



The Epic of Gilgamesh (Penguin Classics)

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The Epic of Gilgamesh (Penguin Classics) By Anonymous

Andrew George's "masterly new translation" (*The Times*) of the world's first truly great work of literature

Miraculously preserved on clay tablets dating back as much as four thousand years, the poem of Gilgamesh, king of Uruk, is the world's oldest epic, predating Homer by many centuries. The story tells of Gilgamesh's adventures with the wild man Enkidu, and of his arduous journey to the ends of the earth in quest of the Babylonian Noah and the secret of immortality. Alongside its themes of family, friendship and the duties of kings, the *Epic of Gilgamesh* is, above all, about mankind's eternal struggle with the fear of death.

The Babylonian version has been known for over a century, but linguists are still deciphering new fragments in Akkadian and Sumerian. Andrew George's gripping translation brilliantly combines these into a fluent narrative and will long rank as the definitive English Gilgamesh.

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Review

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—*London Review of Books*

"Humankind's first literary achievement...*Gilgamesh* should compel us as the well-spring of which we are inheritors...Andrew George provides an excellent critical and historical introduction."

—Paul Binding, *Independent on Sunday*

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—Samuel A. Meier, *Times Literary Supplement*

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—*Scotsman*

"Andrew George has formed an English text from the best of the tablets, differentiating his complex sources but allowing the general reader a clear run at one of the first enduring stories ever told."

—Peter Stothard, *The Times*

"An exemplary combination of scholarship and lucidity...very impressive...invaluable as a convenient guide to all the different strands which came together to produce the work we now call *Gilgamesh*."

—Alan Wall, *Literary Review*

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

About the Author

Andrew George is Professor of Babylonian at SOAS (the School of Oriental and African Studies) in London. His research has taken him many times to Iraq to visit Babylon and other ancient sites, and to museums in Baghdad, Europe and North America to read the original clay tablets on which the scribes of ancient Iraq wrote.

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