



## *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

### *Syllabus*

## ***POLITICAL THOUGHT IN ANCIENT GREEK DRAMA - 56666***

*Last update 24-10-2013*

*HU Credits:* 2

*Degree/Cycle:* 1st degree (Bachelor)

*Responsible Department:* Political Science

*Academic year:* 2

*Semester:* 1st Semester

*Teaching Languages:* Hebrew

*Campus:* Mt. Scopus

*Course/Module Coordinator:* Jeffrey Macy

*Coordinator Email:* [Jeffrey.Macy@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:Jeffrey.Macy@mail.huji.ac.il)

*Coordinator Office Hours:* Tuesday 13:00-14:30

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Teaching Staff:

Dr. Jeffrey Macy

Course/Module description:

*This class is based on the reading of a significant number of classical Greek plays written by Sophocles, Aristophanes and Aeschylus. The aim of the course is to identify and analyze those political ideas and positions that found expression in the plays presented in the ancient Greek theatre -- and by means of that analysis to examine the significant ideas that are expressed in ancient Greek drama and that reflect the Athenian political discourse during the 5th century B.C.E. Central issues that are discussed in the plays include the connection (and often the tensions) between religion and politics, the character of democratic regimes (with emphasis on its weaknesses) and of the leaders of democratic regimes, the challenges posed by war and the quest for peace, human nature and its influence on politics, and the dangers posed by philosophy (or, at least by the activity of Socrates) on the political regime.*

Course/Module aims:

*As stated above, the aim of the course is to identify and analyze those political ideas and positions that found expression in the plays presented in the ancient Greek theatre -- and by means of that analysis to examine the significant ideas that are expressed in ancient Greek drama and that reflect the Athenian political discourse during the 5th century B.C.E.*

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

*Ability to read, appraise and analyze ancient Greek tragedies and comedies with an emphasis on the political and theological-political doctrines contained in these plays; Ability to compare and contrast ancient Greek myths with the myths presented in the 5th century plays; Ability to determine the significance of the transformation of the traditional myths by the authors of the Greek tragedies in order to present new lessons that are applicable in the democratic context of Athens in the 5th Century B.C.E. Ability to evaluate the use of drama as a tool for political critique.*

Attendance requirements(%):

At least 75%

*Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The method of instruction will be based on careful reading of selected Greek comedies and tragedies (in Hebrew*

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translations) and critical analysis of the contents of these plays, including comparison with earlier myths that serve as the basis of some of the plays and comparison with historical events and figures that appear in a number of the plays. Class discussion will be encouraged.

Course/Module Content:

*Introduction to Classical Greek Drama and its political and social importance.*

*Tragedy and Comedy.*

*Sophocles, Antigone.*

*Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound.*

*Aristophanes, Clouds.*

*Aristophanes, Knights.*

*Aristophanes, Lysistrata*

*Additional plays may be read depending on time availability.*

Required Reading:

*Sophocles, Antigone.*

*Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound.*

*Aristophanes, Clouds.*

*Aristophanes, Knights.*

*Aristophanes, Lysistrata.*

*Additional plays may be read depending on time availability.*

Additional Reading Material:

*An extensive list of additional readings from secondary sources will be passed out in the first class.*

*The following list of additional reading material is general in character and relates to Greek drama in the ancient period.*

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גילולה, דבורה, גם סוקרטס בעננים, מבוא ופרק 1, עמ' 9-30. G56/PA3201 (388905)

\* שפיגל, נתן, תולדות הטראגדיה היוונית, חלק ראשון ("מבוא לטראגדיה היוונית"), עמ' 13-52.  
PA3131/S75 (239554)

Arnott, Peter D., *Public and Performance in the Greek Theatre*. PA3201/A77 (302769)

Baldock, Marion, *Greek Tragedy: An Introduction*, chs. 1,2 and 4, pp. 3-17 and 46-65. PA3131/B73/1993 (366550)

Easterling, P.E., ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*. PA3131/E28 (412369)

Flickinger, Roy Caston, *The Greek Theatre and its Drama*. PA3131/F5 (136810)

Goward, Barbara, *Telling Tragedy, Part I*, pp. 9-52. PA3131/G59/1999 (470408)

Green, J. R., *Theatre in Ancient Greek Society*, chs. 1-3, pp. 1-88. PA3201/G74 (366714)

\* Ley, Graham, *A Short Introduction to the Ancient Greek Theatre*. PA3201/L49 (347059)

Meier, Christian, *The Political art of Greek Tragedy*. PA3136/M453 (424996)

Pickard-Cambridge, Arthur, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*. PA3201/P5/1968 (155820)

\* Rehm, Rush, *Greek Tragic Theatre*, chs. 1-5, pp. 3-74. PA3131/R45 (339100)

Segal, Charles Paul, *Tragedy and Civilization*, chs. 1-3, pp. 1-59. PA4417/S4 (215276)

Sommerstein, Alan, *Greek Drama and Dramatists*, esp. ch. 1, pp. 1-32.  
PA3131/S66/2002 (499031)

Wiles, David, *Greek Theatre Performance: An Introduction*. PA3201/W53/2000 (466301)

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 100 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 0 %

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*Project work 0 %*  
*Assignments 0 %*  
*Reports 0 %*  
*Research project 0 %*  
*Quizzes 0 %*  
*Other 0 %*

*Additional information:*

*The lecturer reserves the right to give a limited bonus to the final grade for active participation that makes a special contribution to class discussions.*