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Troy VI: Late Bronze Age

Troy, in legend, can be viewed as one of the ancient world's most intriguing metropolis of the Late Bronze Age, but based on factual evidence from today Troy is no more or less of mystery than what was explored in Homer's *Iliad*. The tale of Troy is filled with Greek gods, love stories, family relations, Greek politics, treasure, war, death, and destruction. Today, in historical context, we find Troy to be unknown and still the subject of controversy amongst scholars and professionals today. These professionals question Homer's poetics, delicately take apart the nine cities built upon a hill overlooking the sea, and critique the work being evaluated by scholars today.

Troy has always been a city of much debate and little is known about Troy VI during the Late Bronze Age. The city's model has been debate for scholars who struggle with literary, historical, and archeological evidence. In this paper I will outline why Troy flourished during the Late Bronze Age, discuss three key elements of the ancient city model derived from different scholars based on excavations and research obtained at the site, and compare Troy VI it to other cities within the ancient world. Troy VI main three elements consisted of the citadel and the lower city, the geography of Troy VI's location, while the city's Bronze Age trade contribution.

To understand the evolution of the Troy VI it is important to address the persons involved in its major discoveries and those who have answered obscure questions pertaining to the development of the city over a period of time. The first sets of discoveries were those of Heinrich

Schliemann from 1870 through 1890.[1] Schliemann, an amateur in search of Homeric Troy, had a bad habit of mixing fantasy with reality. The mindset of Schliemann's focus on the literary poems of Homer is also related to current scholars and archaeologist today and has become the subject of much debate.

Homer lived perhaps around 700 BC, about five hundred years after the Later Bronze Age Troy was abandoned. Homer in the historical sense has been the cause of the search for Troy and the Trojan War which caused its demise. Yet, in literary terms, he was a blind poet who told the story of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* based on generations of oral storytelling. Homer's *Iliad* is not entirely the Trojan War, but a condensed story of the ten-year war between the Trojans and the Greeks or Mycenaeans. The epic poem is a narrative created to entertain its readers much like a movie would today. Homer has played a large part in finding of the location of Troy, the discovery of trade, migration, dynastic lineage, and war. The *Iliad* can be conceived today as nothing more than a historical outline in which Homer filled in the gaps with an intriguing narrative.

Schliemann's discovery of Troy was due to the help of Frank Calvert, who studied the site, Hisarlik, from 1863 to 1865, but yielded no evidence because he had a struggle securing sponsorship for a large scale evacuation. Calvert is accredited with introducing Schliemann to Troy's location and working on part of the excavation. Schliemann's evacuations discovered three important aspects. One, there was a mound, Hisarlik, that consisted of seven cities stacked upon one another. Two, Troy existed and currently its ruins are on the edge of the northwest

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[1] Charles B. Rose, "Troy and the Historical Imagination." The Classical World, 91.5 (1998): 405-413. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Oct. 2012. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4352107 .> P. 405.

region of Turkey such as described in Homer's *Iliad*. Lastly, a treasure he called the "Treasure of Priam" which was recently dated to Troy II in the Early Bronze Age.

Following Calvert's separation with Schliemann, due to a disagreement with methods used and misconstrued interpretations being published, Schliemann convinced Wilhelm Dorpfeld to help him in 1893-94.[2] Dorpfeld is known for uncovering more of the nine cities that existed, which is two cities more than the seven previously discovered by Schliemann. Dropfeld identified the strata from which objects were taken and generally organizing the excavation.

After a long hiatus, from 1932 to 1938, the University of Cincinnati led a series of excavations by archeologist Carl Blegen.[3] These excavations were dedicated to uncovering and identifying Homeric Troy and when the Trojan War took place. Blegen's team had to find a way to separate the different layers and date them according to material located within those layers. According to Strauss, "the technical name for layers of history stacked up one above the other is called strata, and the careful study of them is called stratigraphy. *Stratigraphy* is one of the most important tools in archeologist kit for assigning dates" (p. xvii). Blegen's team was able to systematically divide the city into layers and dates.

After American scholars abandoned the site it took almost 50 years to be reexamined by Manfred Korfmann, a German archeologist, who used the book of the *Illiad* as a reference point. Korfman expanded his excavations of Troy from 1982 to 1987 into other areas of the Troad, hinterlands of Troy, and into the northern region where Besik Bay is located. The bay is supposed to the area where ships would have docked waiting for the winds of Dardanelles, a gateway to the Asian minor, to subside.

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[2] Charles B. Rose, "Troy and the Historical Imagination." The Classical World, 91.5 (1998): 405-413. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Oct. 2012. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4352107 .> P. 405.

[3] Ibid.

It was not until 1988 that the German University of Tubingen sponsored more excavations under Korfmann[4] which lasted until 2005 when Korfmann died. The excavation project used magnetometer survey to discover remains of an outer wall which turned out to be a ditch cut into the bedrock. Korfmann's team, which also consisted of scholars form the University of Cincinnati, made assertions that there was a large lower city that stretched out to this ditch and that there must have been a wall to protect the city's inhabitants. Korfmann and his team were criticized for their controversial model of the city based on their findings during the exhibition called "Troy: Dream and Reality," in Germany in 2001. The scholarly issue with the model was that Korfmann over-exaggerated the size and population of Troy during the Late Bronze Age.

The first city of Troy was founded around 3000 BC. Troy was located in the western providence of Anatolia, a Hittite region, and not located in Greece. It is important to note that Troy was not a Greek city before the end of the Late Bronze Age. The formation of the city was based on the agricultural hinterlands surrounding the area called the Troad. Troy was strategically located near the Aegean Sea with a passage called the Dardanelles, a gateway for sailors headed to Asia. Strauss describes Troy's location, implying that its location invited war, "Its location, where Europe and Asia meet, made it rich and visible. Although, the north wind often blocked ancient shipping there, Tory has a protected harbor, so it beckoned to merchants – and marauders" (p. 1).

Troy's evolution was not prosperous based solely on its seaside location but also due to the rich agricultural lands located around the area. Tomlison describes in greater detail the

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[4] Easton, D. F., J. D. Hawkins, A. G. Sherratt, and E. S. Sherratt. "Troy in Recent Perspective." *Anatolian Studies* 52 (2002): 75-109. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Oct. 2012. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3643078>. P. 76.

formation of a city based on agricultural purposes as "the basic form is the small agricultural community, self-contained and with sufficient land to produce the necessities of life. Its inhabitants work the fields that surround it, returning to houses grouped together to form the settlement which is the basis of their community life" (p. 2).

It had natural resources from surrounding areas in the Troad, which could feed a substantial amount of people, and it was also located by the sea with access to foreign supplies due to trade. There was an abundance of streams and rivers that supplied fresh water that also could have lead to the prevalence of the evolution of Troy over time.

Troy's location is one important element for the city's vast evolution and a gateway to better understanding the reason why Troy was built, destroyed, and rebuilt lives within the layers of each city's construction. According to the Troia Projekt and CERHAS, "Archaeologist call a site like Tory a 'tell.' A *tell* is a human settlement built up over many years. When one city collapses or burns down, a new city is built on top. Eventually we are left with a big mound, in layers. Troy has nine main layers, or levels."[5] Strauss discusses this transformation, "The city was destroyed from time to time by fire, earthquake, and war and then rebuilt" (p. xxi).

Troy's favorable location is what led to the community's consistency of rebuilding the city after having a number of earthquakes, fires, and war. The mound at Hisarlik is important because it is the main source of study for scholars today and it houses the remains of all Troy's citadels. It is the mound that has raised questions regarding Troy's evolution. Not much of the

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[5] "TROY HOMEPAGE." *TROY HOMEPAGE*. National Endowment for the Humanities, n.d. Web. 30 Oct. 2012.
      <http://www.cerhas.uc.edu/troy/>.

cities' citadel size change over its evolution but the contents changed to fit the needs of the community.

The debate about Troy's evolution is surrounded by the theories of scholars who disagree on the nature of the polis based on two things, its citadel and if there could have been lower wall that consisted of a large population. The two major scholars at the center of this debate are Dr. Korfmann, an archeologist and Dr. Kolbs, a historian of ancient times, both are professors at the University of Tubingen in Germany. Kolb was sparked by the controversy of Korfmans model of the Late Bronze Age Troy back in 2001.

Korfmann's model of the city displayed a dense citadel, a lower city wall, surround by a wall that housed a dense area with numerous houses. Kolb argues that the model depicted an outer wall that had not been proven through the excavation's evidence and it projected to its audience a metropolis that contains more than 10,000 citizens. Kofrmann evidence for an outer wall was based on a magnetometer survey that revealed a large ditch cut into bedrock. Kolb states, "Dr. Korfmann want to present a greater Troy at any cost and his interpretations distort the evidence."[6] Kolb takes a minimalist approach to Troy's size and based most of his evidence on what has been recovered from the site and therefore does not believe in a lower city wall. Therefore, Kolb's model primarily consists of the citadel and nothing extending outside the wall of that area.

The debate between Korfmann and Kolbs is important when discussing Late Bronze Age based on the city model because without knowing if Troy VI had an outer wall we cannot

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[6] John N. Wilford "Was Troy a Metropolis? Homer Isn't Talking." *Http://www.nytimes.com/*. NY Times, 23 Oct. 2002. Web. 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/featured_articles/20021023wednesday.html>.

understand the function of the polis or how it thrived. Therefore, it is important to include a wall

in the city model and discuss its importance to the nature of Troy VI and how it flourished.

Troy VI's citadel consist of four megarons; the main palace, temple, treasury, and

archive. The place meagron luckily survived and consisted of more than one story. Leaf stated,

"The sixth city, though in the Greek sense a polis, was never really, what we should call a 'city.'

It was a large fortress, a prince's castle but not a palace which could not have held a large

number of inhabitants" (p. 146). At most the citadel would have housed a few hundred. The

citadel also contained a granary, wealth, and housed elites. Important functions of the citadel

were administrative, political, religious, and economics. Trojans worshiped Athena just as the

Athenians did at their temple in Athens. Trojan government according to Kolbs was aristocratic

in structure.[7] The government consisted of a dual leadership, one of kingship and the privilege

class. Troy's government was very different compared to Athens's democracy and Sparta's

oligarchy. In Troy the common citizens, men, have little to do with the administrative and

politics and yet in Athens citizens were able to cast votes on political issues.

The walls of Troy VI are famous for their protection against siege. The walls of Troy had

a number of functions and were a unique display of architecture since Troy's citadel lacked the

beauty of Athens. The strength itself of the wall is composed of mud brick on the top and

limestone on the bottom. The walls are comparable in nature to the walls of Babylon and

Mycenae. The walls would have been, for citizens, a refuge from imposing forces. The walls

would have protected the wealth of the king and the elite class and this is evident based on

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[7] Hertel, Dieter, and Frank Kolb. "Troy in Clearer Perspective." *Anatolian Studies* 53 (2003): 71-88. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Oct. 2012.
   <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3643087>. P. 86.

Schliemann's finding of gold called "Treasure of Priam." The treasure was a display of wealth in which Troy would have wanted to protect.

The architecture of the fortified city was unique to Anatolian military architecture in the Bronze Age. The style used is called the "saw-tooth" and it is a technique that provided a staggered system of outer wall in the stone foundation.[8] When a wall need to change direction another wall was staggered outside of it and shifted to form a new segment of the wall. The staggered walls could built by mason could have been a way to ease the impact of earthquakes given that a staggered wall was only connected in sections and therefore only one section would fall and not the entire wall itself. The technique being unique to the Anatolian doe imply there was some form of cultural connection with Trojans and the Hittite empire. Strauss stated, "Late Bronze Age Troy controlled an important harbor nearby and protected itself with huge complex walls, ditches, and wooden palisades" (p. xxi). Yet, there are only sections of the wall and a few towers at the ruins today and there is no actually lower city wall to determine the full nature of the wall and how it protected the population.

Troy VI had an area of 62 acres and the city could have supported a large population.[9] No evidence has been produce to support the assumption of a large population. The lower city may have housed a population that consisted of 3,000-6,000 citizens. Troy VI would have been small in comparison to Athens whose population was well over one million. Little is known about the culture of Troy except it changed over time. According to interviews done with

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[8] T. Vincenzi, "Fortification Walls. Development and Conformation of Anatolian 'Saw Tooth Wall','Kastenmauer','Casematte'Defence Systems, and Their Building Techniques in The Bronze Age." *Proceedings of the 4th International Congress of the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*. Vol. 29. 2008.< http://books.google.com/books >. P. 309.

[9] "TROY HOMEPAGE." *TROY HOMEPAGE*. National Endowment for the Humanities, n.d. Web. 30 Oct. 2012. <http://www.cerhas.uc.edu/troy/>.

Korfmann and Kolb we note, "The site itself can be an excavator's nightmare. The mound at Hisarlik was successively occupied by different cultures from 3000 B.C. to A.D. 1200. Fires and earthquakes destroyed the place several times, and construction materials of one culture were often recycled by subsequent occupants."[10] This is important to understanding a major difference of Mycenae and Troy. Mycenae during the Late Bronze is known for its creation of Liner A and Liner B two forms of established writing and language. Yet, Troy appears to have no evidence of writing and this could be due the constant change in culture or destruction of materials. There has been a seal with symbols that suggest Trojans spoke Luwian which was derived from the Hittite empire.[11]

Inside the area where the lower city may have existed materials discovered have found workshops of different types. The population consisted of masons, artisans, framers, craftsmen and families. They lived in mud brick houses with flat rooms and some had grass areas. In these workshops people produced call times of items. Smiths worked in metal, potters worked with clay, there was spinning and weaving for textiles. Craft specialization to Trojans consisted of imitated pottery from Mycenae. Since Trojans were so well skilled at imitation it has made it hard for archeologists today to separate what was brought into the city and what was created in Troy. Therefore, in comparison to Mycenae pottery is was not much of a difference during the Late Bronze Age and also exerts that Troy's cultural influence stretched beyond its borders. Another unique craft to Troy VI was a manufactured purple dye from a seashell called a

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[10] John N. Wilford "Was Troy a Metropolis? Homer Isn't Talking." *Http://www.nytimes.com/.* NY Times, 23 Oct. 2002. Web. 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/featured_articles/20021023wednesday.html>.

[11] Trevor R. Bryce. "The Trojan War: Is There Truth Behind The Legend?" Near Eastern Archaeology 65.3 (2002): 182-195. OmniFile Full Text Mega (H.W. Wilson). Web. 1 Dec. 2012. P. 189.

"murex."[12] The purple dye would have been valuable for trade to obtain luxury goods. Lastly, the Trojan horses appeared in Troy VI and contributed to the lively hood of the city.[13] Horses were traded, sold, used for agriculture, war, and even eaten.

Agriculture of Troy VI was mainly produced in the Troad, a vast land full of rich soil, surrounding the city that reached out to the Aegean Sea. The fresh water system came from two rivers, the Scamander on the north side and the Simoes on the west side, and also there were a number of springs. Kofrmanns' teams have discovered, through remains from animals and grains, what exactly the Trojans consumed and grew from the land. Domestication of plants and animals included a large variety in the Troy during the Late Bronze Age. Animals eaten from the Troad included beef, lamb, pork, kid, horse, Mediterranean tuna, deer, fish, and wild animals. Cow and goats were also used to produce milk and the milk would have been turned into yogurt and cheese to preserve dairy goods. Trojan farmers grew plants like peas, beans, lentils, wheat which was made into bread and porridge. Surplus of these foods were stored in ceramic jars that were sunk into the ground. The domestication of the horse would have made farming these natural resources a lot easier.

The town and countryside interaction appears to be not solely based on agriculture. Finley's economic approach to the city based on the consumer model would not have applied much to Troy due to Troy's variety of natural resources. Instead, Engel's service city model in which servants had disposable income from the ability to maintain their fields and sell items in the marketplace appeared to more appealing to Troy's economic system. Troy VI could have

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[12] "TROY HOMEPAGE." *TROY HOMEPAGE*. National Endowment for the Humanities, n.d. Web. 30 Oct. 2012.
        <http://www.cerhas.uc.edu/troy/>.
[13] Ibid.

been supported by farmers who lived in the city and traveled to the hinterlands of the Troad to

their fields. The service model benefits Troy VI because of the multiple types of economic

resources and natural resources available during the Late Bronze Age. Trade from the ships

passing through would have brought luxury goods, foods, and more. There was enough land to

farm to feed large animals like cows, goats, and sheep and also sustain the population of Troy

VI's size.

Troy's location being sea side in Anatolia brought an abundance of tradesmen traveling

upon ships to the Asian Minor through the Dardanelles. Troy's location allowed the city to open

its self up to the world of commerce. Brain Rose states, "The volume of trade was certainly

much smaller during the Bronze Age than during later periods…but this does not mean trade did

not exist at all" (p. 624). "Troy participated in a network of production and exchange of some

sort" (p. 625). Trade would have been essential for a city with a population of 3,000 or more and

especially one located in an area such as Troy.

Ships who were displaced by the winds in the passage found themselves portside at

Troy's harbor waiting until the wind subsided.[14] Some of these traveling tradesmen were docked

for up to six months which meant more than just goods were passed along to the Trojans.

Strauss, "In the later Bronze Age Troy was one of the largest cities around the Aegean Sea and a

major regional center – not as large as the central cities such as Mesopotamia" (p. xxi). To be

better understand Troy VI's position Strauss tells us, "The Trojan were among the world's

greatest middlemen" (p 8). The Troy's trade would have also extended to land routes that

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[14] Easton, D. F., J. D. Hawkins, A. G. Sherratt, and E. S. Sherratt. "Troy in Recent Perspective." *Anatolian Studies* 52 (2002): 75-
109. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Oct. 2012. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3643078>. P. 103.

included the "Sea peoples" of a coastal community of cities. Strauss, "A major region hub, Troy was a station for goods from Syria, Egypt, and occasionally even from the Caucasus and Scandinavia" (p. 9). Although, Strauss believes the Trojans only had one good to sell of necessity, their famous horses, Trojans also would have sold their purple textiles and pottery.

In conclusion, Troy VI in the Late Bronze Age was city that in comparison to other may not have been viewed to be much of a standard city in the ancient world. Although, Troy VI may not of have had the beauty of Athens, the paved roads of Rome, or the housed one of the seven wonders of the ancient world Troy VI was the city of great fortified walls, perfect geographical location, and had a vast network for trade that was supported by skilled craftsmen.

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