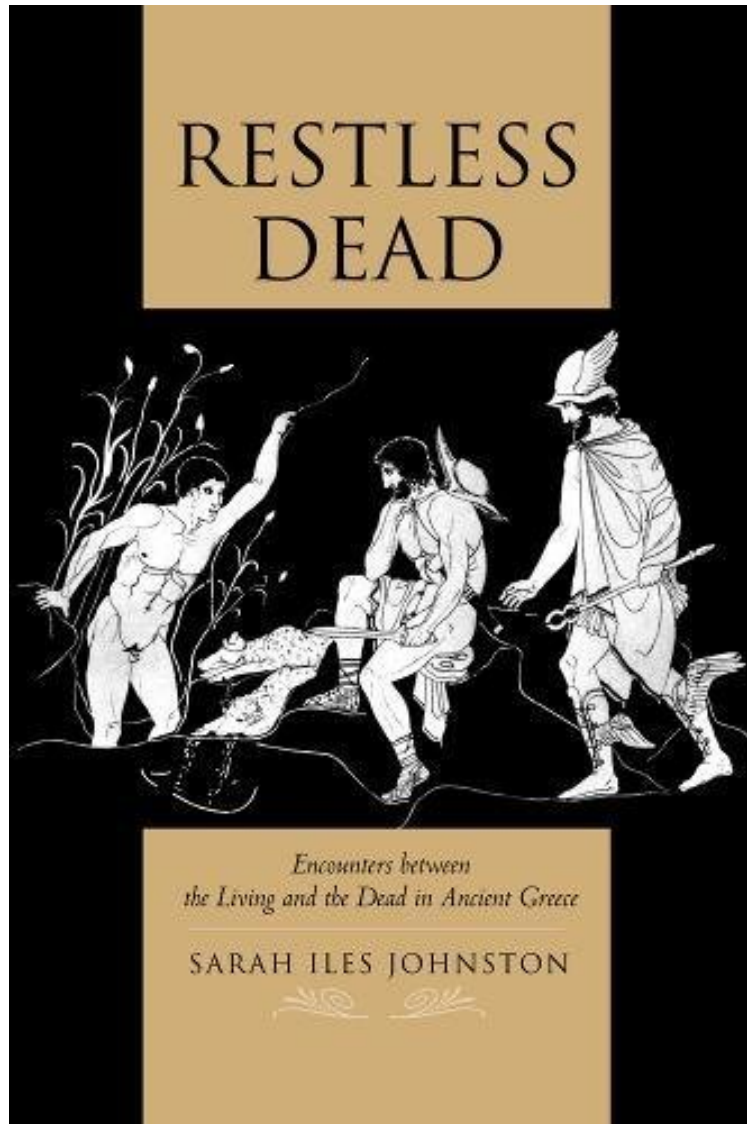


[Free and download] Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece

Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece

Sarah Iles Johnston

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Sarah Iles Johnston : Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating look at another side of the classical Greek worldBy LARA1407This is a fascinating book that traces fear of the actions of the dead from Homeric times (when it was

usually only associated with lack of proper burial) to classical times, when ghosts became a real problem. Johnston points out that few studies have been written on this subject, perhaps out of concern that this would make the classical period seem 'irrational.' The first four chapters are the most interesting, in which she covers the restless dead in classical Greece and draws parallels with Mesopotamian and Egyptian post-death activity. Typically the active dead were those who had died too young or violently, often at liminal points in their lives or their surroundings. Revenge was often a motive. I saw comparisons as well (though she does not draw them) with the Christian cult of saints as well as vampire contagions. Barber's *Vampires, Burial and Death* demonstrated that many of the same reasons motivated the dead to return to haunt the living -- and that they were most prominent in medieval Eastern Europe and the Greek islands. While the means taken to deal with vampires were more draconian, strong similarities appear. I found the final part of the book on the death of maidens and the Erinyes less interesting, and was very surprised there was no real conclusion. This was especially odd since in most chapters of her book she reiterated the major findings. My one real problem with the book was that it was often wordy -- besides using "I" frequently, too often the author used filler phrases and excess words such as "as I demonstrated earlier." Those qualms aside this is an important and very interesting look at a side of classical Greece we seldom see. As a college professor, I wish it had been a little less scholarly at least in its apparatus, because I would have liked to use a simpler version for my classes. But these are relatively small quibbles in what is otherwise a very important book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.
Very interesting
By Global Business Management
Very interesting book, well written and researched.

During the archaic and classical periods, Greek ideas about the dead evolved in response to changing social and cultural conditions most notably changes associated with the development of the polis, such as funerary legislation, and changes due to increased contacts with cultures of the ancient Near East. In *Restless Dead*, Sarah Iles Johnston presents and interprets these changes, using them to build a complex picture of the way in which the society of the dead reflected that of the living, expressing and defusing its tensions, reiterating its values and eventually becoming a source of significant power for those who knew how to control it. She draws on both well-known sources, such as Athenian tragedies, and newer texts, such as the Derveni Papyrus and a recently published *lex sacra* from Selinous. Topics of focus include the origin of the *goes* (the ritual practitioner who made interaction with the dead his specialty), the threat to the living presented by the ghosts of those who died dishonorably or prematurely, the development of Hecate into a mistress of ghosts and its connection to female rites of transition, and the complex nature of the Erinyes. *Restless Dead* culminates with a new reading of Aeschylus' *Oresteia* that emphasizes how Athenian myth and cult manipulated ideas about the dead to serve political and social ends.

From the Inside Flap "[This work] will represent the principal study of ancient Greek beliefs in the intervention of the dead, a topic of acute relevance to the study of classical literature, Greek religion, and the later cultures that spawned curse tablets and versions of Christianity." David Frankfurter, author of *Religion in Roman Egypt* "This is an incontestably useful book. . . . The author's scholarship is remarkable and her competence indisputable. Her laudably courageous and original analysis of the Erinyes leads us from archaic poetry, via the purificatory rituals and reforms of cult brought about by the mysterious Epimenides, to the Orphic tradition recently discovered in the Derveni papyrus all of which enables Sarah Johnston to conclude by proposing an enthralling rereading of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*." Philippe Borgeaud, author of *The Cult of Pan in Ancient Greece*