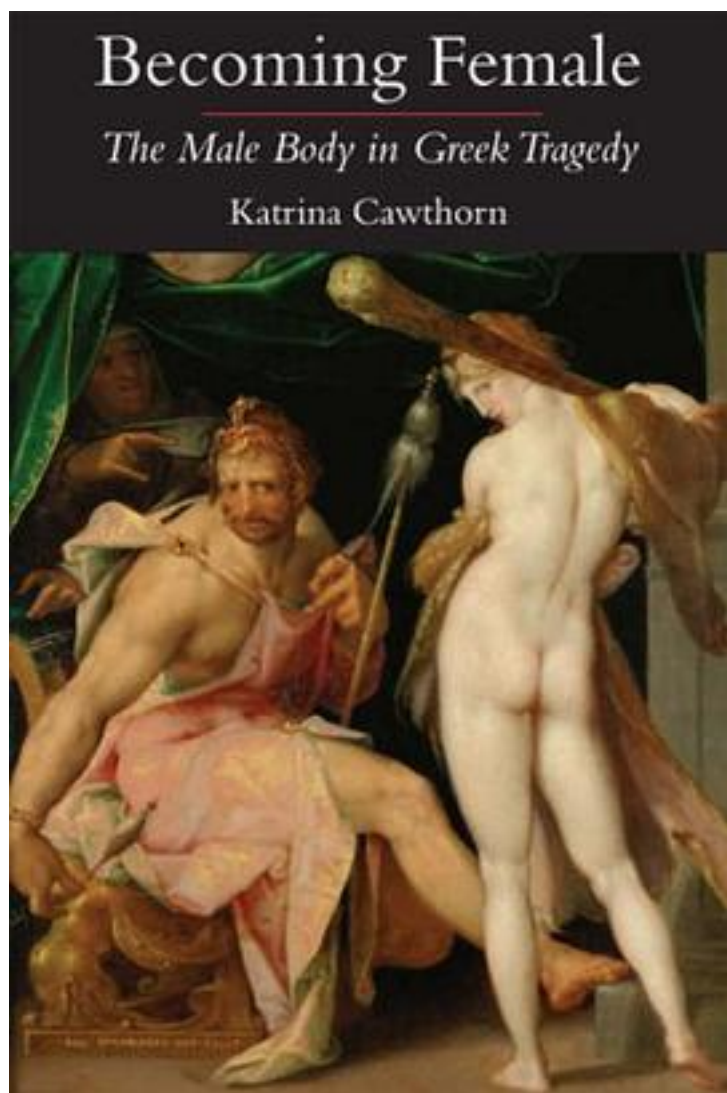


Becoming Female



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"Becoming Female", the first book-length examination of the body in classical Athenian tragedy, reconsiders the figure of the male tragic hero, making use of both feminist and body theory. The male hero becomes female in the space of tragedy through the experience of suffering, and seems unable to return to any secure expression of masculinity. Katrina Cawthorn concentrates initially on the figure of Heracles in Sophocles' "The Women of Trachis", an exemplary specimen of the tragic process of becoming female, who exhibits many of the central issues considered in the book. The male hero is, in the course of the play, undone and feminised, while the instability of masculine identity is revealed. This theme of becoming female, and the resulting failure to circumscribe the feminine and return to any secure and triumphant concept of masculinity, is argued to be a discernible feature of the genre of tragedy. The inconclusive and disconcerting nature of tragic endings contribute to the dislocation of the tragic male and emphasise the Dionysian disturbance of the male hero. Moreover, this state of the dissolute male hero has textual and theatrical consequences, extending to affect the audience so that it too becomes feminised by the processes of tragedy. "Becoming Female" is an important work for scholars and students of Classical Studies, Ancient History, Drama and Theatre Studies, Women's Studies and Cultural Studies.

作者介绍:

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