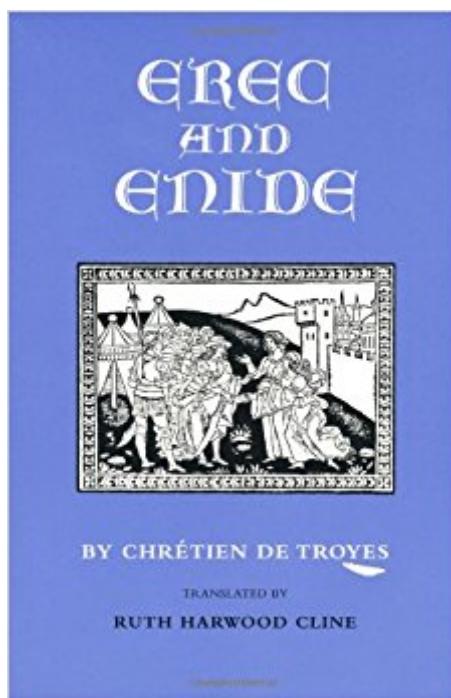


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Erec And Enide



Synopsis

Erec and Enide marks the birth of the Arthurian romance as a literary genre. Written circa 1170, this version of the Griselda legend tells the story of the marriage of Erec, a handsome and courageous Welsh prince and knight of the Round Table, and Enide, an impoverished noblewoman. When the lovers become estranged because Erec neglects his knightly obligations, they subsequently ride off together on a series of adventures that culminate in their reconciliation and the liberation of a captive knight in an enchanted orchard. An innovative poet working during a time of great literary creativity, ChrÃ©tien de Troyes wrote poems that had a lively pace, skillful structure, and vivid descriptive detail. Ruth Harwood Cline re-creates for modern audiences his irony, humor, and charm, while retaining the style and substance of the original octosyllabic couplets. Her thorough introduction includes discussions of courtly love and the Arthurian legend in history and literature, as well as a new and provocative theory about the identity of ChrÃ©tien de Troyes. This clearly presented translation, faithful in preserving the subtle expressive qualities of the original work, is accessible reading for any Arthurian legend aficionado and an ideal text for students of medieval literature.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Since about the middle of the 20th century, it has become increasingly difficult to find poetic translations of long poems. This trend has recently been reversing, with some excellent translations of the Iliad and the Odyssey -- and Ruth Harwood Cline's translations of Troyes' works joins this

new and welcome trend. Most reviews and reviewers will concentrate on the plot -- I want to focus on the translation itself. For too long there has been a philosophy of translation that does not see any value in translating poems in the forms in which they were written. With longer poems especially, more "literal" and plot-driven prose translations have been the norm. But prose is not how these works were written, and it is not how they were meant to be read or heard. They are poems, and only a poetic translation will be able to communicate the full meaning of the poem being translated. Meaning in a poem lies not just in the plot and characters, or even in the particular words used -- though all of this is true -- but also in the rhythms and rhymes, the music, of the poem.

Cline's poetic translation thus translates too the music of the poems she translates. We get the full beauty of the works only when we read them the way they were meant to be read: as poems. One hopes Cline continues to translate poems of this period into English. And now, for a slight aside: Do not read Cervantes' "Don Quixote" until you have read all of Troyes' works, for you will miss almost all the jokes and the full satirical impact of the novel.

I am not a scholar. But I am a student these twenty years of Medieval history. I have studied Welsh, Scot, Irish and English Medieval history; in addition, I have read books and materials concerning the politics and the culture, and the faith and the myths. Based on this background, I wish to express how very much I thoroughly enjoyed reading *Erec* and *Enide*. Ruth Harwood Cline's English translation of this twelfth century poem, written by Chretien de Troyes, touches our senses by its rhythms and rhymes in the rhythmic beat this produces in the poem. Cline's translation also tickles our intellect because through it we can read the ecclesiastical elements and classical motifs. The Celtic legend, Griselda, which I have not read and is mentioned in the introduction, forms the skeleton of *Erec* and *Enide*'s story. Cline further provides a history background for the poem within the introduction and the notes section. I noticed the Arthurian legend and the Christian symbolism portrayed through the characters of *Erec*, *Enide* and King Arthur. I also noticed the "hero's journey." (See *The Hero With A Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell) Each test proved both *Erec* and *Enide* more worthy of attaining their goal with the final test -- the "Court of Joy." This is the first of Chretien de Troyes' poems and I highly recommend it.

Always had heard about *Erec* and *Enide*, but never got around to reading it for a very long time. A very entertaining read!!! Good for couples to read...

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