

GREEK DRAMA IV
TEXTS, CONTEXTS, PERFORMANCE

Edited by

David Rosenbloom and John Davidson

With the assistance of Arthur Pomeroy and Babette Pütz



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PREFACE

In 1982 the first of what was to become a series of conferences in the Antipodes on Greek Drama took place at the University of Sydney, Australia. It was followed in 1992 by Greek Drama II, held at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. The third conference in the series returned to the University of Sydney in 2002. Revised versions of selected papers from this conference were published as J. Davidson, F. Muecke, and P. Wilson (eds), *Greek Drama III: Essays in Honour of Kevin Lee*. BICS Supplement 87. London 2006. The pattern of a ten-year interval between conferences was broken when Greek Drama IV was held at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, from 3–6 July 2007. On this occasion, delegates drawn from eleven countries presented thirty-five papers. This volume consists for the most part of a selection of papers from this conference, all revised and in some cases radically so. One of the contributing delegates, Laura Swift, has contributed a paper entirely different from the one she gave at the conference. Judith Fletcher's contribution originated in a paper delivered at a conference organized by Robert Wallace of Northwestern University, 'Law and Drama in Ancient Athens', which took place in Antalya, Turkey from 26–27 October 2008. Victoria Wohl, a contributing delegate at that conference, agreed to submit a paper on Euripides' *Orestes* for this volume.

Abbreviations of journals follow those adopted in *L'Année Philologique*, with the substitution of 'P' for 'Ph'. Abbreviations of ancient Greek and Roman authors and works are those used in LSJ⁹ and the *OLD* respectively, with a few exceptions, such as *Poet.* for *Po.* (*Poetics*) and Plut. for Plu. (Plutarch). As for the intractable problem of transliterating Greek names, places, and words, the editors have allowed contributors to use their own style, but have sought to ensure a more or less consistent application of principle throughout each paper. Given the nature of this volume, and the increasing use of library document delivery services for the delivery of book chapters in pdf format to the desktop (as well as other means of reproduction), each paper contains its own bibliographical references listed at the end of the chapter. Abbreviated titles are listed under 'Abbreviations' and 'Works Cited' under that rubric.

We would like to acknowledge the editorial assistance of Babette Pütz and Arthur Pomeroy in the early stages of the project. Our thanks are also due to Brigitte Le Guen for giving permission to publish the English version of the Csapo/Wilson paper which

was first published as E. Csapo and P. Wilson, 'Le passage de la chorégie à l'agonothésie à Athènes à la fin du IV^e siècle', in B. Le Guen, ed., *L'Argent dans les concours du monde grec* (Presses universitaires de Vincennes, Paris 2010) 83–105. Thanks too to Clare Litt and Julie Gardiner at Oxbow, and to the Oxbow reader Chris Collard for corrections and helpful suggestions. Finally, we are grateful to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Research Committee for a grant and to our colleague Dr Simon Perris for his keen proof-reading and compilation of the indices.

David Rosenbloom

John Davidson

January 2011

CONTRIBUTORS

Christiaan Leopold Caspers has just completed a PhD dissertation on ideas about language in Euripides. He teaches Greek and Latin at the Murmellius Gymnasium in Alkmaar, the Netherlands. He has published on Greek epic, drama, and Hellenistic poetry.

Eric Csapo is Professor of Classics at the University of Sydney, Australia, and author of *Theories of Mythology* (Blackwell, 2005) and *Actors and Icons of the Ancient Theater* (Wiley/Blackwell, 2010).

John Davidson retired in July 2009 as Professor of Classics at Victoria University of Wellington. He has published widely on Greek tragedy, especially the connections between Sophocles and Euripides and the Homeric texts, and on the reception of the Classics in New Zealand literature.

Judith Fletcher is Associate Professor in the Department of History at Wilfrid Laurier University, in Waterloo, Ontario. She is the author of *Performing Oaths in Classical Greek Drama* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), and co-editor of *Virginité Revisited* (University of Toronto Press, 2007), and *Horkos: The Oath in Greek Society* (University of Exeter Press, 2007). She has published numerous articles and chapters on Greek drama, epic poetry and the Classical Tradition.

Jane Montgomery Griffiths is a theatre practitioner and academic. She is Senior Lecturer in the Centre for Performance Studies at Monash University and author of the play *Sappho ... in 9 Fragments* (Currency Press, 2010) as well as numerous articles and chapters on Greek drama and its reception.

Sue Hamstead is a lecturer in Classics at the University of Leeds, England, and has completed a book manuscript entitled *Off-Stage Characters in Greek Tragedy*.

Georgia Xanthakis-Karamanos is Professor of Ancient Greek Literature and Chair of the Faculty of Philology at the University of Peloponnese, Greece. She has published books on Greek drama and oratory – *Studies in Fourth-Century Tragedy* (Athens, 1980); *Demosthenes Against Meidias* (Athens, 1988); *Parallel Developments in Postclassical Tragedy and Comedy* (Athens, 1991); *Dramatica* (Athens, 2004) – and many articles on drama, oratory, lyric poetry, Greek language and reception. She is the editor of the periodical *Platon*.

Harry Love is Honorary Fellow and Tutor in Classics at the University of Otago, New Zealand and author of *Introductions and Translations to the Plays of Sophocles and Euripides* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006). He has worked extensively in professional and community theatre, with a particular emphasis on bringing Greek drama to the stage.

C. W. Marshall is Associate Professor of Greek and Roman Theatre at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. He is the author of *The Stagecraft and Performance of Roman Comedy* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), and has edited, among other books, *Classics and Comics* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming) with George Kovacs.

Patrick O'Sullivan is Senior Lecturer in Classics at the University of Canterbury, NZ. He has published on varied aspects of Greek Literature as well as on Greek and Roman art and is co-author with Chris Collard of *Euripides' Cyclops* and *Major Fragments of Greek Satyric Drama* (Oxbow, forthcoming).

David Rosenbloom is Senior Lecturer of Classics at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand and author of *Aeschylus: Persians* (Duckworth, 2006). He has published widely on Greek tragedy, comedy, history, and oratory.

Alan H. Sommerstein is Professor of Greek in the University of Nottingham, England. He is the author of *Greek Drama and Dramatists* (Routledge, 2002), *Aeschylean Tragedy* (Duckworth, 2010, 2nd edn), *Talking about Laughter* (Oxford University Press, 2009) and *The Tangled Ways of Zeus* (Oxford University Press, 2010). He has edited Aeschylus (Loeb Classical Library, 2008), Aristophanes (Aris & Philips, 1980–2002) and (with collaborators) two volumes of fragmentary plays of Sophocles (Aris & Philips, 2006–11). He is now preparing, with five collaborators, a two-volume study of *The Oath in Archaic and Classical Greece*.

Laura Swift is a Leverhulme Fellow at University College London, having previously taught at New College, Oxford and Trinity College, Oxford. She is the author of *Euripides: Ion* (Duckworth, 2008) and *The Hidden Chorus: Echoes of Genre in Tragic Lyric* (Oxford University Press, 2010), and has also published articles on Greek tragedy and lyric poetry.

Giulia Torello is Lecturer in Classical Studies at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. Her research interests focus on ancient drama, with particular emphasis on Old Comedy.

Peter Wilson is the William Ritchie Professor of Classics and the Director of the Centre for Classical and Near Eastern Studies of Australia at the University of Sydney. He is the author of *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: the Chorus, the City and the Stage* (Cambridge University Press, 2000; paperback, 2003).

Victoria Wohl is Professor of Classics at the University of Toronto. She is the author of *Intimate Commerce: Exchange, Gender, and Subjectivity in Greek Tragedy* (University of Texas Press, 1998), *Love Among the Ruins: The Erotics of Democracy in Classical Athens* (Princeton University Press, 2002), and *Law's Cosmos: Juridical Discourse in Athenian Forensic Oratory* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

INTRODUCTION

David Rosenbloom

This introduction situates *Greek Drama IV: Texts, Contexts, Performance* within the current state of scholarship on ancient Greek drama, and in particular seeks to sketch the ramifications of the contemporary dominance of 'performance' as a category of analysis. After a brief description of the volume's contents, it argues that Aristotle's treatment of tragedy in the *Poetics* entails the priority of competitive performance to the act of reading a tragic text: while the experience of tragedy does not require 'gestures and postures' (*schêmata*) and 'motion' (*kinêsis*) in performance to achieve its effect, the poet must elaborate his composition in precisely these *schêmata* and work them out for performance. Composition for a reader can be risky: performances fail for reasons a reader cannot determine. But because tragedy works as performance, it works as text in the act of reading; and Aristotle repeatedly uses examples of failed performances to justify his poetics.¹ Moreover – and here his theory is not quite so advanced as his critical practice – the conditions of competitive performance impose the very constraints on the genre that justify Aristotle's contention that tragedy achieves its aim more efficiently and powerfully than epic.

Aristotle's theory sets the stage for two allied but sometimes antagonistic contemporary approaches to the analysis of the texts, performances, and contexts of ancient drama in the contemporary academy: performance criticism and performance culture. These approaches exist in creative tension; but given the nature of drama as an evanescent performance and as a durable text, as a closed and highly artificial circuit of communication and as an institution embedded in a wider culture of competitive performance, they are co-dependent. The contingencies that enable dramatic performances and inform their meaning are highly reticulated – poetic genres and intertexts (epic, lyric, iambic, tetrameter, tragedy, and comedy), religious attitudes and practices, socio-economic ideologies, political practices and performances, past and contemporary events and trends. Audiences possess what recent

¹ Scott (1999) is a sympathetic but unconvincing attempt to argue a stronger version of this thesis. He argues that the power of tragedy for Aristotle is realizable only in performance; but he does not appreciate what 'competitive performance' entails (see esp. 34), does not adequately discuss how Aristotle aligns his poetics with performance, and suppresses Aristotle's statement that a tragedy can communicate its effect by being read. Cf. Halliwell (1986) 343 for a statement of Aristotle's view.