



The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy (Cambridge Companions to Literature)

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As a creative medium, ancient Greek tragedy has had an extraordinarily wide influence: many of the surviving plays are still part of the theatrical repertoire, and texts like Agamemnon, Antigone, and Medea have had a profound effect on Western culture. This Companion is not a conventional introductory textbook but an attempt, by seven distinguished scholars, to present the familiar corpus in the context of modern reading, criticism, and performance of Greek tragedy. There are three main emphases: on tragedy as an institution in the civic life of ancient Athens, on a range of different critical interpretations arising from fresh readings of the texts, and on changing patterns of reception, adaptation, and performance from antiquity to the present. Each chapter can be read independently, but each is linked with the others, and most examples are drawn from the same selection of plays.

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Review

"No dry handbook purveying conventional wisdom with an air of authority, this volume is the product of a group of scholars doing some of the most exciting work on Greek tragedy. They contribute essays on such subjects as the civic context of Athenian theater, Dionysus, the composition of the audience, pictorial representations of tragedy, the sociology of tragedy (gender, class), tragic language, and the construction of the plot, concluding with chapters on modern adaptations and performances and recent critical approaches. One may consult the volume on particular topics or read it cover to cover: the essays are lively and the treatments thorough without suppressing individual styles and views....Highly recommended for all classics collections." D. Konstan, Choice

"It is not merely ironic, but a welcome sign of growing theoretical sophistication among classicists, that the book should demonstrate so convincingly the benefits - indeed, the necessity - of studying Greek tragedy from more than merely literary perspectives. The general quality of the essays is remarkably high: they address topics of central interest with both methodological awareness and (where appropriate) command of relevant textual detail. In sum, I believe that serious students of Greek tragedy will find this to be a boon Companion indeed, and will return to their primary texts with excitement and gratitude for a heightened appreciation of tragedy's complex cultural significance." Southern Humanities Review

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