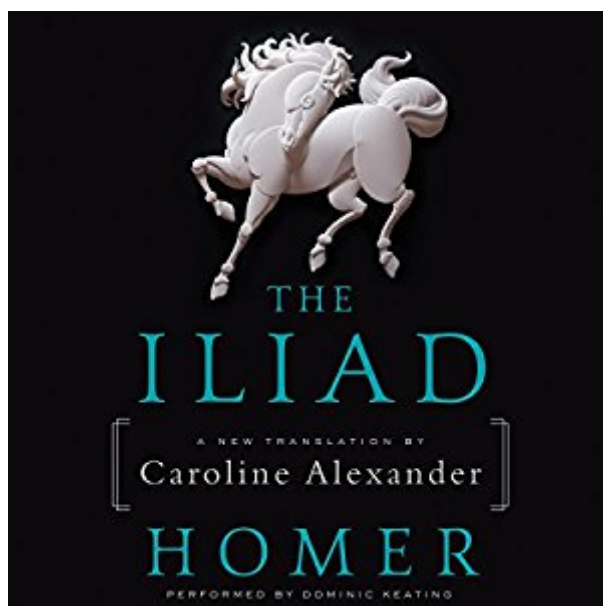


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# The Iliad: A New Translation By Caroline Alexander



## Synopsis

With her virtuoso translation, classicist and best-selling author Caroline Alexander brings to life Homer's timeless epic of the Trojan War. Composed around 730 BC, Homer's Iliad recounts the events of a few momentous weeks in the protracted 10-year war between the invading Achaeans, or Greeks, and the Trojans in their besieged city of Ilion. From the explosive confrontation between Achilles, the greatest warrior at Troy, and Agamemnon, the inept leader of the Greeks, through to its tragic conclusion, The Iliad explores the abiding, blighting facts of war. Soldier and civilian, victor and vanquished, hero and coward, men, women, young, old - The Iliad evokes in poignant, searing detail the fate of every life ravaged by the Trojan War. And, as told by Homer, this ancient tale of a particular Bronze Age conflict becomes a sublime and sweeping evocation of the destruction of war throughout the ages. Carved close to the original Greek, acclaimed classicist Caroline Alexander's new translation is swift and lean, with the driving cadence of its source - a translation epic in scale yet devastating in its precision and power.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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's 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, 1990

“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, 1888

“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, 1997

“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, 1963

“Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus’ son of Achilles and its devastation, which puts pains thousandfold upon the Achaeans, 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, 1951

“Sing, goddess, of Peleus’ son Achilles’ anger, ruinous, that caused the Greeks untold ordeals, consigned to Hades countless valiant souls, heroes, and left their bodies prey for dogs or feast for vultures. Zeus’ will was done from when those two first quarreled and split apart, the king, Agamemnon, and matchless Achilles.” - Translated by Herbert Jordan, 2008

“An angry man—there is my story: the bitter rancor of Achilles, prince of the house of Peleus, which brought a thousand troubles upon the Achaian host. Many a strong soul it sent down to Hades, and left the heroes themselves a prey to the dogs and carrion birds, while the will of God moved on to fulfillment.” - Translated and transliterated by W.H.D. Rouse, 1950

“Achilles’ wrath, to Greece the direful spring of woes unnumbered, heavenly goddess, sing! That wrath which hurled to Pluto’s gloomy reign the souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain; whose limbs unburied on the naked shore, devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore. Since great Achilles and Atrides strove, such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of Jove!” - Translated by

Alexander Pope, 1720  
Achilles sing, O Goddess! Peleus' son; His wrath pernicious,  
who ten thousand woes  
Caused to Achaia's host, sent many a soul illustrious into Aides  
premature, And Heroes gave (so stood the will of Jove)  
To dogs and to all ravening fowls a  
prey, When fierce dispute had separated once  
The noble Chief Achilles from the son  
Of Atreus, Agamemnon, King of men.  
-Translated by William Cowper, London

1791  
Achilles' baneful wrath resound, O goddess that  
imposed infinite sorrow on the Greeks, and the brave souls loosed  
From beasts heroic; sent them far, to that invisible cave  
That no light comforts; and their limbs to dogs and  
vultures gave: To all which Jove's will give effect; from whom the first strife begun  
Betwixt Atrides, king of men, and Thetis' godlike son.  
-Translated by George Chapman, 1616  
The Rage of Achilles  
"sing it now, goddess, sing through me the deadly rage that  
caused the Achaeans such grief and hurled down to Hades the souls of so many fighters,  
leaving their naked flesh to be eaten by dogs and carrion birds, as the will of Zeus was accomplished.  
Begin at the time when bitter words first divided that king of men, Agamemnon, and godlike

Achilles.  
-Translated by Stephen Mitchell  
Sing now, goddess, the wrath of Achilles the  
scion of Peleus, ruinous rage which brought the Achaians uncounted afflictions; many of the powerful  
souls it sent to the dwelling of Hades, those of the heroes, and spoil for the dogs it made of their  
bodies, plunder for the birds, and the purpose of Zeus was accomplished.  
-Translated by Rodney Merrill  
Sing, goddess, the anger of Achilles, Peleus' son, the accused anger  
which brought the Achaeans countless agonies and hurled many mighty shades of heroes into  
Hades, causing them to become the prey of dogs and all kinds of birds; and the plan of Zeus was  
fulfilled.  
-Translated by Anthony Verity  
Antony does not attempt to be poetic. The line numbers

are close to the original.  
Of Peleus' son, Achilles, sing, O Muse, The vengeance,  
deep and deadly; whence to Greece unnumbered ills arose; which many a soul  
Of mighty warriors to the viewless shades ultimately sent; they on the battle plain  
Unburied lay, to ravaging dogs, And carrion birds; but had Jove decreed,  
-Translated by Edward Smith-Stanly

1862  
Sing, Goddess of the rage of Achilles, son of Peleus—that murderous anger which  
condemned Achaeans to countless agonies and threw many warrior souls deep into Hades, leaving  
their dead bodies carrion food for dogs and birds—all in the fulfillment of the will of Zeus.  
-Translated by Professor Ian Johnston, British Columbia 2006  
The rage, sing O goddess, of  
Achilles, son of Peleus, The destructive anger that brought ten-thousand pains to the Achaeans and  
sent many brave souls of fighting men to the house of Hades and made their bodies a feast for  
dogs and all kinds of birds. For such was the will of Zeus.  
-Translated by Barry B.

Powell's Wrath, goddess, sing of Achilles Peleus' son's calamitous wrath, which hit the Achaians countless ills many the valiant souls it saw off down to Hades, souls of heroes, their selves left as carrion for dogs and all birds of prey, and the plan of Zeus was fulfilled from the first moment those two men parted in fury, Atreus' son, king of men, and the godlike Achilles. - Translated by Peter Green

Sing, goddess, the wrath of Achilles Peleus' son, the ruinous wrath that brought on the Achaians woes innumerable, and hurled down into Hades many strong souls of heroes, and gave their bodies to be a prey to dogs and all winged fowls; and so the counsel of Zeus wrought out its accomplishment from the day when first strife parted Atreides king of men and noble Achilles. - Translated by Andrew Lang, M.A., Walter Leaf, Litt.D., And Ernest Myers, M.A. Books I. - IX. . . . W. Leaf. " X. - XVI. . . . A. Lang. " XVII. - XXIV. . . . E. Myers. Another translation is by Ennis Samuel Rees, Jr. (March 17, 1925 - March 24, 2009) Greek Latin - Zeus. Jupiter. Hera. Juno. (Pallas) Athene. Minerva. Aphrodite. Venus. Poseidon. Neptune. Ares. Mars. Hephaestus. Vulcan.----- Wrath's sing, goddess, of the ruinous wrath of Peleus' son Achilles, that inflicted woes without number upon the Achaeans, hurled fourth to Hades many strong souls of warriors and rendered their bodies prey for the dogs, for all birds, and the will of Zeus was accomplished; sing from when they to first stood in conflict- Atreus' son, lord of men, and godlike Achilles. - Translated by Caroline Alexander

You will find that some translations are easier to read but others are easier to listen to on recordings, lectures, Kindle, and the like. If you do not see information on specific translators, it is still worth the speculation and purchase. Right after the translation readability and understanding, do not overlook the introduction which gives an inset to what you are about to read. The Stephen Mitchell translation goes though each of the major characters so well that you think you know them before you starts reading. Other introductions explain the struggle between different types of power. Rodney Merrill's 28 page introduction focuses on singing. The Peter Green translation is easy to read. It is almost a transliteration. However it is the all the scholarly supplemental information that give worth to his contribution. The Oxford University Press Barry B. Powell has an extensive introduction with real MAPS. Also there is information of the finder Schliemann. We even get annotation on the meaning being conveyed. The Caroline Alexander Translation is most excellent for a first translation reading. While other translation rely so much on being scholarly, her translation with plenty of white space make you feel that you are partaking in listening in awe. The only thing missing is the background music. 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 Aries, God of War.) Troy - The Director's Cut [Blu-ray]

I HAVE to give Caroline Alexander's translation 5 stars. Saw it in a local bookstore, and picked it up a few days ago. I don't read Greek, and I am NOT an expert. I first read a beautiful children's version - line drawings - that captured me back when I was very young, and the E.V. Rieu translation as a teenager. DECADES later I read the Fagle Translation when it came out. That was it for me. More years pass ( a bunch). Then a few months ago (I'm 60, could this be a senior moment?) I picked up Peter Green's translation and now I expect to spend some years up close with Homer. Been reading and comparing Homer in 10 translations -catching the high points, sampling many worthy translations. Now ALL of the translators (and they are all 20th century except Green this year, and Butler at the end of the 19 century) have passages where they succeed. It's not a case of one good translation and a host of also rans, but a lot of good and some deemed excellent as personal favorites from the list. Caroline Alexander's translation may be the best. It is WONDERFUL to read out loud - ( like Fagle, or Lombardo) and like them, and like Fitzgerald, she has a real sense of the ENGLISH language, she is in my opinion the best with the economy of her word choice, while avoiding jarring slang and is "noble." Although "free verse" today in the Iliad is more like structured prose, her verse is swift and poetic yet literal like Green or Lattimore. , My favorite Iliad is Alexander Pope's - I think hers has the same attention to ear AND the love of the story that his has, and is, of course, more literal. I was happy with Peter Green's new Iliad, (and will finish it first, with MUCH enjoyment and fascination) , Pope I will keep close and closest, ( maybe surpassing Paradise Lost in it's music if not it's invention) and with a chorus of Homers within reach, I wasn't looking for another translation, happily engaged to Green, and in love with Pope. I saw when Caroline Alexander's came out - read a half dozen passages in the store - and I was hooked. And I've read a lot more of it since. For my tastes, as a reader she just "slam dunked" on all the guys. I still think Alexander Pope's is the best, but unless you live in the year 1700 - his is a "very pretty poem," but her translation is my new first choice for THIS century.

Homer doesn't need my review, but if you're thinking of reading this story, you should. It's long, really long but a lot of that descriptive. He's always comparing events, places, etc and he's long-winded but can sure paint a picture with words. And the woman who translated this made it very readable. I expected to hate it and give up on it. Not a problem. I read every day and was surprised how much I was wanting to pick it up each time to see what happened next. I only had a very broad overview of the story but there is so much detail. I found it fascinating.

Love the narration and the fact that I can read along and go back as I need to, for better understanding. I read the other reviews and bought on the strength of their recommendation for a first time read. I purchased because I had it on my list of classical books to read. I have basic knowledge of mythical gods, and I am still able to understand the story. Thank you for a great kindle version to introduce me to this old classic.

A very readable translation, even though it is in verse-format from the original Greek. I studied Homer at Harvard with Gregory Nagy who recommended this new translation, and based on that I purchased the book. So, the plot is "predictable," if you have read the Iliad before; if not, this is a fresh approach to the tale and would be a good place to start on Homer. Some parts, like the catalog of ships, and the many battle scene monologues establishing heritage, can be tedious, but bear in mind that confirming ancestry was one of the values to the Greeks that made the work so valuable to the culture.

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