Ancient Theatre Around the Black Sea

A podcast with Edith Hall and Rosie Wyles

introduced by Claire Barnes

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Claire Barnes

Welcome everybody to the latest episode of the APGRD podcast “Staging the Archive”. I'm Claire Barnes, I’m one of the archivists and I'm delighted to be joined by two guests, Edith Hall and Rosie Wiles. Edith is Professor of Classics at King's College London. She'll no doubt be familiar to you from her publications on classical cultures and receptions including authoring a whopping 31 books I've just discovered, most recently, *Aristotle's way*, also *A People's History of Classics* – that's part of her successful classics and class project with Henry Stead. She's also participated in numerous TV and Radio appearances and has a delightfully named blog called “The Edithorial”. She also co-founded the APGRD in 1996. So, it's lovely to have her here on the podcast. It's also a real pleasure to welcome Rosie. Rosie lecturer in Classical History and Literature at the University of Kent. Her work has a particular focus on the staging and reception of Greek drama. She's contributed to several theatre projects and BBC documentaries. She's also the author of *Costuming Greek Tragedy*, that's published by Bristol Classical Press, and has an upcoming publication *Theatre Props and Civic Identity in Athens*, published by Bloomsbury Academic. The reason we brought Edith and Rosie together on this podcast today is to discuss their recent book. So, we usually have an item from our archive as a point of focus for these episodes, but today, it's an item from our library. The book is entitled *Ancient Theatre and Performance Culture around the Black Sea*, that's published by Cambridge University Press, and it's co-edited by Edith and Rosie as well as David Braund, Emeritus Professor at the University of Exeter, and it brings together this really quite impressive host of interdisciplinary contributors. I've been busily scrolling away reading this book on my laptop over the past couple of days and it's a very exciting publication – the first study of ancient theatre and performance in this area. I'll let Edith and Rosie tell you more about the

background to this project and cover aspects of the book in greater detail, but to start things off we're all taking a look at a vast fragment from Kiev, which features quite prominently both on the cover and the frontispiece of the book. So, I'll hand over to you both, Edith and Rosie, what's the significance behind this fragment?

Edith Hall

Well, this is one of the most striking pieces of evidence we've got for Greek theatre in the last third of the fifth century BC, it dates from between about 430 and about 420, so, we're talking the absolute heyday of certainly Euripidean and Sophoclean tragic performances, and Rosie will be able to tell you far more about extraordinary costumes and dance moves and masks, which are quite unique evidence. It would be extraordinary enough if it had been found in Puglia or Athens, but actually, it was found way, way, way up the estuary of the river Bug, which comes down through the borderlands between Russia and the Ukraine to Olbia, which was at Olbia Pontica, a quite extraordinarily important northern Black Sea colony. It's evident that somebody up there not only really loved ancient Greek theatre, but had somehow or other got from Athens a really very elaborate pot celebrating not just Dionysus, not just wine drinking, but the dance moves of the chorus. I think Rosie should actually describe what's actually on it.

Rosie Wyles

Okay, absolutely. When I was doing the book on costume, this was one of my go-tos. This is extraordinary in its detail and thanks Edith's work with David Braund getting proper photos of these published in 2014 it really changed the way that we can use this evidence. It's extraordinary! So, the detail of on it is really exquisite. Especially, actually, for the *aulos* player, the musician there right in the centre, and you can see his cheeks up puffing out as he's blowing into the pipes. I think what comes across very strongly for me on this, it's a few fragments piece together. We don't know what the wider composition on this wine mixing bowl was, but what comes across is that interest in performance, the dynamics of it, the excitement of seeing a performance

piece, and, as Edith said, not just a dance for Dionysus, but this is theatre, and we know that thanks for the masks, thanks to that musician. So, you can see on the fragment we have two chorus members masked fully costumed, playing the parts of female dancers. And then, in the centre, the *aulos* player with the musical accompaniment and a mystery figure, maybe a boy, there lower down in front of one of the performers and clapping. I think one of the things apart from the dynamics that you get from the musician being shown really in full flow at this either a performance or rehearsal. The other thing that strikes me is that gaze that you have between the boy, the extra, whatever you want to call that figure, and one of the performing chorus members, and that gaze allows us to see him as an internal spectator. So, it allows someone looking at the vase to think through what it's like watching theatre. That's a phenomenon we see in other vases too, especially the Pronomus Vase, I think, is an interesting point of reference here. So, it too is a monumental, spectacular krater showing cast of the performance of a tetralogy and it too plays on that idea of what watching theatre is like. Now that's from a few decades later, but what's really interesting is that it too is found many miles from Athens. So, you have this spread happening, but, as Edith said, what makes this so unique and so important is actually that it's decades before the Pronomus, and it's in totally the other direction. So, that Black Sea region, we have to ask what's going on.

Edith Hall

We were incredibly lucky to get this photograph on the cover of the book, because, we may talk about this later, there's been historic real problems with getting materials out of museums in the former Soviet Bloc. One of the reasons why people haven't researched the Black Sea, anything like as much as they should have done in West, is because it was almost impossible before 1989. Indeed, even now, many of the publications are perfectly legitimately in the languages of the region, Russian and Ukrainian, and here I have to say before we get any further that Rosie and I are part of a team of three of which, in my view, by far the most important member was Professor David Braund, who's not on this podcast. He's retired now, and lives in Athens but it was my

talking to him, because this man knows Russian, he knows Ukrainian, he knows Georgian, and he has spent his entire career travelling around these countries forging extraordinary relationships with museum directors and archaeologists on digs around the entire Black Sea area. He got these pictures of great friend of his who was called Professor Krapivina, lovely woman, who then died suddenly, only just after we got them and we'd lost our contact in the Kiev museum. So, the whole story of it was one of really thrilling discovery of a sort of new world and new frontiers for both modern scholarship and of course how far the Greeks took their theatre, which was literally everywhere they went. With Dionysus when theatre, and they always took Dionysus with them. Actually in Olbia, when they first went and colonised Olbia, they couldn't get their vines to grow. First thing you would do is take your vines and start to make your wine –that's part of the whole colonisation ritual. They wouldn't grow! It took them over a century to do botanical things with them, grafting and goodness knows what else before that. So, they have to import wines, but we know from their complaints about having to import this awful wine from Fasos which they much resented, the amount they had to for their Dionysiac festivals. The other really important aspect of this vase, which was what made my eyes light up when David sent me the photographs from Professor Krapivina, because David is nearly blind, I have to say. He's a phenomenal individual with very compromised eyesight, and he could not see as I could the inscriptions over the two dancing boys are in the feminine gender beautiful «καλός, καλός», it's not, it's beautiful «καλή, καλή». Even though it is quite clear from the way the masks, which is one of the best pictures we've got of an ancient Greek mask, because we can see that shortcut boy's hair, their brown neck, with these white painted faces and the attached hair to the wig. But this vase uniquely, which is what we talk about in the JHS article which is referenced in the volume, it paints the illusion of a female gender in performance. All other καλός, beautiful inscriptions on equivalent vases are in the masculine recognising the biological sex of the individual under the mask. This vase has really gone for it. These are beautiful women dancing, even though we can see that they're men. I saw this and I said to David "have you got any idea how important this it?" and he said "no".

So, we whisked off that article and sent it off to JHS who lapped it up and then because Professor Krapivina died we dedicated it to her. This whole book has got lots of very, very personal stories in it to do with sort of alienation between East and West which is entirely kind of suitable to us trying to push the boundaries of the Greek world ever north-eastwards rather than to magnify Russia in Italy, which has been incredibly trendy, and Egypt with Oxyrhynchus. The Black Sea was regarded by a lot of the ancient Greeks as a joke place. It was like this backwater. It's constant jokes like it rains, it's foggy, you can't, you can't grow wine there.

Rosie Wyles
I was going to say, you can't plant your vines!

Edith Hall
Exactly! In fact once I started researching it, I may write a whole book about Black Sea and intellectual culture beyond the theatre, because I discovered so many important things, all the way through even right to Christian Fathers disputes – one of the greatest early Christians was Marcion of Sinope, which is practically in Georgia. So, it was a huge adventure for us and we met at the conference, which we may talk about later. We managed, despite visa problems, to get people from Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and Russia and we actually didn't have anybody from Turkey. I ended up talking about the Turkish cities on the southern Black Sea coast, but it was very much a sort of post 1989 celebratory event that we could all sit together and talk about this stuff.

Rosie Wyles
I have to say it was one of the most exciting conferences I've ever been at, that's not just because I was part of the organisation of it. It was intellectually and personally so stimulating, and just to be in a room with people who had dedicated their lives to excavating and to discover these treasures, which were absolutely unknown in our scholarship.

Edith Hall

The book is actually crammed with photographs that they have taken of the things that then they had dug up. So, it's not that this one image is spectacular. For example, there's a wonderful chapter on the sort of musical instruments of the Scythians and how they appear in theatrical context, which implies a sort of hybrid culture that's drawing on local performance traditions within the frame of Dionysiac Greek culture. Our wonderful contributor there supplied all these wonderful, wonderful pictures book – the book is really worth it just for seeing these things. So, each paper that came up there were just gasps as the next picture of an extraordinary vase or a new mask had been discovered in a peninsula, or in a grave, or an *aulos*, or a theatrical puppet turned up. We were so happy because it was my first as a professor at King's College joint things with the APGRD with whom I've kept up such relationships since 1996. Rosie who did her doctorate under the aegis of the APGRD, but when I was at Durham, she was our first PhD supervisee officially attached and paid for by one of the grants.

Rosie Wyles

When you remember when you interviewed me for that PhD? I said I was interested in costume. You and we were sitting at a cafe table with all this sunlight going on and you whipped out this picture of this Pronomos vase. In my four years of studying, I've never come across it of course. You said “what do you make of this?” . That was before the Pronomos conference, that was the beginning.

Edith Hall

Of course the Pronomos vase, we had a previous very successful conference at the archive, and Rosie and Oliver Taplin edited those proceedings. So, this is a sort of joyful reunion for both of us to come back and actually talk on the vlog here. When I suggested to Fiona that we do this as a joint thing with the Centre for Hellenic Studies at Kings and the APGRD, she leapt at it, she thought this is exactly the sort of thing the archive should be doing.

Claire Barnes

Absolutely, thank you! You've both alluded to this but it might be nice to spool back onto slightly this richness that is evidently available in the Black Sea area. It's very telling this is the first publication bringing all this stuff together. Certainly looking at the region from a Greek or even a Roman prison it is this backwater, it's a place people get banished to, Ovid famously. Do you think there are some more contemporary snobbery, a play maybe, or some sort of particular challenges that may have caused a lot of these works to remain hidden?

Edith Hall

Yes, there aren't lingering prejudices against Eastern European scholars. I have to rebuke a member of the Western European delegates at the conference that will remain nameless for complaining that it was all do positivist. That means we weren't doing any fancy theory, nobody mentioned Deleuze. The fact is that the empirical findings have not remotely been exhausted, they have not been catalogued, published and written about. As Rosie said, these people are getting their hands dirty in the sounds of *Panticapaeum*, which is modern is Kerch now. Now, every day, they really haven't got time to sit around, worrying about whether it's just a sort of ecriture or construct or something. Actually and heard that and it really makes me very cross. David and I talked about this a very great deal. Then when Rosie came in knowing nothing much about the former Eastern Bloc with her not prejudices, but gaps in her knowledge, we needed her so badly for the fragments, and for the visual evidence and the costumes. I mean, we needed her terribly, but it was very interesting. David was a working-class scholar from Bristol, who was very interested in Communism as a teenager, and learned in the 1980s during the Cold War, learned all these languages. He is a quite extraordinary scholar. He's published about as many books as I have, but he's never been recognised by the western Academy. He's followed every single honourable Institute you can name in the Eastern Bloc, but has always been dismissed as a sort of rather dubious person interested in the red countries, if you see what I mean. If I hadn't become obsessed with one very

particular thing very, very early on in my academic career, I wouldn't have written to David and said “I need your help”. It was that core relationship, which is actually back to 1985, or something because I was so impressed that he knew all these languages and actually could get me free passes into museums in Soviet Kiev. The thing that got us together was that the northernmost stone Greek theatre that has ever been excavated, is at what is now called Sevastopol on the west coast of the Crimea. When I discovered there was a theatre that I could not believe it, because I had always wanted to write a book, which I’ve actually did, and it's another archive book about the history of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and Tauris is Tauric Chersonesos, which was the Greek supplement with that theatre. So, I suddenly and I do believe that in the West, I'm the first person ever to brought that theatre into conjunction with that tragedy, and got more and more excited and started exploring all of these ideas. Then the next person who goes involved was Tony Harrison, the poet, who’s a good friend of mine – I wanted him to put on a play something to do with the *Iphigenia in Tauris* in that theatre because he loves site specific things and I persuaded him to write this play. We all, David and I and Tony's wife basically, I don't know if they're married or not, doesn't matter, Siân Thomas, that actress and his daughter confusingly called Jane Harrison, who is a Bronze Age archaeologist herself and she does mainly Vikings and things, we all went off a year before Putin annexed Crimea, we persuaded the museum officials to let us put the play on. Tony wrote the play, and it ended up being produced on BBC Radio, because Putin invaded. It's just an extraordinary saga of the Black Sea archaeologist and the poet. We're all going swimming together in the Sea of Azov and Tony wrote poems about it as well. So, it's enriched my life absolutely phenomenally, but I knew neither David nor I was qualified to talk about pots the way Rosie can. So, and anyway I love Rosie, she was my PhD student, I thought “what fun, let's do it together”. So, it's a very, very happy story, but then Putin went and invaded a year after our reconnaissance trip, and thank heavens, you can't get in and out, it's unbelievably difficult because it's top security. I mean, the Russian Navy's but its nuclear subs back into Sebastopol harbour and I went round almost every Museum in Crimea with David and Tony and I took all the

photographs. I just could not believe the uncatalogued Greek pots everywhere. Every single, even little museum like playschool Theodosia, the Russians call it, had about 400 vase fragments with masks of Dionysus or whatever, but I got the pictures out – so, Putin do what he likes, we got them out. Then when Rosie saw them, she literally couldn't believe her eyes I don't think, could you, Rosie, when you saw these pictures?

Rosie Wyles

No, exactly. I mean, where's all this stuff been? It's been right there. I think there is something also in that question about why people haven't gone there and that sort of attitude towards the region and, as you put it, Claire, the snobbery, it's to do with where people feel safe, in terms of discipline wise, and the Athenocentrisism, which dominated even when I was studying as an undergraduate, it was slowly changing, but that relatively recently. So, that, I think, has a huge amount to do with it, and also disciplines and the idea of the text and studying the text versus actually looking at archaeology and saying "yeah, of course, we can look like look at a pot and also analyse poetry, it sounds like an absolute no brainer", but again, I think there's a real lag in catching up with that.

Edith Hall

We were determined, that's why we were invited as two high literary papers in – one by Felix Budelmann is a co-host attached to the archive on mind games in the *Iphigenia in Tauris* and the other by Froma Zeitlin on way the Black Sea stories, the Black Sea heroines and Achilles and Helen haunts the imagination even at the Second Sophistic. These are extremely literary and putting these two people opposite the table for some of the grimiest straight out of this excavation, a hardcore and very serious Russian archaeologist and forcing them into debate. I think when they review this book start coming out, it just came out the end of last year and then we had Covid, but I know from two people that they are reviewing it now. I don't think anybody's ever written a book like it that has quite so much of a variety of approaches in it. There we should mention Kate Bosher, she was a huge friend of the archives, she was

a brilliant young scholar, who was doing all of this in Sicily and South Italy, and she had a job. She died tragically young in 2013 and she had been going to write the first chapter of this book for us, because she has edited a wonderful CUP volume about Greek theatre in the West, again, in the colonies in the provinces but of the West, and her own PhD thesis, I have just finished editing, posthumous, so I had to get it ready for publication, and that will be coming out next January. So, we took huge inspiration from what Kate had done with the West, but the evidence there is completely different. The evidence there is masses and masses of stone theatres – you go around Sicily, there are stone theatres everywhere, there are hardly any stone theatres in the Black Sea because it was so well forested. They were all wooden, simple as that, the one at Sevastopol, Tauric Chersonesos, was actually very, very unusual. Our evidence is little tiny bits of things in museums, and textual fragments, but the other thing – and this is where Rosie really needs to talk – is that there is not a single extant tragedy set in the West. We know there were a couple of plays set on Sicily, like Sophocles' *Kokalos*, but they haven't survived. We have 30 tragedies and do you know what? Two of them are set in the Black Sea and the other one is all about the Black Sea. Rosie edited the actual chunk of the book, which is about the tragic texts.

Rosie Wyles

Yes, and it's extraordinary, isn't it? When you think about the *Medea*, one of the best-known tragedies, and the Black Sea, as Edith brings out in the volume, she talks about the Black Sea as a backstory for *Medea* and how Euripides plays on that. It's extraordinary that's probably the first point of contact. That's why I knew where Colchis was, where is Medea from. They refer to it as "oh, where's that on a map?". So, that might be the only exposure people have to the idea of the Black Sea. It's right there in one of the most popular texts, but it often – I think – you stop at the point of "oh, okay, there's where it is" and then you think about the Argonauts and maybe that's the end of it; but once you start looking not just at the play that are set there, and obviously the *Prometheus Bound* is very important, and the *Iphigenia in*

Tauris, but then going further and looking at the fragments, we have at least 12 fragments, fragmentary plays by Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, which are probably set in the Black Sea, and that all three of them are interested in it points to its importance. So, when you're thinking about the region, it's not just that it's a geographical region where the Athenians are in effect exporting plays, a geographical region where drama is spreading – it's also a space in the tragic imagination. We can see just how embedded that is, by looking at the links between those existing fully extant tragedies and the fragmentary ones. So, you can do that in all sorts of ways – to give one example, Sophocles' *Colchian Women*, which is all about Jason's adventures and trials when he's in Colchis, refers very explicitly, there's an allusion to the *Prometheus Bound*. So, what we have is clear evidence of one playwright nodding to another playwright's use of that setting and saying "I see what you did there. And I'm going to run with it further". And when you start looking at *Colchian Women*, what becomes very, very clear in that play, as I argue in the volume, is its interest in using the Black Sea as a space for thinking through what Athens is doing with its colonial ventures, and what's really important here in 437 BC around then Pericles had gone on his expedition to the Black Sea. So, it becomes in Athenian cultural imagination, this space becomes really prominent. I think it's already been there in tragedy, and you can trace it, of course, in other genres as well, in Herodotus, in Pindar and even further back to Homer, but actually, there's something particular going on with these dramas. As soon as you start looking in the thematics, you can see these motifs of wonder and danger and appropriation. All those help Athens to think through their identity, and it's right there in the place, as we have them the fully surviving ones, but also in the fragments as well.

So, in a way we were looking and thinking about what this region has been neglected as a place where there's a wealth of archaeological evidence, it's also been neglected as a conceptual category for drama. Of course, people know the Black Sea as an important think space, but I think its prominence and importance within drama and its recognised dramatic potential amongst the playwrights is really important.

Edith Hall

Yeah, it's just to supplement that with religious identity. All three of these stories of Medea, of Argive Iphigenia spending 20 years as high priestess of Artemis in Crimea and Prometheus are related very tightly to cults that the Athenians actually had on their territory or that they were extremely familiar with. So, if you take the *Prometheus* in conjunction with the fragments of its trilogy, it's almost certain it was related to the Athenian fire festival where there were torch races. That's almost certainly the case, or the Hephistae, or both. At the Hephistae we know there were even dramatic performances. *Iphigenia in Tauris* is the aetiological charter for the extraordinarily important cult of Artemis at what's now called Vravrona in Brauron. That's where all the little Athenian girls used to go out when they achieved their menarche, when they became fertile, and Iphigeneia went to be priestess there at the end of the play and brings the cult statue of Artemis all the way from the Black Sea. So, the Athenians are defining one of their most important female cults with that version. The Spartans also claimed that Iphigenia had taken that statue to Sparta, Euripides says "no, it came here", and in *Medea*, although the only real Athenian references that she persuaded Egeus, father of Theseus, to give her asylum in Athens, at the end of the play in the Athenian audience would certainly have thought "yeah, that was great when she came along wasn't it?". The cult of Hera at Akraia which is where she's going to leave the corpses of her children, which Rosie and I visited and had another epic swim in, actually. So, it's across the Corinthian Gulf from current that flight paths, she drops, she's going to drop them up, but that cult was absolutely Panhellenic. It was one where people who, especially men with pregnant wives, people went to ask for the preservation of children. And weirdly, in the Greek dialectical imagination the symbols of that cult become the destroyed children. I mean, that's such a classic piece of great unity of opposites sort of thinking, blind seers, that kind of thing, curses who are also avengers.

So, the Athenians knew about this, we went there and there was this enormous and very, very rich Temple of Hera Akraia, which was just over the isthmus, so not a long journey for the Athenians. So, once we started drawing all of these different things together, although it is a discovery about the hybrid

Greco-barbarians of the Black Sea, because Greek men went into marriage out there, these are very hybrid communities, Thucydides and Herodotus called them things like *mixobarbaroi* and *hupobarbaroi*, that kind of thing, but also, it's deeply crucial for everybody who just wants to talk about the Athenocentrism of Greek tragedy, as Rosie said. So, it's, I believe, not just for people interested in peripheral studies, which I admit I always have been fascinated by peripheries, especially given the strength of the Greek-barbarian dichotomy and the Athenian mind, actually wasn't like that in their colonies in practice one little tiny bit.

Claire Barnes
Really interesting, thank you. Going back to the book and the structure of the book in its origins for moments – so you mentioned this has been a long time coming in terms of your very epic sounding 2011 Crimean road trip and the conference proceedings, there's also quite a lot, as you said, within the contributors you've got the scholarly and the poetic, sitting alongside each other. You have, as you say, kind of the grittiness of archaeological finds alongside literary analysis. Can you see this paving the way for any future work on the area? Or is there something ongoing that you're happy for us to talk about?

Edith Hall
Well, on that area, Kate Bosher's forthcoming book is to my mind very much part of this, these books talk to each other, I had already read her manuscript so there's quite a lot of places in our book where we talk about actually the links between pots with a particular play on turn up both in far east of the Black Sea and in the West. There are colonial links, things are actually bypassing Athens sometimes. I'm not, at the moment, going to pursue this, I believe that there's a doctorate that could be written on the material in every chapter, what we've done is carve out the terrain that will allow people to develop. The book is one of those that asks as many questions as it answers an awful lot of the chapters end on a question mark, because some of them are very empirical and I'm not ashamed of that. So, for example, Alexander

Minchev, total hero, is the retired supervisor of the most important Museum of antiquities in Bulgaria and he did an interpretative catalogue. I won't claim that he does much more than tell us what there isn't to do with theatre in Bulgaria. He's a brilliant archaeologist and art historian, so he describes it very well – but the point is someone needs to go and do something with that and actually talk about the identity of the particular city states within that country, do you see what I mean? And I would be very, very happy to supervise such a doctorate. It did take an awful long time to come out, main reason learning about other cultures. I have to say that Russian scholars have a very different attitude time from Western ones! So, actually getting a book out only to six years after the conference, to them was quite an achievement, already, they would not be hurried. Just like life with three editors – David's wife was very ill, Rosie's father died, my mother died, Rosie had a baby, Rosie was very ill after having a baby, life took its toll. David also takes two days to read an article with his sight problems that some of us could get done in a couple of hours.

Rosie Wyles
He had to do all the translations!

Edith Hall
Oh yeah, he had to do all the translations!

Rosie Wyles
The bibliography! That’s the crowning achievement here.

Edith Hall
That’s your achievement.

Rosie Wyles
No it wasn’t it was David’s, I mean it was so complicated.

Edith Hall

But it's all there! It's all there, if anybody wants to go. I've made great friends with the Georgians myself now and I go every year muddling through this to Tbilisi.

Rosie Wyles
Because of the sparkling wine.

Edith Hall
Yes, it is some of the best wine in the world, actually.

Claire Barnes
Dionysus was successfully transplanted over there.

Edith Hall
Exactly. I've been to several other universities and I'm now actually helping by going and talking and so has Fiona – we're both going to Tblisi next year, Fiona Macintosh, to help there again, for the archive, it's brilliant. We discovered the entire Georgian tradition in *Medea* play, which Fiona's editing a new volume, which I write about in that – this has been opened up new reception, scholarly links, as well as Classics in its own time, scholarly links, as well. I would like to write a short book later, as I say about Black Sea intellectual life, and one of the reasons for that is that I've done a lot on reception of classics in the British Raj and then there are enormous parallels between the way that Britain's talked about having to go to India and they either fell madly in love with it and went native and got an Indian wife like my husband's great, great, great grandfather, that was one of those or they absolutely hated it, couldn't wait to get back, their wives would die of a fever, but the way it was talked about in Britain was of utter boredom. It's like we don't want people talking about the tigers that they've caught, but – my goodness – those nabobs came back with wealth, my goodness, and the Black Sea was a goldmine of slaves, corn, and fish, and wood. It was crucial to the ancient economy; we need more investigation of that side of things as well. I often think – Rosie said quite rightly – that Pericles' expeditions were

crucial. A lot of those guys in that audience had been on a terrifying voyage through the mouth of the Black Sea – which is extraordinary, I've done it myself, I've been on a cruise ship, I lectured on a cruise ship. It's really turbulent, even in a great big, modern ship. If you had to row your way through not just the Hellespont, you actually get into the gates of the Black Sea, it's incredibly narrow, it must have been absolutely as terrifying as you can possibly imagine. Number of shipwrecks in that part of the Black Sea, the western Black Sea that have been discovered confirms what Xenophon said about it being the most dangerous. So, people really were very, very, very frightened of Pericles saying 'right, you are rowing on the next trireme to the Black Sea and you get that in the songs of the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, they talk about the terrible danger over and over again. So, it's a perfect place to really think about what it's like to have colonies in a place you don't really like going to but you need.

Rosie Wyles
Life and death, it's all over these places.

Edith Hall
Yeah, it is. Rosie next interest is in funerary vases and rituals, but actually *Iphigenia in Tauris* ones will come in there, weren't they, Rosie?

Rosie Wyles
Yes, exactly, but because of that, what it is in the cultural imagination, as this sort of place of the afterworld, there are many ways in which it can help the Athenians to think through who they are – it's no surprise at all to me that it dominates in these tragedies once you start to look for it.

Claire Barnes
That's very interesting, thank you. I'm now envisaging multiple doctoral applications starting to flood in off the back of this book, which is potentially very exciting. We need another conference, clearly, the natural progression from this. Thank you so much, Edith and Rosie, that sounds absolutely

fascinating we could have probably gone on for double the time, so do check out all of the contributors mentioned. Once we're back to normal, if anyone's visiting the APGRD, you'll be able to consult a copy of the book in our library in our study room. You're also very welcome to get in touch with us via the APGRD website. We'll have an accompanying blog post alongside this podcast so you can get a slightly clearer idea of what the book entails and you can also get in touch with Edith and Rosie on Twitter, @edithmayhall and @rosiewyles. Thank you so much to both of you and we hope to have you back on again.