Schedule for the end of January

W 1/21: Plato, Apology, Crito
Short paper #2 due for writing assistant.

Th 1/22: Class will not meet during x-period as originally scheduled.

F 1/23: Sappho handout
“Beautiful the Doom” handout
Simonides handout
Recommended (or for critical article credit): Anne Carson handout

Short paper #1 revisions now due on Fri.

M 1/26: Bacchylides handout
Pindar handout
Start reading Aeschylus, Persians

Short paper #2 due for a grade.

W 1/28: finish reading Aeschylus, Persians
discussion of Persians in class

F 1/30: first Thucydides assignment (see syllabus)

Handouts:
1. “Beautiful the Doom.” Excerpts from Greek oratory, poetry, and philosophy, on the death/immortality paradox, especially in the “good death” of those who die in battle for their nation.

2. Sappho. Two short poems by Sappho, with commentary by Margaret Williamson exploring how the language and poetry of war have found their way into Sappho’s love poems.

3. Simonides. A short anthology of Simonides’ poetry (including the poem referred to by the “Beautiful the Doom” handout), followed by (a) a collection of dirges, (b) an “elegiac” poem reflecting on the famous line in Homer’s Iliad comparing the generations of men to the generations of leaves, and (c) three epitaphs that Simonides composed for those who died in battle.

4. Article on Simonides: “Epitaphs” by Anne Carson. Anne Carson is a well-known poet herself, and she comments on the strangeness of epitaph poetry, which has to express the value of what is no longer there (the dead). This is required reading only for those who will use it to fulfill the course requirement to read and report (to the class) on a critical article.

5. Bacchylides. Though this poem, for a chorus and a single actor, was composed well after tragic performances used multiple actors, it may still give us an idea of what “tragedy” was like before Aeschylus introduced the second actor. I want you to think about what is “typically tragic” in this poem: its style, way of looking at events, and, above all, the dramatic situation.

6. Pindar, “Pythian 8.” A song composed to celebrate a victory in the Pythian Games (athletic contests that, like the Olympic Games, attracted noble-born competitors from throughout the Greek world). Come to class prepared to explain, with reference our other readings on victory and defeat, why this song includes so much more than just praise and positive/optimistic statements about the victor’s accomplishment. What is the “logic” that unites the ode’s elements into an appropriate reflection on the moment of victory?