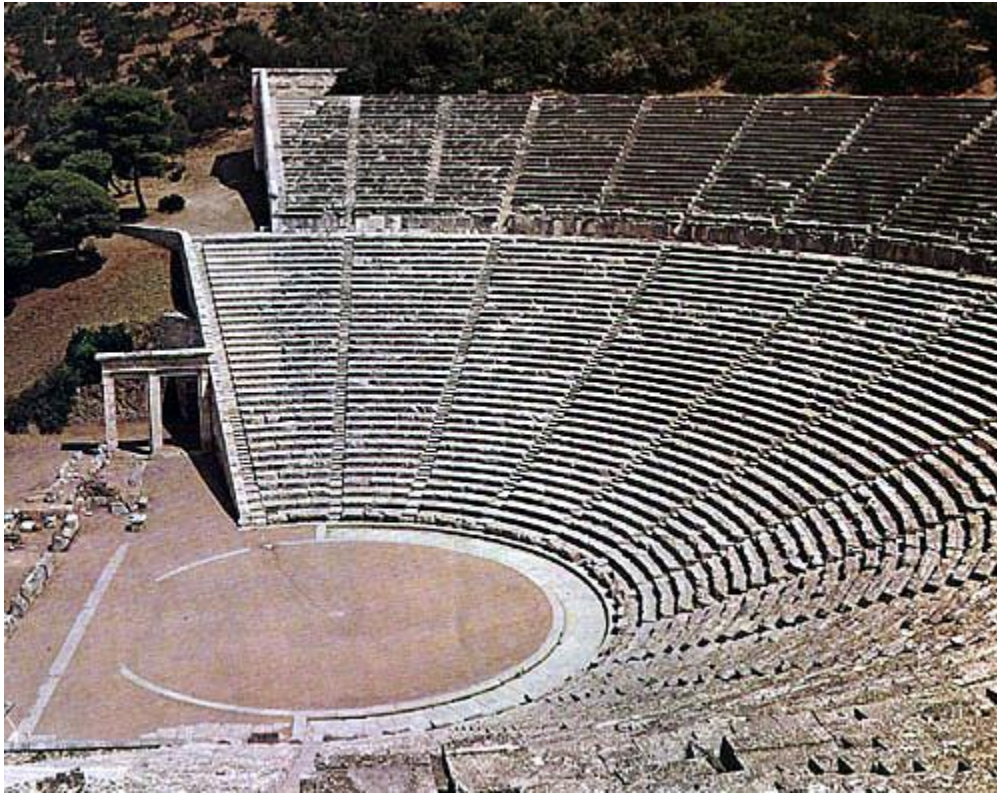


READING ANCIENT GREEK TRAGEDY WITH TOBY ZINMAN



Atrocities: Infanticide, matricide, patricide, suicide, incest, cannibalism. Then horrifying revenge: war, ruined cities, murder after murder, rage and mayhem. Nearly 3000 years later, we can still see the bloody footprints of ancient Greek tragedy in some of the most ravishing plays ever written. Our focus will be on the three mighty tragedians and their most famous plays: *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus, *Oedipus* by Sophocles, and *Medea* by Euripides.

Texts:

Just in case you recall reading musty Victorian translations, I recommend these contemporary translations that breathe life again into these thrilling plays:

*Ted Hughes's *Agamemnon* (in *The Oresteia of Aeschylus: A New Translation*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, ISBN-10 : 0374527059)

*Robert Fagles's *Oedipus* (in *The Three Theban Plays: Antigone; Oedipus the King; Oedipus at Colonus*, Penguin Classics, ISBN-10 : 0140444254)

* Eleanor Wilner's *Medea* (in *Euripides, 1: Medea, Hecuba, Andromache, the Bacchae (Penn Greek Drama Series)* University of Pennsylvania Press, ISBN-10: 0812216261)

4 sessions on Zoom: Thursdays Apr 8, Apr 29, May 13, May 27 | 6:30–8:30 p.m.
You will receive the Zoom link before the first meeting.

Reading schedule

April 8

Week #1: “The glory that was Greece,” known with good reason as “the cradle of Western civilization,” having given birth to democracy, architecture, medicine, philosophy, the Olympics, and theatre.

April 29

#2: *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus. This is the first play in the trilogy called The Oresteia, and it’s about the powerful general’s return from the Trojan War after ten years.

May 13

#3: *Oedipus* by Sophocles. This is the play Aristotle used as his model for tragedy. It’s about what happened after the young Oedipus met King Laius at the crossroads. We will, necessarily, give a nod to Freud.

May 27

#4: *Medea* by Euripides. The most radical of the three playwrights, most often taking the side of women in his misogynistic world. This play just about defines “hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.”

About the instructor

Toby Zinman is a recently retired Professor of English at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia; she was a Fulbright professor at Tel Aviv University and a visiting professor in China; she publishes widely and lectures internationally on American drama; her fifth book, *Replay: Classic Modern Drama Reimagined* (Methuen), and her essay, “American Theatre Since 1990” is included in the newly published, *Visions of Tragedy in Modern American Drama*.

Toby Zinman is also the chief theater critic for the Philadelphia *Inquirer* where she reviews New York and London as well as Philadelphia. She was named by *American Theatre* magazine, “one of the twelve most influential critics in America.” For The Rosenbach she recently taught Stage to Screen: Great Films from Great Plays.