

The final chapter is less systematic, and explores how the ideas that Nietzsche introduced in *BT* reappeared later in his writings as influential concepts like the *Übermensch* and Eternal Recurrence. D. further argues for the importance of Nietzsche's comment in the new preface he wrote for the text in 1886 that 'It ought to have *sung*, this "new soul", and not talked! What a pity it is that I did not dare say what I had to say at that time as a poet; perhaps I could have done it!' (cited at p. 181). Riffing on this line, D. suggests that Nietzsche's project of reevaluating Schopenhauerian philosophy through the example of the Greeks gained its most powerful articulation in the work of two poets: Rainer Maria Rilke and Nietzsche himself. The introduction of Rilke is excellent, in that it brings together two figures who are all-too-rarely juxtaposed in discussions of classical reception; though Nietzsche's poetry is of lower quality, its inclusion speaks to the broad scope of D.'s engagement with the Nietzschean corpus. The chapter ends with a more general discussion of the reception of Nietzsche's work in classical music, before segueing into a helpful timeline of Nietzsche's life and works that includes both philological and philosophical pieces.

D.'s text is best suited to undergraduates: it introduces the relationship between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche lucidly, and its lively tone and straightforward structure are well-aimed at its desired audience. It is therefore a very good addition to the field, particularly compared with the other possible guidebooks for readers of *BT*, such as Silk and Stern's seminal *Nietzsche on Tragedy* (1981), which are less systematic and demand more prior knowledge. As classical reception continues to grow in its rigour and its reach, more and more classics undergraduates will encounter Nietzsche's enigmatic ideas and will require the 'little explaining' that Nietzsche's sister recognised she had to offer over a century ago. By helping his readers to discern the structures of the philosophical tradition that made *BT* possible, D. has created a resource that will allow future generations to engage fruitfully with this sometimes infuriating but ever enthralling text.

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TRAGEDY ON SCREEN

MICHELAKIS (P.) *Greek Tragedy on Screen*. Pp. xii + 267, ills. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Cased, £55, US\$125. ISBN: 978-0-19-923907-8.

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This is an excellent book – highly recommended for anyone interested in analysis of how Greek tragedy has fared on the big screen. It is thoroughly researched; the level of analysis is very deep, but it is so well-written that it flows easily, even in its thick-description, and keeps one engaged. It is informative and persuasive, and above all, it makes one want to watch movies involving Greek tragedy, amply discussed in the text, with which one may not be familiar.

Classicists interested in film tend to sort into two types: (1) those who focus on the consideration of reasonably straightforward classical elements in movies, and (2) those who seek classical elements that are far from obvious in film sources that do not appear, at first glance, to have any classical allusions at all. I am (as an archaeologist who has developed and taught courses in classics and cinema) of the first camp; M. is very much of the second. As daunting as such a work as this from the second camp proves to be for those of

us of the first camp, I would have to say that I came away quite satisfied and, more importantly, educated.

The basic purpose of the book is to answer '[t]he need for reconsidering the generic, temporal, and conceptual boundaries for the relation between film and Greek tragedy' (p. 4). This is done in terms of three 'overarching concerns': first, the position of Greek tragedy in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and its reception on screen (p. 6); second the diversity of methods, technologies and practices in films of Greek tragedy (p. 7); and third the 'workings and politics of film adaptation' (p. 8). There are many elements to the conclusion of the study, but one that stands out is the idea that films engaged with Greek tragedy oscillate technologically between providing 'smoothness' of dramatic flow as well as 'realities of shock' (p. 219). In a very basic sense, that is precisely the appeal of Greek tragedy and the cinema as dramatic art forms. M.'s initial goal is met in impressive fashion and represents a thoughtful and significant contribution to the area of reception studies.

The nine chapters have (with one exception) single word titles, given here in order: 'Spectatorship', 'Canonicity', 'Adaptation', 'Word and Image', 'Media', 'Genre', 'History', 'Time' and 'Space'. The chapter on spectatorship includes a very novel (and gutsy) analysis of the silent film, *The Legend of Oedipus* (1913) directed by Gaston Roudès, based on a couple of stills from publicity for the film and a few seconds of existing footage. In contrast to Sophocles, 'Oedipus is not a detective but more of an action hero' (p. 28). From the outset, M. establishes the importance of multiple readings and multivalence. For him, the key to spectatorship is the difference in positions of the viewer (p. 31); in regard to adaptation, using Jules Dassin's *A Dream of Passion* (1978), we are told that 'films can activate a number of different methods' and we are given a list: 'celebration' of Euripides' play, 'updating' of the play, 'adjustment' of the play, 'commentary' on the play, superimposition of 'conventions of art-house cinema' and a 'dense web of references' that 'complements' the play (p. 65), creating an 'endless number of modes, models and strategies' (p. 79) illustrated by the choice of movies.

Michael Cacoyannis's *Electra* (1962) and *Iphigenia* (1977) are prominently featured; as well as Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Oedipus the King* (1967) and *Medea* (1969); Jules Dassin's *A Dream of Passion* (1978); Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet's *Antigone of Sophocles after Hölderlin's Translation Adapted for Stage by Brecht* (Suhrkamp Verlag 1948) (1992); Gregory Markopoulos's *The Illiac Passion* (1967); Werner Herzog's *My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done?* (2009); Woody Allen's *Mighty Aphrodite* (1995); Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* (1966); Miklós Jancsó's *Electra, My Love* (1974); Tony Harrison's *Prometheus* (1998); Lars von Trier's *Medea* (1988); and Toshio Matsumoto's *Funeral Parade of Roses* (1969).

A sampling of the treatment of these is all that can be provided here. Cacoyannis' *Iphigenia* is described as melodrama. Given that is largely a pejorative term, I did not like this very much; however, M. argues powerfully why he accepts that characterisation. In the end, he uses that example, and the example of the comedy *Mighty Aphrodite* as Greek tragedy to demonstrate 'the ambiguity and instability of genres as categorical descriptions' (p. 148) which fits in with the theme of multiple readings. In treating the difficult films *Antigone of Sophocles etc.* and *The Illiac Passion* ('they refuse to be didactic – let alone entertaining ... there is a sense of subjectless affectivity ... a movie that can be alienating' [pp. 98–9]), M. manages to redeem them somewhat with the observation that they are part of 'a fight against the canonization of content through the renewal of form' (p. 102) even though their 'very systematic and rational way of approaching the text through sounds and images is devoted to its undoing' (p. 104). Finally, in discussing Harrison's *Prometheus* and the film *Germany in Autumn*, M. illustrates the strong connections between photography, history and the cinema, noting that the strength of the cinema

for history is to be able to present realistic re-creations that allow speculation on what happened in the past (p. 169).

Of course there is plenty of discussion of Aristotle's *Poetics*, including the idea that commercial scriptwriting (p. 44) and '[t]he definition and legitimization of the "classical Hollywood narrative" is heavily indebted to Aristotle' (p. 172). That merely shows how peripatetic Aristotle really has proved, given that Dorothy Sayers, famously in 1936 ('Aristotle on Detective Fiction' *English* 1[1], 23–35), wrote an article stating that Aristotle had provided the best template for detective fiction. One interesting elaboration of the place of Aristotle is the idea that the *deus ex machina* is, in a couple of the films reviewed, played by a helicopter. Of course Aristotle denounced Euripides' use of the *deus*, but M. comments that the directors of certain films have used the helicopter (and other aspects of their films) in order to 'highlight its role as an essential ingredient of a dissonant aesthetic' (p. 220). So, there is much fruitful pushing of the envelope of the connections between Aristotle and cinema (even horror films and westerns are mentioned as connected to the rubrics of Greek tragedy and Aristotle's *Poetics*).

One tiny quibble: in a book that abounds with discussion of actors and their performances, I think it odd that the cover, a screen capture of Maria Callas in the role of Medea in Pier Paolo Pasolini's film of that name, mentions her solely in passing on a single page – without discussion of her performance or interpretation of the character.

The afterword ties all the threads effectively together, with the last paragraph recapitulating the various strands of exploration: Greek tragedy broken down into its constituent parts; as an art form interacting with dance, theatre and television; modernised by association with comedy and melodrama; as associated with theatricality and performativity; as a tool for productivity, violence or the shaping of gender identities; as a figurative device working with the narratives of history; and as a structure for conceptualising time and space, fulfilment and redemption, fear, desire and modernity (p. 225). M. asks 'where does Greek tragedy end?' (p. 224). Thankfully, he has answered that question thoroughly for the moment, but in such a way as to make us look forward to the continuing journey of Greek tragedy – and film – into our collective future.

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CINEMATIC GREEK WOMEN

NIKOLOUTSOS (K.P.) (ed.) *Ancient Greek Women in Film*. Pp. xiv + 376, ills. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Cased, £80, US\$160. ISBN: 978-0-19-967892-1.

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From the distinguished *Classical Presences* series at Oxford University Press comes a new volume of thirteen essays on the representation of ancient Greek women in cinema. In his introduction, N. provides a thoughtful explanation of the scholarly goals of the collection in combining the theoretical and methodological approaches of two major interdisciplinary fields: classical reception studies and gender studies. While many of the screen texts under consideration here – from mainstream Hollywood movies to independent films to television productions – have been explored in-depth elsewhere, the innovation of this volume is to gather together and juxtapose these cinematic portrayals of Greek women in thematic units, allowing the reader to trace not only their reception history across time, place and