



# Aeschylus: Libation Bearers (Companions to Greek and Roman Tragedy)

*C. W. Marshall*

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*Libation Bearers* is the 'middle' play in the only extant tragic trilogy to survive from antiquity, Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, first produced in 458 BCE. This introduction to the play will be useful for anyone reading it in the original or translation. Drawing on his wide experience of teaching about performance in the ancient world, C. W. helps readers understand how the play was experienced by its ancient audience. His discussion explores the impact of the chorus, the characters, and the play's apparent affinities with comedy. It investigates the role of revenge in Athenian society and the problematic nature of Orestes' matricide. *Libation Bearers* immediately entered the Athenian visual imagination, influencing artistic depictions on red-figured vases, and inspiring plays by Euripides and Sophocles. This study looks to the later plays to show how 5th-century audiences understood *Libation Bearers*. Modern productions are also considered, integrating the modern reception of the play into its analysis. The volume includes a full range of ancillary material, providing a list of relevant red-figure vase illustrations, a glossary of technical terms, and a chronology of ancient and modern theatrical versions.

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