

The Odyssey
Homer
Translated by
Emily Wilson (Norton Critical Editions, 2020)

'Not another translation of *The Odyssey*', I can hear you say, but this first translation into English by a female writer is refreshingly lively and readable.

Emily Wilson is a Professor of Classical Studies at the University of Pennsylvania and she has published books about Socrates and Seneca as well as translations of *Four Tragedies* of Euripides and Seneca's *Six Tragedies*.

At the recent Troy Exhibition at the British Museum the first lines of her translation were used to introduce Odysseus.

*"Tell me about a complicated man.
Muse, tell me how he wandered and was lost
When he had wrecked the holy town of Troy."*

The book contains an informative 80-page introduction to Homer, the story of Troy and the characters who appear in the *Odyssey* as well as an enlightening Translator's note. She states; *"Homer's concerns – with loyalty, families, migrants, consumerism, violence, war, poverty, identity, rhetoric, and lies – are in many ways deeply familiar, but we see them here in unfamiliar guises. ---- I hope my translation will enable contemporary readers to welcome and host this foreign poem, with all the right degree of warmth, curiosity, openness and suspicion"*.

Emily Wilson captures the humanity of the main characters and makes them real people, not mere mythical beings. She has enabled Homer to speak to 21st century readers as clearly as he did to the Ancient Greeks.

The translation lends itself to being read aloud, which is very much in keeping with the oral tradition of the original Epic tale.

"a masterpiece of translation – fluent, elegant, vigorous."
Rowan Williams, master of Magdalene College, Cambridge,