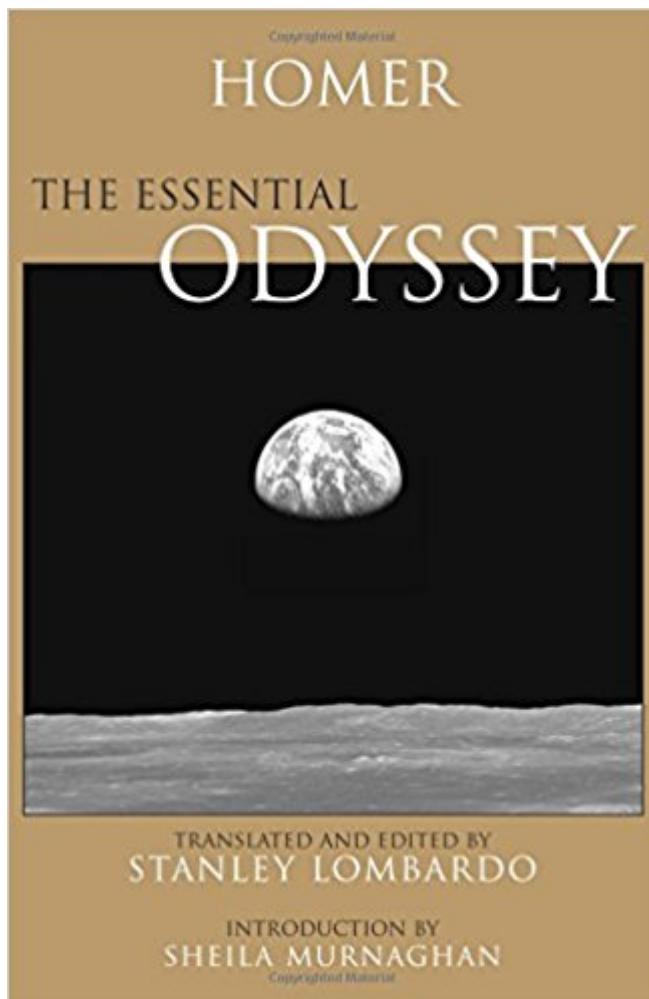


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# The Essential Odyssey (Hackett Classics)



## **Synopsis**

This generous abridgment of Stanley Lombardo's translation of the *Odyssey* offers more than half of the epic, including all of its best-known episodes and finest poetry, while providing concise summaries for omitted books and passages. Sheila Murnaghan's Introduction, a shortened version of her essay for the unabridged edition, is ideal for readers new to this remarkable tale of the homecoming of Odysseus.

## **Book Information**

Series: Hackett Classics

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.; 60177th edition (September 15, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0872208990

ISBN-13: 978-0872208995

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 5.8 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #21,385 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #27 in Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Movements & Periods > Ancient & Classical #32 in Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Movements & Periods > Medieval #32 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Ancient

## **Customer Reviews**

Stanley Lombardo is Professor of Classics, University of Kansas. His previous translations include Homer's *Iliad* (1997, Hackett) and *Odyssey* (2000, Hackett), Hesiod's *Works & Days* and *Theogony* (1993, Hackett), and *Sappho, Poems and Fragments* (2002, Hackett), a PEN Center USA 2003 Literary Award Finalist. Sheila Murnaghan is Professor of Classical Studies, University of Pennsylvania.

The reviews in my class were mixed: while some of the teens felt that its contemporary dialog and straightforwardness made it easier to understand, many of them felt that it was too inconsistent, and lacked the poetic sensibility of other versions that we discussed - which they really liked, and, after all, is a major factor in the relating of the story. By inconsistent, I mean randomly inserting colloquial words and/or phrases, that interrupted the flow of the lines, and seemed too out of place in this

context. We did appreciate this abridged version for eliminating several of the individual books that may have proved tedious for the class, and the short summaries that he replaced them with.

I think everyone already knows the story of the Odyssey, so I'm not going to critique the classic Greek Myth, but the writing and style itself. This particular translation of the Odyssey (by Stanley Lombardo) is just wonderful because it's so accessible. This abridged version (it's still 250 pages) allows him to skip some of more extraneous chapters and stick with the meat of the story. His choice of language is also great because is able to use straightforward language that is easily accessible while maintaining the classical feel of the story. Not an easy task but he pulls it off in (in his own words)... "In the tradition of American poetry; emphasizing on the physicality, rapidity and suppleness of verse" with "...rhythms and language drawn from natural speech..." I have to admit, I chose the Odyssey because I want to read more of the great classics. I half-expected to be bored and to force myself to wade through the text. In the case of this translation, I was not. I'm really liking this book.

'The essential Odyssey' is a good translation of the classic poem by Homer, and Lombardo did a decent job cutting and summarizing the parts that are irrelevant to the main story. There were a few times when I wish that he had put in a full translation, but there aren't many.

As a Classics major, I wanted to be offended by an abridged version of the Odyssey. However, Lombardo did a lovely job with the translating and editing. In the end, it didn't seem that anything essential to the plot was missing. A great introduction to the Odyssey.

I was very disappointed to find out that the kindle-version is different from the paperback version. The kindle version omits several chapters (books) and also leaves out lines within some chapters. For example lines 1-124 in chapter 4. This kindle book is incomplete.

Since the authors did not include all the Chapters, they were very good in telling you what was not in this version and even giving a highlight of the portions left-out. This kept the Odyssey from becoming too lengthy and perhaps not wanting to continue. I had a difficult time putting The Essential Odyssey down.

This was a HS reading requirement. The price is better than getting it at the school bookstore. Since

most bookstores, don't really carry this in stock, it's pretty hard to get a copy at a decent price. From browsing around at used copies, the used version were as or more expensive than a new copy.

This is a great translation of this classic. Takes a difficult poem and makes it an easy read. Highly recommend this edition for anyone who struggles with this type of literature

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