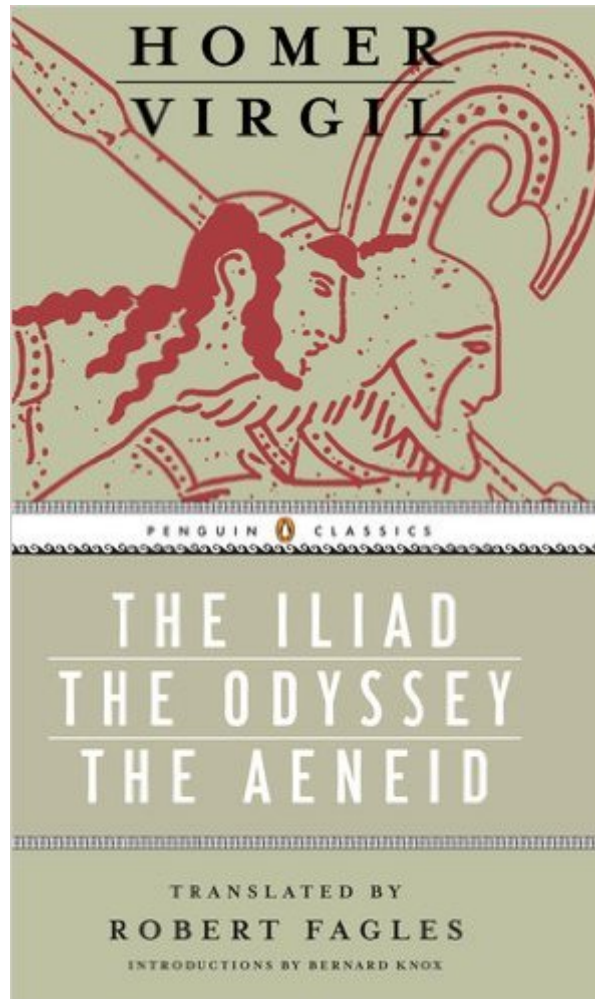


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Fagles is an absolute genius poet. His mastery of the rhythms of the English language is stunning and mesmerizing. I was hooked on his Iliad two decades ago when it first came out (I read it at least two dozen times!) and then this addiction was extended to his other two translations. His Aeneid is a true crowning piece! These three epics are the grand triumvirate trilogy of Western literature. Our civilization and our English language grew up under their dominion, for good reason. Poetry dominates over prose (since it sounds fantastic!) and epic poetry reigns supreme over other forms of poetry, so here we have them - the best of the best of the best, by the best! Fagles plays with all the poetical tricks in the arsenal (e.g. alliteration, etc.) and he uses the rhythms and beats (changing among 3, 5, 6, and 7 per line) to give a feel of increased or decreased momentum or frenzy. He unlocks the bursting word-hoard and sends each word winging to its targeted spot with the swift skill of a master archer. If you are new to poetry, make sure you pause at the end of each line in order to feel the rhythms intended. His poems here capture both the ancient experience and the English

one. As soon as you translate something, it takes on the personality of its new language and its concomitant culture. I think this is why great translations are so enthralling, particularly when it comes to these most awesome poems! I have read all three of these epics in the original languages and I still do read them in their originals. But, the translator has the benefit of "sober second thought" while redacting his poems, so he has the enviable ability to add to and improve upon his source material.

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