



# The Tradition of the Trojan War in Homer and the Epic Cycle

By Jonathan S. Burgess

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Although the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* narrate only relatively small portions of the Trojan War and its aftermath, for centuries these works have overshadowed other, more comprehensive narratives of the conflict, particularly the poems known as the Epic Cycle. In *The Tradition of the Trojan War in Homer and the Epic Cycle*, Jonathan Burgess challenges Homer's authority on the war's history and the legends surrounding it, placing the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the larger, often overlooked context of the entire body of Greek epic poetry of the Archaic Age. He traces the development and transmission of the Cyclic poems in ancient Greek culture, comparing them to later Homeric poems and finding that they were far more influential than has previously been thought.

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## The Tradition of the Trojan War in Homer and the Epic Cycle By Jonathan S. Burgess Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #2096322 in Books
- Published on: 2003-12-17
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .76" w x 6.00" l, 1.03 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 320 pages

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### Editorial Review

Review

A lively and venturesome study of the relationship between the Homeric epics and the largely lost Cyclic poems... A very interesting and accessible book.

(S. Douglas Olson *Religious Studies Review*)

This is a bracingly skeptical treatment of some important issues... A fresh, engaging exercise in heterodox scholarship.

(*Greece and Rome*)

[Jonathan Burgess] has firmly established the case that the Cyclic epics should be regarded as more authoritative representatives of Greek tradition about the Trojan War than the poems of Homer... Essential reading for everyone seriously interested in Homer and Greek epic tradition.

(Margalit Finkelberg *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*)

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* continue to be translated anew, and noticed when they are. Less widely noticed [is] other poetry about the Trojan War... The range and argument of the book make it valuable to any with an interest in what we call Homeric, and indeed, in ancient traditions generally.

(*Virginia Quarterly Review*)

Both the author's remarkable knowledge of previous scholarship on the topic and his eminently moderate and well-balanced approach make this volume a most valuable resource for approaching this complex field, and it immediately becomes indispensable for the study of Homeric and early non-Homeric epic.

(Mark W. Edwards *Phoenix*)

Anyone who has a serious interest in Homer and the Greek epic tradition should find this a valuable and thought-provoking book.

(Mike Chappell *Journal of Classics Teaching*)

A well argued book that packs a great deal of scholarship and insight into less than two-hundred pages. It deserves careful and repeated reading.

(D.M. Carter *Polis*)

About the Author

**Jonathan S. Burgess** is an associate professor of classical studies at the University of Toronto.

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