



Greta Hawes

Thebes on stage and on site: tragedy, re-enactment, and textual topographies

Thebes was the paradigmatic city of Greek tragedy. Its distinctive walled topography offered a sealed conceptual space in which its ruling dynasty played itself out to destruction. Thebes was also a concrete place, a city with its own particular history. This paper looks at the ways that the visual and performative legacy of the stage play out in the city itself, using a traveller's account from the 2nd c AD: Pausanias' *Guide to Greece*. It draws on Rebecca Schneider's recent observations regarding historical re-enactment to explore the paradoxical theatricality of the past as experienced on site. And it considers the cultural parallels between staged performance, and the habits of touristic spectatorship.

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