 430; lectures Agamemnon 19.182; proposed for embassy to Achilles 9.169; recruits for the Trojan War 11.767; reflects on heroic duty 11.408; speech to Achilles 9.225; volunteers to challenge Hector 7.168; wrestling 23.709.”

The following are all in the Library, but depending on your choice of themes, you should search JSTOR and *L’Année Philologique* for relevant articles and books.

Allan, W. 2012. *Homer: The Iliad*. Good overview of the poem and approaches.

Broeniman, C. 1996. “Demodocus, Odysseus, and the Trojan War in *Odyssey* 8,” *Classical World* 90.1: 3-13

Cairns, D.L. (ed.). 2001. *Oxford Readings in Homer’s Iliad* (Oxford). Collection of classic articles. Most directly useful may be R.B. Rutherford’s “From the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey*” (pp. 117-46)

Coleman-Norton, P.R. 1927. “Odysseus in the *Iliad*,” *Classical Weekly*, 21.10: 73-78. Informative article offering an “exhaustive inquiry into the references to Odysseus in the *Iliad*,” followed by some short suggestions: excellent as a starting-point and guide.

- Edwards, M. 1987. *Homer: Poet of the Iliad* (Johns Hopkins University Press). A survey of aspects of the *Iliad* and an excellent place to start. See, for example, Chapter 10, "Speeches, soliloquies, and characterization" (pp. 88-97).
- Finkelberg, M. 1995. "Odysseus and the Genus Hero'," *Greece & Rome* 42.1: 1-14. Compares Homer's Odysseus and Achilles; helpful for Question #2 above.
- Finley, M.I. [1954] 1972. *The World of Odysseus*. Interesting sociological overview of the world described by Homer.
- Franko, G.F. 2005. "The Trojan Horse at the Close of the *Iliad*," *Classical Journal* 101.2: 121-23. Short article how the sack of Troy is evoked in the *Iliad*.
- Griffin, J. 1980. *Homer on Life and Death*. Classic study, well worth consultation.
- _____. 1986. "Homeric Words and Speakers," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 106: 36-57
- Haft, A.J. 1990a. "The City-Sacker Odysseus in *Iliad* 2 and 10," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 120: 37-56. Directly useful for this essay.
- _____. 1990b. "Odysseus' Wrath and Grief in the *Iliad*: Agamemnon, the Ithacan King, and the Sack of Troy in Books 2, 4, and 14," *Classical Journal* 85.2: 97-114. Again, directly relevant for this essay.
- Kirk, G.S. (ed.) 1991. *The Iliad: A Commentary*. Volumes I-VI (Cambridge). For consultation on individual passages.
- March, J. 1998. *Cassell's Dictionary of Classical Mythology*. Helpful summary of the main stories and attributes of mythological figures: useful for gaining a handle on the whole "history" of Odysseus, and the mass of stories from which Homer makes a selection.
- Marks, J. 2005. "The Ongoing Neikos: Thersites, Odysseus, and Achilles," *American Journal of Philology* 126.1: 1-31. Focuses on Thersites and hence much here is of tangential interest, but does have good material on Odysseus in relation to the other two figures.
- Martin, R.P. 1989. *The Language of Heroes: Speech and Performance in the Iliad*
- Morford, M., R. Lenardon, & M. Sham. 2009 *Classical Mythology*
- Nagy, G. 1989. *Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*. Influential book that in Part I draws upon the allusion to a "quarrel" between Achilles and Odysseus (*Od.* 8.72-82) to interpret aspects of *Iliad* 9.
- Owen, E.T. 1988. *Story of the Iliad*. Offers summary and running commentary.
- Postlethwaite, N. 1988. "Thersites in the *Iliad*," *Greece & Rome* 35.2: 123-136
- Pache, C.O. 2000. "War Games: Odysseus at Troy," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 100: 15-23. Highlights some curious aspects of Odysseus in the *Iliad*: uniquely, Odysseus does not weep, and he smiles at the enemy
- Pucci, Pietro. 1987. *Odysseus Polutropos: Intertextual Readings in the Odyssey and the Iliad*. Theoretically complex, not for the faint of heart.
- Rutherford, R.B. 1996. *Homer*. Excellent overview of themes and scholarship.
- Schein, S. 1984. *The Mortal Hero: An Introduction to Homer's Iliad*.
- Scott, J.A. 1918. "Did Homer Have an *Odyssey* in Mind while Composing the *Iliad*," *Classical Journal* 13.8: 607-615. An old article but useful as an introduction for issues around the "Homeric question," whether one poet composed both epics, and their stylistic and thematic unity
- Segal, C. 1994. *Singers, Heroes, and Gods in the Odyssey*. Highly recommended, contains some material on the *Iliad* also.
- Silk, M. *The Iliad*. 2004. A very concise overview, available online (MU library)
- Stanford, W.B. *The Ulysses Theme*. Classic work on the character: see Chapters I-V, especially III ("The Favourite of Athena").
- Whitman, C.H. 1965. *Homer and the Homeric Tradition*. Classic work with many

insightful discussions throughout: see esp. Chapter VIII (“Homeric Character and the Tradition”) with its claim that “The Odysseus of the *Iliad* is quite the same man in essence [as that in the *Odyssey*], but viewed differently” (p. 176).

I recommend beginning with the following works (in the order given), and moving onto a selection of others, depending on the focus you eventually chose to take:

1. Coleman-Norton 1927
2. Haft, 1990a, 1990b
3. Pache 2000, Finkelberg 1995
4. Griffin 1980, Edwards 1987, Allan 2012 as good overviews of Homeric characterization, Homeric style and orality, heroic values.
5. Do not miss Stanford’s classic study of the evolution of Odysseus as a literary character from the *Iliad* on.
6. Browse through some of the other items in this bibliography. Follow up their references, and see where it leads you! Physically going to the library and browsing through the stacks can be the best way to get new ideas. Please use the bibliography provided here, as your first resource. Do not rely on Google searches, as these may take you to online essays, blogs, opinion pieces etc. which are often of lower quality and not appropriate for a research paper like this.

**Dr Kerry Phelan
(relates to GC202)**

Deadline: Monday 27 April 2020

Word Count: c. 5,000 words, please write word count at the end of your essay.

What does Aristophanes' *Frogs* tell us about political circumstances and cultural environment of Athens in 405 BC? How true would it be to say that this play offers a typical example of Aristophanic engagement with contemporary issues?

In Aristophanes' *Frogs*, Dionysus (the god of drama) goes down to the underworld to bring back a tragic poet who he hopes will 'save the city'. Most of the play is taken up with a contest between the dead tragic poets Aeschylus and Euripides: they compete, each trying to prove that he is the best. For this reason, the play has received much attention from those who are interested in literary criticism and the question of what makes a good tragedy. However, constantly hovering in the background of this contest, and the play as a whole, is the reason for Dionysus' trip: the city of Athens is in trouble and needs saving. In fact, this reflects the real situation of Athens in 405 BC, which is the date of this comedy's production. The city *was* in trouble; her internal political situation was in a volatile state and Sparta had troops camped just outside the walls. Aristophanes engages with this contemporary situation in his comedy and finds a means to offer the people of Athens advice through the words of his chorus and characters. Aristophanes' *Frogs* then, is potentially a rich source for contemporary attitudes to the political circumstances and cultural environment of Athens in 405 BC. *Frogs* is made even more attractive and valuable as a source by the lack of other evidence for historical events in precisely this period - Thucydides' history only tells of events up to 411 BC, and the other sources for this period (Aristotle's *Athenian Constitution*, Xenophon's *Hellenica*, and Diodorus Siculus) have their own problems, as you will discover. So seemingly, *Frogs* is a gift as evidence for assessing the historical period – yet the very thing that makes it so valuable, i.e. the lack of other evidence, also makes its use problematic; how can we judge the attitudes towards events when there is not much other evidence for what actually happened? Even more fundamentally, can we use a dramatic text as historical evidence? What are the potential problems with this? These are exactly the kinds of issues that you should be exploring in your essay.

This essay question invites you to work with *Frogs* closely and offer an analysis of what it can tell us as an historical source. You will need to read and re-read the text – familiarize yourself with it and then pick out specific lines or passages which you think are significant in relation to this question (i.e. those which appear to show engagement with contemporary issues) – you will find it helpful to use the notes in the back of the translation, which should explain references or allusion to contemporary affairs. Remember the question asks you about contemporary attitudes to the *political circumstances and cultural environment* – so be on the lookout for allusions to all aspects of Athenian society. Once you have identified these passages, then you should be ready to discuss them in depth in your essay - analyse what they tell us and the attitudes they reflect (or imply). What are the problems with trying to determine the attitudes revealed in certain passages? (i.e. what difference does it make that these appear in a comedy? Or in the mouth of a certain character?). You should also begin to identify trends – does Aristophanes always use the same technique for engaging with the contemporary in each of the passages, which you discuss?

Once you have looked at *Frogs* in depth, then the second half of the question invites you to branch out and consider *Frogs* in relation to Aristophanes' other comedies; in particular it is the engagement with the contemporary that you should be comparing. You need to ask yourself whether the engagement that you have identified in *Frogs* is typical. How different is the method and mode of engagement in other plays compared to *Frogs*? You might pick one or two of the other plays to consider; in particular, you might find it helpful to think about *Acharnians*, *Knights*, or *Lysistrata*. Does Aristophanes use the same techniques for engaging with the contemporary in these plays? Does he always have the same purpose? Is there something special about the circumstances of *Frogs*, which makes this engagement different? *Frogs* is the only comedy to have apparently been re-staged – is this significant? What bearing might it have on the question on how far the engagement in *Frogs* is 'typical'?

Finally, if you would like to branch out even further, then you might consider Aristophanic engagement with the contemporary, and the use of his comedies as historical evidence, through thinking about Aeschylus' *Persians*. This Aeschylean tragedy is set in the Persian court and explores the reactions of the Persians to their defeat by the Greeks in the Persian wars (480/79 BC). The tragedy is therefore valued as historical evidence for contemporary attitudes towards the Persian wars (and in particular it is exploited as a source of evidence for the battle of Salamis which is narrated in the play). It would be worth thinking about Aeschylus' *Persians* and the methodological issues of using it as evidence for contemporary attitudes. Are the issues the same as those which you identified for comedy? Or are there different problems for tragedy and comedy in this respect? (when it comes to thinking about Tragedy as historical evidence you will find the introduction of Pelling a helpful starting point).

Bibliography

*** Starred items are strongly recommended.

Translation and commentary:

***Aristophanes: *Frogs and Other Plays* (intro. S. Dutta, trans. D. Barrett), (London 2007) – this is an **essential text for this module and is available in the bookshop**.

You must use this translation for the quotations in your essay.

Aristophanes *Frogs* edited by A.H. Sommerstein (Warminster, 1996). – read the introduction to this and you will also find that it has excellent notes in the back on specific lines.

Aristophanes, *Frogs*, edited by K.J. Dover (Oxford, 1993) – see especially pp. 24-37 of the introduction, and also the commentary (at the back) for notes on specific passages of the play.

Historical context – sources and scholarship:

For an overview of the historical period look at JACT *World of Athens* (Cambridge, 2nd ed. 2008), pp. 38-41. This should refresh your memory on the historical events. Then you can tackle the sources...

Sources

Before looking at the sources, read about each author in ch.1 of Buckley, T., *Aspects of Greek History 750-323 BC* (London, 1986, 2010²). **Online Library Catalogue.

- **[Aristotle] *Athenian Constitution*, translated by H Rackham (London, 1956)—read specific passages chs.29-35 (this will take you a little beyond 405 BC but gives a good idea of the political climate around the time of the production of *Frogs*).
- **Xenophon, *Hellenica (Greek affairs)*, transl. Brownson (London, 1918); read bk. 2
- **Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca (Library of History)*, transl. Oldfather (London, 1936); read bk. 13, chs. 39-42, 49-51, 68-79, 97-107.
- Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book 8 (on oligarchic coup). **You ought to possess a copy of this already.**

Discussions of the historical period

- **Buckley, T., *Aspects of Greek History 750-323 BC* (London, 1986), pp. 407-423. **Online Library Catalogue.**
- **Crawford & Whitehead, *Archaic and Classical Greece* (Cambridge, 1983), esp. pp. 425-55.
- Ehrenberg, V., *From Solon to Socrates*, (London, 1973), esp. pp. 309-332. **Multiple Copies.**
- Rhodes, P. J., *A Commentary of Aristotelian Athenaiion Politeia* – this offers notes and discussion on Aristotle’s Athenian Constitution (see sources); if you need help looking up the discussion of a particular passage then come and see me.

Scholarship on the *Frogs*:

- Arnott, W.G., ‘A lesson from the *Frogs*’ *Greece and Rome* 38 (1991), 18-22. **Online at Jstor.**
- ***MacDowell, D.M., *Aristophanes and Athens: an introduction to the plays* (Oxford, 1995). –You will find the chapter on the *Frogs* in this a very helpful starting point. **There are 6 copies in the library, 2 on Day Loan.**
- Moorton, R., ‘Aristophanes on Alcibiades’, *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 29 (1988), 345-359. – **available in the Library.**
- Sommerstein, A.H., ‘Kleophon and the restaging of *Frogs*’ in *Tragedy, Comedy and the polis*, edited by Sommerstein et al. (Bari, 1993), 461-476.
- Worthington, I., ‘Aristophanes’ *Frogs* and Arginusae’ *Hermes* 117 (1989), 359-363. **Online at Jstor.**

Religious element:

- Kearns, E., ‘Religious practice and belief’ in *A Companion to the Classical Greek World* edited by K. Kinzl, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp. 311-326.
- Segal, C.P., ‘The character and cults of Dionysus and the unity of the *Frogs*’, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 65 (1961), 207-242. **Online at Jstor**

General discussions of Aristophanes and politics

- Cartledge, P., *Aristophanes and his Theatre of the Absurd* (Bristol, 1989) – this is a very short book and will give you a good overview.
- De Ste Croix, G.E.M., ‘The political outlook of Aristophanes’, ch. 4 in *Oxford Readings of Aristophanes*, edited by Segal, pp. 42-64.
- Dover, K.J., *Aristophanic Comedy* (Berkeley, 1972).
- Ehrenberg, V., *The People of Aristophanes* (Oxford, 1943). This is now rather dated and I would not recommend it in itself, except that you may find it useful to look at this when you are thinking about approaches that may be taken to comedy as a historical source (Ehrenberg offers an example of an attempt to use Aristophanes as historical evidence).

- Gomme, A.W., 'Aristophanes and Politics', ch. 3 in *Oxford Readings of Aristophanes*, edited by Segal, pp. 29-41.
- Halliwell, S., 'Comic satire and freedom of speech in Classical Athens' *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 111 (1991), 48-70. **Online at Jstor.**
- Henderson, J., 'The demos and the comic competition', in *Nothing to do with Dionysos* edited by J. Winkler and F. Zeitlin (Princeton, NJ, 1990), 271-313. – useful on the relationship between comedy and politics in general. [Also available in Segal *Oxford Readings*, see below].
- Hans-Joachim Newiger, 'War and peace in the comedy of Aristophanes' in *Aristophanes: Essays in Interpretation*, Yale Classical Studies Vol. xxvi, edited by J. Henderson, (Cambridge, 1996), 219-237. [Also available in Segal *Oxford Readings in Aristophanes*, see below] – this discussion focuses on *Peace*, *Lysistrata* and *Acharnians* – so will be helpful if you choose to discuss one of those plays. Be careful not to be side-tracked if you use this (stay focused on the question that you have been asked).
- **MacDowell, D.M., *Aristophanes and Athens: an introduction to the plays* (Oxford, 1995). – this has chapters on each play. When you are branching out and thinking about other plays, the chapter in this (for whichever play you choose to focus on) would be helpful as a starting point. **There are 6 copies in the library, 2 on Day Loan.**
- Redfield, J., 'Comedy, Tragedy, and Politics in Aristophanes "Frogs"', *Chicago Review*, Vol. 15, No. 4, (1962), pp. 107-121. **Online at Jstor.**
- Segal, E., *Oxford Readings in Aristophanes* (Oxford, 1996).
- Sommerstein, A.H., 'Aristophanes and the Events of 411', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 97, (1977), pp. 112-126. **Online at Jstor.**
- Sommerstein, A.H., et al. (eds.), *Tragedy, Comedy and the Polis* (Bari, 1993). – a collection of essays, you will find some helpful discussions in this.
- Vickers, M., *Pericles on Stage: Political Comedy in Aristophanes' Early Plays* (Austin, 1997). – this does not discuss the *Frogs*, but it will be helpful for when you are looking at the other Aristophanic plays.

Tragedy as an historical source:

- Aeschylus, *Persians*, edited by E. Hall (Warminster, 1996).
- Goldhill, S., 'Battle narrative and politics in Aeschylus' *Persae*' *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 108 (1988), 189-193. **Online Jstor.**
- Hammond, N. G. L., 'The battle of Salamis' *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 76 (1956), 32-54. **Online Jstor.**
- Lazenby, J. F., 'Aischylos and Salamis' *Hermes* 116 (1988), 168-85. **Online Jstor.**
- Pelling, C. (ed.), *Greek Tragedy and the Historian* (Oxford, 1997).
- Podlecki, A., *The Political Background of Aeschylean Tragedy* (Ann Arbor, 1966).

All the above are either in the MU Library or on JSTOR

The above bibliography will provide further bibliographies, which will provide further reference to the topic given. The areas touched on above are central to this essay, but they are not exhaustive of what you might include.