Late Antique Accounts of the Trojan War
A Comparative Look at the Manuscript Evidence
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Late Antique Accounts of the Trojan War: 
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The story of Troy – its date, its location, the peoples involved, and its war with the Greeks – is certainly best known to modern generations through Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Even though it is difficult to imagine Western literature or history without these two canonical works today, they did not circulate during the Latin Middle Ages, and it may even be argued that an anti-Homeric spirit dominated the European world especially during the late antique and early medieval periods. A number of other classical works in Latin that deal with the story of Troy, including Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Vergil’s *Aeneid* and the *Ilias Latina*, were in circulation of course, but it was three late antique accounts of the Trojan War that were exceptionally influential throughout the Middle Ages and beyond: the *Ephemeridos bellii Troiani* attributed to Dictys of Crete, the *De excidio Troiae historia* attributed to Dares of Phrygia, and the anonymous *Excidium Troie*.¹ These three works, all of which are usually dated

roughly to the period between the fourth and sixth centuries, not only deviate from the Homeric tradition but also differ from each other in terms of their styles and contents. Despite their popularity, for the past couple of centuries these works received almost no favourable attention – if any at all – from scholars, and with the exception of studies on the *De excidio Troiae historia*, there have been no comprehensive studies of their manuscripts.\(^2\)

Most modern editions of late antique and medieval works, especially those from the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, even when they are comprehensive in listing the witnesses of a text, and they usually are not, are not concerned about the rest of the texts contained in the manuscripts. As such, they often do not list what else is included in a manuscript even when it is clear from the composition of the manuscript that two or more texts are arranged to be read together or are written by the same scribe. Such compilations also rarely are taken into consideration in stemmatology, that is, reconstructing the transmission of a text on the basis of relations between the various surviving manuscripts. This is certainly the case with regard to these three works.\(^3\)

After briefly discussing each work, this study will discuss the transmission of the *Ephemeridos belli Troiani*, the *De excidio Troiae historia*, and the *Excidium Troie* by concentrating on the earliest surviving manuscript witnesses of the texts, those dated to before the twelfth century. In the course of examining the witnesses of each work, attention will be paid to all texts contained in any given manuscript. Even though every witness is unique, and there are no known direct descendants or exact copies of any of the early medieval witnesses of these works, looking at the entirety of contents of the manuscripts reveals certain patterns and groupings of works. One of the most interesting findings of this study is the co-presence of these works in the same manuscripts. Therefore, in addition to the examination of the manuscripts of each work, this article will concentrate on the relationships among these three accounts, which were not only copied, read and circulated during the same periods but also are even found as part of the same compilations.

**Dictys of Crete’s *Ephemeridos belli Troiani***

A short prose narrative about the collapse of Troy, the *Ephemeridos belli Troiani* (henceforward *Ephemeridos*) attributed to Dictys of Crete is thought to be the earliest of the three late antique accounts. The Latin version of the work is dated to either the third or the


\^3\ The author is currently engaged in an EU-funded research project entitled ‘Transtextual Networks in the European Middle Ages: A Digital Corpus of the Trojan Narrative in Latin Manuscripts’ which involves investigating all the extant manuscripts of the three late antique accounts and cataloguing the entire contents of these manuscripts in order to study the transmission of groups of texts.
fourth century. This work also is the only one among the three that has been proven to have a Greek original. In the surviving manuscripts, the work opens with either the preface of the translator or a general prologue. In both cases, in the opening of the work it is stated that the text was translated from Greek into Latin, and that the author, ‘Dictys Cretensis’, was an eyewitness to the war. Dictys identifies himself as a follower of Idomeneus, the leader of the Cretans, thus indicating that he is writing from the point of view of the Greeks. Stating that he lived during the era of the Trojan War, the author implicitly claims that he lived before Homer and that his account therefore antedates that of Homer’s.

Manuscripts of the Ephemeridos are conventionally divided roughly into two groups: one is introduced with a letter signed by Lucius Septimius to Quintus Aradius Rufinus (serving as the preface) containing information about the work and its translation, whereas the other includes a prologue providing relatively more detailed information about the text. Septimius, the translator of Dictys as he puts himself, writes in the preface that, after finding the books, as an ‘avidos verae historiae’ (‘enthusiast of true history’), he wanted to translate the work into Latin. Septimius further states that he translated the first five volumes, which were about the siege of Troy and the war itself, without abridgement, and summarized the remaining volumes, which were about the return of the Greeks, in one volume. Thus divided into six books, the Ephemeridos narrates the Trojan War in the first five books and the return of the Greeks in the final sixth book. The account begins with the abduction of Helen and ends with the death of Ulysses. In the prologue of the Ephemeridos, the reader also is told that the text was initially written in the Phoenician language and was translated into Greek during the reign of Nero (54–68). It also is claimed that the ‘original’ books were found in the thirteenth year of Nero’s reign, which corresponds to 66 CE. Even though the story narrated in the prologue and translator’s preface is regarded as a fabrication by modern scholars, the dating to Nero’s reign is usually taken as the dating for the ‘original’ Greek version in the very same discussions. It is argued that the Greek version of the story, which survives only in fragments and on which the Ephemeridos is based, also circulated in the Greek-speaking world and was used by authors such as Joannes Malalas in the sixth century, Joannes Antiochenos in the seventh century, and Georgias Kedrenos in the eleventh century.

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7 Griffin, Dares and Dictys, p. 34-108; see also Merkle, Die Ephemeris belli Troiani des Diktys von Kreta, p. 22–23.
Although over seventy surviving witnesses of the *Ephemeridos* have been identified by various scholars, no comprehensive work has been undertaken with regard to its manuscript transmission. In his 1872 edition, Meister used a selection of six manuscripts of which only one is dated to before the thirteenth century. In his later edition, Eisenhut increased the number of witnesses to fifteen, one of which had already been destroyed in a fire in 1870 in Strasbourg, presumably during the bombardment of the city in the Franco-Prussian War. He further enumerated sixteen other witnesses he knew of in different repositories. Fourteen of these sixteen manuscripts are dated to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. One is dated to the twelfth century and is only a summary of the last two books, and the other one, which is dated to the sixteenth century, is a copy from a printed version. In a short note published in 1978, Speck drew attention to six other fifteenth-century manuscripts at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. Speyer identified and edited another late witness dated to the fifteenth century that contains a summary of all the six books. More recently, Munk Olsen listed eleven witnesses that date before the end of the twelfth century. In his list, Munk Olsen adds three more witnesses to the known manuscripts, two of which again contain the summary of the last two books and the third a partial selection.

Despite the great number of extant manuscripts, as Faivre d’Arcier also acknowledges, until the end of the thirteenth century, one may only talk about a relatively small circulation and limited transmission of the *Ephemeridos*. This is especially true when compared to the other two late antique accounts. About one sixth of the surviving witnesses to the *Ephemeridos*, twelve manuscripts, contain a partial summary of the work. This very short summary of the *Ephemeridos* has two sections entitled the *Item de Enea et Antenore* and the *De reditu Grecorum a Troia* and is neither attributed to nor associated with Dictys in any of the manuscripts. Even though the remaining manuscripts, most of which do cite Dictys, still suggest that there was some awareness of the work in the early Middle Ages, the great majority

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8 It is likely that there are more witnesses, which remain unidentified, especially dated to after the twelfth century.
10 The dating is not known; Eisenhut, however, states that it was a late medieval manuscript.
11 For a discussion of the manuscript transmission as well as a partial *stemma codicum*, see Eisenhut, ‘Præfatio’, in Dictys Cretensis. Ephemeridos belli Troiani, p. v-lii; for a list of the manuscripts that are not used in the edition see p. xxxix-xl.
13 Wolfgang Speyer, ‘Die unbekannte Epitome des Dictys Cretensis im Codex Brixiensis 691’, *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, Neue Folge*, 107, 1964, p. 76-92. Further work has been undertaken more recently by Faivre d’Arcier as part of his investigation of the *De excidio Troiae historia*; however, he mostly deals with later witnesses. See Histoire, p. 361-368.
14 This list is not complete. See Birger Munk Olsen, *L’étude des auteurs classiques latins aux Xle et XIe siècles, Documents, études et répertoires*, 4 vols, Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1982-2014, I, p. 379-382 and III.2, p. 56-57. Munk Olsen skips number 5; therefore, even though his numbering goes to 12, he lists eleven witnesses.
16 In all the extant witnesses, this summary is found as an appendix to Dares of Phrygia’s *De excidio Troiae historia*. See the discussion below.
of these witnesses to the Ephemeridos are from the end of the Middle Ages. Only ten witnesses of the Ephemeridos are dated to before the twelfth century (see Table 1).17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metz, Bibliothèque municipale, 187*</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, Z.XIV.14</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>Tours, France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Vitt. Em. 1631 [Florence, Biblioteca del Conte Baldeschi-Ballcani, 7] (Part i)</td>
<td>IX2/3</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 197 (Part i)</td>
<td>IX2</td>
<td>St Gall, Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 197 (Part iii)</td>
<td>X1</td>
<td>St Gall, Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 601 (Part i)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>western Germany or Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darmstadt, Hessische Landesbibliothek, 4216 [22] (Part i)</td>
<td>XI9</td>
<td>western Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strasbourg, Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire, 14 (Part i)</td>
<td>XI</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, 3920–3923 (Part iii)</td>
<td>XI</td>
<td>Germany (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C.72 Inf.</td>
<td>XI/XII</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Earliest witnesses of the Ephemeridos belli Troiani

Among these ten earliest witnesses, two (Metz, Bibliothèque municipale, 187* and St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 197 (Part iii)) contain the partial summary mentioned above, and another one (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 601 (Part i)) only contains the prologue and a very short summary of contents on f. 1r-v. The remaining seven seem to have contained the full text in the original compilation and they all belong to the same recension, with the exception of Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Vitt. Em. 1631 (Part i).18 Only three of these, however, contain the complete text; two are in fragments and two are incomplete. Furthermore, the majority of the surviving witnesses of the Ephemeridos, including all early witnesses except for the Rome manuscript, include the prologue and not the translator’s preface.19 When the origins of the manuscripts are also taken into consideration along with the recension of the witnesses, the surviving evidence suggests that the Ephemeridos had a limited circulation that is concentrated around the St. Gall-Reichenau region.

17 If the shelfmark of a manuscript has changed, the older shelfmark is provided in square brackets when the manuscript is first mentioned. Manuscripts that survived to the modern times which are no longer available are indicated with an asterisk (*) after the shelfmark.
19 Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Vitt. Em. 1631 (Part i) now contains both the translator’s preface and the prologue due to fifteenth-century alterations. However, it should be noted that this is considered an anomaly among the surviving witnesses and that the translator’s preface is found only in this witness and in some other fifteenth-century manuscripts.
The contents of these manuscripts also deserve closer examination. Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, Z.XIV.14 is a fragment of six folia that contains parts of the first three chapters of the text. Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Vitt. Em. 1631 is a composite codex that now also includes Tacitus’s Agricola and Germania. Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliothek van België, 3920-3923 is another composite manuscript. In all these three cases, it is difficult to ascertain what else might have been included in the ‘original’ compilations together with the Ephemeridos. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 72 Inf., on the other hand, is a historical compilation that contains works on the histories of different peoples such as Bede’s Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum, Paul the Deacon’s Historia Langobardorum and Jordanes’s De origine actibusque Getarum along with the Ephemeridos. Perhaps rather surprisingly, the remaining witnesses of the Ephemeridos that are dated to before the twelfth century are all – in one way or another – accompanied with the De excidio Troiae historia. The extent of the relationship of the two works in these manuscripts is discussed in more detail below.

A cursory study of the later witnesses reveals that there is no surviving witness to the full text of the Ephemeridos that is dated to the twelfth century and that there is only one witness from the thirteenth century. Yet, the transmission of the Ephemeridos expands towards the end of the Middle Ages. Over fifty manuscripts are dated to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and an overwhelming majority of these later manuscripts are from fifteenth-century Italy. This increase in interest during the later Middle Ages in Italy in particular is partly due to humanist scholar Francesco Petrarca (1304-1371), who was interested in gathering material with regard to the Trojan narrative. Petrarca not only commissioned the translation of Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey from Greek into Latin but he also had a copy of the Ephemeridos made and revived the name of Dictys Cretensis together with Livy (59 BCE-17 CE) and Florus (second half of the first century CE - second half of the second century CE).

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20 For a detailed description of this compilation, see Franceschini, ‘Intorno alla tradizione manoscritta di Ditti Cretese’, especially p. 157-164.
21 This is Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 367.
22 Faivre d’Arcier provides a brief analysis and a list of manuscripts that belong to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Histoire, p. 362-368. However, this list is not only incomplete, as he also confesses, but also unreliable as there are duplicate entries and shelfmarks read wrong.
Dares of Phrygia’s *De excidio Troiae historia*

The *De excidio Troiae historia* (henceforward *Historia*) attributed to Dares of Phrygia was undoubtedly the most influential and popular work about the Trojan War throughout the Latin Middle Ages and beyond. Claiming to be an eyewitness account, the *Historia* briefly narrates the Trojan War and the text is presented in forty-four chapters in the modern edition. The story, which includes events that extend over a period of more than ten years, opens with the expedition by Jason and the Argonauts to Colchis and concludes with the immediate aftermath of the fall of Troy. The work is introduced by a letter addressed to Sallust (*Sallustius Crispus*) by Cornelius Nepos – both of whom were authors of the first century BCE – serving as the preface of the translator into Latin. Beginning with the preface, the narrative takes an explicit stance against Homer, and the details throughout the work display a stark contrast to the Homeric tradition. The changes in the course of events and the characters seem to be a deliberate act on the part of the writer. For example, the famous scene of ‘Paris’s judgement’ is significantly altered. In particular, there is no Paris among the sons of Priam in the *Historia*. Instead, there is Alexander and the judgement scene is nothing but a dream of Alexander in which he is promised to be wed with the loveliest woman in Greece by Venus (Chapter 7). The chronology of events also is rather different. For example, Hector is killed early on, around the sixth or seventh year of the war in the *Historia* (Chapter 24) whereas he is still alive after nine years of siege in the *Iliad* and gets killed toward the very end. Parallel to these changes is the attempt to present the Trojan War in a rational and reliable manner from the point of view of an active participant in the events.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Ferdinand Meister, editor of the most recent edition of the *Historia*, agreeing with the ‘viri docti’ before him, argued that the text must have been originally written in Greek. He further stated that, following this Greek version, there must have been a longer version in Latin and that the present work was an abridgement. Although since then questions have been raised with regard to whether or not the text that survives today is an abridgement, it is now commonly assumed that the *Historia* probably had a Greek ‘original’ that was probably composed during the first century. On the other hand, the dating of the Latin “translation” is contested. Whereas Schissel von Fleschenberg and Frazer, Jr. provide roughly the sixth century for the dating of the extant Latin text, scholars like Griffin, Schlauch and Haight fix the date to sometime around the first half of

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the sixth century. More recently, however, Merkle argued that the Historia is ‘most likely to be dated to the fifth century’. The arguments in favour of an earlier Greek version for the Historia are based mostly on the evidence with regard to the Ephemeridos discussed above, which has been linked with the Historia in the popular tradition. Although the Ephemeridos is a translation of an earlier Greek text, partially known from papyri, and as much as the assumption of a Greek version of the Historia is appealing, despite the early references to Dares of Phrygia, the extant evidence does not in fact allow for a certain conclusion. It also is important to note that no Greek text or fragment that may be associated with the Historia has been identified to date. Although almost always these two works are discussed together by modern scholars, and they seem to be similar because of the topic, the content and style of the works as well as their transmission are quite different. The Historia, for example, is written mostly in the first person plural and includes references to the author in the third person even though it also claims to be an eyewitness account. On the other hand, the Ephemeridos is written literally like a diary in the first person singular. Furthermore, the research undertaken for this study suggests that the impact of the Ephemeridos on the Latin Middle Ages might have been exaggerated due to its similarity to (and assumed co-presence with) the Historia.

The material evidence with regard to the Historia is abundant; there are at least 191 identified surviving witnesses of the work in Latin. Despite this number, Meister only used a selection of eleven manuscripts in his 1873 edition, although he enumerated a number of other manuscripts that he knew contained the Historia. Of these eleven manuscripts, six are from the early medieval period whereas the rest range from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. In the mid-twentieth century, Courtney studied a further twenty manuscripts of the Historia, two in his master’s thesis and eighteen in his doctoral dissertation, which were not studied by

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29 For the Greek version of the Ephemeridos, see notes 1 and 5 above. Only Eisenhut denies the existence of a Greek version of the Historia. See Werner Eisenhut, ‘Spätantike Troja-Erzählungen – mit einem Ausblick auf die mittelalterliche Troja-Literatur’, Mittelalterliches Jahrbuch, 18, 1933, p. 1-28 (p. 18). Bate also speculates that perhaps ‘the original work of which Dares’ prose text is a condensation was written, not in Greek, but in Latin hexameters’; Alan Keith Bate, ‘Review of Una Redazione Poetica Latina Medi eval della Storia De Excidio Troiae di Darete Frigio by Marcello Godi’, Medium Aevum, 38, 1969, p. 345-347 (p. 47).


Meister, and collated fourteen of these with the 1873 edition in his dissertation. All of these manuscripts, however, are dated to the twelfth century or after. More recently, Munk Olsen listed forty-nine manuscripts dated to the twelfth century or before. The most comprehensive work, on the other hand, was carried out by Faivre d’Arcier, who identified 190 of the witnesses and created a partial stemma.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Origin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 7906 (Part iii) + Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 5018 (Part iii)</td>
<td>VIIIf</td>
<td>Lorsch (?), Germany (780s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metz, Bibliothèque municipale, 187*</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. Fr. 141</td>
<td>IX to Ix</td>
<td>Loire region, France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 427</td>
<td>Ix to Ix</td>
<td>around Reims, France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, VLF 113 (Part i)</td>
<td>Ix to Ix</td>
<td>Tours, France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut.66.40</td>
<td>Ixu</td>
<td>Monte Cassino, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Class. 3t [E.III.22] (Part i)</td>
<td>Ixu/Xu</td>
<td>Italy (?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 197 (Part iii)</td>
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<td>St Gall, Switzerland</td>
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<td>northern France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 601 (Part i)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>western Germany or Switzerland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 10307 (Part iii)</td>
<td>X to XI</td>
<td>Lorraine (?), north-eastern France</td>
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<td>Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, M 82 [66] (Part iii)</td>
<td>X to XI</td>
<td>northern France or Flanders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valenciennes, Bibliothèque municipale, 448 [420]</td>
<td>X to XI</td>
<td>north-eastern France or Flanders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint-Claude, Bibliothèque municipale, 2 (Part iii)</td>
<td>XI</td>
<td>central France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darmstadt, Hessische Landesbibliothek, 4216 [22] (Part iii)</td>
<td>XI to</td>
<td>western Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut.68.24</td>
<td>XI</td>
<td>central France</td>
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<td>Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 6503 (Part iv)</td>
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<td>Strasbourg, Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire, 14 (Part i)</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 3359 (Part v) + Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 2058</td>
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<td>Normandy, France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, Lat. X, 198 [3251]</td>
<td>XI to XII</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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Table 2: Earliest witnesses of the De excidio Troiae historia

33 This list is, however, not complete. See Munk Olsen, L’étude, I, p. 363–378 and III.2, p. 54–56.
34 He further lists fifty-four lost or destroyed manuscripts; see Faivre d’Arcier, Histoire, p. 111-117. For the stemma, see p. 332.
Twenty-one known witnesses of the *Historia* are dated to before the twelfth century (see Table 2). In the majority of the early medieval manuscripts that preserve Dares of Phrygia’s *Historia* the texts bear traces of Merovingian Latin. The traces of Merovingian spellings are found especially in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Lat. 7906 (Part iii) + Lat. 5018 (Part ii), which is the earliest extant manuscript dated to the end of the eighth century, as well as in Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 427 and Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, VLF 113 (Part i). Moreover, the majority of the earliest manuscripts were produced in some of the major centres of the Carolingian period, or in the surrounding regions along the River Rhine, such as Lorsch and St Gall. Considering that the copies made in Italy had Frankish exemplars, the evidence indicates an almost exclusively Frankish production and circulation in the early Middle Ages.

Five of these twenty-one witnesses only contain an excerpt of the *Historia*, the final chapter of the work, and do not identify the work as such. In all cases, the excerpt, which details the immediate aftermath of the Trojan War and the departure of the Trojans, is attached to the end of the *Ilias Latina*. This short text, however, stands alone in all the witnesses and always comes after the explicit that clearly states that Homer’s poem has ended. It is, however, certain that the two texts were copied at the same time in each case, perhaps from exemplars that already were laid out as such. The best surviving example for this arrangement is Valenciennes, Bibliothèque municipale, 448, in which the excerpt of the *Historia* is inserted immediately after the explicit on the same leaf that reads ‘finit Homeri liber’ (‘here ends the book of Homer’) by the same scribe (see Figure 1). Furthermore, one of the manuscripts that contain this excerpt, Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, M 82, is a composite manuscript that now also contains an eleventh-century witness to the full text of the *Historia*.

In addition to its association with the *Ilias Latina*, the *Historia* also is found together with other works that contain the Trojan narrative in early witnesses including Virgil’s *Aeneid* as well as Dictys’s *Ephemeridos* and the *Excidium Troiae*. In the earliest witness, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Lat. 7906 (Part iii) + Lat. 5018 (Part ii), the *Historia* is preceded by the first five books of the *Aeneid* and followed by the *Liber Historiae Francorum* and Bede’s *Chronicon*. In Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Lat. 10307, the *Historia* is copied on the external columns of the codex which were left for commentaries next to a ninth-century text of the *Aeneid*. In Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 427, on the other hand, the work follows a series of works by Fulgentius: the *Mythologiae*, the *Expositio sermonum antiquorum*, and the *Expositio Virgiliana contentiae*, which is an exposition on the works of Virgil including the *Aeneid*. In five manuscripts, the *Historia* is associated with the *Ephemeridos* and in one ninth-

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35 A number of spelling examples are provided in Faivre d’Arcier, *Histoire*, p. 226.
36 These are Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, 4343-4344 (Part ii), Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, M 82 (Part ii), Valenciennes, Bibliothèque municipale, 448, Saint-Claude, Bibliothèque municipale, 2 (Part iii), and Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut.68.24.
37 Explicits read as follows: ‘finit Homeri liber’ in Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, 4343-4344 and Valenciennes, Bibliothèque municipale, 448 (see Figure 1), ‘explicit liber Homeri poetae’ in Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, M 82, ‘explicit liber Homeri’ in Saint-Claude, Bibliothèque municipale, 2 and Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut.68.24.
century manuscript, Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 66.40, with the *Excidium Troie*.38

The rest of the witnesses have quite different combinations of works. Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. Fr. 141 consists of two fragments that include parts of the text that correspond to Chapters 9 to 33 in the modern edition. Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, VLF 113 is a composite manuscript that contains the *Aethici philosophi Scytheae cosmographia* and the *Historia Apollonii regis Tryri* as well as a series of hagiographical works. Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Class. 31 is another composite manuscript that now contains Festus’s *Breviarium rerum gestarum populi Romani* and Florus’s *Epitome de Tito Livio*. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Lat. 6503 is yet another composite manuscript but the codicological unit that contains the *Historia* also includes *Epistula Alexandri Macedonis ad Aristotelem*, a text which is associated with the Trojan narrative also in other manuscripts including another early composite witness, Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, Lat. X, 198. On the other hand, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Lat. 3359 (Part v) + Lat. 2058 contains the *Historia* and Augustine’s *De civitate Dei*.

Most of the witnesses of the *Historia*, more than 170 manuscripts, however, are from the later Middle Ages. And most of these later witnesses also survive in compilations. The work often is associated with such histories as Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia regum Britanniae* and Ademar of Chabannes’s *Chronicon Aquitanicum et Francicum*.39 The *Historia* also is included in other historical compilations where the texts selected for the compilation are not simply copied but also edited. One such work is Guido of Pisa’s six-book compilation entitled *De varis historiis*, which was completed in c. 1119. In addition to Dares of Phrygia’s *Historia*, Guido’s compilation includes historical works such as Paul the Deacon’s *Historia* as well as the *Excidium Troie*, to which we now can turn.40

38 The extent of the relationship of the late antique works in these manuscripts is discussed in more detail below.
40 The earliest witness to the compilation is Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, 3897-3919 dated to the second half of the twelfth century. Unfortunately, there is no study of the transmission of Guido’s compilation nor there is an edition. As far as I was able to establish, Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 881 and Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, IV F. 33, both of which are dated to the thirteenth to fourteenth century, are also copies of this compilation. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Lat. 3592 dated to the fourteenth century also seem to contain yet further reworked excerpts from one of the witnesses of Guido’s compilation.
The *Excidium Troie*

The anonymous *Excidium Troie* narrates the story of the fall of Troy beginning with the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and ending with the times of emperor Augustus. It has received very little attention from modern scholars even though its influence on other works, especially from the twelfth century onwards, has been established for some time.⁴¹ In both of its modern editions, it is argued that the story is divided into three parts: the destruction of Troy, the travels of Aeneas, and the foundation of Rome.⁴² Only one late-twelfth-century witness, however, has section divisions as such; in most witnesses, the text runs without any interruption, including section or chapter divisions.⁴³ The work contains an extended account of the so-called story of the judgement of Paris, 'the fullest narration in antiquity', and provides the wedding of Peleus and Thetis as the reason behind the beginning of the Trojan War.⁴⁴

The part that narrates the travels of Aeneas is derived from the *Aeneid* and there are several references to Virgil (70 BCE–19 BCE) himself throughout the text.⁴⁵ Yet, this part should not be considered as a mere summary of events as they are narrated in the *Aeneid*. There are several details where the author of the *Excidium Troie* departs from the version of Virgil and some parts of the story, including the entire Book VI of the *Aeneid*, are omitted.⁴⁶ Considering the length of this section in comparison to the full text of the *Excidium Troie*, Kretschmer argues that 'the emphasis is on the wanderings of Aeneas'.⁴⁷ Based on linguistic evidence, Bate suggests that 'the author was using a Greek commentary alongside Virgil’s

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⁴³ This is Evreux, Bibliothèque municipale, 111.
⁴⁵ This section is found on Chapters 24-70. For mentions of Virgil, see Chapters 15, 20, 22, 24, 26, 35, 43, 44, and 70.
⁴⁶ For a detailed discussion, see Atwood and Whitaker, ‘Introduction’, p. lix-lxxi.
poem’. With regard to the last section of the *Excidium Troie*, Bate also suggests that it ‘was probably based on a text of Greek origin’, stating that ‘its depiction of the early history of Rome has more in common with that of writers like Plutarch and Dionysius Halicarnassus than of Livy or other Roman authors’. Atwood and Whitaker also argue that the ‘narrative shows greater similarity to extant Greek accounts than to Latin ones’ and state that ‘the original author of the Latin version drew his account directly from a Greek source (or sources)’.

Apart from the reworkings of the Aeneid, despite the resemblance of different parts of the work to those of Greek accounts, the remainder of the sources for the *Excidium Troie* are unidentified. Even though the claim that there was an earlier Greek version of the *Excidium Troie* remains suspect, Atwood and Whitaker ultimately maintain that the work ‘presents a [...] classical sequence of events, which agrees fairly closely with the ancient Greek epic’. The work does not have any inter-textual relationships with either the *Ephemeridos* or the *Historia*, the two other late antique accounts in Latin. Indeed, the *Excidium Troie* provides such a significantly different version of events that Atwood and Whitaker argue that the *Excidium Troie* ‘shows no relation whatever to the accounts of Dares and Dictys’.

Both the dating and the place of production of the *Excidium Troie* present a challenge. With regard to dating, Atwood and Whitaker state that ‘the most likely period for the composition of such a work was [...] from the fourth to the sixth centuries’. Bate, on the other hand, assumes the sixth century, based again on linguistic evidence. More recently, however, Kretschmer suggested that the work might have been written as late as the seventh century. Even though they refrain from pinpointing a place of production of the *Excidium Troie*, with regard to the purpose of the composition Atwood and Whitaker argue that ‘its original Latin form was almost certainly intended as a handbook for the instruction of the young’. Bate also states that the work was ‘considered primarily as an educational aid by succeeding generations’. There is, however, no material evidence to support either of these claims and none of the extant manuscripts display such usage. Stating that the *Excidium Troie* presents a distinct tradition, Wallace-Hadrill, on the other hand, suggests a ‘Gaulish composition’ for the work. He, however, does not provide any grounds for this statement.

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The interest in the *Excidium Troie* and its manuscripts is relatively recent, and there is no comprehensive study of the manuscript transmission.\(^{60}\) The earliest edition, of Atwood and Whitaker in 1944, was based on three manuscripts.\(^{61}\) In 1957, Finch identified two more manuscripts.\(^{62}\) The most recent editor of the work, Bate, on the other hand, listed fourteen witnesses including the ones used by Atwood and Whitaker.\(^{63}\) More recently, Faivre d’Arcier drew attention to two more hitherto unstudied witnesses during his research on the *Historia*, and Kretschmer to four witnesses that contain a summary version.\(^{64}\)

The research for this study has thus identified twenty witnesses, most of which are dated to the twelfth century or after.\(^{65}\) In none of the witnesses the work is ascribed to an author. A number of them fall into distinct groups. The first includes four manuscripts, all of which contain a summary of the text.\(^{66}\) These seem to have descended from the same exemplar, a unique compilation made up of rather short summaries and paraphrases of historical texts including the *Liber historiae Francorum* and Paul the Deacon’s *Historia Romana*, in addition to the *Excidium Troie*, which Kretschmer dates to sometime in the mid-tenth century.\(^{67}\) Yet, only one witness, Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Hist. 3 (E.III.14), is dated to before the twelfth century. Dated to the mid-twelfth century, Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 1984 + Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 1984A also seems to have some connection with this group. Even though the text of the *Excidium Troie* is complete in this witness, it includes interpolations from the summary version.\(^{68}\)

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\(^{60}\) The interest in the *Excidium Troie* has only started with Atwood’s lengthy article about the ‘Rawlinson *Excidium Troie*’, where he argues that the *Excidium Troie* is one of the sources used for those works about Troy in vernacular literature from the twelfth century onwards. See ‘The Rawlinson *Excidium Troie*’, p. 379-404. However, there has been very little interest in the work in the past eighty years.


\(^{63}\) Bate, ‘Introduction’, p. 10-16.


\(^{65}\) It is likely that there are more witnesses, which remain unidentified, especially dated to after the twelfth century.

\(^{66}\) These are Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Hist. 3 (E.III.14), Oxford, Magdalen College, 14, Salisbury, Cathedral Library, 80 and Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb. lat. 961. Oxford, Magdalen College, 14 is apparently a direct copy of Salisbury, Cathedral Library, 80; however, none of the remaining manuscripts are direct descendants of any of the others. Kretschmer makes a brief analysis of the language used in the text of the *Excidium Troie* in the oldest witness, Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Hist. 3 (E.III.14), where he admits that this version is ‘mainly a summary’ that is ‘reduced to three folia’. See *Rewriting Roman History*, p. 185-187. For an edition of the summary version, see Kretschmer, ‘Aeneas Without the Gods’, p. 307-327.

\(^{67}\) See Kretschmer, *Rewriting Roman History*, especially p. 55-64.

\(^{68}\) The remaining works in the manuscript, which is a historical compilation, also show similarities with those of the manuscripts that contain the summary version; however, the exact relationship remains to be investigated. See Kretschmer, *Rewriting Roman History*, p. 46-55. Bate erroneously only gives Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 1984A as the witness in his list of manuscripts; however, the *Excidium Troie* is in Vat. lat. 1983 and, as it currently stands, Vat. lat. 1984A only includes
A second group of four witnesses is the result of Guido of Pisa’s six-book compilation mentioned above. Its version of the *Excidium Troie* also presents signs of reworking, such as re-edited sentences, alterations and additions albeit, to a much lesser extent than those of the first group that contain the summary version. Of the remaining witnesses, one is a very late copy, dated to the eighteenth century.\(^6\) Five are dated from the end of the twelfth through the fourteenth centuries and all include interpolations to the text that are seemingly independent from Guido’s compilation and from each other.\(^7\) Thus, only six witnesses of the *Excidium Troie*, one of which is the oldest witness to the summary version, are dated to before the twelfth century (see Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ott. lat. 1346</td>
<td>IX(^e-2/4)</td>
<td>France (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London, British Library, Arundel 375 (Part ii)</td>
<td>IX(^e)</td>
<td>north-western France (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut.66,40</td>
<td>IX(^e)</td>
<td>Monte Cassino, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque municipale, 186</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>St Bertin, Saint-Omer, France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Hist. 3 [E.III.14]</td>
<td>XI(^a)</td>
<td>Halberstadt, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c.1000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint-Claude, Bibliothèque municipale, 2 (Part iii)</td>
<td>XI</td>
<td>central France</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Earliest witnesses of the *Excidium Troie*

Despite the smaller number of surviving witnesses, their earlier date suggests that the *Excidium Troie* was initially more widely disseminated than the *Ephemeridos*. In addition, given that Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut.66,40 probably had a Frankish exemplar and the Carolingian dominion and influence in Italy in the ninth century, it also seems that the *Excidium Troie* was exclusively produced in Frankish centres until the twelfth century. Yet, unlike the case of the *Ephemeridos*, the places of production throughout the Frankish dominion for the witnesses of the *Excidium Troie* are more widespread. The evidence presented above further suggests that the *Excidium Troie* is either associated with other Trojan material such as the commentaries of Servius (Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque municipale, t86) and the *Ilias Latina* (Saint-Claude, Bibliothèque municipale, 2), or, more significantly, a number of leaves that got detached from the original compilation over the course of years. Furthermore, even though Bate dates the manuscript to the eleventh to twelfth century, it is now dated to c. 1150. See also David Whitton, ‘The *Annales Romani* and Codex Vaticanus Latinus 1984’, *Bullettino dell’Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo*, 84, 1973, p. 125-143.

\(^6\) This is Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 11029.

\(^7\) These are Charleville-Mézières, Bibliothèque municipale, 275; Eyreux, Bibliothèque municipale, 111; Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, 10046; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson D. 893 and Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 657. The version in the fourteenth-century Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, 10046 has been recently edited and translated into Spanish: *La Versión de *Excidium Troie* de un Códice Toledano (Madrid, BN MS 10046)*, ed. and trans. by Helena de Carlos Villamarín, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar, 70 (London: Department of Iberian and Latin American Studies, Queen Mary, University of London, 2012).
with historical works. In addition to being utilized as part of two historical compilations mentioned above, the *Excidium Troie* is found together with Jordanes’s *De origine acutibusque Getarum*, also known as *Getica*, in Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ott. lat. 1346 and with the anonymous *Liber historiae Francorum* and the *Annales Mettenses priores* in London, British Library, Arundel 375. Moreover, in Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plat.66,40, the *Excidium Troie* is found together as part of the same compilation with Dares of Phrygia’s *Historia*, which was also considered a ‘historical’ account of the Trojan War up until the seventeenth century.

### A Comparative Look at the Manuscript Evidence

There are no surviving witnesses dated to before the late eighth century that contain any of the late antique narratives about the Trojan War. Thus, there is almost no way of determining where and how these works circulated in the first few centuries following their composition. Yet there is plenty of surviving evidence from the early medieval period (see Figure 2). The three late antique accounts of the Trojan War are relatively short pieces, and because of that none of the texts comprise a codex by itself, although there is evidence (such as wear and tear in the first and final folia) to suggest that they may have also circulated in unbound quires, especially in the case of the *Historia*. Thus, these works survive either as part of a compilation or as fragments on unbound leaves. In some cases, it might look like the late antique accounts are bound with the rest of the works in a manuscript for practical purposes, such as the preservation of part of an earlier compilation. For example, Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Class. 31, mentioned above, is a composite manuscript of three different codicological units. The first unit contains Dares’s *Historia*, the second Festus’s *Breviarium rerum gestarum populi Romani* and the third Florus’s *Epitome de Tito Livio*. Even though each part was produced on a separate occasion, it was clearly put together, possibly as early as the eleventh century, as an extended history of the Romans, who, as is known, were linked to the Trojans. In other cases, the compilations seem to have a clearer thematic agenda in their original groupings. For example, in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Lat. 7906 (Part i) + Lat. 5018 (Part ii), the scribe concludes Dares’s *Historia* with ‘explicit gesta Troianorum’ (‘here ends “The deeds of the Trojans”’) and commences the *Liber historiae Francorum* with ‘incipit gesta Francorum’ (‘here begins “The deeds of the Franks”’). This arrangement would reflect the common belief that the Franks, like the Romans, traced their lineage back to the Trojans.71

When compared to the *Historia*, the *Ephemeridos* is generally identified as ‘the earlier and more comprehensive of the two’, ‘the longer and fuller work’, or ‘the rather later and duller’ one.72 As Griffin puts it, ‘[i]n general character and contents the De Excidio Troiae [sic] *Historia* of Dares Phrygus presents a marked contrast to Dictys’ *Ephemeris*’.73 As mentioned above, this also is the case for the *Excidium Troie*. One example might suffice. The cause of the war is presented quite differently in each text. In the *Historia* it is argued that Laomedon’s

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71 See Yavuz, ‘Transmission and Adaptation of the Trojan Narrative’.
72 Griffin, *Dares and Dictys*, p. 1; Frazer, Jr., ‘Introduction’, p. 3; Horsfall, ‘Dictys’s Ephemeris and the Parody of Scholarship’, p. 44.
73 Griffin, *Dares and Dictys*, p. 4.
murder and Hesione’s abduction, following Laomedon’s inhospitable treatment during the expedition by the Argonauts, led to Helen’s abduction and in turn caused the Trojan War. And the reader is assured that Helen indeed went with Alexander (Paris) willingly. In the *Ephemeridos*, Alexander abducts Helen for no apparent reason and commits a ‘crime’ (I.3). Furthermore, the Trojans are unhappy about Alexander’s behaviour and actions, and Alexander kills his own people over this conflict (I.8). The *Excidium Troie*, on the other hand, provides the wedding of Peleus and Thetis as the reason behind the war. The story presented in these works also differs in many other essential respects from the more familiar Homeric version. Whereas there are minor changes in details, such as from whence Helen is taken, there are also major changes such as the inclusion of certain characters that do not play any role in the Iliad, such as Troilus and Polyxena, or the exclusion of elements such as the friendship between Achilles and Patroclus, or the famous ‘wooden horse’.

Despite these differences with regard to the content and scope of the works, the manuscript evidence suggests that in more than one occasion, these works, although in different combinations, have been considered as part of the same compilation. There is no evidence to suggest that medieval compilers and scribes who copied either one of these works knew all of them and simply chose one to copy. But the extant evidence does demonstrate that in some cases copyists were aware of and had access to more than one version of the Trojan narrative and chose to compile them together. Furthermore, the evidence also suggests that in these compilations there was a selection process in which the works were seen to be complementary. For example, Dares of Phrygia’s *Historia* was compiled together with both Dictys of Crete’s *Ephemeridos* and the *Excidium Troie*. There are, however, no known manuscripts that contain both Dictys of Crete’s *Ephemeridos* and the *Excidium Troie* (see Figure 3).

![Fig. 2: Distribution of the earliest witnesses of the three late antique accounts between the eighth and eleventh centuries](image-url)

In modern scholarship, Dares of Phrygia is often compared with Dictys of Crete, and his *Historia* is coupled with the Dictys’s *Ephemeridos*. The two works, however, are quite different. As already seen, they differ in length or style and contents of the narrative. Furthermore, the manuscript evidence suggests not only that they did not exclusively circulate together either in the early Middle Ages or later on, but also that they were not transmitted in the same ways or produced in the same places. Yet, Spence, for example, argues that ‘references to Dares do not necessarily reflect a choice between the two tales [i.e. the *De excidio Troiae historia* and the *Ephemeridos belli Troiani*] but, rather, suggest that the two late antique tales were often thought of as one and referred to as “Dares,” as for example, in the works of Isidore and Ordericus Vitalis’. A similar assumption was also made by Faivre d’Arcier who argues that Isidore perhaps read a manuscript that contained both works ‘puisqu’il confond Darès et Dictys dans les Étymologies’. The two authors mentioned by these scholars, Isidore of Seville (c. 560-636) and Ordericus Vitalis (1075-c. 1142) both reference Dares of Phrygia in their works. Isidore of Seville names Dares among the first authors of histories in his *Etymologiae*: ‘Apud gentiles vero primus Dares Phrygius de Graecis et Trojanis historiam edidit, quam in foliis palmarum ab eo conscriptam esse ferunt’ (‘Among the pagans, Dares of Phrygia was first to produce a history, on the Greeks and Trojans, which

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75 Faivre d’Arcier, *Histoire*, p. 149.

they say he wrote down on palm leaves’), Ordericus Vitalis, on the other hand, opens his Historia ecclesiastica naming a series of auctores and refers to Dares as a ‘gentilium historiographus’ (‘historiographer of the pagans’). In both cases, the authors do not mention the name of Dictys and there is no evidence to suggest that they ever even knew of the Ephemeridos. There is thus not a single piece of evidence, either textual or material, to support the claim that whoever knew or mentioned Dares of Phrygia must have also known Dictys of Crete and his work, especially for the early Middle Ages.

The reverse, however, might be true: in six of the ten early witnesses of the Ephemeridos, the work is associated with the Historia. Given that three out of the remaining four witnesses of the Ephemeridos are either fragmentary or composite manuscripts, that is, it is not known whether these witnesses also once contained the Historia, having both works in six manuscripts is significant. Yet, the association of the two works in the extant witnesses is more complicated than a case of two texts simply appearing together. Among the early witnesses, Metz, Bibliothèque municipale, 187* and St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 197 (Part m) include the Historia and a summary of the Books V and VI of the Ephemeridos appended to the end of the text. This supplementary text, which details the return of the Trojans and Greeks following the Trojan War, does not bear the name of Dictys in any of the surviving manuscripts. The earliest witness is the ninth-century Metz, Bibliothèque municipale, 187*, which was destroyed in 1944 in a bombing raid during World War II. All the remaining witnesses, however, seem to be related and derive from the same exemplar, which may have been the Metz manuscript, which attests to the existence of this summary as early as the ninth century. It is likely that this witness was also related to the tenth-century St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 197 (Part m) as well as to the rest of the surviving witnesses. It is safe to assume, moreover, that those who read this short appendix to the Historia did not necessarily recognize it as part of the Ephemeridos, especially given the more limited circulation of the latter work.

St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 197, which contains this extended version of the Historia followed by the summary of Ephemeridos, is a composite manuscript. The text of the Historia is found in its third codicological unit dated to the beginning of the tenth century. Its first codicological unit, which is dated to the second half of the ninth century, also includes a

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76 Isidori Hispalensis episcopi, Etymologiarum sive originum: libri XX, ed. by W. M. Lindsay, Scriptorum classicorum bibliothecae Oxoniensis, 2 vols, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911, i, I.42.
78 For textual evidence on Ordericus Vitalis’s reliance solely on Dares of Phrygia’s Historia with regard to passages on Troy in his work, see, for example, the brief discussion in F. M. Warren, ‘The Story of Troy in Orderic Vital’, Modern Language Notes, 28, 1913, 203-205.
79 There are ten more witnesses to this combination from the later Middle Ages: Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 29; Charleville-Mézières, Bibliothèque municipale, 275; Douai, Bibliothèque municipale, 880; Douai, Bibliothèque municipale, 882; Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magl. XXIII.136; London, British Library, Add. 10094; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Lat. 4286; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, N.a.l. 1.423; Uppsala, Universitetsbibliothek, C. 198 and Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 657.
copy of the full text of the *Ephemeridos*. These two units are definitely products of different hands. It is unclear, however, when these two parts were put together. The entry in St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 267 (Part i), a catalogue of the books in the abbey library in the third quarter of the ninth century, which reads ‘Hystoria[m] dictis [et] daretis in I sced[a]’ (‘The history of Dictys and Dares in one section’), is sometimes thought to refer to Cod. Sang. 197. Yet, given the dating of the part of Cod. Sang. 197 that contains the *Historia*, not only the attributed date for this catalogue entry but even the dating of this manuscript that contains a series of registers of books is too early for the catalogue entry to denote the composite St Gall manuscript. It might be the case, however, that there was an earlier codex that included both works and that the part that contains the *Historia* had to be replaced at a later stage. Furthermore, the text of the *Historia* as found in St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 197 (Part m) is so divergent from the rest of the surviving witnesses that it cannot even be confidently grouped with posited recensions of the text. Therefore, even though as a composite manuscript, St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 197, attests to the existence of these two works at the same place, perhaps even put together as part of the same codex at an earlier date, its impact on the earlier transmission of both works is rather limited.

Nor are the Metz and St Gall manuscripts the only early manuscripts to contain both texts. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 601 (Part i), for example, contains the prologue and a very short summary of contents of the *Ephemeridos* on f. 1r-1v which are immediately followed by the full text of the *Historia*. Thus, even though this witness is proof of knowledge of both works at a certain point in tenth century, the scribe either did not have access to the full text of the *Ephemeridos* or was more interested in the version related in the *Historia*. In addition, Strasbourg, Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire, 14 (Part i) is the only manuscript where one gets close to finding both texts in full by the same scribe. This eleventh-century manuscript contains the *Ephemeridos*, whose beginning is now missing, followed by the *Historia*. The same hand continues only until the third chapter of the latter and the rest of the text is supplied in a fifteenth-century hand. There is another, similar case with Darmstadt, Hessische Landesbibliothek, 4216, which contains two separate eleventh-century fragments, one of which contains the *Ephemeridos* and the other the *Historia*. Even though they are written by two significantly different hands, Staub argues that these fragments originated in

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80 The second codicological unit is a thirteenth-century addition of two poems on p. 92, which originally was part of the first codicological unit. Therefore, it is not relevant to the current discussion here.

81 The manuscript itself is dated to 883-896. The section that contains this entry is found on p. 32, among the list of books given to the abbey by Abbot Grimalt (841-872), which is titled ‘Istos autem libros domnus Grimoldus de suo dedit ad sanctum Gallum’: ‘And those books lord Grimalt granted from his own resources to St Gall’. See David Ganz, ‘The Libraries, Librarians and Library Catalogues of Reichenau and St. Gall’, in *Carolingian Culture at Reichenau & St. Gall* <http://www.stgallplan.org/en/tours_libraries.html> [accessed 17 January 2013].

82 See Faivre d’Arcier, *Histoire*, p. 208, where St Gall witness is identified as a ‘manuscrit isolé’.

the same scriptorium from the same codex. Yet, one of his arguments for these two fragments being part of the same codex is the existence of similar compilations, for which the evidence is very weak.

The evidence from the earliest manuscripts suggests that even if the two works do appear together in a few manuscripts it cannot be argued that they usually circulated together in the early Middle Ages. Additionally, the posited origins of the manuscripts indicate that these appearances were localised in western Germany-Switzerland. This thus raises serious doubts regarding the assumed co-presence of the *Ephemeridos belli Troiani* and the *De excidio Troiae historia* throughout the Middle Ages and requires consideration of whether or not there are grounds for the coupling of Dares and Dictys in modern scholarship and the conflation of their two quite different stories. Furthermore, with the beginning of the twelfth century, whereas there is a huge increase in the number of surviving manuscripts for the *Historia*, this is certainly not the case for the *Ephemeridos*. Apart from these instances in the early medieval manuscripts, when the witnesses that contain the summary (of which ten survive from the later Middle Ages) are excluded, the *Historia* and the *Ephemeridos* are found together as part of the same compilation only in five manuscripts dated to the fourteenth century and after.\(^84\) Considering there are over 170 witnesses for the *Historia* from the later Middle Ages, this is a significantly low number, making up less than three per cent of the surviving witnesses.

Another misapprehension deriving from the supposed association of the *Historia* and the *Ephemeridos* manifests itself in the discussions of the transmission of the *Ilias Latina*. Marshall states that ‘it seems that from the tenth (possibly the ninth) century on, the *Ilias Latina* was transmitted with other works dealing with Troy, especially Dares and Dictys Cretensis’ and that in later centuries it ‘circulated in different company’.\(^85\) There is not a single manuscript, original compilation or composite, however, that is dated to before the twelfth century in which the *Ilias Latina* and the *Ephemeridos* are found together.\(^86\) In fact, other than Saint-Claude, Bibliothèque municipale, 2 which also contains the *Excidium Troie* in addition to the last chapter of *Historia* attached to the end of the *Ilias Latina*, as far as the late antique accounts of the Trojan narrative are concerned, the *Ilias Latina* is only associated with the *Historia*, and this may well be one of the reasons that the *Ilias Latina* survived the early Middle Ages.

When the witnesses of the *Excidium Troie* are studied, in addition to the occurrence in Saint-Claude, Bibliothèque municipale, 2, the work is found together with the *Historia* only in Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut.66.40. This ninth-century witness is the only early medieval manuscript where the two works are contained in full as part of the same

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\(^84\) These are Belluno, Biblioteca Lolliniana e Gregorgiana, 42; Durham, NC, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, 112; Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, II.VII.125; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borg. lat. 413 and Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, Lat. X. 105 [3305]. Another manuscript, Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ott. lat. 156, dated to the fifteenth century which contains the full text of the *Ephemeridos* also contains the first few lines of the preface of the *Historia*.


\(^86\) Later manuscripts have not been examined for this specific case. It is very likely that there are no manuscripts at all that contain both works.
compilation; however, when the surviving manuscripts of later dates also are taken into consideration, it is seen that many witnesses of the *Excidium Troie* also contain the *Historia*. As seen above, there are only sixteen identified witnesses that contain the *Excidium Troie* in part or in full, as opposed to the summary version. In three of them, the *Excidium Troie* is the sole component and there are no accompanying texts. In eight out of the remaining thirteen witnesses, the compilation also includes Dares’s *Historia*. Admittedly, four of these are the result of Guido of Pisa’s early twelfth-century compilation mentioned above. But the remaining four, including one of the earliest witnesses, the ninth-century Florence manuscript, do not only include both works but also have no direct interrelationships. 87

In light of this evidence, a few general observations may be made. In comparison to the other two late antique accounts, the *Historia* attributed to Dares of Phrygia had a much wider circulation both in terms of quantity and geographical range. In the majority of the surviving manuscripts, all three of these works were associated with different and mostly historical texts throughout the Middle Ages. And, despite – or perhaps because of – their differences in narrating the story of Troy and the Trojans, they were also included fairly often in the same manuscript compilations. It should be underlined, however, that the *Historia* was the common denominator in these compilations. The interest in the Trojan narrative, especially in the Frankish regions, in the early Middle Ages and specifically the interest in Dares and his *Historia* quite probably contributed to the circulation and survival of the other two late antique accounts. This brief study of the manuscripts of the late antique accounts of the Trojan War demonstrates not only that texts that travel together can display how narratives are transmitted, but also how they were employed and received, not to mention hyper- and inter-textual relationships among the works being transmitted. 88

Taking into consideration the entirety of the contents of manuscripts, especially those that are ‘original’ compilations, and studying the materiality of manuscripts can open up new avenues in understanding the ways manuscripts were produced, disseminated and received, and the manner in which texts were transmitted.

87 The later witnesses that include both works are Charleville-Mézières, Bibliothèque municipale, 275, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, 10046, and Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 657.