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## Research Project

### Dionysus and Greek Tragedy

#### Project funded by own resources

**Project title** Dionysus and Greek Tragedy

**Principal Investigator(s)** [Bierl, Anton F.H.](#) ;

**Organisation / Research unit**

Departement Altertumswissenschaften / Griechische Philologie (Bierl)

**Project start** 01.01.2011

**Probable end** 31.12.2016

**Status** Completed

The book is the translation of the first modern and exhaustive study dealing with the fundamental issue of the relation between tragedy and Dionysus. In contrast to Nietzsche's intuitive approach, it departs from the dramatic texts themselves and throws a glance at all tragic passages where Dionysus, the god of tragedy, is explicitly named, or where the Dionysian serves a metaphor. After defining Dionysus as a strictly ambivalent god full of tensions in positive and negative aspects, Bierl explores how the Athenians used this special deity as a benchmark in terms of communal life in the polis and in matters of dramatic questions. Bierl sees the god as a continuous metatragic device where intellectual poets reflect on their performances and textual productions. The book develops for the first time questions like choral referentiality and explores how Dionysus and the Dionysian can be used as dramatic catalysts. It provides detailed readings, particularly of Aristophanes' *Frogs* from where the method is deduced, Sophocles' *Antigone*, and Euripides' *Heracles*, *Helen*, *Phoenissae* and *Bacchae*.

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It is my aim to provide a completely revised second edition and add new parts, including also the two other dramatic genres, comedy and satyr-play. The perspective will be broadened to question of mythic-ritual Dionysian poetics and performance.

**Keywords** Dionysus, Metatheater

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