

# The Ages Of Homer

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this is the most exciting and diverse collection of essays on homer to emerge in the past twenty five years there is no other volume like this in scope or ambition or in the erudition of its contributors it is one of a kind richard p martin professor of classics princeton university dedicated to the archaeologist and classical scholar emily vermeule this splendidly illustrated volume takes a special place among the numerous studies devoted to the homeric past to sum it up this is a valuable collection of penetrating

studies about homer with interesting insights into early greek art journal of indo european studies by any standard an outstanding collection and among its thirty one articles are nearly a dozen that will be appreciated as real advances in the discussion of one homeric problema or another perhaps an unprecedented percentage the university of texas press has produced a volume worthy of its ceremonial function in the career of a tremendously influential scholar and educator it is lavish and very attractive bryn mawr classical review will be required reading for serious students of the iliad the odyssey and the homeric world choice homer s iliad and odyssey have fascinated listeners and readers for over twenty five centuries in this volume of original essays collected to honor the distinguished career of emily t vermeule thirty four leading experts in homeric studies and related fields provide up to date multidisciplinary accounts of the most current issues in the study of homer the book is divided into three sections the first section treats the bronze age setting of the poems around 1200 b c using archaeological evidence to reveal how poetic memory preserves distorts and invents the past the second section explores the early iron age in which the poems were written c 800 500 b c using the strategies of comparative philology and mythology literary theory historical linguistics anthropology and iconography to determine how the poems took shape the final section traces the use of homer for literary and artistic inspiration by classical greece and rome

how reliable is the tradition embodied in the homeric poems their basic historicity was widely accepted in the ancient world thucydides and plato used homeric data in reconstructing early greek history and territorial claims could be supported by reference to the epic traditions does research in more modern times support this view professor luce examines in detail the world of homer through the literary and archeological evidence in the years since schliemann s first soundings on the site of troy archeological investigations in greek lands and on the aegean coast of turkey have been numerous and productive the most important result of this activity has been the establishment of a tantalizingly cogent basis for the greek heroic legends in this most readable survey professor luce displays the evidence for and the interpretations of a truly golden heroic age from publisher s description

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

analysing in detail ancient greek culture and society gladstone achieves his aim to promote and extend the study of homer

are we to believe that late minoan crete was over run with dancers and bull leapers as senta german shows dancing and bull leaping were the most prevalent themes of late bronze age glyptic art although aside from their demonstration of a social and perhaps symbolic activity they also had a much deeper function in late minoan society

a theorist who believes that the homeric poems are the growth of four changefulcenturies must present a definite working hypothesis as to how they escaped from certain influences of the late age in which much of them is said to have been composed we must first ask to what manner of audiences did the poets sing in the alleged four centuries of the evolution of the epics mr leaf as a champion of the theory of ages of expansion answers that the iliad and odyssey are essentially and above all court poems they were composed to be sung in the palaces of a ruling aristocracy the poems are aristocratic and courtly not popular footnote companion to the iliad pp 2 8 1892 they are not volkspoesie they are not ballads it is now generally recognised that this conception is radically false these opinions in which we heartily agree there never was such a thing as a popular epic were published fourteen years ago mr leaf however would not express them with regard to our iliad and odyssey because in his view a considerable part of the iliad as it stands was made not by court bards in the achaean courts of europe not for an audience of noble warriors and dames but by wandering minstrels in the later ionian colonies of asia they did not chant for a military aristocracy but for the enjoyment of town and country folk at popular festivals footnote iliad vol i p xvi 1900 the poems were

begun indeed he thinks for a wealthy aristocracy living on the product of their lands in European Greece were begun by contemporary court minstrels but were continued vastly expanded and altered to taste by wandering singers and reciting rhapsodists who amused the holidays of a commercial expansive and bustling ionian democracy footnote companion to the Iliad perhaps we must suppose that on this theory the later poets pleased a commercial democracy by keeping up the tone that had delighted an old land owning military aristocracy it is not difficult however to admit this as possible for the poems continued to be admired in all ages of Greece and under every form of society the real question is would the modern poets be the men to keep up a tone some four or five centuries old and to be true if they were true to the details of the heroic age it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that some part of the most primitive Iliad may have been actually sung by the court minstrels in the palace whose ruins can still be seen in Mycenae

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