

The Homeric Hymns

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publisher description

this book is specifically designed for upper level students of these major narrative works of early greek poetry

the homeric hymns are a crucial work in the western literary canon and peter mcdonald s new verse translations offer the major modern account of this still under appreciated body of ancient poetry the thirty three hymns are poetic accounts of ancient greek gods including apollo dionysus aphrodite zeus and poseidon some of the poems are micro epics in their own right recounting the lives and affairs of the divine taken together they form a meditation on the primal themes of love war betrayal desire and paternity and contemplate the dangerous proximity of gods and men the book includes a new translation of the life of homer a narrative incorporating the shorter poems known as homer s epigrams attributed to pseudo herodotus two appendices provide verse translations of episodes from homer s odyssey and hesiod s theogony while mcdonald gives fresh versions throughout of relevant passages from pindar aeschylus sophocles and other greek poets the accompanying notes and commentaries on the poems are the most generous and authoritative of any translation this book revives an ancient classic for the twenty first century

with fair tressed demeter the sacred goddess my song begins with herself and her slim ankled daughter whom aidoneus once abducted most people are familiar at least by repute with the two great epics of homer the iliad and the odyssey but few are aware that other poems survive that were attributed to homer in ancient times the homeric hymns are now known to be the work of various poets working in the same tradition probably during the seventh and sixth centuries bc they honour the greek gods and recount some of the most attractive of the greek myths four of them hymns 2 5 stand out by reason of their length and quality the hymn to demeter tells what happened when hades lord of the dead abducted persephone demeter s daughter the hymn to apollo describes apollo s birth and the foundation of his delphic oracle in the hymn to hermes apollo s cattle are stolen by a felonious infant hermes god of thieves in the hymn to aphrodite the goddess of love herself becomes infatuated with a mortal man the trojan prince ankhises about the series for over 100 years oxford world s classics has made available the widest range of literature from around the globe each affordable volume reflects oxford s commitment to scholarship providing the

most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features including expert introductions by leading authorities helpful notes to clarify the text up to date bibliographies for further study and much more

this is the first collection of scholarly essays on the homeric hymns a corpus of 33 hexameter poems celebrating gods that were probably recited at religious festivals among other possible performance venues and were frequently attributed in antiquity to homer after a general introduction to modern scholarship on the homeric hymns the essays of the first part of the book examine in detail aspects of the longer narrative poems in the collection while those of the second part give critical attention to the shorter poems and to the collection as a whole the contributors to the volume present a wide range of stimulating views on the study of the homeric hymns which have attracted much interest in recent years

poet and translator sarah ruden offers a sparkling new translation of one of our prime sources for archaic greek mythology ritual cosmology and psychology

a thorough analysis of the mechanics of the language of homer as used in the iliad and the odyssey

composed for recitation at festivals these 33 songs were written in honour of the gods and goddesses of the ancient greek pantheon they recount the key episodes in the lives of the gods and dramatise the moments when they first appear before mortals together they offer the most vivid picture we have of the greek view of the relationship between the divine and human worlds

a rich source for students of greek mythology and literature the homeric hymns are also fine poetry attributed by the ancients to homer these prooimia or preludes were actually composed over centuries and used by poets to prepare for the singing or recitation of longer portions of the homeric epics in his acclaimed translations of the hymns apostolos athanassakis preserves the essential simplicity of the original greek offering a straightforward line by line translation that makes no attempts to masquerade or modernize for this long awaited new edition

athanassakis enhances his classic work with a comprehensive index careful and selective changes in the translations themselves and numerous additions to the notes which will enrich the reader's experience of these ancient and influential poems

the hymn to hermes while surely the most amusing of the so called homeric hymns also presents an array of challenging problems in just 580 lines the newborn god invents the lyre and sings a hymn to himself travels from cyllene to pieria to steal apollo's cattle organizes a feast at the river alpheios where he serves the meat of two of the stolen animals cunningly defends his innocence and is finally reconciled to apollo to whom he gives the lyre in exchange for the cattle this book provides the first detailed commentary devoted specifically to this unusual poem since radermacher's 1931 edition the commentary pays special attention to linguistic philological and interpretive matters it is preceded by a detailed introduction that addresses the hymn's ideas on poetry and music the poem's humour the hymn's relation to other archaic hexameter literature both in thematic and technical aspects the poem's reception in later literature its structure the issue of its date and place of composition and the question of its transmission the critical text based on f càssola's edition is equipped with an apparatus of formulaic parallels in archaic hexameter poetry as well as possible verbal echoes in later literature

the homeric hymns ancient literature invites readers on a timeless journey through the mythological tapestry of ancient greece this collection of the homeric hymns attributed to the legendary poet homer presents a vivid and poetic exploration of the pantheon of greek gods and goddesses these hymns originating in the archaic period of greek history serve as both spiritual invocations and poetic tributes to the deities of olympus through eloquent verses readers are introduced to the mighty zeus the wisdom of athena the radiant apollo and a host of other divine beings each hymn dedicated to a specific member of the greek pantheon rich in both mythological significance and literary artistry the homeric hymns offers a glimpse into the religious and cultural beliefs of ancient greece this collection stands as a testament to the enduring appeal of these ancient tales which have captivated generations with their timeless themes of heroism divine intervention and the interplay between gods and mortals whether you are a

scholar of classical literature a student of mythology or simply a lover of timeless stories the homeric hymns ancient literature provides a captivating and immersive experience allowing readers to delve into the very essence of ancient greek thought and storytelling this volume serves as a literary bridge that connects modern readers with the rich heritage of classical antiquity where the gods of olympus reigned supreme and the human spirit aspired to the divine

this is a collection of the standard texts of ancient greek which are important components of what we know about greek myth religion language and culture all of the works collectively known as the homeric hymns are collected and translated here in their entirety and the work includes ample notes and an introduction to provide information on the works historic importance a chronological table genealogical chart maps of greece and the aegean islands and illustrations of vase paintings with mythological themes this edition is part of the focus classical library

andrew lang 1844 1912 was a prolific scots man of letters a poet novelist literary critic and contributor to anthropology he now is best known as the collector of folk and fairy tales he was educated at the edinburgh academy st andrews university and at balliol college oxford as a journalist poet critic and historian he soon made a reputation as one of the ablest and most versatile writers of the day lang was one of the founders of the study of psychical research and his other writings on anthropology include the book of dreams and ghosts 1897 magic and religion 1901 and the secret of the totem 1905 he was a homeric scholar of conservative views other works include homer and the epic 1893 a prose translation of the homeric hymns 1899 with literary and mythological essays in which he draws parallels between greek myths and other mythologies and homer and his age 1906 he also wrote ballades in blue china 1880 and rhymes la mode 1884

english translation of all the homeric hymns with notes and introductions

these lively narrative poems attributed in antiquity to homer are works of great charm composed for recitation at festivals in honour of the gods they tell of apollo s birth on the island of delos and his foundation of the delphic

oracle hermes invention of the lyre and theft of his brother apollo s cattle and aphrodite s love affair with the mortal anchises this edition offers a new text of these poems the introduction discusses among other things the nature and purpose of the poems in general their origins their structure and themes the commentary brings out the individual character of each hymn by analyzing in depth its language and literary qualities and also its religious and historical aspects the aim is to make these hymns more accessible to students of greek literature and help them to appreciate the poems more fully as major works of early greek poetry

george chapman s translations of homer immortalized by keats s sonnet are the most famous in the english language swinburne praised their romantic and sometimes barbaric grandeur their freshness strength and inextinguishable fire and the great critic george saintsbury wrote for more than two centuries they were the resort of all who unable to read greek wished to know what the greek was chapman is far nearer homer than any modern translator in any modern language this volume presents the original text of chapman s translation of the homeric hymns the hymns believed to have been written not by homer himself but by followers who emulated his style are poems written to the gods and goddesses of the ancient greek pantheon the collection originally titled by chapman the crowne of all homers workes also includes epigrams and poems attributed to homer and known as the lesser homerica as well as his famous the battle of frogs and mice

the reception of the homeric hymns is a collection of original essays exploring the reception of the homeric hymns and other early hexameter poems in the literature and scholarship of the first century bc and beyond although much work has been done on the hymns over the past few decades and despite their importance within the western literary tradition their influence on authors after the fourth century bc has so far received relatively little attention and there remains much to explore particularly in the area of their reception in later greco roman literature and art this volume aims to address this gap in scholarship by discussing a variety of latin and greek texts and authors across the late hellenistic imperial and late antique periods including studies of major latin authors such as virgil horace and ovid and byzantine authors writing in classicizing verse while much of the book deals with classical

reception of the hymns including looking beyond the textual realm to their influence on art the editors and contributors have extended its scope to include discussion of italian literature of the fifteenth century german scholarship of the nineteenth century and the english romantic poets demonstrating the enduring legacy of the homeric hymns in the literary world

the homeric hymn to aphrodite 600s bce tells the story of a brief encounter between the goddess of love and the cowherd anchises which led to the birth of the trojan hero aeneas less than 300 lines long it is among the shortest of the so called major homeric hymns however it is also richly and beautifully conceived and narrated and of enormous importance for the greek mythology and the history of greek religion olson offers a complete new text of the poem and of ten related minor hymns based on a fresh examination of the manuscripts a full critical apparatus and a translation the work is completed by a substantial introduction which treats inter alia the stories of aeneas the problem of dating early greek epic and the nature of the connections between the hymn to aphrodite and the homeric and hesiodic poems olson furthermore offers a substantial narratologically oriented commentary

the homeric hymns are a collection of thirty three anonymous ancient greek hymns celebrating individual gods the hymns are homeric in the sense that they employ the same epic meter dactylic hexameter as the iliad and odyssey use many similar formulas and are couched in the same dialect they were uncritically attributed to homer himself in antiquity from the earliest written reference to them thucydides iii 104 and the label has stuck the whole collection as a collection is homeric in the only useful sense that can be put upon the word a w verrall noted in 1894 that is to say it has come down labeled as homer from the earliest times of greek book literature the oldest of the hymns were probably written in the seventh century bc somewhat later than hesiod and the usually accepted date for the writing down of the homeric epics this still places the older homeric hymns among the oldest monuments of greek literature but although most of them were composed in the seventh and sixth centuries a few may be hellenistic and the hymn to ares might be a late pagan work inserted when it was observed that a hymn to ares was lacking walter burkert has suggested that the hymn to apollo attributed by an ancient source to cynaethus of chios a member of

the homeridae was composed in 522 bc for performance at the unusual double festival held by polycrates of samos to honor apollo of delos and of delphi the hymns which must be the remains of a once more strongly represented genre vary widely in length some being as brief as three or four lines while others are in excess of five hundred lines the long ones comprise an invocation praise and narrative sometimes quite extended in the briefest ones the narrative element is lacking the longer ones show signs of having been assembled from pre existing disparate materials most surviving byzantine manuscripts begin with the third hymn a chance discovery in moscow in 1777 recovered the two hymns that open the collection the fragmentary to dionysus and to demeter complete save some lacunose lines in a single fifteenth century manuscript some at least of the shorter ones may be excerpts that have omitted the narrative central section preserving only the useful invocation and introduction which a rhapsode could employ in the manner of a prelude the thirty three hymns praise most of the major gods of greek mythology at least the shorter ones may have served as preludes to the recitation of epic verse at festivals by professional rhapsodes often the singer concludes by saying that now he will pass to another song a thirty fourth to hosts is not a hymn but a reminder that hospitality is a sacred duty enjoined by the gods a pointed reminder when coming from a professional rhapsode

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