



Metapoetry in Euripides

Isabelle Torrance

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Metapoetry in Euripides is the first detailed study of the self-conscious literary devices applied within Euripidean drama and how these are interwoven with issues of thematic importance, whether social, theological, or political. In the volume, Torrance argues that Euripides employed a complex system of metapoetic strategies in order to draw the audience's attention to the novelty of his compositions. The metapoetic strategies discussed include intertextual allusions to earlier poetic texts (especially to Homer, Aeschylus and Sophocles) which are often developed around unusual and memorable language or imagery, deployment of recognizable trigger words referring to plot construction, novelties or secondary status, and self-conscious references to fiction implied through allusion to writing.

Torrance also looks at and compares metapoetic techniques used in tragedy, satyr-drama, and old comedy to demonstrate that the Greek tragedians commonly exploited metapoetic strategies, and that metapoetry is more pervasive in Euripides than in the other tragedians. While Euripides shares some metapoetic techniques with old comedy, these remain implicit in his tragedies (but not in his satyr-dramas).

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