Eternal Troy

Re-imagining the Ancient Story throughout the Ages

Catalogue to the online exhibition
'Eternal Troy'

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Figure front page. Amsterdam Troy Project 2019.

Prologue

Thus spoke Achilles' prophecy: live a simple life and die an old man, or sail to Troy and have your name engraved in the annals of history. The sunlit beaches of the eastern harbour, the ancient temple of Apollo, the great walls of Priam's city. It was here that the names of heroes, Greek and Trojan alike, were written into history, legend, and myth. Their immensely compelling stories have been imagined again and again, from Imperial Rome to the High Middle Ages, to the twentieth century and beyond. Characters and plots changed and took on new meanings as societies searched for ways to understand the city of Homer's *Iliad*. Centuries were thus filled with an endless scala of versions of the ancient story, originally brought to life by the Greek poet. As his countrymen in the poem won the ten-year war, Troy was burned to ashes, yet ignited an ever-growing flame. That flame grew in the hearts of the writers of this catalogue. Inspired by the various images of Troy through the ages, we, the students of the course *Imagining Troy* at the University of Amsterdam (UvA), present an exhibition and six accompanying individual papers on the endless story that is Troy. We have spent the last eight weeks trying to grasp the idea that is Troy by looking at different appropriations of it. This is the end result of that Odyssey. Coming from various backgrounds, we have all found our own imagination of Troy, that city written down in history, legend and myth. In the end, the city but a ruin, the heroes, Greek and Trojan alike, passed away. Yet the name of their lives' stage carried on forever, engraved in the Eternal Troy.

Table of contents

1. Angelien Ponsioen, *Homeric Women on Pompeian Walls*…………………………...5
2. Maaike van Etten, *Hero of the East or the West? The Trojan Aeneas on Roman imperial and provincial coinage, 47 BCE-253 CE*………………...………………………….21
3. Ellen Bond, *Agent Troy. Troy in Medieval Art and Literature.*……………………..33
4. Thijs Langendijk, *The Agency of Helen within the Trojan Cycle*…………………...53
5. Toon Meijerink, *Ode to Troy. The Musical Themes of a Doomed City in Film.*……62

Homeric Women on Pompeian Walls

Angelien Ponsioen

It is not often emphasised, but women played a vital role in the Trojan Cycle. From beginning, middle to end, decisions made for and by women decide which turn the narrative takes and influences the actions made by the male characters. Think only of the catalyst event for the whole affair: Helen leaving her husband Menelaus, whether wilfully or not, is the reason the war is started in the first place. However, throughout different imaginations and retellings of the Homeric epics, the women are assigned different amounts of agency and play a bigger or lesser role on the Trojan stage, depending often on the context of the society within which the story is retold. Helen is a good example. She presents probably the most conflicting character of the whole Trojan Cycle, depending on who is telling her story when and through which medium. Even within ancient sources her agency is represented divergently, ranging from willingly leaving behind Menelaus for her lover to being raped and abducted by Paris. In screen adaptations of the last century Helen also plays different roles. These and more versions of Helen will be explored elsewhere in this volume by Thijs Langendijk. As is true for the Trojan Cycle as a whole, the specific ways in which the women in the story were depicted was a reflection of the society that portrayed them, or a vehicle for a message to be conveyed.

One such society that used the Homeric women in their own unique way was the Roman World. Not just the imperial family, but rich households all over Italy (and beyond) made use of the vast storyline of the Trojan War to decorate their walls with frescoes. The scenes depicted were often carefully chosen to produce a coherent whole, whether united through composition, plot or themes. The evidence for this is found in Pompeii, the only city where a significant amount of wall paintings survive for us to do actual research. Whole houses with their wall decoration largely intact were found when the city was rediscovered underneath the ashes of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE. This has allowed scholars throughout the twentieth century to break their necks over the ensembles of scenes presented in Roman interiors, trying to figure out the common denominator between them. As much as the mythological puzzle is fun and exciting, it is also highly elusive. Although some decorative programs have pretty convincing connections, others are harder for the modern scholar to explain and it should thus be questioned whether any thematic link should be sought at all. Perhaps the owner of the house selected scenes randomly for their look, or because he liked their specific story. Perhaps the

patron had a limited amount of choice depending on the fresco artist available and thus did not get to create the scheme he might have wanted. Perhaps the scenes do not correspond to any logical order or underlying moral message, but to moments out of the life of the owner. The real motivations will remain buried, but for some ensembles we can make an educated guess at what the intended effect was. What is certain is that the Trojan War was an extremely popular subject matter for the Pompeians. Achilles presents one of the most loved characters; the reveal of his identity on Scyros alone counts eleven instances in Pompeii.[1] But besides the main male hero, the women from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were used again and again in wall-paintings to convey messages. To illustrate this, I will now turn to four Pompeian buildings using Homeric women in their wall decoration, to show in which ways they were appropriated by the rich Roman elite.

Homeric women in the House of the Tragic Poet

The most obvious house to examine in this light is the House of the Tragic Poet (VI.8.5). The atrium, the main hall of the house which was quite a public place, is richly decorated in Fourth Style wall painting with six frescoes adorning the walls. (Presumably) four of the six compositions are scenes from the Trojan Cycle: Helen leaving with Paris, the Wrath of Achilles, Briseis being taken from Achilles and the Judgement of Paris (figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4). The last one is unclear because a large part of the fresco is missing, but most scholars agree that it would have depicted the fateful competition between the three goddesses. The other two scenes in the atrium depict the abduction of Amphitrite by Poseidon and the wedding of Hera and Zeus (figs. 5 and 6). Two scenes include Achilles, and two scenes involve Paris. But other than that there does not seem to be one immediate or obvious connection between the chosen episodes. They are supposed to be seen in relation to each other, however, because compositionally they are unified: all depict a sitting dark-skinned male with a standing woman in pale clothes (that is, if a sitting Paris is present in both the Judgement fresco and the fresco with Helen). When considering the two non-Trojan narratives together with the Trojan ones, a pattern emerges. It has been argued that these six panels represent women in transition: Hera becomes a wife, Briseis is taken from one man to another, Helen in the act of leaving her husband and Amphitrite being abducted. A seventh painting that ties into this theme is located on one of the peristyle walls of the same house. It depicts the sacrifice of Iphigenia (fig. 7). She is in transition too, on the verge of death, her father Agamemnon veiling his head because he is unable to face what is about to happen.[2] What is the owner of the house trying to tell us with this lavish

display? Is the visitor supposed to contemplate the behaviour of different women and take inspiration from Hera, the ideal wife? This interpretation would require us to view Helen's actions as intentional, instead of forced. Even then, Briseis is not in control over what happens to her in her scene, nor Amphitrite and Iphigenia in theirs. [3]

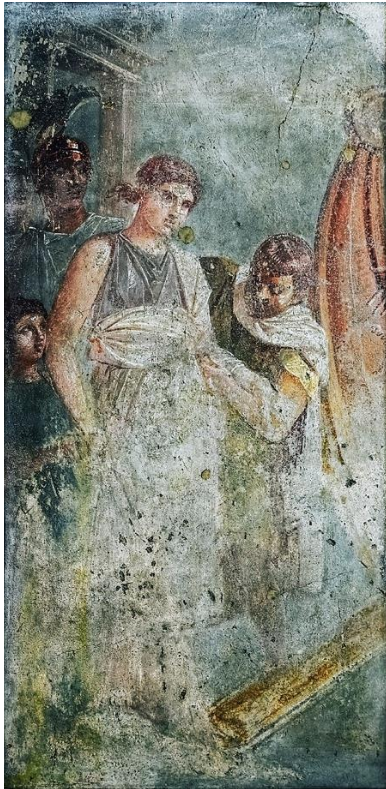

Fig. 1. Fresco with Helen stepping on the boat to Troy, 1st century CE, House of the Tragic Poet (atrium), Pompeii, 116 x 58 cm, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Photo: WikiCommons.

Fig. 2. Left: Fragment of fresco with the Wrath of Achilles, 1st century CE, House of the Tragic Poet (atrium), Pompeii, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Tempera by F. Morelli in Bergmann (1994).

Right: Fresco with the Wrath of Achilles, 62-79 CE, House of the Dioscuri, Pompeii, 112 x 74 cm, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Photo: Luigi Spina.

Fig. 3. Fresco of Briseis being taken from Achilles, 1st century CE, House of the Tragic Poet (atrium), Pompeii, 127 x 122 cm, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Photo: WikiCommons.

Fig. 4. Fragment of fresco with the Judgement of Paris, 1st century CE, House of the Tragic Poet (atrium), Pompeii, 153 cm, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Tempera by F. Morelli in Bergmann (1994).

Fig. 5. Fresco with the abduction of Amphitrite by Poseidon, 1st century CE, House of the Tragic Poet (atrium), Pompeii, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Tempera by F. Morelli in Bergmann (1994).

Fig. 6. Fresco with the wedding of Hera and Zeus, 1st century CE, House of the Tragic Poet (atrium), Pompeii, 153 x 130 cm, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Photo: WikiCommons.

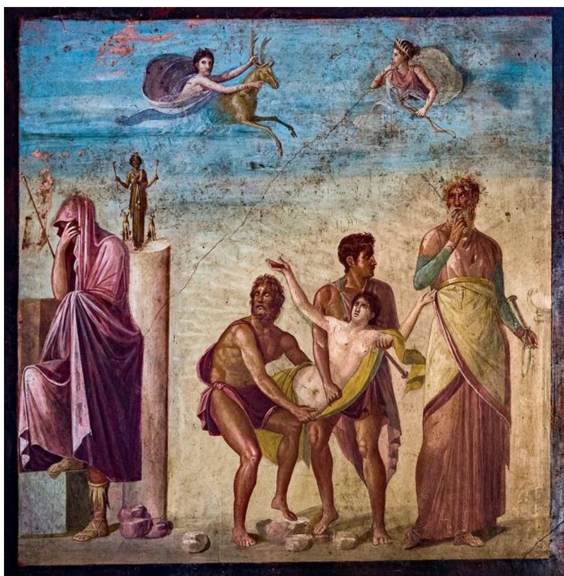

Fig. 7. Fresco with the Sacrifice of Iphigenia, 1st century CE, House of the Tragic Poet (peristyle), Pompeii, 140 x 138 cm, *in situ*. Photo: WikiCommons.

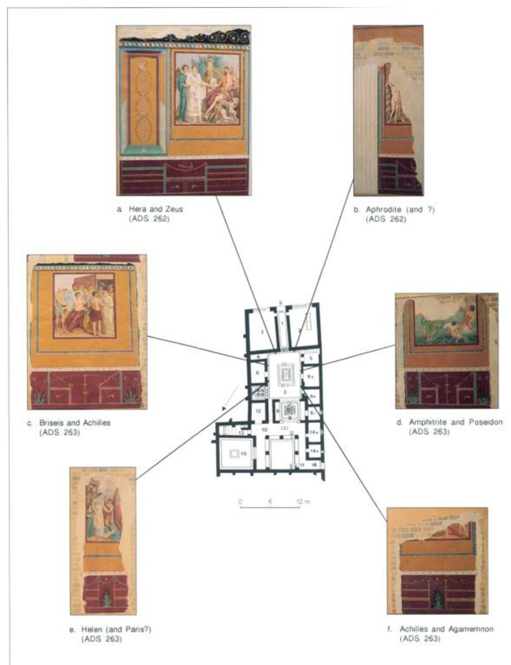

Fig. 8. Plan of the House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii. Reconstruction by: Victoria I, in Bergmann (1994). Temperas by F. Morelli.

Perhaps we may understand the programme in a different light then, not as a cautionary tale for the roles of women, but the treatment of them by men. The scheme would then work as follows and explain itself as the viewer moved around the room (fig. 8): when entering the atrium, first left on the wall is the Judgement of Paris, which shows how the choice of a man influenced the course of history. Moving clockwise, the abduction of Amphitrite by Poseidon comes next, which shows the violent behaviour of gods towards women. Besides the abduction we see the Wrath of Achilles which would immediately recall the disastrous consequences for the losses faced by the Greeks in the Trojan War. So far these three panels do not seem to make much sense, but then the eye moves towards the right wall and they are all explained. Helen who is taken onto the boat with Paris shows the results of the first panel, where the greediness of a man leads him to take someone else's wife and start a ten-year war. Next to Helen we see Briseis who is equally taken from one man to another. This scene is important for the elucidation of the Wrath of Achilles panel: one points to the bloody consequences, the other to the cause of them; two men who fight over a woman. Last but not least, the divine wedding between Hera and Zeus presents a foil to the Amphitrite and Poseidon scene. Hera is peacefully invited by Zeus to lift her veil and step into marriage, instead of the desperate figure of Amphitrite who is struggling in Poseidon's grip on his lap.

Of course we will never be able to find out which of these interpretations is the one meant by the designer of the decoration. Perhaps they were supposed to be allusive and obscure

so that every viewer could argue for their own interpretation. A sort of conversation starter if you will. In any case, the multitude of possible readings shows that the Homeric women represented on the frescoes were all but one-dimensional characters.

Cassandra in the House of the Menander

This is reinforced again if we look at a different house that also displays Helen, in combination with a different woman from the Trojan Cycle: the House of the Menander (I.10.4). Off the atrium is a small room with three walls, each wall depicting a scene related to the Trojan War. The north wall has an eclectic ensemble of Priam in the middle flanked by Helen seized by Menelaus on his right-hand side, while Cassandra is dragged away from the statue of Athena by Ajax on his left-hand side (fig. 9). Moving on from Cassandra to the east wall, we meet her again besides the Trojan Horse, which is hailed into the city of Troy (fig. 10). The last, south, wall depicts the death of Laocoön and his two sons (fig. 11). This room clearly represents unheard prophesies. Cassandra predicted the abduction of Helen would bring tragedy on the city of Troy but no one believed her. This might be why we see her on the north wall in combination with Helen and Menelaus. It illustrates how she prophesised the beginning of the war. The middle panel instead shows how she also predicted the fall of Troy, while she tries to stop the horse from being dragged into the city. This depiction ties in with the last panel because Laocoön equally warned the Trojans to beware of the horse, but was ignored. Ultimately, all paintings comment on the inevitability of fate in the face of the will of the gods. [4] In this house, then, Cassandra takes centre-stage, while Helen is just a side character whose inclusion in the composition aids the viewer in understanding the message concerning the protagonist.

Fig. 9. Fresco with Priam, Helen, Cassandra and Ajax, 1st century CE, House of the Menander, Pompeii, appr. 100 x 100cm, *in situ*. Photo: Barbara McManus, WikiCommons.

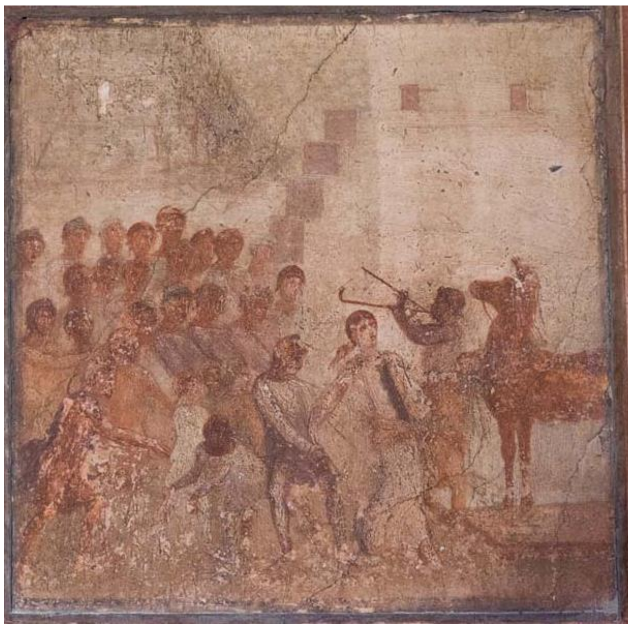

Fig. 10. Fresco with Cassandra and the Trojan Horse, 1st century CE, House of the Menander, Pompeii, appr. 100 x 100cm, *in situ*. Photo: Johannes Eber.

Fig. 11. Fresco with the death of Laocoön, 1st century CE, House of the Menander, Pompeii, appr. 100 x 100 cm, *in situ*. Photo: Johannes Eber.

Helen and the 'pregnant moment' in the House of Jason

So far, these painting programmes have included at least more than one episode from the Trojan Cycle to get across a certain message. There are houses, however, where a Homeric woman is represented separately from her role played in the Trojan War. This is the case in the House of Jason (IX.5.18), which features a painting of Helen and Paris in a room in the back of the house, decked out in Third Style wall-paintings of 30-20 BCE (fig. 12). On the opposite wall is a depiction of Phaedra, discussing her incestuous love for her stepson Hippolytus with her nurse (fig. 13). In between Phaedra and Helen, Medea can be seen with her children (fig. 14). It comes as no surprise to anyone acquainted with these myths that this house was also named the House of the Tragic Lovers. All three paintings highlight the great contrast between the tragedy of the love story, with the role of these women in their domestic setting. Phaedra who is running her household in the fresco, would try to advance an incestuous relationship with her son, setting in motion both of their deaths. Medea who is seen here in her role of mother, would later commit infanticide after the betrayal of Jason. And Helen, entertaining a guest in her house in this display, whose adultery would be the cause of hundreds of deaths.[5]

Fig. 12. Fresco of Helen and Paris, 1st century CE, House of Jason, Pompeii, 115 x 87 cm, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Photo: WikiCommons.

Fig. 13. Fresco with Phaedra and her nurse, 1st century CE, House of Jason, Pompeii, 130 x 102 cm, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Photo: Museo Archeologico Nazionale.

Fig. 14. Fresco with Medea contemplating the murder of her children, 1st century CE, House of Jason, Pompeii, 101 x 130 cm, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Photo: Museo Archeologico Nazionale.

For the unaware viewer, however, the link might not be so apparent because only a thorough knowledge of what happens later in the story would tie the unfortunate fates of these women together.[6] What we see in these paintings, as with many compositions in Roman frescoes, has become known over time as the 'pregnant moment'. It entails the moment in the narrative before chaos is about to ensue. The calm before the storm. This allows patrons to decorate their house with seemingly serene and quiet scenes, without missing out on the climax of the myths as the tragic height of the story would play out in the minds of the visitors. Although visually linked in their composition, like we have seen in the House of the Tragic Poet, the implicit narrative connection only exists in the consciousness of those who know how the plot continues after the scene in front of their eyes.[7]

Penelope in the Macellum

The same concept is used by the artists of the wall-paintings of a public building in Pompeii called the Macellum, the central market place. A panel on the west wall in the corner depicts a woman sitting on a rock glancing towards a man standing on her left (fig. 15). The woman is identified by the small horns on her head: this is a scene from the story of Io. The man standing guardingly over her, then, must be her watchman Argus. After Io and Zeus had intercourse

together, she was turned into a white cow. Hera sent Argus to keep guard over her to prevent her husband from pursuing her again. The pregnant moment we see here is right before the arrival of Hermes, who has come to kill Argus on Zeus' orders.

Adjacent to the Io panel is another fresco on the north wall that matches it in composition. A man sits on the viewer's left, who looks up at a woman standing on the right. Their eyes meet as she looks at him curiously and sceptically. This scene represents the moment of reunion of Odysseus and Penelope, although Odysseus is here disguised as a beggar and thus his wife does not recognise him immediately. What is evident, though, is the silent tension in their reciprocal gaze. This specific scene, like Helen and Paris from the House of Jason, carries a high level of sexual tension, besides narrative tension. The ancient viewer knows that the next moment in the story constitutes their sexual union, especially charged for Penelope who has admirably played the role of the faithful wife these twenty years waiting for Odysseus to return home.

The compositional connection between the two scenes is evident, but how do they link thematically? The two paintings do not stand on their own in the Macellum: one more painting on the west wall and three more on the north wall were present. The north wall featuring Penelope has a clear theme. The other three paintings are Achilles receiving his new armour from his mother Thetis (so two Homeric scenes), Medea contemplating the murder of her children and Phrixos riding the golden ram (two Jason related myths). This wall represents a contradiction: good mother/wife vs. bad mother/wife. Medea as the penultimate evil mother who kills her own children is compared to the murderous (off-stage) stepmother Ino, who Phrixos escapes from in the scene in the painting. Penelope is often seen as the ideal wife, waiting faithfully for twenty years until her husband returned. She makes a diptych with Thetis, the dedicated mother who provides a new armour for her son.

The west wall is much more difficult to interpret, not in the least because the last painting no longer exists (nor a drawing of it). It would be foolish, therefore, to attempt an interpretation of any kind, but since the Io and Penelope panels are so close in composition and location, a connection might possibly be detected there. Both these panels deal with transcendent themes made tangible through story: wandering, longing, waiting, watching and concealment. Io and Odysseus are both disguised and Argus and Penelope regard them with watchful and sceptical eyes. [8]

Without the missing west wall panel, we cannot get much closer to a thematic interpretation that unites the decorative programme as a whole. What is clear, however, is that Penelope is used to perform a multitude of functions: she is painted in conjunction with another

Trojan episode (Achilles receiving his armour) to evoke the Homeric myths, as a compositional tool to connect different walls together and as a stand-alone moralising *exemplum* in her own right. She thereby beautifully illustrates the divergent roles the women from the Homeric epics could have in the interior decoration of the ancient Pompeiians.

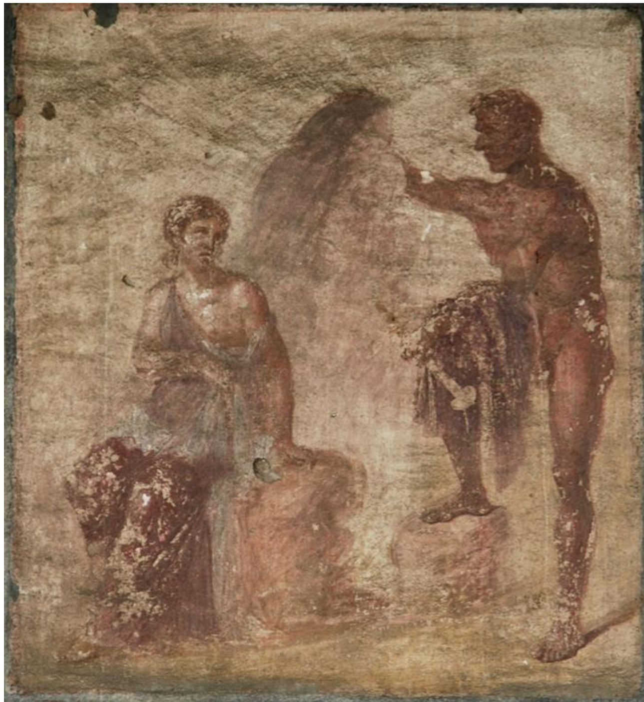

Fig. 15. Fresco with Io and Argus, ca. 65 CE, Macellum, Pompeii, 68 x 72 cm, *in situ*. Photo: Sergey Sosnoviskiy.

Fig. 16. Fresco with Penelope and Odysseus, ca. 65 CE, Macellum, Pompeii, 70 x 82 cm, *in situ*. Photo: WikiCommons.

Conclusion

As the four different examples presented above have shown, the episodes from the Trojan War were extremely popular subject matter for Pompeian wall-painting. Besides the omnipresence of Achilles, the women from the Homeric epics are well represented on the interior decoration. Just as their roles were important yet malleable and multi-dimensional in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, so too did they get employed for different purposes in the wall paintings. Aspects of each story were highlighted where appropriate, and associations with (women from) other myths were emphasised by similarity in composition. This is how the Romans used well-known women from Greek antiquity in their own unique way. To convey a message, to display intellectuality, to invoke a story, or for reasons we have yet to discover.

Endnotes

[1] Trimble (2002), 246.
[2] Bergmann (1994), 232-255.
[3] Beard (2008), 147-149.
[4] Brilliant (1984), 69.
[5] Beard and Henderson (2001), 11-63.
[6] Brilliant (1984), 69.
[7] Bergmann (1996), 199.
[8] Barringer (1994), 149-166.

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Hero of the East or the West? The Trojan Aeneas on Roman Imperial and Provincial Coinage, 47 BCE-253 CE.

Maaike van Etten

> *"Arms and the man I sing, who first from the coasts of Troy, exiled by fate, came to Italy and Lavine shores; much buffeted on sea and land by violence from above, through cruel Juno's unforgiving wrath, and much enduring in war also, till he should build a city and bring his gods to Latium; whence came the Latin race, the lords of Alba, and the lofty walls of Rome."* Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.1-7.

Thus Virgil starts his Aeneid. The man he speaks of is Aeneas, a Trojan soldier who, according to Homer, was destined to survive the Trojan War. For seven long years Aeneas wandered the seas and foreign lands, finally arriving in Italy, where he founded Lavinium. This city grew considerably and Aeneas' son, Ascanius, founded a new city: Alba Longa. After many generations of kings, a man called Numitor became king of this city. His daughter, Rhea Silvia, became a Vestal Virgin, a priestess of the goddess Vesta. Although her sacred oath forbade her to have sexual relations, she became pregnant with twins by Mars, the god of war. She was executed after giving birth to the twins for breaking her sacred oath. The twins were put in a basket and set adrift on the Tiber, to come ashore at the Lupercal, a grotto at the foot of the Palatine Hill. Here they were suckled by the she-wolf until the swineherd Faustulus found them and raised them together with his wife. When the boys came of age, they fought over the right to be king of Rome: a fight Romulus would win. Rome was founded in 753 BCE. The Romans trace their ancestry via Romulus to Aeneas. Although the stories of these two heroes are linked, from the late first century BCE there is a clear preference for Aeneas as the ancestor. In particular, there are more visual representations of Aeneas than of Romulus, especially on coins. An interesting example is a set of three coins struck during the Second Triumvirate (43-32 BCE). Mark Antony, Lepidus, and Augustus each struck a gold coin depicting their portrait on the obverse and an image of their ancestor on the reverse. Mark Antony traced his ancestry back to Hercules, Lepidus to the Vestal Virgin Aemilia, and

Figure 3.1: Golden *aureus* minted in Rome ca. 42 BCE. 20,5 millimetres diameter. The obverse depicts a portrait of Augustus. The reverse depicts Aeneas carrying his father, Anchises, on his left shoulder. RRC 494/3b. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Figure 3.2: Golden *aureus* minted in Rome ca. 140-144 CE. 20 millimetres diameter. The obverse depicts a portrait of Antoninus Pius. The reverse depicts Aeneas wearing a military dress, carrying his father Anchises on his left shoulder, while holding his son Ascanius with his right hand, who is wearing a Phrygian cap. This scene is the imperial standard for coins depicting Aeneas. RIC III[3] Antoninus Pius 91. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Augustus to Aeneas (fig. 3.1). By choosing Aeneas, Augustus expressed a clear preference for the Trojan hero over the Roman Romulus. Aeneas would remain the central figure in Augustus' propaganda, a model followed by the emperors of the Julio-Claudian dynasty (27 BCE-68 CE) and the later Adoptive and Antonine emperors (96-192 CE) (fig. 3.2).

Despite the clear appropriation of Aeneas by the Romans, Aeneas appears more often on provincial coins minted in the eastern part of the empire than on imperial coins. This seems odd because it presents Aeneas as the hero of the East rather than of the West; the West being Rome and the East being the eastern provinces of Rome. By Aeneas being the hero of the East, I mean that he was more important to the people of that part of the Empire than to the Romans, who claimed him as an ancestor on a large scale. The Romans are known for their

appropriation of Aeneas, but it are the eastern provinces that mint the most coins depicting Aeneas. How can we explain the discrepancy between what we know from the coins and what we know about the importance of Aeneas for the Romans? Is Aeneas as much a hero of the East as he is of the West?

History and dynamics

The first coin ever struck depicting Aeneas was minted in Aenea in the sixth century BCE (fig. 3.3). This Macedonian city was supposedly founded by Aeneas himself, so the identification of Aeneas with the warrior depicted on the reverse is not surprising. It took much longer for the Roman world to catch on and mint coins depicting Aeneas, although there is no consensus on the exact date. However, even taking on the earliest date proposed, Aeneas appears in the Roman world considerably later than in the Greek world. Nevertheless, from the late first century BCE, there is a marked increase in the number of coins depicting Aeneas. It was a coin struck by Julius Caesar that ushered in a new age for depictions of Aeneas on coinage (fig. 3.4). The scene on the Macedonian coin never returns.

The imperial household thus set the trend for depictions of Aeneas on coins, but how did the imperial mint function? The Roman Empire was the direct continuation of the Roman Republic, and so was its coinage. During the civil war between Pompey Magnus and Julius Caesar, the coinage system collapsed and Caesar took full control of the imperial mint. This changed slightly during the reign of Augustus, who returned some authority over the imperial mint to the Senate. In order to prevent the total surrender of the imperial mint to the Senate, Augustus established Lugdunum, modern-day Lyon, as the great imperial mint. The emperor retained full control until the third century CE. The imperial mint gave the emperors the opportunity to inform the citizen about what was important and to influence people's opinion on certain issues. Coins were also used to disseminate knowledge of current events and can thus be considered to be the newspaper of the day.[2] As such, they were a great propaganda tool. This explains the great variety of reverses found on Roman imperial coins.

In the eastern part of the Empire, coinage worked in a different way. Cities in this part of the empire received their right to mint coins from the emperor or the provincial governor, who was appointed by the emperor. This right required good relations with Rome, so it was crucial for the city's notables to gain the emperor's approval. In order to achieve this, cities dispatched embassies to Rome. Once good relations with Rome had been established and maintained, the provincial mint was subject to local rather than central control, and the reverses

Figure 3.3: Silver tetrobol minted in Aenea ca. 510-480 BCE. 15 millimetres diameter. The obverse depicts a helmeted warrior identified as Aeneas. The reverse depicts a four-part incuse square, a common symbol in Archaic tradition. ANS SNG 7.70. © American Numismatic Society.

Figure 3.4: Silver denarius minted in Rome ca. 47-46 BCE. 17 millimetres diameter. The obverse depicts a portrait of Venus wearing a diadem. The reverse depicts Aeneas carrying his father Anchises on his left shoulder, while holding the palladium in his right hand. Julius Caesar claimed descendance from both Venus and Aeneas. RRC 458/1. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

of the coins depicted scenes that emphasised the local identity of the citizens. The right to mint coins conferred considerable sovereignty. However, all these cities were subject to Roman control, albeit in different ways. This meant that each city had its own status, which in turn influenced the local mint. Cities that became part of the Roman world as colonies followed the scenes depicted on imperial coins. While these cities thus had the autonomy to mint their own coins, they were still dependent on the imperial coinage because they were under Roman control. They would often use scenes corresponding to their local identity, but they were not as free as cities that entered the Empire with autonomous status. The reverse of coins struck in free cities often differed from the imperial mint and had a strong local character. In addition, the legends on the coins of autonomous cities were in Greek rather than in Latin. The reverse of coins minted in these cities remained the same over long periods of time and did not change nearly as often as they do on imperial coins, because they did not function as local newspapers.

Homer, Aeneas and the East

Before we go any further, it is important to make the following observation. The cities of the East already had a rich tradition of Homeric heroes and myths. After all, Homer was the hero of the East and considered to be the greatest poet of all time:

> "*Now the summit on which everyone's gaze should be fixed may rightly be named as Homer, the source whence all the rivers flow and all the seas, and every fountain, (..).*"
> Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *On Literary Composition* 24.

It is clear that in the first century BCE, when Dionysius wrote this work, Homer was still considered to be above all others. The heroes of the Homeric poems were well known, and often part of the local identity of cities in the East. Looking at Ilium, it goes without saying that this city had a rich Homeric tradition. The same can be said of many cities located in and around the Troad region. Therefore, I do not want to argue that Rome brought this tradition to the East. I want to show that this civic Homeric identity is only expressed through Aeneas when Rome appears on the scene. Because Rome appropriated Aeneas from the reign of Augustus onwards, cities in the eastern part of the Empire were given the opportunity to forge relations with Rome, without renouncing their own civic identity. These relationships could be both political and social, as we shall see. Aeneas is not necessarily separate from civic identity, but it is only in relation to Rome that the civic identity is expressed in this way.

Aeneas on provincial coinage

Let us take a closer look at the provincial cities minting coins depicting Aeneas. From the reign of Augustus (27 BCE-14 CE) to the reign of Trebonianus Gallus (251-253 CE), fourteen cities in the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire (including Sicily) struck coins depicting Aeneas. Seven of these cities have a connection with Aeneas or Troy: Antandrus, Dardanus, Ilium, Otrus, Scepsis, Segesta, and Tyre; the latter was also a Roman colony. Six other cities are also Roman colonies: Apamea, Berytus, Coela, Corinth, Patras, and Sidon. Finally, the last city is completely autonomous and has no connection with Troy or Rome: Nicaea. Let us take a closer look at them all.

Segesta

We begin with Segesta in Sicily. In antiquity, the popular founding myth of this town was that when the city of Troy was captured and destroyed, a group of Trojans fled, took their boats and sailed to Sicily to start a new life. The cities that these Trojan refugees founded were called Eryx and Egesta, later Segesta. Segesta differs from the other cities that struck coins with the Aeneas motif because it struck such a coin as early as the middle of the third century BCE, years before the Aeneas motif became an imperial standard. That the coin was struck at this time is no coincidence: the First Punic War (264-241 BCE) was in full swing. During this war, Rome was keen to strengthen its ties with the Greek cities in order to gain support against Carthage. It was also at this time that Rome began to write the history of its city, and Aeneas appeared for the first time as its ancestor. So although there are no visual representations of Aeneas by Roman hands from this period, he is already known as their ancestor. Segesta allied itself with Rome during the war on the basis of their common Trojan ancestry. The coin struck in Segesta was therefore intended to consolidate the relationship with Rome. Shortly after the coin was struck, Sicily became Rome's first province.

The next series of coins struck by Segesta depicting Aeneas date from around 21 BCE. Sicily suffered during the occupation of the island by Sextus Pompey between 43 and 36 BCE. Augustus managed to defeat Sextus Pompey, and Sicily was restored to the imperial rule of Rome. In 21 BCE, Augustus visited the island to repair the damage caused by Sextus Pompey in the form of building programmes. The coins depicting Aeneas were intended to honour and thank Augustus for his benevolence and to firmly re-establish the relationship between Sicily and Rome, which had suffered during the war. Thus, while Segesta had a personal relationship with Aeneas, which could explain his appearance on her coins, he only appears on the coins in relation to Rome.

Ilium

The next city I will discuss is perhaps the most famous city associated with Troy. Ilium was located in the Troad, the region that was at the heart of the Trojan War as described by Homer. The inhabitants of Ilium claimed that their city was once ancient Troy and that they were the direct descendants of that great city. Ilium was destroyed in 85 BCE, but rebuilt by Sulla, and later restored further by Julius Caesar and Augustus. The latter was the first to actively support Ilium financially. Despite the emperor’s financial support, Ilium was not formally a Roman colony and Augustus emphasised Ilium’s autonomous status. However, the extensive rebuilding of the city by Augustus led to the erection of several statues of him and members of

his family. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it was during the reign of Augustus that Ilium minted its first coin depicting Aeneas. It is tempting to suggest a link between Augustus' benefactions and the appearance of Aeneas on Ilium's coins at this time. Given Augustus' clear propagandistic use of Aeneas, and the lack of Aeneas on Ilium's coins before this time, it seems not too far-fetched to suggest that Ilium minted these coins to honour or please Augustus.

In 93, 105, and 120 or 128 CE Ilium was struck by earthquakes, which caused large parts of the city to collapse. After the last earthquake, there is evidence of a major rebuilding of the city, much of which is attributed to the benefactions of Hadrian (117-138 CE). He was the first emperor in over a hundred years to support Ilium financially and was celebrated with a statue, as Augustus had been. Again, it is not surprising that Aeneas appears on coins in this period. Coins were another way for the citizens of Ilium to honour Hadrian for his favours.

From 150 to 250 CE Ilium maintained a close diplomatic relationship with Rome.[3] During the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Aeneas reappears frequently on their coins (fig. 3.5). There is evidence of a new marble nymphaeum, a monument dedicated to the nymphs, in the second half of the second century CE, which may well have been financially supported by Marcus Aurelius, given the large-scale building activity elsewhere in Asia Minor during his reign. Although this link is less certain than that between Augustus and Hadrian and Ilium, the appearance of Aeneas could still be explained in the context of Ilium's diplomatic relations with Rome. Furthermore, it is surprising that Aeneas appears on coins minted in Ilium only when the imperial example is set, and precisely during the times when the Aeneas motif is popular in the imperial mint. This could be a coincidence, but it is noteworthy.

Antandrus, Dardanus, Otrus and Scepsis

Like Ilium, Antandrus, Dardanus, and Scepsis were located in the Troad region. Their connection with Aeneas is clear; the cities are surrounded by the archaeology of the Trojan past. They were eager to express their local affiliation with these remains, which they did through the medium of coinage (fig. 3.6). None of these cities have a direct relationship with Rome that could explain the appearance of Aeneas on their coins, as we have done for Ilium and Segesta. However, all the coins depicting Aeneas struck in these cities were minted between the early second and early third centuries CE, with the majority of them struck in the second half of the second century CE. This is noteworthy, because from the late Antonine period onwards there was a significant change in the attitude of the Greeks towards Rome. The Roman imperial identity and the Hellenic civic identity were merged, and Rome was seen as the worthy supreme *polis* leading the larger community.[4] Associations between Greek cities

Figure 3.5: Bronze Æ minted in Ilium ca. 161-162 CE. 34 millimetres diameter. The obverse depicts a portrait of Lucius Verus, Marcus Aurelius' co-emperor, wearing a cuirass and laureate crown. The reverse depicts Aeneas, carrying his father Anchises on his left shoulder, while holding his son Ascanius with his right hand. This scenery is reminiscent of the scenery we saw on Antoninus Pius' imperial coin. RPC IV^2 91. © Roman Provincial Coinage Online.

Figure 3.6: Alloy Æ minted in Dardanus ca. 180-182 CE. 22 millimetres diameter. The obverse depicts a portrait of Crispina, wife of Commodus. The reverse depicts Aeneas, carrying his father Anchises on his left shoulder, while holding his son Ascanius with his right hand. This scene again strongly reminds of Antoninus Pius' imperial coin. RPC IV^2 67. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

and Rome were more frequently expressed, especially on local coins. Around this time, cities in the Troad region began to mint coins with Aeneas on the reverse, imitating imperial scenes previously found only on coins minted in Roman colonies, as we shall see. The fact these coins were all struck from the second century CE onwards suggests that they were struck to establish an alliance with Rome.

A similar observation can be made for Otrus, although this city is not located in the Troad region, but in Phrygia. Otrus claims a personal connection to Troy through Otreus, one of the allies of Priam, the king of Troy. Otreus was said to have founded Otrus, and the citizens of Otrus could therefore trace their history back to ancient Troy. The depiction of Aeneas on their coins could be seen in this context. Yet again, the coins struck in Otrus depicting Aeneas

were not minted until the late second and early third centuries CE, when Rome and Greece became much more connected. However, since there is no direct link to Rome that could explain the depiction of Aeneas on the coins of any of these four cities, it seems that they struck coins depicting Aeneas on their own accord. Aeneas was their personal hero.

Roman colonies

Apamea, Berytus, Coela, Corinth, Patras, and Sidon all minted coins depicting Aeneas, but had no direct connection with him or Troy. This suggests that Aeneas had become important to these cities on their own accord by appropriating the myth to fit their local identity. However, the status of these cities is revealing. As we have seen, while provincial cities were technically free to mint their own coins, the coinage of Roman colonies often followed the imperial example. The cities mentioned did not come under Roman control as free and autonomous cities, on the contrary. While Corinth was one of the most important cities in the Greek world between the eighth and second centuries BCE, it was destroyed by the Roman army in 146 BCE and rebuilt as a Roman colony by Augustus in 44 BCE. Similar observations can be made for Apamea, Berytus, and Patras. These cities became Roman colonies during the reign of Augustus, and the coins minted here depicting Aeneas follow the imperial example.

Coela in Thrace was founded as a Roman city and received the right to mint coins from Hadrian.[5] From this time on, the city began to mint coins with the same scene depicted on the reverse: a prow with marine ram and a cornucopia. This design continued until the reign of Trebonianus Gallus, when the reverse became oriented towards Rome, including depictions of Aeneas. Although the reign of Trebonianus Gallus was short and poorly documented, we do know that he was the governor of Moesia, a province just above Thrace. In 252 CE, Moesia was attacked by the Goths, and with Trebonianus Gallus still being in the area, we can imagine him seeking support from neighbouring regions, not in the least to support his claim to the purple. Since Aeneas was the ancestor of the Romans, it is not difficult to understand Coela's reason for depicting this mythical hero on her coins in support of Trebonianus Gallus.

A similar observation can be made for Sidon in Phoenicia. When the city came under Roman rule, Augustus was quick to deprive it of its rights. However, during the reign of Elagabalus (218-222 CE), the city became a Roman colony. The first coin depicting Aeneas appears in 221 CE, just after receiving its new status as a colony. Sidon was clearly following the imperial example.

Unlike the other colonies, Tyre had a relationship with Aeneas. Tyre is said to be the birthplace of Dido, queen of Carthage. She and Aeneas had a brief romantic relationship while Aeneas was stranded in Carthage, until Aeneas decided to continue his journey to Italy. Through Dido, Tyre claimed a rich history, and this could explain the depiction of Aeneas on its coins. However, Aeneas is depicted only from the reign of Elagabalus onwards, which is after Tyre became a colony under Septimius Severus (193-211 CE). If we want to explain Aeneas' appearance on the coins as a result of Tyre's relationship with Aeneas through Dido, we would expect Aeneas to appear before Tyre became a Roman colony. This is not the case, however, and the coins struck depicting Aeneas once again follow the imperial example.

Nicaea

Finally, only Nicaea in Bithynia was an autonomous free city under Roman rule with control of its own coinage, and had no direct connection with Aeneas or Troy. While Bithynia was a Roman province, Nicaea was granted autonomy. The coins struck depicting Aeneas do follow the imperial example, but it seems that Nicaea celebrated Aeneas separately from Rome. The coins bear a Greek legend instead of a Latin one, and it appears to be a true example of Aeneas being a hero of the East.

Conclusion

The discrepancy between coins depicting Aeneas minted in the East and the West has been put into perspective. Aeneas appears more often on coins minted in the eastern provinces, suggesting that Aeneas was the hero of the East. However, if we look at the status of the cities minting coins depicting Aeneas, more than half of them were a Roman colony, and thus under Roman control. The other cities, with the exception of Nicaea, struck coins depicting Aeneas either to thank the reigning emperor for his benevolence or to establish and maintain a relationship with Rome, since these coins were struck from the middle of the second century CE onwards. Without Rome, only Nicaea would have struck coins depicting Aeneas, although these too follows the imperial example. Aeneas appears in the East only after Rome has appropriated him. Aeneas is thus the hero of the West and not the hero of the East, as the coins might suggest.

Endnotes

[1] Kluczek (2016), 298.

[2] Mattingly (1923), 22.

[3] Rose (2014), 254.

[4] Harl (1987), 72.

[5] Jones (1998), 16.

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Agent Troy
Troy in Medieval Art and Literature

Ellen Bond

When starting this research project, I was surprised to learn that Troy has been a popular topic in Medieval art and literature. When speaking of Troy I mean Troy in a larger sense, not only Troy as a (lost) city, but also the whole story or themes surrounding Troy. Troy known through Homer's *Iliad* and various other post-Homeric writings of the Trojan cycle. Thinking about this, several questions came to mind. How did Troy, a lost city, forever remembered through an epic story, come to be known in Medieval Europe? How do we see Medieval knowledge, ingenuity and imagination of Troy in art and literature? Can 'Troy' be seen as some sort of Agent? In order to find out more about this I am going to describe six Medieval objects. Through these descriptions I want to see if a theoretical concept of Agency can help me to understand more about possible processes and purposes behind these objects. The theory I want to look into is the Actor-Network-Theory of Bruno Latour. I chose this theory because he takes the use of Agency to another level. Bruno Latour, 1947-2022, was a French philosopher, sociologist and anthropologist. He was known for his work in the field of science and technology studies and is one of the primary developers of the Actor-Theory-Network. To clarify this concept I will describe some aspects of Agency and the theory of Bruno Latour.

Agency

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines agency as *"the capacity, condition, or state of acting or of exerting power; a person or thing through which power is exerted or an end is achieved"*. There are theories of Agency used in all sorts of disciplines. Janet Hoskins, in "Agency, Biography and Objects," cites Laura Ahern's understanding that *"agency is 'the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act' and is deliberately not restricted to persons, and may include spirits, machines, signs, and collective entities."* [1] Objects, she also states, are made to act upon the world and on other persons; otherwise, they would not be created. Therefore, objects do indeed possess an innate agency that allows them to affect change.[2] Agency, therefore, fluctuates in meaning for individual scholars of material culture. There is some agreement however, that objects and their following actions and legacies have an effect in

human interactions and societal intentions. The Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) of Bruno Latour is a theoretical and methodological approach. It is a social theory where everything in the social and natural worlds exists in constantly shifting networks of relationships. It proposes that nothing exists outside those relationships. Bruno Latour defines 'social' *"not as a special domain, a specific realm, or particular sort of thing, but only as a very peculiar movement of re-association and re-assembling."*[3] In other words: *"social for ANT, is the name of a type of momentary association which is characterized by the way it gathers together into new shapes."*[4] About agency of objects Latour writes that *"in addition to 'determining' and serving as a 'backdrop for human action', things might authorize, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid, and so on."*[5] Latour was critiqued for this, because it gave the impression that he was equating humans with objects. But he writes that *"ANT is not the empty claim that objects do things 'instead' of human actors: it simply says that no science of the social can even begin if the question of who and what participates in the action is not first of all thoroughly explored, even though it might mean letting elements in which, for lack of a better term, we would call non-humans."*[6] It is precisely this why objects are active partners in social relations and allows us to investigate if Troy can be seen as an Agent through these Medieval objects.

Timeframe

The objects seen in the exhibition represent some of the art and literature form Western Europe. The objects are from the period of the 12th to the 15th century, also known as the High and Late Middle Ages. The period is divided in the High Middle Ages from approximately 900 to 1300 CE to the Middle Ages from 1300-1500 CE. The timeframe and dating of the period are without question always open for discussion, and therefore to be taken as a general guideline. One would say that the Middle Ages are aptly named for an obscure period, somewhere hovering between the dominance of the glorious classic culture from Late Antiquity and the Renaissance. However, this is furthest from the truth. But before ensuing another war on when and where the Middle Ages start and end, or if the name is wrong or not, let's take a closer look at how obscure this period actually is.

Troy in Medieval Europe

How did Troy come to be known in Western Europe? Troy and the Homeric epics were important in Mediterranean antiquity and the *Iliad* served as a source of historical background for Greek and Roman communities. Christian Baier writes what Plutarch mentions about Alexander the Great; that he *"carried about with him Aristotle's recension of the text, which he called 'the Iliad of the casket' and always kept it under his pillow along with his dagger."* Romans used Troy in the founding myth of the city of Rome where they link the ancestry of Romulus to the Trojan hero Aeneas. The Homeric epic being so imbedded in antiquity also meant that this was maintained and spread through the classic curriculum and various cultural expressions of the Roman Empire. An article in *The Guardian* featured a report about recently found 3rd/4th CE century mosaics, depicting scenes from the Iliad. No doubt there were more cultural expressions featuring Homeric epic which were not preserved. The collapse of the Western Roman Empire and the chaotic aftermath was not beneficial for upholding a standard of classic culture. Despite this the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* continued to be studied and copied in the Byzantine East. Greek manuscripts of the Homeric epics had more or less disappeared by the end of the Carolingian period. Alongside the main focus on Scripture, the remnants of the classic curriculum were mainly used to study Latin and roman law. The curriculum was predominated by religious sources.

Among the so called 'pagan' sources, Virgil's *Aeneid* remained important. In Western Europe there were no manuscripts of the Homeric epics in circulation at least until the late 14th century. However, in the High and Late Middle Ages there were a lot of narratives of the Trojan War. For example Benoît de Sainte Maure's 12th century *Roman de Troie* and Jacob van Maerlants *Historie van Troyen.* How could this be? The transmission depended on two short prose epitomes dating from late antiquity, attributed to Dares Phrygius (Dares the Trojan), and Dictys Cretensis (Dictys the Cretan). They claimed to have fought in the Trojan War and to have recorded eyewitness accounts. Both versions of the Trojan War and its aftermath are different from the narratives recorded in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Neither of the texts transmits the Homeric epics. Another text, called the *Ilias Latina,* is a short poem of one thousand hexameters that summarizes various books of the *Iliad*. The name Homer was often connected with the *Ilias Latina* in Medieval manuscripts. But this text did not line up with the versions of the Trojan War of Dares and Dictys. Despite all these contradictions these texts enabled Troy to be translated into, eventually, the vernacular literary cultures of Western Europe. This

process was also enhanced by the laborious work of copying at the increasing number of monasteries, the rise of universities and the technological advancement of the codex.

There are many depictions featuring Troy in one way or another. The main themes involved throughout the High and Late Middle Ages are concerning Lineage, chivalry and courtly love. These themes are related and seen within the depictions of objects in the exhibition.

Lineage

In antiquity leaders like Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar claimed to have legendary or mythologic descent. Leaders in the Middle Ages aspired to claim descent from the chivalric knights of Troy. The origins of Rome were traced back to Aeneas, Paris was named after the Trojan prince who took Helen, Britain supposed to be called after Brutus of Troy and Troyes was to be a new version of Troy. The genealogical structure of these chronicle manuscripts, in which the narrative of one king's reign is followed by that of his successor, is given explicit form in the many royal genealogies created at this time. Tracing their origin back to Troy played a significant role in the attempts to legitimize their reign. The accounts of Dares and Dictys do not offer a starting point for construing the Frankish or British legends going back to Troy. This seems to be starting from the *Chronicon of Ps. Fredegar* and the *Liber Historia Francorum*.[7] The need for a hero from Troy is important when looking at the collection of Trojan refugees in Western Europe. Edith Hall notes that *"when it comes to the view of historical figures from well beyond living memory the distinction between history and myth indeed becomes invalid."*

Chivalry

Defining chivalry is met with some reluctance since the meaning can vary according to the writer, time, and context. In Encyclopaedia Britannica chivalry is understood as a set of values widely shared by an aristocratic warrior elite. It combined a warrior ethos, knightly piety, and courtly manners to establish a notion of honour and nobility. Nigel Saul has called chivalry *"the value system and behavioural code of the secular aristocracy of the Middle Ages*."[8] Historians have looked at the rise of specific values connected to knighthood. The early use of it seems to represent a company of knights (chevaliers) adhering to certain skills and training they displayed. In the 11th century it came to be used in preference to indicate a mounted warrior. Eventually they changed into a professional warrior elite enhanced by technical

developments. The cost of equipping these knights widened the gap between them and the infantry. The knights relied upon having an aristocratic income. This professionalized elite is vividly described in epic *Chansons de Geste.* Chivalry as a set of shared values functioned within a Christian framework. An important value was prowess which is a combination of personal bravery, physical strength and skill in arms. This is combined with loyalty, generosity and last but not least courtesy. Maurice Keen expressed that "*chivalry cannot be divorced from the martial world of the mounted warrior: it cannot be divorced from aristocracy, because knights commonly were men of lineage: and from the middle of the twelfth century it very frequently carries ethical or religious overtones*."[9] This aristocratic warrior elite began founding orders. The first few of these new orders closely follows the dissolution of the old crusading order of the Templars. In 1325 King Charles-Robert of Hungary founded the Society of St George. This was the first princely secular order of chivalry. Soon followed by more, like the order of the Golden Fleece founded in 1430 by Philip the Good of Burgundy. Membership was limited to those who were of noble birth and without reproach (in reputation). Members of these orders followed statutes. They adhered to the values of chivalry and a recurring theme was the testing of quality of honour of the individual knight. Troy is connected to chivalry through the personages of Hector and the brave warriors in the *Iliad.* Hector is known as a Trojan prince, hero and warrior for Troy. He led the Trojans and allies in defence of Troy. Hector is described, by Dares Phrygius, as being fierce, noble, merciful and deserving of love. Hector is also one of nine historical and legendary men of distinction who personify the ideals of chivalry known in the Middle Ages. These Nine Worthies, were referred to as 'Princes' regardless of their historic titles. The Nine Worthies include three pagans (Hector, Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar), three Jews (Joshua, David and Judas Maccabeus) and three Christians (King Arthur, Charlemagne and Godfrey of Bouillon).

Fig. 4.7. Wool warp Tapestry: *Alexander the Great or Hector of Troy from the Nine Heroes Tapestries*. Ca. 1400-1410, South Netherlandish culture. Dimensions: Overall 420.4 x 264.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York USA.

Courtly love

Courtly love developed through the literary genre of poetry. It arose in southern France in the 12th century CE through troubadours and poet-minstrels who travelled from town to town or were retained by a royal court. This composed poetry influenced the age and had great effect

on the literary movement. Courtly love is intertwined with chivalry and the genre elevated the position of women. The poem highlights a lady, usually married but always in some way inaccessible. The lady becomes the object of a noble knight's service, devotion and self-sacrifice. The power relationship between the Lady and the Knight is asymmetrical and is comparable to the relationship between Paris and Helen. Whether or not the Trojan War was triggered when Paris abducted Helen of Troy from King Menelaus, it was suggested that she was the cause of the Trojan War that led to the deaths of numerous people. In Medieval Europe there were other well-known tragic love couples like Tristan & Isolde and Lancelot & Guinevere.

Fig. 4.8. Tempera on gold and wood: *Two couples - Paris and Helen, Tristan and Iseult*. Giovanni dal Ponte. Ca.1410. Dimensions: height: 33 cm; width: 78 centimetre. Czartoryski Museum, Kraków, Poland.

Objects in exhibition

Figure 4.1. Depicted is a miniature of Brutus of Albion, set on a page in a manuscript. The manuscript is a chronicle and also titled *Abrégé des histoires divines*. The illustration shows the death scene of Brutus of Albion. Brutus, crowned, has his eyes closed, is nude but covered with blankets. He reclines in a draped bed. There are three men next to the bed, one of them raises both hands, another holds his right hand to his face. The scene is against a golden background within a blue and pink frame decorated with white ornaments. The text on the page is relating to the death of Brutus. The manuscript is written and illuminated in France, perhaps in Amiens, between 1300 and 1310. The text is an abridged version of biblical history in the form of a genealogical tree of Christ, in French, of the preface to the *Compendium historiae in genealogia Christi of Petrus Pictaviensis* (Peter of Poitiers). It is followed by chronicles which have been compiled from various sources. The text attempts to synchronize the events of the

biblical history with the history of the Romans, the Assyrians, the Britons, emperors of the Eastern and Western empires, the popes, the patriarchs of Jerusalem and French history down to the reign of Philip Augustus.

Figure 4.2. This is a depiction of the presentation of *Chroniques de Hainaut t*o Phillip the Good of Burgundy 1419-1467. This is the presentation scene of the first Volume c. 1447-1448. A number of miniaturists had worked on the chronicle's illustrations, but this particular scene is assigned to Rogier van der Weyden 1399-1464. Phillip in the company of his son and his court is ceremoniously receiving volume 1 of *Chroniques de Hainaut*. The page is surrounded by a border with his emblem, motto and the arms of the territories he had acquired through conquest, inheritance, purchase and diplomacy. In the prologue Philip claims descent from both the princes of Troy and the saintly duchess Waldetrudis. Philip had a plan for a crusade and to achieve this he needed a history, an ancient, independent and renowned identity.[10] To acquire this Philip used his wealth to support projects, patronized artisans and built monuments to testify to his greatness and for his historical and cultural identity. In line with this he had established an extensive library which held seventeen manuscripts on the history of Troy. The duchy of Burgundy under Philip was comprised of various regions with their own languages and he also used the title 'duke of Lotharingia'. Lorraine had become a part of the duchy of the dukes of Brabant. The *Chronica noblissimorum ducum Lotharingiae et Brabantiae* of Emond de Dynter recounts the history of the duchy from its Trojan foundations to the coronation of Emperor Frederick III in 1442. Dynter had a position as one of the archivists and he got paid for the *Chronica* in September 1447 (by Philip). Phillip then, hired Jean Wauquelin to translate this work from a Latin into a French version: *Chronique des ducs de Brabant.* It seems that Philip did not hold back his ambitions and upon acquiring the duchy of Hainaut he obtained the *Annales Hannoniae* ascribed to a Franciscan named Jacques de Guise. These *Annales* begin with a foundation story that Hainaut was founded by a wandering Trojan prince named Bavo, one of Priam's cousins. It further mentions that the counts of Hainaut were the true kings of the Franks. A translation project was started by Simon Nockart, who was a clerk of the Bailiwick and who had chosen Jean Wauquelin. Philip took over and Jean Wauquelin translated it into the *Chroniques de Hainaut* adding it to Philip's history. In the end Phillip's plan for a crusade did not work out and he died before the completion of all the volumes of *Chroniques de Hainaut*. The process of establishing a lineage of royalty and renown, in his case, proved to be quite the endeavour. His history of renown however is still being talked about, but maybe not in the way he would have wanted.

Figure 4.3. Two illustrations on one page of *Der Wälsche Gast* (*The Italian Guest*) Book 3.8 by Thomasin von Zerclaere 1186 - c. 1235. This particular manuscript originates from Trier, Germany and is dated c. 1380. Thomasin was a clerk at the court of Wolfger von Erla, a patriarch at Aquileia. Thomasin's native language was Italian, but he chose to write in Middle High German. The text has a prose foreword followed by 10 books containing 14.796 verses in rhymed couplets and as many as 125 illustrations. *Der Wälsche Gast* is composed during 10 months in 1215/1216. It can be seen as the earliest comprehensive book of court etiquette written in German. It seeks to educate noblemen in the rules and norms of courtly love, chivalry, ethics, rulership and good manners. This work brings together studies from history, art, musicology and literary studies. Its didactic concept, with the additional use of images and Thomasin's poem was well received and was frequently copied and widely spread. The illustration in the first column shows Brutus and Cassius stabbing Julius Caesar in the back. Julius Caesar is crowned and in the movement of falling. Brutus and Cassius are wearing headdresses and the background has a Diaper pattern. Diapering is a technique used in heraldry to decorate large areas of flat colour. All three men have a scroll with their names inscribed. The illustration in the second column shows Achilles and Hector. Achilles, wearing a hat and holding a goad (a spiked stick to drive animals with), is seated on a horse and looks behind him at the body of Hector. Hector is dragged by ropes tied behind the horse. Attached to him is a scroll inscribed with *daz ist Hector.* In the background is the city of Troy, also signified by a scroll which says: *Die ist die stat Troia.*

Figure 4.4.This is a depiction of a fragment of a textile tapestry. What is shown is *The Battle with the Sagittary and the conference at Achilles' tent*. This fragment is one of three, coming from two or more tapestries depicting scenes from the Trojan War. The tapestry is probably produced by Jean or Pasquier Grenier of Tournai and dated at c. 1470-1490. The textile is a wool warp, wool wefts with a few silk wefts. It is a large tapestry of almost 5 by 4 meter (436,9 x 396,2 cm) and it is made in Tournai. Taking the dimensions into account the tapestries were frequently used in churches and castles during the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance. They provided a form of decoration and insulation. Through the process of weaving, they could create complex images on a grand scale. They could be produced in sets including ten or more pieces. Henry VII bought a set (of eleven) depicting scenes of the Trojan War in 1488. The sets could be commissioned with designs the wealthy patron chose. Benoît de Sainte-Maure composed his poem *Roman de Troie* probably using the accounts of Dares Phrygius and Dictys

Cretensis. Guido delle Colonne simplified the poem *Roman de Troie* into Latin prose in 1287. The French and Latin texts on the tapestry do not come from this work but from an unknown author. The figure who dominates the centre of the scene is a centaur. The centaur is driving back the mounted Greek warriors in the lower left part of the tapestry. The centaur fights on the side of the Trojans. There is a lot of confusion in the scene of the battle. The men in the tent show two types of Late Medieval fashion. The older men tended to wear long, dignified robes, as Agamemnon does, while younger men, such as Hector and Achilles, wore doublets and hose, over which plate armour could fit. The banderole, a small but long flag, at the top with quatrains in French and one at the bottom left with distichs in Latin describe the events. The names of the participants are inscribed on the clothing, armour and harnesses of the figures. The size of these tapestries hanging throughout a court with depictions in a Medieval setting, created a sense of being a part of the scenes.

Figure 4.5. Depicted is the month January in *Les Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*. Jean, Duc de Berry 1340-1416, was the third born son of a French king, great grandson of an emperor and grandson of a king of Bohemia. He was a patron of arts and bibliophile. The duke commissioned three Dutch artists, the Limbourg brothers. Unfortunately, they died in 1416 before the work was done as did the duke. The project was completed in 1489 by the painter Jean Colombe on behalf of the duke of Savoy. *Les Tres Riches Heures* was a Book of Hours. A book of Hours was a prayer book for a layperson, it contained readings to be recited at specific times of the day. Such a book usually started with a calendar with biblical illustrations and signs of the zodiac. This Book of Hours is different because the artisans had other ideas and created images of the current times. The calendar paintings give a vivid impression of the times. The month of January gives us a glimpse of Medieval life. The illustration is very vibrant in colour and shows a scene of a celebration at the court of the duke. The scene depicted is a celebration at the duke's court. The duke himself is the only one who is seated. Two of the three Limbourg brothers are also depicted, they wear grey floppy hats. A decorated baldachin is seen above the duke. This is to emphasise his high standing. Significant tapestries are visible at the back wall. It seems as if the courtiers are surrounded by tapestries lining all the walls. The tapestry seems to blend in with the scene while it depicts the Trojan War. Like the baldachin this emphasizes the duke’s renown, chivalry and lineage.

Figure 4.6. Depicted is a miniature in the manuscript of *Troilus & Criseyde* by Geoffrey Chaucer c. 1340s - 25 Oct. 1400. The illustration shows Criseyde wearing a hat, she has her

hands slightly raised. Troilus also wears a hat and extends his hand with something that is unclear, but it is suggested as a branch. They are facing each other, and the scene is enclosed in the initial T. The text on the page is enclosed in a frame of red, blue and gold and decorated with floreae vine scroll. The lower margin is decorated with heraldry of Henry, Prince of Wales (future Henry V of England).The text is an epic poem and re-tells in Middle English a tragic love story. This manuscript is probably written for Henry V when he was Prince of Wales between 1399-1413. In Medieval Western Europe Troilus was the youngest son of Priam and Criseyde, a Trojan woman and daughter of the Greek seer Calchas (he went over to the Greeks). Criseyde is derived from the character Briseida (derived from Briseis in the *Iliad)* from *Roman de Troie* by poet Benoît de Sainte-Maure. Briseida is a women involved in a love-triangle. *Troilus and Criseyde* by Chaucer is based on Boccaccio but it is an expanded version. Boccaccio an Italian author and poet who writes *Il Filostrato* makes a shift. The focus of his poem is more on telling the story of the love triangle than to the larger tale of the Trojan War. Laura Hibbard states that "*for the medieval poet Jean Bodel the Matter of Rome is the literary cycle of Greek and Roman mythology, together with episodes from the history of classical antiquity, focusing on military heroes like Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar*."[11] Bodel c. 1165 - c. 1210 was a French poet from Arras, who wrote a number of *Chansons de geste* as well as many fabliaux. Chaucer includes the Matter of Rome which includes the Matter of Troy. This also consists of romances and other texts based on the Trojan War and its legacy, including the adventures of Aeneas. Chaucer also brings the precepts of Courtly love into the story line. He expresses respect to authors who influenced him but never acknowledges his reliance on *Il Filostrato* by Boccaccio. He instead pretends to translate from a Latin poet who does not exist and whom he calls Lollius. The story of Troilus and Criseyde is set against a backdrop of war during the siege of Troy. It is a fitting setting for a doomed love. Marion Turner indicated that Troy had a mixed image (in English literature), it was usually portrayed as the primitive origin of London and it served as a tale and warning of pending doom for a divided city or nation. Chaucer portrays Troy to be a city that is *"at once London and London's so-called origin point."*[12] Troilus means "little Troy" and his fate is intertwined with Troy. The use of Troy as a setting can be read as a response to the social unrest plaguing England during that time.

Fig. 4.9. Elephant ivory *Mirror Case*. Possibly Paris, France. 1350-1375. Dimensions: Overall 11.1 x 10.4 x 1.1 cm. Gallery 304 at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York USA.

Actor-Theory-Network (ANT)

The themes, lineage, chivalry and courtly love are linked to the objects as a guideline and focus. The themes can overlap within certain objects, this is also because the themes are often intertwined. Objects one and two are meant as an example of stories linked to lineage. Both works relate a story of origin and successive history. They are compiled by incorporating different sources often through a period of time. Not only are they translating but they also create something new. Both manuscripts are linked to several persons. The authors, translators and the so called patrons who want to add to an already existing format. The use of Troy often in combination with Biblical elements or other scenes from antiquity, such as the killing of Caesar to establish a (mythological) history of renown or origin is certainly from the point of view of the patrons an intentional act. From the view of the authors/scribes and translators it could be as simple as following or obliging the patron as a way of making a living. Or these

origins could also be held as a broad accepted history. Troy and certain motifs are known in Medieval Western Europe as attested by numerous vernacular literatures in both verse and prose. The Medieval 'education system' in the form of copying, together with oral transmission (bards/ troubadours) must have maintained a certain amount of knowledge about Troy from Late Antiquity. The authors and scribes translate this into something which is received and understood in their time and worldview. These story's, authors/scribes, patrons and their readers/viewers are all networks within their own contexts who come into contact with each other in the social and natural. These networks are therefore constantly shifting. In this sense you could see Troy as an Agent because it influences a movement of re-association and re-assembling which in turn can encourage human action again. Objects three and four focus more on the theme chivalry. *Der Wälsche Gast* as a didactic work can also be seen as translation of multiple and various sources. The method of combining in combination with the illustrations however makes it into a new shape. As a didactic work it is written for the specific purpose of teaching for a specific network consisting of the elite. Its use of Troy in text and depictions opens up the entire world and meaning behind the acts and deeds portrayed and described through its characters. It is then made relevant to Medieval time in the context of the elite and chivalric culture. The readers and persons taught are encouraged to implement that into their own action and subsequently able to make changes in their own network of relationships. The movement of re-association and re-assembling continues within the networks.

The tapestry *The Battle with the Sagittary and the conference at Achilles' tent* is totally different from a manuscript. Due to its dimension it can have considerable impact and is much more visible. They are obviously connected with the elite because of costliness. However, the location of tapestries in churches and castles also meant that people who did not belong to the elite were able to see them when working at or visiting these locations. Seeing the tapestries and hearing about deeds of knights and heroes can indeed alter someone's actions. Even if it only was something they could aspire for. The tapestries were meant to have an impact through their grandeur and subject depicted. The subject chosen in this case surely gave a message. Imagine a hall filled with tapestries where guests are surrounded by life size characters and action filled colourful scenes. Scenes translated in a way as happening in the same time. It is almost as if the owner wants to blend in with the characters on the tapestry, as being one of them. In this case chivalric and royal characters of renown. Troy again re-associated and re-assembled in relationships (in the social). The tapestries and the production of them also had an enormous impact on the economy and influence of the region. Object five, *Les Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* is a bit peculiar regarding Troy. This book of hours is again connected

to and made for the elite, in this case very personally. It is not meant as something to be read by many other people or for educational purposes (although it could be used as such). The link with chivalry lies in a significant detail within the illustration of the month January. This is the depiction of the tapestry with Trojan War scenes hanging in the court of the duke. The book itself is unique because its illustrations differ from what was normally depicted in these books of hours (Biblical and religious scenes). So within a religious book, there is a reference to Troy and no doubt a connection to an origin and history of renown. One could say that Troy, through chivalry, is re-associated and re-assembled with Christian values in a completely different network of relations. It still might remind, encourage and influence the duke to uphold a chivalric service to God in arms in the way of prayer and Christian virtue. Object six Chaucer's book of *Troilus and Criseyde* focuses more on the theme of Courtly love and chivalry. Chaucer uses various sources and therefore translations (of translations) of the story of Troy. He in his turn translates them into a different story. Troy is used as a template and he adds and changes the role of characters within the story. With the meaning and context of Troy understood he addresses issues from his time and place. The way he writes the message or moral of the story into a love story and in middle English vernacular made it a well-received book (codex). Like the objects before he re-associates and re-assembles the social. The book went beyond the boundaries of the elite perhaps also enhanced by a change in technology of the codex (smaller dimensions), making it easier to copy and spread.

To conclude I would say that we can we see Troy as an agent. Especially since it is non-human and could be considered as a concept, collective memory, 'object' or entity. Because of its long cultural tradition and connection with the past, Troy gives credibility and legitimacy to contemporary themes in Medieval society. It almost seems to work like a language constantly transforming and moving across barriers of place and time. This would mean that you have agency within agency, within all these different social, natural networks of relationships and movements of re-association and re-assembling making it fluid and transforming into something new.

Endnotes

[1] Hoskins in Tilley et al (2006), 74.

[2] Hoskins in Tilley et al (2006), 75.

[3] Latour (2005), 7.

[4] Latour (2005), 65.

[5] Latour (2005), 72.

[6] Latour (2005), 72.

[7] Peters (2018).

[8] Saul (2011).

[9] Keen (2000).

[10] Moodey (2012).

[11] Hibbard (1960).

[12] Turner: (2007), 62.

Figures

Figure 4.1. Manuscript M.751 *Abrégé des histoires Divine*, miniature fol. 009r painting on vellum. Record ID:335930. Chronicle, Brutus of Albion illustration; School Picardy, AmiensFrance c. 1300-1310. Dimensions manuscript: 212 x147 mm. Pierpont Morgan Library. MS M.751, fol. 9r. Dept. of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts (MRMSS) of The Morgan Library & Museum in New York, USA. http://corsair.morganlibrary.org. Getty AAT: 30026452. https://ima.princeton.edu/images/morgan/m751.009ra.jpg

Figure 4.2. Manuscript *Chroniques de Hainaut: Annales historiae principum Hannoniae*, vol. 1: Ms. 9242. Miniature frontispiece f.1r. on vellum. Jacques de Guise (author), Jean Wauquelin (translator/scribe), Rogier van der Weyden (illuminator), c. 1447-1448, Southern Netherlands: Mons, Brussels. Dimensions marginal decoration: 439 x 316 mm. KBR or the Royal Library of Belgium, Brussels. Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx.

Figure 4.3. Manuscript Ms G.54 *Der Wälsche Gast* book 3.8: column miniature 2 fol. 20v painted illumination on vellum. Record ID: 331703. Thomasin von Zerclaere c.1186-1235 (author), illuminated by the Kuno von Falkenstein workshop, c. 1380, Trier, Germany. Dimensions: 352 x 252 mm. Dept. of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts of The Morgan Library & Museum in New York, USA. http://corsair.morganlibrary.org. Index of Christian Art, Princeton University. https://ima.princeton.edu/images/morgan/g54.020vb.jpg

Figure 4.4. Wool warp (wool & silk), Tapestry: Accession nr. 52.69 *The Battle with the Sagittary and the Conference at Achilles' Tent*. Probably produced through Jean or Pasquier Grenier of Tournai c. 1470-1490, South Netherlandish culture. Tournai, South Netherlands. Dimensions: Overall: 436.9 × 396.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York USA. Credit Line: Fletcher Fund, 1952.

Figure 4.5. Manuscript Ms 65 (1284) Book of Hours *Les Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berry.* Large miniature illumination of January fol. 1v on vellum. The Limbourg brothers (died 1416), folios 57 to 109 are ascribed to Jean Colombe (1430-1493). 1411-1489. Dimensions: 290 x 210 mm. Musée Condé Bibliothèque du château. Château de Chantilly, Oise. Institut de France. Photo (C) RMN-Grand Palais (domaine de Chantilly) / René-Gabriel Ojeda.

Figure 4.6. Manuscript Ms 817 *Troilus & Criseyde*. Record ID:147148. Miniature fol. 1r illuminations painted on vellum. Record ID: 336792. Geoffrey Chaucer (author). 1403-1413, probably London, England. Dimensions 300x200 mm. Dept. of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts (MRMSS) of The Morgan Library & Museum in New York, USA. http://corsair.morganlibrary.org . Getty AAT: 300264522. https://ima.princeton.edu/images/morgan/m817.001ra.jpg

Figure 4.7. Wool warp Tapestry: Accession nr. 47.101.2d *Alexander the Great or Hector of Troy from the Nine Heroes Tapestries*. C. 1400-1410, South Netherlandish culture. Dimensions: Overall 420.4 x 264.2 cm. At the Met Cloisters in Gallery 18. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York USA.

Figure 4.8. Tempera on gold and wood: Accession nr. XII-199 *Two couples - Paris and Helen, Tristan and Iseult*. Giovanni dal Ponte 1385-1438. Date: 1410. Dimensions: height: 33 cm; width: 78 cm. Czartoryski Museum, Kraków, Poland. Picture credit: BurgererSF on Wikimedia commons.

Figure 4.9. Elephant ivory Mirror case: Accession nr. 41.100.160 *Mirror Case*. Possibly made in Paris, France. 1350-1375, French culture. Dimensions: Overall 11.1 x 10.4 x 1.1 cm. Gallery 304 at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York USA. Catalogue Entry by Scott

Miller, Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial and Research Collections Specialist, Department of Medieval Art and The Cloisters, 2020–2022.

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The Agency of Helen within the Trojan Cycle

Thijs Langendijk

‘’The face that launched a thousand ships’’ is a common saying to describe Helen, who is presumed to be the product of a mating between a mortal woman (Leda) and Zeus disguised as a swan. Many stories have been told about Helen and her involvement within the Trojan cycle. Here, I will highlight different interpretations in various societies concerning Helen's agency within the Trojan cycle and how visual arts has reflected those societal interpretations.

Helen as a victim to males

On the first wall in this exhibition room, Helen is considered as a war prize and as a means for sexual gratification. These interpretations consider Helen to be an entity without any agency, focusing more on the necessity for warfare amongst males and their tendency to view women as prizes of conquest. These interpretations stem from the belief that women merely exist for male sexual gratification and thus can be considered prizes to be stolen.[1]

The first sculpture that will be shown in this exhibition on Helen’s agency has been produced by Italian sculptor Giovanni Suzini (fig. 1). Suzini has been described as a sculptor that adhered to the Mannerist style, originating from the Renaissance. This text has been produced in the Renaissance, the period after the Middle Ages in which Christian influences became less dominant within European society. With that transition came a less pious way of life. The perceptions of women also changed. Whereas Christian values promoted a modest and pious way of life, the Renaissance valued women as erotic entities. When it came to producing art that centers around the female narrative, Renaissance painters often invoked the eroticism that men attribute to women.[2]

In this text Giovanni presents the audience with a harrowing scenario: Helen has obtained the ideal that the Renaissance has laid out for women and because of this, she is considered a sexual conquest which allows for the rape and ravishment by Paris. The bronze sculpture highly details the force that Paris uses to take Helen away from Sparta. Helen herself is struggling against Paris’ strong grip and her face carries an expression of utter anguish. A handmaiden beneath the struggling duo attempts to rescue Helen, but her efforts are for naught, as Paris clearly remains in control within a forceful way. This text is ideal to represent Helen

as a victim and most importantly as a victim of male interpersonal violence. This text shows the male gaze in multiple facets. It not only resonates with the ideals of the Renaissance that was brought upon by the male gaze concerning women but this sculpture also portrays the male gaze that is prominent in the *Iliad.* The Achaean warrior Nestor mentions during a speech (*Iliad* 2.355-356) how he and by extension the entire Greek army, believe that Helen has been forcibly taken by the Trojans and continuously suffers from rape and ravishments within the Trojan walls. This sculpture portrays the overwhelming belief within the male Greek warriors that Helen has had no agency whatsoever in her relocating to Troy. They consider it a rape in the sense that she was taken as a woman belonging to one of their own. This belief is typical of the culture of interpersonal male violence that ruled within antiquity.[3]

The second painting that will be discussed within this part of the exhibition on Helen's agency also takes into account the trope of Helen as a victim of male violence and places this trope within the art of another era. This painting has been made by Italian painter Francesco Botti. While no official date has been given to this text Botti lived from 1640-1711, during the Baroque period and his work is heavily influenced by the Baroque style. Botti's painting depicts the abduction of Helen by the Trojan prince Paris. The Baroque style relies heavily on the expressed emotions of the painted or sculpted subject. Another aspect of this style is its brutality: primal and thuggish situations are favorite subjects amongst painters who had adhered to the Baroque style. Paris raping and abducting Helen as depicted by Botti would intersect on those two Baroque elements. Helen has a fearful and sad expression as she is literally lifted from her bed and attempts to push Paris away without any avail. Paris himself has a vague bored expression as if he is not violating someone's bodily autonomy. These emotions resonate once again with the idea of rape as an ideal within Antiquity and within the Trojan cycle as Helen is objectified and perceived as a sexual object that can be stolen and raped at a man's leisure.[4]

Fig 6.1 Giovanni Susini, Bronze sculpture, The abduction of Helen by Paris, 1627, Italy, 67.9 x 34.3 x 33.7 cm. © Paul J. Getty museum, Google arts and sculpture.

Fig 6.2 Francesco Botti, The Abduction of Helen by Paris, unknown, Rome, 115 x 147.5 cm. © Milan, Frascione arte.

Helen as divine pawn

The second part of the exhibition and the second wall centers around the narrative of Helen as a divine pawn. This interpretation takes away the sway that mortal men had within the Trojan cycle. This in itself ties back to the Greek myth of the judgment of Paris. The judgment of Paris is a theme within Greek mythology in which a dispute arose during the wedding of Achilles' mother Thetis. The goddess of strife, Eris was not invited and as punishment for this snub she threw a golden apple amongst the goddesses Aphrodite, Hera and Athena which read that it was intended for the fairest. Zeus decreed that the Trojan prince Paris should be the judge of this competition. All three attempt to bribe him with bold promises. Aphrodite promises Helen as wife since she is considered to be the most beautiful. Paris grants Aphrodite and thus sets in motion the events that led to the siege and sack of Troy. The Olympian gods play a vital role within the Trojan war as described in the *Iliad*, each of them choosing a side to promote their own favorites and interests. The judgement of Paris is only briefly alluded to in the 24th book of the *Iliad*. whether Homer did it to diminish Aphrodite's role or to highlight the sense that the reader should follow the idea that Paris is more to blame for Helen's departure is unknown.

The range of possible interpretations for this part of the myth gives artists plenty material to work with as evidenced by these texts.

The first artifact on this wall consists of a crater vase that has been produced sometime during 500-450 BCE (fig. 3). This vase depicts the sack of Troy and Helen fleeing amongst the carnage from her husband Patroclus. Patroclus himself is intercepted by Aphrodite's son Eros, who pacifies him and makes him fall in love again with Helen. It is Patroclus' agency that is currently being manipulated by divine intervention, but it places the omnipresence and omnipotence of the Gods and places all agency under their direct command. It is interesting that even though Patroclus' agency is altered, it still focuses on how it revolves around Helen being at the mercy of Patroclus and the Gods, functioning as a bridge between these two tropes.

The next artifact is not one painting but rather a pair of paintings that have been produced by artist Gavin Hamilton (fig. 4 and 5). Although they differ in dates of creation, these texts can be considered related since they present the same scene of the Trojan cycle. The first painting, created in 1756 depicts Aphrodite handing over Helen to Paris. Paris is transfixed but does not take a physically dominating stance, instead he chooses to remain seated as Venus is towering over him, as if he is waiting with anticipation until his mother is giving him a new toy. Helen is only touched by Aphrodite who unveils her and winged men, presumably versions of Aphrodite's son, Eros, that force Helen to come closer to Paris.[5] This painting takes a more classical stance in which Olympian Gods are considered to be the most domineering forces instead of interpersonal male violence. Helen herself is reluctant and attempts to pull back from the winged gods, but those divine forces are no match for her reluctance The sequel to this painting was painted in 1784 (fig. 5). Helen is escorted to the boat by Paris whilst the Trojan soldiers defend the couple from incoming Spartan soldiers. Helen does not fight Paris, instead she is clinging to Paris for safety and comfort whilst Paris does not make an attempt to touch Helen, only to protect her from incoming violence from the Spartans by raising her shield to safeguard her from any flying projectiles. While Aphrodite is absent from this painting, Helen seems to have had a sudden change of heart and is now more than willing to leave with Paris, instead of turning away from Paris. This would imply that Aphrodite has used her agency to either bewitch or entrance Helen to a point where she willingly lets herself be escorted to her new Trojan home with a new Trojan husband. The similarity of these scenes on the wall can be found within the positioning of Eros as a main agent of the Trojan cycle, while it is actually Aphrodite who is the patron of love and sexuality and Eros is often described as her missive. However, in these two paintings artists opt to use males as agents. These texts therefore use divine agency and male agency to diminish Helen's own agency and force these interpretations

to follow the explained tropes. The use of Gods and therefore a mythical explanation to the Trojan war is a common theme within the revival of classical ideals in European art throughout the eighteenth century, known to us as neoclassicism.[6]

Fig 6.3 Ceramic Crater, Menelaus regains Helen, 500-450 BCE. Egnatia, diam. 30.2 cm. © Louvre, wikimedia.

Fig 6.4 and 6.5. Gavin Hamilton, Venus presenting Helen to Paris & The Abduction of Helen. 1785 & 1784, Rome, 306 x 297 cm & 306 x 367 cm. © Musea di Roma, web gallery of art.

Helen as an independent agent

Helen embodying the trope of independent agent in the Trojan cycle is an occurrence that has its historical roots within societal change and the rise of feminism. With the waves of feminism

and emancipation, filmmakers have been reconsidering the common tropes concerning Helen. The final two texts of this exhibition concern themselves with how filmmakers have envisioned Helen as an independent agent.

Diane Kruger's version of Helen in Wolfgang Petersons 2004 movie *Troy* goes against the previous tropes in the sense that Helen is not forced to leave Sparta by either her male counterparts or the Gods (fig. 6). Helen and Paris have an affair that lasts multiple nights. Menelaus can be seen sexually harassing some of the serving girls at a banquet. Helen has a disgusted reaction and leaves the feast early. This implies that Helen has suffered that same fate during her marriage with Patroclus. Paris comforts her during their affair. This affair and Patroclus' fondling of serving women in the palace, results in Helen confessing her depression as Patroclus' consort and how she has lived a meaningless life. Her decision to leave for Troy is augmented by consensual passionate sex. Later on in the movie Helen attempts to flee Troy due to a sense of guilt of her willingly leaving Patroclus but she is stopped by Hector, and later reaffirms her love for Paris. Helen takes a more centralized role and is portrayed as having agency of her own, making her own decisions and revealing depth within her character. It is interesting that despite Helen being perceived as having more agency, this film takes into the account the trope of Helen being seen as a sexual object by some of her male counterparts, as Menelaus can be seen fondling woman and Helen reacting with disgust.

David Farr creates an even more independent Helen in the 2018 series, *Troy. Fall of a City*, although they differ on one key aspect of the previously discussed tropes: divine presence (fig. 7). The series starts with the judgement of Paris. Aphrodite bribes him in the same fashion as has been recorded within the *Iliad*, but fails to specify who is considered to be the most beautiful woman in the world, stating only that he will notice her when the time is right. After Paris meets Helen, there is some sexual tension between the two, but Paris is reluctant. Paris attempts to leave Sparta due to his conflicting feelings towards Helen, but Zeus summons storms to keep him stranded on the Spartan grounds. Helen locks herself due to her conflicting feelings. After finally giving in to their lust and passion, Paris offers to take her with him. Helen considers all arguments, abandoning her daughter Hermione, possible political repercussions and divine retributions if she does not accompany Paris. Ultimately, believing that her loveless marriage with Menelaus is nothing compared to the passionate love affair she has with the Trojan Prince, she leaves for Troy. In Troy, she immediately claims asylum and demands equal treatment regardless of her gender, which she receives. After the tenth year, she realizes that the war is lost and strikes a deal with Menelaus: in exchange for her return, the Greeks would leave Troy. Helen aids with the famous Trojan Horse only for Menelaus to rescind on the offer

and to sack the city. Vindictively, Helen swears to leave her heart in Troy and that Menelaus will only have an empty shell of a woman in his marriage bed. The claim to equal rights in the beginning of the series signals to the audience that this version of Helen makes her own decisions and will perform as much agency as her male counterparts.

These two film adaptations, originating in the 21st century have placed great value on the Trojan war, but eliminated misogynistic sentiments by placing the women within a context that takes into account their agency. David Farr's interpretation seemingly plays with the idea of Helen as an opportunistic lady who sees that her best interests are not with Paris anymore and turns it into wanting to protect Paris and the rest of Troy. This seemingly fits well with the goal to have Helen as a protagonist to root against the invading Greeks, so the viewers are constantly reminded how pure and erotic her love for Paris is and therefore the entity that should be protected at all costs.

Fig 6.6 Diane Kruger as Helen of Troy, *Troy*, 2004, Wolfgang Petersen. © Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

Fig 6.7 Bella Dayne as Helen of Troy, *Troy. Fall of a City,* 2018, David Farr. © Netflix

Conclusion

These tropes of Helen of Troy in art have shown us how agency can be interpreted and influenced by changing societal values. From deeply misogynistic Middle Ages to empowering 21st century adaptations, the Trojan cycle has been embedded within the societal narrative of art and promotion of ideals; Helen has transformed from a female enigma to a feminist icon who considers herself equal to her male counterparts. This exhibition has also shown that while there are distinct tropes in the portrayal of Helen's agency within the Trojan cycle, these tropes do not necessarily exclude one another. While there are no Gods in Petersons 2004 adaption of the *Iliad*, the implication is made that Helen is sexually abused by Menelaus and thus decides to become her own agent and leave with Paris. The same case can be made for neoclassicistic paintings in which Helen is forced to come with Paris by male gods, but is protected by male mortal counterparts who rape her in art that has been produced within the Renaissance and in Baroque. In conclusion, there is no definitive way to portray Helen and her agency, as this exhibition has shown that her enigmatic nature surrounding her role within the Trojan cycle cannot be distinguished by several tropes within storytelling, but even those tropes tend to overlap in some cases.

Endnotes

[1] Gottschall (2008), 57-80.

[2] Spicer (2019), 37.

[3] Loughery (2002) ,293-295.

[4] Gottschall (2008), 57-80.

[5] The original uses the Roman name, Venus as name for Aphrodite, but since this exhibition takes into account the Greek perspective, this article uses Aphrodite.

[6] Irwin (2023).

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Ode to Troy. The Musical Themes of a Doomed City in Film.

Toon Meijerink

A female voice echoes over the sunlit beaches. Menacing drums swell. A dramatic Bulgarian choir takes over from the soprano. An Oriental feeling creeps in with the Eastern sounds accompanying the Trojan defenders. The brass sounds sharp as the attacking ships come in sight. Four simple, repetitive notes announce the great hero: the Greek Achilles arrives. What follows is an epic battle in the dunes of Troy accompanied by the entire orchestra. However, this episode resembles the battle of Gallipoli or the first part of *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) more than any text from the Troy portrayed in Homer's *Iliad*. Clearly, the musical scene from *Troy* (2004) is not true to the Bronze Age city fending off Mycenaean Greeks. There were no Bulgarian choirs in ancient Troy, no violas in the *Iliad* and no grotesque trombones in the music of antiquity. So why does composer James Horner choose these atonal themes here? What does the music from such films say about the makers' perception of Troy? From the old Hollywood blockbuster *Helen of Troy* to the Italian Cinecittà spectacle *L'Ira di Achille*, each film composer has his own musical interpretation of the Trojan cycle. Thus, it is not in the tonal progressions but in the musical feeling that we find the recurring idea about a Babylonian Troy: the almost Biblical theme of a city that was too greedy for its own good. This article therefore shows how invariably a fatalistic sound hangs over beautiful Troy in film music.

Helen of Troy (1955)

Shot entirely in the film studios of Rome, Robert Wise's *Helen of Troy* depicts a grand retelling of the *Iliad*. This film came out of the top hat of Hollywood's Golden Age, in which romantic stories (man and woman fall in love and defy the perils of their time) reigned supreme.[1] Semi-historical films such as *Spartacus* (1960), *Cleopatra* (1963) and *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (1963) all first gave way to a romantic plot, not infrequently the driving force of the protagonist; a storyline we hardly find in writings by Herodotus, Livy or other ancient historians.[2] In *Helen of Troy*, Paris' love story must thus be recounted warring the epic fate of a true Hollywood hero. On his peace march to Sparta, which is apparently already being fought against, the Trojan is stranded and found by the beautiful Helen. Not surprisingly, the two fall in love and the suspicious Menelaus, Helena's husband, treacherously attempts to kill Paris. The two lovebirds

flee to Paris' Troy where the Greeks, with the excuse of Helena’s abduction, but really to steal Troy's treasure , start the Trojan War. Paris is eventually stabbed in the back by Menelaus during the fall of the city, but will be reunited with the hopeful Helena in Elysium, because "What is lived and shared is never lost."

Max Steiner's composition stays close to the film's extremely romantic approach. The swelling violin music of the main theme is reminiscent of his most famous soundtrack of *Gone with the Wind* (1939). Also a film revolving around a region determined to decline (the American South), in which lovers try to hold out, although Scarlett O'Hara turns out to be a lot more complicated than Helen of Sparta. The subtle, yet loving harp, a lyre-like instrument that existed in other form in ancient Greece, in the *Love Theme* is the only element that betrays a classical Greek story in the score. But the film also has a more cynical undertone despite its romantic slant: the Greek kings, from Odysseus to Agamemnon, pursue their selfish, wealth-seeking goals, peace is impossible and the terrible battle (the horror emphasised by Greek and Trojan) takes up the bulk of the running time. Thereby, and most prominently in the duel between Hector and Achilles, the painful *Jaw*s-like twang describing the horror of war is heard during the battle. With those romantic, sometimes Greek, sounds interspersed with painful twangs, the music's message ties in with the cinematic theme of two lovers having to survive the horrific, Greek world.

Yet at the end of the film comes a sudden turn away from the portrayal of Troy. Throughout the film, it is the greedy, warlike (as here Achilles is) Greeks who aggressively try to destroy the mostly peace-loving Trojans. Yet the Trojans likewise fall before what the film seems to criticise: greed. The infamous horse not featured in the *Iliad* is brought in as "price" despite warnings from the morally perfect hero Paris. A lavish bacchanal takes place under the walls of Troy, accompanied by an equally lavish theme. A cacophony of sharp violins, chaotic cymbals and harsh trumpets tells us Troy's sudden greed. As the scene progresses, it becomes clear to us that this greedy excess is the downfall of Troy: the cymbals now beat rhythmically, painfully like the twang of battle, as do the fatalistic chords of the violins, towards the doom of the city. The chaos of the violins is repeated when the Greeks finally bring that doom, now combined with the previously heard painful rhythm of battle. The musical bacchanal had thus warned the Trojans of their greed.

L'Ira di Achille (1962)

Helen of Troy was only the beginning of the films about the Trojan War shot at Cinecittà. After *La Guerra di Troia* (1961), *La Legende di Enea* (1962), *L'Ira di Achille* was the latest in a series of large-scale Italian productions about the *Iliad*. The film mainly covers the feud between Achilles and Agamemnon and between Achilles and Hector. The latter vendetta results in an all-consuming rage coming over the demigod Achilles, who destroys everything, including Hector, that crosses his path. The film is the culmination of the so-called "Sword-and-sandal"-films, mainly focused on battle and 'historical' Roman costumes. Starring Gordon Mitchell, an American bodybuilder, as the hero Achilles, the film has few pretensions of being a complex drama about Homeric myths.

The musical themes of *L'ira di Achille* are as complex as the film itself: not really. Simple chords accompany simple emotions. When we see battle we hear rowdy violins, when we see the Greeks we listen to recorders and again the harp, when we see romance the theme is an easier version of Steiner's *Helen of Troy*. But the film also shows Orientalism at maybe unexcepted places. After an over-emotional scene in which Achilles declares his love in harmonious straight-forward Western tones to Briseis, Agamemnon tries to seduce the same Briseis viciously in his tent. The almost ritualistic scene with mirrors, towels and candles, is accompanied by the well-known "Snake charmer's theme".[3] A striking theme, rather associated with the ancient Middle East, giving a certain Oriental feel. The modest bacchanal, in Agamemnon's tent, is thus placed as an event that viewers in the 1960s would associate with the distant, Eastern land where Troy lay. When Achilles furiously leaves the treacherous Agamemnon, we even briefly hear the typical Chinese chord progression, pointing out him leaving behind the treacherous Orient. If, however, Achilles is the American hero, brave, dutiful and invincible, Western harmonies resound. Thus, musically, the hero thereby becomes antithetical to the Oriental bad qualities of the Greeks: lustful seduction, corruption of the soul and treacherous greed

But the film is also critical of the eastern Troy. After all, in *L'Ira di Achille*, Hector is not the peace-loving, dutiful prince. Hector chooses aggression over 'restraint' and, with his greedy belligerence, the blood lust to destroy the Greeks completely, chases Patroclus, friend of Achilles, to death. Yet with that greed to drive all the Greeks to their deaths in a day, Patroclus' resulting death also sounds the screeching, atonal violins, reminiscent of the menacing, romantic music of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Patroclus' last words, damning the violent Hector, are accompanied by blaring trumpets announcing the death of both combatants.

The same trumpets sound when Achilles' revenge has become the death of the greedy Hector. Thus, once again the greed of both the Greeks and the Trojans takes centre stage, even in yet another Italian Sword-and-sandal interpretation. So in it, the threat in Hector's theme is once again an announcement of the fatal consequences of such greed.

Trojan Women (1971)

Unlike the films of the 1950s and 1960s, *Trojan Women*, from 1971, was not a romance loosely based on the *Iliad*. The film later adheres to Edith Hamilton's translation, though without gods, of Euripides' play of the same name, written down about two hundred years after Homer's *Iliad*. The tragedy, and the film, cover post-war events. The insertion of women playing the leading role combined with the critical attitude towards wars is illustrative of the often progressive, socio-cultural and political message in the films of the 1970s, and cannot be separated from the terrible war in Vietnam. Indeed, after the Trojan War, it is women who have to deal with grief, mourning and the destructive power of war. In this destruction, Hecuba, mother of Hector, and Andromache, Hector's widow, watch the Trojan land disconsolately. A messenger tells them that Menelaus and Agamemnon have decided that Astyanax, son of Andromache and Hector, must die. The mad Cassandra, the fortune-telling daughter of Hecuba, foresees their tragic fate; herself as Agamemnon's concubine, Helen of Sparta, carried away by her husband Menelaus.

Being a play originally, the film revolves mainly around the text: music plays a secondary role. Yet the much-used drums are essential to the tension of the scenes. Every threat announced by accelerating rhythms, every fate emphasised by short, loud drum rolls. The simple, rhythmic sound adds to the authentic atmosphere of the Trojan land, the mood of the text and the sense of impending doom. An elongated guitar sound accompanies a lament of the women once, catching their dramatic feelings about the ten-year war. Greek-sounding choruses, like the *koroi* sang in plays, occasionally accompany the once again tragic feeling of the women being taken one by one by the Greeks. There is no romance theme here, no pugnacious drumbeat; the rhythmic, dark, drawn-out themes from *Trojan Women* emulate the sadness of war.

So the fatalistic theme, as heard in previous films, is heard here after the fatal consequence. The greed, the aimless militancy, here especially evidenced by the greedy Greek men, is echoed in the mournful drums of *Trojan Women*. The menace evident in other Trojan themes is in the chant at the beginning of the film, when Troy is being sacked, both a threatening prayer and a lament. The voiceover then tells us that Troy's gold fell into the greedy hands of

the Greeks. Yet again doom threatens, this time not the Trojans, but the Greeks. The fatal theme, sung for the Trojans, disappears and gives way to a threatening theme for their enemies. Not long was it before the deaths of Agamemnon and Menelaus, of Ajax (son of Oileus) and Neoptolemus (son of Achilles). Greed came after the fall, greed came before the fall. The fatal Trojan belligerence ends with tragic guitars, drums and lamentation; the fatal Greek greed is announced by another rhythmic threat.

Troy (2004)

Antiquity seemed to lose interest in the 1980s and 1990s, the era fitting poorly into ideas about film-making and, more broadly, about the democratising world. Until, in 2000, Ridley Scott managed to implement a Western vision of democracy in the world of autocratic Roman emperors with *Gladiator*. This was shortly followed by a miniseries called *Troy* (2003), a film about *Alexander* (2004) and the blockbuster *Troy* (2004). The latter still shapes many viewers' perceptions of the *Iliad*. A pompous Brad Pitt plays the self-destructive yet non-warlike Achilles. Agamemnon and Menelaus are the clear antagonists of the story, laying gruesome siege to the very eastern depicted Troy for several weeks, rather than years. The film is clearly anti-war; the invented violent Greek arrival on the beach mirrors the infamous D-Day scenes from *Saving Private Ryan* (1998). Hector, the hero who mourns young Patroclus and hates killing, finds his gruesome death as "leader ... of the East" at the hand of the imperialist Greeks; the film ends with the beautiful Troy in painful ruins. Within all this, Troy's Babylonian walls, the decked-out attire of its inhabitants, the flowery patios and Mesopotamian statues of gods make it seem Middle Eastern. Could this film be a critique of the recent violent Western invasions of the Middle East, Afghanistan 2001 and Iraq 2003?

The music does not suggest otherwise. Hans Zimmer's *Gladiator* soundtrack seems an obvious inspiration for James Horner's themes in this regard. The voice of Macedonian singer Tanja Tzarovska in *Troy* has the same feel as Lisa Gerrard's Breton vocals in *Gladiator*, such a soprano in another language now apparently the essence for antique music. The elongated near eastern woodwind instruments of Zimmer's track *To Zuccabar*, combined with simple drums, seemingly provide the backdrop for Horner's main theme *3200 Years Ago*, often indicating the city of Troy. Thereby Horner uses the 'eastern' sounds now associated with oriental parts of the antique world to create his own image of an oriental Troy. The anti-war aspect of the music is even so evident in Horner's adoption of themes from the Stalingrad anti-war scenes of *Enemy at the Gates* (2001) and Shostakovich's hopeless Fifth Symphony.[4] Unlike the early Troy films,

however, the music is simple in its instrumentation: as in *Trojan Women*, drums form the basis, now supplemented by a sporadic choir, often a soprano, some violins and the occasional flute. The simplicity of the score seems to want to create another antique feel: even the love scenes between Paris and Helena, Achilles and Briseis are accompanied only by a flute, or even silence. Only the war scenes are accompanied by screeching violins and crackling brass. As such, this is not a romantic film. This movie is part of a new-wave of antiquity anti-war films, reflecting the consequences of the invasion of the West by the East: the commander-in-chief Agamemnon dies in this story while destroying Troy.

That destruction is never far away. It is already palpable in the grandiose, beneficent entry of Hector, Paris and his Helen on their return to Troy. For composer James Horner, in consultation with director Wolfgang Petersen, the chaotic yet triumphant rising and falling theme of the horns, Troy's theme, symbolises Troy's greedy arrogance. The motif announces not only Helena, but with Helena, doom. At the moment of triumph, Priamus does not yet see why Helena's arrival brings dark news, but with Hector bringing that news, the ironically triumphant theme turns to soft, low string sounds: the mournful destruction of Troy has been brought in by Paris. When the horse is brought in far afterwards, a triumphant theme has long since ceased to sound: a dark organ sounds both epic and ominous. The epic greed with which the Trojans in their arrogance bring in the horse is once again their downfall.

Conclusion

An arrow pierces Achilles' heel, the cowardly Paris shot from the back. Briseis holds her Greek once more as a romantic Hollywood theme blares. Together with Paris, she flees leaving the burning Troy behind. In the ashes of the blackened city, the Oriental soprano now sounds for the last time. Greed and rage lead to Achilles' burial in a Troy in ruins. Odysseus tells us that Hector, who had to fight, and Achilles, who never actually wanted to fight, died there. In doing so, *Troy* (2004) tells its story in again a different way than other films about Troy. *Troy* (2004) in its turn criticises war and Western aggression, evidenced by its Oriental themes and painful battle sounds. Those painful battle sounds are also found in the first major sound film about Troy *Helen of Troy* (1955), where, by contrast, a Hollywood romance is central to the romantic music. Instead, in the Sword-and-sandal film *L'Ira di Achille* (1962), battle is at the centre, and we mostly find a critical attitude in the stereotypical Oriental bad traits heralded by typical musical motifs: seduction, lust and greed. Yet, the Euripides-based *Trojan Women* (1971) is

negative about the Greeks' belligerence in its rhythmic, menacing tones of the ensuing downfall or hopeless lamentations about Troy's previous arrogant downfall.

That greedy downfall of Troy recurs again and again in the film score. In *Helen of Troy*, one hears a cacophonous exorbitant bacchanal before the fall of the city, in *L'Ira di Achille* the Hector's blood-soaked yellowing screeching violins prophesize the downfall of the Trojan prince, in *Trojan Women* sounds a lament for the arrogant Trojans and a threatening drumbeat for the greedy Greeks who will find their doom, and even years later in *Troy,* the composer still works a chaotic, fatalistic chord in the Trojans' triumphant behaviour. The (musical) main themes of the films differ, but a Trojan doom in each soundtrack is as inevitable as the doom of Troy itself. The *hubris* of the Trojans visible in every film, audible in every film score. And again and again, the city is reinterpreted in sounds, notes, tones in that way, as if the lyre of their patron god Apollo never played out, even after the musical doom. Troy’s fate was written, the city destroyed, the Trojans buried, but their music echoes in eternity over the sunlit beaches.

Endnotes

[1] Winkler (2015).

[2] Paul (2013).

[3] ‘Cultural Representation in Western Film Music’, https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/honors-research-and-exhibition/2021fall/section-03/13/ (accessed 28.05.23).

[4] ‘The Words of James Horner #2’, http://jameshorner-filmmusic.com/interview-james-horner-troy/ (accessed 28.05.23.).

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