

# GSEM 619 Death and Beyond: Ancient Greece and China

Wednesday, 24, Carpenter 15

Professorodie Shi

Office: Old Library 239

Phone: 5344

jshi1@brynmawr.edu

Office Hours: TTh 4-5 pm

or by appointment

Professor Radcliffe G. Edmonds

Office: Old Library 245

Phone: 5046

redmonds@brynmawr.edu

Office Hours: TThF 1:00-2:00

or by appointment

## Required Texts:

- x Garland, Robert, *The Greek Way of Death*, Cornell University Press: New York, 2001
- x Olberding, Amy and Philip Ivanhoe, *Mortality in Traditional Chinese Thought*, Albany: SUNY, 2012.
- x van Gennep, Arnold, *Rites of Passage*, M.B. Vizedom & G. L. Caffee, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1960.

## Course Description:

The question of what happens after the moment of death has always troubled humanity. At one moment there is a living person, the next only a corpse; where did the person go? Every culture struggles with these questions of death and afterlife. What does it mean to die and what happens after death? This seminar will examine a variety of types of evidence: archaeological, poetic, and philosophical -



Week 3. February 6 Death in China: Perspectives on Death

Topics:

- Is there a heroic death in China?
- Good death and bad death

Primary Readings:

Confucius, Analects Book 11

Sima Qian, "Letter to Ren'an" and Biography of Boyi and Shuqi" "Biography of Nie Zheng"

Wang Chong (1962) "On Death," 191-201.

Secondary Readings:

Durrant (2016), Intro; Ch. 3 51-

- Lex Sacra from Selinous
- Funeral ritual in different periods
  - Sourvinouhnwood 1983, A Trauma in Flux; Appendix to Reading Greek Death
  - Morris 1989, Attitudes toward Death in Archaic Greece
  - Nilsson Stutz 2015, A Proper Burial
- Lamentation
  - Alexiou1974 Ritual Lament ch.9 (on reserve in Carpenter)
  - Hame2008, Female Control
- Funeral Legislation
  - Garland1989, The well-ordered corpse
  - Stears 2008, Death Becomes Her
  - Toher1991, Greek funerary legislation and the two Spartan funerals
- Marriage and Death
  - Seaford1987, The Tragic Wedding
  - Rehm1994, Marriage to Death, ch 1
  - Sourvinouhnwood 1978, Persephone and Aphrodite at Locri
  - Redfield2003, Locrian Maidens

Week 5. February 20 Diminality for the Community in China: The Funeral Ritual and Mourning

Topics:

- Reinforcing kinship
- Serving the Dead as if they were alive
- Filial Piety

Primary Readings:

Steele (1917), vol. 2, 45-105, chapters on shisang and jixi rituals.  
 Watson (2003), 112-4. Xunzi, "A Discussion of Rites"

Secondary Readings:

Olberding (2008)  
 Brown (2007)

Special Topics:

- Division of Souls
  - Brashie (1996)
- Corpse Preservation
  - Thorp (1991)
  - Brown (2002)
- Imagery of the liminal door and sexuality
  - Goldin (2001)

Week 6. February 27 Diminality for the Deceased in Greece: The Journey and its Perils

Topics:

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Primary Readings:

Odyssey 10-11, 24

Necromancy in Keston Julius Africanus & Aeschylus' Persians

Pausanias IX.39 on the Trophonius Oracle

Plutarch, de gen. Socris 589f-592f

'Orphic' Gold Tablets

Aristophanes, Frogs

Plato, Phaedo

Secondary Readings

Garland, ch. 4

Johnston 1999, ch. 3

Vermeulen 1979 ch. 6

Special Topics:

- failed transitions – demons and the restless dead

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Week8. March 13

Primary Readings:

Watson (2003), 97-12. "Explaining Ghost"

Wang (1962), 23-49. "All about the Ghosts"

Liu (2018) "The Realm of Ghosts"

Secondary Readings:

Poo (2008)

Poo (1995), 4-68.

Poo (2000)

Sterckx (2013)

Campany (1991)

Special Topics:

- Aveng

- Philosophical Consolations
  - [Plato] Axiochus
  - Plutarch, Consolatio ad Apollonium
  - BoysStones 2013, The Consolatio ad Apollonium
  - Therapy for the Dead

Week12. April 10 Beyond the Afterlife: Remembrance and Ancestral Worship in China

Topics:

- Memory and Identity
- Ancestor
- Death, Time, and Transformation

Primary Readings:

Cook(2016), 92-100. Shi Qiang Pan  
 Shaughnessy(2007)  
 Ebrey(1980)

Secondary Readings:

Falkenhausen (1993) 1-66. Ch 1.  
 Brasher (2011)  
 Bokenkamp, 32. Chs. 4 and 5 (Connect on Tripod)

Special Topics:

- Remembrance and Forgetting
  - Owen(1986), Ch. 2.
- Stelae
  - Brashier(2004),vol. 2,102759.
- Mortality and immortality
  - Shi (2012)

Week13. April 17 Beyond the Afterlife: Reincarnation or Nothing in Greece

Topics:

- Alternatives to the Underworld
- Atomism and the afterlife
- Ethicization of reincarnation

Primary Readings:

Diogenes Laertius



Epicurus Letter to Menoecius  
Warren, Facing death: Epicurus and (his crisis in Carpenter)

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## Bibliography

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- Brashier, K.E. (1996) "Han Thanatology and the Division of 'Southeastern' Early China" *Early China* 21: 125-58.
- (2011) *Ancestral Memory in Early China*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard East Asia Center
- (2004) "Eastern Han Commemorative Stelae: Laying the Cornerstones of Public Memory." In *Early Chinese Religion*, edited by Lagerwey and Kalinowski, 2: 1027-59. Leiden: Brill
- Brown, Miranda (2002) "Did the Early Chinese Preserve Corpses? A Reconsideration of Elite Conceptions of Death" *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 10: 1-23.
- (2007) *The Politics of Mourning in China*. Albany: SUNY
- Durrant, Stephen, Waiyee Li, Michael Nylan, and Hans van Es (2016). *The Letter to Ren An and Sima Qian's Legend* (2016), Intro; Ch. 3, 1-70.
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- Cedzich, Ursula Angelika

-- (2012).

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- Baltzly, Dirk (2013). Proclus and Theodore of Asine on female philosophy, patriarchy, metempsychosis and women in the neoplatonic commentary tradition. *Ancient Philosophy* 33:240-264.
- Bernabé, Alberto (2015). What is the *Timaeus*? *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 47:1-24.

Humphreys, S. C. (1993). Family Tombs & Tomb Cult . The family, women and death : a comparative study. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press: 79-34.

Johnston, S. I. and F. Graf (2007). Ritual Texts for the Afterlife. Orpheus and the Bacchic Liturgy. London and New York: Routledge.

Johnston, Sarah Iles (1995). Defining the Dreadful: Remembrance of the Greek Child-Killing Demon. Ancient Macedonia

- Sourvinou-Inwood, Christiane (1978). Persephone and Aphrodite at Locri: A Model for Personality Definitions in Greek Religion. *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 98: 101-121.
- Sourvinou-Inwood, Christiane (1981). To Die and Enter the House of Hades: Homer, Before and After. *Mirrors of Mortality: Studies in the Social History of Death*. Wiley, New York, St. Martin's Press: 15-39.
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- Sourvinou-Inwood, Christiane (1995). *Reading' Greek Death*. Clarendon Press: Oxford.
- Stears, Karer (2008). "Death Becomes Her: Gender and Athenian Death Ritual." In *Studies in the Ancient Mediterranean and Beyond* by Ann Suter, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 55.
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