**Nessus and Knowledge in Sophocles’ *Trachiniai***

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**Key points**:

* The central theme of Sophocles’ *Trachiniai* is Deianeira’s “education” by Nessus.
* Sophocles presents Nessus as a foil to the Cheiron tradition.
* Sophocles uses the play as an *epideixis* to question who benefits from Sophistic education.

**Background**:

1. According to Plato’s *Meno*, Protagoras first appears as a Sophist ca. 450 BCE.
2. T.F. Hoey (1979) proposes that the *Trachiniai* was first performed ca. 450 BCE.
3. Euripides’ first play, the *Peliades*, performed ca. 455 BCE.

**Passages**:

1. [ἦν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=h%29%3Dn&la=greek&can=h%29%3Dn0&prior=fra/sw) [μοι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=moi&la=greek&can=moi0&prior=h)=n) [παλαιὸν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=palaio%5Cn&la=greek&can=palaio%5Cn0&prior=moi) [δῶρον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=dw%3Dron&la=greek&can=dw%3Dron0&prior=palaio%5Cn) [ἀρχαίου](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29rxai%2Fou&la=greek&can=a%29rxai%2Fou0&prior=dw=ron) [ποτὲ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pote%5C&la=greek&can=pote%5C0&prior=a)rxai/ou)

[θηρός](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=qhro%2Fs&la=greek&can=qhro%2Fs0&prior=pote%5C), [λέβητι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=le%2Fbhti&la=greek&can=le%2Fbhti0&prior=qhro/s) [χαλκέῳ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=xalke%2Fw%7C&la=greek&can=xalke%2Fw%7C0&prior=le/bhti) [κεκρυμμένον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kekrumme%2Fnon&la=greek&can=kekrumme%2Fnon0&prior=xalke/w%7C),

[ὃ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28%5C&la=greek&can=o%28%5C0&prior=kekrumme/non) [**παῖς**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pai%3Ds&la=greek&can=pai%3Ds0&prior=o(%5C)[**ἔτ᾽**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Ft%27&la=greek&can=e%29%2Ft%270&prior=pai=s)[**οὖσα**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29%3Dsa&la=greek&can=ou%29%3Dsa0&prior=e)/t') [τοῦ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tou%3D&la=greek&can=tou%3D1&prior=ou)=sa) [δασυστέρνου](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=dasuste%2Frnou&la=greek&can=dasuste%2Frnou0&prior=tou=) [παρὰ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=para%5C&la=greek&can=para%5C0&prior=dasuste/rnou)

[Νέσσου](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*ne%2Fssou&la=greek&can=*ne%2Fssou0&prior=para%5C) [φθίνοντος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=fqi%2Fnontos&la=greek&can=fqi%2Fnontos0&prior=*ne/ssou) [ἐκ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29k&la=greek&can=e%29k0&prior=fqi/nontos) [φονῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=fonw%3Dn&la=greek&can=fonw%3Dn0&prior=e)k) [ἀνειλόμην](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29neilo%2Fmhn&la=greek&can=a%29neilo%2Fmhn0&prior=fonw=n),

[ὃς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28%5Cs&la=greek&can=o%28%5Cs0&prior=a)neilo/mhn) [τὸν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=to%5Cn&la=greek&can=to%5Cn0&prior=o(%5Cs) [βαθύρρουν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=baqu%2Frroun&la=greek&can=baqu%2Frroun0&prior=to%5Cn) [ποταμὸν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=potamo%5Cn&la=greek&can=potamo%5Cn0&prior=baqu/rroun) [Εὔηνον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*eu%29%2Fhnon&la=greek&can=*eu%29%2Fhnon0&prior=potamo%5Cn) [βροτοὺς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=brotou%5Cs&la=greek&can=brotou%5Cs0&prior=*eu)/hnon) 560

[**μισθοῦ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=misqou%3D&la=greek&can=misqou%3D0&prior=brotou%5Cs) **'**[**πόρευε**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=po%2Freue&la=greek&can=po%2Freue0&prior=misqou=) [χερσίν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=xersi%2Fn&la=greek&can=xersi%2Fn0&prior=po/reue), [οὔτε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29%2Fte&la=greek&can=ou%29%2Fte0&prior=xersi/n) [πομπίμοις](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pompi%2Fmois&la=greek&can=pompi%2Fmois0&prior=ou)/te)

[κώπαις](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kw%2Fpais&la=greek&can=kw%2Fpais0&prior=pompi/mois) [ἐρέσσων](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29re%2Fsswn&la=greek&can=e%29re%2Fsswn0&prior=kw/pais) [οὔτε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29%2Fte&la=greek&can=ou%29%2Fte1&prior=e)re/sswn) [λαίφεσιν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=lai%2Ffesin&la=greek&can=lai%2Ffesin0&prior=ou)/te) [νεώς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=new%2Fs&la=greek&can=new%2Fs0&prior=lai/fesin).

Long ago I had a gift from an ancient beast, concealed in a bronze cauldron, which I took **when I was still a child** from shaggy-breasted Nessus when he was dying from bloodshed, who used to convey mortals **for hire** across the deep-flowing Evenus River with his hands, neither rowing with conveying oars nor with the sails of a ship.

Sophocles, *Trachiniai 556-61*

2. [ἐκθνῄσκων](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29kqnh%2F%7Cskwn&la=greek&can=e%29kqnh%2F%7Cskwn0&prior=dierroi/zhsen) [δ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=d%27&la=greek&can=d%277&prior=e)kqnh/%7Cskwn) [ὁ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28&la=greek&can=o%282&prior=d') [θὴρ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=qh%5Cr&la=greek&can=qh%5Cr0&prior=o()

[τοσοῦτον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tosou%3Dton&la=greek&can=tosou%3Dton0&prior=qh%5Cr) [εἶπε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ei%29%3Dpe&la=greek&can=ei%29%3Dpe0&prior=tosou=ton): [παῖ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pai%3D&la=greek&can=pai%3D0&prior=ei)=pe) [γέροντος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ge%2Frontos&la=greek&can=ge%2Frontos0&prior=pai=) [Οἰνέως](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*oi%29ne%2Fws&la=greek&can=*oi%29ne%2Fws0&prior=ge/rontos), 570

[τοσόνδ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=toso%2Fnd%27&la=greek&can=toso%2Fnd%270&prior=*oi)ne/ws) [ὀνήσει](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%29nh%2Fsei&la=greek&can=o%29nh%2Fsei0&prior=toso/nd') [τῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tw%3Dn&la=greek&can=tw%3Dn2&prior=o)nh/sei) [ἐμῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29mw%3Dn&la=greek&can=e%29mw%3Dn0&prior=tw=n), [ἐὰν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29a%5Cn&la=greek&can=e%29a%5Cn0&prior=e)mw=n) [πίθῃ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pi%2Fqh%7C&la=greek&can=pi%2Fqh%7C0&prior=e)a%5Cn),

[πορθμῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=porqmw%3Dn&la=greek&can=porqmw%3Dn0&prior=pi/qh%7C), [ὁθούνεχ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28qou%2Fnex%27&la=greek&can=o%28qou%2Fnex%270&prior=porqmw=n) [ὑστάτην](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=u%28sta%2Fthn&la=greek&can=u%28sta%2Fthn0&prior=o(qou/nex') [σ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=s%27&la=greek&can=s%270&prior=u(sta/thn) [ἔπεμψ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fpemy%27&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fpemy%270&prior=s') [ἐγώ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29gw%2F&la=greek&can=e%29gw%2F1&prior=e)/pemy'):

[ἐὰν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29a%5Cn&la=greek&can=e%29a%5Cn1&prior=e)gw/) [γὰρ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ga%5Cr&la=greek&can=ga%5Cr1&prior=e)a%5Cn) [ἀμφίθρεπτον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29mfi%2Fqrepton&la=greek&can=a%29mfi%2Fqrepton0&prior=ga%5Cr) [αἷμα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ai%28%3Dma&la=greek&can=ai%28%3Dma0&prior=a)mfi/qrepton) [τῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tw%3Dn&la=greek&can=tw%3Dn3&prior=ai(=ma) [ἐμῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29mw%3Dn&la=greek&can=e%29mw%3Dn1&prior=tw=n)

[σφαγῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=sfagw%3Dn&la=greek&can=sfagw%3Dn0&prior=e)mw=n) [ἐνέγκῃ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29ne%2Fgkh%7C&la=greek&can=e%29ne%2Fgkh%7C0&prior=sfagw=n) [χερσίν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=xersi%2Fn&la=greek&can=xersi%2Fn2&prior=e)ne/gkh%7C), [ᾗ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=h%28%3D%7C&la=greek&can=h%28%3D%7C1&prior=xersi/n) [μελαγχόλους](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=melagxo%2Flous&la=greek&can=melagxo%2Flous0&prior=h(=%7C)

[ἔβαψεν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fbayen&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fbayen0&prior=melagxo/lous) [ἰοὺς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=i%29ou%5Cs&la=greek&can=i%29ou%5Cs0&prior=e)/bayen) [θρέμμα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=qre%2Fmma&la=greek&can=qre%2Fmma0&prior=i)ou%5Cs) [Λερναίας](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*lernai%2Fas&la=greek&can=*lernai%2Fas0&prior=qre/mma) [ὕδρας](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=u%28%2Fdras&la=greek&can=u%28%2Fdras0&prior=*lernai/as), 575

[ἔσται](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fstai&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fstai0&prior=u(/dras) [φρενός](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=freno%2Fs&la=greek&can=freno%2Fs1&prior=e)/stai) [σοι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=soi&la=greek&can=soi0&prior=freno/s) [τοῦτο](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tou%3Dto&la=greek&can=tou%3Dto0&prior=soi) [κηλητήριον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=khlhth%2Frion&la=greek&can=khlhth%2Frion0&prior=tou=to)

[τῆς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=th%3Ds&la=greek&can=th%3Ds2&prior=khlhth/rion) [Ἡρακλείας](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*%28hraklei%2Fas&la=greek&can=*%28hraklei%2Fas0&prior=th=s), [ὥστε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=w%28%2Fste&la=greek&can=w%28%2Fste1&prior=*(hraklei/as) [μήτιν᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=mh%2Ftin%27&la=greek&can=mh%2Ftin%270&prior=w(/ste) [εἰσιδὼν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ei%29sidw%5Cn&la=greek&can=ei%29sidw%5Cn0&prior=mh/tin')

[στέρξει](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ste%2Frcei&la=greek&can=ste%2Frcei0&prior=ei)sidw%5Cn) [γυναῖκα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=gunai%3Dka&la=greek&can=gunai%3Dka1&prior=ste/rcei) [κεῖνος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kei%3Dnos&la=greek&can=kei%3Dnos0&prior=gunai=ka) [ἀντὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29nti%5C&la=greek&can=a%29nti%5C0&prior=kei=nos) [σοῦ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=sou%3D&la=greek&can=sou%3D0&prior=a)nti%5C) [πλέον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ple%2Fon&la=greek&can=ple%2Fon0&prior=sou=).

And as he was dying the centaur spoke this: ‘Child of old Oeneus, you will have such a profit from my passage, if you should obey, since I ferried you last. For if you gather in your hands the clotted blood from my wounds where he dipped the black-biled arrows into the Lernaean hydra, you will have a charm for the heart of Herakles, so that having gazed upon a woman that man will love no one more in your place.’

Sophocles, *Trachiniai* 569-578

3. [οὐκ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29k&la=greek&can=ou%29k1&prior=u(/per) [ἔστιν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fstin&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fstin0&prior=ou)k), [ἀλλὰ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29lla%5C&la=greek&can=a%29lla%5C0&prior=e)/stin) [τὸν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=to%5Cn&la=greek&can=to%5Cn0&prior=a)lla%5C) [βαλόντ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=balo%2Fnt%27&la=greek&can=balo%2Fnt%270&prior=to%5Cn) [ἀποφθίσαι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29pofqi%2Fsai&la=greek&can=a%29pofqi%2Fsai0&prior=balo/nt') 710

[**χρῄζων**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=xrh%2F%7Czwn&la=greek&can=xrh%2F%7Czwn0&prior=a)pofqi/sai) [**ἔθελγέ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fqelge%2F&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fqelge%2F0&prior=xrh/%7Czwn)[**μ᾽**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=m%27&la=greek&can=m%271&prior=e)/qelge/): [ὧν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=w%28%3Dn&la=greek&can=w%28%3Dn0&prior=m') [ἐγὼ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29gw%5C&la=greek&can=e%29gw%5C0&prior=w(=n) [μεθύστερον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=mequ%2Fsteron&la=greek&can=mequ%2Fsteron0&prior=e)gw%5C),

[ὅτ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28%2Ft%27&la=greek&can=o%28%2Ft%270&prior=mequ/steron) [οὐκέτ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29ke%2Ft%27&la=greek&can=ou%29ke%2Ft%270&prior=o(/t') [ἀρκεῖ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29rkei%3D&la=greek&can=a%29rkei%3D0&prior=ou)ke/t'), [**τὴν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=th%5Cn&la=greek&can=th%5Cn0&prior=a)rkei=) [**μάθησιν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ma%2Fqhsin&la=greek&can=ma%2Fqhsin0&prior=th%5Cn) [ἄρνυμαι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%2Frnumai&la=greek&can=a%29%2Frnumai0&prior=ma/qhsin).

No, but **benefitting he deceived me** to destroy the one striking him: Too late I gain knowledge, when it is no longer sufficient.

Sophocles, *Trachiniai* 710-12

4. [καὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kai%5C&la=greek&can=kai%5C1&prior=lo/gou) [ἐγὼ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29gw%5C&la=greek&can=e%29gw%5C0&prior=kai%5C) [ἐπὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29pi%5C&la=greek&can=e%29pi%5C0&prior=e)gw%5C) [μὲν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%5Cn&la=greek&can=me%5Cn1&prior=e)pi%5C) [πολὺν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=polu%5Cn&la=greek&can=polu%5Cn0&prior=me%5Cn) [χρόνον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=xro%2Fnon&la=greek&can=xro%2Fnon0&prior=polu%5Cn) [κεκηλημένος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kekhlhme%2Fnos&la=greek&can=kekhlhme%2Fnos0&prior=xro/non) [ἔτι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fti&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fti1&prior=kekhlhme/nos) [πρὸς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pro%5Cs&la=greek&can=pro%5Cs0&prior=e)/ti) [αὐτὸν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=au%29to%5Cn&la=greek&can=au%29to%5Cn0&prior=pro%5Cs) [ἔβλεπον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fblepon&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fblepon0&prior=au)to%5Cn) [ὡς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=w%28s&la=greek&can=w%28s0&prior=e)/blepon) [ἐροῦντά](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29rou%3Dnta%2F&la=greek&can=e%29rou%3Dnta%2F0&prior=w(s) [τι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ti&la=greek&can=ti0&prior=e)rou=nta/), [ἐπιθυμῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29piqumw%3Dn&la=greek&can=e%29piqumw%3Dn0&prior=ti) [ἀκούειν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29kou%2Fein&la=greek&can=a%29kou%2Fein0&prior=e)piqumw=n):

And I was still staring at him, spell bound for a long time, as if desiring to hear him saying something.

Plato, *Protagoras*, 328D

5. [λόγος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=lo%2Fgos&la=greek&can=lo%2Fgos0&prior=*dhia/neira) [μέν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%2Fn&la=greek&can=me%2Fn0&prior=lo/gos) [ἐστ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29st%27&la=greek&can=e%29st%270&prior=me/n) [ἀρχαῖος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29rxai%3Dos&la=greek&can=a%29rxai%3Dos0&prior=e)st') [ἀνθρώπων](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29nqrw%2Fpwn&la=greek&can=a%29nqrw%2Fpwn0&prior=a)rxai=os) [φανείς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=fanei%2Fs&la=greek&can=fanei%2Fs0&prior=a)nqrw/pwn),

[**ὡς**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=w%28s&la=greek&can=w%28s0&prior=fanei/s)[**οὐκ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29k&la=greek&can=ou%29k0&prior=w(s)[**ἂν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%5Cn&la=greek&can=a%29%5Cn0&prior=ou)k)[**αἰῶν᾽**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ai%29w%3Dn%27&la=greek&can=ai%29w%3Dn%270&prior=a)%5Cn)[**ἐκμάθοις**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29kma%2Fqois&la=greek&can=e%29kma%2Fqois0&prior=ai)w=n')[**βροτῶν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=brotw%3Dn&la=greek&can=brotw%3Dn0&prior=e)kma/qois), [πρὶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pri%5Cn&la=greek&can=pri%5Cn0&prior=brotw=n) [ἂν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%5Cn&la=greek&can=a%29%5Cn1&prior=pri%5Cn)

[θάνῃ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=qa%2Fnh%7C&la=greek&can=qa%2Fnh%7C0&prior=a)%5Cn) [τις](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tis&la=greek&can=tis0&prior=qa/nh%7C), [οὔτ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29%2Ft%27&la=greek&can=ou%29%2Ft%270&prior=tis) [**εἰ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ei%29&la=greek&can=ei%290&prior=ou)/t')[**χρηστὸς**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=xrhsto%5Cs&la=greek&can=xrhsto%5Cs0&prior=ei))[**οὔτ᾽**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29%2Ft%27&la=greek&can=ou%29%2Ft%271&prior=xrhsto%5Cs)[**εἴ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ei%29%2F&la=greek&can=ei%29%2F0&prior=ou)/t')[**τῳ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tw%7C&la=greek&can=tw%7C0&prior=ei)/)[**κακός**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kako%2Fs&la=greek&can=kako%2Fs0&prior=tw%7C).

There is an ancient saying among men, **that you could not know the lifespan of mortals**, **whether it was good or bad**, until one dies.

Sophocles, *Trachiniai 1-3.*

6. [φησὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=fhsi%5C&la=greek&can=fhsi%5C0&prior=tau=ta) [γάρ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ga%2Fr&la=greek&can=ga%2Fr0&prior=fhsi%5C) [που](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pou&la=greek&can=pou0&prior=ga/r) **‘**[**πάντων**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pa%2Fntwn&la=greek&can=pa%2Fntwn0&prior=pou)[**χρημάτων**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=xrhma%2Ftwn&la=greek&can=xrhma%2Ftwn0&prior=pa/ntwn)[**μέτρον**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%2Ftron&la=greek&can=me%2Ftron0&prior=xrhma/twn)**’** [**ἄνθρωπον**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%2Fnqrwpon&la=greek&can=a%29%2Fnqrwpon0&prior=me/tron)[**εἶναι**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ei%29%3Dnai&la=greek&can=ei%29%3Dnai0&prior=a)/nqrwpon)**, ‘**[**τῶν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tw%3Dn&la=greek&can=tw%3Dn0&prior=ei)=nai)[**μὲν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%5Cn&la=greek&can=me%5Cn0&prior=tw=n)[**ὄντων**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%29%2Fntwn&la=greek&can=o%29%2Fntwn0&prior=me%5Cn)[**ὡς**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=w%28s&la=greek&can=w%28s0&prior=o)/ntwn)[**ἔστι**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fsti&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fsti0&prior=w(s)**,** [**τῶν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tw%3Dn&la=greek&can=tw%3Dn1&prior=e)/sti)[**δὲ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=de%5C&la=greek&can=de%5C0&prior=tw=n)[**μὴ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=mh%5C&la=greek&can=mh%5C0&prior=de%5C)[**ὄντων**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%29%2Fntwn&la=greek&can=o%29%2Fntwn1&prior=mh%5C)[**ὡς**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=w%28s&la=greek&can=w%28s1&prior=o)/ntwn)[**οὐκ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29k&la=greek&can=ou%29k0&prior=w(s)[**ἔστιν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fstin&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fstin0&prior=ou)k).’

For he says that “**man is the measure of all things, of things that are, and of the non existence of things that are not”**.

Plato, *Theaetetus* 152A

7. [ἐμοὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29moi%5C&la=greek&can=e%29moi%5C0&prior=%5D) [δὲ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=de%5C&la=greek&can=de%5C0&prior=e)moi%5C) [σὺ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=su%5C&la=greek&can=su%5C0&prior=de%5C) [καὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kai%5C&la=greek&can=kai%5C0&prior=su%5C) [πλουτέειν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ploute%2Fein&la=greek&can=ploute%2Fein0&prior=kai%5C) [μέγα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%2Fga&la=greek&can=me%2Fga0&prior=ploute/ein) [φαίνεαι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=fai%2Fneai&la=greek&can=fai%2Fneai0&prior=me/ga) [καὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kai%5C&la=greek&can=kai%5C1&prior=fai/neai) [βασιλεὺς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=basileu%5Cs&la=greek&can=basileu%5Cs0&prior=kai%5C) [πολλῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pollw%3Dn&la=greek&can=pollw%3Dn0&prior=basileu%5Cs) [εἶναι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ei%29%3Dnai&la=greek&can=ei%29%3Dnai0&prior=pollw=n) [ἀνθρώπων](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29nqrw%2Fpwn&la=greek&can=a%29nqrw%2Fpwn0&prior=ei)=nai): [ἐκεῖνο](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29kei%3Dno&la=greek&can=e%29kei%3Dno0&prior=a)nqrw/pwn) [δὲ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=de%5C&la=greek&can=de%5C1&prior=e)kei=no) [**τὸ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=to%5C&la=greek&can=to%5C0&prior=de%5C)[**εἴρεό**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ei%29%2Freo%2F&la=greek&can=ei%29%2Freo%2F0&prior=to%5C)[**με**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me&la=greek&can=me0&prior=ei)/reo/)**,** [**οὔκω**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29%2Fkw&la=greek&can=ou%29%2Fkw0&prior=me)[**σε**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=se&la=greek&can=se0&prior=ou)/kw)[**ἐγὼ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29gw%5C&la=greek&can=e%29gw%5C0&prior=se)[**λέγω**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=le%2Fgw&la=greek&can=le%2Fgw0&prior=e)gw%5C)**,** [**πρὶν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pri%5Cn&la=greek&can=pri%5Cn0&prior=le/gw)[**τελευτήσαντα**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=teleuth%2Fsanta&la=greek&can=teleuth%2Fsanta0&prior=pri%5Cn)[**καλῶς**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kalw%3Ds&la=greek&can=kalw%3Ds0&prior=teleuth/santa)[**τὸν**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=to%5Cn&la=greek&can=to%5Cn0&prior=kalw=s)[**αἰῶνα**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ai%29w%3Dna&la=greek&can=ai%29w%3Dna0&prior=to%5Cn)[**πύθωμαι**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pu%2Fqwmai&la=greek&can=pu%2Fqwmai0&prior=ai)w=na)**.** [**οὐ**](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29&la=greek&can=ou%290&prior=pu/qwmai) [γάρ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ga%2Fr&la=greek&can=ga%2Fr0&prior=ou)) [τι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ti&la=greek&can=ti0&prior=ga/r) [ὁ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28&la=greek&can=o%280&prior=ti) [μέγα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%2Fga&la=greek&can=me%2Fga1&prior=o() [πλούσιος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=plou%2Fsios&la=greek&can=plou%2Fsios0&prior=me/ga) [μᾶλλον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ma%3Dllon&la=greek&can=ma%3Dllon0&prior=plou/sios) [τοῦ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tou%3D&la=greek&can=tou%3D0&prior=ma=llon) [ἐπ᾽](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29p%27&la=greek&can=e%29p%270&prior=tou=) [ἡμέρην](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=h%28me%2Frhn&la=greek&can=h%28me%2Frhn0&prior=e)p') [ἔχοντος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fxontos&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fxontos0&prior=h(me/rhn) [ὀλβιώτερος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%29lbiw%2Fteros&la=greek&can=o%29lbiw%2Fteros0&prior=e)/xontos) [ἐστί](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29sti%2F&la=greek&can=e%29sti%2F0&prior=o)lbiw/teros), [εἰ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ei%29&la=greek&can=ei%290&prior=e)sti/) [μή](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=mh%2F&la=greek&can=mh%2F0&prior=ei)) [οἱ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=oi%28&la=greek&can=oi%280&prior=mh/) [τύχη](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tu%2Fxh&la=greek&can=tu%2Fxh0&prior=oi() [ἐπίσποιτο](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29pi%2Fspoito&la=greek&can=e%29pi%2Fspoito0&prior=tu/xh) [πάντα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pa%2Fnta&la=greek&can=pa%2Fnta0&prior=e)pi/spoito) [καλὰ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kala%5C&la=greek&can=kala%5C0&prior=pa/nta) [ἔχοντα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fxonta&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fxonta0&prior=kala%5C) [εὖ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=eu%29%3D&la=greek&can=eu%29%3D0&prior=e)/xonta) [τελευτῆσαὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=teleuth%3Dsai%5C&la=greek&can=teleuth%3Dsai%5C0&prior=eu)=) [τὸν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=to%5Cn&la=greek&can=to%5Cn1&prior=teleuth=sai%5C) [βίον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=bi%2Fon&la=greek&can=bi%2Fon0&prior=to%5Cn).

I think to me you seem to have great wealth and to be king of many men: **but I do not yet answer that which you asked me, before your life has ended well.**  For the very wealthy man is not more blessed than the man who meets his daily needs, except the one whom fortune follows to end his life having all things well

Herodotus 1.32.5

\*All translations provided are my own.

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