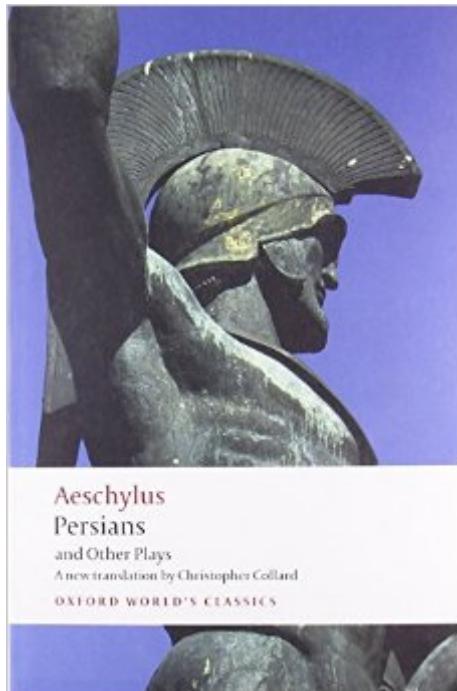


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Persians And Other Plays (Oxford World's Classics)



Synopsis

Aeschylus is a towering figure in western literature, the first of the great Greek playwrights, a dramatist whose work still has the power to inspire and terrify readers and theatre-goers alike. The four plays in this volume demonstrate the full range and depth of Aeschylus's genius. *Persians* is the only surviving tragedy to draw on contemporary history, the Greeks' extraordinary victory over Persia in 480 BC. In *Seven Against Thebes*, a royal family is cursed with self-destruction, in a remorseless tragedy that anticipates the grandeur of the later *Oresteia*. *Suppliants* portrays the wretched plight of the daughters of Danaus, fleeing from enforced marriage. And in the hugely influential *Prometheus Bound*, Prometheus is relentlessly persecuted by Zeus for benefitting mankind in defiance of the god. Christopher Collard's highly readable new translation is accompanied by an introduction that sets the plays in their original context; by comprehensive explanatory notes on the language, structure, and content of the plays, and by an up-to-date bibliography, five maps, and an index.

About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

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Customer Reviews

After providing helpful summaries of the stage-action of the four plays in this volume -- "Persians",

"Seven Against Thebes", "Suppliants", and "Prometheus Bound" -- Collard's substantial introductory essay (in 93 pages) discusses Aeschylus's early plays in general, before going on to introduce the reader to each individual play in turn. The section on dramatic form and language is followed by a section of the plays' reception. Finally there is a "Note on the Text, Translation, and Explanatory Notes", an annotated "Bibliography and Further Reading" section, a chronology of Aeschylus' life and times, and five maps. On all of these matters Collard provides the reader with an enormous amount of reliable information, and on controversial matters he finds space to report alternative views. With 141 pages the explanatory notes are unusually extensive for a mere translation. The notes are both scholarly and comprehensive, touching in very concise fashion on every aspect of the plays -- dramatic structure, style, tragic ideas, staging, and meter. Metaphors, especially recurring ones, are carefully noted, as are alliteration and assonance (often reproduced in the translation). To some extent the conciseness is achieved by Collard's policy of generally restricting his citation of parallels to the plays of Aeschylus himself, and of referring to the secondary literature without naming the scholars whom he has in mind. The "Further Reading" section and the footnotes of the introductory essay more than compensate for this. Particularly good are the brief introductions to the individual scenes and choral odes, e.g. pp. 156-57 on the kommos of "Persians", and p. 234 on the end of "Suppliants".

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