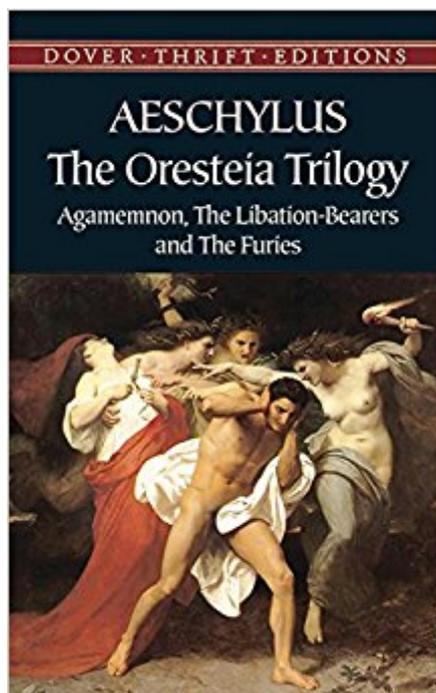


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# The Oresteia Trilogy: Agamemnon, The Libation-Bearers And The Furies



## Synopsis

Perhaps the greatest of the Greek tragedians, Aeschylus wrote 90 plays, but only seven have survived complete. Among them is this classic trilogy dealing with the bloody history of the House of Atreus. In *Agamemnon*, the warrior who defeated Troy returns to Argos and is murdered by his wife Clytemnestra for sacrificing their daughter Iphigenia before the start of the Trojan War. In *The Libation-Bearers*, Orestes, Agamemnon's son, avenges his father by murdering his mother. In *The Furies*, Orestes flees to Delphi, pursued by the divine avengers (Erinyes) of his mother. After being purified by Apollo, he makes his way to Athens and is there tried (and acquitted) at the court of Areopagus. Written in a grand style, rich in diction and dramatic dialogue, the plays embody Aeschylus's concerns with the destiny and fate of individuals as well as the state, all played out under the watchful eye of the gods. Still powerful and provocative after 2,500 years, these great tragedies offer unparalleled insight into the world of ancient Greece and the origins of the Western dramatic tradition.

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## Customer Reviews

..."The Eumenides" was a captivating play with a few minor flaws. To fully understand the play, one must first understand the history that went on before the play took place. "The Eumenides" was written by Aeschylus and is also known as "The Furies", the third play of The Oresteia Trilogy. This play is set around the time period of 1250 B.C., approximately the same time as the Trojan War. The main character of the play is Orestes from Argos. In the plays before "The Eumenides", Orestes killed his mom, Clytemnestra, who killed Orestes' dad, Agamemnon, after he returned home from

war. Orestes was told by Apollo to kill his mom in order to avenge his father's death. Therefore, this is the reason "The Eumenides" began at Apollo's temple. Aeschylus was an Athenian man who wrote thirteen first place plays. He wrote this tragedy around 458 B.C. This play had some new innovations for its time period, such as a second actor, elaborate staging, and poetic diction. Aeschylus was in the navy at Salamis and...Page 2took part in the Persian Invasion in 480 B.C. He died in 456 B.C., when an eagle dropped a tortoise on his head, crushing his skull. "The Eumenides" was a great play, as were the other two of the trilogy. The poetic words seemed to flow from the actors' mouths, maybe a little too much when the Furies spoke prior to the trial. The Furies were annoying throughout the play and had too many rambling speaking parts. However, the play contained a practical plot line that is still fit for today's society, even though it was written some 2,461 years ago. I enjoyed seeing how the people from long ago dealt with similar issues, which still haunt our society today. The plot appeared to flow steadily throughout the play.

The Oresteia Trilogy by Aeschylus is a detailed portrayal of a family's curse and the effect it takes on them. Aeschylus wrote this trilogy between 500 B.C and 456 B.C. when the great Greek plays were being written and performed by all Athenians. Aeschylus wrote many trilogies, winning approximately thirteen first place prizes at the festivals in March. He led a life of adventure participating in several wars, the most famous being the war at Marathon. Even though Aeschylus wrote this trilogy hundreds of years ago, it can still be related to life today in the 21st Century. As one reads the plays one can envision their own town or life in his work. For this reason it is regarded as a "Great Greek Tragedy" and no one here seems to be arguing. As The Oresteia Trilogy begins to unravel the reader begins to experience the lives and times of the characters. They are given an exclusive view into the minds and souls of each character as they contemplate each decision. Clytemnestra and the characters surrounding her were experiencing many of the trials and life situations citizens experience today. As the Trojan War raged on in the trilogy and the citizens dealt with the absence of husbands and fathers, our country also deals with the same situation and Iraq. Wives were constantly facing the thought of their husbands' deaths or infidelity. Even though Clytemnestra had different reactions to these than most women, she still felt and experienced them. Clytemnestra's feelings weren't unjust; her instincts of Agamemnon's infidelity were truthful. As Agamemnon was unfaithful to his wife Clytemnestra, our culture also deals with many couples that cannot seem to be pleased with just one mate. When many of these affairs are revealed violence can erupt.

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