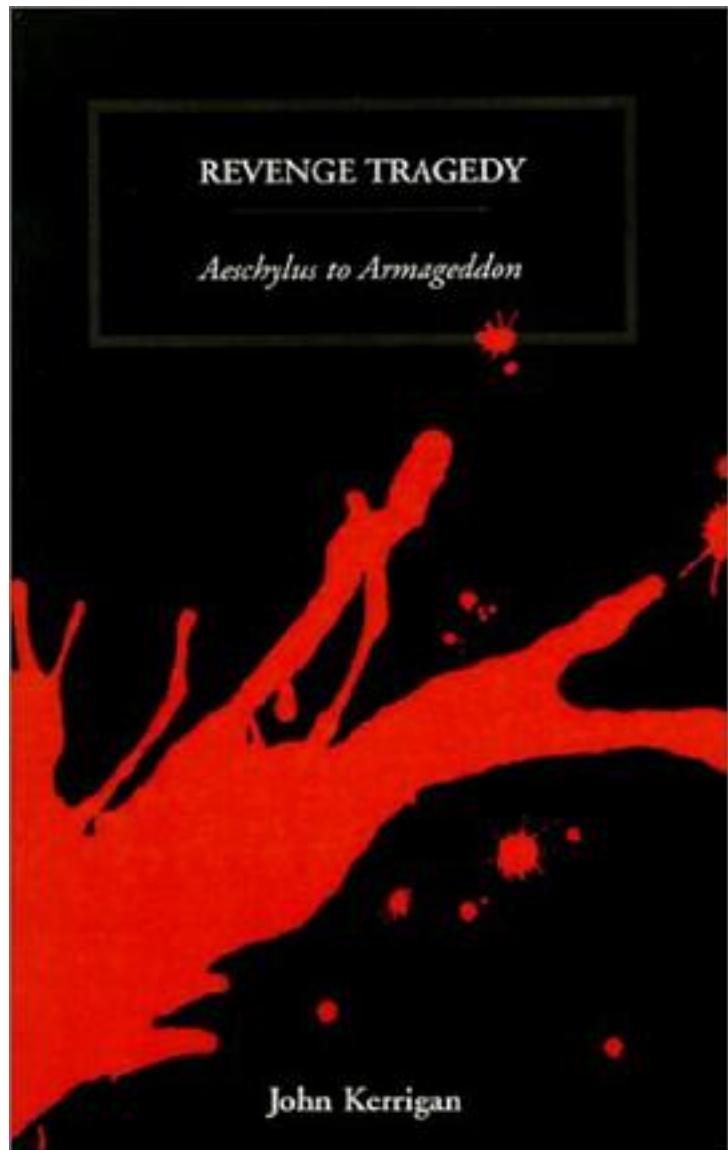


Revenge Tragedy



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Revenge has long been central to European culture. From Homer to Nietzsche, St Paul to Sylvia Plath, numerous major authors have been fascinated by its emotional intensity, and by the questions which it raises about violence, sexuality, death, and the nature of justice. In this exceptionally learned and lively book, John Kerrigan explores the literature of vengeance from Greek tragedy to postmodernism, ranging through material in several languages, as well as through opera, painting, and film, while opening new perspectives on such familiar English works as Hamlet, Clarissa, and The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. By means of broad historical analysis, but also through subtle attention to the fabric of individual texts, Kerrigan shows how evolving attitudes to retribution have shaped and reconstituted tragedy in the West, and elucidates the remarkable capacity of his ancient theme to generate innovative works of art. Although *Revenge Tragedy: Aeschylus to Armageddon* is a literary study, it makes fresh and ambitious use of ideas from anthropology, social theory, and moral philosophy. As a result it will be of interest to students in a variety of disciplines, as well as to the general reader.

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