

notes on the text, and also at a fairly inexpensive price, remains a truly wonderful introduction to Golding's Ovid.

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Alan Shepard and Stephen D. Powell (editors), *Fantasies of Troy: Classical Tales and the Social Imaginary in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. (Essays and Studies, 5). Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2004. 306pp. US \$37.00. ISBN 0-7727-2025-8.

If asked to pick the most excellent of all men, Montaigne's first choice would be Homer. How can this be so when he does not read Greek and finds it difficult to imagine a greater poet than Virgil? Because for a humanistically educated gentleman of the late sixteenth century, Homer is the author of the Troy legend, of the secular scriptures of early modern Europe. In Montaigne's eyes, Homer – by his own authority – created many gods and made them honoured in the world. The testimonies to the ancient Greek's authority are legion. When Alexander the Great found a costly jewel-box amongst the goods pillaged from Darius he could only imagine one use for it: to house his best and most faithful counsellor on the subject of armies, his copy of Homer. Besides,

what renown can be compared with his [Homer's]? Nothing lives like his fame and his works on the lips of men: nothing is so known or accepted as Troy, Helen and Homer's wars – though they may never have existed. Our children are still given names which he invented over three thousand years ago. Who has not heard of Hector and Achilles? Not only individual families but most of the nations seek their origins in what Homer created. When Mahomet II, the Turkish Emperor, wrote to our Pope Pius II, he said, 'I am amazed that the Italians should band against me, since we both have a common origin in the Trojans and, like the Italians, I have an interest in avenging the blood of Hector on the Greeks whom they are supporting against me.' Homer provides a noble farce in which over the centuries Kings, Republics and Emperors all play their parts and for which this great universe serves as the theatre.¹

To put this less wittily, Troy, more than any other set of non-biblical stories, shaped the 'social imaginary' of medieval and early modern Europe. It played as farce and epic, comedy and tragedy. It appeared on household tapestries and on public stages. It sounded in everyday conversation and diplomatic correspondence, a shared repertoire of emotive commonplaces, stirring events, and exemplary characters. The legend of Troy was on the one hand a source of dynastic authority recognizable equally to the Pope and the Ottoman emperor; on the other hand an example of empty fame, a story with characters who may never have existed. Montaigne knew all this by

¹ Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*, tr. M. A. Screech (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), II 36 'On the most excellent of men', 852–3.

looking and listening around him. Modern scholars of medieval and early modern Europe know it after a short time on the job, both as researchers and teachers. My own department of English has in recent times offered at least two courses devoted largely to the literary history of Troy.

Strange, then, that there is no outstanding general study of the cultural currency of Troy in the Eurasian tradition. (I follow recent trends in saying 'Eurasian' rather than 'western'; the 'Troia' of Renaissance maps was located at the centre of the Eurasian geo-cultural space occupied by Popes and Ottoman emperors alike.) As far as I can tell there is no attempt at a truly general study in Anglophone literature until Diane P. Thompson's *The Trojan War* of 2004, a reference work intended for general readers. In more strictly academic literature, there is Thomas Greene's comparative literary study of *The Light in Troy* (1982), and the recent stimulating exercise in deconstruction by Matthew Gumpert (*Grafting Helen: the abduction of the classical past*, 2001). There are various studies and exhibition catalogues relating to Troy in the visual arts. Closest in spirit to the volume under review is Sylvia Federic's book on *New Troy: fantasies of empire in the late Middle Ages* (2003). But the impression remains that we do not have a working general map of the field, if it is a field.

This is what the publicity, the cover and the introduction to this volume all appear to promise. The volume's provenance at the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies at the University of Toronto – a globally renowned and internationally minded centre for early modern studies – augurs well. Based, though not exclusively, on a 2002 conference ('Troy in the Renaissance'), *Fantasies of Troy* is described in Alan Shepard and Stephen D. Powell's opening piece as showing not only how the stories were transmitted by writers but how they 'were lived out in the ways people embraced the normative presumptions about love . . . or war' (3). This is precisely what was needed; a coherently conceived, collaborative venture situated between literature and social and cultural history.

Slightly vexing to report, then, that what we get is a series of discrete studies that do not come together as a groundbreaking analysis of the transmission and use of the Troy legend in Europe. The appearance of a stunning piece of Renaissance maiolica from Urbino on the cover fails to reflect the contents, which foreground neither visual culture nor Italy. In fact *Fantasies of Troy* is like a nine-article issue of the journal *English Literary Renaissance* (comprising Chapters 2–3 and 10–16) into which has been grafted a vigorous scion of European intellectual and cultural history (Chapters 4–9 – including a piece on a middle English romance). The result, though diverse and interesting, is an odd hybrid. The editors put on the best show they can by dividing the chapters into sections on 'Affiliation and Appropriation', 'Rhetoric, Translatio Imperii, and Trojan Legacy', and 'Exemplarity in Troynovant'. But once you start reading the individual essays there is little sign that contributors have even been asked to engage with shared themes, or with each others' chapters. It was clearly thought that common reference to 'Troy' would be enough. There is not even a general bibliography at the back. Ironically for a volume about the most shared narrative of them all, there is no shared narrative. When James Carscallen points to 'this paper's own story' (22) he points to a general truth: each chapter, including the introduction, tells its own story in isolation (with two exceptions I shall come to). As I have already indicated, the stories fall into two broad categories: exercises in literary

hermeneutics and narratives in intellectual and cultural history. The former mostly concern the English Renaissance and are more uneven in quality.

Carscallen's first chapter shows wide learning and does attempt a comparative overview of the history of the Troy legend. But it is a very idiosyncratic one that takes in, for example, a digression on the way the Middle Ages tries to turn the world into a kind of gentleman's club (25), and is ultimately geared to a rather abstract literary-critical reading of Spenser. Michael Keefer's almost wantonly extravagant piece finds a 'hermeneutical thematic' common to Goethe's and Marlowe's engagements with Helen. To emerge from these two openers into Paul Cohen's elegant and lucid essay on the historiographical strategies used by commentators to elevate the French vernacular is to come back down to earth, to intellectual history. Brent Miles's extremely well conceived, documented and written piece on late medieval Irish engagement with the tale of Troy carefully pushes against the identification of Irish literature with 'nativeness' by paying attention to manuscript culture. Sheila Das sets out to account for the anomalous case of Venice, which made a particular use of its Trojan foundation myth, then abandoned it earlier than other European powers; her subtle hypothesis has to do with the distinctive nature of Venetian political and commercial goals as expressed in international contexts – more protectionist than expansionist and universalist. Pamela Luff Troyer performs a scholarly service by showing us that it was possible to burlesque Troy long before Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. The fourteenth-century *Seege or Batalye of Troye*, which survives in four manuscripts, can be read 'as a facetiously unorthodox version of a history venerated by high culture that features a family of incompetent leaders who disregard one another's advice, make ignoble choices, and ultimately destroy their own world' (130).

The next two contributions are amongst those which most squarely address the theme announced in the 'Introduction'. In the first, Lorna Jane Abrey, Chair of History at the University of Toronto, analyses how Christine de Pizan used the figure of Hector – in the context of the social imaginary of her time – to strike at the ill-mastered chivalry she saw in her male contemporaries. This, along with the concluding pieces by Scott Schofield and Michael Ulliyot (both Graduate Fellows at the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies) is Toronto historiography at its best. The second is the only chapter not in English. Stéphanie Bélanger writes in French on Garnier's *Troade* (1579), a play in which the dramatist draws on the legend to stage and moralize the religious wars and massacres of contemporary France.

We then return to the English literary Renaissance and to hermeneutics. Andrew Hiscock's chapter is very good on the interface between rhetorical translation and performative action in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and contains one of the richest readings of the Players' scenes I have encountered. Stephen Guy-Bray's suggestive re-evaluation of the relative progressiveness of Douglas and Surrey in translating the *Aeneid* unfortunately neglects the rhetorical and pedagogical contexts of Renaissance translation when it assumes that Surrey chose Books 2 and 4 of the *Aeneid* for reasons connected with his own poetics (they were, with Book 6, the books most often read in schools, and most often translated throughout Europe). If you think we need another reading of an English Renaissance text that turns out to be a self-conscious interrogation of the nature and possibility of representation, then Christopher Johnson's piece on ekphrasis in *The Rape of Lucrece* may satisfy you. Elizabeth Jane Bellamy's

chapter – the best in the volume on Spenser – did satisfy me, even though it presents Paridell as an ‘embodiment of the possibility that no history or genealogy of Troy can be separated from the errances of its complex literary history’ (220), as, that is, yet another prophet of North American new historicism. Bellamy’s detailed reading of *Faerie Queene* III.ix takes the form of a persuasive argument rather than a theoretical mantra, and suggests how exhausted the legend of Troy might have been by the end of the sixteenth century. Rebeca Helfer’s argument that Mutability’s case stands for *The Faerie Queene*’s larger trial of English empire has a similar shape but joins the debate about the two Spensers (imperialist, humanist) in a more conventional fashion.

To be honest, it is a relief to emerge from these disparate hermeneutical worlds to finish with the only two pieces in the volume that are obviously in dialogue with one another, and that engage with specific occasions in history. Scott Schofield sets out to explain exactly why the Lord Mayor’s Show for 1605 focusses quite so heavily on the figure of Brute, thereby blurring the lines between civic and royal celebration. He carefully reveals what it meant to choose Brute in 1605 – a time when historical scholarship was increasingly sceptical about Trojan Britain – and answers that Munday and his collaborators were attempting to solicit James to become an honorary member of the Merchant Taylors. Michael Ulliyot concludes with a terrific piece on the ways in which the unexpected death of Prince Henry on 6 November 1612 instantaneously changed the meaning and use of the Troy legend in contemporary literary discourse, and caused what he calls a crisis in exemplarity. Only a week before his death, on the 29 October 1612, Prince Henry had been present in London in two bodies. One, an actor representing his person in the Lord Mayor’s show (*Troia-Noua Triumphans*), sat in a ‘peticular roome’ that had been reserved for England’s great hope in the House of Fame (274). The other was a profoundly vulnerable wretch, a pale and convulsing figure lying on his deathbed in St. James’ Palace at what should have been the moment of his greatest triumph. Both were figures of Hector.

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Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. xiii + 363. £48.00 (\$80.00). ISBN 0-521-81607-6.

Andrew Hadfield’s *Shakespeare and Republicanism* is a book with a formidable, and formidably thorough, body of documentation – almost a hundred pages of detailed notes. This is measure of the book’s fine qualities: it is with considerable efficiency and erudition that Hadfield has gathered together and incorporated the immense body of historical and critical material on this subject, increasingly important as it is to Shakespeare and Renaissance studies. This will make his book a very important work for both students and researchers, and it finds a place alongside the recent collection, *Shakespeare and Politics*, edited by Catherine Alexander, and Hadfield’s own *Shakespeare and Renaissance Politics*, as well as the many critical works on Shakespearean Rome). Hadfield’s interest in *Shakespeare and Republicanism* is in the republican culture of the last twenty or so years of Elizabeth I’s reign, and the many factors that contributed to that historical moment: the Elizabethan ‘monarchical republic’ (as it