**Attic Tragedy and the Fiction of Globalisation:**

**Articulating a Classical Tradition**

Die attische Tragödie und die Fiktion der Globalisierung:

Die Artikulation einer klassischen Tradition

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# **1 Abstract**

Spanning the Trojan War through to the War on Terror, tragedy, straddling both ancient and contemporary forms, figures as one of the West’s most enduring literary modes. With the Greco-Roman tradition at the base of the Western canon, the globalised cultural marketplace has germinated a vast corpus of literary criticism on Attic tragedy’s philosophical implications and its manifestations as contemporary drama. Considering this, the dearth of research into Greek tragedy’s continued influence on the contemporary novel is somewhat surprising; albeit globalisation’s most conspicuous narrative form. Partly owing to anti-canonical sentiments in the wake of postcolonialism, the prominence of the classics in general, and tragedy in particular, is presumed to be waning: above all, in English departments around the world. Yet, this supposed death of classicism within Anglophone literary and cultural studies only veils its ongoing vitality, especially as prose fiction. In analysing novelised versions of the three major Attic tragedians written between 2017 and 2019 by authors such as Colm Tóibín, Kamila Shamsie, Pat Barker, and Marlon James, this dissertation project not only seeks to confront this lack but to understand how the structures of globalised literary and cultural production leave unmistakably ‘tragic’ marks on the literary works themselves—be it through the articulation of modern individualism in Tóibín’s retelling of Orestes’ plight, Shamsie’s Sophoclean articulation of ‘jihadi bride’ experiences, or the articulation of Euripidean tragedy and anti-war sentiments in Pat Barker’s *The Silence of the Girls*. The project itself will build on three key concepts: epistemology, phenomenology and articulation. This bricolage will aim to unravel the complex mechanisms of tragedy in a globalised world, trace theoretical shifts, and explicate the way the classics, to paraphrase George Steiner, are still dominating and shaping our sense of the world; ultimately constituting a nascent revival of classicism.

# **2 Key Terms**

## 2.1 Globalisation: Locating Tragic Fiction(s)

In his defence of global fiction, the American literary critic Adam Kirsch describes the novel as the archetypical and primary modern mode of ‘exploration and explanation’, arguing that an analysis of the novel’s globalising tendencies will give insight into the existence of a global consciousness.[[1]](#footnote-1) In consequence, studying novels that are distinguished by their global character may be a means of exploring the way prose fiction gives insight into the construction of these globalising mechanisms. The term ‘globalisation’ has, for well over two decades, organised a seminal discourse in academia as well as within the broader political landscape and media discourses. Although the importance of conceptualising globalisation was already recognised in the late 1980s, the term has only recently gained prominence in literary studies.[[2]](#footnote-2) As this research project is primarily interested in tragedy’s manifestation as global literature, it is necessary to consider the way Anglophone literatures unfold in this ‘complex system of transnational economic and cultural exchanges characterized by the global flow of cultural products and commodities [. . .].’[[3]](#footnote-3) Especially, as the concept has become increasingly fraught within literary and cultural studies—criticised for its presumed modernising telos.

It is therefore of little surprise that globalisation is perceived as a process and ideology of ‘Americanisation’ and ‘Westernisation’: concepts often treated synonymously with modernising impulses.[[4]](#footnote-4) Because of this, a particular effort has been made to deconstruct the ‘global’ in globalisation. Efforts that, apart from postcolonial critiques, find their genesis in French academic circles.[[5]](#footnote-5) Spearheaded by Jean-Luc Nancy, a clear differentiation between *globalisation* and *mondialisation* is opened up, with globalisation designating a future determined by the hegemonies of a global economic and technical system, whereas the active process of forming and deconstructing the world, termed *mondialisation*, acts as a counterpart to the hegemonies of the Western global. Contemporary literature, as an exponent of global literature, thus runs contrary to *mondialisation* with its tendencies towards globalised ‘world-making’ activities.[[6]](#footnote-6) In light of this, it is the aim of this thesis to better understand what world is constructed through the fiction of globalisation and the globalisation of fiction.[[7]](#footnote-7)

## 2.2 Tragedy: A Novel Form?

As the very creation of contemporary prose fiction is traceable to Attic tragedy,[[8]](#footnote-8) this long-standing relationship opens up pertinent questions about the function and functionalisation of tragedy as global literature. The philosophical and cultural importance of the tragic form arguably finds its genesis in Plato,[[9]](#footnote-9) who—in likening his ideal state to tragedy—extended its figurations to encompass more than the Attic stage.[[10]](#footnote-10) Centuries later, Raymond Williams, in quasi-Platonic fashion, continued this legacy in his *Modern Tragedy* (1966) by again bridging the fictional and empirical in a re-conceptualisation of this much-debated concept. For Williams, the idea of tragedy epitomises the strategic universalisation of a cultural tradition: ‘[T]he Greeks and the Elizabethans, in one cultural form; Hellenes and Christians, in a common activity. It is easy to see how convenient, how indispensable, an idea of tragedy this is,’ he says.[[11]](#footnote-11) Pointing to tragedy’s recurring articulations, Williams effectively highlights how the concept has constructed a monolithically Greco-Christian literary and cultural tradition: an idea and assumption that has historically been conjured and propagated when it was felt that ‘civilization [was] being threatened.’[[12]](#footnote-12) As the reaction to this ‘threat’ is perhaps most conspicuous when surveying the spectral presence of Greco-Roman antiquity in the West,[[13]](#footnote-13) the question arises as to what has led to Attic tragedy’s ongoing vitality as fiction, despite its proclaimed death.

Circumnavigating an anachronistic conflation of tragic ideas with modern notions, these examples point to the way tragedy becomes a floating signifier. Though the concept of tragedy remains somewhat elusive, it is clear that the form can only exist within, and never outside of, historically situated value systems.[[14]](#footnote-14) Because definitions of tragedy are always already a reflection of their time, they cannot then be dislocated from cultural specificities.[[15]](#footnote-15) Tragedy thus highlights the way genre, in general, shapes our understanding of the world, where Plato’s conception of tragedy says as much about a specific temporality as Williams’, or a contemporary novelist like Kamila Shamsie’s. In keeping with this premise, the question necessarily arises as to what tragedy has come to signify in the era of globalisation and how contemporary rewritings of the major tragedians articulate at the nexus of tragedy and globalisation.

## 2.3 Epistemology: Globalised Archives

The Italian literary critic Marco Codebò contends that ‘[t]he archive and the novel share significant traits: both apply writing to the preservation of knowledge, store the memories of past events, and base their claims to truth on written proof.’[[16]](#footnote-16) This, perhaps, is most evident in tragedy’s function(ilsation) as an archive in a globalised literary and cultural marketplace. With tragedy continuously transmitting knowledge systems from one generation to the next, it is necessary to unravel what world is created through this specific archive. Interest in this ‘general system of the formation and transformation of statements,’ as Michel Foucault describes it, [[17]](#footnote-17) is part of a larger interest in archival processes that, peaking in the 1990s, is generally referred to as the ‘archival turn’.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Rather than pointing to a presumed objective reality, Foucault’s analyses show how archival processes highlight the way the world is created and sustained. With this, the archival process is central to the Western epistemological enterprise.[[19]](#footnote-19) The construction of a literary tradition, too, is central to this epistemo-archival drive and, as will be argued in this research project, it is the contemporary global novel that acts as a means of articulating a global classism through its function as an archive. A process that, as any study of Foucault is sure to show, is inherent to the process of creating a world determined by the global flow of cultural products. Analysing Attic tragedy in its contemporary manifestations then means analysing archival processes, especially as several of the novels under investigation overtly deal with the archiving of events through fiction.[[20]](#footnote-20) Examples, to name but a few, being the archiving of Greek myth, legend, and religion in their contemporary forms as mediatised fiction in Natalie Haynes’ *The Children of Jocasta*, the ekphrastic archiving of ancient African cartography and architecture in Marlon James’ *Oresteia*–inspired rewriting, or Kamila Shamsie’s archiving the experience of so-called ‘jihadi brides’. In doing so, these novels straddle the presumed divide between ‘fact’ and ‘fiction’. Because epistemology concerns itself with the production of knowledge, an epistemological approach, in the form of studying Attic tragedy’s archival impetus, may point to the way a globalised world-making is reflected, acted out, and articulated in contemporary rewritings.

## 2.4 Phenomenology: Globalised Fictions

Foucault, although rejecting the basic premise of phenomenology, points to a mainstay of the discipline: the link between experience and knowledge.[[21]](#footnote-21) Apart from looking into the epistemological structures involved in the creation of tragedy as globalised fiction, it is, therefore, necessary to ask what evokes the experience of the tragic and how this experience is articulated in rewritings of the three major tragedians. With phenomenology arguably best fit to deal with conceiving of these experiential articulations,[[22]](#footnote-22) we are led to seeking the phenomenological in the literary.[[23]](#footnote-23) This does not, however, translate to a simplistic application of phenomenological analyses to literary texts. It rather means seeing how fiction is able to tell us something about the way fictions are created in the mind and, in uncovering the relationship between knowledge and experience in the discussed corpus, answering how this contributes to the construction of a tradition.

In keeping with this, it will be of interest to analyse how consciousness is created through repetition and the consolidation of certain acts, as is aptly summarised by Judith Butler: ‘[C]onsciousness,’ she says, ‘consists […] in a series of acts, repeated through time and temporalized in their structure.’[[24]](#footnote-24) The corpus in question, too, highlights the way stories are indissociable from the construction of consciousness-creating acts. It is, however, not only the overtly ideological novel that is inextricable from the construction of knowledge and, as a result, experience, but stories based on ‘fact’ as well. This is highlighted in several of the novels in question, perhaps most explicitly, in *The Children of Jocasta*, *Black Leopard, Red Wolf*, and *Home Fire*, that all deal with the creation of myth, fables, media and so-called ‘fake news’ and in turn contribute to the construction of *a posteriori* knowledge. Repetition constructing, even mythologising, a tradition has also been considered by the classics scholar Clare Foster, who contends that ‘[t]o some extent, anything which is recognizably transmitted across great differences of time and place can be seen as necessarily mythologised in this way: as self-mythologising by the very fact of its notoriety, which is, in such retrospect, amazing – an ‘adventure’, a narrative.’[[25]](#footnote-25) A phenomenological analysis combined with epistemological concerns will thus highlight how the structures of consciousness are articulated that have created the narratives of tragedy in a global culture industry. A particular effort will be made to understand the way certain ideas and concepts have been linked by the terminology of tragedy; reflected and mythologised as a globalised classicism in the discussed novels.

## 2.5 Articulation:Locating Globalised Fiction(s)

Stuart Hall’s oeuvre, highlighting the way cultural questions are in themselves necessarily political questions, reflects the way subjectivity and discourse are formed by the politics of representation determined by a globalised culture industry. This is echoed in the concept of ‘articulation’.[[26]](#footnote-26) A chimaera of sorts rooted in the Gramscian tradition of the 1930s, the articulation principle en- and decodes the most variegated of contexts. Hall, who broadened the term in the 1970s,[[27]](#footnote-27) described it as ‘a way of understanding how ideological elements come, under certain conditions to cohere together, within a discourse, and a way of asking how they do or do not become articulated at certain junctures, to certain political subjects.’[[28]](#footnote-28) The principle of articulation, in other words, conceptualises the way cultural discourses (theoretical practices, texts, media etc.) create meaning that does not naturally inhabit discursive structures but, always in flux, emerges within specific contexts.[[29]](#footnote-29)

The incentive of such an approach lies in its ability to move beyond a supposedly Marxist determinism, thus highlighting the complex enmeshments of discursive practices and illuminating the connections between material foundations, subjective positions and cultural processes. Articulation principles uncover the historical specificities and ruptures leading to phenomena and ‘world-making’: An approach that is particularly useful in the context of classical tragedy (a field, as the frequent turns to classicist modes attest, inexorably re-articulating). In light of this, we may, at the junction of articulation, be able to find a way of decoding the epistemological and phenomenological elements that under particular conditions are made to cohere together—forming tragic fiction(s) in a globalised world. As the classical tradition is still very much alive in the discussed corpus, it will be necessary to map the way this tradition has been constructed and, more importantly, how moving beyond institutionalised practices articulates the cultural sphere at large.

# **[3 Introduction]**

Aeschylus was the “father of tragedy,” and one of the forefathers of world literature. Was his unique fate a great sadness or a blessing? It is impossible to know for certain.[[30]](#footnote-30)

**—**Ismail Kadare, ‘Aeschylus the Lost’

Assuming that Attic tragedy is a seminal forebear of globalised literature, one necessarily needs to confront the question of what world is created through tragic forms. As briefly referenced above, Pheng Cheah, in a recent study on global literature, explicates the way the latter has to be understood as a ‘world-making activity’; a presupposition that ties in well with George Steiner’s attempt at answering how *Antigone* in particular, and Greek myths in general, ‘continue to dominate, to give vital shape to our sense of self and of the world.’[[31]](#footnote-31) If *Antigone* metonymically stands for Attic tragedy, perhaps tragedy has not only lastingly shaped the narratives and myths of the West but constituted a ‘Western’ epistemology and phenomenology archived through prose fiction. It is, in turn, of importance to look to the global novel in order to answer why the interest in Attic tragedy in its figurations as fiction (versus drama or poetry) has increased over the past decades, what this says about the present moment in Anglophone literary and cultural studies, and about the relationship between tragedy and globalisation.[[32]](#footnote-32) The linkages between the articulation of tragedy in global literature and the experiences of the early 21st century thus become a productive site where ‘the structure of tragedy in our culture’ is made explicit.[[33]](#footnote-33) Based in English and American studies, this dissertation project is interested in a global culture industry marked by this Anglo-American hegemony and its influence on articulating a revived classicism. The questions posed about the possibilities and limits of articulation in these global rewritings of Attic tragedy, i.e. the way they are epistemologically and phenomenologically structured in a global culture industry should ideally be answered, at the least discussed and critiqued.

# **4 Working Hypothesis**

This research project aims to contribute to and broaden current Anglophone literary and cultural criticism in the field of globalisation studies. With the resurgence of tragedy in the past decades being a ‘world-wide’ phenomenon,[[34]](#footnote-34) it is necessary to research what has led to this specific articulation. I will, therefore, explore howcontemporary novels, especially those aimed at an international market, conjure up a sense of tragedy and how these texts refer to and adapt elements of Attic tragedy in order to make sense of the world of today—articulating and bringing into being a purportedly global epistemology and phenomenology.

Studying authors from diverse geographies will shed light on the equally diverse ways in which these ideologies, centring on the classics, manifest themselves. Thus, gaining an insight into the function and functionalisation of tragedy in globalised spaces. Because of the seminal influence the Greco-Christian tradition has had on globalised Anglophone literatures, it is of importance to consider closely the articulations of tragedy as a concept, particularly in its contemporary manifestations.[[35]](#footnote-35) This is neither a matter of defending the classics, nor of propagating anti-canonical sentiments. It is rather an attempt at answering why, as put forth by George Steiner, tragedy might ‘continue to dominate, to give vital shape to our sense of self and of the world.’[[36]](#footnote-36) In analysing these rewritings, the function of tragedy as an empirical entity, a tradition, perhaps even a habitus,[[37]](#footnote-37) will be highlighted. It will be the aim of this research project to unravel the discursive practices of the literary works in question. In doing so, understanding why these rewritings exist in the forms that they do and how archival processes have contributed to their construction and the propagation of a renewed classicist telos.

# **5 Current State of Research**

That the Greco-Roman tradition has spurned a vast corpus of tragic literary criticism is somewhat prophetically displayed by the comic playwright Aristophanes.[[38]](#footnote-38) In *The Frogs* he portrays a despaired Dionysus bringing back Euripides from the Greek underworld to remedy what he perceives as the ‘lousy’ state of tragic poetry.[[39]](#footnote-39) Taking a brief survey of contemporary theatre landscapes, both in the ‘West’ and the so-called Global South, it would seem that not only in Aristophanes’ *Frogs* Dionysus brought back the major playwrights from Hades. In our globalised world Sophocles returns as a rights activist, Aeschylus is revived amidst the Ngqoko Group and the Yoruba god Ogun writes back to Euripides; dramatic adaptations that have been studied, amongst others, by Lorna Hardwick and Carol Gillespie, Kevin Wetmore, and Marianne McDonald. The ‘dramatic lopsidedness’ of these scholars fall in line with the papers presented at the University of Cambridge’s recent CRASSHconference on tragedy (December 2019),[[40]](#footnote-40) and exemplify the general bias towards drama (and continental philosophy) rather than prose fiction in recent tragic scholarship.[[41]](#footnote-41)

The current state of research includes the authors and theories already mentioned above as well as my own preliminarily research, reflected in my master’s thesis ‘Post-Colonial Dramaturgies of Sound: Adapting Greek Tragedy in the Global South’. Here, I attempted to trace the dramaturgical practice of postcolonial, globalised productions of Greek tragedies through sound. Based in a genealogical elaboration of sound in dramaturgies of the Global South, the thesis highlighted the way sound phenomena serve as a vector for transferring neo-orientalist structures into contemporary drama in their manifestations as Greek tragedies. The thesis then developed the mechanisms of sound through attempting an epistemological and phenomenological analysis of adaptations of Greek tragedies in the Global South. However, it soon became clear that the thesis could not account for a precise analysis of the primary motivator behind tragedy’s varied articulations.[[42]](#footnote-42)

# **6 Methodology**

The field of tragic literary and cultural criticism, though rich, is not definitive. Aware of ‘the magisterial bulk and the sheer weightiness of that history […],’[[43]](#footnote-43) in rethinking tragedy, this dissertation project attempts to map the epistemological and phenomenological programmatics of a discursive practice within a globalised culture industry by analysing rewritings of Attic tragedy in their current form as fiction. This investigation will not be based on Homer’s *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, nor will it be based on Greek mythology as such. Though the latter cannot be dislocated from tragedy, the scope of such a study would simply be too great.[[44]](#footnote-44) Under the aegis of articulation principles, the dissertation project will be making use of the heterogeneous theories and methods listed above: a bricolage that will form the transdisciplinary research approach that is especially indebted to British cultural studies.[[45]](#footnote-45) It has to be pointed out that, because of the exponential increase in rewritings of Attic tragedy, a comprehensive, encyclopaedic study of these phenomena simply will not be possible.

The dissertation project will comprise three work phases. The first will comprise a close reading of both the Attic tragedies and their respective rewritings, listed in the corpus below, whereas the second will consist of an analysis using the tools offered by epistemological and phenomenological approaches, as delineated above. In the first two work phases, I will also be learning ancient Greek and absolving a Graecum-exam at an open Gymnasium in Würzburg. Although I am not explicitly concerned with the primary tragic texts, a basic grasp of Greek will be useful for the analysis of their contemporary counterparts. As per the results and findings of the study, the subsequent final step will bundle and process the knowledge gained.

# **7 Preliminary Outline**

I will group the novels according to their most dominantly set association with either Aeschylean, Sophoclean, or Euripidean tragedy. Accordingly, I will devote a chapter to each of these set associations; attempting a case study of these texts’ epistemological and phenomenological implications for the relationship between Attic tragedy and recent fiction. This should roughly make up the following groupings:

# **8 Corpus**

Chapter I: Aeschylean Tragedy (primarily the *Oresteia* trilogy)

James, Marlon. *Black Leopard, Red Wolf.* N.p.: Penguin, 2019.

Tóibín, Colm. *House of Names*. 2017. N.p.: Penguin, 2018.

Chapter II: Sophoclean Tragedy (the three ‘Theban plays’)

Haynes, Natalie. *The Children of Jocasta*. 2017. London: Picador, 2018.

Shamsie, Kamila. *Home Fire*. 2017. London: Bloomsbury, 2018.

Chapter III: Euripidean Tragedy (primarily *The Trojan Women* and *Medea*):

Barker, Pat. *The Silence of the Girls*. N.p.: Penguin, 2018.

Vann, David. *Bright Air Black*. 2017. London: William Heinemann, 2017.

# **9 Project Schedule**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **July–September 2020** | Research (Phase I)   * Close reading of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides (in   their English translations) as well the general  reception theory of these texts   * Preparation for the ‘Graecum-Exam’ |
| **October–January 2020** | Research (Phase I)   * Close reading and analysis of corpus (i.e. the contemporary   novels under investigation) and the reception history of  these novels within the framework of a globalised literary  industry; linked by the principle of articulation   * Preparation for the ‘Graecum-exam’ |
| **February–April 2021** | Research (Phase I)   * Merging results of the first research phase   // drafting introductory chs.   * Preparation for the ‘Graecum-Exam’ |
| **May–July 2021** | Research (Phase II)   * Researching the relationship between epistemology   and globalised literature   * Preparation for the ‘Graecum-Exam’ |
| **August–December 2021** | Research and Writing (Phase II)   * Analysis of the primary texts (corpus) based on   epistemological concerns // drafting chs. I-III   * Preparation for the ‘Graecum-Exam’ |
| **January–March 2022** | Research (Phase II)   * Researching the relationship between phenomenology and   globalised literature   * Preparation for the ‘Graecum-Exam’ |
| **April–July 2022** | Research and Writing (Phase II)   * Analysis of the primary texts based on   phenomenological concerns // drafting chs. I-III   * Taking the Graecum exam (May/June 2022) at a public   Gymnasium in Würzburg |
| **August–December 2022** | Writing (Phase III)   * Bundling of results // writing final ch. drafts |
| **January–March 2022** | Editing (Phase III)   * Revision of individual chapters |
| **April–July 2023** | Editing (Phase III)   * External editing and submission of the dissertation |

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1. Adam Kirsch, *The Global Novel* (Columbia: Columbia Global Imports, 2017) 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Suman Gupta, *Globalization and Literature* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009) 5–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Paul Jay, “Beyond Discipline?: Globalization and the Future of English,” *Literature and Globalization: A Reader*, ed. Liam Connell and Nicky Marsh (London: Routledge, 2011): 106.  [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Simon Gikandi, “Globalization and the Claims of Postcoloniality,” *Literature and Globalization: A Reader*, ed. Liam Connell and Nicky Marsh (London: Routledge, 2011): 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Jean Luc Nancy, *The Creation of the World or Globalization*, trans. and ed. David Pettigrew and François Raffoul (Albany: State U of New York P, 2007) 27–34. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Pheng Cheah, *What Is a World: On Post-Colonial Literature as World Literature* (Durham: Duke UP, 2016) 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Susie O’Brien, and Imre Szeman, “Introduction: The Globalization of Fiction/The Fiction of Globalization,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 100.3 (2001): 603. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Early modern and Enlightenment translations of classical tragedy were the impetus behind the Bildungsroman, adventure and romance novels. See Edith Hall, “Greek Tragedy and the Politics of Subjectivity in Recent Fiction,” *Classical Receptions Journal* 1.1 (2009): 23.. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Plato, “Laws 7,” *Plato in Twelve Volumes* (Cambridge MA: Harvard UP, 1968) 7.817b. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The origin of tragedy, though often traced either to choral performances (such as the *dithýrambos*) or satyr drama (*satyrikon*), will perhaps never fully be resolved. Less disputed, however, is that the idea of a tragic philosophy, in contrast to tragedy as ‘genre and form’, can largely be traced to German Romanticism’s consolidation of the idea of a universal tragic spirit. See André Laks, “Plato’s ‘Truest Tragedy’: *Laws* Book 7, 817a–d,’” *Plato’s Laws: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010): 220 and Rita Felski (ed.), *Rethinking Tragedy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2008) 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Raymond Williams, *Modern Tragedy*, ed. Pamela McCullum (Toronto: Broadview, 2006) 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Williams 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. In Britain, for example, apart from Renaissance-endeavours, the quest for antiquity as an idealised place of origin, increased as society rapidly evolved due to industrialisation and the expansion of the British Empire. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Max Scheler, “On the Tragic,” *CrossCurrents* 4.2. (Winter 1954): 180. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Williams 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Marco Codebò, “The Dossier Novel: (Post)Modern Fiction and the Discourse of the Archive,” *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 3.1 (2007): N.p. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. For a detailed study of the archival turn see Francis X. Blouin, and William G. Rosenberg (eds.), *Archives, Documentation and Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar* (N.p.: U of Michigan P, 2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Apart from Michel Foucault, whose conception of the archive is somewhat ambiguous and ever metamorphosing, it is necessary to point to Jacques Derrida’s seminal position in the creation of ‘archive fever’. In his *Archive Fever* (1995), Derrida traces the root of the term to the Greek *arkhē*, which translates as ‘government’. Thus, by explicitly drawing attention to the concept’s etymology, mapping its enmeshment in structures of power. This link between political power and the archive is also underscored by the German media theorist Wolfgang Ernst who argues that historiography is *narrativ verstellt*. See Wolfgang Ernst, “Nicht Organismus und Geist, sondern Organisation und Apparat. Plädoyer für archiv- und bibliothekswissenschaftliche Aufklärung über Gedächtnistechniken,” *Sichtungen*  2 (1999): 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972) 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. As tragedy cannot be uncoupled from sonic concerns (the importance of the sonic element in tragedy, especially in its form choral form, exemplified in Plato’s dictate: ‘no chorus, no culture’), it will be necessary to also consider the function of sound as an archival mechanism. See Simon Goldhill, *How to Stage Greek Tragedy Today* (London: U of Chicago P, 2007) 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See Stéphane Legrand, “‘As Close as Possible to the Unlivable’: (Michel Foucault and Phenomenology),” *Sophia* 47.281 (2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Scheler 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Literary theory’s indebtedness to phenomenological practices is perhaps most evident in the Geneva school of phenomenological criticism, with its focus on the awareness literary works generate. As J. Hillis Miller has fittingly described the Geneva critics, they ‘consider literary criticism to be itself a form of literature.’ See J. Hillis Miller, “The Geneva School: The Criticism of Marcel Raymond, Albert Béguin, Georges Poulet, Jean Rousset, Jean-Pierre Richard, and Jean Starobinski,” *The Virginia Quarterly Review* 43.3 (1967): 466. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Judith Butler, Foreword, *The Erotic Bird: Phenomenology in Literature*, by Maurice Natanson (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1998) ix. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Clare Foster, “Afterword: Repetition or Recognition?” *On Repetition, Writing, Performance and* Art, ed. Erini Kartsaki (Bristol: Intellect, 2016) n.p. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. See Rainer Winter, “Der zu bestimmende Charakter von Kultur: Das Konzept der Artikulation in der Tradition der Cultural Studies,” *Kulturen vergleichen*, ed. Ilja Srubar, et al. (Wiesbaden: VS, 2005): 271–89. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Craig Calhoun (ed.), “Articulation,” *Oxford Reference* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Stuart Hall, “On Postmodernism and Articulation,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 10.2 (1986): 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. See also Jennifer Daryl Slack, “The Theory and Method of Articulation in Cultural Studies,” *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1996). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Ismail Kadare, *Essays on World Literature: Aeschylus, Dante, Shakespeare*, trans. Ani Kokobobo (New York: Restless, 2018) 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. George Steiner, *Antigones*: *How the Antigone Legend Has Endured in Western Literature, Art, and Thought* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1996) xi. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The centrality of globalisation also means that the novels chosen for analysis are dated from the early 2000s onwards; perhaps the peak of globalisation. Notwithstanding this, the effects the Covid-19 pandemic will have on globalisation’s current form are yet to be seen. Perhaps, as Philippe Legrain conjectures in a recent *Foreign Policy* piece, it will lead to a rejection of globalisation principles or, ‘[o]nce the pandemic and panic abate, those who believe that openness to people and products from around the world is generally a good thing will need to make the case for it in fresh and persuasive ways.’ If, as Raymond Williams has contended, the idea of tragedy is conjured up when (Western) civilisations fear their breakdown, it remains to be seen whether, at this crisis point, tragedy will be propagated as a tool for globalised interests. See Philippe Legrain, “The Coronavirus is Killing Globalization as we Know It,” *Foreign Policy*, 12 March 2020 and Johann Weiß, Andreas Sachs, and Heidrun Weinelt, *2018 Globalization Report: Who Benefits Most from Globalization?* (Gütersloh: BertelsmannStiftung, 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Pamela McCallum, “Introduction: Reading *Modern Tragedy* in the Twenty-First Century,” *Modern Tragedy*, by Raymond Williams (Toronto Broadview, 2006): 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Edith Hall, Fiona Macintosh, and Amanda Wrigley (eds.), *Dionysus Since 69: Greek Tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millennium* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004) 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. See also David Wright, “Cultural Capital and the Literary Field,” *Cultural Trends* 15.2 (2006): 123–39. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Steiner xi. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. A theorisation of epistemological questions may, among other things, also lead to an examination of *habitus* and *posture* (after Pierre Bourdieu and Jérôme Meizoz) as well as a general examination of the globalised culture industry; from the publishing industry to Booker Prizes. See M. Suderland, (2013) “Habitus und Literatur: Literarische Texte in Bourdieus Soziologie,“ *Pierre Bourdieus Konzeption des Habitus*, ed. A. Lenger, C. Schneickert and F. Schumacher (Springer VS, Wiesbaden, 2013): 327 and Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge, 1984). [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. The prominence of the classics, albeit waning in English literary and cultural studies in the West, is still a dominant force within continental philosophy—well-known examples being Judith Butler’s *Antigone’s Claim: Kinship between Life and Death* (2000) and Slavoj Žižek’s *Antigone* (2016). See Keri Walsch, “Antigone Now,” *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*, 41.3 (September 2008): 2; Rita Felski (ed.), *Rethinking Tragedy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2008); Nancy Sorkin Robinowitz. *Greek Tragedy* (Malden: Blackwell, 2008), Simon Goldhill, *Who Needs Greek: Contests in the Cultural History of Hellenism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) and Edith Hall, *Greek Tragedy: Suffering under the Sun* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Aristophanes, *Aristophanes’ Frogs* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2015) 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. CRASSH, “Re-/Un-working Tragedy: Perspectives from the Global South,” *University of Cambridge* 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. The reasons for the dearth of research into the relationship between classical tragedy and contemporary fiction is explicated in Edith Hall’s ‘Greek Tragedy and the Politics of Subjectivity in Recent Fiction’ (2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. It is important to note that it proves decidedly more difficult to trace the influence of Roman, i.e. Senecan tragedy in contemporary fiction than the influence of Attic tragedy. This dearth of overtly Roman rewritings may, however, point to the general understanding of the classics as ‘Greek’ rather than Roman. Tracing the influence of Roman tragedy is perhaps more difficult also because one cannot say whether these adaptations are intentionally Roman or intentionally Greek. Salman Rushdie’s *The Golden House* (2016) and arguably Christa Wolf’s *Medea* are perhaps such examples. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Felski 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. In 2016 Astrid Erll initiated a research project that specifically maps the relationship between Homer’s *Odyssey* and modern cultural memory. See Astrid Erll, *Odyssean Travels: A Literary History of Modern Memory, Volkswagenstiftung.* 11 September 2016. 16 May 2020. <<https://portal.volkswagenstiftung.de/search/projectDetails.do?ref=91867>>. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Rainer Winter, “Stuart Hall: Die Erfindung der *Cultural Studies*,” *Kultur: Theorien der Gegenwart*, ed. Stephan Moebius and Dirk Quadflieg (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2006): 381. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)