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Homer

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Homer : The Iliad before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Iliad:

227 of 230 people found the following review helpful. In short: In 2015, this is the best translation to get. By James Liu Before I begin, a disclaimer. This review is not written to help you decide whether to read the Iliad. It is to help you decide which translation of the Iliad to choose. In short: In 2015, this is the best translation to get. Get it in paper, not Kindle. Peter Green states in the introduction that he is following in the footsteps of Lattimore, to preserve as much of the poem in Greek--wording, sentence structure, meter, and so on--in English, but to also make it declaimable. It is a translation to be read aloud. Thus, it is also a challenge to Fagles's translation, among whose virtues is how well it works as an audiobook. To review, there are several major verse modern translations of the Iliad. Lattimore's is closest to the original Greek, and for undergraduate work can substitute for the original well enough. There is the Fagles translation, in modern free verse, is wonderful to read aloud. The Fagles Odyssey was on Selected Shorts once, and for a long time after I insisted that there was no other worthwhile contemporary translation of Homer. I swore by it. Lombardo's translation is pretty common in colleges because of the price and the slangy presentation. Then there is Fitzgerald, which some swear by, but Fitzgerald's translation is loose with the Greek and mannered and fey in its English. It even translates Odysseus as "Ulysses," a sure sign that fidelity to the Greek is not worth the translator's trouble. I am missing some others, I'm sure. So let us begin at the beginning. In the Greek, the Iliad has "????? ????? ??? ?????????? ??????" Quite literally, "Rage! sing goddess of the son of Peleus Achilles." ????? means, more or less, the anger that engenders revenge, rage, wrath, anger are all ok to some degree. (It's complicated, an entire scholarly treatise is written on the meaning of the word.) Green gives, "Wrath, goddess, sing of Achilles Peleus's son's [/wrath]." Fagles gives "Rage--Goddess sing the rage of Peleus's son Achilles." Lattimore gives "Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son Achilleus." Green and Fagles are right to put the first word first. This is poetry, after all, the order of the words matter, the first especially. The first word is the theme of the poem, the way it is directed first against Agamemnon, then toward the Trojans, and then tempered for a common moment of humanity, is the internal trajectory of the whole epic. Wrath might be best of all, since it conveys that it is anger in a sense that is unfamiliar to modern readers. Once, in my second year of taking Greek, I was told that there was no use of literal translations. Take it far enough, and you wind up with a textbook on how to read the book in the original Greek. Make it into readable English, and you wind up with a host of compromises where thousands of close translations might do. Go far enough you wind up with Girardoux's "The Trojan War Will Not Take Place," worthwhile on its own, but not really a "translation." That professor preferred Fitzgerald, but easy for her to do, she could read anything in Greek without any help. For us mortals with mostly forgotten Greek, or no Greek at all, closeness to the original in a translation should be treasured. In the end, translating Homer is a game of compromises, How much of the strangeness of 2500 year old lines

and 3200 year old motivations do you keep? Dactylic hexameter calls for lines much longer than any form of English verse, so shorter lines or not? And so on. For me, Fagles is as far to compromise with how English verse should go as I am willing to accept. For what it's worth, Lattimore's English verse is better than his critics complain of. Starting from no knowledge of Greek, I'd choose Green. Over Lattimore because it's friendlier for the beginner and not worse as far as I can tell for a serious third reading. Over Fagles because the true-to-the-Greek line lengths convey the way the poem drives itself forward better in Green's line by line than in Fagles's free verse. Also. The introduction includes a plot summary of the whole Trojan War, of which the Iliad only covers a small portion. I have never seen such a succinct and complete synopsis before. There is also a synopsis of the poem keyed to the poem in the back matter to help find your place, an enlightening glossary of names and concepts to help you through your first read, and footnotes to inform the reader of context that has since been lost. Word to the wise re: Kindles. These are long verse lines. To get complete lines on a Kindle screen, you need a Kindle that allows text to display in landscape mode. Even then, complete lines only work in a very small font size. Get this in hardback for now. The hardback is stitched and bound to keep, so it is worth your money. 97 of 105 people found the following review helpful. I got the T.E. Lawrence translation -- it's prose!! By Sarah A. Rolph This is not a book review, but a warning: there is a technical problem with this page. I received a different translation than the one shown here, and apparently the page changes randomly (since someone else says this is the page for buying a copy of the Iliad!). I've reported the problem and it is being looked into. Because you can't leave a review without a star rating, I've using one star for this warning. That's no reflection on the book described here, which I hope to purchase once corrects this problem. I know this is an unusual use of book reviews, but I think it's important for people to know that if they purchase from this page there is no telling what they might receive. I will delete this once the problem is solved. 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Review of Kindle Edition By Christopher It's great to have the Lattimore translation available on Kindle, but there are drawbacks. The biggest would be the awkward coupling of words that are clearly meant to be one word. "Offended" becomes "off ended" regularly, for instance. "Craftsmanship" is "craft smanship". This seems to be done for the sake of lines that are divided in two because it is apparently impossible to fit an entire hexameter on one line (is this different on other Kindles? Mine is a first generation. I'd be curious to know). But even if you adjust your font to get as much of the line on one line as you can, this two syllable word (and others) are still broken into two separate words, creating a false archaism. In terms of the layout of the page, you always end up at least a small portion of the hexameter line indented beneath the line on which it began, and as a result the poetry "flows" differently. Of less concern, but nonetheless still a problem, there is no effort made to reproduce the fonts for the headings of each book, either.

The Iliad is an ancient Greek epic poem in dactylic hexameter, traditionally attributed to Homer. Set during the Trojan War, the ten-year siege of the city of Troy (Ilium) by a coalition of Greek states, it tells of the battles and events during the weeks of a quarrel between King Agamemnon and the warrior Achilles. Although the story covers only a few weeks in the final year of the war, the Iliad mentions or alludes to many of the Greek legends about the siege; the earlier events, such as the gathering of warriors for the siege, the cause of the war, and related concerns tend to appear near the beginning. Then the epic narrative takes up events prophesied for the future, such as Achilles' looming death and the sack of Troy, prefigured and alluded to more and more vividly, so that when it reaches an end, the poem has told a more or less complete tale of the Trojan War. The Iliad is paired with something of a sequel, the Odyssey, also attributed to Homer. Along with the Odyssey, the Iliad is among the oldest extant works of Western literature, and its written version is usually dated to around the eighth century BC. [2] Recent statistical modelling based on language evolution has found it to date to 760–710 BC. [3] In the modern vulgate (the standard accepted version), the Iliad contains 15,693 lines; it is written in Homeric Greek, a literary amalgam of Ionic Greek and other dialects.

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