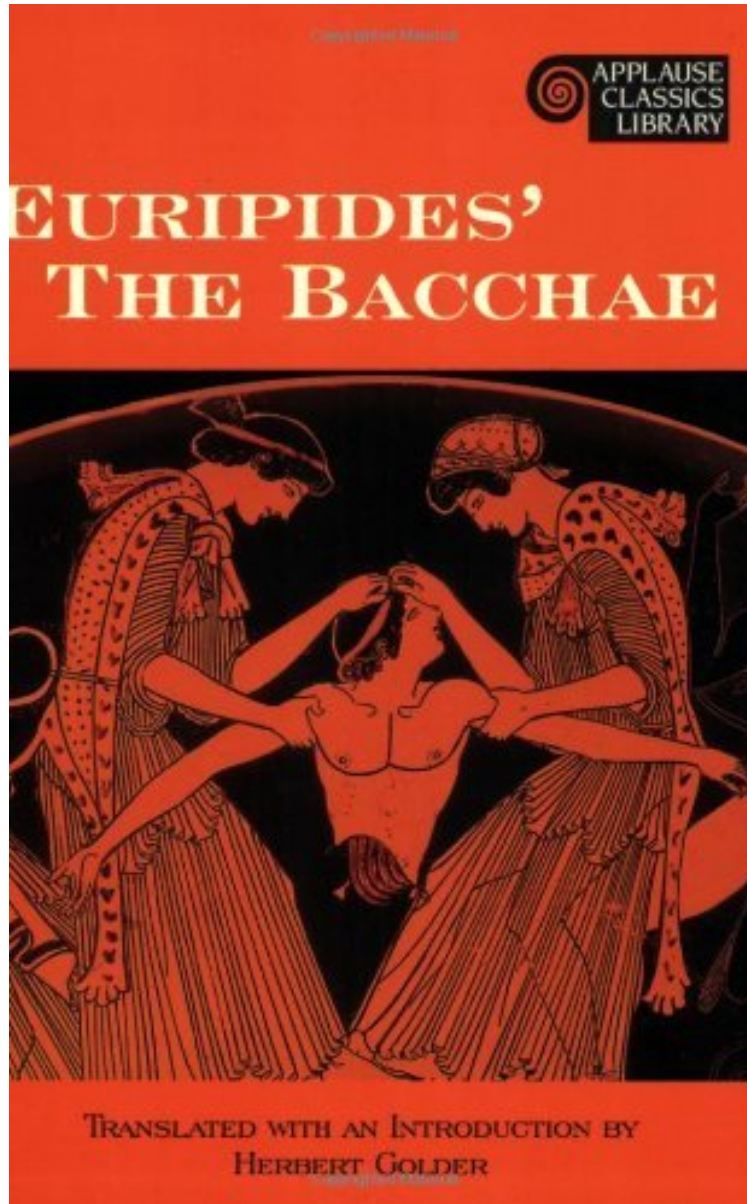


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Euripides

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Euripides : The Bacchae (The Applause Classical Library, Featuring New) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Bacchae (The Applause Classical Library, Featuring New):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Written for the StageBy (m)This translation is a rare gem--written for the stage and with the full force of modern poetry. One does not have to go far to discover how Golder brings

translation of Greek Drama to the next level. Compare Arrowsmith's impeccable translation of lines 261-263, in which Pentheus admonishes Teiresias: "When once you see the glint of wine shining at the feasts of women, then you may be sure the festival is rotten." This has been the standard for generations, and followed by nearly every subsequent translator, including Kovacs in the recent Harvard University Press Greek/English edition. Now see what Golder, who undertook his translation at the behest of Arrowsmith himself: "Of this, old man, you can be sure: when women mix with wine, they glow--but not with holy light. There's no mystery here." On a basic level, Golder transposes the "shining" quality from the grape in the cup to the flush in the skin of the women, then uses this to undercut the religious truth of the Bacchic revels, a point on which the entire play turns on. But it's deeper than that because Golder introduces the word "mystery", a very precise choice that is strangely absent from other translations. What elevates this to the best poetry is the double meaning he gets out of the word. As "Mystery", it references religious rites, mystery cults such as that at Eleusis; as "mystery" it reduces the term to the lesser meaning, the implication that it's all about getting the women drunk for lascivious purposes, and one can even stretch this to a direct accusation that Teiresias' intent is lecherous. You may be thinking "so what?" Well, the brilliance of Golder's choice becomes readily apparent when you look at the Greek, and find the word Euripides uses for mystery is (*orgia*). You might recognize this word because from it we derive the modern "orgy". In a single passage Golder presents the conflict between the holy ecstatic rites and the base degraded mockery of the same. But what is perhaps most salient is that the Golder translation opens the passage to nuance not found in the more one-dimensional renderings which tend to lock Pentheus into a rather unsympathetic and uninteresting portrayal. The Golder *BACCHAE* sets a new standard, both for performance-oriented Greek translation, and depth of understanding of the material. There is a resonance here beyond the linguistic, that gets the very core of the myth. This is a translation that should be an essential part of any library, and should be the first choice of those wishing to stage the play.³ of 7 people found the following review helpful. Foolish Pentheus does not welcome Dionysus to Thebes. By Lawrence Bernabò "The Bacchae" was written by Euripides when he was living in Macedonia in virtual exile during the last years of his life. The tragedy was performed in Athens after his death. These factors are important in appreciating this particular Greek tragedy because such plays were performed at a festival that honored the Dionysus, and in "The Bacchae" he is the god who extracts a horrible vengeance. The tragedy clearly demonstrates the god's power, but it is a terrible power, which suggests less than flattering things about the deity himself. Pentheus was the son of Echion and Agave, the daughter of Cadmus, the founder of the Royal House of Thebes. After Cadmus stepped down the throne, Pentheus took his place as king of Thebes. When the cult of Dionysus came to Thebes, Pentheus resisted the worship of the god in his kingdom. However, his mother and sisters were devotees of the god and went with women of the city to join in the Dionysian revels on Mount Cithaeron. Pentheus had Dionysus captured, but the god drove the king insane, who then shackled a bull instead of the god. When Pentheus climbed a tree to witness in secret the revelry of the Bacchic women, he was discovered and torn to pieces by his mother and sisters, who, in their Bacchic frenzy, believed him to be a wild beast. The horrific action is described in gory detail by a messenger, which is followed by the arrival of the frenzied and bloody Agave, the head of her son fixed atop her thyrsus. Unlike those stories of classical mythology which are at least mentioned in the writings of Homer, the story of Pentheus originates with Euripides. The other references in classical writing, the "Idylls" written by the Syracusean poet Theocritus and the "Metamorphoses" of the Latin poet Ovid, both post-date "The Bacchae" by centuries. On those grounds, the tragedy of Euripides would appear to be entirely his construct, which would certainly give it an inherent uniqueness over his interpretations of the stories of "Medea," "Electra," and "The Trojan Women." I see "The Bacchae" as being Euripides' severest indictment of religion and not as the recantation of his earlier rationalism in his old age. The dramatic conflicts of the play stem from religious issues, and without understanding the opposition on Apollonian grounds of Pentheus to the new cult readers miss the ultimate significance of the tragedy. This is not an indictment of Apollonian rationalism, but rather a dramatic argument that, essentially, it is irrational to ignore the irrational. As the fate of Pentheus amply points out, it is not only stupid to do so, it is fatal. Consequently, "The Bacchae" is one of the most important of Greek tragedies.

(Applause Books). The *Bacchae* was not only the last and greatest of Euripides' tragedies, it was very close to the last of the great Greek tragedies. The story of the play is in part about this cultural dissolution in Athens. It's also about the theatre itself, and how a sane society needs strong, intelligent theatre to survive. The *Bacchae* makes a perfect first entry in the new Applause series of classic dramas, because it argues so passionately and beautifully and convincingly for the need for such a theatre, in our era as much as in Euripides'. Herbert Golder in his new translation has turned an ancient play into a new one, one just as potent for an applicable to our troubled times as Euripides' own.