



The Iliad of Homer

Homer (c. 8th cen - c. 8th cen) translated by Samuel Butler (1835 - 1902)

Read by:	Multiple readers	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	14 hours 24 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1012
Language:	English	UPC:	0684758935977
Style:	Collaborative	MSLP:	\$11.99
Genre:	Plays, Poetry, War & Military Fiction		

The Iliad by Homer is an epic poem of over 15,000 lines that recounts the conflict between Agamemnon, the man of power, and Achilles, the genius of war, over a period of several weeks. Their contretemps is set within the larger tale of the ten year Trojan War, and is told in flashbacks and flash-forwards; by the end the poem has told a more or less complete story of the war.

No television mini-series has anything on this epic poem. The story is utterly human and has resonated down the centuries. There's the ugly man of power, selfish, greedy, entitled and obsessed. There's the young, beautiful star, burdened with greatness and by the false power of a man without merit. The authentic versus the phony - the same old story.

The Iliad was composed sometime between 760 and 710 B.C., and together with *The Odyssey* is considered the first great work of western literature. "Composed" is the correct word because *The Iliad* was passed down by oral tradition. The teacher recited it, the students repeated it and memorized it – all of it. There's a story, apocryphal or not, that around 700 B.C., a virtual riot broke out when some upstart in the Academy proposed to write it all down, because the older, wiser men believed transcription would destroy the Greek facility for memorization, not to mention the silencing of the sound of the poetry itself. This reading returns this epic to the manner of presentation in force at the time. (Summary by Michael Hogan)

Homer was a Greek poet in the oral tradition who is the author of the first two great works of western literature, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. The actual life of Homer is at best a mystery, owing to an almost total lack of information. Some believe the works were composed by a single person; others believe they may be the work of a group. There is a general consensus, however, that he was born on the coast of Asia Minor or one of the nearby islands sometime between 750 BC and 1200 BC. Some think he lived close to the time of the Trojan War; others believe he lived much later, based on the style of his poetry. Greek historian Herodotus put his birth at 850 BC. He is thought to have been blind based on a likely similarity with the blind poet and minstrel Demodokos in *The Odyssey*. Whatever the facts about Homer the person, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, lengthy works composed and transmitted orally for hundreds of years, have served as both seed and fertilizer for much of the arts and sciences. That may be all we need to know.