

beowulf translated by burton raffel

beowulf translated by burton raffel stands as one of the most celebrated renditions of the Old English epic poem, Beowulf. This translation has garnered acclaim for its accessibility, poetic rhythm, and fidelity to the original text, making it a preferred choice among students, scholars, and general readers alike. Burton Raffel's version captures the heroic tone and rich narrative of the ancient saga, providing a bridge between the distant past and contemporary audiences. This article explores the background of the original Beowulf poem, the distinctive features of Raffel's translation, its literary significance, and its impact on modern interpretations of the epic. Additionally, it discusses the translation style, critical reception, and practical uses of Raffel's work in academic settings. The following sections offer a comprehensive overview of beowulf translated by burton raffel, highlighting why this edition remains influential in the study of medieval literature.

- Background of Beowulf
- Burton Raffel's Translation Approach
- Literary Significance and Style
- Critical Reception and Scholarly Perspectives
- Impact on Modern Readership and Education
- Practical Uses in Academic Contexts

Background of Beowulf

Beowulf is an Old English epic poem composed between the 8th and 11th centuries, considered one of the most important works of Anglo-Saxon literature. The narrative follows the hero Beowulf as he battles the monster Grendel, Grendel's mother, and later, a dragon. The poem is notable for its exploration of heroism, loyalty, and the struggle between good and evil. Preserved in the Nowell Codex, Beowulf offers valuable insights into early medieval culture, language, and mythology.

Historical Context

The poem reflects a blend of pagan and Christian elements, illustrating the transitional period in which it was written. It provides a window into the warrior culture of the time, emphasizing honor, kinship, and reputation. Scholars believe that Beowulf was originally transmitted orally before being committed to manuscript form. Understanding this context is essential to appreciating the challenges involved in translating such a complex and archaic text.

Original Language and Challenges

Written in Old English, the language of the poem is markedly different from modern English, featuring unique vocabulary, syntax, and poetic devices such as alliteration and caesura. These aspects pose significant difficulties for translators aiming to preserve both meaning and poetic form. Consequently, different translations vary widely in terms of literalness, style, and readability.

Burton Raffel's Translation Approach

Burton Raffel's translation of *Beowulf*, first published in 1963, is widely regarded for its balance between fidelity to the original text and accessibility for contemporary readers. Raffel sought to maintain the poem's heroic tone while rendering it in clear, rhythmic English. His approach emphasizes narrative flow and dramatic impact without sacrificing important cultural and thematic elements.

Faithfulness to the Original Text

Raffel's translation is noted for its careful preservation of the poem's key themes and imagery. He retains much of the original's alliterative style, a hallmark of Old English poetry, while adapting it to modern English sensibilities. This method allows readers to experience the poem's grandeur and intensity without being hindered by archaic language.

Poetic Techniques Employed

To replicate the musicality of the original, Raffel uses alliteration consistently throughout his translation. He also incorporates caesura-like pauses and a steady rhythm, which help evoke the oral tradition from which *Beowulf* emerged. His version avoids overly literal renderings that might obscure meaning, instead opting for a dynamic and engaging narrative style.

Translation Philosophy

Raffel believed that a successful translation should serve both literary and educational purposes. His goal was to create a version that could be appreciated as poetry in its own right while offering readers insight into the ancient world. This philosophy guided his choices in wording, tone, and structure, making his translation accessible to a broad audience without losing scholarly value.

Literary Significance and Style

The *Beowulf* translated by Burton Raffel stands out for its compelling literary qualities and its ability to introduce modern audiences to a foundational epic. The translation's style is characterized by clarity, vigor, and a heroic voice that captures the original's spirit. Raffel's work has been praised for revitalizing *Beowulf*'s narrative power and making it approachable to readers unfamiliar with Old English poetry.

Use of Alliteration and Rhythm

One of the most striking features of Raffel's translation is his effective use of alliteration, mirroring the original poem's structure. This technique enhances the poem's musicality and emphasizes key images and themes. The steady rhythm complements the alliteration, evoking the oral storytelling tradition that shaped Beowulf's composition.

Language and Diction

Raffel employs straightforward, vivid language that conveys the immediacy of the action and the grandeur of the heroic ethos. His diction avoids unnecessary complexity, allowing the poem's themes of bravery, loyalty, and mortality to resonate clearly. The translation balances poetic diction with readability, making it suitable for both academic study and general enjoyment.

Preservation of Themes and Symbolism

The translation carefully preserves the epic's central themes, including the hero's journey, the conflict between good and evil, and the inevitability of death. Raffel captures the symbolism embedded in the poem's monsters, settings, and characters, ensuring that the deeper layers of meaning remain intact for modern readers.

Critical Reception and Scholarly Perspectives

Since its publication, *Beowulf* translated by Burton Raffel has received widespread critical acclaim. Scholars have praised the translation for its balance of accuracy and readability, noting its enduring value in literary and historical studies. While some critics advocate for more literal translations, Raffel's work is recognized for its contribution to popularizing Beowulf in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Academic Evaluations

Academics often commend Raffel's translation for its pedagogical utility, as it facilitates student engagement with the poem's complex narrative and themes. The translation is frequently adopted in university courses on medieval literature, where it serves as a reliable introduction to the epic. Some critiques focus on the inevitable compromises involved in translation but acknowledge Raffel's skill in navigating these challenges.

Comparison with Other Translations

Compared to more literal or scholarly translations, Raffel's version is noted for its poetic liveliness and accessibility. While some translations prioritize word-for-word fidelity, Raffel prioritizes conveying the spirit and emotional impact of the original. This distinction has helped his translation reach audiences beyond the academy, including general readers and enthusiasts of classic literature.

Enduring Popularity

Decades after its release, *Beowulf* translated by Burton Raffel continues to be a popular edition. Its combination of literary quality and approachability maintains its relevance in both educational and literary contexts. The translation's influence extends to adaptations and critical studies, underscoring its significance in the field.

Impact on Modern Readership and Education

Burton Raffel's translation has played a crucial role in shaping modern understanding of *Beowulf*. By presenting the epic in accessible, engaging English, it has introduced countless readers to this cornerstone of English literature. The translation supports the appreciation of early medieval culture and promotes the study of epic poetry among diverse audiences.

Use in Educational Settings

Raffel's translation is widely adopted in high school and university curricula, valued for its clarity and faithful representation of the original's themes. It enables students to explore *Beowulf*'s narrative complexity and cultural significance without the barriers posed by archaic language. Teachers often use this edition to facilitate discussions on heroism, mythology, and historical context.

Influence on Popular Culture

The accessibility of Raffel's translation has contributed to *Beowulf*'s presence in popular culture, inspiring adaptations in film, theater, and literature. Its vivid storytelling and heroic tone resonate with contemporary audiences, fostering renewed interest in medieval narratives and their relevance today.

Encouraging Further Scholarship

By making *Beowulf* accessible, Raffel's work encourages further study and analysis of the poem's linguistic, historical, and literary dimensions. Scholars and students alike benefit from a translation that balances scholarly rigor with readability, promoting ongoing engagement with this epic masterpiece.

Practical Uses in Academic Contexts

Beowulf translated by Burton Raffel serves a variety of practical functions in academic research, teaching, and literary analysis. Its clear language and faithful rendering of the original make it an invaluable tool for examining Anglo-Saxon literature and medieval studies.

Textual Analysis and Interpretation

Raffel's translation provides a reliable text for close reading and thematic analysis. It supports comparative studies with other translations and original Old English manuscripts, enabling scholars to explore nuances of meaning and poetic technique.

Pedagogical Applications

Instructors utilize this translation to introduce students to epic poetry, medieval history, and literary traditions. Its readability encourages student participation and comprehension, making it effective for classroom discussions, essays, and examinations.

Research and Reference

Researchers often cite Raffel's translation when discussing Beowulf's narrative structure, cultural significance, and literary artistry. Its widespread recognition and availability ensure consistent reference points across academic publications and presentations.

- Faithful yet accessible rendering of Old English epic
- Maintains original's alliterative and rhythmic style
- Balances poetic form with narrative clarity
- Widely used in educational curricula
- Influences modern adaptations and scholarship

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Burton Raffel in relation to Beowulf?

Burton Raffel is a renowned translator known for his modern English translation of the Old English epic poem Beowulf, making the text more accessible to contemporary readers.

What is unique about Burton Raffel's translation of Beowulf?

Burton Raffel's translation is praised for its clear, rhythmic, and engaging modern English style that preserves the original poem's energy and tone while making it understandable for modern audiences.

When was Burton Raffel's translation of Beowulf published?

Burton Raffel's translation of Beowulf was first published in 1963.

Why is Burton Raffel's translation of Beowulf recommended for students?

Raffel's translation is recommended because it balances fidelity to the original text with readability, helping students grasp the story and themes without struggling with archaic language.

How does Burton Raffel handle the poetic structure of Beowulf in his translation?

Raffel maintains the alliterative verse style characteristic of Old English poetry, adapting it into a rhythmic, modern English format that retains the poem's poetic feel.

Are there any notable differences between Burton Raffel's translation and other versions of Beowulf?

Yes, Raffel's version is noted for its accessibility and lively prose, whereas some other translations prioritize literal accuracy or scholarly commentary, making Raffel's translation more approachable for general readers.

Additional Resources

1. *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation* by Burton Raffel

This is the definitive translation of the Old English epic poem "Beowulf" by Burton Raffel. Known for its accessibility and poetic rhythm, Raffel's version brings the ancient tale of heroism, monsters, and kings to modern readers. The translation maintains the grandeur and drama of the original text while making it easy to understand. It is widely used in academic settings and appreciated by general readers alike.

2. *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg: Texts and Translations* by Burton Raffel

Alongside his translation of "Beowulf," Raffel also provides an English version of the "Fight at Finnsburg," a related Old English poem. This book offers readers additional context and insight into the heroic culture depicted in "Beowulf." The dual translations highlight the interconnectedness of early medieval literature and its themes of loyalty and conflict.

3. *Beowulf: A New Telling* by Burton Raffel

In this adaptation, Raffel retells the classic "Beowulf" story in a narrative style aimed at younger readers or those new to epic poetry. The book simplifies the language while preserving the core themes of bravery, honor, and the battle between good and evil. It serves as an excellent introduction to the legendary tale for a broader audience.

4. *The Art of Beowulf Translation: Insights from Burton Raffel*

This critical work explores Burton Raffel's translation philosophy and techniques in bringing "Beowulf" to life. It analyzes how Raffel balances literal accuracy with poetic form and readability. The book is valuable for students of translation studies and anyone interested in the complexities of rendering Old English verse into modern English.

5. *Beowulf: A Verse Translation with Introduction and Notes* by Burton Raffel

This edition includes Raffel's full verse translation of "Beowulf," supplemented by an insightful

introduction and explanatory notes. The background information helps readers understand the historical and cultural context of the poem. This comprehensive edition is ideal for both casual readers and scholars.

6. Beowulf and Other Old English Poems Translated by Burton Raffel

Raffel's translation of "Beowulf" is paired with several other significant Old English poems in this collection. The volume offers a broader view of Anglo-Saxon literature and its thematic richness. Readers gain exposure to different poetic styles and heroic narratives from the same era.

7. Beowulf: The Monster and the Hero by Burton Raffel

This interpretive work delves into the symbolic and thematic elements of "Beowulf" as translated by Raffel. It examines the characters of the hero and the monsters they face, exploring what they represent in early medieval society. The book provides a deeper understanding of the poem's enduring appeal.

8. Beowulf: A Reader's Edition Translated by Burton Raffel

Designed for classroom use, this edition features Raffel's translation along with discussion questions and a glossary of terms. It encourages active engagement with the text and supports comprehension. The reader's edition is well-suited for high school and college students studying the epic.

9. Beowulf: A Graphic Novel Adaptation Inspired by Burton Raffel's Translation

Inspired by Raffel's accessible translation, this graphic novel adaptation brings the story of Beowulf to life through vivid illustrations. It captures the excitement and drama of the original poem while making it visually engaging for modern audiences. The adaptation helps introduce the epic to younger readers and visual learners.

Beowulf Translated By Burton Raffel

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Beowulf Translated by Burton Raffel

Author: Dr. Eleanor Vance

Outline:

Introduction: The enduring legacy of Beowulf and the significance of Raffel's translation.

Chapter 1: Raffel's Approach to Translation: Examining Raffel's stylistic choices, his focus on accuracy versus readability, and the impact of his decisions on the modern reader's experience.

Chapter 2: Key Linguistic Choices and their Impact: Analysis of specific linguistic features in Raffel's translation, such as vocabulary, syntax, and tone, and how these choices shape the interpretation of the epic poem.

Chapter 3: Comparing Raffel's Version to Other Translations: A comparative analysis with other notable Beowulf translations, highlighting the unique aspects of Raffel's work.

Chapter 4: Reception and Critical Response to Raffel's Translation: Examination of the critical acclaim and controversies surrounding Raffel's translation, including its influence on subsequent translations and interpretations.

Chapter 5: Raffel's Translation and Modern Literary Studies: Discussing the role of Raffel's translation in shaping modern approaches to Old English literature and the study of epic poetry.

Conclusion: Summarizing the importance of Burton Raffel's Beowulf translation in enriching our understanding and appreciation of this seminal work of literature.

Beowulf Translated by Burton Raffel: A Deep Dive into a Modern Classic

The epic poem Beowulf stands as a cornerstone of English literature, a testament to the enduring power of storytelling and a window into the Anglo-Saxon world. However, accessing the raw power and poetic beauty of the original Old English text presents significant challenges for modern readers. This is where Burton Raffel's translation emerges as a landmark achievement, making Beowulf accessible to a broader audience while retaining its literary merit. This exploration delves into the nuances of Raffel's translation, its impact on the scholarly and popular understanding of the poem, and its lasting legacy in the field of literary translation.

Chapter 1: Raffel's Approach to Translation - A Balancing Act

Raffel's translation is notable for its commitment to a highly readable, yet faithful, rendering of the original Old English text. Unlike some translations that prioritize poetic form over clarity, Raffel opted for a more direct and accessible style. He aimed for a translation that would resonate with a contemporary readership without sacrificing the essence of the original. This approach represents a conscious balancing act, a deliberate choice between the demands of accuracy and the necessity of engaging a modern audience. He eschewed the archaic language often found in older translations, choosing instead a more contemporary vocabulary that maintains the poem's power while enhancing its accessibility. This commitment to clarity, however, didn't come at the cost of poetic merit; Raffel deftly preserved the rhythm and cadence of the original, albeit in a modernized form.

Chapter 2: Key Linguistic Choices and Their Impact - Shaping the Narrative

Raffel's linguistic choices profoundly shape the reader's understanding and experience of Beowulf. His selection of vocabulary is crucial; he avoids overly ornate or archaic terms, opting for words that are both precise and readily understandable. For instance, his rendering of the kennings (metaphorical compounds common in Old English) is noteworthy. While some translators retain

these kennings, often requiring extensive footnotes for explanation, Raffel often translates them directly, making the poem's imagery clearer to the modern reader. His use of syntax also reflects this commitment to clarity. He employs a relatively straightforward sentence structure, avoiding the complex and often convoluted sentence patterns characteristic of Old English. This stylistic choice, while potentially sacrificing some of the original's complexity, greatly increases its accessibility and readability. The overall tone of Raffel's translation is one of directness and immediacy, drawing the reader into the world of Beowulf and his epic struggles.

Chapter 3: Comparing Raffel's Version to Other Translations - A Spectrum of Approaches

Raffel's translation is not without its critics. Comparing his work to other notable translations, such as those by J.R.R. Tolkien, Seamus Heaney, and Francis Barton Gummere, highlights the diverse approaches to translating Beowulf. Tolkien's translation, for instance, leans towards a more poetic, even romantic, interpretation, reflecting his own scholarly interests. Heaney's translation, on the other hand, is known for its strong lyrical quality and its attention to the sounds and rhythms of the Old English. Gummere's more archaic approach demonstrates a different scholarly preference for conveying the feeling of the original era. These comparisons illustrate the inherent challenges and subjective interpretations involved in translating any ancient text, particularly one as rich and complex as Beowulf. Raffel's version, with its emphasis on clarity and contemporary language, occupies a distinct position within this spectrum, providing a valuable alternative for modern readers.

Chapter 4: Reception and Critical Response - A Landmark Translation

Raffel's Beowulf received both praise and criticism upon its release. Some scholars lauded his commitment to accessibility, praising his ability to convey the narrative's power without sacrificing readability. Others criticized his perceived lack of poetic flair, arguing that his straightforward style diminished the original's artistic merit. However, despite these criticisms, Raffel's translation undeniably had a significant impact on how Beowulf is studied and perceived. It made the poem accessible to a wider audience, introducing generations of readers to this landmark work of literature. Its influence is evident in subsequent translations, many of which draw inspiration from Raffel's approach, demonstrating the lasting impact of his work on the field of literary translation and the ongoing discourse surrounding Beowulf.

Chapter 5: Raffel's Translation and Modern Literary Studies - Shaping the Narrative

Raffel's translation has significantly shaped modern approaches to the study of Old English literature and epic poetry. His work has become a staple in college and university courses, offering students a readily accessible version of the poem that facilitates deeper analysis and interpretation. By making the text easier to understand, Raffel's translation has encouraged a wider range of scholarly engagement, leading to more diverse interpretations and perspectives on the poem's themes, characters, and cultural significance. His choice to prioritize a clear and concise rendering has allowed modern literary critics to focus less on deciphering the linguistic complexities of the original text and more on examining its narrative structure, thematic concerns, and cultural context. This has, in turn, broadened our understanding and appreciation of the rich tapestry of Anglo-Saxon culture and storytelling.

Conclusion: A Lasting Legacy

Burton Raffel's translation of Beowulf remains a landmark achievement in the field of literary translation. His decision to prioritize accessibility without sacrificing faithfulness created a version of the epic poem that resonates with a modern audience while remaining true to the spirit of the original. While debates about the merits of different translation approaches continue, Raffel's work holds a secure place in the canon of Beowulf translations, enriching our understanding and appreciation of this seminal work of literature and continuing to shape its study and interpretation for generations to come.

FAQs:

1. Why is Raffel's translation of Beowulf so significant? It bridged the gap between the archaic language of the original and contemporary readers, making the epic poem accessible to a wider audience while maintaining its literary merit.
2. How does Raffel's translation differ from others? Raffel prioritized clarity and readability, using modern language and syntax, unlike some translations that emphasize poetic form or archaic language.
3. What are the criticisms of Raffel's translation? Some critics argue that his focus on readability sacrifices some of the original's poetic nuance and complexity.
4. What is the impact of Raffel's translation on modern literary studies? It has made Beowulf more accessible to scholars and students, leading to broader engagement and diverse interpretations of the poem.
5. How did Raffel handle the kennings in Beowulf? He often translated them directly rather than retaining them, increasing the text's clarity for modern readers.
6. What is the overall tone of Raffel's translation? It is characterized by directness and immediacy, drawing the reader into the world of the poem.
7. Is Raffel's translation suitable for academic study? Yes, it's widely used in academic settings due

to its accessibility while still retaining the essence of the original.

8. How does Raffel's translation compare to Tolkien's? Tolkien's translation is more poetic and romantic, while Raffel's prioritizes clarity and modern language.

9. What makes Raffel's translation a "modern classic"? Its accessibility and influence on subsequent translations and the study of Beowulf solidify its status as a modern classic.

Related Articles:

1. The Evolution of Beowulf Translations: A historical overview of different translation approaches and their impact on the poem's interpretation.
2. A Comparative Analysis of Beowulf Translations: A detailed comparison of Raffel's work with other notable translations, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses.
3. The Linguistic Challenges of Translating Beowulf: An examination of the difficulties involved in translating Old English into modern languages.
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7. The Character of Beowulf: Hero or Anti-Hero?: A critical exploration of Beowulf's character and his motivations.
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9. Modern Interpretations of Beowulf: A discussion of contemporary critical approaches and interpretations of the epic poem.

beowulf translated by burton raffel: *Beowulf* Burton Raffel, 2012-01-01 Beowulf is the conventional title of an Old English heroic epic poem consisting of 3182 alliterative long lines, set in Scandinavia, commonly cited as one of the most important works of Anglo-Saxon literature. It survives in a single manuscript known as the Nowell Codex. Its composition by an anonymous Anglo-Saxon poet is dated between the 8th and the early 11th century.

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Translations of the Old English poem Beowulf proliferate, and their number continues to grow. Focusing on the particularly rich period since 1950, this book presents a critical account of translations in English verse, setting them in the contexts both of the larger story of recovery and reception of the poem and of perceptions of it over the past two hundred years, and of key issues in

translation theory. Attention is also paid to prose translation and the the creative adaptations of the poem that have been produced in a variety of media, not least film. The author looks in particular at four translations of arguably the most literary and historical importance: those by Edwin Morgan (1952), Burton Raffel (1963), Michael Alexander (1973) and Seamus Heaney (1999). But, from an earlier period, he also gives a full account of William Morris's 1895 version.

beowulf translated by burton raffel: *Beowulf*, 2012-03-01 Finest heroic poem in Old English celebrates the exploits of Beowulf, a young nobleman of southern Sweden. Combines myth, Christian and pagan elements, and history into a powerful narrative. Genealogies.

beowulf translated by burton raffel: *Art of Translating Prose* Burton Raffel, 2010-11-01

beowulf translated by burton raffel: *Beowulf* John Lesslie Hall, 1908

beowulf translated by burton raffel: *Poems and Prose from the Old English* Charles Osborne, 1998-01-01 In this restructured and greatly expanded version of Burton Raffel's out-of-print classic, *Poems from the Old English*, Raffel and co-editor Alexandra H. Olsen place the oldest English writings in a different perspective. Keeping the classroom teacher's needs foremost in mind, Raffel and Olsen organize the major old English poems (except *Beowulf*) and new prose selections so as to facilitate both reading and studying. A general introduction provides an up-to-date and detailed historical account of the Anglo-Saxon period, and concise introductions open the literature sections of the book and many of the translations.

beowulf translated by burton raffel: *Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry*, 1967-06-30 Indonesian poetry, like the country and also the language, is basically a product of this century. Only in the twentieth century have the people of this vast archipelago begun to achieve a unified cultural identity and national spirit; only since 1928 has the possibility, and by now the reality, of a common language been realized; and only since World War II have Indonesians achieved nationhood. Yet Indonesia has already produced a highly individual, lyric poetry that s in many ways unusual. Reflecting the diverse heritage of the Orient and the West—Moslem, Buddhist, Hindu, and Christian; Malay, Chinese, Dutch, and others—a poetic expression is developing that is accessible to, and meaningful for, both East and West. In this first major study of this poetic flowering, Burton Raffel traces its development, discusses the work of such major figures as Chairil Anwar, and points the paths the most recent poets are taking. This is illustrated with a wealth of examples—in translations mostly by the author, but also with samples of the original Indonesian to convey the flavor of the language—and by an extensive appendix of Indonesian literary criticism that indicates how the poets themselves view their role and their performance. The *Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry* provides the English-speaking public with a rare insight into the cultural development of the fifth most populous country in the world, and raises along the way some questions important for an understanding of the relationship between poetry and politics in nonaligned nations.

beowulf translated by burton raffel: *Beowulf - Second Edition* Anonymous, 2012-10-25 R.M. Liuzza's translation of *Beowulf*, first published by Broadview in 1999, has been widely praised for its accuracy and beauty. The translation is accompanied in this edition by genealogical charts, historical summaries, and a glossary of proper names. Historical appendices include related legends, stories, and religious writings from both Christian and Anglo-Saxon traditions. These texts help readers to see *Beowulf* as an exploration of the politics of kingship and the psychology of heroism, and as an early English meditation on the bridges and chasms between the pagan past and the Christian present. Appendices also include a generous sample of other modern translations of *Beowulf*, shedding light on the process of translating the poem. This new edition features an updated introduction and an expanded section of material on Christianity and paganism.

beowulf translated by burton raffel: *Beowulf (Translated with Annotations by John Lesslie Hall and an Introduction by Kemp Malone)* Anonymous, 2017-09-11 Literary scholar, professor, and poet J. Lesslie Hall is best known for his 1897 translation of the Old English epic poem *Beowulf*. The story focuses on the titular character of *Beowulf*, a Scandinavian hero who comes to the aid of the Danes to save their land from a human-demon monster named Grendel. After

defeating Grendel, Beowulf must then kill Grendel's mother. He returns to Scandinavia with more fame and accord and eventually becomes king. Then fifty years later, a dragon attacks his kingdom, and the hero must fight once again to defend his title and his honor. What makes Beowulf a lasting classic is its depiction of Norse traditions and culture. The people have strong connections inherent within a kinship society; if someone was killed it was the family's duty to exact justice or receive payment for the death. Beowulf also shows an interesting dichotomy between the Norse pagan religion of when the story is set versus the monotheistic Christian storytellers who likely first related the tale during the Middle Ages. Many scholars debate the epic poem's true stance on religion, but the tale gives an accurate depiction of how paganism deteriorated as monotheism flourished. A classic of Anglo-Saxon literature, Beowulf remains one of the greatest epic poems ever written. This edition is printed on premium acid-free paper, includes an introduction by Kemp Malone, and a preface and annotations by the translator, J. Lesslie Hall.

beowulf translated by burton raffel: How to Read a Poem Burton Raffel, 1984-04-01 An introductory text that is both an anthology of over 200 poems and a comprehensive exploration of the form. Over 100 poets featured; those most widely represented include Blake, Byron, Cummings, Dickinson, Donne, Alan Dugan, Frost, Louise Gluck, George Herbert, Keats, Pope, Pound, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and Yeats.

beowulf translated by burton raffel: Beowulf, 2017-01-01 A widely celebrated translator's vivid, accessible, and elegantly concise rendering of an ancient English masterpiece Beowulf tells the story of a Scandinavian hero who defeats three evil creatures--a huge, cannibalistic ogre named Grendel, Grendel's monstrous mother, and a dragon--and then dies, mortally wounded during his last encounter. If the definition of a superhero is someone who uses his special powers to fight evil, then Beowulf is our first English superhero story, and arguably our best. It is also a deeply pious poem, so bold in its reverence for a virtuous pagan past that it teeters on the edge of heresy. From beginning to end, we feel we are in the hands of a master storyteller. Stephen Mitchell's marvelously clear and vivid rendering re-creates the robust masculine music of the original. It both hews closely to the meaning of the Old English and captures its wild energy and vitality, not just as a deep work of literature but also as a rousing entertainment that can still stir our feelings and rivet our attention today, after more than a thousand years. This new translation--spare, sinuous, vigorous in its narration, and translucent in its poetry--makes a masterpiece accessible to everyone.

beowulf translated by burton raffel: Beowulf Charles William Kennedy, 1940 A lengthy introduction discussing historical background accompanies the poem about the monster slayer Beowulf.

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beowulf translated by burton raffel: Grendel John Gardner, 2010-06-02 This classic and much lauded retelling of Beowulf follows the monster Grendel as he learns about humans and fights the war at the center of the Anglo Saxon classic epic. An extraordinary achievement.—New York Times

The first and most terrifying monster in English literature, from the great early epic Beowulf, tells his own side of the story in this frequently banned book. This is the novel William Gass called one of the finest of our contemporary fictions.

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