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Inferno: The Divine Comedy, Volume 1 (Galaxy Books)



Synopsis

An invaluable source of pleasure to those English readers who wish to read this great medieval classic with true understanding, Sinclair's three-volume prose translation of Dante's Divine Comedy provides both the original Italian text and the Sinclair translation, arranged on facing pages, and commentaries, appearing after each canto, which serve as brilliant examples of genuine literary criticism.

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Customer Reviews

"Solid text, useful notes."--Sahron Ann Jaeger, University of Pennsylvania"Sinclair's commentary shows his complete awareness of the extraordinary beauty of Dante's lines...and is remarkable for its concentration on the poem as an expression of Dante's own spiritual history. There is hardly a single beauty of detail to which he does not draw attention with an apt remark on its particular significance."--Times Literary Supplement"I have adopted it. It is a good translation, the prose appears more accessible to undergraduates. The side-by-side Italian/English is very helpful, and the notes at the end of each canto are excellent."--Helen Regueiro Elam, SUNY - Albany"It's convenient to have The Comedy in one volume. Good translation and notes. More economical for students."--Reverend James Collins, Holy Family College"The introduction gives essential biographical and historical background and a discussion of the form of the poem, and the extensive notes contain new material."--Manuscripta

Mr. Sinclair's three-volume prose translation of DANTE'S DIVINE COMEDY should prove to be an invaluable source of pleasure to those English readers who would read this great medieval classic with understanding. The original Italian text and the Sinclair translation are arranged on facing pages, and the commentaries, brilliant examples of genuine literary criticism, appear after each canto.

Durling avoids the clumsiness that attends a slavishly literal translation and attains fluidity and readability without sacrificing accuracy, and this is no small feat for Dante's poem, especially its final third. There are existing prose translations -- most notably John Sinclair's, originally published over 60 years ago. But Durling's seems to me the most accurate without being less readable. In addition, Sinclair's translation often has an archaic flavor that Durling typically avoids.

I've read John Ciardi's terza rima translation of the Inferno and, let me tell ya, it does not compare favorably to John D. Sinclair's masterful prose rendition. Sinclair doesn't have to contrive any awkward rhymes or make any stilted arrangements because he is more or less translating it word by word. Therefore, the prose is muscular yet eloquent, allowing for a great range of flexibility. I can't recommend this one highly enough. The only reason I bought this translation in the first place is because Harold Bloom (Western Canon) touts it as the best rendition into English, and, my goodness, he was spot on! As a great added bonus, at the end of almost every canto, Sinclair helps illuminate and clarify the text through lucid commentary. He tersely but effectively enlightens the reader concerning all of the contemporary references to Dante's time and place, including many of those whom Dante was acquainted with and much more (e.g., mythological allusions, Medieval theology, etc.). Essentially, one doesn't even need to be truly conversant in Greek and Roman mythology or Christian Theology to fully comprehend this uncanny work, thanks wholly to Sinclair's annotations and notes. If you're bogged down due to the myriad translations, fret no more! Sinclair will guide you into the stinking maw of Dante's Hell, and you'll think it's absolutely torture to stop reading once you've begun!

Anxious to read my first English translation of Dante's poem I feared I would miss the joy of reading it in my native language so I searched for a book congaing both texts. This was just what I needed! Although not always literal (understandably) I feel this text does a great job at capturing the essence of Dante's work. Grazie mille.

This published version includes not only the best translation of Dante's first book in his Divine Comedy, but also includes Dante's original Italian text. And both languages are aligned by line number within each chapter. Fun to read, especially if you know a little Italian or a little Latin. This is my favorite version.

You can SEE the action in all of its physical and emotional colors. Too bad I cannot read it in its original Italian.

The English prose version that is unparalleled - now about 75 years old.

Very thought provoking.

Was completely lost without the CliffNotes. Sometimes I wonder about these greatest epics of western literature. Amen. Guess I will plug along to next chapter.

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