**Project Troia**

"The hill lies at the crossing between the Orient and southwest Europe, and between the Aegean and the Black Sea. Because of its nearly continuous occupation for more than 3000 years, this site is an important point of reference for the chronology of the ancient world from the early Bronze Age through the Roman Empire." (Project Troia Website 2010) This website contains a chronicle of a long ranging project at the site now commonly accepted as that of ancient Troy. Project Troia began in 1988 with the resurrection of archeological excavations by Manfred Korfmann after a long hiatus following the exit of Carl Blegen in 1938. Seven goals for the project are listed on the website. Their central theme is the scholarly application of modern investigative techniques. From the examination of previously found evidence at the site, up to and including newly discovered artifacts, the systematic survey has uncovered a wealth of information. For many years the central argument against the identification of the site as the legendary Troy was its relatively unimpressive size. "Troy 6 and 7a which might be considered a chronological match for Homer's Troy, were wretched little settlements which could make no serious claim to the title of the city" (The City and Antiquity, Kolb 1984) One of the most significant discoveries made by Korfmann and his team was the evidence of settlement outside the walls of the citadel. The city was shown to be many times larger than originally thought. These discoveries forced a reconsideration of previously held conceptions and seem to have cemented the historical identification of the mythic kingdom. The existence of the city and the study of the artifacts therein clearly establish both the historicity of the site and its highly probable connection to the Homeric Epics.

Troy was located by Heinrich Schliemann at the site previously known as Hisarlik. He was directed to the location by a very helpful landowner named Frank Calvert, who had been digging in a mound on his property. Schliemann quickly proclaimed that he had found the lost city of Troy. He triumphantly highlighted the grave goods he had taken from a level that would later become known as Troy II. He draped his young wife in "Priam's Treasure". She is famously photographed wearing "The Jewels of Helen". When Schliemann leaves, Wilhelm Dörpfeld takes over the excavation. It is Dörpfeld who is responsible for early identification of the multi-level habitation on the site. He identified the probable placement of Homeric Troy as level VIIa. He also found evidence that there had been destruction by fire. Further study of the scene was undertaken in 1932 by Carl Blegen, under the auspices of the University of Cincinnati. By this time there was a more established chronology of Bronze Age Civilization which may have assisted in categorization of the site. Blegen confirmed Dorpfeld's theory that the level labeled VIIa was the site of the ancient city. He also notes the presence of large storage jars and other objects which may have been used in preparation for a siege. "We believe that Troy VIIa has yielded actual evidence showing that the town was subjected to siege, capture and destruction by hostile forces at some time in the general period assigned by Greek tradition to the Trojan War, and that it may be safely identified as the Troy of Priam and Homer." (Carl Blegen quote, Woodford p. 114) When Blegen leaves Troy in 1938, the excavation is halted and is not resumed until fifty years later.

The most recent TROIA-CAMPAIGN excavation information is from 2011. It indicates that the program was to continue working on an evaluation of previously found objects. There is also an effort to create a comprehensive publication of artifacts in an excavation series titled "Studia Troica". In order to make the data more accessible to researchers, the University of Cincinnati has placed pottery data online. The information can be found at: <http://classics.uc.edu/troy/GRBPottery>. In January 2011 the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism announced a contest for the architectural design of a building to hold the long anticipated Excavation Museum at Troia. In 2001 - 2002 there was an exhibit titled Troia - Dream and Reality. An exhibition description clearly indicates both the historical and mythic facets of the city, "The dream of Troia is seen in Homer's Iliad, the Trojan war, and the treatment of these topics by authors and artists in antiquity, through the Middle Ages up to present day. These myths are contrasted by the reality of the prehistoric mound at the Dardanelles as it has been unearthed by excavations from the time of Heinrich Schliemann up to the present day." (Project Troia Website 2011) In addition to Korfman's discovery of the city outside the citadel, which established the geographic scope of the city, there have been numerous other enlightening moments. Close analytical inspection of the site has produced another earmark accomplishment of Project Troia. Troy IV and V have been identified as Anatolian in origin. Troy had been thought of as Mycenaean by Homer, a perception which remained essentially unchallenged until recently. This conclusion has been based on a preponderance of archaeo-biological evidence. Some of the features which point to Anatolian origins are; defensive ditches, mud brick perimeter walls, towers on perimeter walls and pottery shards found in a style called Gray Minion ware. All these features are present in what we know of Anatolian Civilization, none are typically seen as indicative of the Mycenean Culture.

"The modern method of radiocarbon-dating is indispensable for an exact chronology. This method, however, was not yet available for the earlier researchers Schliemann, Dörpfeld and Blegen." (Project Troia Website 2011) The scientific study of artifacts by Project Troia has helped to answer questions which have plagued seekers of the city for more than a millennium. Through the application of scientific principles, we now have a more complete depiction of the archaeological history of Troy than even Homer could claim. He described the city in distinctly Greek terms, yet we now have evidence of the Anatolian culture that thrived on the site. The longevity of the culture also provides an invaluable resource in its comparison to contemporary civilizations. The discovery of Troy was made during the scramble for ancient treasure that characterized the nineteenth century. Schliemann was convinced that the Homeric Epics were based in reality. After his success finding Mycenae he was off in search of Troy. The announcement of his discoveries was a connection to the historical reality of seemingly mythological accounts. In the years that have followed the discovery of Troy, a methodology has developed that allows contemporary archaeologists to benefit from data produced by many sources. The scientific method was an ideal model and has become a fixture in modern archaeology. It has provided a system for categorization of art and artifacts from the dawn of man through modern history. As we discover and decipher more of the ancient world, the need for critical examination will only increase. Project Troia, with its seven distinct objectives, will continue to provide the framework for generations of archaeological surveys to come.