

GSEM 619 Death and Beyond

**Office: Old Library 245
Phone: 5046**

(Sibbing-Plantholt 2021), Coping with time and death
(Tarlow 2023), Chapter 1 (note that this is a very personal chapter which may cause some distress)

Special Topics:

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- (Azevedo and Bitencourt Othero 2020) Human death as a triptych process
- (Bauks 2016) “Soul Concepts”
- (Farber 2007) Lamaštu—Agent of a specific disease
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- (Lambert 1980) Theology of Death
- (Ortner and Frohlich 2007), The EB IA tombs and burials
- Black et al. 1998c), *Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the world* (ETCSL Translation) (Black et al. 1998e)
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- (George 2009) *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
- (Black et al. 1998f). (ETCSL Translation)
- (Black et al. 1998g), *The death of Gilgamesh* (ETCSL Translation)

Week 3: September 18 Death in Greece: Dying - Who Dies? When and How?

Topics:

- Mortals vs. Immortals
- Good Death and Bad Death
- Mechanics of Dying – departure of the psyche, dissolution of elements

Primary Readings:

Plato,
Hesiod, *Works and Days*
Lyric Poets: Callinus, Tyrtaeus, Semonides, Mimnermus, and Solon
Homer, xvi, xxii
Herodotus I.30-33 (Solon)
Stobaeus, On Death

Secondary Readings:

Edmonds (forthcoming) What is Death?
Garland, ch. 1-2

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Section 2: Liminality

Week 4: September 25 Liminality for the Community in the Near East: The Funeral Ritual and Mourning

Topics:

- Ritual for the community
- Funeral rituals and burial practices in different periods
 - Burial and disposal methods
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Week 5: October 2 Liminality for the Community in Greece: The Funeral Ritual and Mourning

Topics:

- Ritual for the community
- Miasma and Purification
- Funeral ritual in different periods
 - Funeral components – burial vs. cremation, offerings, lamentation
 - Funeral Legislation – community regulates its rituals, the role of women
- Parallels between funeral ritual and marriage ritual
 - Assimilation of the transitions in myth
 - the case of Persephone at Locri

Primary Readings:

Homer, *Odyssey* 11.1-11.100

Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers* 1-100

Arat, *Phaenomena* 100-110

Week 6: October 9 Liminality for the Deceased in the Near East and Greece: The Journey and its Perils

Topics:

- the journey – directions
- obstacles to the journey –

Plutarch, *de genio Socratis* 589f-592f
Ghost Magic from Greece

Secondary Readings:

(Finkel 2020), *The First Ghosts*

Johnston 1999, ch. 3

Vermeule 1979, ch. 6

(Weiss-Krejci 2013), *The Unburied Dead*

Special Topics:

Johnston 2001, *Defining the Dead* (K)eing t15 (MCID 10 BDC /TT3 1 Tf-6.2d()TjEM5 (r)4 (

Week 11. November 13 Beyond: Afterlife in the Near East – The Netherworld, Remembrance and Ancestors

Topics:

- the afterlife and different conceptions
- Memory, Identity and Ancestors
- Death, Time, and Transformation

Primary Readings:

(Black et al. 1998i), Sumerian King's List
(Lambert 2014), Enuma Elish Tablet V and VI

Secondary Readings:

(Assmann 2010), Re-framing memory
(Lucas 2005), Ch. 3
(Whitley 2002), Too many ancestors

Special Topics:

(Katz 2003), ch. 5
(Lundström 2013), Chaos and Creation
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(Lange 2012), Food and Libation Offerings
(Lange 2014), The Next Level
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(Croucher 2006), Death, Display and Performance (this focuses on the Neolithic, which is outside of our main periods of interest but reveals several interesting points regarding time and human remains)
(Peltenburg 2007), Enclosing the Ancestors
(Schwartz 2013), Umm el Marra

Week 12: November 20 Beyond: Afterlife in Greece – Topography of the Underworld

Topics:

- the changing location of the underworld – Elysium, Isles of the Blest, Hades
- the nature of life in the afterlife
- privilege and punishment
- Mystery Cults and Salvation
- Eleusinian Mysteries and Orphism
- Symposia of the Blest

Primary Readings:

Pindar II & Dirges
'Orphic' Gold Tablets
Plato: myths from (107c-115b) and (523a-527e);
Pausanias X.28-31 on Polygnotos (cp. Frazer's commentary)
Lucian,
Plutarch

Secondary Readings

Edmonds 2015, Imagining the Afterlife

Garland, ch. 5, 6
Vermeule 1979, ch. 2

Special Topics:

Burkert 2009, Pleading for Hell
Saunders 1991, Anxieties and Surrogates

Mystery Cults and Salvation

Burkert 1987, Mystery Cults
Redfield 1991, The Politics of Immortality

Parker 1995, Early Orphism
Edmonds 2008, Extra-ordinary People

[Plato]
Plutarch,
Boys-Stones 2013, The : Therapy for the Dead

Week 13: November 27 Beyond the Afterlife: Reincarnation or Nothing?

Topics:

- Alternatives to the Underworld
- The fragmentary body
- Atomism and the afterlife
- Ethicization of reincarnation

Primary Readings:

Diogenes Laertius: Lives of Empedokles & Pythagoras
Plato on reincarnation: selections from
Lucretius, , book III
Aeneas of Gaza,

Secondary Readings:

Edmonds 2013, Life in the Afterlife
(Fowler 2016), Relational personhood
Henry 2009, Introduction (xvi-xxii) Epicurean Ideas of Death
Long 1948, A Study of the Doctrine of Metempsychosis
Obeyesekere 2002, Eschatology In Greek And Rebirth Soteriology

Special Topics:

Obeyesekere, (online in Tripod)
Epicurean philosophy and death
Epicurus,

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Near East:

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