



Through this he makes reasonable judgements about the forms of knowledge on which these ancient observations are based. Sommerstein discusses stage directions found in manuscripts of Greek drama and argues convincingly that some indications of non-linguistic vocalisations in the manuscripts of Aeschylus' tragedies may have been made by the author. The argument builds on the fact that the indicated vocalisations cannot be deduced from the text. This is a good reason to believe that they originate from someone who had close knowledge of either the first or a later performance, but, in my view, not necessarily the author himself.

Although concern for performance has become a natural part of much research on Greek drama, there is still need for studies that focus on performance and the relationship between text and staging. This volume is an excellent example of such scholarship and is therefore a most welcome contribution. The work, however, is just beginning, as all the chapters raise new and interesting questions. It is therefore my hope that the book, as is hinted in the acknowledgements by Totaro, may be followed by further volumes on similar topics.

*MF Norwegian School of Theology,  
Religion and Society*

ROBERT EMIL BERGE  
robert.e.berge@mf.no

## GREEK TRAGEDY THEN AND NOW

LIAPIS (V.), SIDIROPOULOU (A.) (edd.) *Adapting Greek Tragedy. Contemporary Contexts for Ancient Texts*. Pp. x+436, colour ill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Cased, £90, US\$120. ISBN: 978-1-107-15570-1.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X23002238

In the last few decades scholarship on the rich afterlife of Greek tragedy has grown exponentially. In contrast to volumes focused on adaptations of Greek tragedy in specific national contexts and geographical areas or on the reception of individual plays, Liapis and Sidiropoulou's new collection focuses on the 'contemporary', that is, on the period spanning the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries. This focus on the 'now' is tricky, as the editors acknowledge from the outset. However, as they argue, this choice coheres with recent developments in processes of adaptation: the last few decades have witnessed a series of key shifts in theatre, notably a move away from approaches grounded in the text and towards those that centre performance and visual aspects. The volume contains a neat blend of the theoretical and the practical, as can be seen by chapters that query the vocabulary and theories typically associated with adaptation processes as well as interviews with theatre practitioners on their craft and creative vision for Greek tragedy. Overall, the volume should prove useful for students and scholars interested in exploring the thorny question of how to stage Greek drama today.

Despite the contemporary focus of the bulk of the volume, Liapis opens with a 'prelude' that provides a historical overview of the reception of tragedy from antiquity to the present day. In my view, this prelude is indispensable to anyone seeking a rapid and brief account of the complex and varied afterlives of Greek tragedy since the fifth century BCE. The sections concerned with early modern and modern versions of tragedy,

from the Renaissance to the nineteenth century, understandably focus on the multiple adaptations that have been produced in Western Europe, predominantly Britain, France and Germany. When it comes to twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the focus is helpfully broadened to include a handful of examples from elsewhere in Europe (namely, Greece and Italy), the Americas, Asia and Africa. As such, this overview will be a valuable resource in the classroom.

Equally useful is the first set of chapters in Part 1, 'Adapting Greek Tragedy: Definitions, Conceptual Foundations, Ethics'. K. Krebs interrogates our vocabulary for 'adaptation' and related terms such as 'rewriting' and 'version', which are often interchangeably used but less frequently interrogated (Chapter 1). Through a series of case studies stemming from contemporary theatre practice and its reception, Krebs offers useful clarifications and framings, which help understand what is at stake when using certain terms. For example, she makes clear that invoking the term 'adaptation' is to assume a particular structured relationship (hierarchical and/or temporal) between the written and the embodied text. P. Meineck interrogates the 'fidelity discourse' – the idea of a play's faithfulness often used as a marker of an adaptation's success – in relation to Greek drama (Chapter 2). As he points out, this is impossible for ancient plays given that the 'original' version does not exist and that tragedians redrafted and rewrote mythical narratives. Instead, he proposes that adaptations be celebrated for their creative nature. L. Hardwick delves into translation theory and practice and considers the affinities between translation and adaptation practices, while exploring the blurry lines between the two when staging Greek drama (Chapter 3). Conceiving of adaptation as a 'love affair', Sidiropoulou discusses the ethics involved in directing the Greeks. This chapter, which closes the section, provides a good if at times impassioned discussion that extends the impact of the fidelity discourse on directing and especially the negative response that more radical tinkering with the original might receive. Unstated yet underpinning Sidiropoulou's view of adaptation as a 'love affair' is the cultural capital that these texts wield, especially in the Global North, from which all the examples are taken. In my view, a postcolonial frame would have enriched this discussion – potentially challenging the notion of 'love'.

Part 2 explores 'Adaptation on the Page and on the Stage: Re-Inscribing the Greek Classics'. An 'interlude' focused on Sidiropoulou's interviews with select theatre practitioners (Charles L. Mee, Suzuki Tadashi, Ivo Van Hove) opens this section. The rest of the chapters examine a diverse range of case studies. These include various geographical contexts ranging from Australia (J. Montgomery Griffiths, Chapter 7) to modern Greece (A. Bakogianni, Chapter 12) as well as methodological explorations, including the possibilities offered by archival work in reconstructing and interpreting modern adaptations (A. Lecznar, Chapter 6) and the role of technology and media in live theatre (P.A. Campbell, Chapter 8).

Given the wealth of scholarship that exists on global receptions and especially on Greek tragedy's rich and complex afterlife, the coverage is rather un-even. It is clear that the editors attempted to expand beyond the usual contexts; as I noted above, Liapis's prelude includes a more global outlook when discussing Greek tragedy's afterlife in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In general, many of the productions and adaptations that contributors use as a reference point tend to be British and London-based (e.g. Peter Hall's *Oresteia*, Sarah Kane's *Phaedra Love*, Robert Icke's *Oresteia*). Sidiropoulou's list of 'renowned directors' are all Western European and North American, except for Suzuki Tadashi (p. 134). More problematic in my view is the decision to limit discussion of 'non-Western' and 'postcolonial' performance cultures to two chapters (E. Fischer-Lichte and E. Steinmeyer, Chapters 10 and 11 respectively). This means that, beyond these two chapters and the prelude by Liapis, there is almost nothing on

engagements with Greek tragedy in Africa and Latin America, on which there is an extended and accessible body of research projects and scholarship in English. The sole exception is Hardwick's discussion of how translation and adaption intersect in Yaël Farber's *Molora*. This is a missed opportunity: as stated above, engagement with postcolonial theories would have enriched the discussion in some chapters. The volume also neglects to engage with avant-garde and experimental practices in countries with vibrant theatrical cultures such as Argentina and Brazil (not mentioned in the book). Given the volume's aims in clarifying theories and vocabularies of adaptation – a global practice –, it is worrisome that the main building blocks and key case studies stem from such a small sample.

Despite this emphasis on tragedy in the Global North, the volume delivers what it promises, and it often does so quite well. Those seeking a good orientation in the topic of adapting Greek drama will especially benefit from the blend of academic and practical concerns that can be found throughout the volume (e.g. Meineck draws from his performance project work with Aquila Theatre, Montgomery Griffiths provides a personal account of her experience in a production of *Antigone*). Readers wishing to investigate recent trends in both Greek tragic reception and broader theatrical practices will not be disappointed.

King's College London

ROSA ANDÚJAR  
[rosa.andujar@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:rosa.andujar@kcl.ac.uk)

## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF GREEK TRAGEDY

RODOSTHENOUS (G.), POULOU (A.) (edd.) *Greek Tragedy and the Digital*. Pp. x + 226, ills. London and New York: Methuen Drama, 2023. Cased, £85, US\$115. ISBN: 978-1-350-18585-2.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X23001841

Scholarship on antiquity's reception in digital media (film, gaming etc.) has been on the upswing. With COVID-19 and its resultant lockdowns necessitating digital turns across disciplines, Greek tragedy has found itself in the digital realm, as demonstrated with the publication of *Greek Tragedy in a Global Crisis* (2023) by volume contributor M. Telò.

Rodosthenous and Poulou here extend Rodosthenous's 2017 edited volume *Contemporary Adaptations of Greek Tragedy: Auteurship and Directorial Visions* (with several contributors returning: G. Sampatakakis, A. Sidiropoulou and M. McDonald) into this collection. Where the 2017 volume sourced its code predominantly from examinations of specific productions, directors and adaptive choices, this volume instead walks a line between theatrical close reading and theory of the digital, living up to the *and* of its title; this is not Greek tragedy *in* the digital, and indeed the digital world is placed on equal footing with the tragic. Digital theory and media are taken on their own terms, and it is inspiring to see the sort of thoughtful work that truly interdisciplinary scholarship can create.

The volume raises intriguing questions concerning not simply the meeting of Greek tragedy and digital media, but the performative and theoretical possibilities that arise