

## Week 8: The *Iliad* in Translations

### Essay task:

EITHER:

Select one 20-line passage from the *Iliad*; compare, and contrast, two different translators' treatments of this passage.

OR:

What makes a good translation? Answer, with reference to two different translations of the *Iliad*.

**Notes:** This is an opportunity for you to engage with detail and word-choice more closely than you've done in your essays so far, while also thinking about some of the big questions surrounding translation (what makes a "good" or a "bad" translation? What kind of decisions, or compromises, do translators make?)

I don't mind which translations you pick; however, they should both be verse translations (e.g. Lattimore, Wilson) as opposed to the prose of, say, Rieu.

If you can, I expect you to use the Greek in comparing the decisions which different translators have made; if you're not yet reading Homeric Greek, this will be a slightly trickier assignment, as you don't have a text you can treat as "the original".

### Suggested reading:

Arnold, M. (1861) 'On Translating Homer'

\*Reynolds, M. (2011) *The Poetry of Translation: From Chaucer & Petrarch to Homer & Logue*. Oxford. – especially Chapter 8 and Chapter 22, but do dip into any chapters that look interesting to you!

Steiner, G. (2004) 'Homer in English Translation' in R. Fowler, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*. Cambridge. 363-75.

\*Wilson, E. (2023) 'Translator's Note' in her translation of the *Iliad*. (And, more generally, read the translators' notes in any translations of the *Iliad* you have – or haven't! – been using.)