

REVIEWS

D. Hertel, *Die Mauern von Troia. Mythos und Geschichte im antiken Ilion*, Beck München, 2003, 360 pp. + 42 tables. ISBN 3 406 50444 2, € 98,-.

In April 1993 Hertel (hence H) published his 'Habilitationsschrift', *Eine Stadt als Zeugnis ihrer Geschichte. Troia/Ilion in griechischer und in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit*. Its subject was the meaning of the physical remains, in their widest sense, in and around Troy. These remains were regarded as both the evidence and theatre of the historical past, especially the Trojan War, in antiquity. H investigates thus the Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman Ilion, including the Troad, from the question to what extent monuments and myth affected each other. The present book is a reworked copy of H's 'Habilitationsschrift', largely based upon fieldwork in the area (including participation in the excavations led by M. Korfmann from 1989 to 1991) until 2000 and the equally important historiographical research, including literature up to 2002. In the process it unites archaeological, epigraphic, and historical material from the period of the eleventh century BC until the fourth century AD with the reception of the 'legendary past' by later generations.

H has divided the book in two parts, part A and part B. Part A (pp. 23-184) is called "Die einzelnen Bauwerke und Denkmäler nach den archäologischen Befunden und den schriftlichen Quellen". In its introduction H remarks that not only the constructional remains and objects, *i.e.* the monuments, which are regarded as old, but also the other architectural complexes will be "katalogartig nach den archäologischen Befunden und den einschlägigen literarischen Quellen aufgearbeit" (p. 23): the more recent ones are some way or another connected with the older ones and in the Hellenistic period even physically integrated in the older ones. H more or less invites readers without real archaeological interest to skip this part of the book (p. 5): to do so would, however, be, in my opinion, a major mistake. Using, *a.o.*, both Dörpfeld's and Blegen's excavation notebooks and the extensive photo archive of Dörpfeld, H paints a vivid picture of the practice of archaeology. Moreover, this piece of archaeography is, more often than not, vital to understand at least part of the background in the current debate between the professors Korfmann and Kolb and their respective followers. Laymen and archaeologists alike may find much attractive and illuminating reading in this part of H's book, *e.g.* on

the sanctuary of Athena Ilias, the system of wells, and the, supposed, tombs of heroes of the Trojan War.

The true heart of the book, or rather the part the title refers to, is constituted by part B (pp. 185-309), “Das griechische, hellenistische und kaiserzeitliche Ilion als Erinnerungsort an die mythische Zeit”. In this part H describes “unter Heranziehung der schriftlichen Überlieferung die epochenspezifische Interpretation, d.h. die historische Synthese” in four sections: I.1. the pre-Homeric and Homeric ages, I.2. the archaic and classical ages, II.1. the Hellenistic period, II.2. the imperial period until AD 391/2. Some focus in the description is directed at both the impressive citadel’s wall and its majestic NE bastion and the tombs of the heroes.

‘Modern Troy’, Troy VIII (and Troy IX), starts in H’s perception at the end of the 11th century BC, at the start of the Aeolic settlements in the Troad and roughly contemporary with the destruction of VIIb2/3. The monumental remains and the tombs were still clearly visible for the poets and may have inspired them, as the very landscape itself may have done. By incorporating these remains in the songs of the past, Homer, whether to be considered as a singular or plural form, created a new reality: the heroic city and the heroic landscape had emerged.

The importance and far-reaching impact of the picture thus evoked became apparent during Xerxes’ visit to Troy, en route to Greece in 480. By then Troy had already seen several foreign overlords, like the Lycians (from c. 660 BC), the Mytilenians, the Lydians (c. 560 BC), and the Persians (c. 545 BC). Though the plain of Troy was not new in misinformation plays (the people of Mytilene had some dispute with Athens over Sigeum, during which some arguments of this kind were exchanged), Xerxes’ sacrifice to Athena Ilias was an ideological and propagandist masterpiece. It directly linked the heroic past of the Greeks with his own expedition, symbolically showing that he, at last, was able to retaliate the wrongs Asia had suffered by the hands of the Greeks. After the Persian War Ilion, belonging to Mytilene, fell within the area of jurisdiction of the Delian League: some rapid changes of overlordship followed until c. 400 BC, when Ilion emerged as a quite important walled city with an occupation of Greek mercenaries. Though the city’s official allegiance varied from that moment during the following decades until the arrival of Alexander the Great, it was most of the time under, more or less firm, Persian rule. It should, however, be noted that in spite of Ilion’s ideological importance in the mounting controversy between ‘Europe’ and ‘Asia’, this importance is not reflected in its stature, size, or buildings.

All that changed after 334 BC, when Ilion became the centre of a ‘koinon’, the Ilian League, and expanded into a relatively important city, both from the perspective of political meaning and architectural point of view (*e.g.* the magnificent temple of Athena Ilias, built under Lysimachus and the Seleucids), a regional goal of travel where the ancient monuments gained a renewed interest. For H these events constitute the basis for a change in denomination: Troy

VIII becomes Troy IX. Ilion was Alexander's front for his Persian campaign, a new, panhellenic enterprise against 'Asia'. Gradually, however, its importance decreased again. According to Strabo, Demetrius of Scepsis called Ilion c. 200 BC a "kômopolis", a village-city, fittingly describing its putrefied status. About the same time Ilion was entered into the Roman sphere of influence.

This occasion gave way to a new phenomenon in the ideological record, the Aeneas-saga, and a renewed interest of Ilion. This, however, did not prevent C. Flavius Fimbria during the 1st Mithradatic War (88-85 BC: Ilion was part of Mithradates' territory and supported Sulla) from destroying the city, including many of the remains of its glorious past (though not as totally as has been suggested). Soon the city was reconstituted and honoured with the reinstatement of most, if not all, of its previous privileges.

In 20 BC the Emperor Augustus visited Ilion. His visit marked the beginning of a period of vast constructional activities, instigated both by the emperor and the wealthy citizens of Ilion and the Troad. Augustus aimed at a fundamental modernization of the city, including the temple of Athena Ilias, both to constitute a *Romana Pergama*, a *Roman Troy* and to display the "maiestas imperii" through "publica magnificentia". Time and again the common ancestry of Romans and Ilians from the Trojans (in general and, of course, Aeneas in particular) was stressed: this idea legitimized Rome's position, both in Greece and, notably, in Asia (= the Greek East).

Also after Augustus' death Ilion kept a prominent place as several statues and inscriptions testify, though *e.g.* Smyrna successfully competed with Ilion for the privilege to construct the provincial temple for Tiberius, Livia, and the Senate. It showed the Ilians that in Roman everyday political life other arguments than the "gloria antiquitatis" mattered. It also makes believe that Augustus' successors did not pursue the building activities as actively as he had done, though the archaeological record appears to show that wealthy citizens did continue to provide Ilion with new constructions. Gradually however, certainly from the beginning of the 3rd century AD, Ilion's position began to weaken: nevertheless many of its monuments, expressly including pagan ones, were still in tact and functioning when Julian Apostata visited Ilion in AD 355 (and for whom the Ilians erected a statue c. AD 362). In spite of the fact that Ilion had been an episcopal see from the time of Constantine the Great it lost its reputation of "Holy city" (a label the settlement flashed around from the Hellenistic period onwards), and thereby much of its attractivity, after Theodosius the Great issued a law against the practice of pagan cults in AD 391/2. Also the surrounding countryside with its many tombs of and shrines for heroes was heavily afflicted by this imperial measure. It led, *a.o.*, to a significant decrease of visitors (throughout the ages, at least since Herodotus, a regular source of sustenance) to the sites – and to Ilion – with all economic consequences. People left, the city shrunk. What was left of the city was destroyed by an earthquake in the 6th century, a destruction completed by

looting, especially the robbery of stones. Nevertheless the site was not deserted.

According to H the ‘tourist Troy’, more than the ‘historical nucleus’ of the Bronze Age Trojan War, if it ever happened, shaped the picture, the reception, ‘the idea of Troy’ as the Greeks of the classical and hellenistic periods and the Romans after them experienced it (*cf.* p. 309) – and transmitted it to us. If only therefore, it deserves to be an object of study in its own right. H’s book is a useful and stimulating effort to show both the importance and the continued effect of the ‘Heroic past’, not only for the people of Ilion from the proto-geometric period to the imperial period including, but even to the present day. It is, therefore, an important book, not only for archaeologists and historians, but also for scholars in other social sciences, especially those who are, in some way or another, involved in any aspect of “Rezeptionsgeschichte”. The use of the book is further enhanced by an extensive and excellent bibliography (pp. 311-338), and three concise indexes (pp. 354-360). The often delightful set of photographs, finally, is the cherry on the pudding.

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