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## History of the Trojan War in Medieval Manuscripts Presentation Notes

### Medieval views on the Trojan War

During the Middle Ages, the Franks, Macedonians, Turks, British, Normans, Danes, Icelanders, and many other European societies traced their origins back to the Trojans through the Roman Empire

How do we know? Written accounts such as the *Chronicle of Fredegar*  
Seventh-century historiographical compilation of the Trojan origins of the Franks, Romans, Macedonians, and Turks  
Romance that follows the story of Francio, a Trojan leader who supposedly escaped to the area of France after the war, which was named after him

These guys loved Aeneas

Why is this important?

Societies in the Middle Ages were NOT fans of Homer.

They descended from Trojans, namely, Aeneas. Homer glorifies the Greeks

He depicts men fighting with gods

Christian audiences don't like pagan gods

Virgil is the exception

Considered an "honorary Christian"

Seen in literature such as Dante's *Commedia*

Written long after the war

Where do societies in the Middle Ages get their mythology?

"Eyewitnesses" Dictys Cretensis and Dares Phrygius

Dictys was supposedly a Cretan who went to Troy with Idomeneus and Meriones

Favors the Greeks and sticks closer to Homer's narrative, although many characters on both sides are more deceitful and unheroic than in Homer

Dares was supposedly a Trojan priest of Hephaestus

Favored over Dictys whenever possible because he glorifies the Trojans

Both of these are forgeries and written way after Homer

Summary and notable differences from Homer in Dares's account (VERY brief)

Does not follow the story of the *Iliad*, in fact, it starts with the story of Jason and the Argonauts

King Laomedon is rude to Jason, so Hercules attacks Troy, kills Laomedon, and Telamon is given Hesione, Laomedon's daughter and Priam's sister as a prize

Priam, who was in Phrygia, returns to Troy, and asks Hector to build a fleet to sail against Greece

Hector is unsure, but Paris calls for war, saying he had a dream while hunting on Mt. Ida and that he believes Aphrodite will support them

This dream is the Judgement of Paris

Paris sails to Cythera where he meets Helen at the temple of Artemis

They fall in love and leave for Troy

Menelaus, who was on his way to visit Nestor in Pylos, returns and calls for war  
 The Greeks still go to Aulis, but there is no mention of the sacrifice of Iphigenia  
 Philoctetes is not abandoned  
 Priam is pleased with Helen's arrival, thinking of using her as a bargaining chip for the return of Hesione  
 Achilles does withdraw from the war, but it is not because of Agamemnon, and it is not until *after* Patroclus's death  
     Hector is killed by Achilles; on the first anniversary of his death, Priam, Hecuba, and Polyxena encounter Achilles at Hector's grave, where Achilles falls madly in love with Polyxena  
 Hecuba and Priam say Achilles can marry Polyxena if all the Greeks leave in peace; Achilles asks the Greek generals for peace and is refused; NOW he withdraws from the war  
 After the embassy, as well as Agamemnon asking personally, Achilles sends his Myrmidons to fight, but remains out of the war  
 He rejoins in defense of the Myrmidons after seeing Troilus, youngest son of Priam and replacement for Hector as the best warrior of Troy, kill many of his men  
 Achilles kills Troilus  
 Hecuba is distraught, and asks Achilles to meet with her in the temple of Apollo near Troy to discuss his wedding with Polyxena  
     He goes happily, and is ambushed and killed by Paris  
 Antenor, Polydamas, and Aeneas call for the return of Helen; Priam is upset by this because Antenor urged him for war in the first place, and Aeneas helped capture Helen  
     He calls for their deaths, believing they will betray the city  
 What do they do? They betray the city  
     They go to Agamemnon and craft a plan to get the Greeks into the walls of Troy; Aeneas and Antenor open the Scaean gate for them in the middle of the night, which is decorated with a horse's head (as apposed to the Trojan Horse)  
 Neoptolemus kills Priam and sacrifices Polyxena on the grave of Achilles

Translated account of Dares: <https://www.theoi.com/Text/DaresPhrygius.html>

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