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The Iliad (A Penguin Classics Hardcover)



Synopsis

Part of Penguin's beautiful hardcover Clothbound Classics series, designed by the award-winning Coralie Bickford-Smith, these delectable and collectible editions are bound in high-quality, tactile cloth with foil stamped into the design. The Iliad is the first and the greatest literary achievement of Greek civilization—the cornerstone of Western culture and an epic poem without rival in world literature. The story centers on the critical events in the last year of the Trojan War, which lead to Achilles's killing of Hektor and the fall of Troy. But Homer's theme is not simply war or heroism. With compassion and humanity, he presents a universal and tragic view of the world: human life lived under the shadow of suffering and death set against a vast and largely unpying divine background. This edition presents Penguin Classics founder E. V. Rieu's lively translation of Homer's great epic.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Iliad is an intoxicating masterpiece, and well worth reading. I read it with my kids over the course of a year and all of us were totally captivated. I have compared a pretty good number of translations with each other trying to ascertain which was most faithful, and I disagree with the reviewer on here who puts this translation down the list a ways. I think this is the best translation for the general reader. The Lattimore is a fairly difficult go; the Fagles is an easy enough read but has the disadvantage of not being all that faithful to the original. For the average person, I think the Rieu/Jones is the best. It combines fidelity to the original with a graceful comprehensibility. Good

luck.

The Iliad is a magnificent poem, and has, appropriately, been translated numerous times. Rieu's translation is a somewhat older translation, and it is showing its age. Whatever your desires, there are better translations. If you want the poem in poetic form that most closely tracks the majesty and glory of the original, choose either the Lattimore or the more difficult to find Fitzgerald translations. Lattimore is the more generally preferred translation for scholars who don't read Homer in the original Greek. If you want a more colloquial version, but one that still brings poetic grandeur to the poem, choose the newer Fagles translation. If you want an easier to read, prose translation that doesn't have to adapt its language to the poetic form, Butler's translation is probably your best bet. If you want the most literally accurate translation, you could choose the Loeb Classical Library edition, though it is more costly and in several volumes -- it has the Greek on the left page and the translation on the right, and because it is designed to assist Greek students with their translation it tends to be the most literal translation. But for the most Homeric experience outside of reading it in Greek, the Lattimore translation is the way to go. It is a bit more difficult than Fagles or Butler, but worth the effort.

I have read all other translations of Homer's Iliad, including Alexander Pope's and Fagles, and can unequivocally say that E.V. Rieu's translation is the most readable and forceful. It reads like a novel, not iambic pentameter verse, and therefore is more enriching to the modern 21st century reader.

Rieu's pioneering Iliad of 1950 brought Homer to millions, it was constantly re-published throughout the decades.....but in 2002 it was revised by Peter Jones and Rieu's son. This time taking away much of E.V. Rieu's lovely poetic storytelling genius and a lot of the original "Joie de Vivre". Not only that but there are constant interferences all throughout the book...I mean in the middles of the text! References, side notes, top notes, bottom notes, summaries etc. interrupt the flow of the revised translation. They may be useful to intellectuals but overall I find them very annoying. Please take a look at the two versions (original and revised). As well as recommending Rieu's "original", I also recommend Stanley Lombardo's powerful, accurate, and incredibly poetic translation of the Iliad on a publishing company called Hackett.*** I think Rieu's original Iliad in Penguin's re-release from the 60's and 70's (with the colorful covers and spines) is the most attractive and the most successful. Marketplace sellers have tons, or you can find them easily at used bookshops around the nation.***

This book was great. I sometimes find reading epic poems in their poetic form distracting so the prose translation was perfect for me. The introduction was brief and general, which is nice in a book that some would call long and difficult. Other than that, one of the greatest stories of all time. The only person I would steer away from this particular version of The Iliad is someone looking for a poetic translation.

With many books, translations are negligible, with two obvious exceptions, one is the Bible, and surprisingly the other is The Iliad. Each translation can give a different insight and feel to the story. Everyone will have a favorite. I have several. For example: "Rage--Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles, Murderous, doomed, that cost the Achaeans countless losses, hurling down to the House of Death so many souls, great fighters' souls. But made their bodies carrion, feasts for dogs and birds, and the will of Zeus was moving towards its end. Begin, Muse, when the two first broke and clashed, Agamemnon lord of men and brilliant Achilles." -Translated by Robert Fagles "Sing, O Goddess, the anger of Achilles, son of Peleus, that brought countless ills upon the Achaeans. Many a brave soul did it send hurrying down to Hades, and many a hero did it yield a prey to dogs and vultures for so were the counsels of Zeus fulfilled from the day on which the son of Atreus, king of men, and great Achilles first fell out with one another." -Translated by Samuel Butler "Rage: Sing, Goddess, Achilles' rage, Black and murderous, that cost the Greeks incalculable pain pitched countless souls of heroes into Hades' dark, And let their bodies rot as feasts for dogs and birds, as Zeus' will was done. Begin with the clash between Agamemnon--The Greek Warlord--and godlike Achilles." -Translated by Stanley Lombardo "Anger be now your song, immortal one, Akhilleus' anger, doomed and ruinous, that caused the Akhaians loss on bitter loss and crowded brave souls into the undergloom, leaving so many dead men--carrion for dogs and birds; and the will of Zeus was done. Begin it when the two men first contending broke with one another--the Lord Marshal Agamemnon, Atreus' son, and Prince Akhilleus." -Translated by Robert Fitzgerald "Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son of Achilleus and its devastation, which puts pains thousandfold upon the Achains, hurled in the multitudes to the house of Hades strong souls of heroes, but gave their bodies to be the delicate feasting of dogs, of all birds, and the will of Zeus was accomplished since that time when first there stood the division of conflict Atreus' son the lord of men and brilliant Achilleus." -Translated by Richmond Lattimore You will find that some translations are easier to read but others are easier to listen to on recordings, lectures, Kindle, and the like. Our story takes place in the ninth year of the ongoing war. We get some introduction to the first nine years but they are just a background to this tale of pride, sorrow and revenge. The story

will also end abruptly before the end of the war. We have the wide conflict between the Trojans and Achaeans over a matter of pride; the gods get to take sides and many times direct spears and shields. Although the more focused conflict is the power struggle between two different types of power. That of Achilles, son of Peleus and the greatest individual warrior and that of Agamemnon, lord of men, whose power comes from position. We are treated to a blow by blow inside story as to what each is thinking and an unvarnished description of the perils of war and the search for Arête (to be more like Ares, God of War.) Troy - The Director's Cut [Blu-ray]

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