



The institution of the warrior in
several Greek tragedies

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INTRODUCTION

- Central question: In what way can tragedies be said to ‘violate’ an ‘institutional value?’



3 Assumptions

-Theater performances developed in a community threatened by *stasis*.

-The tragic genre must be understood as an expression of a 'secular ritual'



4 Distinction

- Dramatic action, presenting individual destinies.
- ‘Tragic workings’ creating violations of some institutional value.



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5 The 'tragic workings'

- Generating tragic 'shock and horror'
- Appealing to the audience's 'tragic fascination'



6 ARGUMENT

The historical context: the Ancient Athenian polis 500-400 BC

Josiah Ober: *stasis*



7 From ritual to theater

- Early state-level societies
- Integrating the ranked segments of society
- Morgan & Brask



8 The religio-cultural context

- *phallophóroi*
- *tothasmós*
- Dionysiac liminality

- Susan Guettel Cole

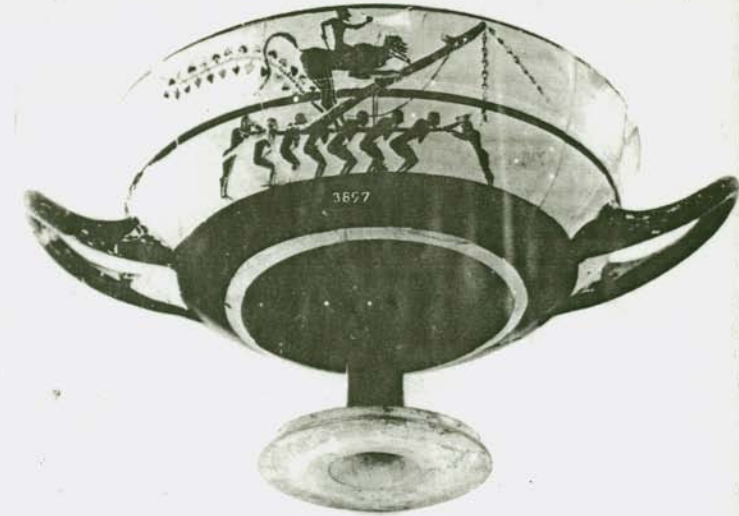


Plate 19A. II 4A. Attic cup. Florence 3897. Courtesy, Soprintendenza Archeologica di Firenze.



Plate 19B. II 4B.

9 Comedy

- ‘Group laughter’
- ‘Joking community’
 - consolidating in-group
 - readjusting relationships between powerful and less powerful

- Marcus Asper



10 Satyr drama

- Maintenance of citizen identity
 - heroes
 - satyrs
- Collective sense of group-membership and class-relations
- Marc Griffith



11 Theater as ritual?

- Celebrations structured in phases differing in emotional tone (Don Handelman)
 - Ritual may generate prescribed communal activity and intensified experience (Stanley Tambiah)
- > The theater celebration structured in phases with 'prescribed sentiments'

12 Secular ritual

- Collective ceremonial occasion
- May refer to 'the sacred'
- 'Presentational' performance
- 'Discourage untrammelled inquiry into the 'socially unquestionable''

* Sally Moore & Barbara Myerhoff

13 Liminal phase

- Serious phase ‘communicating the sacra’
- Hilarious phase of ‘jocund festivity and ludic recombination’
- Victor and Edith Turner



14 Tragic drama

- Embedded in program og phases
- Rousing ‘prescribed sentiments’



15 Aristoteles on tragedy

- Tragic *eleos* and *phobos*: ‘*shock*’ and ‘*horror*’
Wolfgang Schadewaldt on *eleos and phobos*
- Tragic relationships: *philoï*



- Plato, *Laws*: unwritten laws on incest

‘Tragic workings’

- Violence perpetrated on a basic social norm, ‘the socially unquestionable’
- Examples



17 METHODOLOGY

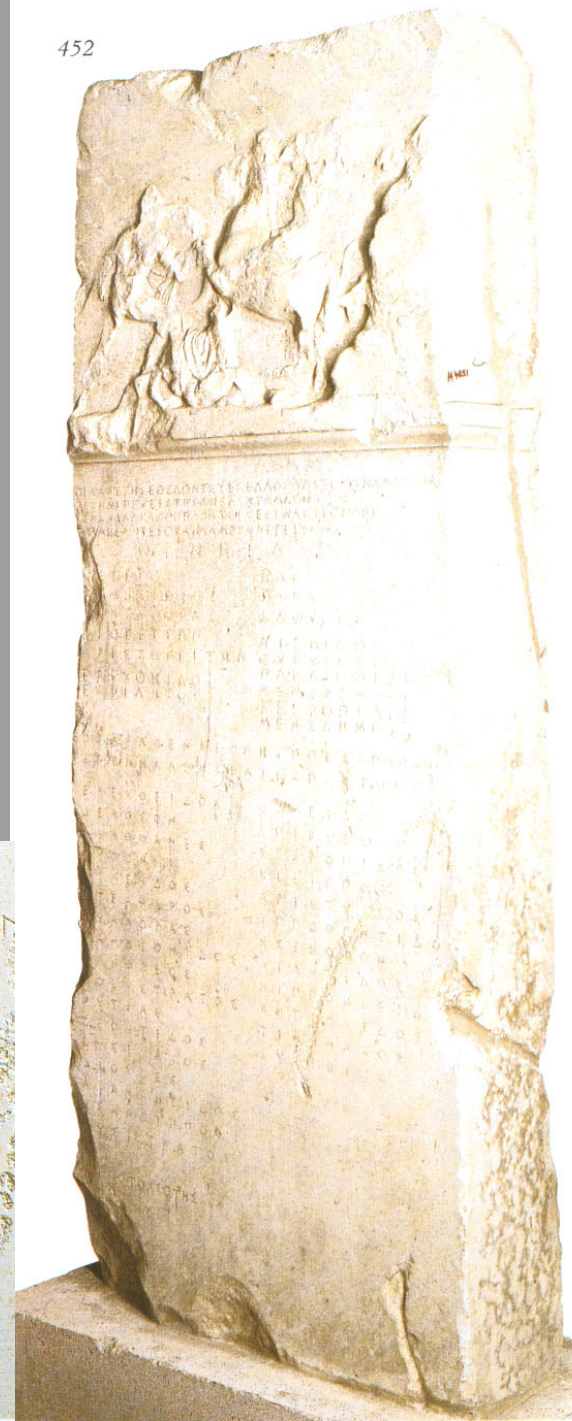
- Dramatic level:
 - *Who* are the conflicting parties?
 - *Why* did they engage in conflict?
- Tragic workings:
 - *What* is the institutional value that is being disrupted, causing tragic revolt?

18 Polis values

‘The symbol of the warrior’
‘Key’ symbols (Sherry Ortner)

- DEMOSION SEMA
 - Stele from the Palaiologos street, Athens
 - Peloponnesian war

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19 Euripides' *Trojan Women*



20 Euripides' *Herakles*



21 CHS-Project

- Aiskhylos' *Seven against Thebes*, Sophokles' *Aias* and *Philoktetes*

