

INTRODUCTION

Excavations in and around Troy have occurred over the course of nearly forty-five years, beginning in 1855 and continuing sporadically until the present day, which means that the history of fieldwork there is nearly as fascinating as the archaeological discoveries themselves. Within that 150-year period there have been three major campaigns, those of Heinrich Schliemann and Wilhelm Dörpfeld (1870–94), Carl Blegen (University of Cincinnati, 1932–8), and Manfred Korfmann and me (Universities of Cincinnati and Tübingen, 1988–2012).¹ The critics of Schliemann’s publications were vociferous in their objections, and divergent opinions about Troy’s significance have surrounded every field project that has explored the site. The most recent campaign was no exception: many of the interpretations we advanced during the last twenty-five years were controversial, thereby prompting the publication of a large number of increasingly specialized publications that required of the reader an advanced understanding of the site.

Consequently, I felt that there was a need for a synthetic overview of all of the excavations and research that have been conducted at Troy, with the nineteenth and early twentieth century finds joined to those that were discovered between 1988 and the present. The sphere of activity for which I was responsible involved Greek, Roman, and Byzantine material culture, or “post–Bronze Age,” whereas the Bronze Age excavations were conducted by Prof. Korfmann, who served as overall director of the site.² From the inception of the project, however, the work of the post–Bronze Age group was

inextricably intertwined with that of Prof. Korfmann, and the narrative that I present here is very much influenced by and indebted to his excavations and research.³

When I began researching this book, I planned to concentrate on the Greek and Roman periods, since the Trojan material of that date had never been synthesized. I quickly realized, however, that such an analysis had to be framed by an overview of the Bronze Age settlements as well as by an assessment of the manipulation of the Trojan tradition in post-antique Europe and Asia. As a result, the material presented in these chapters encompasses over five millennia of history and ranges from Britain to Afghanistan, even though the core focus remains on the Trojan settlements of Greek and Roman date.

Post-Bronze Age excavations in the surroundings of Troy actually began nearly a century before Schliemann, and the initial attractions were the monumental burial mounds, or tumuli, that had become linked to the Homeric heroes over the course of several millennia (Plates 1 and 2). Count Choiseul-Gouffier, French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, sponsored excavations in 1787 at the “Tomb of Achilles” north of Yenişehir, 6 km from Troy; he also inspected the “Tomb of Ajax” and identified the cliffs around the village of Yeniköy as the rocks of Hesione, the sister of Priam, who was rescued from a sea monster by Herakles.⁴

Excavation would not recur until the winter of 1855–6, when a British railroad engineer named John Brunton began exploring areas around the mound that probably coincide with the Agora and Lower City (Plate 8), reportedly finding the ruins of a Corinthian temple and a house with a mosaic floor featuring a boar hunt.⁵ Also excavating in that area in the 1850s was Frank Calvert, a British expatriate and American Consul who ultimately bought the eastern half of the mound of Hisarlık with the expectation that it encompassed the ruins of Troy.⁶ In 1855, he excavated the tumuli of Priam and Patroclus, after which he began to conduct fieldwork on and around the citadel mound itself.

These were the first excavations of the Temple of Athena and the Hellenistic City Wall, which continued to be explored by Heinrich Schliemann in the 1870s and 1880s.⁷ In the course of his seven campaigns, Schliemann also extended his fieldwork to the large theater on the northeast side of the mound, the Spring Cave in the Lower City, and probably a part of the Agora. Following the model of Choiseul-Gouffier and Calvert, Schliemann also excavated several of the “Homeric” mounds that had been investigated by his predecessors, including those of Achilles and Patroclus, as well as Beşik-Sivritepe, identified in this book as the “Tomb of Achilles” that was visited by Alexander the Great.

Schliemann’s broader sphere of exploration allowed him to offer the first solid overview of Hellenistic and Roman habitation at Troy, which was placed

on an even firmer footing by the fieldwork and publications of his successor, Wilhelm Dörpfeld, who unearthed substantial parts of the Agora, including the Bouleuterion and Odeion.⁸ He also exposed the west side of the citadel, dominated by Building IXA (Plate 8), and proposed a plausible reconstruction of the City Wall's circuit based on several strategically situated trenches in the Lower City. Neither Schliemann nor Dörpfeld had a firm grasp of the Iron Age, Archaic, or Classical periods at the site, but the architectural remains and small finds, including coins and inscriptions, were chronicled for the first time, and Dörpfeld's color phase plan of the nine known settlements would serve as one of the principal foundations for diachronic research on Trojan habitation for the next century.⁹

Although Carl Blegen's primary purpose in restarting the Troy Excavations was to refine the chronology of Bronze Age habitation at the site and search for prehistoric cemeteries, he uncovered several important complexes dating to the Greek and Roman periods.¹⁰ These included two baths, one of which lay in the agora, a likely Early Christian Church paved in mosaics, and more of the Odeion, which had first been explored by Dörpfeld. His most significant post-Bronze Age discovery, however, was a large religious complex on the southwest side of the mound, generally referred to as the West Sanctuary.¹¹ Blegen began investigations there in an attempt to ascertain the nature of habitation on the outer face of the Late Bronze Age (Troy VI) fortification wall, in an area that also coincided with the projected line of the Early Bronze Age (Troy II) stone ramp further to the west. What he found was the best evidence that had ever been uncovered for the later Iron Age and Archaic period at Troy, as well as an unusually rich assemblage of material relating to local cults during those periods.

Carl Blegen noted in his final Troy report that there was much more of interest to explore at the site, but he was ending the project in order to leave as many opportunities as possible for the next generation of archaeologists who would be equipped with more advanced tools and techniques than he possessed – a decision I would also make sixty years later.¹² Although Blegen subsequently moved on to even more impressive discoveries at Pylos, in southwestern Greece, he did not neglect the publications of the material produced by his excavations at Troy: four volumes of the Bronze and Iron Age discoveries appeared during the course of the 1950s, with the coins and terracotta figurines each receiving monographic treatment in the early 1960s.¹³

After a fifty-year hiatus, new excavations were launched by Manfred Korfmann. In 1987, after he had secured permission from the Turkish Ministry of Culture to inaugurate a new project at Troy, Korfmann approached the University of Cincinnati with the offer of a joint excavation, wherein Tübingen would be responsible for the Bronze Age investigations, and Cincinnati for the post-Bronze Age. The intent was that the new Troy project would be different

from the earlier campaigns: the team would focus on all phases of habitation at the site, from the Early Bronze Age through the Ottoman, treating the remains of each with the same respect so that a complete diachronic reconstruction could be produced for the first time.¹⁴

We were fortunate in that much of Lower City had already been subjected to magnetic prospection, and we had a good idea of the size of the Roman residential district.¹⁵ The prospection results were splendid, in large part because the Lower City was essentially flat, not heavily wooded, and the ruins – at least the Roman ruins – were only a few centimeters below the surface. The use of magnetometry was not unprecedented on archaeological sites – it had been used at Gordion already in the mid-1960s – but it was not a common technique, especially on Greek and Roman excavations, and it enabled us to gain an understanding of post-Bronze Age habitation in the Lower City much more rapidly than would otherwise have been the case.

Within the Lower City, much of the post-Bronze Age excavations was ultimately tied to Bronze Age research goals: the Hellenistic and Roman houses at the southern edge of the Lower City were found during the exploration of the Troy VI defensive ditch, and the excavations in and around the Spring Cave were launched because Manfred Korfmann hoped to demonstrate a link between the cave and Kaskal.kur, “the god of the underground water-course,” who was mentioned with Wilusa, the Hittite name for Iliion, in a Late Bronze Age treaty.¹⁶ These trenches allowed us to reconstruct Hellenistic occupation in the Lower City for the first time, and clarified the water systems as well.

In addition to the Lower City, the West Sanctuary emerged as the primary focus of fieldwork for nearly the entire duration of the project. More than any other area, the West Sanctuary excavations allowed us to construct a ceramic chronology spanning the entire first millennium B.C. They also demonstrated that there was much less of a gulf between the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Greek period than we had expected at the outset of the project. The first Archaic monumental architecture to have been uncovered at the site gradually appeared during excavations in the Sanctuary, as did our first evidence for Iliion’s “great recovery,” as Strabo called it, during the second century B.C.¹⁷

The eastern part of the Troad also became a target for research, survey, and publication beginning in 1994. This was a period during which the looting of tumuli became increasingly common, especially in the vicinity of the Granicus River, between the modern towns of Biga and Karabiga. Subsequent rescue excavations by the Çanakkale Museum yielded three extraordinary sarcophagi and a tomb chamber with painted *klinai*, after which we launched a four-year survey of tombs in the area.¹⁸ The material retrieved from the Granicus tombs was essential to our understanding of the Troad during the late Archaic and

Classical periods, in that material of this date was rarely discovered at Ilion or, for that matter, in most of the coastal cities of western Asia Minor.¹⁹

What binds together these different campaigns spanning more than 220 years is the interface of archaeology and the Homeric tradition. When Choiseul-Gouffier began his excavations in 1787, he targeted the “Tumulus of Achilles,” and other Homeric tumuli were subsequently explored by Calvert, Schliemann, Manfred Korfmann, and me. Excavations were driven by a desire to assess the historicity of the Trojan War as well as the validity of its connection to the mound of Hisarlık.

To an extent, that interface still prevails, in that many of our discoveries, especially those of Bronze Age date, are viewed against the backdrop of the *Iliad*. Scholars have, in fact, occasionally voiced concerns that we have allowed the Homeric tradition to play too prominent a role in our fieldwork, research, publications, and exhibits. The origins of these accusations are probably tied to the discovery of the Late Bronze Age rock-cut ditch in 1993, immediately interpreted as a fortification component, which propelled the issue of the Trojan War to the forefront of archaeological discussions.²⁰ Such ditch fortifications were referred to several times in the *Iliad*, albeit in association with the Greek camp near Troy, and the *Iliad* passages were noted in connection with the ditch in several articles in *Studia Troica*.²¹

The discovery of a thirteenth-century B.C. bronze seal inscribed with Luwian hieroglyphics, a script used by the Hittite kingdom in the second millennium B.C., prompted a more extensive discussion of the potential link between the topographical names “Ilion” and “Wilusa,” as well as an inclination to bring the Hittite references to Wilusa into the broader discussion of the Trojan War (Fig. 1.16, below).²² Homer also began to be viewed in a more Anatolian perspective than had earlier been the case.²³

Perhaps the most direct link forged between site and epic appeared in Korfmann’s 1999 excavation report, where he noted, “I regard Homer as a ‘contemporary witness,’ reporting on whatever the condition of Ilios was in about 700 B.C.”²⁴ This meant that physical features associated with Troy in the *Iliad* could conceivably be identified in the Late Geometric or Archaic levels of the site, and the Spring Cave was cited as a potential case in point.

Such attempts to assess the historicity of Homer have always been controversial, and they form part of a very long intellectual tradition that has been operating as least since the fifth century B.C. Herodotus registered his disbelief in the story of Helen’s departure for Troy, while Strabo and his primary source, Demetrius of Scepsis, cast doubt on the claim of Ilion’s inhabitants that they were living above the ruins of Priam’s citadel.²⁵ The archaeologists had their critics too: Ernst Bötticher, a member of the German Society for Anthropology, Ethnography, and Prehistory, wrote several long critiques of

Schliemann's conclusions, especially regarding Schliemann's interpretation of Troy II and the Trojan War. This prompted Schliemann to assemble an international group of scholars in 1889 and 1890 (the "Hisarlik Conference") to discuss the excavation results.²⁶

The Hisarlik Conference model was also employed by Manfred Korfmann, although it did not prevent the appearance of a level of criticism nearly as pronounced as what had been directed toward Schliemann.²⁷ The question of the size of the Bronze Age Lower City and, indeed, the prominence of Troy in the Late Bronze Age would become a major issue in 2001, when a new Troy Exhibit ("Troia: Traum und Wirklichkeit") opened in Germany. Included in the exhibit and the catalogue was a hypothetical reconstruction of the Lower City during the Late Bronze Age, which showed the district as densely inhabited.²⁸ Our evidence for this reconstruction was limited because we had excavated approximately 2 percent of the Lower City, and a surface survey of the area had not yet taken place, but since the reconstruction was presented as conjectural, no one at the time considered that it would become as controversial as it subsequently did.

The leader of the critics was Korfmann's colleague, Frank Kolb, who also taught at the University of Tübingen, although in a different department. He pointed out that the evidence for such dense occupation in the Late Bronze Age was absent, as was the proof that Troy was a major mercantile center at that time.²⁹ Some of his arguments picked up on the criticisms made by Eberhard Zangger in 1994, and those written by Dieter Hertel in a series of publications during the last decade.³⁰ This scholarly dispute developed into a kind of intellectual war marked by strikes and counterstrikes, with scholars assembling on either side of a Kolb–Korfmann line.³¹ The post–Bronze Age excavation results were also brought into the discussion from time to time, especially regarding the question of an Aeolian migration and the issue of settlement continuity between the Bronze and Iron Ages, both of which were tied to the composition and dissemination of the *Iliad*.³² All of these issues will be treated in greater detail in Chapters 1 and 2, as will the question of a Trojan War.

Whether or not the current excavation team interfaced too closely with the Homeric tradition is something that historiographers of the future will undoubtedly be in a better position to clarify, but that tradition unquestionably constituted the dominating element in the site's history throughout the Greek and Roman periods. This is a theme that surfaces continually throughout these chapters, as I attempt to investigate the ways in which Ilion's alleged Homeric heritage was approached, manipulated, and aggrandized over the course of its history, as far as the twentieth century.

Throughout the book, the reader will notice the intersection of Bronze Age and post–Bronze Age investigations, which is a reflection of the collaborative nature of the project. Each year I attempted to ensure that the post–Bronze

INTRODUCTION

7

Age team's goals were compatible with the developing Bronze Age excavation strategy, which meant reshaping my own strategic plan to take advantage of Manfred Korfmann's new (and often unexpected) areas of exploration. This was not easy to do, either for me or for Korfmann, but in the end the project was mutually advantageous, yielding results far broader than expected and far more intellectually satisfying, as I hope the following chapters will demonstrate.

ONE

TROY IN THE BRONZE AGE

We usually speak of the Troad, the peninsular section of northwestern Asia Minor in which Troy is located, as if it were a relatively homogeneous zone, but the geography of the region varies considerably (Plates 1 and 2). The most dominant feature is the Ida mountain range that crosses the southern part of the peninsula in a roughly east-west direction and serves as the source for the three principal rivers that cross the Troad: the Scamander (modern Kara Menderes), which flows west and north, emptying into the Dardanelles north of Troy; the Aesepus (modern Gönen Çay), which terminates at the central southern coast of the Sea of Marmara and, according to Homer, forms the eastern boundary of the Troad; and the Granicus (modern Biga Çay), which lies between them and flows in a meandering northeast direction to the Sea of Marmara.¹

Nearly the entire coast of the Troad is ringed by sections of the Ida range, which meant there was often a separation in communication between coast and interior. Since larger settlements tended to be established along the coast, the interior was reserved primarily for farming and shepherding. Geologically, the center of the Troad lies near the North Anatolian Fault, at the intersection of the Rhodope and Menderes Blocks, thereby making the entire area extremely prone to earthquakes throughout its history.² Raw materials suitable for a variety of industries were easily available, including gold, copper, and iron, as well as plentiful clay beds and pine tree forests on Mt. Ida.³ Aristotle notes that the mollusks on the coast near Troy were ideal for purple dye production,

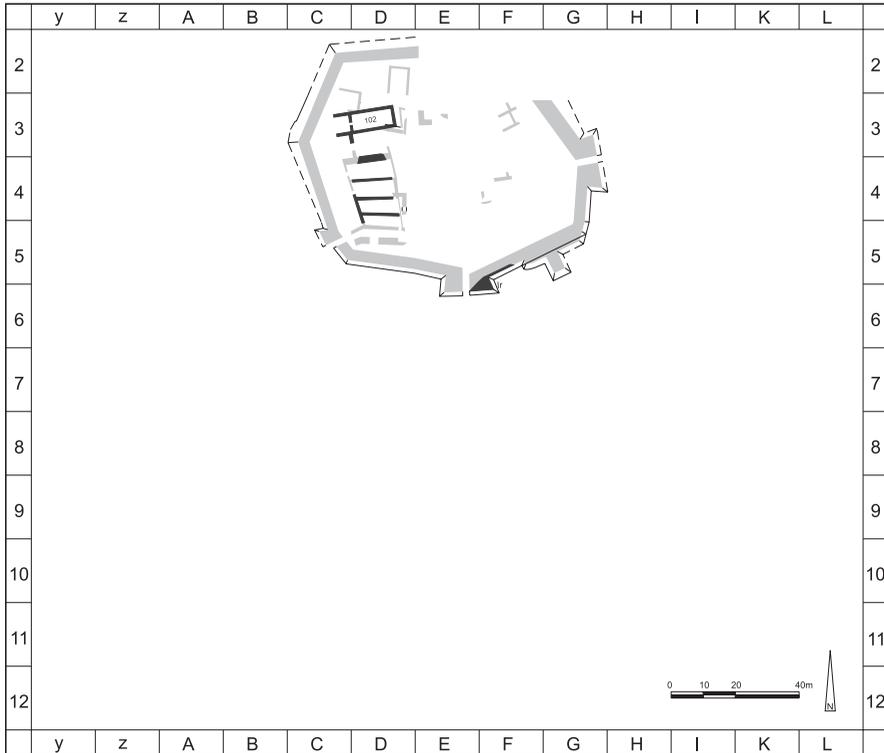
and such dyers appear to be attested on the nearby island of Lesbos during the Late Bronze Age.⁴

Seven of Troy's nine settlements date to the Bronze Age and span a period of two millennia, from ca. 3000 B.C. to 1000 B.C. Three of those settlements have typically attracted more attention than the others: one from the Early Bronze Age (Troy II, 2550–2300 B.C.), because of the multiplicity of precious-metal assemblages or “treasures” with which it has been associated, and two from the Late Bronze Age (VI and VIIa, 1800–1180 B.C.), due to their alleged links to the Homeric tradition. All three are discussed extensively in this chapter since their impact on the site's subsequent history was so significant, although I situate them within a complete diachronic overview of prehistoric habitation in and around Troy, beginning with the earliest evidence for habitation.

Reconstructing occupation in this area prior to the Bronze Age is not easy, but the surveys of Mehmet Özdoğan in Thrace have made it possible for us to sketch its development in broad outline.⁵ In the interior of the Troad (the Çan–Yenice–Pazarköy region) there is evidence for occupation beginning in the Upper Paleolithic (late Stone Age), which had extended to the coast of the Troad, the Gallipoli peninsula, and the island of Imbros in the seventh and sixth millennia.⁶

In the immediate region around Troy, however, the first signs of habitation do not appear before ca. 5000 B.C., and the best evidence comes from the site of Kumtepe, which lies 5 km northwest of Troy and 2 km south of the Dardanelles.⁷ Only small sections of the settlement have been excavated, but the houses seem to have been rectangular and freestanding, with stone foundations and mud-brick walls. Similar settlements in the general vicinity were established at more or less the same time: Beşik-Sivritepe (which would ultimately become the site of Achilleion), Gülpınar (the Smintheion), Hanaytepe, Alacalıgöl, approximately 5 km to the west of Troy, and Işıldaktepe altı, on the coast of the Dardanelles.⁸ All of these sites were in communication with each other, judging by the pottery, and they clearly formed part of a broad-based exchange network that linked the Troad with the eastern Aegean and southeastern Europe.⁹ Already by the fifth millennium B.C., then, boats were sailing from the Troad across the Dardanelles and into the Aegean.¹⁰

For some reason, still undetermined, habitation in the region was interrupted around the middle of the fifth millennium B.C. and commenced again only ca. 3300 B.C., at which point there was new occupation at Kumtepe (Ib) and Karaağaçtepe, among others.¹¹ The end of the fourth millennium witnessed the foundation of Troy, which appears to have absorbed the inhabitants from the other sites in the area (Plates 3–8, Figs. 1.1 and 1.2), although another small settlement was simultaneously established a few kilometers away, on the Aegean coast (Beşik-Yassitepe).¹² At that point in time the topography of the area was very different, as one can see from the results of core sampling or



1.1. Plan of Troy I, prepared by Elizabeth Riorden for the Troy Excavation Project.

explorative drilling in the plains to the north of Troy. Such sampling provides a diachronic perspective on the movement of the coastline over several millennia and has revealed that a lagoon originally extended approximately 6 km inland from the Dardanelles at the time in which Troy was founded, thereby essentially transforming the northwest corner of the Troad into a peninsula (Plate 5). Troy's location on the eastern side of this lagoon afforded easy access to the Dardanelles as well as protection from its winds and currents.¹³

Such strategic locations are often tied to security concerns, and this may explain why Troy was always an unusually well-fortified settlement. The citadel of Troy I measured only ca. 85 × 95 m, and was therefore small by comparison to the subsequent settlements, yet dramatically different from what had existed at Kumtepe and Beşiktepe. The limestone fortification walls were continually strengthened, gradually increasing from a thickness of 2.5 m to 3 m, and with a height of more than 3.5 m (Plate 8, Figs. 1.1, 1.2). The first walls were founded on bedrock and featured a 2 m wide gate flanked by towers. Several of the buildings they protected were of megaron shape, with a vestibule leading into a large room with central hearth, and one of them was conspicuously larger than the others, measuring nearly 19 × 7 m. Determining the city plan is difficult, since so much of it is covered by later settlements, but the houses, in general, are parallel to the fortification wall at the south.¹⁴