CARMEN HEROUM:

GREEK EPIC IN ROMAN FRIEZES

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Abstract

Roman wallpainting has been the subject of innumerable studies from the eighteenth century to the present day, but the epic-themed friezes of Late Republican and Early Imperial Italy have been comparatively neglected throughout this history of scholarship. This thesis therefore seeks to examine the three painted and stucco *Iliad* friezes from Pompeii, all found on the Via dell'Abbondanza, and the *Odyssey* frescoes from a house on the Esquiline in Rome, as four examples of a type which had a long history in the Graeco-Roman world, even if their survival in the archaeological record is scant.

The primary aim of the study is to understand each frieze in the knowledge of how they might have been regarded in antiquity, as elucidated in Pausanias' commentaries on Polygnotus' Iliupersis and Nekyia frescoes in Delphi, and to understand their extra-textual insertions and spelling discrepancies not as artistic errors but as reflections of the geographical and chronological contexts in which the friezes were displayed. Through detailed study of their iconography and epigraphy, alongside contemporary writers' discussion of the epic genre and its specific concerns for a Roman audience, this study aims to show that the most fruitful course of enquiry pertaining to the friezes lies not in an argument about whether they are entirely faithful to the Homeric epics or depart from them in puzzling ways, but in the observation that reliance on the text and free play on it go hand in hand as part of the epic reception-culture within which these paintings belong.

For Grandma and Grandpa.

To whom I owe my education and straight teeth.

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List of Abbreviations

AJA	American Journal of Archaeology. 1897–
AJP	American Journal of Philology. 1880–
ANWR	Aufitieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. 1972–
BEFAR	Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome. 1877–
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum. 1862–
HSPh	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology. 1890–
JDAI	Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. 1918–
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies. 1880–
JRA	Journal of Roman Archaeology. 1988–
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies. 1911–
LIMC	Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae. 1981–
LTUR	Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae. 1993–1999
Mon.Piot.	Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot. 1984–
PPM	Pompei, Pitture e Mosaici. 1990–2003
PTL	Poetics and Theory of Literature. 1976–
RHAA	Revista de História da Arte e Arqueologia. 1994–
RM	Römische Mitteilungen (Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen lnstituts. Römische Abteilung). 1916–
TAPhA	Transactions of the American Philological Association. 1870–

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Introduction

The discrepancies between texts, reliefs and the text of Homer have long vexed scholars.

(Nicholas Horsfall, 1979)

This thesis seeks to re-examine the long-neglected domestic, epic-themed, painted friezes of Roman Italy by interacting with and experiencing them as the ancient viewer would have done, as suggested by ancient commentaries on comparable artworks. The epic-themed frieze is defined by the presence of a continuous, pictorial rendering of a sequence of episodes relating to the Trojan War, specifically from the narrative of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer, and is often decorated with painted labels. Three relatively intact examples are currently *in situ* in houses in Pompeii and one from Rome is now displayed in the Vatican Museums. Since all can be dated to within around a century of each other and have a relatively discrete geographical distribution they will form the basis of this study.[1]

Although the relationship between epic and art has recently undergone something of a resurgence with the publication of Lovatt and Vout's edited volume on *Epic Visions* (2013) and two extensive studies on the Tabulae Iliacae (Squire, 2011; Petrain, 2014), the four friezes have never been thoroughly investigated as part of a distinct genre of Roman art. This thesis will therefore give a detailed analysis of the content, structure and iconography of each and conclude that the Roman 'epic frieze' of the first centuries BC and AD, following a tradition of earlier Greek friezes and extended frescoes on Trojan War themes, engaged in free play with the narrative of the relevant epic alongside rendering its minutiae pictorially. Whereas the extra-Homeric iconographic and epigraphic features evident within each have traditionally been seen as artistic errors or simply brushed away in scholarly puzzlement (Gigante, 1979), this study will argue that they instead reflect the concerns and interests of the Roman homeowner and are indicative of the fluidity of the epic reception-culture within which these paintings belong. Although direct comparison of epic-themed artworks with the Homeric account has received criticism in recent scholarship (Squire, 2011), detailed reading of Pausanias and Philostratus the Elder, the latter described by Elsner as "self-confessedly an education in how to look at pictures",

[1] There is suggestion of other, much more fragmentary epic friezes in other parts of the Roman Empire, for example in Otford, Kent (Sevenoaks Society (1927; 1928); Ling (2007) 84) and Cologne (Thomas, 1987).

confirms that this approach was a fundamental recourse in the ancient viewing of art through Roman and Greek eyes[2] and is not only a legitimate course of enquiry (Newby, 2009) but arguably the most authentic and historically accurate means of interacting with the narrative friezes.

Structure

The paintings will be addressed thematically and geographically and proceed in the following order: chapters one to three will analyse the *Iliad* friezes in the House of the Cryptoporticus (mid to late first century BC), House of the Iliac Shrine (60s–70s AD) and the House of Octavius Quartio (60s–70s AD), all situated on the Via dell'Abbondanza in Pompeii; chapter four will investigate the *Odyssey* frescoes from the Esquiline in Rome (mid to late first century BC), which are now displayed in the Sala di Nozze Aldobrandine in the Vatican Museums. Focusing on the minutiae of the paintings is key to their interpretation and so chapters one to four will reassess the traditional and widely-accepted interpretations of individual scenes and correct faulty identifications whenever possible. As three out of the four were found to be in a fragmentary state at excavation I will offer a repositioning of fallen fresco fragments and propose reconstructions of entire friezes where evidence is available to do so. The framework and terminology used in the interpretation of individual episodes is presented below ('Methodology') and where extra-Homeric insertions are found in the iconography and epigraphy proposals will be made to identify their meaning.

Chapters five and six will address the formal and practical components of the paintings and argue that, although stylistically and architecturally they conform to a long tradition of Hellenistic and Classical Greek friezes from a range of contexts, their iconographic and epigraphic details strongly suggest that they are unique compositions of the Late Republican and Early Imperial chronological context in which they were displayed; and thus not copies or adaptations of earlier Greek or South Italian 'originals'. The extensive secondary literature on this theme, which forms the majority of the scholarship on the friezes and, in particular, the *Odyssey* frescoes, will be examined in detail and counter-arguments provided. The marble *Iliad* frieze from the Temple of Apollo Smintheus in the Troad, being the only extant example of a narrative frieze with a Trojan War theme to survive from the Greek world, will also be examined using the methodology

[2] Elsner (2002) 14.

applied in chapters one to four and will be shown to contain the same range of features pertaining to its interaction with the epic text as the Roman friezes.

The final chapter will examine the specific terminology used by authors of the Late Republic and Early Empire when discussing the epic genre and analyse how the underlying concepts may have affected the nature and content of the very few narrative friezes found on the walls of Roman houses (and one tomb) from the first centuries BC and AD. Investigation of the Pompeian single fresco panels with Trojan War themes both in isolation and as part of a programmatic combination of episodes will contribute to the argument that the continuous frieze format facilitates the conveyance of extended narrative as told through the formulaic sequencing of scenes from the epic work, and it is within this structured configuration that the artist was afforded the fluidity to include iconographic and epigraphic details extraneous to the Homeric account, but certainly intended for the viewer's notice.

Literature survey

The study of Homeric subjects in Classical art has a long history with key studies focusing largely on Greek art, as found in Bulas (1929), Scherer (1963), Schefold (1972; 1975), Woodford (1993), Snodgrass (1998) and Lowenstam (2008) to give a small selection. The Roman *Iliad* friezes have not been subject to a dedicated study since the publication of Vittorio Spinazzola's *Pompei alla luce degli scavi nuovi di via dell'Abbondanza (anni 1910-1923)*, which was published posthumously in 1953 under the editorship of Salvatore Aurigemma, and has informed all subsequent scholarship on the friezes. Spinazzola's interpretations will be discussed throughout chapters one to three and, when relevant, alternative identifications will be proposed which, in one instance, fundamentally alters the narrative flow of the frieze in question. Suggestions for the reconstruction of individual episodes will similarly be based on comparable scenes in extant Roman art but not with the intention of seeking an original model from which all subsequent representations stem, for which there is negligible evidence, but with a view to understanding how ancient artists worked and went about composing lengthy artworks of this nature.

The surveys offered since Spinazzola's publication have taken the form of brief overviews within wider studies of Roman painting, including Beyen (1960), Brilliant (1984), Clarke (1991), Ling (1991), Scagliarini Corlàita (1997), Croisille (2005) and Santoro (2005), or as mines of pictorial evidence in treatises on the existence of illustrated scrolls or

Bilderbücher on Homeric themes: Bianchi Bandinelli (1955); Weitzmann (1959) and Schefold (1975; 1983). Discussion of the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine and the function of the sacellum in which it is displayed is found in Blanc (1997) and the 'split screen' interaction between the Hercules and *Iliad* friezes in the House of Octavius Quartio is analysed by Lorenz (2013). Most recently Squire (2011; 2014) and Petrain (2013; 2014) have discussed the *Iliad* friezes in studies concerning the representation and ordering of epic on the Tabulae Iliacae.

Each of the above, employing a range of methodologies and posing disparate investigatory questions, will be addressed in relevant chapters, but none attempt a synthetic study of the friezes unto themselves and generally use them as comparanda for investigation of other artworks. Often, however, they are entirely ignored and not one of the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii is referred to, even in passing, in Leach's study of continuous narrative in Roman art (1988) or, perhaps most astonishingly, in the most recent, comprehensive publication on Graeco-Roman painting: *The Cambridge History of Painting in the Classical World* (2014).

The *Odyssey* frescoes have received considerably more scholarly attention than their Iliadic cousins and the vast bibliography ranges from the earliest published accounts of their discovery in Matranga (1852) and Gerhard (1852) to Biering's monograph examining the painting and its various phases of restoration by means of UV lighting (1995). New fragments have been discovered in the intervening years: Vlad-Borrelli (1961) and Maurina (1999). The analysis of the frescoes in chapter four will therefore incorporate observations made by other commentators on the iconography and epigraphy yet overwhelmingly they have formed the focus of studies seeking to recover the hypothetical Hellenistic or Classical 'original' upon which they are often argued to have been based. The seminal articles on this theme are Andreae (1962) and von Blanckenhagen (1962), with the influence of the latter felt throughout all subsequent scholarship on the frescoes: Pollitt (1986), Andreae (1996); Coarelli (1998), Rambaldi (2001); Croisille (2005); Bastos Marques and Regis Cavicchioli (2009). Comparatively few have argued against this widely-held assumption: Dawson (1944); Biering (1995); Lowenstam (1995); Thomas (1995) and O'Sullivan (2007). Chapters five and six of this thesis will therefore offer a critique of the methodologies of those who apply *Kopienkritik* to seek hypothetical originals behind the Roman friezes and will instead argue, through detailed analysis of their iconography and epigraphy, that the the friezes are original creations of the Roman era and not copies of earlier Greek or South Italian originals.

The study of Greek mythological subjects in Roman wallpainting and their function as a visual symbol of erudition has received considerable attention, with early studies including Schefold (1952) and Thompson (1960–1), and more recently Bergmann (1994; 1995; 1999; 2007), Zanker (1999) and Leach (2004). Much debate has addressed the relationship between art and text and, although Lorenz (2008) and Muth (1998) largely deny the relationship between wallpaintings and mosaics and literature, this study concurs with Newby's suggestion that "analysis of the use made of images in literature and rhetoric can … help us to map out the interpretative possibilities."[3] Investigation in chapter seven will therefore consider whether a discernible relationship with the epic text can be discerned from all Roman wallpaintings with Trojan War themes and will seek to show that only the epic frieze format can be successfully argued to reflect the intention of a Roman homeowner to recall a literary work on their walls.

Methodology

Pausanias and the paintings of Polygnotus: a framework for description

Crucial to our understanding of the epic-themed friezes under consideration in this thesis is Pausanias' commentary on Polygnotus' lengthy paintings (γραφὰς) on the Fall of Troy (Paus. 10.25.7 – 10.27.4) and Odyssean Nekyia (Paus. 10.28.1 – 10.31.12) decorating the Lesche of the Knidians at Delphi. The level of detail with which Pausanias, writing in the second century AD, was able to describe the figural and epigraphic details of the fifth century frescoes is invaluable for helping us to interpret some of the more puzzling features of the Roman friezes. Although both series were clearly intended to *evoke* the account found in the Trojan War epics, their artists' aim was clearly not to *illustrate* them as the insertion of extra-textual protagonists, names and even entire episodes attests.[4] Indeed, one of the difficulties with the Iliupersis painting is that Pausanias attributes two authors to the most relevant epic(s): Lescheos (Paus. 10.25.4, 8, 9; .26.1, 4, 7; 27.1, 2) and Stesichorus (Paus. 10.26.1; 27.2) and it is never explicitly said (ie through the accompanying epigram[5]) that the painting is based on the epic. However, the frequency with which Pausanias refers to

[3] Newby (2016) 139.

[4] Pausanias also mentions another series of paintings, probably frescoes, by Polygnotus which were displayed in Athens (Paus. 1.22.6-7) but, since they are not discussed in detail, will be addressed briefly in chapter five.

[5] γράψε Πολύγνωτος, Θάσιος γένος, Ἀγλαοφῶντοςυἱός, περθομένην Ἰλίου ἀκρόπολιν (Polygnotus, a Thasian by birth, son of Aglaophon, painted a picture of Troy's citadel being sacked – Paus. 10.27.4)

Lescheos (Stesichorus appears to be cited as a contrast) as well as lines such as "So it is plain that Polygnotus would not have represented them so wounded, if he had not read the poem of Lescheos" (Paus. 1.25.4) suggests that he had the epic in mind when viewing the fresco.

Of course, in the *Description of Greece* we are experiencing the Polygnotan frescoes through the (perhaps distorting) filters of not only Pausanias' initial (upon viewing) but subsequent (upon writing) interpretations, but his commentary is the closest the modern observer can come to having a contemporary description and analysis of extended ancient artworks with epic themes.[6] To give a framework to the analysis the following terminology will be used to define the different means by which ancient viewers may have interacted with the epic-themed artworks on display in their houses, temples and meeting places. Ziva Ben Porat refers to *markers*, which belong to or are closely related to a referent text which, in this context, would be the written epic, the most immediate form of which is direct quotation from the original source.[7] In this study's archaeological context direct quotation can be both textual, in the use of labels applied to the images, but also pictorial in the visual representation of the details of the epic text. Pausanias makes constant reference to and comparison with epic literature with regard to both the epigraphic and pictorial details of the Polygnotan frescoes, confirming that the educated viewer was meant to recall – perhaps even compare and contrast – the written text when viewing them. In his description of the Nekyia, for example, he describes Tantalus "enduring all the pains that Homer speaks of" (Paus. 10.31.12) which, being a fairly lengthy account in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 11.582-592), may have been a reasonably detailed visual account of the torment and the writer clearly deemed it to be an accurate representation of Homer's words. Other works from the Epic Cycle are also recalled:

> Palamedes, as I know from reading the epic poem *Cypria*, was drowned when he put out to catch fish, and his murderers were Diomedes and Odysseus (10.31.2).
>
> Near Helenus is Meges, who is wounded in the arm, as Lescheos of Pyrrha, son of Aeschylinus, describes in the *Sack of Troy* (10.25.5).

[6] Preztler notes, "Once Pausanias had collected enough material, he had to integrate it into his description of Greece. This involved the assessment of large amounts of historical material of variable provenance and quality … he would have to resort to his own calculations in order to prepare them for further use in the Periegesis" – Pretzler (2005) 242. Elsner (1992) for Pausanias' use of Greek myth to explore Greek identity in a Roman context.

[7] Ben Porat (1978).

> Beyond these are painted on a couch Deinome, Metioche, Peisis and Cleodice. Deinome is the only one of these names to occur in what is called the *Little Iliad*. Polygnotus, I think, invented the names of the others" (10.26.1).[8]

The analysis undertaken in chapters one to four of this thesis will reveal a significant number of pictorial and epigraphic markers within the Roman friezes which, in some instances, reflect the smallest minutiae of the Homeric text. In this visual context, however, markers can also take the form of commonly-repeated compositional motifs, which will be designated as *standardised scenes*. Although some are not entirely 'faithful' to the Homeric text in their iconographic details, their attribution as a marker is still sound as their recognition by the Roman viewer, being the traditional representation of a particular episode, usually with a long history in Classical art, would prompt them to recall the literary work in question within the context of an epic frieze. The analysis will therefore differentiate between *textual markers* (which may take the form of labels or detailed pictorial renderings of the epic text) and *standardised scenes*.

Elsewhere, Pausanias employs his in-depth knowledge of epic literature to decipher or interpret the subtler details in the paintings:

> Helen herself is sitting, and so is Eurybates near her. We inferred that he was the herald of Odysseus, although he had yet no beard (10.25.4).[9]

> Beyond Helen, a man wrapped in a purple cloak is sitting in an attitude of the deepest dejection; one might conjecture that he was Helenus, the son of Priam, even before reading the inscription (10.25.5).

> Going on to the next part of the picture, you see very near to the man who is twisting the rope a painting of Ariadne. Seated on a rock she is looking at her sister Phaedra, who is on a swing grasping in either hand the rope on each side. The attitude, though quite gracefully drawn, makes us infer the manner of Phaedra's death (10.29.3).

> We inferred that these people too were of those who had held of no account the rites at Eleusis (10.31.11).

In each of these quotations Pausanias uses his familiarity with the Homeric and cyclic epics to read and interpret the details of the painting before him and we will see

[8] All translations of Pausanias by W.H.S. Jones and H.A. Ormerod (1918).
[9] The Greek word translated here as 'we inferred' is εἰκάζομεν, which is a verb commonly used to describe a conjecture or inference based on an image – Liddell, Scott and Jones, εἰκάζω.

throughout the Roman friezes occasions where protagonists are not labelled, nor (to the modern eye) identifiable by commonly-found attributes, clearly leading to some learned interpretation on the part of the viewer. These will be referred to as *allusions* to the Homeric narrative, which may not be as textually faithful as the *marker*, or instantaneously recognisable as the *standardised scene*, but still necessitated familiarity with the epic narrative for a correct interpretation to be formed. Such allusions may have prompted discussion among viewers and Pausanias frequently uses the first person plural verb endings ομεν (εἰκάζομεν – 10.25.4) and όμεθα (ἐτεκμαιρόμεθα – 10.31.11), suggesting that he is discussing his own reading of the frescoes with a companion or student.[10] He later comments upon a feature of the Nekyia painting which seems to be disputed among learned visitors to Delphi:

> On the other side of the willow tree Promedon is leaning against it. Some there are who think that the name Promedon is as it were a poetic invention of Polygnotus; others have said that Promedon was fond of listening to all kinds of music (10.30.7).

This also reveals another interesting feature of the Polygnotan frescoes: that Pausanias does not judge the painter negatively with regard to his apparent invention of some of the protagonists and labels within them:

> But Homer's *Odyssey*, the poem called the *Minyad*, and the *Returns*, although they tell of Hades, and its horrors, know of no demon called Eurynomus (10.28.7).
>
> There is no inscription on the boy, and Phrontis is the only one with a beard. His too is the only name that Polygnotus took from the *Odyssey*; the names of the others he invented, I think, himself (10.25.3).
>
> But I know of no poet, and of no prose-writer, who makes mention of Xenodice (10.26.1).
>
> Beyond these are painted on a couch Deinome, Metioche, Peisis and Cleodice. Deinome is the only one of these names to occur in what is called the *Little Iliad*. Polygnotus, I think, invented the names of the others (10.26.1).
>
> Under those who are administering the oath to Ajax, and in a line with the horse by Nestor, is Neoptolemus, who has killed Elasus, whoever Elasus may be (10.26.4).

[10] Compare also Philostratus the Elder and his student(s) in the *Imagines* (I.1.1). Discussion in Squire and Elsner (2016).

> [Homer] goes on to say that Aphrodite ascended into heaven, wishing to secure for the girls a happy marriage, and in her absence they were carried off by the Harpies and given by them to the Furies. This is the story as given by Homer. Polygnotus has painted them as girls crowned with flowers and playing with dice, and gives them the names of Cameiro and Clytie (10.30.2).

The addition of extra-Homeric protagonists, labels and even entire episodes is also a feature of the Roman friezes and Pausanias' commentary reveals that this was deemed to be acceptable practice in both the fifth century BC (at the time of painting) and the second century AD (at the time of writing). Throughout the following analysis such features will be classified as *extra-Homeric insertions*. On other occasions Polygnotus appears to have subverted or altered the Homeric text, raising a comment from Pausanias, but again no negative judgement:

> One handmaid, Panthalis, is standing beside Helen; another, Electra, is fastening her mistress' sandals. These names too are different from those given by Homer in the *Iliad*, where he tells of Helen going to the wall with her slave women (10.25.4-5).[11]

> Beyond the altar he has painted Laodice standing, whom I do not find among the Trojan captive women enumerated by any poet so I think that the only probable conclusion is that she was set free by the Greeks (10.26.7-8).

> Neoptolemus is the only one of the Greek army represented by Polygnotus as still killing the Trojans, the reason being that he intended the whole painting to be placed over the grave of Neoptolemus (10.26.4).

Such 'subversions' are also found in the Roman friezes and similarly appear to have been employed when the artist intended to use the epic narrative as a means to convey another message. In the latter quotation, for example, Polygnotus altered the details of the (unspecified) epic to suit his intention of placing the painting over Neoptolemus' grave (at least according to Pausanias); in the Roman paintings the same appears to have been applied either for compositional balance or to direct the viewer's attention a particular hero. Richard Thomas, commenting on similar modifications in Latin literature, refers to *corrections* – "a quintessentially Alexandrian type of reference" – where the writer reveals his scholarly superiority by contradicting or altering his source.[12] The motive for the textual alterations in the Greek and Roman friezes, however, was perhaps not quite so

[11] *Iliad* 3.144-145 names the handmaidens as Aethra and Clymene.
[12] Thomas (1986) 185-186.

erudite as practical and aesthetic and so Pausanias suggests that Polygnotus intentionally grouped certain heroes together who otherwise would have no reason to be:

> If you turn your gaze again to the upper part of the painting, you see, next to Actaeon, Ajax of Salamis, and also Palamedes and Thersites playing with dice ... the other Ajax is looking at them as they play ... Polygnotus has intentionally gathered into one group the enemies of Odysseus. Ajax, son of Oïleus, conceived a hatred of Odysseus, because Odysseus urged the Greeks to stone him for the outrage on Cassandra. (10.31.2-3).

Finally, Pausanias refers throughout his description to parts of the Delphian frescoes to details which he finds puzzling and notes to the reader that these are often the subject of localised knowledge and tradition.[13] He refers to Mygdon, the father of a warrior depicted in the Iliupersis fresco, who had a "notable tomb" in Stecotrium in Phrygia and "after him poets are wont to call Phrygians by the name of Mygdones" (10.27.1). In the Nekyia description he points out a figure painted in blue/black colour of whom he has had to seek the true identity from the local guides at Delphi, who reveal that it is a demon in Hades who eats the flesh from men's bones (10.28.7).[14] Next comes a legend local to the Ionians regarding the wife and cord of Ocnus (10.28.2) and then another to the Phrygians in Celaenae relating to the musicians Marsyas and Olympus, who are also depicted in the fresco (10.30.9). Pausanias tells us that he sees on Memnon's cloak embroidered birds called *Memnonides*, which the people of the Hellespont say visit the tomb of Memnon and sweep it clean (10.31.5). Among a group of women in the Underworld he brings our attention to Nomia, whom the Arcadians say was a nymph native to their land (10.31.10).

Pausanias therefore offers us a potential paradigm for understanding how epic imagery might have been regarded. It is not unlikely that the details of the Roman friezes that seem puzzling to us today, particularly the extra-Homeric scenes and labels, similarly referred to local tradition and were relevant and recognisable to contemporary viewers, even if their meaning has since been lost. Chapter three of this thesis will suggest that it may even be possible to identify some of these 'localised elements' which would have been immediately familiar to the inhabitants of Pompeii in the mid first century AD, but appear puzzling to viewers today.

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[13] For a wider discussion of Pausanias and localised, oral tradition within the context of the Second Sophistic see Pretzler (2005).

[14] See also Jones (2001) for the interaction between Pausanias and his guides.

The artist

Pausanias clearly considered Polygnotus himself to have composed and designed the Iliupersis and Nekyia paintings, as well as painting them, but the question of *who* in the wider process was responsible for designing the Roman epic-themed friezes, with their markers, allusions and corrections to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, alongside the extra-Homeric insertions, is unclear. It was certainly someone with recourse to the epic text and therefore a relatively high level of literacy, and the depth of this interaction suggests a fairly detailed planning stage, but whether this was the fresco artists themselves, another member of the workshop or even the patron cannot be discerned. Artists' signatures are rarely found in Roman artworks and apart from a notable few (Lucius, Felix, Theodorus and Cheirisophos, for example[15]), some of which appear to be pseudonyms,[16] reconstructing the processes of ancient art production remains largely hypothetical, beyond noting the formulaic nature of Roman art and the deferral to standardized and recognisable scenes when available.[17] For convenience throughout this thesis I have referred to *the artist/s* when discussing the creative process, but the practicalities and logistics of frieze design and construction, simply because of the lack of hard evidence, are not addressed in detail.

Context

The role of epic in Roman life and the availability of the Homeric text

The function of the ancient epic frieze was clearly not to illustrate the narrative of its respective epic in the way that graphics in a modern book might do so, but to evoke the work and its major themes, with a certain amount of flexibility in the details. Yet the presence of markers, which refer to the minutiae of the text, suggests that intricate knowledge of the epic *was* required to allow the viewer to appreciate such correspondences *and* to notice when corrections or extra-Homeric insertions occurred. Familiarity with and expression of Greek education and culture in Roman life is generally discussed in modern scholarship under the umbrella term of *paideia*, which is certainly of

[15] Lucius denoted by the painted attribution *Lucius pinxit* on the biclinium in the House of Octavius Quartio – discussion in Richardson (2000) 147-153; Felix denoted by the carved inscription ΦΗΛΙΞ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ on the Felix Gem in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford – Walker (2004); Theodoros named on several Tabulae Iliacae – Squire (2011) 283-302; Cheirisophos named in both Latin and Greek on the Hoby Cups, now in the National Museum of Denmark – discussion in Squire (2011) 293-296.
[16] Squire (2011) 291-302.
[17] Stewart (2008) 10-38 discusses in more detail 'Who made Roman art?'

concern to the wider themes of this study, but does not suffice to explain the intricate level of literary knowledge a Roman would need for full understanding of the friezes.[18] Archaeological and literary evidence suggests that an almost obsessive level of familiarity with Homer's words were achievable – if not prized – in Roman society, thus making the type of analysis elucidated above a fruitful and legitimate course of study.

Epic in education, dining settings and among the super-elite

Homer held a fundamental and unrivalled position in Roman education and writers from the Late Republic through to Late Antiquity attest to the poet's role in their formative years (Hor. *Ep.* 2.2.41-42; Quint. *Inst*. 1.8.5; Stat. *Silv*. 5.3.146-50; Plin. *Ep.* 2.14; Mart. *Spect*. 8.3.9-19; August. *Conf*. 1.13*)*. Suetonius reports that as a schoolchild Nero even used Homer to get himself out of trouble (Suet. *Ner.* 22) and Epictetus complains that boys are taught Homer by rote and are quizzed on the most trivial details:

> 'Who was the father of Hector?' … 'Priam.' 'Who were his brothers?' 'Alexander and Deïphobus.' 'And who was their mother?' 'Hecuba. This is the account that I have received.' 'From whom?' 'From Homer' (Arr. *Epict. Diss.* 2.18.7).[19]

Such immersion into and obsession with epic was even mocked and a graffito from Cyrene asks, "Who was the father of Priam's children?" (*SEC* 192).[20] Juvenal pours scorn on parents who would stop a teacher in the streets to quiz him on his knowledge of Homer (Juv. 7.233-236) and the emperor Tiberius is criticised by Suetonius for the very same (Suet. *Tib.* 30). Numerous papyri record children's writing exercises pertaining to the study of Homeric epic and reflect the means of learning through the copying and repetition of the epic text.[21]

It was not just in Roman childhood, however, that knowledge of Homer was deemed a necessity; the testimony of Greek and Roman writers reveals that quoting from and referring to epic literature was also a feature of social gatherings among adults and was regularly discussed at dinner parties. Juvenal both bemoans the practice and offers it

[18] For discussion of *paideia* in art see Newby (2016) 137-227; Borg (2004). For a history of the scholarship of *paideia* and problems defining its true meaning in antiquity see Elsner (2013).
[19] Trans. W.A. Oldfather (1925).
[20] Note also the fourth century AD *Philogelos* (197) which tells of a grammarian who, not knowing the answer to the question "What was the mother of Priam called?" replies, "Out of respect we call her madam". Further examples in Kaster (1984) 457-8.
[21] Joyal, McDougall and Yardley (2009) 166-202 for educational practices in the Late Republic and Early Empire.

at his own house (Juv. 6.434-437) and contrasts the entertainment found at certain salacious parties with his own refined offerings (Juv. 11.179-183). Homer is frequently mentioned in Plutarch's *Table-Talk* and is cited over one hundred times in Atheneaus' *Learned Banqueters*. Our best evidence for the recitation and recollection of epic at dinner parties in fact comes from criticism of those who get it wrong. Seneca the Younger complains of the freedman Calvisius Sabinus who would forget the names of the heroes of the Trojan War and would hire (at great expense) slaves to recite the works of different poets at his dinner parties, forcing his guests to listen to their recitations and to his own attempts to emulate them (Sen. *Ep.* 27.5-7). The freedman *par excellence* is, of course, Trimalchio, and the *Cena Trimalchionis* contains ample reference to epic, which could only fully be appreciated by those among Petronius' readers who were completely conversant with their Homer (and Virgil). Trimalchio himself advises his guests: "It does to know one's literature even when dining out" (Petron. *Sat.* 39).[22]

In the *Satyricon* Petronius was probably also parodying the well-documented tendency of the Roman elite to quote from Homer and to attempt heroic compositions themselves.[23] When Germanicus and his family visited Troy the prince composed an epigram for the Tomb of Hector (*Anth. Lat.* II.798) and Scipio Africanus quoted a prophecy concerning the destruction of Troy from *Iliad* 6.448 while watching Carthage burn to the ground (Polyb. 39.5); later Africanus, upon hearing about the death of Tiberius Gracchus, recited aloud *Odyssey* 1.47 (Plut. *Tib. Gracc.* 21.4). Lines from Homeric epic were quoted in the lawcourts (Pl. *Ep.* 9.13.20), its moral dilemmas were used as *suasoriae* for orators-in-training (Sen. *Suas.* 3) and its themes used as *exempla* in philosophical discussion (Sen. *Ep.* 88.6-8). The most notorious fan of the Trojan War and its literature was the emperor Nero and Suetonius recalls the famous tale of the emperor composing his *Halosin Ilii* while Rome burned (Suet. *Ner.* 38) and even quoting *Iliad* 10.535 in his final moments as he plunged the dagger into his throat (*Suet. Ner.* 49).

[22] Trans. P. Dinnage (1999).

[23] Farrell (2004) for further examples, including commentary on Seneca's Homer-laden *Apocolocyntosis* – "the most visible representative of a rich tradition of Homeric parody in the literary realm" – and Cicero's *Epistulae ad Familiares*, in which "the abundance of (Homeric) quotation is so over-the-top that one cannot read the letter without a smile."

Epic in Roman libraries

Knowledge of Homeric epic was clearly deemed a necessary component of elite life and without it a Roman could not stake his claim in all manner of contexts, ranging from dinner-party discussion to the lawcourts. Epic's well-attested role in Roman education would allow a wide-ranging strata of society to at least grasp its basics, which were no doubt reinforced by theatrical performances, yet the following chapters will reveal that intricate knowledge of the text appears to have been a distinct advantage when 'reading' the epic friezes. George Houston's work on Roman libraries suggests that ownership of the papyrus rolls on which literary works were copied was not the reserve of the upper echelons of the elite and that private book collections could range from the small and highly-selective to the large and wide-ranging. The recovered collection from the Villa of the Papyri, for example, has so far yielded no copies of Homeric epic, yet the Oxyrhynchus papyri preserve 236 fragments of Homer, making him by far the most attested author.[24] Houston notes that the fact that these papyri were found in Egypt need not be of concern: "Readers and book collectors in Italy and Egypt seem to have behaved in very similar ways … the concerns and practices of Cicero, Pliny, and Galen are reflected in those of the individuals we meet in the papyrological record. Thus, literary culture in general seems to have operated in very much the same way in Egypt as it did elsewhere, and there is no reason to believe that book collections in Egypt were different in any significant way from those in Italy and other areas."[25] The lists of literary works recorded on papyri reveal that households often owned particular books of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but not necessarily all twenty four of each respective epic. This will be discussed further in chapter seven but nevertheless confirms that access to the Homeric text was readily available for those who might be invited to view and interpret the friezes, and perhaps even to those who were responsible for composing and painting them.

There is clear need then to view the epic-themed friezes with new eyes and to study them as a distinct genre of Roman art with its own concerns, forms of reference and demands on the viewer. Their appeal is certainly related to the promotion of *paideia* through display of mythological imagery in the home but moves beyond mere recognition of iconography

[24] Houston (2014) 87-129; Krüger (1990) 214-215.
[25] Houston (2014) 48. The availability of the epic text contradicts frequently found presumptions about the creators of the Tabulae Iliacae, of whom critics often assume to have used summaries and *hypotheseis* of the Trojan War epics in their compositions. See especially Horsfall (1979).

and discussion of Greek heroes as exempla and paradigms (Brilliant, 1984; Newby, 2016) to a symbiotic and interdependent relationship with the epic text itself. Analysis of the narrative and the details of the iconography and epigraphy by direct comparison with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* was a means of viewing employed by contemporary audiences and the following chapters will therefore proceed with the implied approval of Pausanias and Philostratus the Elder, commentating on the epic-themed frescoes in Delphi and the panel paintings in the Neapolitan portico.

Leach provides an excellent summary of the expectations placed on the ancient viewer when reading continuous narrative in this form: "Within the boundaries of place and episode established by the frieze, or the comprehensive framework of the [Iliac] tablet, the spectator must arrange single events in an appropriate casual and temporal sequence. He can accomplish this ordering and determine the interconnections among separate figures only *by supplying the personal knowledge that will transform their gestures and attitudes into narrative*."[26] Acknowledging the debt to the epic text alongside an understanding of the formulaic and referential nature of Roman art will allow us, for example, to propose reconstructions of non-extant parts of the friezes for the first time and to investigate the extra-Homeric insertions found within them not as errors on the part of a careless or ill-informed artist, but as a visual representation of the social and cultural context in which they were created and displayed.

[26] Emphasis my own. Leach (1988) 320.

Chapter 1: The *Iliad* frieze from the House of the Cryptoporticus on the Via dell'Abbondanza in Pompeii

Context

The first frieze of this study runs along the walls of the subterranean cryptoporticus (figure 2) of the House of the Cryptoporticus in Regio I in Pompeii (I 6,2) and is usually dated to around 40–30 BC.[27] A plan of the upper and lower levels of the house is seen in figure 1.

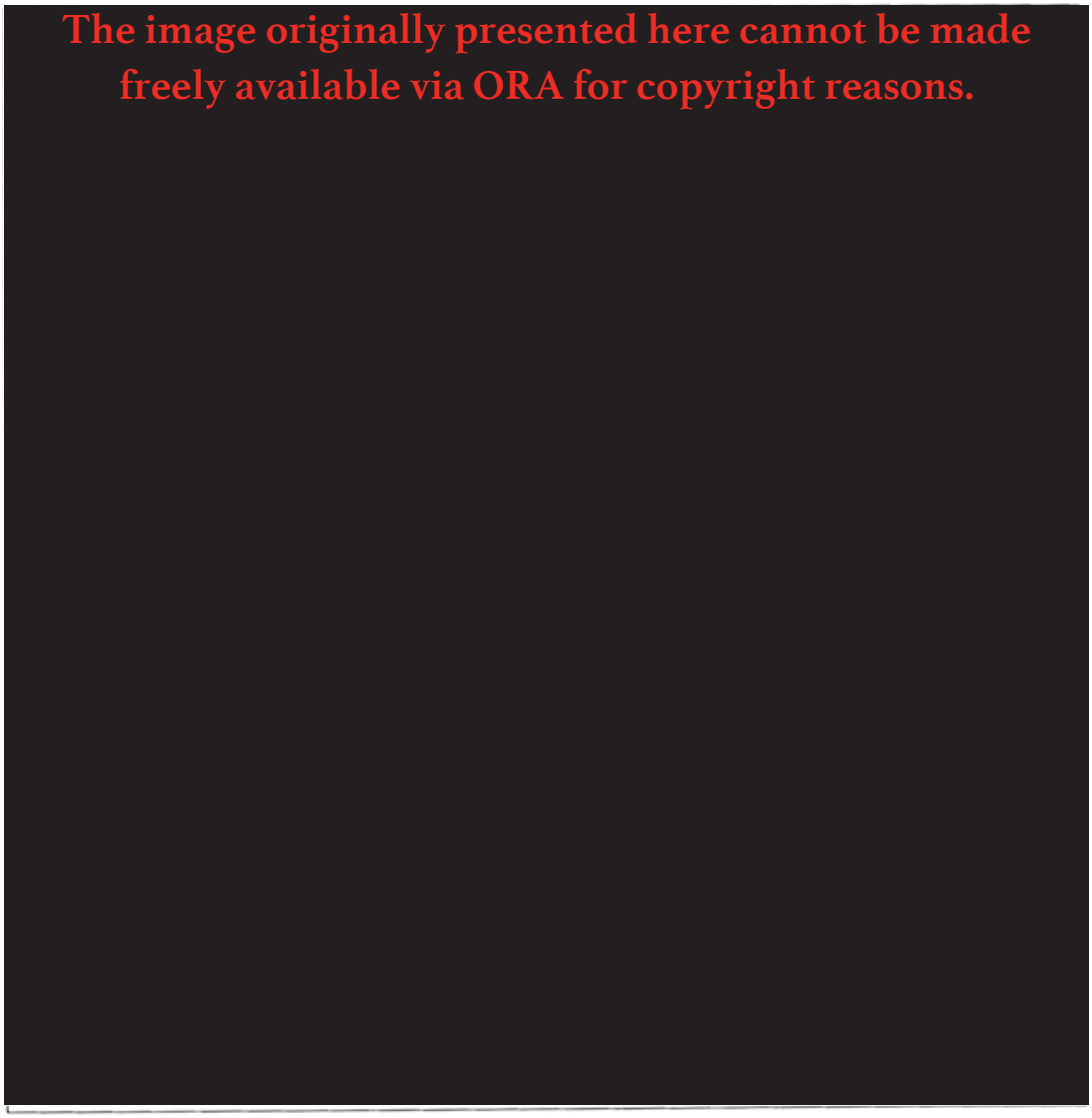


Fig.1 – Plan of Pompeii regio I insula 6.
House of the Cryptoporticus entranceway through fauces 2,
wings of cryptoporticus running around garden 30.

[27] The decoration is traditionally assigned to phase IIa of the Second Style – Bragantini (2000) 193-194.

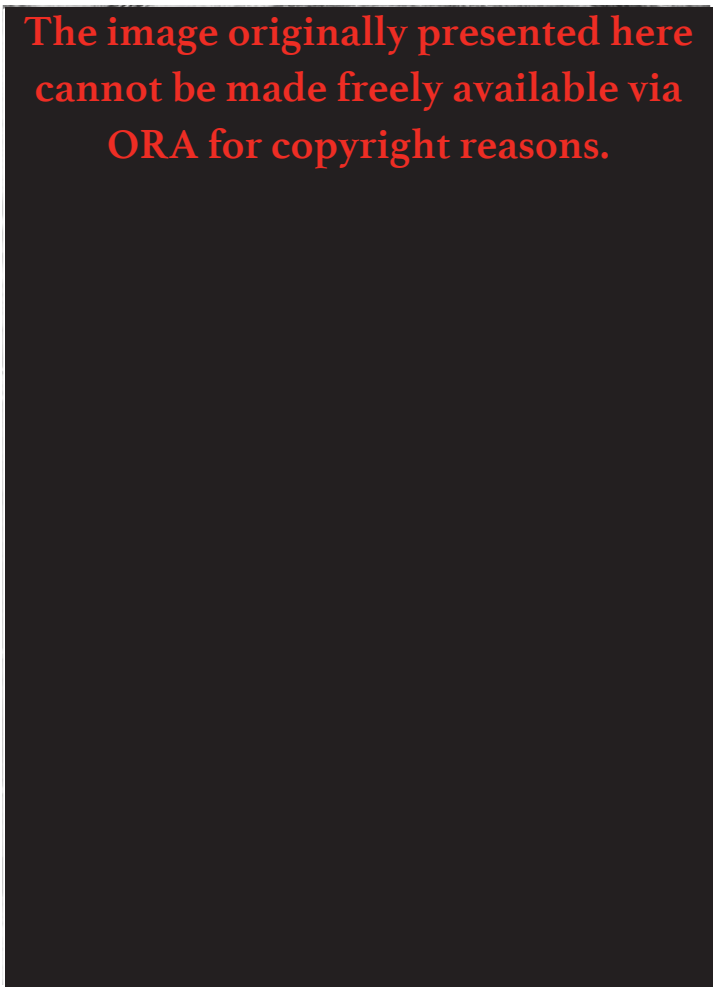


Fig.2 – Reconstruction of the north wing of the cryptoporticus.

After the earthquake of AD 62/3 the house was divided into two separate dwellings (I 6,2 and I 6,4) but, prior to this, the residence was probably one of the largest and grandest in the regio; even after the separation Andrew Wallace-Hadrill still places it in his Quartile Four, categorising houses which had an area of 350-3000 square metres.[28] Yet the entire subterranean complex of the house, which also included a heated bath suite and large oecus/triclinium, the latter similarly decorated with painted herms and caryatids supporting the *pinakes* above, had fallen into disrepair by the eruption in AD 79 and when the house was excavated in the early twentieth century storage amphorae were found resting against the walls of the north wing of the cryptoporticus. The emblemata from the mosaic floors of rooms 20, 22 and q had been removed in antiquity and so, in its final stages, the cryptoporticus was

[28] Wallace-Hadrill (1994) 81 for the quantification of the quartiles; 187 for the area of the individual houses.

probably being used as a storage cellar for the upper (and possibly public) triclinium, which was renovated after the earthquake and decorated with Fourth Style frescoes.[29]

The neglect of the subterranean rooms in the first century AD, damage from the eruption and serious fading since their discovery in the early 1900s has left the frieze frescoes in a sorry state – of the original eighty or so episodes just over a quarter have survived[30] – and from 2012 to 2015 the House of the Cryptoporticus underwent critical restoration work to prevent further degradation.[31] Thankfully, many of the scenes were photographed and sketched during initial excavation under the direction of Vittorio Spinazzola in the 1910s and Amedeo Maiuri *et al* in the 1920s and so we are today able to reconstruct and identify several which are now no longer extant.[32] For each a *lucido* (preparatory sketch) and subsequent reconstruction by Spinazzola and the artist A. Sanarica were published and will be used, when relevant, throughout the following analysis.

The frieze itself is positioned slightly above eye level above marble-effect panels and other painted architectural features and is broken up by herms in the form of satyrs and caryatids, linked by garlands. It is around 30cm high and, although to be read as continuous, is formed of horizontal panels of various lengths which are often punctuated by windows and the painted herms (figure 3). The early photographs reveal that many episodes were reasonably well preserved at the time of excavation with the colouring, detail and Greek labels clearly legible. We may assume then that in the case of those scenes which are otherwise well preserved, but where labels do not appear, that this was a deliberate omission on the part of the artist and they have not simply faded over time. This is, of course, much more difficult to assert for those episodes whose overall visibility is reduced or where early photographs are not available.

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[29] Bragantini alternatively proposes that the house was modified and the garden raised in the Late Republican era, when an earlier portico was closed off and transformed into the cryptoporticus, and the bath suite and oecus/triclinium constructed and decorated with Second Style frescoes. She notes the similarities between the decoration of the frigidarium and other subterranean rooms with room 11 of the House of Augustus on the Palatine, dating from 36–28 BC – Bragantini (1990) 193. Paul Zanker suggests that the alteration works must have come "at enormous expense" – Zanker (1998) 94.

[30] Croisille (2005) 154.

[31] www.pompeiisites.org/Sezione.jsp?titolo=House+of+the+Cryptoporticus&idSezione=3065 – website last consulted 17.3.2017.

[32] Spinazzola (1953); Maiuri, Jacono and Della Corte (1928).

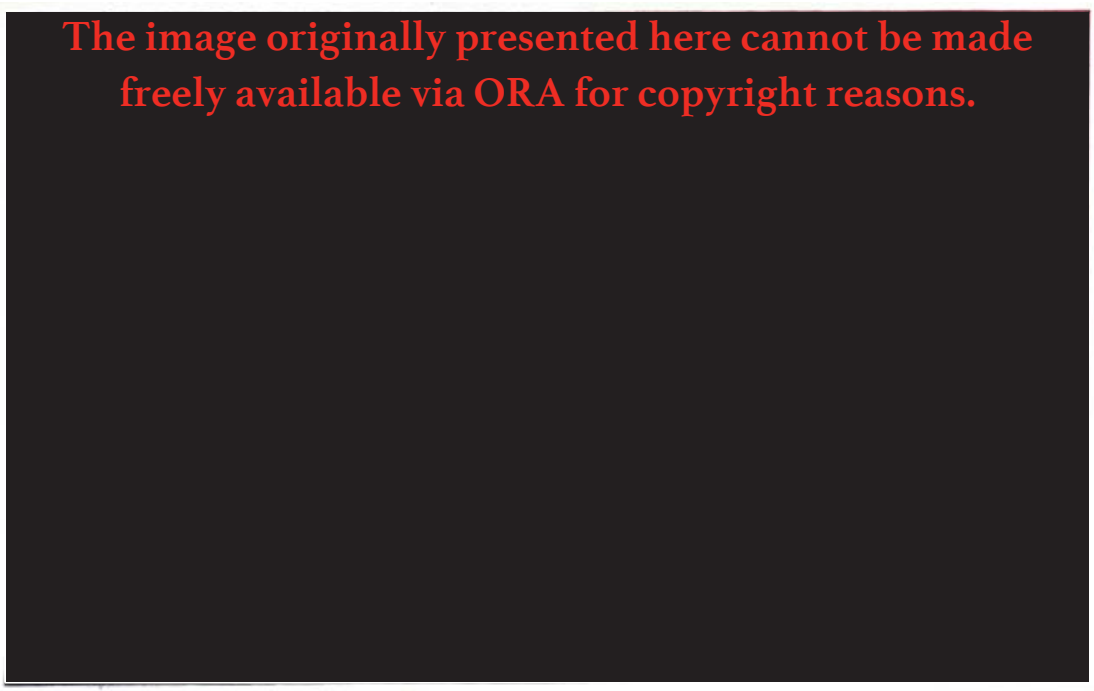


Fig.3 – Painted reconstruction of a section of the south wall of the north wing of the cryptoporticus by A. Sanarica.

Spinazzola also recorded a number of fresco fragments which were found on the floor of the cryptoporticus during excavation. They are published in the *Pompei alla luce degli scavi nuovi di Via dell'Abbondanza* with notes recording the walls they were found besides, and so will be addressed in the relevant sections of the following discussion. The epigraphy, in the form of painted labels, is recorded in *CIL* IV.7141.

Spinazzola's and Aurigemma's comments on the iconography will be consulted throughout, but in several instances I will offer alternative interpretations for both the *in situ* frescoes and the fallen fragments. The textual markers, standardised scenes, allusions, corrections and extra Homeric insertions will be noted whenever they occur. Figure 4 is my own reconstruction of the frieze, giving the positioning of the extant episodes and a proposed repositioning of the fallen fragments. Figure 5 gives the *Iliad* references (where applicable) for the reinterpreted frieze.

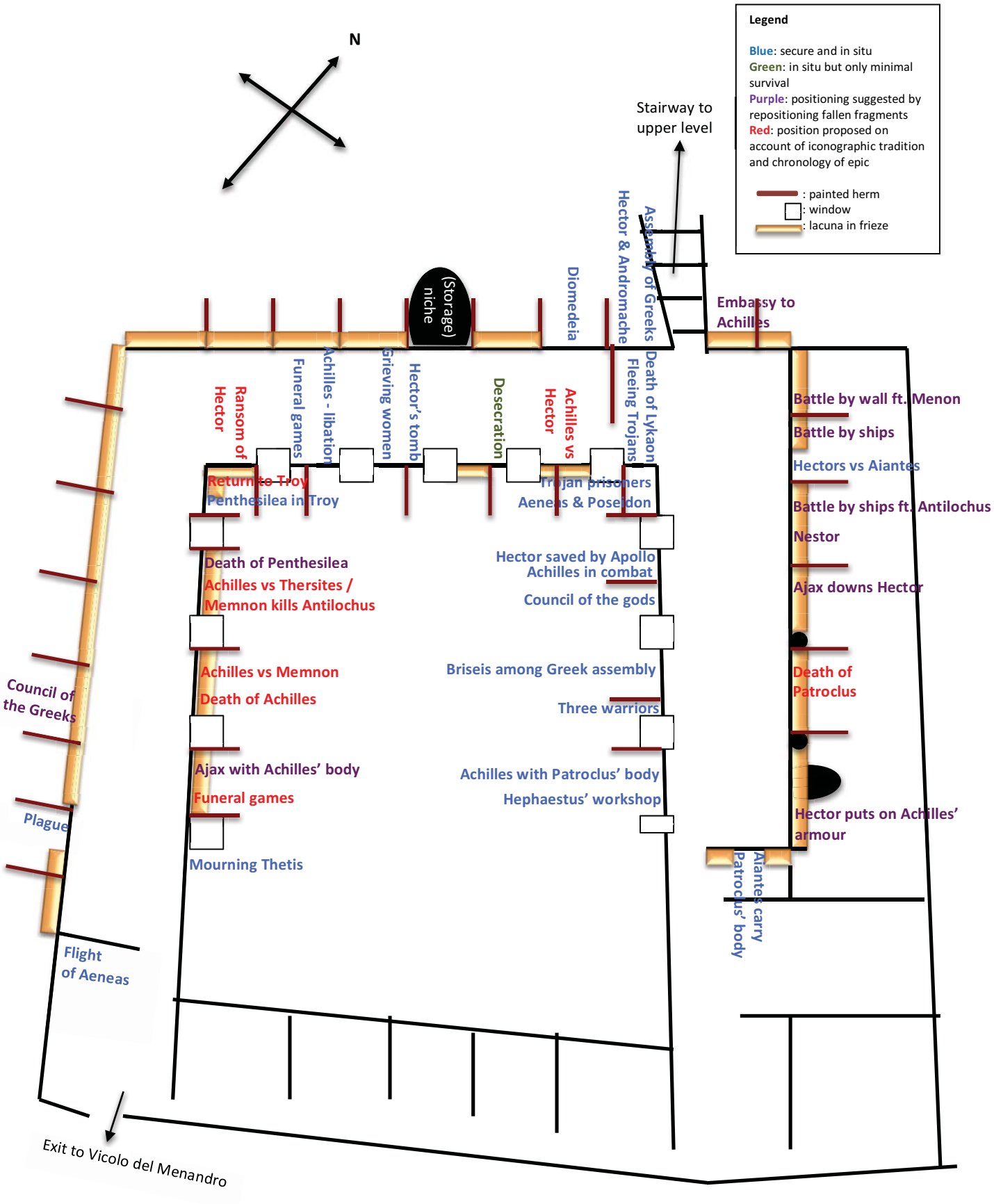


Fig.4 – Proposed positioning of the scenes in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus.

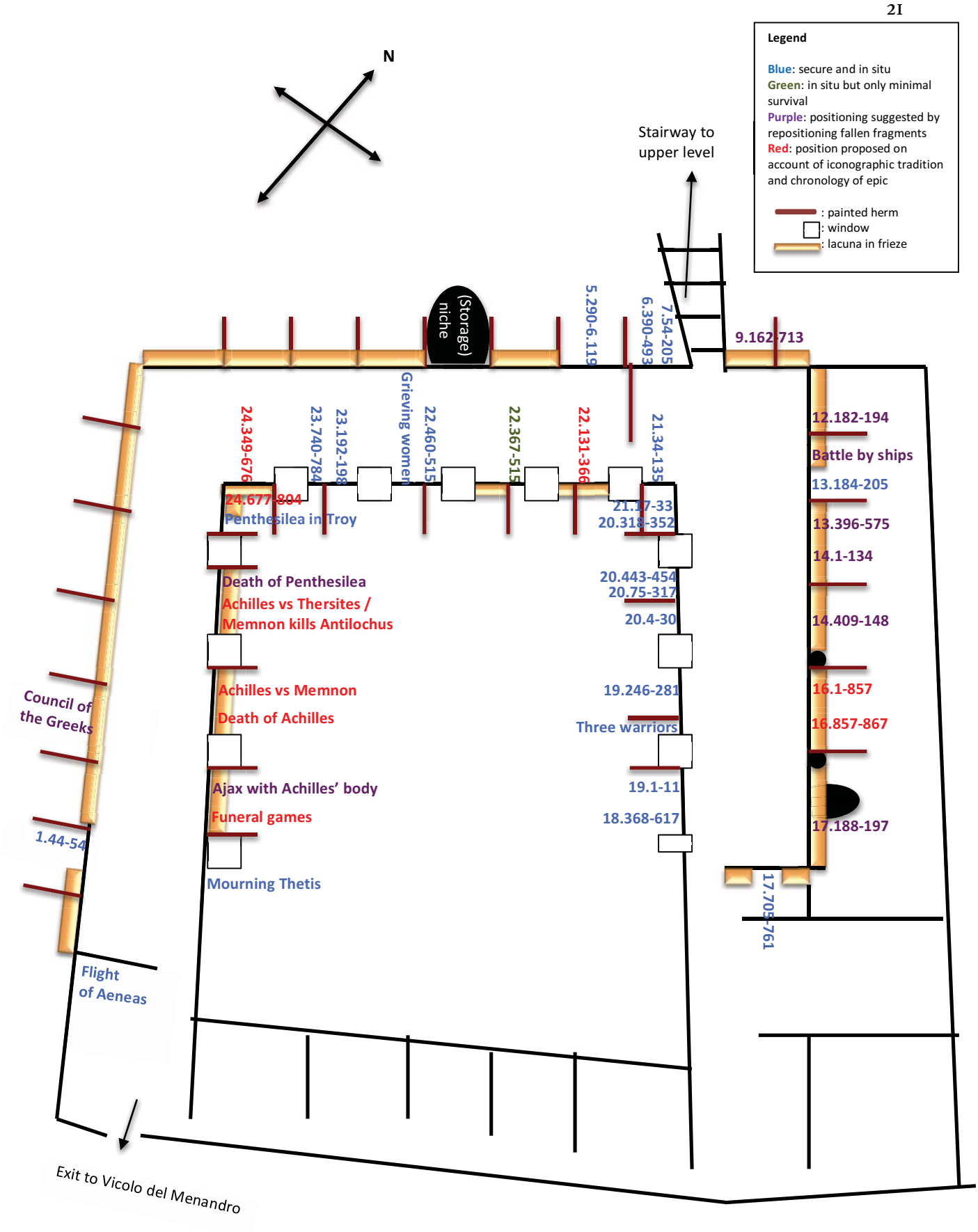


Fig.5 – Proposed positioning of the scenes in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus with *Iliad* references.

West wing, western wall

If considered solely with regard to the extant frescoes, the frieze 'begins' (reading according to the order of the Homeric account) in the west wing of the cryptoporticus where we find the only surviving scene from the entire west wall: Apollo's plague on the Achaean camp (figures 6 and 7).[33]

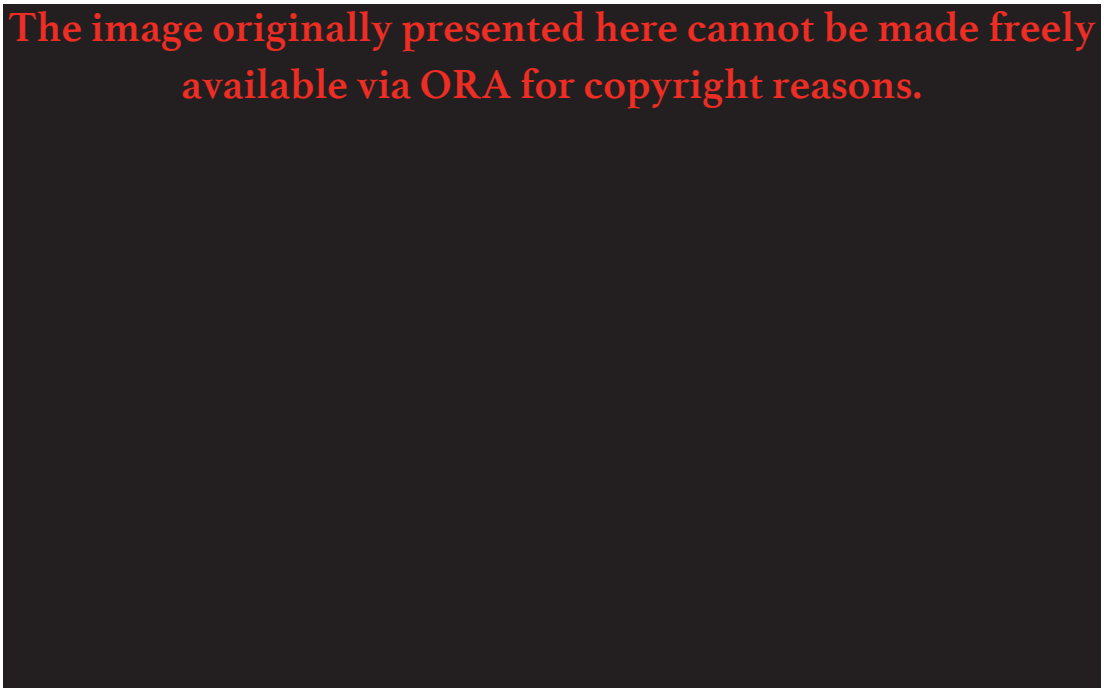


Fig.6 – The plague in the Greek camp (colours enhanced for better legibility) – photograph from 2010.



Fig.7 – Reconstructed sketch of the plague in the Greek camp.

[33] The possible inclusion of earlier Iliadic episodes positioned towards the south of the wall before the plague will be discussed in chapter seven.

The scene has been reconstructed from fragments but its status as a marker, referring directly to the Iliadic passage is clear:

> It was Apollo, Son of Zeus and Leto, who started the feud, when he punished the King for his discourtesy to Chryses, his priest, by inflicting a deadly plague on his army and destroying his men ... Phoebus Apollo heard his prayer and came down in fury from the heights of Olympus with his bow and covered quiver on his back ... He sat down opposite the ships and shot an arrow, with a dreadful twang from his silver bow. He attacked the mules first and the nimble dogs; then he aimed his sharp arrows at men, and struck again and again. Day and night innumerable fires consumed the dead. (Hom. *Il.* 1.8-11, 43-52)[34]

Apollo (labelled ΑΠΟΛΛΟΝ) is positioned in the upper left corner and fires his deadly arrows (seemingly in the wrong direction) into the Greek camp. Homer says that both mules and men were stricken by the plague and this is reflected in the animal in the foreground limply bowing its head and the driver raising his arms in protest to Olympus. The armed warriors on the right similarly lift up their arms in distress. A temple can be seen on a promontory in the background alluding to the Temple of Apollo which would feature prominently in the narrative of the entire Trojan War. The plague, being one of the first significant events of the *Iliad*, and the subsequent sequencing of episodes falling in almost consistent chronological order with regard to the narrative of the epic, confirms that the intention of the frieze is to evoke the *Iliad* in pictorial form. The pestilence scene therefore refers the viewer directly to the text, allowing the educated reader rapid recognition that the opening of the *Iliad* is being evoked.

What followed next in the frieze is, unfortunately, almost impossible to determine. Figures 4 and 5 show that there is a lacuna spanning the entirety of the remaining western wall, and then the majority of the northern wall of the north wing. Such a gap, allowing for an average of around two scenes between the painted herms, suggests the original inclusion of around 22 episodes. Owing to the nature of the frieze, which overwhelmingly follows the narrative order of the *Iliad*, it is reasonable to propose that the missing fresco featured events from books one to six of the *Iliad*, which fell between the plague scene (1:44-54) and the Diomedeia (6:230-236). It is tempting to reconstruct this section of the frieze using episodes from these chapters which are found in extant Roman – even Pompeian – art:

[34] All translations of the *Iliad* by E.V. Rieu (1953).

perhaps the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon (*Il.* 1:121-247),[35] the removal of Briseis from Achilles (*Il.* 1:326-347) or the return of Chryseis to her father (*Il.* 1:428-474).[36] The identification of the latter panel (MNN 9108) is not at all secure but the return of Chryseis does appear on the right side of the uppermost band of the Tabula Capitolina (1A) (figure 8) which, being of early Imperial dating, places it within around half a century of the construction of the cryptoporticus frieze.[37] A representation of the removal of Briseis seems a distinct possibility as the priestess reappears on the western wall of the east wing among the Greek elders (figures 28 and 29), presumably just before she was returned to Achilles. Both episodes are found on the Tabula Capitolina (1A) in close succession.

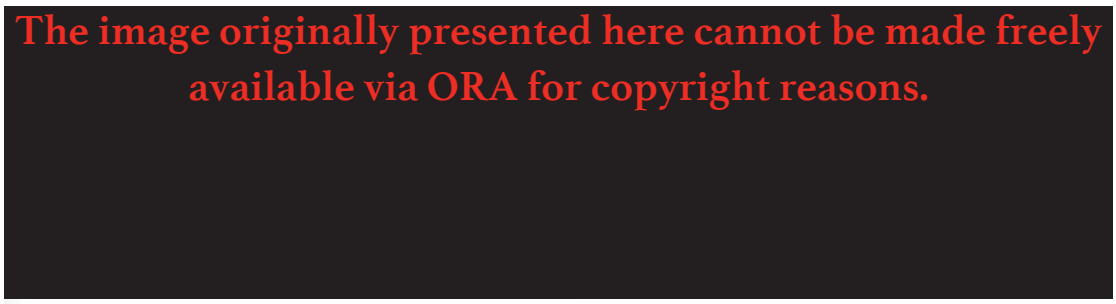


Fig.8 – Detail from a sketch of the upper band of the Tabula Capitolina (1A).

Using this methodology to propose a reconstruction has its difficulties, however. Primarily, even though the Tabula Capitolina (1A) is reasonably close in date to the frieze, the single panel frescoes date to around a hundred years later and there is no firm evidence to suggest that similar iconographies were present in Pompeii in the Late Republican era. Additionally, many of the panels, such as MNN 9108 above, are subject to varying interpretations leading to scholarly uncertainty as to which protagonists or particular episodes are intended. For example, we might like to propose for inclusion a now-faded arming scene in the House of Meleager, which both Helbig and Hodske suggest shows Paris before his duel against Menelaus from *Iliad* 3.325-339. The identification is highly insecure, however, as even though the

[35] As found in a wall mosaic still *in situ* in the garden of the House of Apollo (VI 9,6 – Sampaolo in *PPM* IV (1993) 470-524), in a single panel wallpainting from the House of the Dioscouri (MNN 9104, Pompeii VI 9,6 – Bragantini in *PPM* IV (1993) 860-1004), in a panel from the Temple of Apollo (Pompeii VII 7.32 – Bergmann (1994) fig.27, after Overbeck (1857) pl.16.4 – Sampaolo in *PPM* VII (1997) 286-304) and also on the uppermost band of the Tabula Capitolina (1A – figure 8). See also Hodske (2007) taf.99, abb.2 for a sketch probably showing the scene from an unknown house in Pompeii.

[36] Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, MNN 9105 and MNN 9108 from the House of the Tragic Poet (Pompeii VI 8,3,5 – Narciso in *PPM* IV (1993) 527-603).

[37] Discussion of the dating of the Tabulae Iliacae in Montenegro (2004) 305-309.

man on the right of the panel (supposedly Paris) is dressed in eastern/Trojan attire, the hat being handed to him is a Phrygian cap, rather than a plumed helmet as described in the text, and he looks in no way ready for battle.[38] To add to the difficulties, a survey of Roman art reveals a dearth of scenes relating to the second, third, fourth and fifth books of the *Iliad,* particularly in wallpaintings and mosaics, which is probably due to the general absence of Achilles in these chapters on account of his withdrawal from battle.

In fact the most significant, and unresolvable, impediment to reconstruction is that we must account for the inclusion of extra-Homeric scenes or those which in some way stray from the narrative of the *Iliad*, which are self-evidently impossible to predict. As a result of this the frieze reconstructions in figures 4 and 5 do not include proposals for the remainder of the western wall of the west wing or the western half of the north wing. In the *Pompei alla luce degli scavi nuovi di Via dell'Abbondanza*, however, Aurigemma reveals that he found in Spinazzola's excavation notes reference to seven fragments (repieced from much smaller pieces) found on the floor beside the western wall of the west wing, which Spinazzola believed depicted the council of Greek elders from *Iliad* 1.53-317 (figure 9).[39]

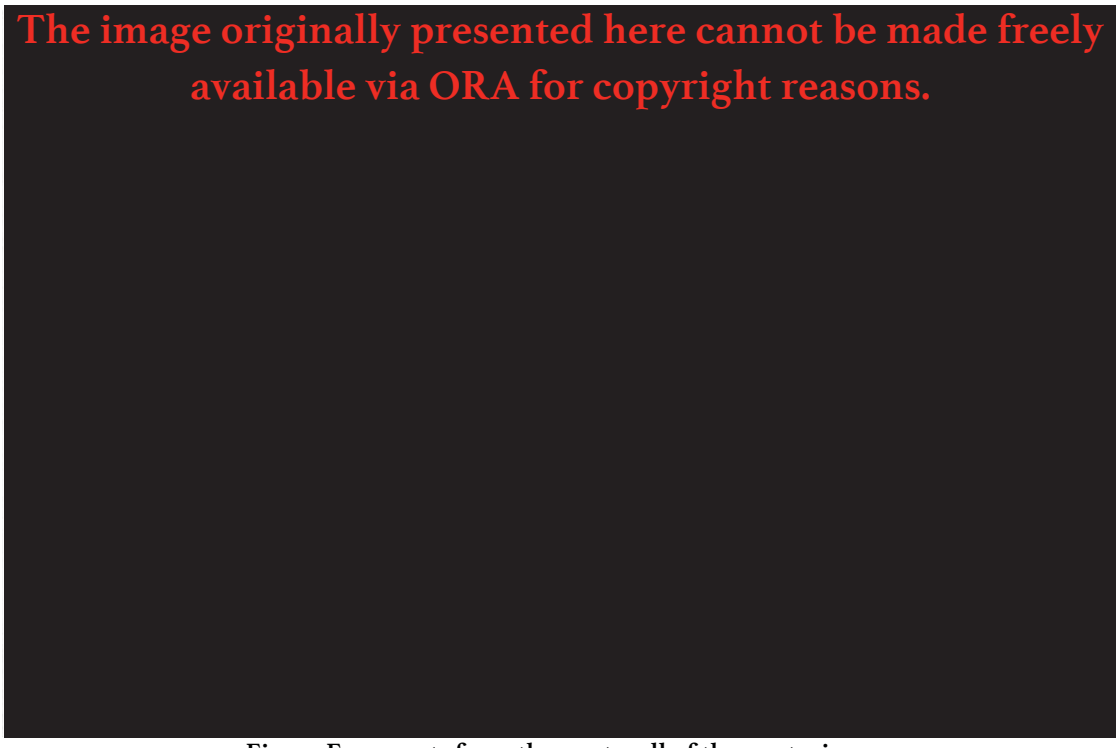


Fig.9 – Fragments from the west wall of the west wing.

[38] Helbig (1868) no.1285 and Hodske (2007) kat.272. Pompeii VI 9,2.13 – Bragantini in *PPM* IV (1993) 660-818.

[39] Spinazzola (1953) 956-958.

Suggesting an original placement for the fragments is difficult since they lack labels and the protagonists in them cannot be identified, being so small. Furthermore the meeting of the Greeks is a fairly lengthy event in the *Iliad* (around 250 lines) and includes several key episodes which are discussed above. Aurigemma proposes that around 19 different scenes were originally painted onto this wall, since the available linear space between the herms and end pillars is 16.65m and the mean length for extant scenes is 0.7m.[40] I would suggest that a number of between 16 and 19 is more likely as elsewhere in the frieze there tend to be only two scenes situated between individual herms or window spaces.

North wing, northern wall

The fresco resumes on the northern wall of the north wing of the cryptoporticus, beyond the storage niche in which the amphorae were found. The first panel, combining three episodes from the Diomedeia (figures 10 to 12), is one of only two instances in the entire frieze when the order of events from the epic appears not to have been strictly followed. The central section showing Diomedes (ΔΙΟΜΗΔΗC) swapping armour with Glaucus (not labelled) from *Iliad* 6.230-236, comes pictorially (although not textually) before his attack (right hand side) on either:

a) Pandarus, killed by a spear through the nose (5.290-296) – although in Homer he was standing in his chariot, rather than on the ground,
b) Aeneas, at whom Diomedes hurled a rock (5.297-310) and then battered with his shield (5.431-442), or
c) Ares disguised as Acamas – although again unlikely as Diomedes recognised the god and advised his companions to retreat (5.596-606).[41]

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Fig.10 – Reconstructed sketch of the Diomedeia.

[40] Spinazzola (1953) 968.
[41] Spinazzola (1953) 912 considers the opponent to be either Aeneas or Ares.



Fig.11 – Diomedes' attack on a Trojan warrior – photograph from 2010.

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Fig.12 – Detail from right side of figure 10.

In this lengthy panel, filling the entire horizontal frieze band between two painted herms, books 5 and 6 of the *Iliad* have been reversed to create compositional balance and to give a sense of the peaceful act of friendship between Diomedes and Glaucus amidst the brutalities of war which rage all around. It is possible that no specific opponent is intended on the right side as none of the duels from book five fit neatly with the imagery; yet even so the narrative sense is maintained by the allusion to the epic account. We might also comment here on the lack of a label for Glaucus. There is no mistaking that this is the Lycian warrior, but only for those who knew their *Iliad* well and understood the pictorial allusion to the text.

The remaining scenes on this section of the wall all follow the narrative chronology of the *Iliad*, without lacunae, beginning with another marker: the

farewell of Hector, Andromache and Astyanax (figure 13), all of whom are labelled. The depiction closely recalls Homer's words with the infant Astyanax raising his arms in terror at the sight of his father in full armour, right down to the detail of the plumed helmet looming over him (*Il.* 6.390-493).


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Fig.13 – Reconstructed sketch of the farewell of Hector, Andromache and Astyanax.

For the cultivated viewer there is no mistaking the episode's identity: it contains identifying labels, adheres closely to the text and was presented with similar composition elsewhere.[42] Note, however, the spelling discrepancy between the label ΑΝΔΡΟΜΑΚΑ in the reconstruction in figure 13 and the Greek form Ἀνδρομάχη; apparently the fresco artist has replaced the chi with a kappa and the eta with an alpha. Comparison with two Attic vases showing the same scene finds

[42] Compare the same scene from the Domus Aurea in Rome – Motta (2002) 221. Although painted around a century later it reveals that the composition was fairly standardised in wallpainting of the Late Republican and Early Imperial periods. Plut. *Vit. Brut.* 23 mentions (although does not describe) a painting in Elea with the same theme which Porcia, wife of Brutus, used to weep beside.

the label Ἀνδρομαχη on one[43] and Ἀνδρομαχε on the other.[44] The only other Roman examples with labels are the Tabula Capitolina (1A) and the Tabula Sarti (6B), which both bear the inscription ANΔPOMAXH.[45] Later in the cryptoporticus frieze (figure 42) we find the label [ανδρ]OMAKH. Thus in all other examples the eta/epsilon, at least, are constant. Unfortunately, the early photograph of the farewell scene supplied by Aurigemma does not show the full label, with the edge of the image cutting the letters off at ANΔPO; the *lucido* sketch is also unclear with ANΔPOMA legible but the final two letters clearly fragmentary at excavation. Aurigemma reproduces a sketch of the label made by Matteo Della Corte which seems to verify the penultimate letter as a kappa, owing to the vertical line on the left of the character, but the final letter could either be an alpha or an eta.[46] It is possible therefore that the label did originally say ANΔPOMAKA, bearing in mind the spelling inconsistencies which occur throughout the frieze (examined further in chapter six), but note also its resemblance to the Italian *Andromaca*, leading us to wonder if this influenced the reconstruction in any way.

The next episode follows the farewell without any painted or architectural mode of separation and shows a gathering of Greek leaders with labels for (from left to right) MENECTEOC,[47] ΔIOMHΔHC, NECT[ωρ], AIAC and [τρα]CYMHΔHC. Spinazzola reconstructs the latter label as TPACYMHΔHC – Thrasymedes – (figure 14) but Della Corte in *CIL* IV.7141 suggests [Διο]MHΔHC. As the second label in the list clearly refers to Diomedes, Spinazzola's interpretation seems far more plausible and consequently he proposes that the scene shows the council of Greek elders after Hector had challenged one of them to a duel from *Iliad* 7.54-205.[48]

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[43] Attic red-figure oinochoe of c.450-400 BC, Beazley 7019.

[44] Attic black-figure amphora of c.550-500 BC, London, British Museum 1899.7-21.3.

[45] Tabula Capitolina (1A) in Squire (2011) figs 56, 58 and 59; Tabula Sarti (6B) now lost but image and description in Squire (2011) fig.79, 396-397.

[46] Spinazzola (1953) fig.911; Spinazzola (1953) fig.912; Spinazzola (1953) fig.914.

[47] Note the unaspirated tau here, where we would expect a theta. Later in the frieze we find θETIC with the theta clearly rendered (figure 23). Such spelling discrepancies will be explored further in chapter six.

[48] Spinazzola (1953) 918-919. As the characters before the letters CYMHΔHC did not survive to excavation we might question Spinazzola's and Della Corte's reconstruction, both supplying T as the first letter of the name instead of the Homeric Θ. This could be on account of the unaspirated tau in MENECTEOC, but note again that the Italian translation of the name is Trasimede.



Fig.14 – Reconstructed sketch of the council of the Greek elders.

Curiously, it is the labels themselves which make identification of the scene problematic since not all of these warriors are said by Homer to have been present at the council, with no reference to Thrasymedes or Menestheus (who is first mentioned in *Iliad* 2.552). Furthermore the artist has *not* provided labels for some of the key protagonists who certainly *were* at the meeting: Agamemnon, Hector, Menelaus, the lesser Ajax, Idomeneus, Meriones, Eurypylus, Thoas or Odysseus. Here we return to Pausanias' comments concerning artists inventing names, or at least placing protagonists in episodes in which they did not feature in the relevant epic.[49] These are probably not corrections in the Alexandrian sense and possibly refer to some local, Pompeian relevance for the two, but there is no doubt on the basis of the scene's composition and reference to leaders who *were* present that the gathering alludes to the council of the Greeks in *Iliad* 7.54-205, and the viewer was meant to recognise it as such.

East wing, eastern wall

After another long lacuna the frieze moves onto the eastern wall of the east wing. Fragments which may give us some indication as to what was originally depicted in the north-eastern corner will be considered below. Part way down the wall an

[49] Paus. 10.26.1, 10.25.4-5, 10.26.7-8. Compare also Pausanias' description of a statue group of the Council of the Greeks in Olympia, of whom he is able to identify Nestor and Idomeneus (only recognisable from the cockerel on his shield, signifying his descent from Helios). He notes that only Agamemnon among the group of eight bears a label and there were originally nine leaders, but Odysseus was carried off to Rome by Nero (5.25.8-10).

extant and largely *in situ* panel showing the two Ajaxes fighting Hector (AIAC, AIAC, EKTωP) over an unidentified body has been reconstructed from fragments (figures 15 to 17). There is no surviving label for the deceased and Spinazzola proposes that he is Patroclus, with the episode referring to the seventeenth book of the *Iliad* where the body of Achilles' companion is defended by the Greeks.[50]



Fig.15 – The Ajaxes and Hector fight over a body – photograph from 2010.

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Fig.16 – The Ajaxes and Hector fight over a body – photograph from the early 1900s.

[50] Spinazzola (1953) 920-921.



Fig.17 – *Lucido* sketch of the Ajaxes and Hector fighting over a body.

But, if Spinazzola's identification is correct, the scene's placement at this point on the wall is confusing as it would compress ten books of the *Iliad* into a mere five or six episodes (running clockwise around the north-east corner), either omitting or certainly curtailing key events such as the embassy to Achilles (9.162-221), Hector reaching the Greek ships (12.442-471), the Doloneia (book 13), Ajax wounding Hector (14.402-457) and Patroclus fighting in Achilles' armour (book 16). There *is* fragmentary evidence for some of these scenes in the east wing (discussed below) and so it *is* possible that the narrative order of the Homeric text has been distorted on this wall but further problems arise when we consider that a depiction of the Aiantes carrying Patroclus' body from the battlefield is located on the southern wall of the east wing (figure 21), which would either mean that the seventeenth book of the *Iliad* occupied the entirety of the east wall or that the Ajaxes defending Patroclus' body was positioned too early on it. But this would be out of character with the nature of the frieze which is almost consistently faithful to the chronology of the epic.

We are left then with the possibility that the scene was wrongly-identified by Spinazzola, and has never been subsequently challenged until this study. First we note that the painting does not adhere to the account as found in the *Iliad* where it is Menelaus and the Telamonian Ajax who successfully defend the body of Patroclus. Hector appears in *Il.* 17.72 but the Aiantes only work together at the very end of the book when they protect Menelaus and Meriones who drive the chariot bearing the corpse to the Myrmidon camp (17.706-761). Additionally, several fragments recovered from the floor of the cryptoporticus suggest that the battles besides the Greek ships and encampment walls, from books 12 and 13, were originally painted in this location. Early in book 13 Poseidon, in the guise of

Calchas, approaches the Aiantes to spur them into defending the ships against Hector who has killed Amphimachus and attempted to strip his armour. The Trojan prince is held back by the Aiantes who guard the body and also that of the fallen Imbrius (*Il.* 13.1-205). Consequently, owing to the placement of the scene towards the northern end of the wall and the fresco pieces found on the floor in its vicinity, including one containing the letters AM,[51] it is much more likely that the death of Amphimachus (or Imbrius) is depicted in figures 15 to 17 than the defence of Patroclus' corpse.[52] The new identification forms a marker for those who knew the epic well enough to identify the (unlabelled) deceased and also allows for more accurate repositioning of the fallen fragments of plaster.[53]

Fallen fragments from the north and east wings of the cryptoporticus

As discussed above, significant lacunae are found between the council of the Greeks on the northern wall and the death of Amphimachus/Imbrius on the eastern wall; and then between the latter and the Ajaxes transporting Patroclus' body on the southern wall of the same wing. But a number of fallen fragments, recorded by Spinazzola and interpreted by Aurigemma, may indicate what was originally painted there. These are particularly interesting for the purposes of this thesis because, as will be explored in chapter three, they include episodes also found in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio: the embassy to Achilles and the battle by the walls and ships but, due to their fragmentary state, cannot be categorised beyond a rudimentary identification.

The fragments must have fallen from the eastern or northern walls of the east wing of the cryptoporticus as the frescoes on the west wall remain intact. Lacunae on the eastern wall allow for the original inclusion of around eleven now missing panels or episodes[54] and around four in the eastern corner of the north

[51] It is suggested below that the AM(φιμαχος) label is probably not from this very panel, owing to the lack of lacunae in figure 16, but from a preceding scene.
[52] Spinazzola (1953) 960-961. Neither Aurigemma nor Spinazzola make the connection between the name and the correct interpretation of the scene. The fragment bearing the AM label is omitted from Della Corte's list in *CIL* IV.7141.
[53] Spinazzola's incorrect identification prompted scholars to comment upon the contracted nature of the north easterly part of the frieze, with Croisille puzzling over the uneven distribution of the scenes between the *Diomedeia* and the so-called death of Patroclus, in comparison with the rest of the frieze – Croisille (2005) 155.
[54] Aurigemma suggests a larger figure of 14 – Spinazzola (1953) 969.

wall.[55] The first grouping (reconstructed from eleven smaller fragments) appears to show a walking man in a long mantel and bears the label ΦΟΙΝΙΞ, and is so most likely from the embassy to Achilles in *Iliad* 9.168-170 (figure 18).

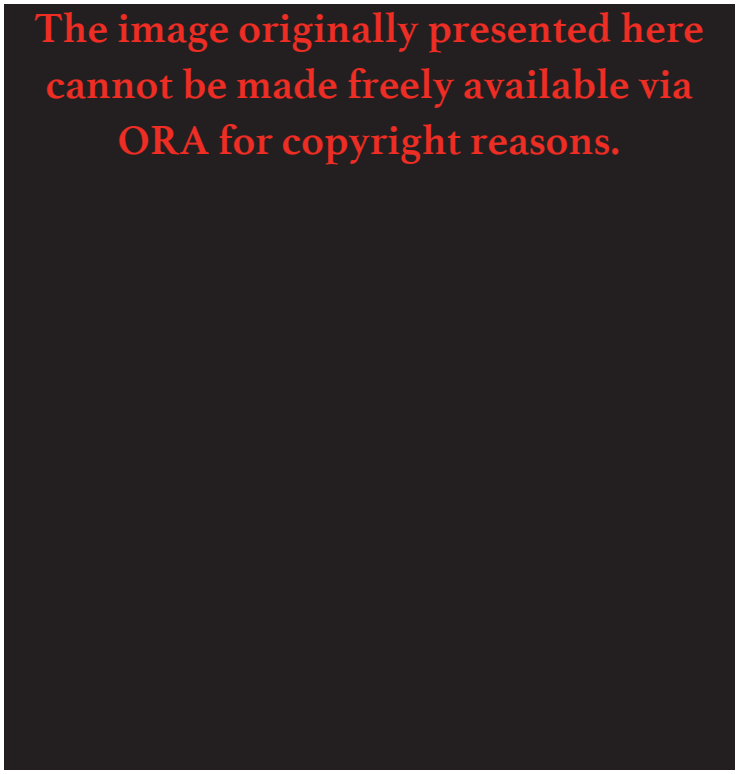


Fig.18 – Phoinix.

Thanks to the revised interpretation of the only extant scene from this wall as the Aiantes defending Amphimachus and/or Imbrius from *Iliad* 13.184-205 we can now securely position the Phoinix fragments in the north-eastern corner of the frieze, separated from the council of Greeks by the stairway to the upper level of the house, although precisely *where* on this small stretch of wall cannot be determined. In its current state the frieze bears no reference to episodes from the second half of *Iliad* books 7 through to 11, which were probably also positioned in the north-eastern corner. We might expect to see the duel between Hector and Ajax (7.233-312), Diomedes rescuing Nestor from the battlefield (8.78-166), Teucer's archery and retreat (8.292-335) or perhaps Achilles refusing his comrades' entreaties and playing

[55] In the *CIL* entry Della Corte records that apart from two unlabelled fresco fragments showing a standing, armed hero holding out a helmet (*CIL* IV.7141a) and the head of another hurling a spear (*CIL* IV.7141b), which were "ad ambulationem orientalem pertinentia", labels *CIL* IV.7141 c-n, which Spinazzola records as being from the eastern wing, were "in ambulatione occidentali detecta sunt" alongside the fallen fragments from the *Aethiopis* section of the frieze. However, they can be much more convincingly be repositioned into scenes on the eastern wall of the eastern wing, and so Spinazzola's account will be taken as the most reliable.

his lyre in his tent (9.606-731). (Note the representation of the latter in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio – figure 133.) Depictions of the Doloneia (book 11) appear in a number of near-contemporary artworks including the neck of one of the pendant oinochoai from the Berthouville hoard and a marble relief plaque now in Vienna.[56] From book 12 we might envisage Agamemnon's arming scene and aristeia (12.15-283), Paris shooting and injuring Diomedes (12.368-400) or Menelaus and Ajax coming to the aid of the wounded Odysseus (12.456-488). However, these can only remain proposals and, once again, we cannot discount extra-Homeric episodes and protagonists appearing in the frieze at this point.

Six further fragments almost certainly show the battles by the wall and the Greek ships from books 12 and 13. The first three fragments, bearing the letters ΜΕΝΩΝ, are convincingly argued by Aurigemma to be from the battle by the walls of the Greek camp as the only Menon mentioned in the *Iliad* is found in this episode (12.188-194).[57] The next three fragments contain the letters ΑΝΤΙΛΟ, surely Antilochus son of Nestor, who featured prominently in the battle by the ships in the second half of *Iliad* 13.[58] As there are no suitable gaps in the plaster in figure 16 (the photograph from the early 1900s) in which the fragments containing the labels for Menon, Antilochus or Amphimachus might be repositioned, the three warriors must have featured in scenes of fighting which came before and after the only in situ scene on this wall. Proposed locations are given in figures 4 and 5 and have been suggested according to the chronological order of the narrative. Indeed, two other fragments found on the floor of the east wing, both reconstructed from smaller fresco pieces, show the spear and helmeted head of an unidentifiable warrior with another man beside him; and a warrior armed with a lance.[59] Clearly combat featured heavily in this part of the frieze, probably spanning the entirety of the wall.

A further fallen fresco fragment bearing the name ΝΕΣΤ[ωρ], alongside the guidance of the Homeric account, may provide the identity of another scene on the

[56] Berthouville oenochoe in Baratte (1989) no.16. Marble plaque in Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, I 771, but with disputed date: Schreiber proposes late Hellenistic, Alexandrian – Schreiber (1894) pl.XLV; Franz Wickhoff a Roman dating – Wickhoff (1900) 35; and Margarete Bieber the first century BC – Bieber (1961) 152-153.

[57] Spinazzola (1953) 960, fig. 976. Della Corte proposes that the label (whose letters are very clear) might be a misspelling of Memnon (*CIL* IV.7141 l), but is probably based on his mistaken assumption that the fragments were found in the west wing of the cryptoporticus.

[58] Spinazzola (1953) 960, fig. 977.

[59] Spinazzola (1953) 961-962, figures 978 and 979.

western wall.[60] In *Iliad* 14.1-134 the Gerenian charioteer encounters the wounded Odysseus, Agamemnon and Diomedes returning from the battle by the ships. This is the only reference to Nestor in this part of the epic (from book 12 to late in book 15) and so the fragments containing his name probably formed part of a scene depicting this episode. Another (figure 19) shows a fallen or seated warrior and the label AIAC TE[λαμονιος] is found in the lower right hand corner.



Fig.19 – Fragment showing Hector? Ajax?

Unfortunately, Spinazzola does not seem to have recorded the precise findspot of this fallen fragment within the wider east wing (or the note is at least not reproduced by Aurigemma) and Homer refers to Ajax Telamonius several times during the battles by the walls and ships, and then in the Greeks' subsequent attempt to drive Hector and the Trojans back from their encampment. Furthermore, there is no occasion in this section of the *Iliad* where Ajax is thrown to the floor. I would suggest instead that this is Hector, thrust to the ground by Ajax's hurled boulder from *Iliad* 14.409-418, with the label belonging not to the fallen but the Telamonian standing near him. Aurigemma questions the nudity of the warrior and wonders whether there is an error in Spinazzola's notes regarding the findspot of the fallen fragments[61] but, if we compare with figures 15 to 17, we see that the central Ajax is nude in his battle against Hector, as is the central warrior in

[60] Spinazzola (1953) fig.980.
[61] Spinazzola (1953) 962-963. Homer even says that when Hector fell "the bronze trappings of his armour rang upon him" (*Il.* 14.419-420).

figures 26 and 27, and so heroic nudity need not mean that a combat scene be discounted.

The final repieced grouping of fallen fragments from this wing shows a warrior holding out a helmet in his right hand and carrying a shield in his left (figure 20).

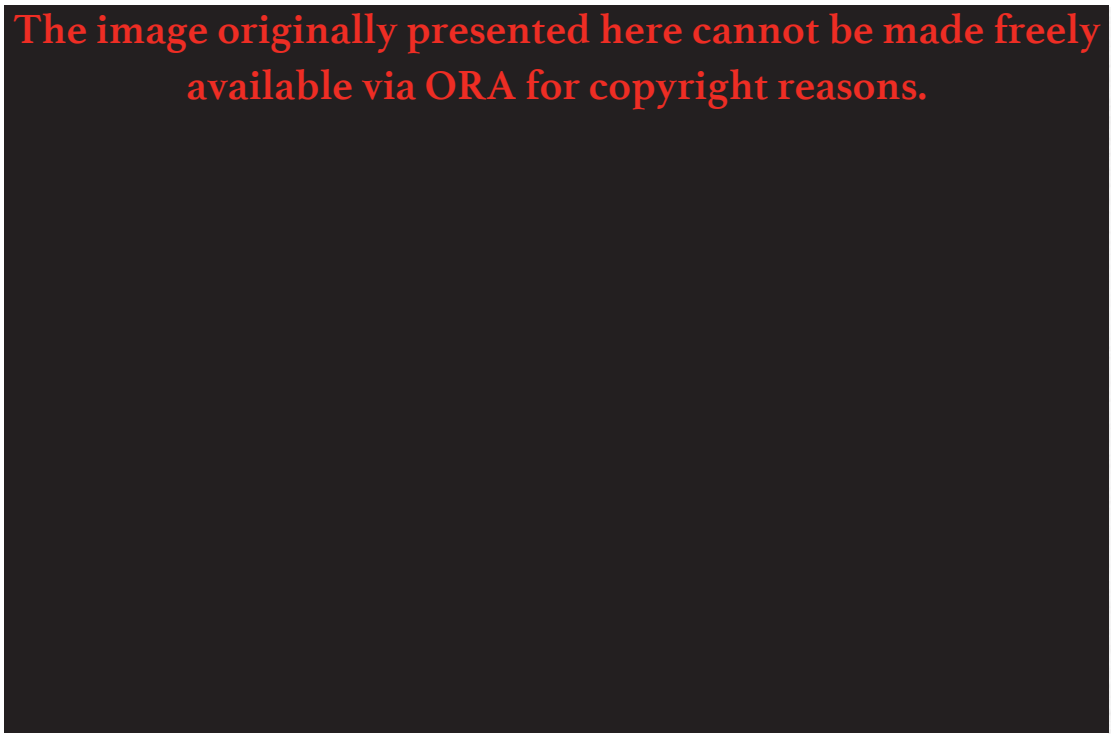


Fig.20 – Warrior holding a helmet.

For its identity Aurigemma proposes and simultaneously rejects two gift-giving episodes: that between Glaucus and Diomedes from *Iliad* 5.290-6.119 and that between Ajax and Hector from *Iliad* 7.303-312. He also tentatively proposes Hector removing his own armour and putting on Achilles', which has just been stripped from Patroclus' corpse.[62] The latter hypothesis is certainly the most likely as the warrior in the fragment appears to be wearing a helmet already and so is probably in the act of exchanging his own for the new one. Furthermore this episode, as found in *Iliad* 17.188-197, fits neatly within the proposed chronology of the eastern wall and was probably originally situated just before the *in situ* and securely–identified (if non-textual) scene on the southern wall, showing the Aiantes removing Patroclus from the battlefield (discussed below). Consequently the Patrocleia and subsequent death of Patroclus (*Iliad* 16.1-867) can be repositioned in

[62] Spinazzola (1953) 965.

the southern part of the wall, between Ajax throwing the boulder at Hector and Hector putting on Achilles' armour. Perhaps the death of Sarpedon and struggle over his body were also depicted (16.426-683), as are also found in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio (figures 110 and 111).

East wing, southern wall



Fig.21 – *Lucido* sketch of the Ajaxes transporting Patroclus' body.

We now return to the in situ frescoes of the frieze which resume on the southern wall of the east wing. The labels in figure 21 confirm that these are the Aiantes carrying Patroclus' body, but this is in fact a distortion of the Homeric account in which Menelaus and Meriones are said to have carried the corpse to safety (*Il.* 17.722-746). It is therefore another correction, which alludes to or evokes, rather than illustrates the event as found in the epic. Elsewhere in the frieze we find the Ajaxes favoured over other warriors, which may again (as with Thrasymedes or Menestheus above) reflect some now lost, local tradition, or perhaps simple preference for the heroes on the part of the homeowner.

There then follows a small lacuna on the southern wall immediately after figure 21 in which a maximum of one scene could have originally been painted. An episode falling in the first half of the eighteenth book of the *Iliad* seems likely, perhaps Antilochus bringing news of Patroclus' death to Achilles (*Il.* 18.1-34),[63] Achilles addressing the Greek troops (18.202-231) or the subsequent council of the Trojan assembly (18.243-314). Each is a distinct possibility but, again, we cannot discount an extra-Homeric scene being painted here.

[63] *Cf.* Philostr. *Imag.* 2.7.1.

East wing, western wall

The frieze continues on the western wall of the east wing where eight episodes can be identified and the absence of lacunae reveals that the fresco is intact along its entire length. The first panel shows Thetis in Hephaestus' workshop which will be encountered several times in the single panels of the Third Pompeian Style,[64] although found with a unique composition here (figures 22 and 23).



Fig.22– Thetis in Hephaestus' workshop – photograph from 2010.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Fig.23 – Reconstructed sketch of Thetis in Hephaestus' workshop.

Thetis (θETIC) sits sorrowfully on the right as this event signifies the beginning of the end for her son and reflects her grief expressed in *Iliad* 18.428-462. Hephaestus, in traditional pilos and exomis, sits on a stool in the centre of the workshop and the

[64] Bragantini (1990) 208.

newly-forged weapons are scattered around him. A nymph labelled EYANΘH (blooming, resplendent) admires both the shield and her own reflection in it and is a clear extra-Homeric insertion since the only female deities Homer describes as present in the forge are Thetis and Charis, wife of the smith god (*Il.* 18.368-387). She is undoubtedly a pictorial device created by the artist to highlight particular details of the scene, specifically to bring the viewer's attention to the shield since her name evokes the lustre of the divine weapons.[65] And, just as the Delphian guides had to explain the meaning of the extra-Homeric demon Eurynomus in Polygnotus' Nekyia fresco to Pausanias (Paus. 10.29.7), EYANΘH may also be an obscure mythological reference decipherable only by those who knew the intricacies of Greek mythology. The first century philosopher Cornutus notes that certain people in his day believed that Euanthe was the mother of the Graces, of whom Charis, wife of Hephaestus, was one. [66] As Charis herself is not labelled in the panel the viewer would have to make sophisticated connections between the Iliadic text and the extra-Homeric epigraphy to fully understand the inclusion of Εὐάνθη herself and the mythological reference she alluded to; clearly a requirement far beyond simple recognition of a familiar scene.

Conversely the next episode finds Achilles sitting beside Patroclus' corpse in a standardised scene known from other Roman artworks of this and later periods (figures 24 and 25).[67] No epigraphy survives today but Della Corte cites a label with the letters MENEC, which he reconstructs as Menesteus (*CIL* IV.7141), whom we may have previously encountered in the Council of the Greeks. Yet in this setting the protagonist is more likely to be the Myrmidon whose genealogy is given in *Iliad* 16.173-178. But, Homer refers to *neither* Menestheus in this episode in the epic text. Did the name therefore hold some special appeal for the homeowner, or have local significance, leading to the extra-Homeric insertion? This certainly appears to be the case for the problematic labels in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio (chapter three) but cannot be discerned here.[68]

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[65] A theory proposed by Spinazzola (1953) 923 and seconded by Bragantini in *PPM* I (2000) 208.
[66] *Theologiae Graecae Compendium* 15. Lang (1881) for 'Cornuti Theologiae Graecae Compendium'.
[67] Front panel of a second century Metropolitan sarcophagus in Ostia (Inv. 43504); silver oinochoe from the Berthouville hoard – Lehmann-Hartleben (1928) plate XIIIa.
[68] The name is documented epigraphically in Rome on two funerary monuments of the first and second centuries AD (*CIL* VI 22404 and VI 29533) but there is no extant evidence linking it to Pompeii.



Fig.24 – Achilles mourns for Patroclus – photograph from 2010.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Fig.25 – *Lucido* sketch of Achilles mourning for Patroclus.

The ambiguous presentation and lack of labels in the next scene has led to interpretative difficulties among scholars, and perhaps it was so among ancient viewers. Here we encounter three unidentified warriors, two facing the viewer and a third with his back to us (figure 26 and 27). Spinazzola proposes then rejects Neptune in the guise of Calchas with the two Ajaxes on either side from *Iliad* 13.43-80 and tentatively favours Achilles about to re-enter battle wearing his divine

armour (*Il.* 18.215-238). Bragantini suggests that the composition is too general to form an accurate identification and Della Corte suggests (with cautious question mark) a "deus(?) fere nudus inter heroes iuvenem et senem" (*CIL* VI.7141).[69] It is even difficult to determine whether these are Greeks or Trojans as throughout the frieze both are indistinguishable by their dress alone.[70] Prominence is certainly given to the central figure who stands in heroic nudity and holds the gaze of the men either side, and Achilles seems the most likely option given his inclusion in the episodes both before and after. From the current state of the fresco it is difficult to decipher whether the artist painted labels which have since faded, or omitted them altogether, and in the *CIL* entry (IV.7141) Della Corte records "titulis caruit?" If this is true the ancient viewer was therefore required to provide his own identification, correctly inferring which of the warriors from the *Iliad* were presented, perhaps using clues now lost to modern observers.[71]

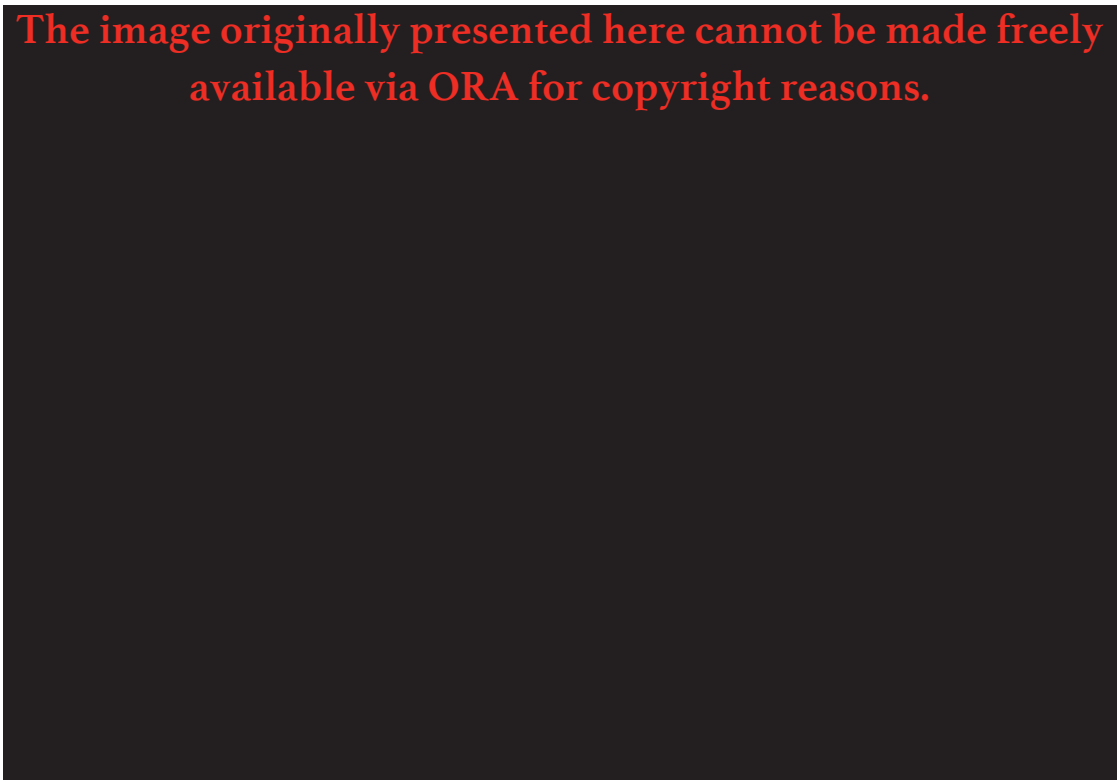


Fig.26 – Three warriors.

[69] Spinazzola (1953) 929-931; Bragantini (2000) 210.
[70] Only the unarmed Trojan captured for sacrifice by Achilles (figure 37) and the infant Astyanax (figure 42) wear Phrygian attire.
[71] *Cf* Philostr. *Imag.* 7.2-3, 7.1, 10.2; Paus. 10.25.4, 10.25.5, 10.29.3, 10.31.11.

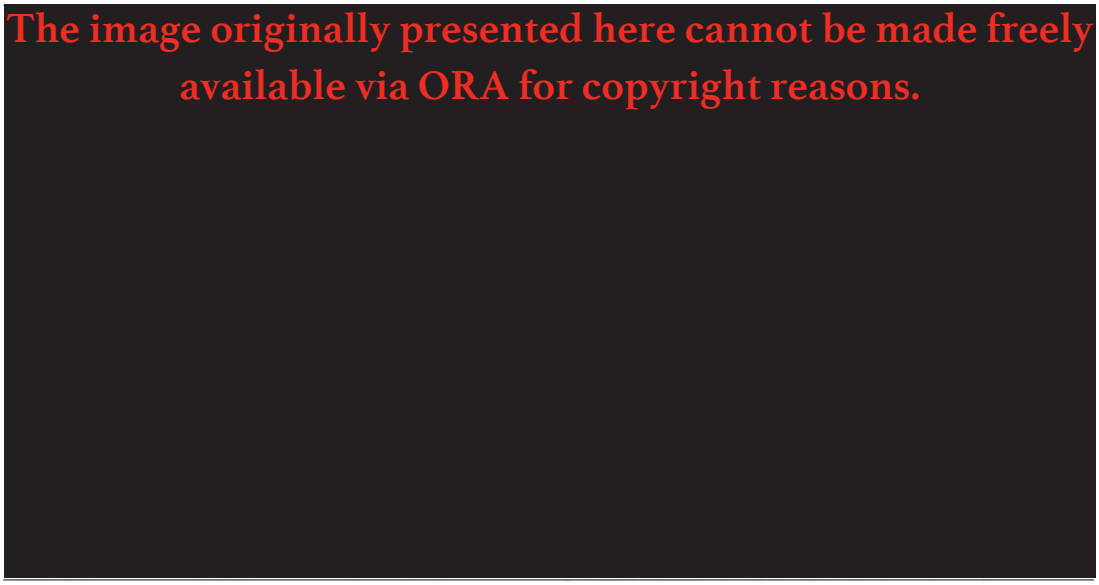


Fig.27 – Reconstructed sketch of three warriors.

The third surviving scene along the wall (although only preserved in its lower half – figure 28, with full reconstruction in figure 29) shows Briseis about to be returned to Achilles after the deliberations of the Greek leaders, from *Iliad* 19.40-285. The labels for Agamemnon, Briseis, the Ajaxes and Talthybius (ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ, ΒΡΕΙCΗΙC, ΑΙΑC, ΑΙΑC, ΤΑΛ[θ]ΥΒΙΟC) confirm the identification although there is no sign, at least epigraphically, of Achilles who was instructed by Thetis to call the assembly (*Il.* 19.34). Note again the presence of the Aiantes who are not named in the Homeric account (Talthybius is mentioned briefly, in lines 250-269) but here take up the right third of the scene. The correction is particularly curious since, by contrast, there is no evidence of Odysseus who plays a far more prominent role in the narrative, as he did in the Council of Greeks (figure 14), which also neglected the Ithacan. The omission of Achilles was perhaps intended to heighten the drama of the subsequent episodes which convey the hero's bloody return to battle.[72]



Fig.28 – Briseis among the Greek assembly.

[72] Compare Paus. 10.26.4.



Fig.29 – Proposed reconstruction of figure 28 by V. Spinazzola and A. Sanarica.

Only a fragment from the right side of the next scene survives (figures 30 and 31, left side of the herm head) and appears to show a gathering of deities. Only Athena can be securely identified, however. Both Aurigemma and Della Corte (*CIL* IV.7141) propose that this is the council of the gods, prior to them joining the battle, and the notion that they might be watching the combat between Achilles and Aeneas in the adjacent panel (figures 30 and 31, right side of the herm head) is rightly rejected since the Olympians are facing left, seemingly oblivious to the battle on the right.[73]

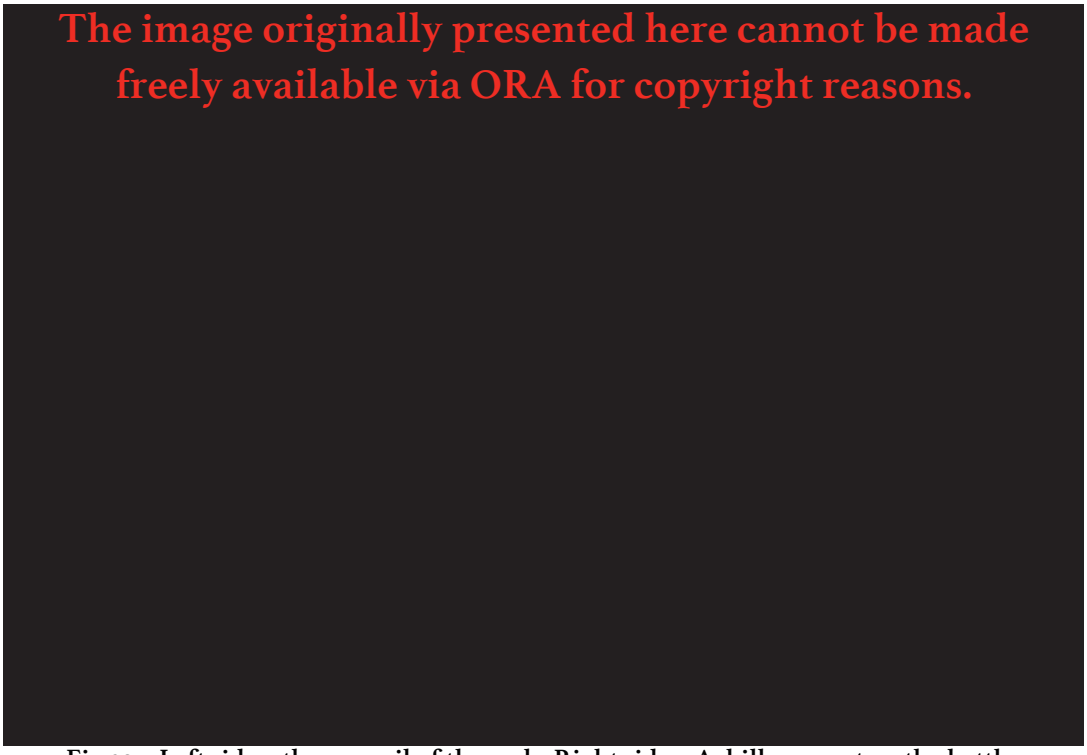


Fig.30 – Left side – the council of the gods; Right side – Achilles re-enters the battle.

[73] Spinazzola (1953) 934.



Fig.31 – Left side – the council of the gods; Right side – Achilles re-enters the battle.

The next panel therefore shows the very moment when Achilles (ΑΧΙΛΛΕΥϹ) re-enters battle. The death of Polydorus (*Il.* 20.407-418) and Hector hidden in the mist by Apollo (*Il.* 20.443-454) occur in quick succession in book 20 and their proximity in the narrative is reflected pictorially in the frieze, making the sequence a clear textual marker. Since there is no label for Polydorus in this otherwise well-preserved scene – Achilles' label is very clear – the viewer was again required to infer the identity of the fallen man from his knowledge of the epic.[74] A lacuna in the plaster conceals whether Hector or Apollo, both on the right, were labelled, but the chronological narrative of the epic, alongside a visual comparison of the god's depiction both here and in the plague scene, even accounting for the sketching style of A. Sanarica, (figures 32 and 33), leaves the interpretation secure.



Fig.32 – Detail from a sketch by A. Sanarica.

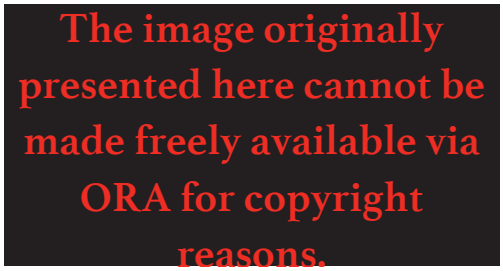


Fig.33 – Detail from figure 7.

[74] *Cf.* Paus. 10.25.4, 10.25.5, 10.29.3, 10.31.11.

The most northerly panel on the western wall combines two episodes within one image field and continues to emphasise Achilles' return to the battlefield (figure 34). On the left (thus the penultimate scene) Achilles charges at Aeneas, who is simultaneously rescued by Poseidon (figures 35 and 36). All three are labelled: ΠΟCΕΙΔΩΝ, ΑΙΝΙΑC and ΑΧΙΛΛΕΥC. Note how the artist has made the composition a mirror image of Apollo rescuing Hector (*Il.* 20.443-454) from the previous scene, yet this is one of the rare occasions in the extant frieze in which the chronological order has been subverted since Aeneas rescued by Poseidon is a slightly earlier event in the epic narrative (*Il.* 20.318-352). Indeed, this type of 'distortion' occurs in each of the *Iliad* friezes studied in this thesis and can usually be attributed to an artistic preference for repeated or symmetrically-balanced compositions.[75]



Fig.34 – Left hand side of scene. Aeneas fighting Achilles, rescued by Poseidon.

[75] Compare Pausanias 10.31.2-3.

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Fig.35 –Reconstruction of Aeneas fighting Achilles, rescued by Poseidon.



Fig.36 – Detail of Aeneas fighting Achilles – photograph from 2010.

The final scene on this wall shows Achilles capturing a Trojan prisoner for sacrifice. Although the plaster has faded considerably today, the two sketches made during and after excavation (figures 37 and 38) allow us to see that the artist has created a highly-condensed, pictorial evocation of the Homeric account of Achilles rounding up several Trojans in the Scamander, slaughtering most and taking twelve young men to sacrifice in revenge for the death of Patroclus (*Il.* 21.17-33). The artist's intention to abridge the textual episode is confirmed by the use of the extra-

Homeric, plural noun [αι]ΧΜΑΛΩΤΟΙ (prisoners of war) even though only one is depicted.[76]

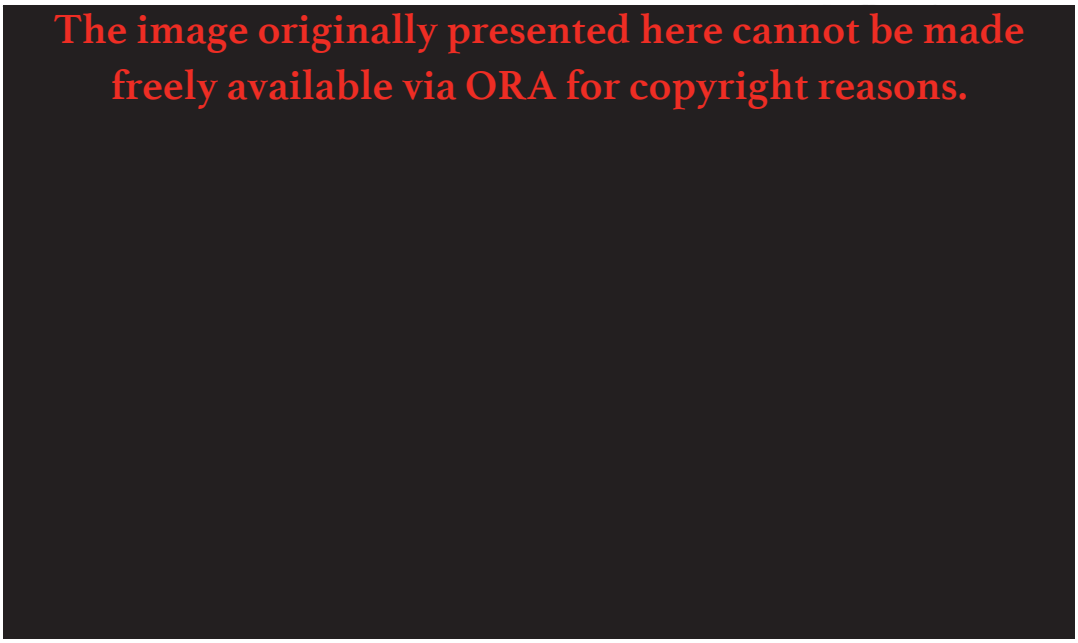


Fig.37 – Reconstructed sketch of Achilles capturing a Trojan prisoner.

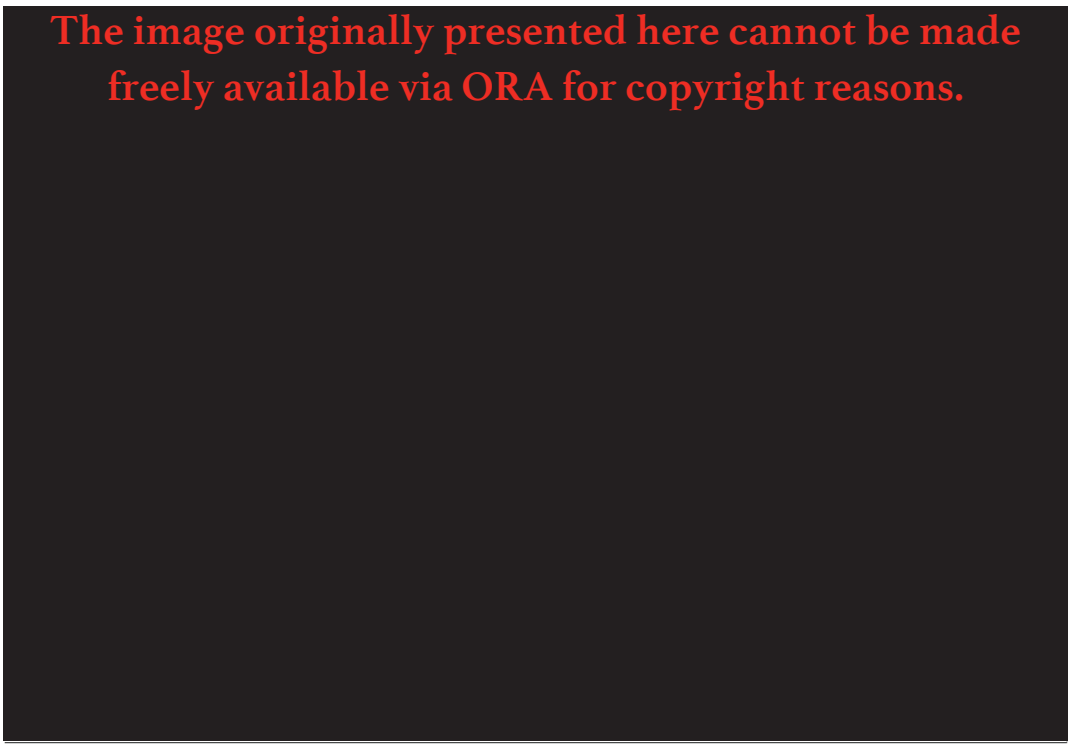


Fig.38 – *Lucido* sketch of Achilles capturing a Trojan prisoner.

[76] Compare Paus. 10.31.9-10: "There is no separate inscription on either woman, but there is one common to the pair, which states that they are of the number of the uninitiated".

North wing, southern wall

The frieze now moves to the southern wall of the north wing of the cryptoporticus for a further seven episodes, with lacunae suggesting that there were originally six or seven more. The first extant scene continues the events in the Scamander with the death of Priam's son Lykaon (figures 39 and 40).



Fig.39 – Achilles and Lykaon in the Scamander – photograph from 2010.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Fig.40 – Reconstructed sketch of Achilles and Lykaon in the Scamander.

The river god is seated on the left (CKAMANΔPOC), Achilles (AX[ιλλευς]) overpowers Lykaon (ΛYKAΩN) in the centre, while a man denoted by the letters

EC, usually reconstructed as [φρυγ]EC,[77] runs towards the right, possibly another Trojan fleeing from Achilles. The artist's decision to call the river god Scamander rather than the textual Xanthos – the name used throughout *Iliad* 21 – appears to be an epigraphic correction, perhaps referring to Homer's explanation that the gods call the river Xanthos but men call it Scamander (*Il.* 20.74), but much more likely to differentiate the deity from one of Achilles' divine horses who features in the very next scene. The death of Lykaon appears also to have been a standardised scene found elsewhere with similar composition in Graeco-Roman art,[78] and is referred to twice by Philostratus both directly (Philostr. *Imag.* 1.1) and indirectly (*Imag.* 2.2.1). Since Philostratus comments that Hephaestus is running in his painting (*Imag.* 1.2) it might suggest that the figure rushing towards the right in figures 39 and 40 is in fact the smith god himself. The *lucido* sketch reveals that the lettering of the label was barely perceptible at excavation,[79] and so it is entirely possible that it read [Ηφαιστ]OC (compare figure 23) as opposed to [φρυγ]EC, particularly when we consider that the god/man wears a dark red exomis in both paintings.[80]

There then follows a lacuna in the fresco between the first and second windows on the eastern side of the wall, and beyond the second window only the partially-preserved and lower section of a panel remains (figure 41). Aurigemma proposes, on account of its placement between the death of Lykaon and Andromache's lament, that this would have been the location of the duel between Hector and Achilles, followed by the desecration of Hector's corpse. He cites a note from Della Corte (reproduced in *CIL* IV.7141) concerning the remains in this location of a painting of around 80cm in length with labels for ΑΧΙΛΛΕΥC and ΞΑΝΘOC, which seems to confirm the proposal (the latter naming one of the hero's divine horses who feature in each of the Pompeian *Iliad* friezes).[81] Della Corte records that the hind legs of a horse were originally visible on the fragment and, although they are not perceptible on the early photograph, we would imagine that the representation, being one of the most frequently-replicated standardized

[77] Della Corte – *CIL* IV.7141. Aurigemma compares with the Tabula Capitolina (1A) which shows Achilles chasing unidentified Trojans towards the gates of Troy, also with the label ΦΡΥΓΕΣ – Spinazzola (1953) 940.
[78] Kossatz-Deissmann, 'Achilleus' in *LIMC* I.1 (1981) nos 549-553.
[79] Spinazzola (1953) fig.950.
[80] Squire and Elsner (2016) 72 for a perceptive commentary on the inherent difficulties of translating the Homeric scene into art, particularly Homer's ambiguity about the form of Scamander himself.
[81] Spinazzola (1953) 941.

scenes from the narrative, would have followed the traditional composition of the desecration scene as found throughout Graeco-Roman art.[82]

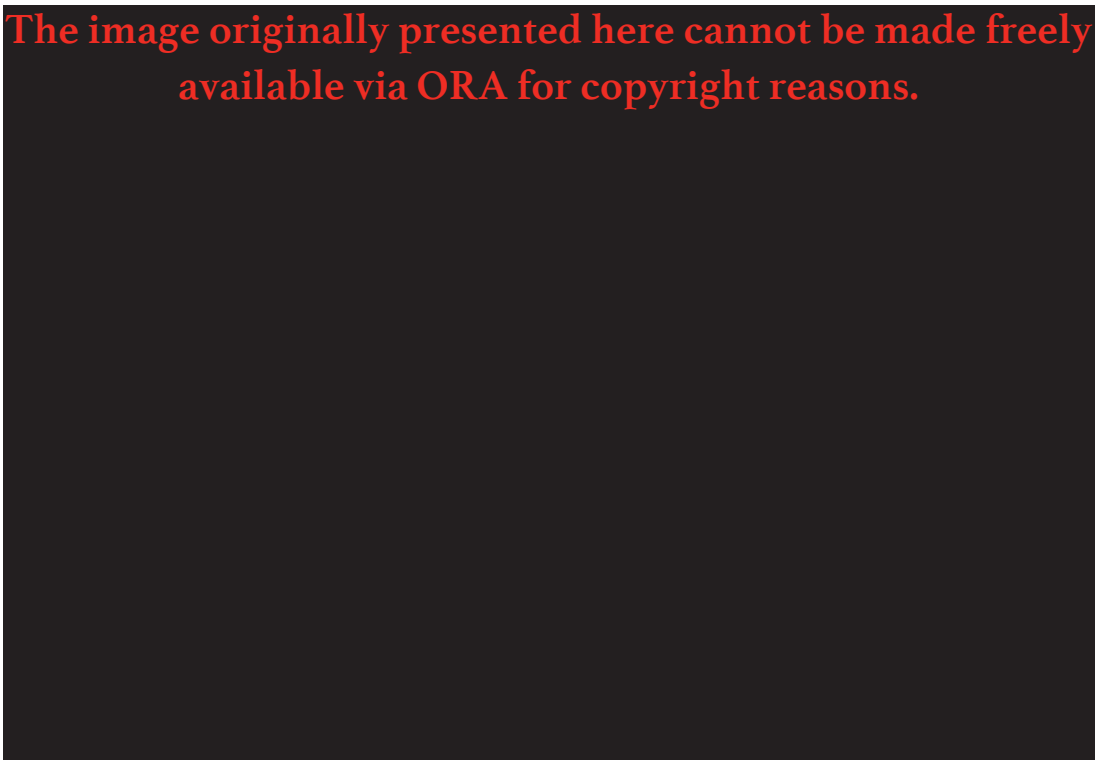


Fig.41 – Southeastern corner of the north wing of the cryptoporticus.

If figure 41 *did* show the desecration of Hector then the duel between Achilles and Hector must have been painted somewhere on the wall (with room for two or three more episodes) between it and the death of Lykaon. How much horizontal space this filled cannot be discerned, however, although the duel was clearly the focal point of the *Iliad* frieze in the neighbouring House of the Iliac Shrine (figure 81). On the reconstruction in figure 4 I have suggested that it fell immediately before the desecration but on the opposite side of the window. The two scenes before the duel may have included Hephaestus blasting the Scamander with fire (*cf* Philostr. *Imag.* 1.1), perhaps Apollo luring Achilles away from the battlefield (*Il.* 21.526-22.24) or even the protestations of the Trojan royal family towards Hector, as found in the House of the Iliac Shrine (figures 65 and 66).

Another lacuna with spacing for two or three scenes comes after the desecration. The next extant scenes on the northern wall leave the battle (which

[82] Kossatz-Deissmann, 'Achilleus' in *LIMC* I.1 (1981) nos 584-641. Near contemporary scenes are found on the Tabula Tarentina (13 Ta – London, British Museum, Inv.1895,1224.1), a silver pitcher from the Berthouville Hoard – Lehmann-Hartleben (1928) plate XIVa, and a ceramic lamp found in Egypt (London, British Museum, Inv. 1895,1020.1).

has probably raged on for the previous six) and show Andromache's lament beside Hector's burial mound and a gathering of grieving women (figures 42 and 43). It is difficult to propose possible episodes for the lacuna here as the desecration is unsecure and figure 42 is largely extra-Homeric, meaning that definitive beginning and ending points within the Iliadic narrative cannot even be cited.



Fig.42 – *Lucido* sketch of Andromache's lament.

Andromache's lament (figure 42), which is barely visible today owing to severe fading, is dominated by women. Astyanax, who has aged from his presentation as a baby in the farewell scene (figure 13), is now shown as a toddler in a Phrygian cap. Andromache is labelled ([Ανδρ]ΟΜΑΚΗ) and sits beside Hector's ΤΑΦΟS (tomb).[83] Della Corte suggests that in the scene "heros et nuntius coloquuntur?" (*CIL* IV.7141) but there is little evidence for this either in the *lucido* sketch or the early photograph.[84] Interesting comparisons can be made with Pausanias' description of the grieving Andromache and her companions in the Iliupersis fresco in Delphi (Paus. 10.25.9) since the women have their heads covered in both and similarly have Astyanax with them. Within the Iliadic context, however, figure 42 is entirely extra-Homeric, especially since Hector's corpse should still be in the possession of Achilles at this stage, and so the mound is a device used by the artist to give visual focus for Andromache's grief as relayed in *Iliad* 22.460-515. It is therefore a pictorial evocation – but certainly not illustration – of the epic text.

[83] Aurigemma notes that the letters ΠΥΛΗ were just visible beneath Andromache's label, which he interprets as the Scaean gate – Spinazzola (1953) 943. Della Corte omits ΤΑΦΟS from *CIL* IV.7141.
[84] Spinazzola (1953) fig.954.

In the next scene, which is now so faded that the only available representation is the preparatory sketch made at excavation (figure 43),[85] a woman sits with her head in her hands in the centre, another kneels before her on the left, and another stands behind. Labels do not survive, or may never had been painted – Della Corte writes "titulis caruit?" – CIV IV.7141 – and so we must infer the episode's meaning; perhaps it is a pictorial representation of Hecuba's grief at the loss of her son, juxtaposed with that of her daughter-in-law immediately before (figure 42)?[86] Nevertheless, it is entirely extra-Homeric as there is no reference in the *Iliad* to grieving women after the death of Hector and before the burial of Patroclus.

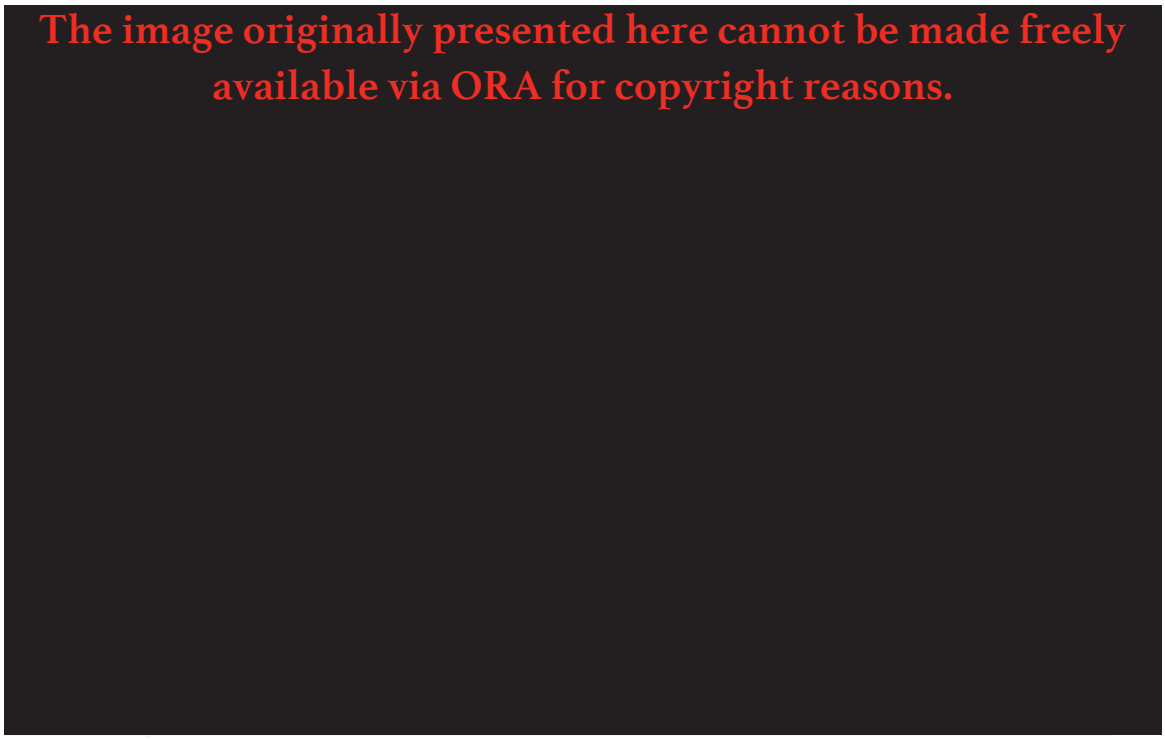


Fig.43 – *Lucido* sketch of grieving women.

The remaining episodes on the southern wall of the north wing can be securely identified, however, and show Achilles making libations at Patroclus' pyre (left of figure 44, figures 45 and 46) and a scene from the Funeral Games (right of figure 44, figures 47 and 48).

[85] Aurigemma does not supply a photograph.
[86] Aurigemma rejects a proposal of Thetis in her sea cave grieving for Achilles (*Il.* 24.83-36) since it would distort the Iliadic chronology and there is no hint of a marine setting – Spinazzola (1953) 946. Compare, however, another extra-Homeric scene showing a grieving parent in the House of Octavius Quartio (figure 127).



Fig.44 – left: Achilles at Patroclus' pyre; right: the foot race – photograph from 2010.

The labels on the left panel have survived well enough to allow identification of [No]TOC (South Wind, with arm and horn visible in the upper left corner), ΠΑΤΡΟΚΛΟC and ΑΧΙΛΛΕΥC, right down to the sacrificial ΑΙΧΜΑΛΩΤΟΙ piled up on the floor (figures 45 and 46). Bragantini describes the scene as an almost literal rendering of Homer,[87] but this is not quite accurate as Βορέας and Ζέφυρος are named in the text, not Νότος (*Il.* 23.195), forming an artistic correction.



Fig.45 – Achilles makes libations for Patroclus – photograph from 2010.

[87] Bragantini (2000) 219.



Fig.46 – *Lucido* sketch of Achilles making libations for Patroclus.

In the funeral games for Patroclus which follow the only contest which seems to have been depicted is the foot race (figures 47 and 48). This scene, depicting a bearded warrior fallen to the ground and two standing above him, is almost certainly the climax of the race between the lesser Ajax, Odysseus and Antilochus from *Iliad* 23.740-784. The Locrian Ajax must be the man on the floor (having slipped on offal from Achilles' earlier sacrifice) but the lack of labels makes identification of the others problematic, perhaps leaving the viewer to infer their identity from now missing attributes.[88] According to Homer, the foot race was not the first of the funeral games to take place (the chariot race, boxing match and wrestling bout came before) but allowing for the inclusion of other contests in this corner of the cryptoporticus would leave little or no room for depiction of the critical Ransom of Hector's body episode (discussed below) and so it may well be that this was the only event from the games depicted in the frieze, contrasting with their lengthy treatment in the House of Octavius Quartio.[89]

[88] *Cf* Philostr. *Imag.* 7.2-3; Paus. 10.29.3. Della Corte (CIV IV.7141) proposes that the men may instead be involved in boxing – "caestu?" – but this seems unlikely in a scene showing three men.
[89] The same foot race is mentioned by Philostratus in his description of a painting showing the death of Antilochus (Philostr. *Imag.* 2.7.1).



Fig.47 – left part of the foot race – photograph from 2010.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Fig.48 – Reconstructed sketch of the foot race.

West wing, eastern wall

The remaining frescoes of the frieze are found on the eastern and southern walls of the west wing of the cryptoporticus, although they number only three in total. The first (figure 49), from the east wall, is very well preserved and reveals the quality of the painting before neglect and degradation took hold, which was perhaps as early as the first century AD. Here we leave narrative of the *Iliad* and find an event which followed immediately after: the Amazon Penthesilea's entry into Troy (ΠΕΝΘΕ[σ]ΙΛ[ε]ΙΑ), welcomed by Priam (ΠΡΙΑΜΟC).



Fig.49 – Penthesilea enters Troy – photograph from 2010.

This means that other famous episodes from the end of the *Iliad* have not survived in the frieze, in particular the ransom of Hector's body from book 24, which usually took the form of a standardised scene (and is presented as such in the two other *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii).[90] The only suitable location for it would be between Ajax's fall in the Funeral Games and Penthesilea's entry into Troy, sitting most logically on the far western edge of the southern wall of the north wing. At the extreme

[90] Figures 85 and 126. Kossatz-Deissmann 'Achilleus' in *LIMC* I.1 (1981) nos.642-718. Near contemporary examples include a Hoby cup – Klingenberg (2008) no.127, the Tabula Capitolina (1C), the Tabula Veronensis (3C) and the Tabula Parensis (12F). An alternative presentation, where Hector is literally ransomed for his weight in gold, can be seen on one of the Berthouville jugs – Lehmann-Hartleben (1928) pl 13a.

north of the eastern wall of the west wing is a smaller lacuna in the fresco where the return of Hector's body to Troy (found in both other *Iliad* friezes) or perhaps his funeral may have been painted. This would bring the narrative neatly on to Penthesilea and her entourage entering Troy to aid their Trojan allies.

Aurigemma notes that the entry scene is rare in extant Graeco-Roman art and cites only three other known examples.[91] The story was famously told in the *Aethiopis* but, as only fragments of the epic survive, we are unable to compare closely with the text to determine the presence of markers, allusions, corrections and extra-textual insertions in the frieze.[92] It certainly existed in the first century BC when the frieze was painted since later authors comment upon it, although there is no way of knowing how well known its details were.[93] We might imagine that in a context such as this, where literature is closely recalled in art and a visitor was invited to compare and contrast visual representations with the Homeric text, that this is exactly such a home where the other works of the Epic Cycle may have been known and read. But in the writings of Pausanias and Philostratus the Elder the *Aethiopis* is rarely mentioned, even when protagonists and episodes known to have featured in the epic appear. For example, when Pausanias describes Penthesilea, Memnon and Thersites in the Polygnotan Nekyia painting (Paus. 10.31.1-10) he mentions neither the epic nor its supposed author, Arctinus of Miletus. This is all the more peculiar when we contrast his free and copious references to Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Lescheos of Pyrrha's *Iliupersis* (10.25.5-6, 8-9; 26.1,4,7; 27.1,2), Stesichorus' *Iliupersis* and *Nostoi* (10.26.1; 27.2; 28.7; 29.6; 30.5), the *Cypria* and its author (ὁ ποιήσας ἔπη τὰ Κύπρια – 10.26.1,4; 31.3), the *Ilias Parva* (10.26.2) and the *Minyad* (10.28.2,7; 31.3).[94] Similarly, when Philostratus describes the panel painting showing the deeds and death of Memnon, the *Aethiopis* is not once mentioned

[91] Only one roughly contemporary and found on Iliac tablet 18L – Squire (2011) fig.93. Other representations are found on a sarcophagus in the Galleria Borghese and an Etruscan vase – Spinazzola (1953) 952-3. Martin West proposes that the extreme left of the *Aethiopis* band of the Tabula Capitolina (1C) probably originally showed the Amazon's arrival in Troy – West (2013) 131.

[92] The lost epics concerning the Trojan War – the *Cypria, Aethiopis, Ilias Parva, Iliupersis, Nostoi* and *Telegony* – survive today summarised in Proclus' *Chrestomathia* and in a number of fragments. See Evelyn-White (1932) 489-533 and West (2013).

[93] West doubts that the *Aethiopis* was still available for consultation by Quintus of Smyrna in the fourth century, although it is obviously difficult even to estimate when a book may have been 'lost' – West (2013) 2. Curiously, no fragments of or relating to the *Aethiopis* are documented among the Oxyrhynchus papyri.

[94] Also cited are the non-epic poets Euphorion (10.26.8), Himera (10.26.9), Simonedes (10.27.4), Panyassis (10.29.9) and Archilochus (10.31.12), the playwright Phrynichus (10.31.4) and Hesiod's *Ἠοῖαί* (10.31.3).

(*Imag.* 1.7), nor is it in his description of the death of Antilochus (*Imag.* 2.7), although he freely compares the latter with the Homeric text. There even appears to be the same reluctance in art and on the Late Hellenistic Homeric bowls, where scenes from the *Aethiopis* are shown alongside those from the *Iliad*, the epic is not once mentioned by name in the extant examples.[95] The only exception is the Tabula Capitolina (1A) in which informs the viewer that the ΑΙΘΙΟΠΙΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΑΡΚΤΙΝΟΝΤΟΝ ΜΙΛΗΣΙΟΝ is being recalled.[96]

Of course, this is not to say that the scenes running down the eastern wall of the frieze were not intended to recall the *Aethiopis*, since it follows the narrative of the epic as described in Proclus' summary, but with the exception of the first and final scenes on this wall (figures 49 and 55), which remain *in situ*, in searching for clues pertaining to the intervening narrative we can only refer to fallen fresco fragments recorded in this location by Spinazzola and interpreted by Aurigemma. These include a left leg with a label for Achilles (figure 50), a fragment consisting solely of labels for Achilles and Penthesilea (figure 51), the bottom half of a warrior with the label Pisander (figure 52) and a large male carrying a corpse (figure 53).



Fig.50 – Fragment showing Achilles' left leg and the inscription [Αχ]ΙΛΛΕΥC.

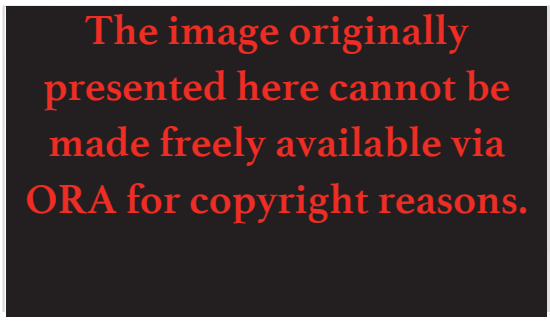


Fig.51 – Labels for ΠΕΝΘ[ε]CΙΛΗΑ and ΑΧΙΛΛ[ευς].

[95] Sinn (1979) MB 23, MB 24, MB 25, MB 26.
[96] Squire (2014) 148-149.



Fig.52– Lower part of a body and the label ΠΙCΑΝΔΡΟC.



Fig.53 – A warrior carrying a corpse.

Aurigemma proposes that the four formed scenes showing Achilles fighting Penthesilea, Thersites and Memnon, followed by the recovery of Achilles' body and the burial of his corpse.[97] Both Proclus' summary and the earlier *Epitome* of Apollodorus (generally dated to the first or second century AD) confirm that these are all episodes which featured in the *Aethiopis*, suggesting that its narrative was evoked in the cryptoporticus frieze although, on account of it on only taking up one wall out of six, more selectively and in less detail than the evocation of the *Iliad*.[98]

To aid the reconstruction we will consult various Tabulae Iliacae since they are the closest chronological, geographic and thematic exempla. The deaths of Penthesilea, Thersites, Memnon, Antilochus and Achilles are all found on the lower, central bands of the Tabula Capitolina (1A), as is the removal of Achilles' body and the madness of Ajax. The Tabula Thierry (7Ti) (now lost and only known from a heliograuve) depicted on its upper band Penthesilea's arrival in Troy, her duel with Achilles and, according to Martin West's interpretation, the deaths of Memnon and Achilles.[99] Likewise on the Tabula Veronensis (9D) we find the arrival in Troy, the tragic duel and the deaths of Antilochus, Memnon and Achilles. The epitomising of the significant episodes of the *Aethiopis* therefore seem consistent in Roman art *and* literature and allows us to propose a tentative reconstruction of the east wall of the west wing using the general chronology of the

[97] Spinazzola (1953) 956.
[98] Frazer (1921) xvi; West (2003) 111-113.
[99] See Petrain (2014) fig.12 after Rayet (1882); West (2013) 132.

Aethiopis as preserved in Proclus' *Chrestomathia*, the *Epitome* of Apollodorus and the three relevant Tabulae Iliacae. The reconstruction (refer to figure 4 throughout) replicates the spacing of the episodes on the western wall of the east wing, whose fresco survives intact and is of similar architectural structure to the eastern wall of the west wing, allowing us to account for the artist painting two different episodes on the linear surface between the windows or painted herms.

As noted above, it is possible that the return of Hector's body to Troy marked the first scene on this wall; Penthesilea's entry into Troy is secure as the second and it seems likely that her death at the hand of Achilles would follow.[100] Penthesilea's death was an extremely popular subject in Graeco-Roman art and its inclusion seems certain considering the label fragment in figure 51.[101] The literary summaries reveal that Achilles then killed Thersites for teasing him about his love for Penthesilea and, although there are no fallen fragments supporting the inclusion of this scene in the frieze, the episode is found on the Tabula Capitolina (1A) and is mentioned by Proclus (*Chrest.* 2), Apollodorus (*Epit.* 5, 1) and Quintus of Smyrna (*Quint. Smyrn.* 741-747).[102] Aurigemma's proposal is therefore sound and Thersites' death would probably have formed the next scene. However, the death of Antilochus at the hands of Memnon was also found in the *Aethiopis* (Procl. *Chrest.* 2; Apollod. *Epit.* 5,3; Quint. Smyrn. 2.257-259) and a depiction of this scene also seems plausible, especially considering Antilochus' inclusion in the Funeral Games and the battle beside the walls and the ships.

The summaries imply that next in the narrative Memnon was killed by Achilles in revenge for the death of Antilochus (Procl. *Chrest.* 2; Apollod. *Epit.* 5,3; Quint. Smyrn. 2.542-544). This was an especially popular scene in Classical and Archaic Greek art and its inclusion would fall naturally among others where

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[100] Aurigemma notes the fallen fragment of a label bearing the letters ΨΕΛΗ and suggests that it may have been a name of another Amazon – Spinazzola (1953) 965.

[101] Kossatz-Deissmann, 'Achilleus' in *LIMC* I.1 (1981) nos.719-793. Near contemporary examples include three Tabulae Iliacae (1C, 9D and 7Ti), a fragment of a Campania relief in Berlin (Inv. 8785) and two terracotta lamps (Kossatz-Deissmann (1981) nos 786-787). Later single panel wallpaintings are found in the House of the Golden Cupids (Pompeii VI 16,7 – Seiler in *PPM* V (1994) 714-846); the House of Jason (Pompeii IX 5,18) and the House of M. Spurius Mesor (Pompeii VII 3,29). The tragic pair became especially popular on Roman sarcophagi – Kossatz-Deissmann (1981) nos.757-783.

[102] In the *LIMC* entry for Thersites, Konrad Zimmerman lists only six entries for the "Antihelden": two Apulian vases and the Tabula Capitolina (1A), all secured by inscriptions, and three unsecure representations on Attic red-figure vases – Zimmerman in *LIMC* VIII.I (1997) 1207-1209. Thersites is also mentioned by Pausanias as one of the group in the Nekyia whom the artist has painted together for their shared hatred of Odysseus (Paus. 10.31.1).

Achilles' military prowess was celebrated.[103] In a Roman context it is found on the lower, central band of the Tabula Capitolina (1A), coming just after the deaths of Thersites and Antilochus. On the Tabula Veronensis II (9D) the label informing the viewer that ΜΕΜΝΩΝ ΑΝΤΙΛΟΧΟΝ ΑΠΟΚΤΕΙΝΕΙ is situated immediately above another stating that ΑΧΙΛΛΕΥΣ ΜΕΜΝΟΝΑ ΑΠΟΚΤΕΙΝΕΙ. Both deaths are described by Philostratus (*Imag.* 1.7 and 2.7) and so we must allow for the possibility that either may have been painted onto the cryptoporticus frieze.[104]

Consequently the fragment in figure 50, bearing a label for Achilles and showing his left leg, could be repositioned in several places along this wall. The fragment in figure 53, however, shows a (now) headless warrior whose weight is concentrated on his bent right leg, and who appears to be carrying or dragging something heavy, leading Aurigemma to propose that he was Ajax retrieving Achilles' corpse from the battlefield. The scene was popular in earlier Greek art, although usually depicted Ajax carrying Achilles on his shoulder.[105] The Tabula Capitolina (1A) presents an alternative rendering with Ajax hauling ΑΧΙΛΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΜΑ behind him (figure 54, in red box). The composition suggested in figure 53 is instead found in another Roman context, in the Tensa Capitolina of the late third century AD, which has Ajax supporting or dragging Achilles' body along the ground.[106]

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Fig.54 – *Aethiopis* section of the Tabula Capitolina (1A).

If we accept this identification for the fragment in figure 53 we should include Achilles' death before it, which would be positioned after the death of Memnon.

[103] The eastern frieze of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi (6th century BC) may have shown the psychostasia for Achilles and Memnon and the duel over Antilochus' body – Brinkman (1985). Memnon was a popular theme on Attic vases, especially in scenes showing his duel against Achilles and the burial of his body by his mother Eos – Kossatz-Deissmann, 'Memnon' in *LIMC* VI.1 (1992) 448-461.

[104] In the reconstruction in figure 4 I have omitted Proclus' account of Achilles travelling to Lesbos for purification after Thersites' death and the deification of Memnon since they are not found in Apollodorus' *Epitome* nor are depicted on the Tabulae Iliacae, and also because the extant episodes from the frieze are concentrated on events *in Troy* – even the council of the gods concerns the battle raging below – and so their inclusion would move the narrative too far away from the battlefield.

[105] Spinazzola (1953) 967. Kossatz-Deissmann (1981) especially 185-193.

[106] De Grummond and Ridgway suggest that the stance evokes the Pasquino – (2000) 118.

This would leave one final space before the *in situ* representation of a grieving woman, which is the final scene on this wall (figures 55 and 56). According to Proclus and Apollodorus (*Chrest.* 2; *Epit.* 5.4) after Achilles' death and the retrieval of his body there followed his funeral games, the burial of his body on the White Island and (only in Proclus' summary) the clash over Achilles' armour.[107] For the frieze reconstruction we can perhaps discount the transfer of his body to the White Island on the grounds of it taking the narrative too far away from Troy, and the scene not occurring on any of the Tabulae Iliacae nor in any extant Graeco-Roman artworks.[108] The dispute over the divine armour is a possibility and a dejected Ajax (ΜΑΝΙΩΔΗΣ) can be seen on the right of the Tabula Capitolina (1A) in figure 54, but we cannot disregard the possibility of another set of funeral games here, which would link the narrative neatly with the grieving woman who is found in the extreme southern part of the eastern wall of the west wing.

The doleful figure sits atop what appear to be steps and touches the leaves of a tree to her left (figures 55 and 56), with her attitude leading Aurigemma to propose that this may be Helen on the walls of Troy, pondering the events of the war, or perhaps Thetis at Achilles' tomb.[109] The latter interpretation is also tentatively offered by Della Corte.[110] The Roman viewer was no doubt challenged to infer her true identity but the focus on Achilles all along this wall suggests that this is probably Thetis, perhaps looking down at the funeral games, grieving for the loss of her son. The faded state of the painting today makes it impossible to tell whether labels were originally included and, although none were recorded by Spinazzola, Della Corte offers the very vague reading of "... A? ..." (*CIL* IV.7141, 22). The scene could therefore be another from the *Aethiopis*, which is not recorded in the summaries, or may be entirely extra-textual and a pictorial invention by the artist.

[107] West proposes that Proclus omitted Ajax's suicide from his *Aethiopis* summary because the episode occurred instead in the *Ilias Parva* – West (2013) 132.
[108] Only a single Attic amphora in the British Museum may depict the scene, although is in no way secure – Kossatz-Deissmann (1981) no.901.
[109] Spinazzola (1953) 953.
[110] Della Corte suggests "Matrona dolens (Thetis?) imaginem clipeatam(?) meditatur prope herois tumulum" (*CIL* IV.7141) but it is not possible to see any sign of a shield in the early photograph (figure 55) or in the *lucido* sketch – Spinazzola (1953) fig.969.



Fig.55 – Unidentified woman – photograph from the early 1900s.



Fig.56 – Unidentified woman, sketch by A. Sanarica.

We are left, then, with the puzzling fragment showing a standing and a fallen warrior and bearing the label ΠΙCΑΝΔΡΟC (figure 52). But, there is no mention of this name in Proclus' or Apollodorus' summaries of the *Aethiopis* (which are admittedly succinct), in the surviving fragments of the epic or even in Pausanias or Philostratus.[III] Three Pisanders are referred to by Homer: a Trojan killed by Agamemnon (*Il.* 11.122-143), a Trojan killed by Menelaus (*Il.* 13.601-619) and a Myrmidon chief (*Il.* 16.193). The former two seem unlikely in this context as their

[III] Evelyn-White (1904 and 1932) 506-509 and West (2003) 108-117.

inclusion on this wall would subvert the chronological order of the epics, which has so far been closely followed. As the label seems to be referring to the standing man, rather than the fallen, it may be that this is the Myrmidon Pisander witnessing the death of Achilles at the hands of Paris and Apollo (proposed above as the sixth scene on this wall), or perhaps the moment when his body has been returned to the Myrmidon camp by Ajax (proposed as the seventh). That it again might reveal an episode from the *Aethiopis* which has not survived today in the summaries is a possibility, as is it being extra-textual and an invention by the artist.

Owing to the dearth of references to the *Aethiopis* epic by name in Roman literature we might wonder whether this particular wall of the cryptoporticus frieze may have perhaps offered a more faithful following of its epic than the Iliadic walls. Homer's *Iliad* was clearly such a staple of education and fundamental part of literate and educated Roman society that it was entirely possible to make obscure allusions and references to the text and expect them to be understood simply because the epic was so well known. But the surviving scenes and fragments from the *Aethiopis* wall – perhaps with the exception of the final episode – suggest that for the large part standardised scenes were selected for inclusion, rather than extra-textual insertions. Again, we do not know how widely the *Aethiopis* circulated at this time, or how well known its text actually was, but it had certainly not attained the status of the Homeric (and possibly other cyclic) epics if citations by ancient writers are to be believed.

West wing, southern wall

The final scene of the entire frieze leads the viewer who has followed the narrative sequentially, beginning with the plague in the Achaean camp on the western wall of the west wing (and possibly earlier) round to this concluding point on the southern wall of the west wing, to the moment where the Trojan story becomes the Roman: the flight of Aeneas. The fresco here has been reconstructed from fragments but the composition leaves no uncertainty that this is the moment when Aeneas fled from Troy accompanied by his father, infant son and, for a short time, his wife (figure 57).

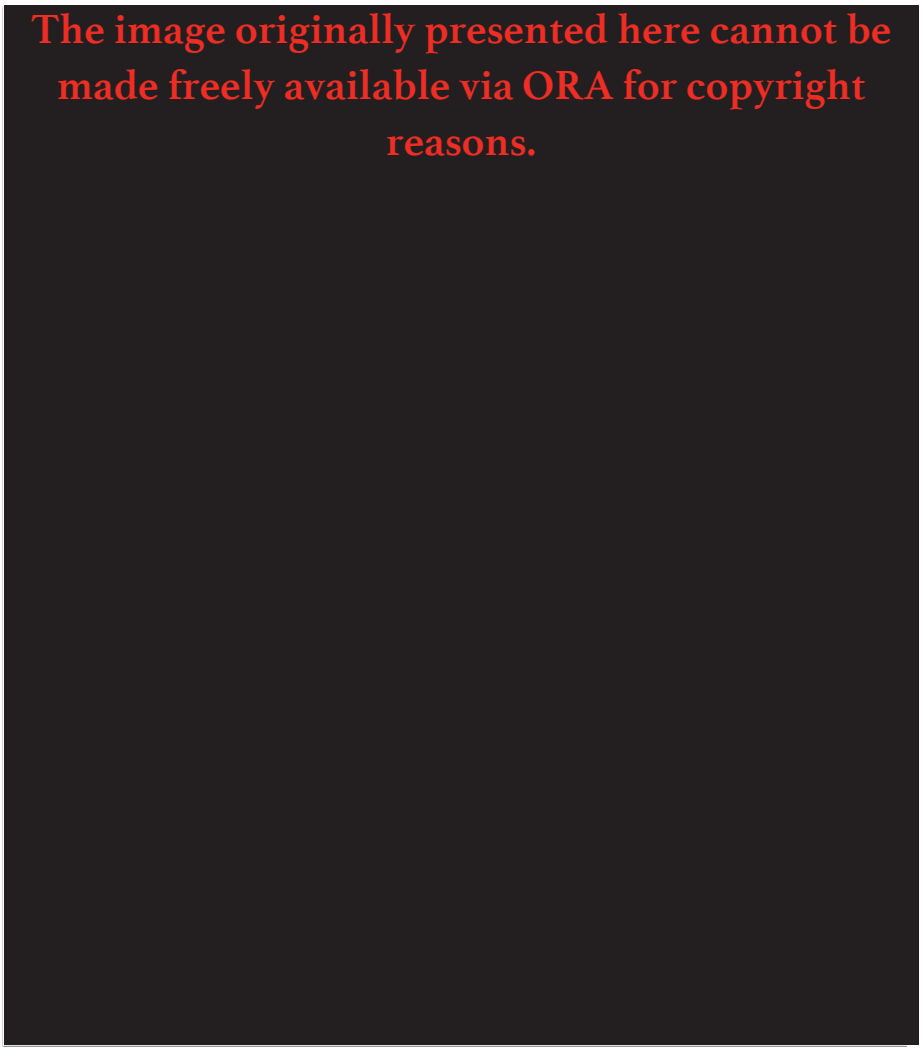


Fig.57 – The Flight of Aeneas – photograph from the early 1900s.

It is *possible* that this scene was inspired by a literary source as Brilliant, Croisille and Santoro suggest, citing the epic *Iliupersis* in which one of the earliest textual accounts of Aeneas' escape was recorded,[112] and the Tabula Capitolina (1A) has at its centre the inscription ΙΛΙΟΥ ΠΕΡΣΙΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΣΤΗΣΙΧΟΡΟΝ directly beneath the Flight of Aeneas motif. The scene in the cryptoporticus may even have been inspired by *Iliad* 20.259-352 where Poseidon prophesies that Aeneas is destined to continue the Dardanian race by becoming the new Trojan king.[113] Yet, at the time of the frieze's construction, around 40–30 BC, the motif was being promoted by the *gens Iulia* for political means and already had a long and established presence in

[112] Brilliant (1984) 63; Croisille (2005) 155; Santoro (2005) 107. *Iliupersis* in West (2013) 223-243. Michael Squire (2014) 381, note 67, comments that scenes from the *Cypria* are found in the frieze but, as none are extant or even alluded to, we cannot presume that episodes from it were originally painted.
[113] Gruen argues that these particular Iliadic lines were a "stumbling block" for later commentators since Homer does not explicitly mention any movement westwards for Aeneas – Gruen (1993) 12.

Greek, Etruscan and Roman art.[114] The gens claimed Aeneas, and crucially Venus, as their descendent and under Julius Caesar and then Octavian/Augustus promoted the link through art and literature.[115] An explicit presentation of the ancestral message is found on a denarius of Julius Caesar from 47–46 BC (figure 58) which shows on the reverse Aeneas carrying his father on his shoulder and the Palladium in his hand and, on the obverse, Venus as *genetrix.* On a slightly later aureus of Octavian (figure 59) Aeneas carries his father on his shoulder on the reverse but on the obverse we find Octavian himself. The reissue of the Flight of Aeneas motif was therefore a deliberate act which stressed the young leader's link both to his adopted father and his Trojan ancestor with a divine mother.[116]

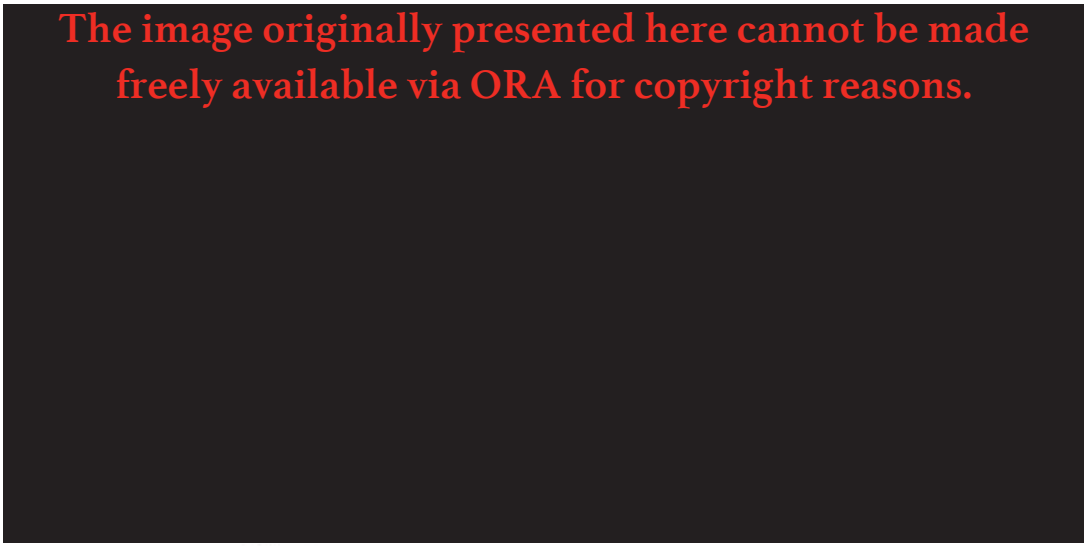


Fig.58 – Silver denarius of Julius Caesar, 47–46 BC.
Obverse: Venus Genetrix, Reverse: Flight of Aeneas.

[114] The largest concentration of Greek vases bearing the scene is from an Etruscan context and date from around 520–500 BC. Canciani lists 27 Attic black-figure vases within this date range, 12 of which were found in Vulci, Tarquinia and Cerveteri – Canciani (1981) 381-396. Gruen sees the concentration not as evidence of acceptance of the foundation myth, but as "an artistic fad" – Gruen (1993) 22.
[115] Charles Hedrick proposes "the ultimate cause for the quick and wide dissemination of the *Aeneid* is likely its association with the ideals and images of the Julio-Claudian house" – Hedrick (2011) 170.
[116] The ancestral message was to continue throughout the reign of the Julio-Claudians and at Drusus Caesar's funeral Aeneas' portrait was carried among the ancestors of the imperial family (Tac. *Ann.* 4.9.2). For the history of the Flight of Aeneas motif see Galinsky (1969), Zanker (1988) 201-210 and Canciani, 'Aineias' in *LIMC* I (1981) 386-390. It is very rarely found in wallpainting from the Bay of Naples with only two other examples extant: on the outer wall of the House of M. Fabius Ululitremulus (Pompeii IX, 13.5), discussion in Cooley and Cooley (2004) 71-72 and Milnor (2014) 248-250; and in the parody from a villa in Stabiae (MNN 9089). For various interpretations the latter see Spinazzola (1953) 153; Fuchs (1973) 630; Cebe, (1966) 369-370; Brendel (1953-4) 156); Binsfield (1956) 31,71. Galinsky suggests it is a reaction by the homeowners to their new Augustan colonists with their Julio-Claudian sympathies – Galinsky (1969) 32.

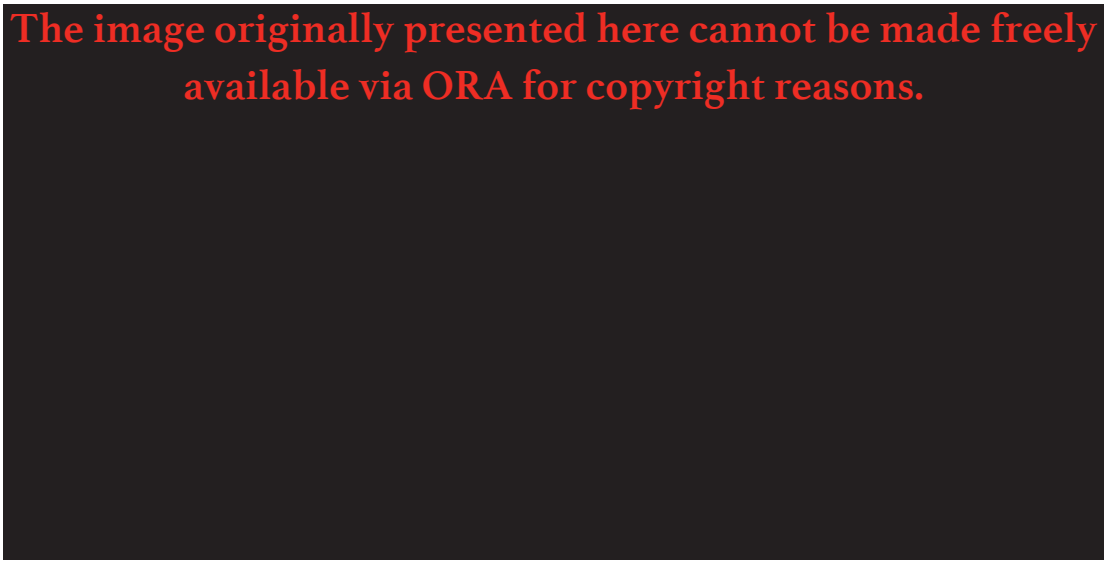


Fig.59 – Gold coin of Octavian, 42 BC.
Observe: head of Octavian, Reverse: Flight of Aeneas.

Yet the composition of the Flight scene in the House of the Cryptoporticus in fact defers to older representations, in which Creusa (and sometimes Aphrodite) appear with the men, thus evoking the moment before Aeneas' wife became lost in the fall of Troy. This perhaps suggests that the (admittedly simplified) motif as found on the coins only became the 'go to' presentation of the scene after it was replicated in statue form in the Forum of Augustus in the very last years of the first century BC, and adds weight to the generally-accepted dating of the cryptoporticus frieze in the (probably early) 40s BC. Even so, the inclusion of the scene was almost certainly influenced by contemporary usage of the image which stressed the role of the Romans as descendants of the Trojan line, rather than by any specific literary account. Indeed, this relationship would be solidified and celebrated in literature only a few decades later with the publishing of Virgil's *Aeneid* in 19 BC. It is perhaps no coincidence then that this was the last scene a visitor encountered as he exited the cryptoporticus and rejoined the tumult of Roman life in Pompeii.[117]

Other fragments from the cryptoporticus frieze and extensive lacunae

In the *CIL* entry for the frieze Della Corte lists two further fragmentary labels which are not referred to by Spinazzola. These are:

[117] Compare with the Tabula Capitolina (1A) which also ends 'chronologically' with the ΑΠΟΠΛΟΥΣ AINHOY. Berger-Doer, 'Kreousa III' in *LIMC* VI.1 (1992) nos 1-42, although omitting the scene in the House of the Cryptoporticus.

CIL IV.7141d: Ante virum sedentem hasta armatum . . . . AYOC . . .

CIL IV.7141e: Heroum Graecorum (4 supersunt) conventus aiAC /
loKROS.

Owing to the confusion with regard to the findspots of the fragments (recall that Della Corte states that all but two of the fallen fragments from the cryptoporticus were found in the western wing, which contradicts Spinazzola's detailed excavation notes) it is impossible to reposition the above with any certainty. *CIL* IV.7141e, which must refer to the Locrian Ajax, could arguably be found on any of the walls which contain lacunae, perhaps even the *Aethiopis* wall considering that we do not know the minutiae of the epic. In the Tabula Capitolina (1A) there is a label for ΑΙΑΣ ΛΟΚΡΟΣ in band Ξ, beneath Ajax's duel with Archilochus (who is actually said in *Iliad* 14.462-475 to have been killed by the Telamonian Ajax), but the context does not fit with Della Corte's description which seems to suggest a meeting of the Greeks. *CIL* IV.7141d is even more difficult to reconstruct as no protagonist in the *Iliad* has a name which contains the letters AYOS and so we must leave the fragment unpositioned.[118]

But what of the rest of the frieze and its extensive lacunae? As mentioned above, Aurigemma proposes that there were a possible 19 image spaces on the western wall of the west wing, although between 16 and 19 is more likely. He proposes a further 14 on the eastern wall of the east wing; 12 on the southern wall of the north wing; 8 on the eastern wall of the west wing; 21 possible scenes on the northern wall of the north wing; 3 on the southern wall of the east wing and only one on the southern wall of the west wing. All 8 of the scenes from the western wall of the east wing survive. The data is represented in the table below (figure 60) giving an estimate of the possible number of scenes originally painted, which falls between 80 and 86.[119] However, as only 24 survived intact to excavation, with even fewer visible or readable today, any observations or proposals must consider the fact that only 30% of the original whole is available for analysis.

[118] Interestingly, fragments of Sappho (58.19; 103.13; 104; 157) show that the poet used the name Αὔως to refer to Eos, the mother of Memnon, whose story was almost certainly told in the cryptoporticus. No other labels from the frieze are written in the Aeolic dialect, however.

[119] Bianchi Bandinelli also favours a more reserved estimate of around 80 to 86 scenes – Bianchi Bandinelli (1954) 94; Karl Schefold proposes an even more conservative 75 – Schefold (1975) 40; and Croisille between 75 and 80 – Croisille (2005) 154.

Wing and wall	Windows or doors	Herms	Available space for frescoes	Surviving scenes	Total number of possible scenes
West, west	0	7	13.45m	1	16–19
West, east	4	5	5.78m	2	8
West, south	0	0	1.0m	1	1
North, north	2	8	14.7m	4	18–21
North, south	5	6	7.0m	6–7	12
East, east	3	5	10.3m	1	14
East, west	4	4	5.8m	8–9	8–9
East, south	0	0	2.7m	1	3

Fig.60 – Spatial data for the walls and wings of the cryptoporticus.

Nevertheless, the above investigation concerning the identification of individual scenes, the positioning of extant, fragmentary and even fallen scenes and the interpretation of the iconography in a new way has allowed us to re-examine a frieze whose publication in 1953 has remained largely unchallenged for over half a century. This has created a more regular pacing of scenes on the eastern wall of the east wing and, through analysis of fragments and surviving frescoes, permitted a reconstruction of the non-extant parts of the frieze. But this is *only* possible because the artist has closely adhered to the chronological narrative of the *Iliad* throughout, as demonstrated in figure 5. And it is this, alongside comparison with other epic-themed artworks discussed in ancient literature and found in the archaeological record, which enables us to interpret the extra-Homeric insertions and corrections of the Homeric text not as errors on the part of the artist, but as entirely conventional features of an epic frieze in the Graeco-Roman tradition.

Chapter 2: The *Iliad* frieze from the House of the Iliac Shrine on the Via dell'Abbondanza in Pompeii

Context

A second frieze which evokes Homer's *Iliad* is found in the House of the Iliac Shrine (Pompeii I 6,4), which, prior to the earthquake of AD 62/3, was part of the same complex as the House of the Cryptoporticus (I 6,2).[120] A ground plan of the house and insula can be seen in figure 61.

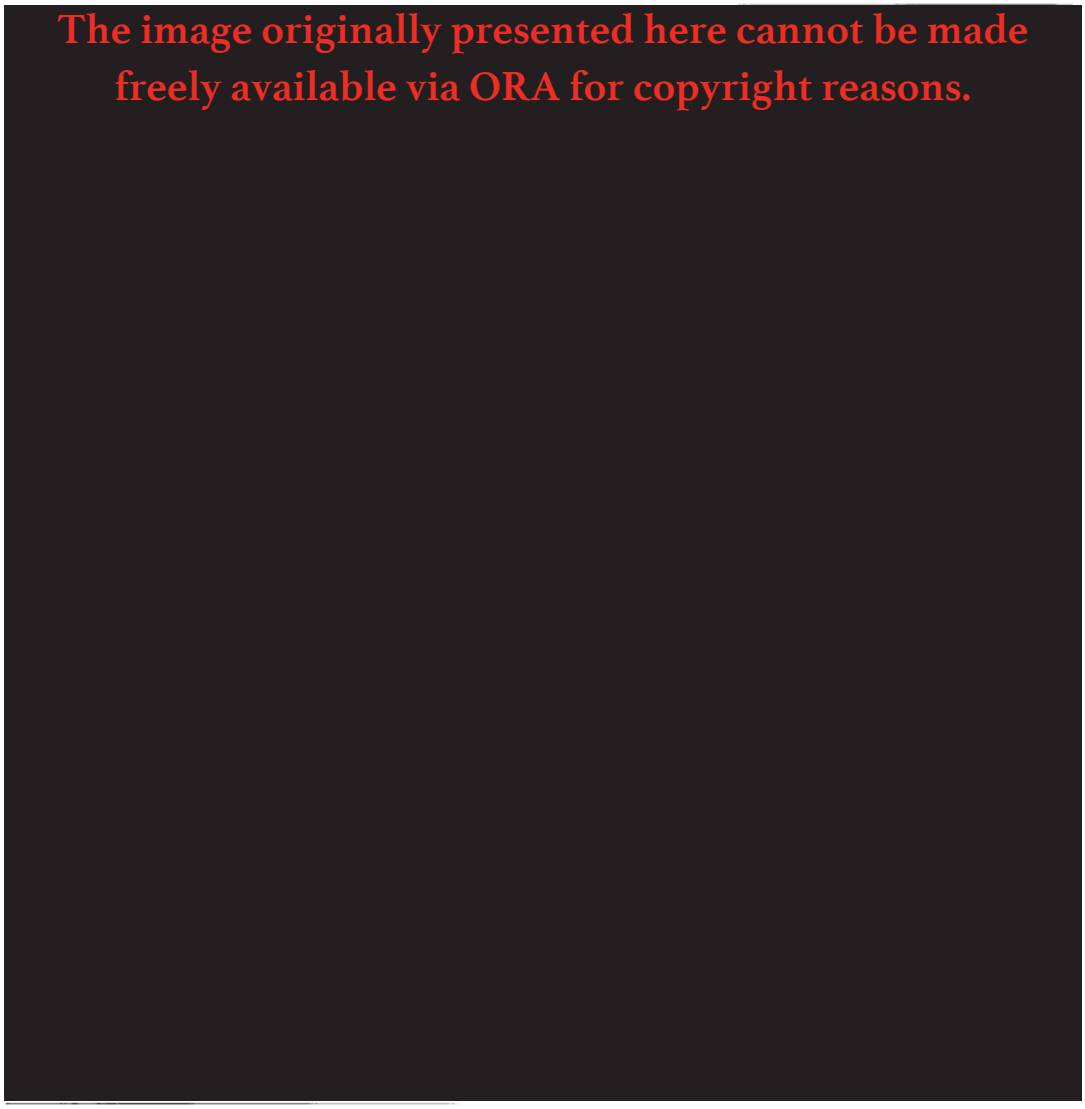


Fig.61 – Plan of Pompeii regio I insula 6.
House of the Iliac Shrine entranceway through fauces 4.

[120] Maiuri (1942) 147.

After the earthquake the houses were divided into two smaller dwellings yet the House of the Iliac Shrine is still placed by Wallace-Hadrill in his Quartile Four categorisation, even after the division.[121] It was undergoing restoration at the time of the eruption in AD 79 and the decoration of many rooms was left incomplete, particularly those around the atrium, where our next frieze is located (figure 62).[122]



Fig.62 – Atrium of the House of the Iliac Shrine. Sacellum on the right. Photograph from 2014.

The frieze is dated (on account of the restoration work) between AD 62 and 79, which places it around a century later than the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus. Since the houses remained in close proximity, however, it seems plausible that the latter in some way influenced the former. The function of the small room in which the stucco frieze is still found remains unclear but it may have been a shrine of some sort, accounting for the modern attribution *sacellum*.[123] Its

[121] Delineating houses which had an area of 350–3000 square metres – Wallace–Hadrill (1994) 81.
[122] Bragantini (2000) 194. Strocka (1984) 126–131 proposes that the refurbishment of the house was interrupted by the earthquake of AD 62/3 and left in a state of incompletion up to the eruption.
[123] Nicole Blanc considers the room to have been a place of ancestor worship, arguing that its entrance marks it off as a place of religious significance. She sees the iconographic scheme of a vanquished hero (Hector) positioned below another with access to the divine (Endymion) positioned below another received into Olympus (Ganymede) as a pictorial rendering of the transition from the living world to the divine – Blanc (1997) 37–41. Santoro critiques Blanc's proposal as "meno convincente" but concedes that the homeowner may have been promoting his heroic ancestry to

ceiling is vaulted and the upper lunette contains painted and stucco scenes of Endymion and Selene, with Ganymede abducted by Zeus in the centre of the vault (figure 63).[124] Yet beneath the *Iliad* frieze rough, unfinished plaster is still found on the walls and, when excavated, wooden storage chests containing glass vessels were stacked within it, suggesting that the room was not serving its intended function at the time of the eruption.[125] The *Iliad* frieze itself differs from those in the House of the Cryptoporticus and the House of Octavius Quartio because it is rendered in white stucco on a painted blue background with details accentuated by coloured paint. It runs uninterrupted along the three walls of the sacellum and is not broken up by frames or architectural features (figure 64). Significantly, it completely lacks labels and so resembles a temple or architectural frieze, which may further suggest that the room was used for cultic purposes.

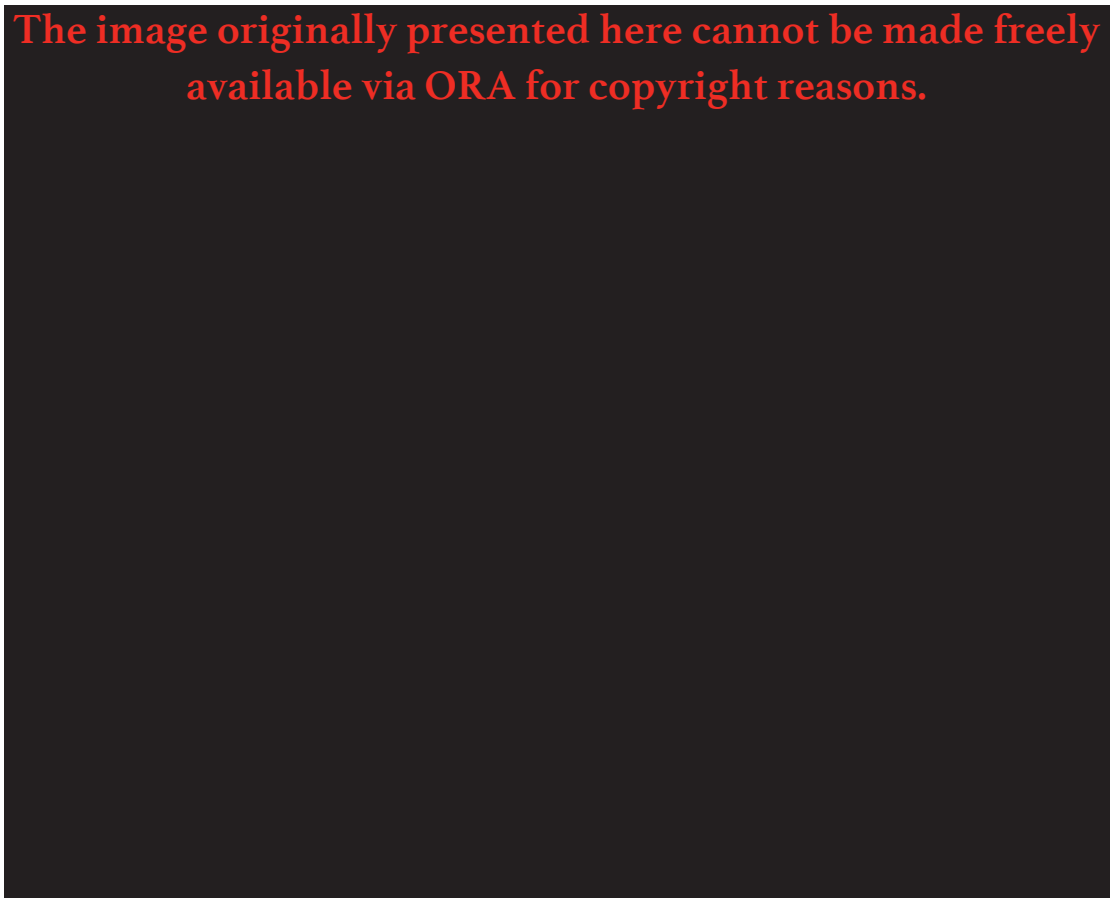


Fig.63 – Vaulted ceiling and *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine.

Hector – Santoro (2005) 108, n.73. Aurigemma proposes that the room may have been a shrine to Venus and Diana, a theory later repeated by Brilliant – Spinazzola (1953) 877; Brilliant (1984) 63.

[124] Brilliant offers an interpretation of the layered iconography as the deceased hero (Hector) subject to a long, calm sleep (Endymion) and then undergoing apotheosis (Ganymede) – Brilliant (1984) 64.

[125] See http://www.stoa.org/projects/ph/house?id=1 for the finds from the house. Website last consulted 17.3.2017.

Stucco frieze

The frieze's starting point, however, must be located by the viewer. The narrative actually begins (if following it chronologically) in the middle of the east wall yet, upon entering the room, or certainly while standing in its narrow entranceway, the viewer is instantly drawn to the centre of the rear wall where the duel between Hector and Achilles from the twenty-second book of the *Iliad* is depicted.[126] This episode will be shown below to inform all those preceding and following it and throughout the frieze its consequences are explored, leading Brilliant to suggest that it is "deformed" according to "teleological objectives".[127] Santoro alternatively suggests that the retelling begins at the southern end of the east wall with the return of Hector's body to Troy, making it a rhetorically-inspired *hysteron proteron*.[128] Wherever we envisage the narrative beginning (if indeed we are meant to do so) the *Iliad* is referred to exclusively throughout by means of markers, allusions to the text, standardised scenes and two which are entirely extra-Homeric.

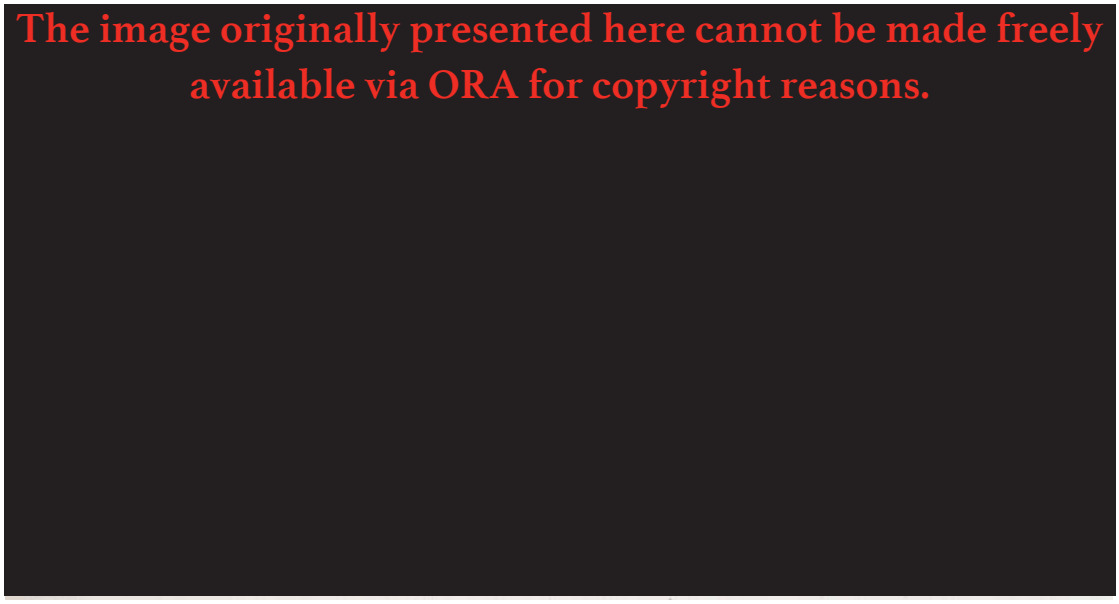


Fig.64 – Line drawing of House of the Iliac Shrine frieze by A. Sanarica. Labels added by author.

At least chronologically the frieze begins half way along the eastern side of the room (figures 65 and 66) where we find three figures leaning over a high wall, gesturing towards someone below them. Those who knew their *Iliad* would

[126] Chapter seven will discuss the concept of beginnings and endings for the friezes in more detail.
[127] Brilliant (1984) 64.
[128] Santoro (2005) 108.

understand the man, woman and child to be Priam, Hecuba and Astyanax looking down from the walls of Troy, bidding farewell to Hector.



Fig.65 – Priam, Hecuba/Andromache and Astyanax bid farewell to Hector.



Fig.66 – Detail from figure 65.

The scene is therefore an evocation of *Iliad* 22:1-89 where Priam and Hecuba attempt to dissuade Hector from fighting Achilles. The presence of Astyanax may point towards the central female being Andromache but Homer says that at the time of the duel she was still in the palace (*Il.* 22.436-465).[129] The child's inclusion in this particular episode is also extra-textual, but may foreshadow his tragic fate,

[129] Blanc considers her to be Andromache – Blanc (1997) 37; Brilliant concurs – Brilliant (1984) 63.

which Pausanias similarly makes reference to when seeing the child in the Iliupersis painting (Paus. 10.25.9).[130]

Hector himself follows immediately on the right in a very literal rendering of the epic account (figure 67). Glancing backwards towards his pleading family he is nevertheless led by Moῖρα to his death (*Il.* 22.5-6): "But Fate (ὀλοιὴ μοῖρ') for her own evil purposes kept Hector where he was, outside the town in front of the Scaean Gate."



Fig.67 – Fate leads Hector to the duel.

Santoro cites the following lines from the *Ilias Latina* (944-946) in her description of this scene, suggesting that the first century Roman work is a more likely source than Homer's *Iliad*:[131]

> His wretched parents watch his fate (*sua fata*) from the walls
> and see their son grow pale in his last moments
> (whom now his last day was pressed by the final light).

[130] A clay medallion, dated to the third century and found in Lugdunum, also shows Hector's death and has the labelled ANDROMACHE, PRIAMUS and HECUBA watching in horror from the city walls – Audin and Bruhl (1968) for discussion and images.
[131] Santoro (2005) 108. *Ilias Latina* with Italian translation in Scaffai (1997), English translation in Kennedy (1998).

The *Iliad*, however, personifies Moira, where the *Ilias Latina* does not, and so the epic offers a much closer account for the personnification. Yet the Greek Moirai (and the Roman Parcae) were not traditionally shown as winged in art,[132] and so it seems that other models were used for the divine figure in the stucco frieze. Compositionally, she adopts a similar pose to the Athena from the Gigantomachy frieze from Great Altar of Pergamum (figure 68) and the outstretched right arm, bent left arm, backward glance and stride toward the viewer's right recall a conventional position adopted by several goddesses in Graeco-Roman battle scenes.

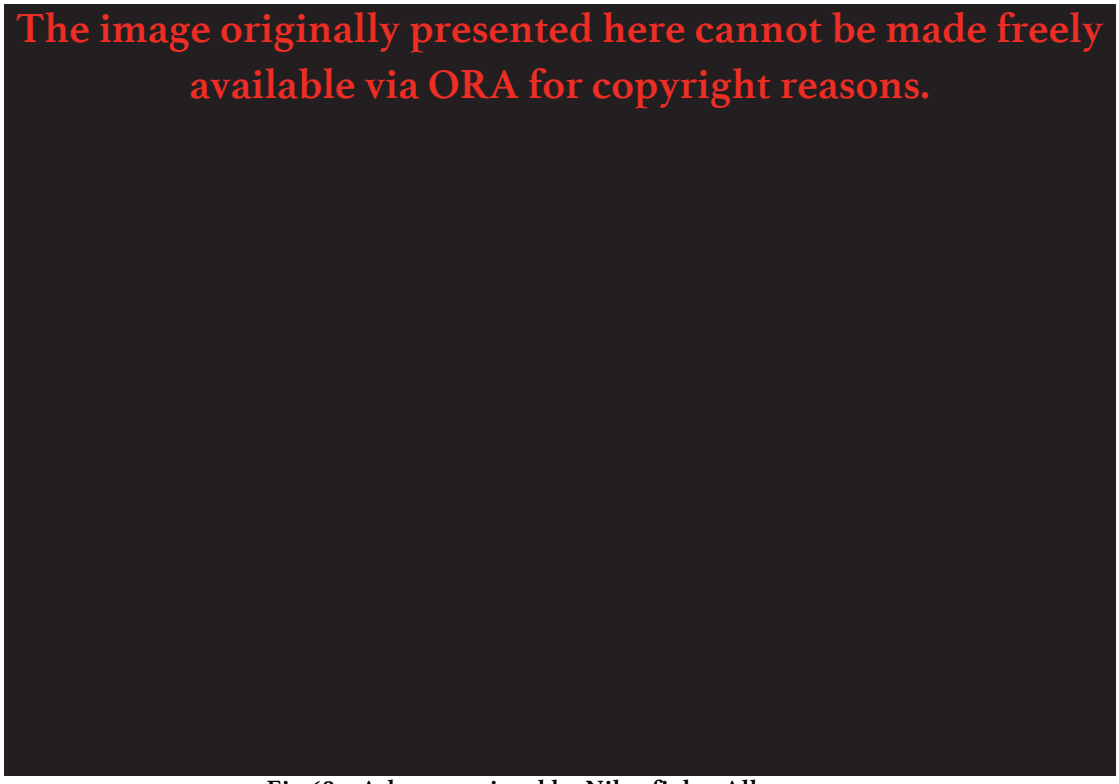


Fig.68 – Athena, assisted by Nike, fights Alkyoneus.
Detail from eastern side of the Gigantomachy frieze on the the Great Altar of Pergamum.

Note also the similarities between the Pompeian Moira and a striding Nike from the balustrade of the Temple of Athena Nike on the Acropolis in Athens (figure 69). This is not to say that the Roman artist used the Pergamene or Athenian friezes as direct models but, as will become evident below, that he incorporated models from earlier and contemporary relief sculpture (perhaps intermediately translated

[132] De Angeli, 'Moirai' in *LIMC* VI.I (1992) 636–648.

through other artistic genres) which traditionally represented *other* protagonists.[133] The figure in the Pompeian stucco frieze can only represent the textual Moira, however, as other goddesses traditionally depicted with wings, perhaps Nemesis or even Nike herself, would not be appropriate in this context.[134]

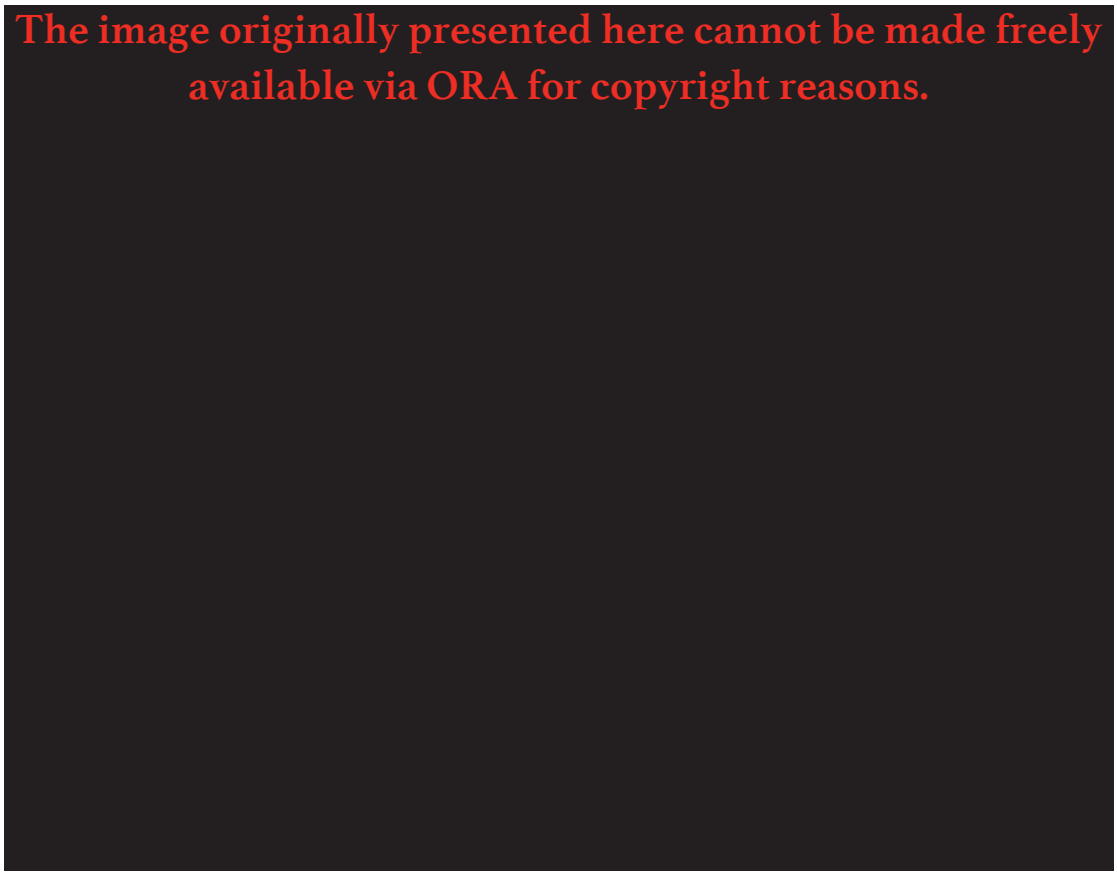

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Fig.69 – Striking Nike leads a bull to sacrifice.
Panel from the balustrade of the Temple of Athena Nike, Athens.

Thus, even after analysis of only two episodes it is evident that the Roman viewer was intended to interact with the sacellum frieze in a similar way to that in the House of the Cryptoporticus. One scene is a marker, making direct reference to the Homeric text, yet the other is an evocation of it, nevertheless still requiring familiarity with the *Iliad* and the wider stories of the Trojan War for full understanding (in the foreshadowing of Astyanax's death, for example). The next, which is found on the eastern side of the rear or southern wall, is another allusion

[133] Hölscher (2004) 58–102 for discussion of the reuse of compositional types for different themes in Roman statuary.
[134] Linant de Bellefonds, 'Nemesis' in *LIMC* VI.I (1992) 733–773; Moustaka, Goulaki–Voutira and Grote, 'Nike' in *LIMC* VI.I (1992) 850–904.

to the text in the form of a pictorially contracted account of a more detailed Iliadic episode (figure 70). Here two goddesses sit on a craggy outcrop and appear to be discussing the action taking place in the centre of the wall. Because the scene is not a literal illustration of the text several different identifications have been proposed for the figures, ranging from Hera and Aphrodite, to two nymphs representing the springs of the Scamander (*Il.* 22.147-156), to Aphrodite and Thetis.[135]



Fig.70 – Two goddesses watch the duel.

The partially nude figure on the right is almost certainly Aphrodite, forming an aesthetic contrast with her fully-clothed companion. Although we would expect the latter to be an Olympian, or possibly Thetis, she in fact recalls Roman-era sculptural representations of Polyhymnia, the muse of sacred and lyric poetry (compare with the sarcophagus frieze in figure 71).[136] Another close sculptural

[135] Hera and Aphrodite – Spinazzola (1953) 878 and Croisille (2005) 161; two nymphs – Simon (2008) 238; Aphrodite and Thetis – Blanc (1997) 38; Aphrodite and Thetis/Hera – Santoro (2005) 108.
[136] I am grateful to Dr Peter Stewart for this observation.

parallel is seen in a statuette from the garden of the House of Octavius Quartio, the third house analysed in this thesis (figure 72).



Fig.71 – 'Sarcophagus of the Muses', dated to the first half of the second century AD. Polyhymnia outlined in red. Paris, Louvre, MR 880.



Fig.72 – Polyhymnia statuette from the garden of the House of Octavius Quartio.

If the stucco figure is intended to be a muse we might instead expect Calliope, the muse of epic poetry, but it is more likely that the artist has again incorporated sculptural models which traditionally represented other protagonists into the frieze. Whatever her intended identity *Iliad* 22.166 in fact states that "they [Hector and Achilles] were watched by all the gods" and it is Athena and Zeus, in particular, who argue over the duel, neither of which can be mistaken for the goddesses here. It seems then that the artist has chosen to summarise the textual account with aesthetics in mind by contrasting a matronly goddess with the sensuous Aphrodite

and, overall, aesthetics and a balanced composition are prioritised on the rear wall of the sacellum over strict sequential order.[137] The viewer is not meant to move from left to right, reading the episodes as continuous narrative, but to contemplate the band as a whole from both ends towards the centre.

On the left side, after the goddesses, we again encounter Hector, running past a group of warriors towards his climactic duel with Achilles (figure 73). His presentation is almost identical to that in the earlier scene but the rapid movement towards the right is denoted by the plumed horsehair of the helmet streaming behind him. This is another scene which has no known parallel in ancient art. The face of the bearded warrior on the right is rendered in detailed stucco (figure 74, showing how the artist has adapted to allow for the curve in the wall) and touches Hector's shield. Could this be Athena assuming the guise of Deiphobus in order to trick Hector into stopping his flight around the walls of Troy (*Il.* 22.188-246)? It is difficult to say with certainty but perhaps this is another occasion in which the Roman viewer was required to infer the meaning of the scene based on a subtle pictorial gesture and his detailed knowledge of the epic.



Fig.73 – Hector (left) runs towards the duel passing by a group of Trojans.

[137] Compare Paus. 10.31.2–3.



Fig.74 – Detail from figure 73, photograph taken from a lower angle.

We now come to the visual focal point of the frieze, which is situated in the centre of the rear wall: the fatal duel between Achilles and Hector (figure 76). Hector is already thrown to his knees and Achilles looks set to deal the final blow (*Il.* 22.247-366). Several (although not all) Graeco-Roman representations of the scene show Achilles standing, as here, and Hector in a submissive position, but the context makes its identity unmistakeable.[138] Its importance is even denoted compositionally by the artist choosing to frame the scene by creating pendant groups of Trojans on the left and Greeks on the right (figure 75).[139]



Fig.75 – Rear/south wall of sacellum.
Hector and Achilles outlined in red.
Groups of Trojans (left) and Greeks (right) outlined in green.

[138] For other representations of the duel see Kossatz–Deissmann, 'Achilleus' in *LIMC* I.1 (1981) nos.558–581. Near contemporary examples are rare and limited to a scene on the Tabula Capitolina (1A).

[139] Aurigemma argues that the two groups are representative of the nearness of the Trojan and Greek armies during the duel and that Achilles can be seen in the group of Greeks on the right – Spinazzola (1953) 881–883.



Fig.76 – Hector versus Achilles.

On the extreme right of the wall, beyond the group of Greeks, a charioteer drives two horses (figure 77). This is either Achilles or, more likely, Automedon, steering Xanthus and Balius, whom we encountered in the House of the Cryptoporticus and will meet again in the House of Octavius Quartio. Clearly the divine pair held some fascination for Pompeian audiences of the first centuries BC and AD but they are *not* mentioned by Homer within the context of the duel; they are found instead in *Iliad* 16.149 being driven by Patroclus, in 17.426-480 weeping after his death and then in 19.392-421 when Achilles rejoins the battle, at which time Xanthus even prophesies to his master. They therefore appear to have become part of the visual repertoire which became associated with the latter books of the *Iliad* in Roman art.



Fig.77 – Automedon drives Xanthus and Balius.

Compositionally, the rear wall of the sacellum is similar to the right half of the eastern frieze of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi (figure 78, compare with figure 75), which appears to show two sets of warriors fighting over the body of a fallen man. Two different subjects have been proposed. John Boardman and Livingston Vance Watrous argue that the scene evokes *Iliad* 16.502-665, making the fallen warrior Sarpedon and the unlabelled warrior beside Automedon, Patroclus.[140] More recently, the battle between Achilles and Memnon over the corpse of Antilochus has been suggested.[141] The Siphnian frieze featured in its left half groupings of Olympian gods who were pro-Trojan and pro-Greek,[142] a theme which, in the Pompeian context, was summarised by the two goddesses on the left of the sacellum wall.[143] Once again, it is unlikely that the Pompeian artist had seen the Siphnian Treasury for himself but the compositional similarities – especially considering that both are Trojan in theme – suggests that he was influenced by intermediary sculptural friezes or battle scenes which followed a similar format.

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Fig.78 – Sketch of the eastern frieze of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi, by John Boardman.

[140] Boardman translates the fragmentary labels as [Γ]Λ[α]ΥΚΟΣ (Glaucus), ΣΑΕΝΙΑ (Aeneas, retrograde), ΕΚΤ[ορ] (Hector), ΜΕΝΕ[λαος] (Menelaus), ΝΟΔΕΜΟΤΥΑ (Automedon, retrograde) and ΡΟΤΣΕΝ (Nestor, retrograde) – Boardman (1978); Vance Watrous (1982) 171–172.
[141] Neer (2012) 188–190. The colour reconstruction in the Archaeological Museum in Delphi also favours the Achilles versus Memnon interpretation.
[142] Boardman (1978) fig.212.2.
[143] If the left side of the Delphian frieze did include in its centre the *psychostasia*, as Richard Neer suggests, then the duel between Achilles and Memnon is more likely since it was often accompanied by the weighing of the souls of each of the warriors beloved by the gods – Neer (2012) fig.7.20; Kossatz–Deissmann (1981) nos 797–806.

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Fig.79 – Detail from the eastern frieze of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi.

The Roman frieze now moves to the west wall where the sequential, chronological narrative returns. First an unidentified man moves to the right, emerging from a doorway or gateway, and runs towards a group of warriors (figure 80). There are no clues as to his identity (at least for the modern viewer) although he appears to glance over his shoulder. Instead, he and the group on the right guide the viewer's gaze to the grizzly scene that follows.



Fig.80 – A warrior runs towards a group on the right.

Now the terrible consequences of the duel are revealed. In front of the walls of Troy and a gathered crowd Achilles drags Hector's corpse behind his chariot in a

traditional representation of the desecration scene (figure 81).[144] The Roman viewer might note the small deviation from the text – Homer says that Achilles alone drove the chariot, yet here Automedon takes the reins (*Il.* 22.395-404) – but the formatting adheres to specifically *Roman* representations of the scene in which Hector's body is dragged by a two-horse biga, as opposed to Greek representations which overwhelmingly show a four-horse quadriga.[145]



Fig.81 – The desecration of Hector.

There then follows a section of the wall where the stucco is poorly-preserved with only the remains of the blue background paint and a tent- or curtain-like feature hanging above visible (figure 82, in red box).

[144] See note 82 for parallels and references. Aurigemma suggests that it is possible to see a pained grimace on Hector's face but this is imperceptible today – Spinazzola (1953) 888.

[145] I am unable to find *any* Greek artworks which show Achilles or Automedon driving a biga, or any Roman artworks which show them driving a quadriga, after consulting the Beazley Archive, *LIMC* volumes and my own records of Trojan War–themed art. Often on Greek vases only two heads and rears are depicted, but the total number of legs (always sixteen) confirms that four horses were intended by the artists. The only possible exception would be a scene on one of the upper bands of the Ara Casali in the Museo Pio Clementino in Rome, of the second or third century AD, but there are numerous problems interpreting the relief as the desecration of Hector. A man is certainly being dragged behind a chariot – here a quadriga – but the vehicle forms part of a sequence or race with another immediately in front of it. The large–scale goddess behind also lends nothing towards a Trojan interpretation. Instead Bulas, agreeing with Carl Robert, convincingly proposes that it shows the race between Pelops and Oinomaos; the latter being the man dragged behind the chariot with his charioteer, according to the legend, still driving the horses – Robert (1919) 249–253; Bulas (1929) n.2.

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Fig.82 – Sketch of the west wall.

In the right half of the western wall we encounter another familiar episode rendered in traditional form: the ransom of Hector's body. Although the narrative runs chronologically here a balanced composition is again achieved by having both standardised scenes (the desecration and ransom) punctuated by men emerging from gates or monumental archways and moving towards the right (figure 82). The second man (right half of wall) wears patterned trousers and a Phrygian cap and carries a vessel on his shoulder (figure 83). The scene that follows prompts us to infer that this is surely a Trojan bringing part of the ransom out of Troy towards the cart that will be driven to Achilles' tent.

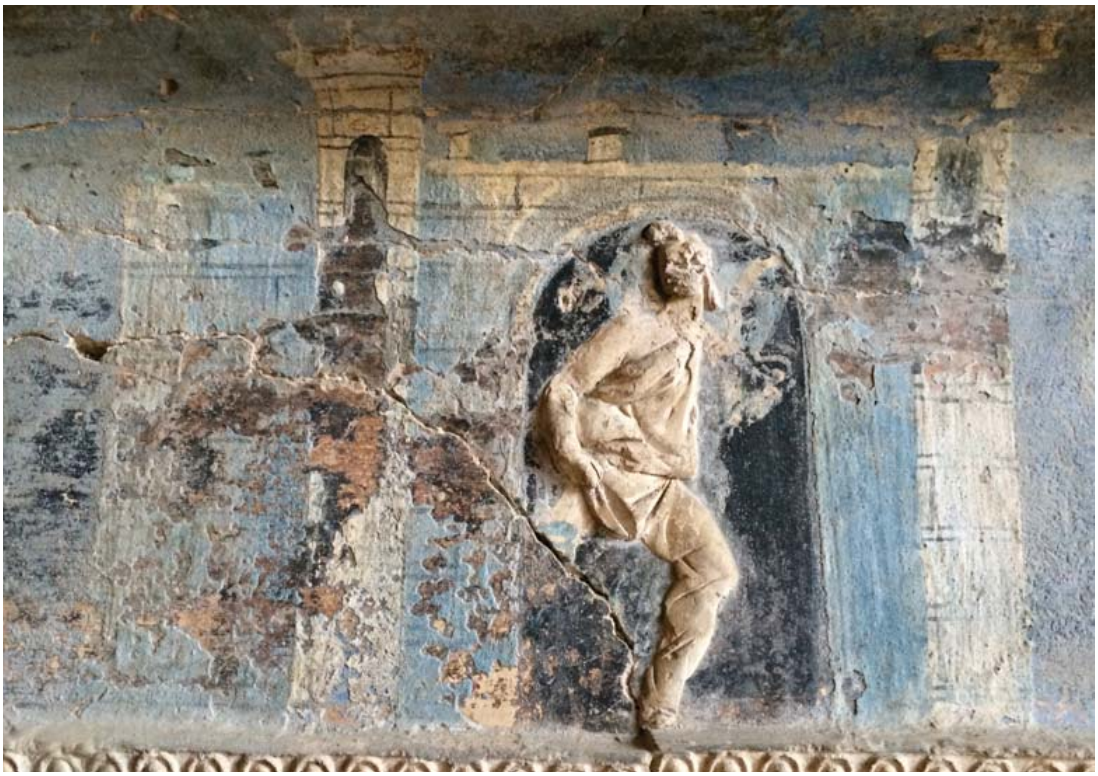


Fig.83 – A Trojan carries part of the ransom out of Troy.

We then see the cart itself (figure 84) driven by a man whom the educated Roman knows from *Iliad* 24.325 to be Idaeus (whom we will encounter again, unlabelled, in the House of Octavius Quartio) and guided by Hermes to Achilles' tent where King Priam is already kneeling prostrate before the Myrmidon chief (figure 85).



Fig.84 – Hermes guides the cart to Achilles' tent.



Fig.85 – The Ransom of Hector.

In the ransom scene – the final episode on the western wall – Achilles' relaxed and confident recline contrasts with the hunched, vulnerable figure of Priam who throws himself at the mercy of his son's killer. This is a standardised scene, rendered with a similar composition throughout Graeco-Roman art and, in parts, the epic text is represented in close detail, from Hermes (with winged feet and caduceus) guiding the aged king to the camp (*Il.* 24.462-464) to the mule-cart carrying "a hoard of treasure", to Priam "huddled at Achilles' feet" (*Il.* 24.509-510).

Homer tells us that Hermes refused to enter the tent (*Il.* 24.460-467) but he stands immediately behind Priam here, in a slightly clumsy overlap within the narrative, and Priam seems to be positioned outside of the curtains of the enclosure. Homer also says that at this time Achilles was accompanied by a throng of companions but this is rarely depicted in Roman art and is not reproduced here (see chapter 3 for a rare example of this detail being included). The ransom scene in the House of the Iliac Shrine therefore evokes, rather than illustrates, the epic account, with the composition reflecting that which is only found in Late Hellenistic and Roman art with Achilles seated in a chair (his rear arm resting on what would have been its back), rather than reclining on a kline, as it is usually found in earlier Greek art.[146] The frieze then moves to the most northerly point of the eastern wall (figure 86), on the opposite side of the sacellum doorway, directly facing the previous scene. On the far left hand side vessels rest beneath a curtained enclosure and a man stands outside it. Today only the outline of his imprint survives, although it is still possible to see his left hand, gesturing towards the next scene (figure 87).

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Fig.86 – Sketch of the east wall.
Beginning and end of narrative marked by red line.



Fig.87 – Gifts in the tent and an unidentified, gesturing man.

[146] The earliest examples of Achilles sitting on a chair are found on three Homeric cups of the second century BC – Sinn (1979) MB 23, 24 and 25.

The story told in the remaining part of the frieze has been a subject of contention among scholars. Bragantini and Aurigemma propose that the structure in figure 87 is Achilles' tent with the unloaded ransom visible; but Bragantini does not offer a suggestion for the male figure and Aurigemma suggests that it is simply a servant wearing an exomis.[147] If we consult the *Iliad*, however, as the ancient viewer was certainly intended to do (most likely from memory) we see that the final scenes are a moving evocation of *Iliad* 24.677-697 and the function of the unidentified man, like the two others on the opposite wall, is to direct the viewer's gaze to a particularly poignant part of the narrative. In the epic Hermes instructs Priam to leave Achilles' tent before dawn, before the Greeks have awoken, so that they can remove Hector's body without challenge. The messenger god then drives the cart bearing Hector's body as far as the River Xanthus and returns to Olympus, whereupon Priam and Idaeus take over the driving of the wagon. The details of this are evoked pictorially in the left two thirds of the eastern wall of the stucco frieze where we find an ornate casket with volute decoration (figure 88). This is the cart, emptied of its ransom and now bearing Hector's body (implied but not shown), pulled by two horses and led by a Trojan in patterned trousers (figure 89).[148]



Fig.88 – A Trojan leads the wagon carrying Hector's corpse.

[147] Bragantini (2000) 301; Spinazzola (1953) 897.

[148] On account of this being the only extant representation of the scene in art it is described by Santoro as a *hapax iconografico* – Santoro (2005) 108.



Fig.89 – Detail from figure 88.

In front of the wagon we see Priam once again led to safety by Hermes, who repeats his stance from the opposite side of the sacellum (figures 85 and 90). A tragic contrast is drawn here for those who recognised the compositional repetition and knew their Homer well: this scene of Priam led to safety by Hermes is almost immediately followed by Hector led by Fate to his death.



Fig.90 – Hermes leads Priam back to Troy.

The stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine therefore makes interpretative demands on its viewers in the same manner as the painted friezes in the House of the Cryptoporticus (chapter 1) and the House of Octavius Quartio (chapter 3). Textual markers and easily-recognised standardised scenes are placed among others whose identity is more of a challenge to interpret and several are evocations of and allusions to the Homeric text rather than faithful illustrations of it. In contrast, the stucco frieze includes far fewer extra-Homeric characters and insertions than the other two and instead challenges the viewer to draw narrative parallels from the sequence and ordering of episodes displayed:

a) Priam led by Hermes to safety; Hector led by Fate to his death (west wall).
b) A Greek warrior emerges from a doorway to see the desecration of Hector; a Trojan servant emerges from a gateway carrying the ransom for Hector's corpse (east wall).
c) Achilles at his most brutal followed by the hero at his most compassionate (east wall).
d) From the far right and left hand sides of the rear wall, working inwards, both Hector and Achilles run towards the centre and undergo their climactic duel.

The stucco frieze therefore asks its viewer to infer and interpret themes and moral tales from its iconography and sequencing by means of their own detailed knowledge of the epic text. We are reminded here of Pausanias commenting on similar compositional choices made by Polygnotus in Delphi where, in the Nekyia fresco, the artist has collected together characters from Greek mythology according to their fate: the juxtaposition of women who all suffered on account of their husbands and lovers (Paus. 10.29.3-7) and the grouping of men who were all wronged by Odysseus (Paus. 10.31.1-2). Although the Pompeian stucco frieze does not include labels, it contains within its relatively limited surface all of the features we have come to expect of a Graeco-Roman epic-themed frieze, even though only three books of its respective epic are evoked.

Chapter 3: The *Iliad* frieze from the House of D. Octavius Quartio on the Via dell'Abbondanza in Pompeii

Context

The third *Iliad* frieze is probably contemporary with that in the House of the Iliac Shrine, thus dating between AD 62 and 79, and is also thought to have been created as part of renovations undertaken after the earthquake.[149] It is located in an oecus/triclinium (h) in the House of Octavius Quartio – our third house from the Via dell'Abbondanza – which overlooks the expansive garden and 'Euripus' canal.[150]. A ground plan of the insula is found in figure 91.

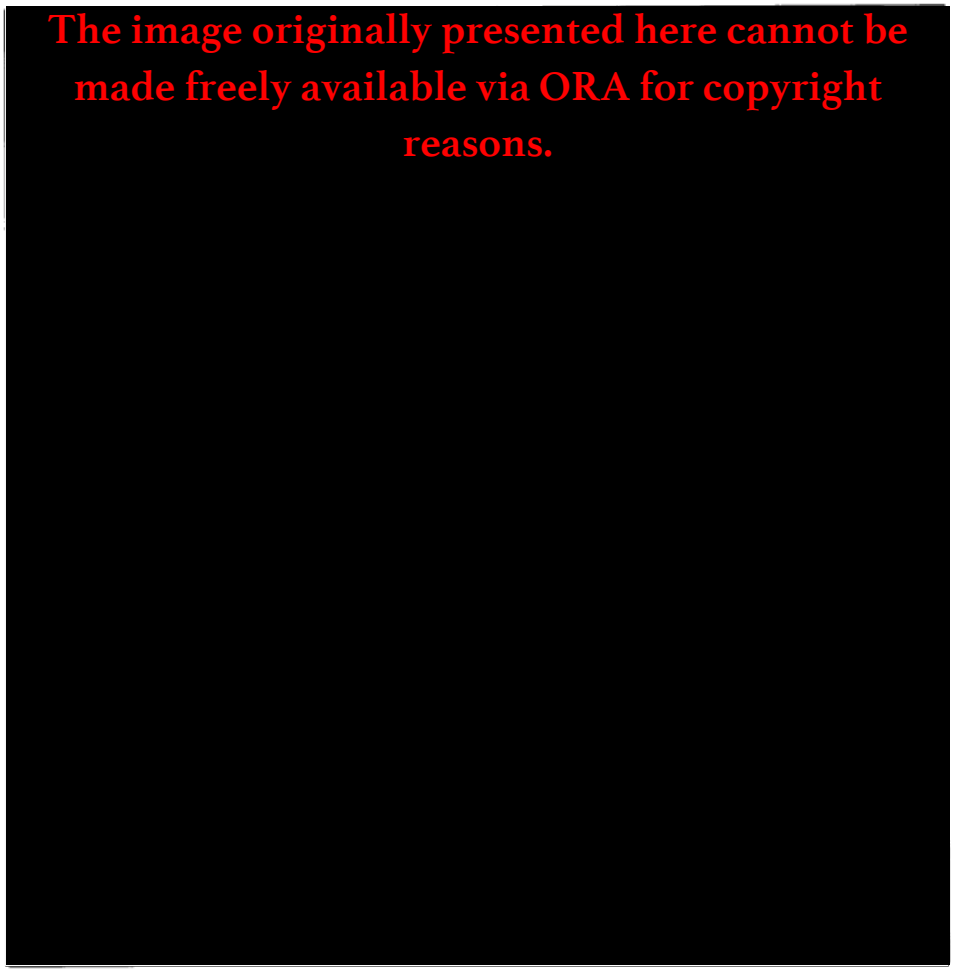


Fig.91 – Plan of Pompeii regio I insula 2.
House of Octavius Quartio entranceway through fauces 2,
***Iliad* frieze in room h.**

[149] De Vos suggests that the tablinum was removed during the alterations but residence itself was originally an aristocratic house from the Samnite era - De Vos in *PPM* I (1990) 42.
[150] John Clarke describes it as "the most important room in the house" – Clarke (1991) 201. Zanker proposes that the remodelling of the house was unfinished in AD 79 – Zanker (1998) 145.

The *Iliad* frieze shares more formal features with that in the House of the Cryptoporticus than the stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine, being painted and, according to the extant frescoes, beginning its narrative with the plague in the Greek camp from the first book of the epic. It too has labels but here in Latin letters rather than Greek, although only occurring on two walls of the room. Yet, like both, it contains textual markers, standardised scenes, corrections of and allusions to the epic, alongside extra-Homeric scenes and labels, all of which must be interpreted by the viewer.

Although it was created almost a century after the cryptoporticus frieze there might have been some intention on the part of the homeowner to emulate earlier domestic decoration. The Augustan architect Vitruvius bemoans the loss of earlier decorative styles in *De architectura* 7.5.2, including the *ambulationes* decorated with the *troianas pugnas seu Ulixis errationes*, and the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus and the *Odyssey* frescoes in Rome are both usually dated around the mid to late first century BC, thus corresponding with Vitruvius' chronology. Furthermore, the lower sections of the oecus are painted with faux marble panels, reminiscent of those found in the atrium of the Villa of the Mysteries (figures 92 and 93) of Late Republican dating.[151] It seems very likely then that the owner of the house intended the room to recall the grand residences of the Bay of Naples which still retained 'heritage' decoration.[152]



Fig.92 – Faux marble panel in the oecus/ triclinium in the House of Octavius Quartio.



Fig.93 – Faux marble panel in the atrium of the Villa of the Mysteries.

[151] Bragantini (2014) 311-316.

[152] Fant (2007) for marble and imitation marble at Pompeii.

Mariette de Vos argues that the faux marble panels instead recall the decoration of the Domus Transitoria in Rome, dating to the early 60s AD,[153] but the combination of continuous frieze *(Iliad*), larger scale painting (Hercules frieze) and marble-effect panelling much more convincingly recalls domestic decoration of the Late Republic and is rightly described by Lorenz as "something of an anachronism."[154] If we contrast with the quintessential Fourth Style decoration of rooms d, e and f, located on the opposite side of portico g, we encounter a distinct contrast in decorative choices even though both were probably painted contemporaneously.[155]

The *Iliad* frieze sits beneath a much larger narrative frieze concerning the adventures of Hercules in Troy (figure 94): the former is around 30cm in height, the latter around 80cm. The Hercules frieze will be considered in more detail in chapter seven and the juxtaposition potentially alters the viewing experience of each, which has recently been explored by Lorenz.[156] Figure 95, taken from Lorenz's article, shows the combinations of scenes and I have added wall orientations in red. Those episodes which contain *in situ* labels are underlined in green. The individual episodes are usually separated by painted landscape or architectural features and are set on a blue/black background.

Of the original twenty or so scenes from the *Iliad* frieze only fourteen survived to excavation, and even fewer are visible today.[157] Thankfully the figural and epigraphic details were recorded by Spinazzola and sketched and painted by A. Sanarica before the allied bombing of 1943, which caused damage to the house and the wider insula. Between 2012 and 2015 the House of Octavius Quartio was subject to emergency conservation work to preserve its frescoes and masonry as part of a larger series of restoration works on the Via dell'Abbondanza.

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[153] De Vos (1993) 86.

[154] Lorenz interprets the perspectival alignment of the *Iliad* frieze as being "towards the back" of the visual plane, which she argues is characteristic of Second Style decoration - Lorenz (2013) 222-223, 227. Salvatore Nappo comments on the First Style stucco cornices in the lateral rooms of the house, which were positioned alongside Fourth Style wall decoration – Nappo (2007) 362.

[155] De Vos in *PPM* I (1990) 42-108.

[156] Lorenz (2013).

[157] Santoro erroneously states that there were originally fourteen scenes, but the lacunae reveal without doubt that there were originally several more – Santoro (2005) 113.

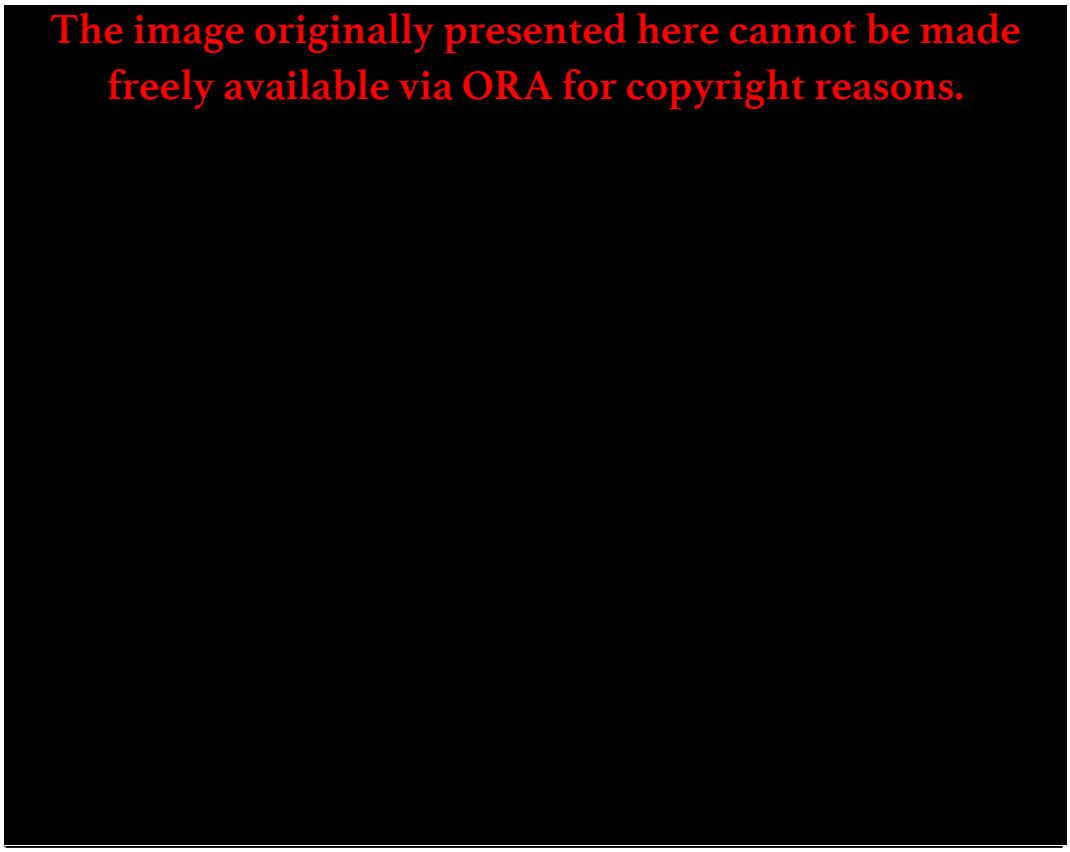


Fig.94 – Hercules and *Iliad* friezes in the House of Octavius Quartio.

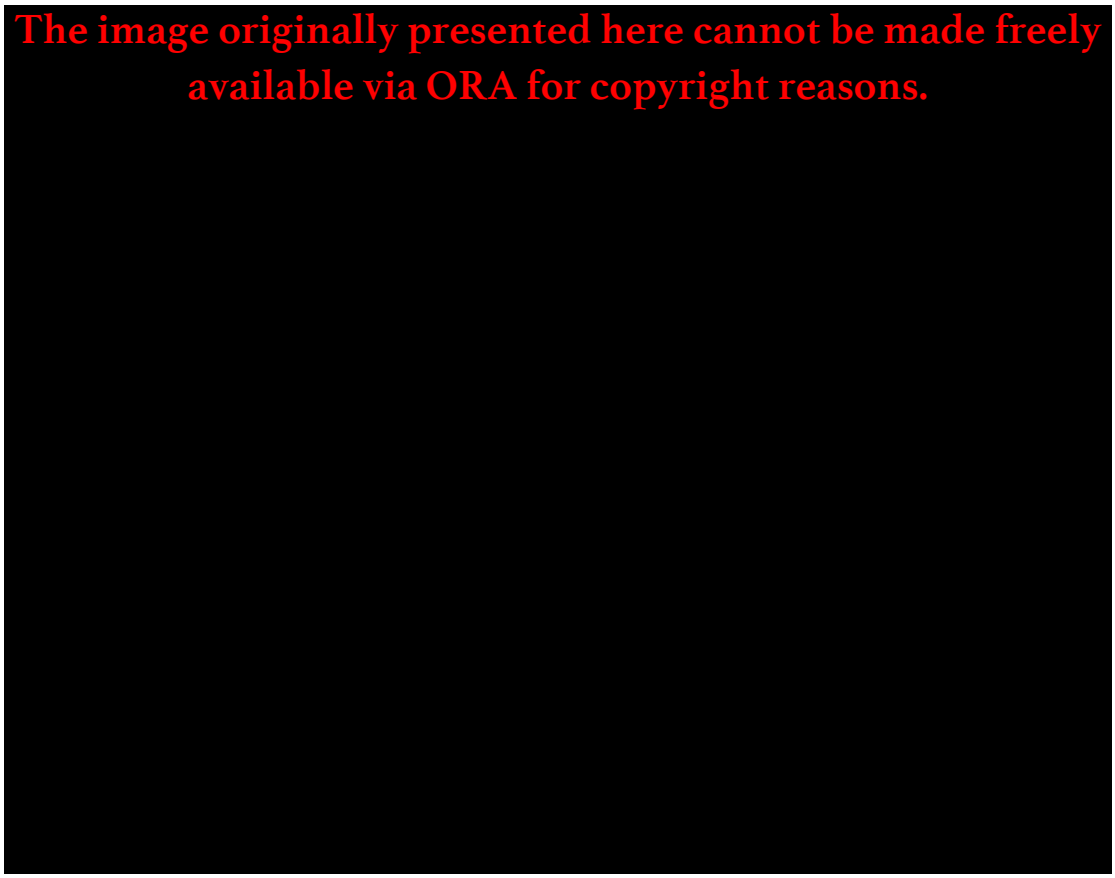


Fig.95 – Positioning of scenes in the Hercules (bold) and *Iliad* (italics) friezes.

Southern wall, west side

Chronologically, the narrative begins in the southwestern corner of the room (turning immediately left as one enters through the southern door) with the plague in the Greek camp (figures 96 and 97).



Fig.96 – Plague in the Greek camp – photograph from 2013.

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Fig.97 – *Lucido* sketch of the plague in the Greek camp.

Like the corresponding scene in the House of the Cryptoporticus (figure 6) Apollo fires his deadly arrows from a high promontory causing devastation for those below. The mules and wagon driver are omitted here and the man lying in the foreground, partly covered by his shield, is directly in the aim of the archer god, leading Aurigemma to interpret the scene as one of acceptance on the part of the afflicted rather than the desperate pleading evident in the cryptoporticus frieze.[158] As it is compositionally differently to the panel in the House of the Cryptoporticus it cannot be argued to be a standardised scene (like the ransom and desecration of

[158] Spinazzola (1953) 977.

Hector) but Apollo's stance, which is almost identical in each, reflects the formulaic nature of Roman art, even though the examples are around a century apart. The plague itself is nevertheless a textual marker and the commencement of the narrative (according to the extant frescoes) with one of the first significant episodes from the *Iliad* invites the viewer to compare the scene before him with the Homeric text. Lorenz comments on the "unique situation tag" LOIMOS in the painting, but the excavators record that "Nessuna epigrafe contrassegna gli Eroi tanto nei brevi tratti estremi della parete meridionale (Apollo saetta la peste nel campo dei Greci)".[159] In fact no labels were found along the entirety of the southern or eastern walls of the room, prompting us also to question Lorenz's claim that the number of name tags throughout this frieze is unmatched in Pompeii, when the much larger *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus contained far more labels for its protagonists.

Western wall

We then (certainly as a modern viewer) naturally move to the western wall of the oecus, beyond the second door of the room which opens onto portico g, to scenes showing the fighting beside the fortifications built by the Greeks to protect their ships (figures 98 to 100) as found in the twelfth book of the *Iliad*. In following a clockwise route around the room eleven books of the epic appear to have been omitted, but this will be addressed below. It was noted in the Introduction to this thesis that in Pausanias' discussion of the Nekyia and Iliupersis frescoes in Delphi he often refers to parts of the paintings which he finds puzzling, and notes to the reader that these are usually the subject of localised knowledge and tradition. In this Pompeian context it may even be possible to identify the inspiration for the extra-Homeric insertions in the *Iliad* frieze and I will argue throughout that they may point us, somewhat surprisingly, to the world of Roman public spectacle.

[159] Lorenz (2014) 228; Maiuri, Jacono and Della Corte (1928) 111.



Fig.98 – Left half of western wall – photograph from 2013.



Fig.99 – The etched and painted label 'DANAVS', photograph from 2015.

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Fig.100 – The Battle by the Wall, composite of sketches by A. Sanarica.

In the first scene on the western wall labels are found for DANAVS and [...]AON (figure 100); the former possibly a generic term for a Greek, making a singular Latinate noun out of the collective term Δαναοί. Danaus is not the name of a warrior in the *Iliad*, however, and is therefore an extra-Homeric insertion by the artist.[160] When inspecting the label in May 2015 I noticed that it appears to have been scratched into the black background and then painted over in white (figure 99), whereas all the other labels seem only to have been painted. The *CIL* entry makes no distinction (*CIL* IV.7533), simply stating that all of the labels in the frieze are "heroum nomina Latina fert pencillo picta, colore albo".[161] There is a curious link, however, with the House of the Gladiators in Pompeii (V 5,3), where the same name is scratched onto a column in the peristyle directly above the name

[160] *Cf* Paus. 10.26.4.
[161] *CIL* IV, Suppl. III (3) 818.

DARDANVS (*CIL* IV.4324 – discussed below). The graffiti from the House of the Gladiators was published in an article from 1890 by August Mau where a number of names, clearly referring to gladiators are found.[162] Among the graffitos are details of contests fought and their outcomes: *CIL* IV.4288, for example, reads:

MURRANVS
CLOD III>III

indicating that the gladiator Murranus of the Clodii won three out of his three fights in the arena.[163] The DANAVS label in the House of Octavius Quartio appears to record something similar and figure 99 confirms that there are three lines etched beneath the name. These are not recorded in the *CIL* entry or by Maiuri *et al* in the earlier publication from 1928, but *are* present in the excavation photograph reproduced by Aurigemma in 1953,[164] clearly taken at a time before modern visitors were able to deface the frieze, as is all-too-painful to note when visiting today.

There is also some discrepancy regarding the [...]AON label. The earliest account was published by Maiuri, Jacono and Della Corte in 1928 who reproduce the label as shown in figure 101, offering Lykaon and Machaon as possibilities in their discussion of it. Ernst Diehl (1930) records it as Likaon and the *CIL* entry from 1963, proposing a Greek lambda as the first letter, is shown in figure 102.[165] Spinazzola (1953) reconstructs it as LYKAON (*cf* figure 100 with Latinate L rather than Greek Λ) but the *lucido* sketch conveys further difficulties (figure 103).



Fig.101 – [...]AON label in Maiuri et al (1928).

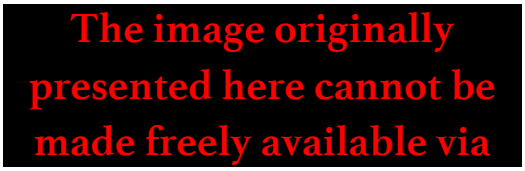


Fig.102– [...]AON label in *CIL* IV.7532 (1963).



Fig.103 – [...]AON label in the *lucido* sketch from excavation.

[162] Mau lists the DANAVS and DARDANVS graffitos in a section entitled "Nomi, forse di gladiatori" - Mau (1890) 25-39. The dwelling seems to have been used as a gladiatorial barracks until the earthquake of AD 62/3, after which it was moved to the quadroporticus behind the theatre (Pompeii VIII 7,16). Jacobelli (2003) 47-52 for evidence concerning the names of other gladiators in Pompeii.
[163] Cooley and Cooley (2004) 55 for interpreting the numbers and symbols on gladiatorial graffiti.
[164] Spinazzola (1953) fig.1009.
[165] Maiuri, Jacono and Della Corte (1928) 112; Diehl (1930) 65 no.842b.

It seems that there are three possibilities for the label. The first and most favoured among scholars is that it refers to Lykaon: a Trojan who is not said by Homer to have taken part in the battle by the wall, but who was later killed by Achilles in his rage after the death of Patroclus (compare figures 39 and 40 in the House of the Cryptoporticus). Though not strictly an extra-Homeric insertion, indeed more in the vein of a correction, his inclusion would nevertheless have been noticed by the educated Roman viewer who knew that Lykaon only entered the war in the twenty-first book of the epic, certainly not in the battle by the walls or ships.

The second possibility, as suggested by Maiuri *et al*, is that the label recalls MAKAON who, in this context, could only be the Greek doctor wounded by Paris in *Iliad* 11.506-520. It is difficult to see how the letters M and A can be reconstructed from any of the surviving characters, however. Yet, if we return to the earliest published edition of the label (figure 101) there is also the possibility of KYKAON or KIKAON, which was a restorative drink or magical elixir given to Nestor and Machaon after they had left the battlefield. The potion is cited several times in Homeric epic (*Il.* 11.624, 641; *Od.* 10.290, 316) and was also a verb used by Homer to denote being stirred up or panic stricken (*Il.* 20.489, 21.235; *Od.* 12.238). This too corresponds to a particular genre of gladiatorial names which suggest frenzied action or a particular state of being: compare Advolans (flying towards) mentioned by Martial (*Spect*. 5.24), Flamma (blazing – *CIL* X.7297) and Licentiosus (lustful).[166]

The recurring, inherent difficulties interpreting (and even reading) the labels of the frieze are in fact a significant feature of their construction, as will be explored below, and continue in the following scene, which is an evocation of the battle by the ships from the fourteenth book of the *Iliad* (figures 104 and 105).



Fig.104 – The battle by the Greek ships – photograph from 2013.

[166] Found on the Torrenova gladiator mosaic in the Galleria Borghese in Rome.



Fig.105 – Reconstructed sketch of the battle by the Greek ships.

Along the ground line is a label for HECTOR, which is very clear on the excavation photograph, and on the left AI[..] TAIAMONIVS, which appears initially to be a mis-spelling or mis-translation of Τελαμώνιος. Both Sanarica and the *lucido* artist transcribe the word as TAIAMONIVS and, although it is referred to in Aurigemma's commentary as TALAMONIVS, the third letter is unquestionably an I (figures 106 and 107).[167]



Fig.106 – Reconstruction by Sanarica.

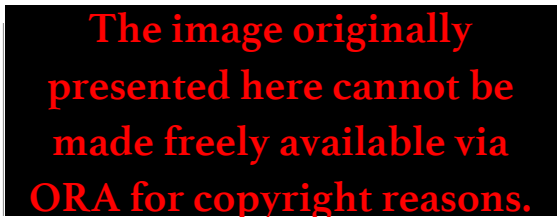


Fig.107 – *Lucido* sketch from excavation.

The episode can confidently be assigned to the battle by the Greek ships as both Hector and the Greater Ajax (and the Locrian Ajax who cannot be identified here) play the largest roles in this part of the epic and the details of the text are closely followed, making the scene a marker. Aurigemma interprets the figure lying on the floor (partly covered by his shield) as Hector downed by the boulder hurled by Ajax (*Il.* 14.402-457, *cf* figure 19 in the House of the Cryptoporticus) although it is difficult to tell whether Hector is instead the upright figure standing above the fallen man.[168] If we compare with the same scene on the Tabula Capitolina (1A) (figure 108) we see that Hector is indeed standing, and it is Kaletor who has been thrown to the floor.

[167] Spinazzola (1953) figs 1015, 1016 and 1017. It is recorded incorrectly in *CIL* IV.7533 as "Aiax TELAMONIVS" (which cites Ernest Diehl's publication, in which it is written as "Aia[x] Telamonius") and in Maiuri *et al* where it is recorded as "AI[ax] TELAMONIVS" - Diehl (1930) 64 no.841b; Maiuri *et al* (1928) 111 no.123.

[168] Spinazzola (1953) 986.



Fig.108 – Sketch of band 'O' from the left hand side of the Tabula Capitolina (1A).

A further link with gladiatorial names is found upon further investigation into the curiously-spelled AIAS TAIAMONIVS label. A fourth century mosaic from Torrenova, now in the Borghese Gallery (figure 109), reveals on the left a gladiator with a name reflecting this exact spelling – TAIAMONIVS (*CIL* VI.10206). These are the only two extant examples from the Roman world to convey this particular spelling and both are applied to various scenes of combat: epic battle and gladiatorial games. Even the name Hector has links with the arena as a now-lost grave stele from Moirans in south-eastern France (*CIL* XIII.5354) attests.[169]

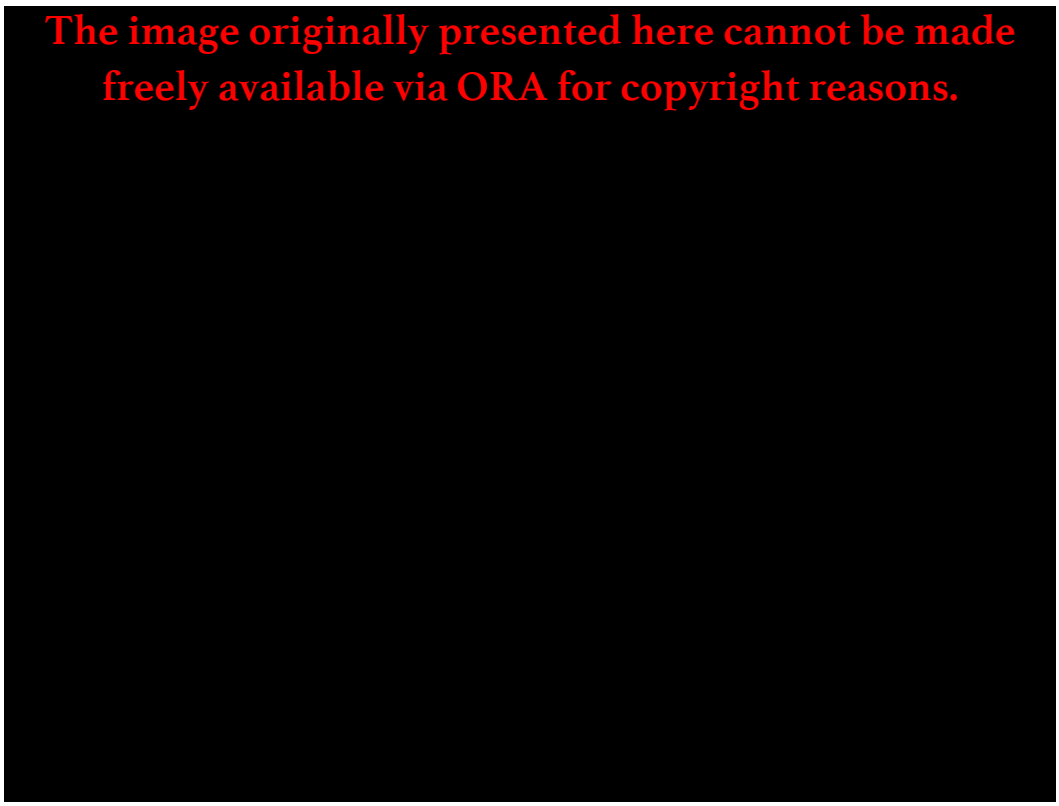


Fig.109 – Torrenova gladiator mosaic.

[169] The stele bore the inscription HECTOR VIC(toriarum) III alongside a depiction of two gladiators and is dated to the first century AD based on the use of the word *victoriae*, which is not found in a gladiatorial context after the first century - Vismara and Caldelli (2000) no.68; Ville (1981) 309.

Northern wall

The frieze then continues on the northern wall of the oecus (figure 112 for the positioning of episodes) where three figures are reaching for an object before them (figures 110 and 111). Exactly what or whom they are reaching for is not visible in the surviving painting, nor in the early sketch, but could be a fallen comrade. Epigraphy pertaining to his identity is not provided (or does not survive in the fragmentary fresco) but the episode's placement between the battle by the ships and the Patrocleia might give us some indication. In *Iliad* 16.426-507 we read of the death of the Lycian chief Sarpedon at the hands of Patroclus and the fierce battle over his body and armour which followed (*Il.* 16.569-683). This seems to be the most likely interpretation for the below scene but is not secure. If Sarpedon's death was intended, then the men might instead be wrangling over the hero's armour since Homer tells us that his corpse was spirited away by Apollo for burial in Lycia.[170]



Fig.110 – Removal of a body from the battlefield – photograph from 2013, (colours enhanced for better legibility).

[170] A more literal interpretation is found in early Classical artworks which show Ὕπνος and Θάνατος removing Sarpedon's body, as per Apollo's instructions in *Iliad* 16.682-683. Compare the Euphronios krater, recently repatriated to the Museo archeologico di Cerveteri, and a bronze cista handle in the Cleveland Museum of Art, Inv.1945.13.



Fig.111 – *Lucido* sketch showing the removal of a body from the battlefield.

Most of the upper part of the fresco has been reconstructed from fragments but from the *lucido* sketch we can see the letter YCES painted above a warrior's shoulder. This could be another generic label, perhaps [phr]YCES (Trojan), taking the form of another extra-Homeric insertion like DANAVS, since neither term is used in the *Iliad*, and Aurigemma notes that the men are wearing long-sleeved tunics and mantles confirming their eastern identity.[171] Precedents for the word *Phryges* being used to denote Trojans in an epic context are found largely in the art and literature of the Augustan period: band Φ of the Tabula Capitolina (1A) includes the label ΦΡΥΓΕΣ for the Trojans who are pursued by Achilles in the Scamander and in Aeneas' interpretation of the *Iliacas ex ordine pugnas* in the Temple of Juno in Carthage (Verg. *Aen.* 1.456-468) he comments upon the *Phryges, instaret curru cristatus Achilles*. The term also appears to have links with Pompeian gladiators. The word PHYRGIE (*CIL* IV.1975)[172] is scratched onto the portico of the Eumachia building (Pompeii VII 9, 1, 67.68) surrounded by other graffitos referring to names documented elsewhere in the town as being used by or relating to gladiators. The line of graffiti recorded in *CIL* IV.1975 commences with CRESCES, who is also found in the House of the Gladiators, then comes AMPLIATA, which must refer to the Pompeian gladiatorial agent Numerius Festinus Ampliatus (*cf CIL* IV.1183 and 1184).[173] Further epigraphy surrounding the line also conforms to the

[171] Spinazzola (1953) 990. "Phryges" is also proposed by Maiuri *et al* (1928) 111 and in the *CIL* entry (IV.7533e), but is entirely missing from Diehl (1930).
[172] The vocative of Phrygius (an alternate spelling of the adjectival noun Phrygus) – Dickey (2000) 552.
[173] Jacobelli (2003) 45.

genres of names given to gladiators: CLARUS (brilliant/famous – *CIL* IV.1977),[174] GERMANUS (from Germania – *CIL* IV.1972),[175] MINIATE (vocative form of Miniatus, meaning red-coloured – *CIL* IV.1981).[176]

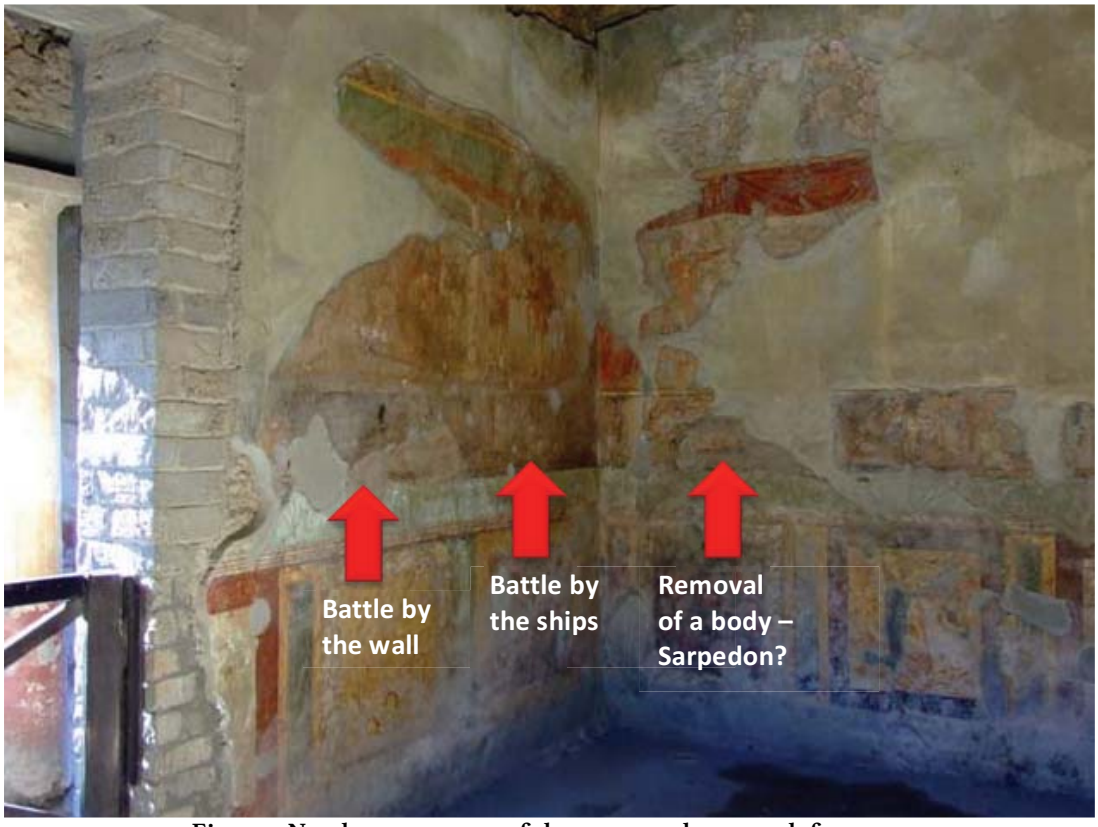


Fig.112 – North-west corner of the oecus – photograph from 2013.

The frieze continues with the Patrocleia, which is positioned left of centre on the northern wall of the oecus (figure 113), and is consequently a focal point when the viewer approaches from the garden. We must now rely almost exclusively on sketches and oil paintings by Sanarica to study the fresco (figure 114), considering its present condition (figure 115).

[174] The same name was used by a famous charioteer who is cursed in a lead tablet from Hadrumetum (ILS 8753) – Lee (2016) 27-28. Compare the graffito for VENUSTUS (charming/beautiful) from Pompeii I, 6 (*CIL* IV.8017 – Vivolo (1993) 46) and FLORUS (bright/gleaming – *CIL* IV.4298) in the House of the Gladiators.
[175] *Cf* the gladiator ALBANUS (Alban) referred to in a Pompeian graffito (*CIL* IV.8056 – Vivolo (1993) 37) and SAMUS (Samian) from the House of the Gladiators (*CIL* IV.4340).
[176] *Cf* the graffito for AMARANTHUS (unfading/reddish-purple – *CIL* IV.4295) from the House of the Gladiators.



Fig.113 – North wall of the oecus – photograph from 2013.

A label is provided for PATROCLO[s] and we meet again the divine horses XANTUS and BADIUS, the former having a T where TH might better fit (from the Greek θ) and the latter name traditionally considered a spelling error or mistranslation from the Greek βαλίος, with the artist, according to several scholars, confusing a Greek lambda (Λ) with a delta (Δ).[177]

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Fig.114 – The Patrocleia, oil on canvas by A. Sanarica.

[177] Spinazzola (1953) 1007; Ling (1991) 112; Lorenz (2013) 234; Squire (2014) n. 64.



Fig.115 – The Patrocleia – photograph from 2013.

Patroclus' onslaught followed directly on from the death of Sarpedon in the *Iliad* and this is reflected pictorially in the frieze, referring the viewer immediately back to the Homeric text. Aurigemma suggests that the warrior lying at the foot of the chariot may be Sarpedon himself, but this seems unlikely given that the frieze has so far stayed faithful to the Iliadic chronology, and this would naturally be an episode that came before the wrangling over his corpse or armour in the previous scene.[178] Aurigemma makes his proposal based on a similar representation in band Π of the Tabula Capitolina (1A) (figure 116) but here again there is no label for the fallen man and so we cannot presume that he was intended to be Sarpedon.

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Fig.116 – The Patrocleia, Tabula Capitolina (1A).

Bianchi Bandinelli wrote in 1954 that in the Patrocleia fresco both the hero's "combattimento e morte" are found. This is repeated verbatim by Santoro and by Coralini.[179] But the death of Patroclus cannot be discerned in the current frieze, nor is reproduced or even mentioned by Spinazzola, Aurigemma or by Maiuri *et al* in the 1928 report. Furthermore, the gap between this and the next extant scene is only

[178] Spinazzola (1953) 993.
[179] Bianchi Bandinelli (1954) 92; Santoro (2005) 113; Coralini (2001) 168.

around 20 cm or so in length and would not allow for the inclusion of another significant episode. We must therefore reject Bandinelli's proposal. The following event, however, resulted directly from Patroclus' death: Achilles arming for battle after deciding to seek vengeance for his companion (figures 117 and 118). Although reconstructed from fragments the labels – THETIS, ACHILL[es], BADIVS – and the chronological placement of the episode confirm the identity of the scene. Owing to the position of Achilles' label it seems that he was originally situated where the large lacuna in the centre of the plaster now obscures the fresco.



Fig.117 – Thetis gives the new arms to Achilles – photograph from 2013.



Fig.118 – Thetis gives the new arms to Achilles.

At the time that this frieze was painted, when the Fourth Pompeian Style was flourishing, many homeowners in the town opted to display in single panel format different versions of this episode, or paintings closely related to it.[180] Thus we find Thetis riding a sea centaur across the ocean, holding the new weapons, or sometimes collecting the arms from Hephaestus' workshop (a much earlier version of which can be seen in the cryptoporticus frieze).[181] In the House of Octavius Quartio, however, the artist has painted a moment not found elsewhere in Pompeii which combines two separate events: Thetis delivering the weapons to her son *and* his arming scene. Although standardised scenes on similar themes were available the artist has created a new composition for the frieze which evokes two parts of the epic text. Xanthus and Badius, according to Homer, were not present when the weapons were delivered but *are* mentioned by name during the arming scene (*Il.* 19.338-424). Automedon the charioteer – the figure in a yellow tunic on the right of figure 117 whose label is cited by Maiuri *et al*[182] – was also not at hand since he was busy harnessing the horses and readying the chariot while Achilles readied himself for battle (*Il.* 19.392-424).

It might be of significance, considering the interest in the divine horses, that the arming scene is the very moment in the Homeric narrative when Xanthus speaks to Achilles and prophesies his master's death (*Il.* 19.408-417). This leads me to wonder whether some local tradition now lost to us, perhaps in the form of a theatrical performance, might have heavily showcased the two horses since they are found in each of the Iliadic friezes and often, as here, featuring in scenes in which they are not said to have played a part in the epic. Moreover, delving back into the world of public spectacle might even help us to solve the confusion with the Balius/Badius label, which is generally considered to be a spelling or translation error on the part of the artist.[183] The word *badius* is used by Varro in the first century BC (ap. Non. p. 80,2), by the Augustan poet Grattius (*Cyn.* 536) and by Eusebius in the fourth century AD (*Mart. Pal.* 13.4) to describe the colour of brown

[180] Hodske (2007) 216-218, *taf* 115-117.
[181] Thetis at sea – Pompeii VI 9,6-9 (the House of the Dioscouri, *in situ*); IX 5,2 (the House of Achilles, *in situ*); VII 2,25 (the House of the Quadriga, now in Naples, MNN 8863); VI 9,2 (the House of Meleager, now in Naples, MNN 8873) - Bragantini in *PPM* IV (1993) 660-818. Thetis in Hephaestus' workshop - VI 9,2 (the House of Meleager, now in Naples, MNN 9528) - Bragantini in *PPM* IV (1993) 660-818; IX 5,2 (the House of Achilles, *in situ*).
[182] Maiuri *et al* (1928) 111.
[183] See note 177.

or chestnut horses.[184] Similarly a funerary monument from Rome (*CIL* VI.10047) dating to the early second century records the name of a horse called DANAO B(adio) AF(ro) who had won nineteen races under the successful charioteer P. Aelius Gutta Calpurnianus.[185] We might wonder then whether the artist of the *Iliad* frieze had *not* made a transliteration mistake and was instead punning on or playing with the similarities between the Greek Βάλιος and Latin *Badius*, or was perhaps even referring to a contemporary, even celebrated racing horse in first century Pompeii named Badius. A graffito from the exterior wall of a house (Pompeii VI 2.9-10) on the Via di Mercurio, to the north of the forum, may refer to another (or the same?) horse since the word BADIUS can be deciphered from the cursive (*CIL* IV.1333).[186] Remarkably, on the same wall, the word XANTVS can also be seen (*CIL* IV.1361) with the exact (mis)spelling as that in the House of Octavius Quartio.[187] The Pompeian funerary monument of Aulus Umbricius Scaurus (discussed below, figure 140) confirms that horses were involved in the games and so it seems very likely that just as gladiators were assigned the names of heroes so the horses which took part in public spectacle would likewise be given the names of famous horses from legendary history.[188]

Returning to the northern wall of the oecus (consult figure 113) there follows a significant lacuna of around 40 to 50 cm where only small, unidentifiable fragments of the plaster have survived. The climactic duel between Achilles and Hector would almost certainly have been positioned here, recalling its pivotal position in the stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine (but similarly missing on account of lacunae in the House of the Cryptoporticus). The *CIL* entry for the Octavius Quartio frieze lists two (otherwise unaccounted for) labels for [Achil]LES (*CIL* IV.7533 q) and HECTOR (*CIL* IV.7533 t), which can convincingly be

[184] Varro cited in Nonnius Marcellus 358 – "equi colore dispares item nati: hic badius, iste gilvus, ille murinus" – Astbury (2002) 60. Squire and Elsner note another pun in the description of the Scamander painting in Philostr. *Imag.* I.1 in which the name of the river god (Xanthos) is conflated with his blonde hair colour – Squire and Elsner (2016) 75-76.

[185] Note the combination of *afrus*, *danaus* and *badius*, with the latter two adjectives recalling two of the more puzzling labels we encounter in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio. Papi (1999) 272-273 for discussion of the monument.

[186] In the *CIL* entry Zangemeister proposes BILIUS or BADIUS as possible readings but Avellino, in an earlier publication, opts for BADIUS – Avellino (1840) 68. *CIL* IV *tav*. XXVII 14.

[187] Keegan (2014) 63-65.

[188] A fourth century mosaic from Dougga records the name of the charioteer Eros and two of the three horses he raced, with the names of the horses – AMAN[D]VS (loveable) and FRVNITVS (jovial) – almost as prominent as those for their master. Discussion in Corbier (1995) 134-135.

repositioned here. The duel is predictably followed by the desecration of Hector which, although fragmentary, is typically presented as a standardised scene (figures 119 and 120).



Fig.119 – The desecration of Hector – photograph from 2015.

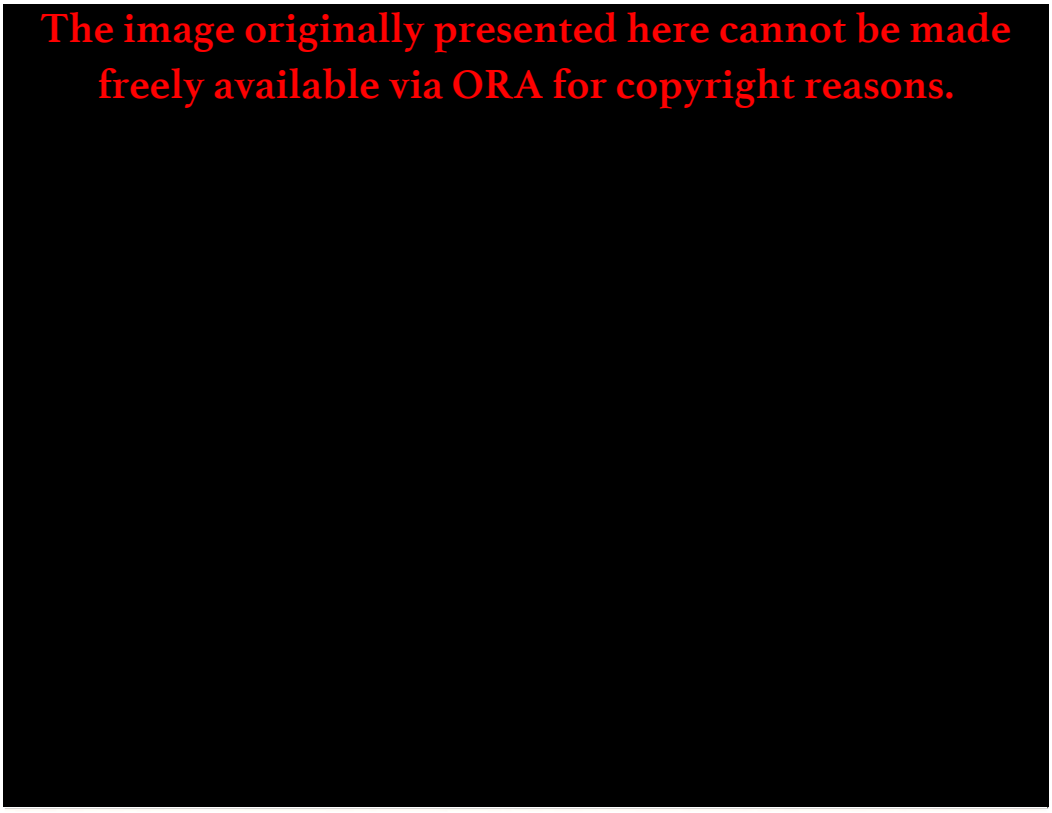


Fig.120 – *Lucido* sketch showing the desecration of Hector.

It is still possible to read the letters OR in the lower left hand corner of the plaster and we can confidently reconstruct the label as [Hect]OR. AUTOMEDON is also labelled, driving the horses, according to the traditional representation of the scene (but not the Homeric account).[189]

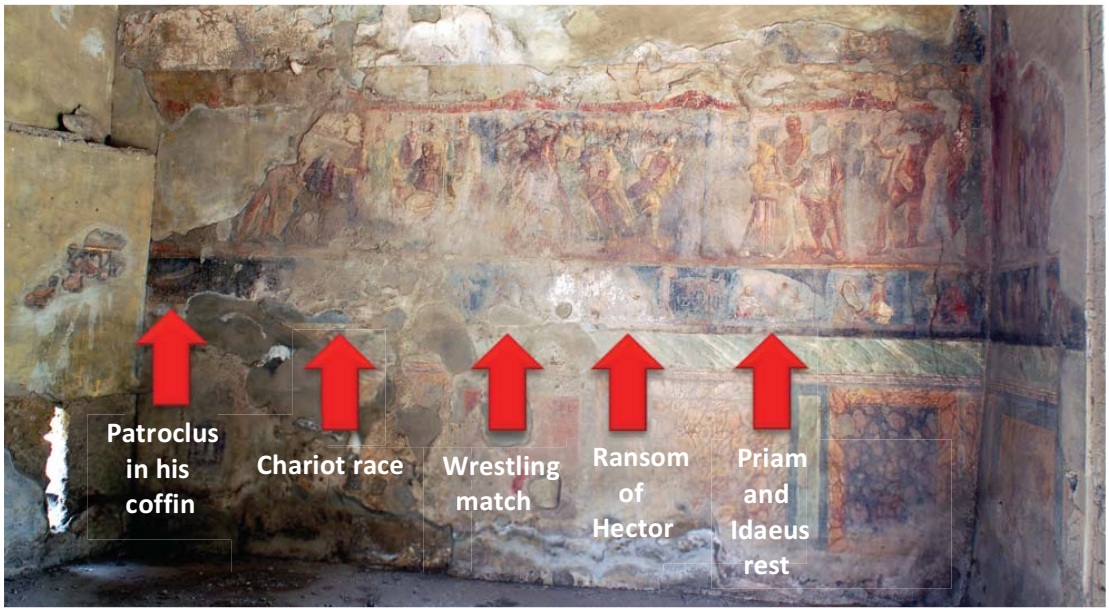


Fig.121 – Eastern wall of the oecus – photograph from 2013.

Eastern wall

We now move on to the eastern wall of the oecus (figure 121), which is currently in a much better state of survival than its northern neighbour. There is no evidence of the inclusion of labels in *any part* of the eastern or adjoining southern wall, which seems especially curious considering the part that epigraphy has played in all of the scenes so far discussed. Nevertheless, dominating the left half of the eastern wall are the funeral games for Patroclus (figures 122a and b), which survived in enough detail at excavation to be recorded in oils by A. Sanarica (figure 123).

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Fig.122a – Patroclus' body and the chariot race, reconstruction by Sanarica and Spinazzola.

[189] See discussion in chapter two.

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Fig.122b – The chariot race and the wrestling, reconstruction by Sanarica and Spinazzola.

On the extreme left Patroclus, in burial shroud, lies in an open coffin with his head resting on a pillow (figure 124). In the *Iliad*, however, the games take place beside his tumulus (*Il.* 23.250-257) and so the artist may have made the decision to show the hero in an open casket to add pathos to the games that follow.[190]



Fig.124 – Patroclus in his coffin – photograph from 2015.

[190] *Cf* Paus. 10.26.4. Compare also the extra-Homeric ταφος in figure 42 in the House of the Cryptoporticus.

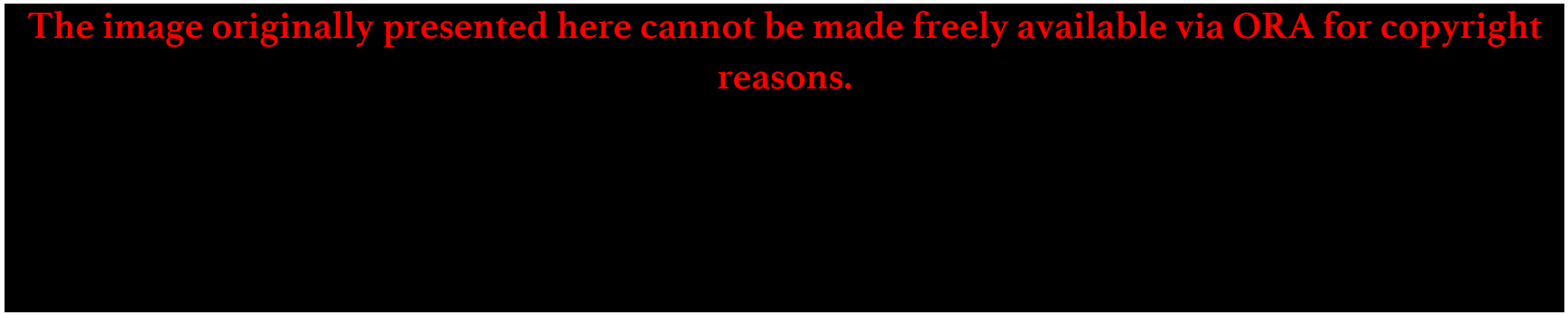


Fig.123 – The funeral games for Patroclus.
Composite of four oil paintings by A. Sanarica.

The first contest depicted is the chariot race in which five Greek leaders competed (*Il.* 23.287-538). Three competitors are shown in the frieze alongside three attendants and Aurigemma considers the riders to be those who came first, second and third in the race: Diomedes, Menelaus and Antilochus. He expresses puzzlement, however, at the identity of the helmeted man who holds a staff and gestures to the right and the two men wearing *exomides* and holding bowl-like objects, proposing that they are possibly attendants who will give the prizes to the victors.[191] Yet we need look no further than the epic itself which says that Sthenelus, companion of Diomedes, accepted the prizes (a woman and a tripod) after his comrade had won the race and then took them away for safekeeping (*Il.* 23.510-513). As elsewhere in the Iliadic frieze then the Roman viewer was meant to infer the identity of unlabelled protagonists from his knowledge of the textual episode.

Similarly, in the background behind the race we can see the faint traces of spectators watching the competition. In the *Iliad* this group played its own role in the games, violently arguing over who was in the lead at various moments during the race (*Il.* 23.448-498) and so the shadowy figures may prompt the viewer to recall this particular detail of the text.[192] The final contest on the east wall is the wrestling match between two muscular fighters and, again without guiding labels, the educated viewer would need to use their knowledge of the *Iliad* to infer that they were Telamonian Ajax and Odysseus, whose equal strength led to them both being declared winners by Achilles (*Il.* 23.700-737). The composition of the painting was probably of equal concern to the artist as the minutiae implied within it since he has created a highly-effective rendering of movement and drama in the race alongside reference to the epic text.

Yet the next episode, which is separated from the funeral games by a painted pillar, is the ransom of Hector's corpse, presented in its traditional form as a standardised scene (although with details bringing it closer than usual to the epic account). The fresco is almost entirely faded today but we are able to reconstruct its details thanks to the sketch made after excavation (figure 125) along with an early photograph (figure 126).

[191] Spinazzola (1953) 998-1000.
[192] *Cf* Paus. 10.25.4 and 10.31.11.



Fig.125 – The ransom of Hector, reconstruction by Sanarica and Spinazzola.



Fig.126 – The ransom of Hector, early photograph.

The ransom contrasts with the frivolity of the funeral games which came before it as Priam throws himself at Achilles' mercy. The Trojan king wears the traditional Phrygian cap and a long mantle and, on the right, a Trojan in trousers brings in the ransom from the mule cart. Hermes is entirely absent, marking a contrast with the House of the Iliac Shrine stucco frieze in which the god featured prominently. Note

also the other warriors in the tent (visible behind Achilles), again contrasting with the stucco frieze, but evoking their presence in the Homeric account (*Il.* 24.474).

Yet the next scene, which would be chronologically last in the entire sequence, is entirely extra-Homeric (figure 127) and we find Priam resting after retrieving his son's body from the Myrmidon camp. Aurigemma proposes that Priam is the man on the right, looking behind the rock, with the herald Idaeus seated on the left but, since this is a unique composition in extant Roman art, their identities are not securely discernible.[193] Perhaps the viewer was intended to imagine Priam contemplating the fate which had befallen his people, while thinking back to his investiture as king of Troy by Hercules, as depicted in the larger frieze on the southern wall (figure 128).[194] The artist's desire to prompt an emotional response from the viewer, although through an entirely extra-Homeric scene, can be compared with Pliny the Elder's discussion of a painting showing the sacrifice of Iphigenia by Timanthes (Plin. *HN.* 35.73), in which grief was appropriately rendered according to the relationship of each figure to the soon-to-be-sacrificed Iphigenia, thus Agamemnon's despair was so overwhelming that the artist chose to cover his head with a veil.[195] This same sentiment may perhaps explain why the artist in the House of Octavius Quartio did not render Priam's face in detail in the fresco.

[193] Spinazzola (1953) 1006.

[194] Lorenz (2013) and Squire (2014) for the possible interplay between the two friezes.

[195] A panel of what may be a version of Timanthes' painting was found in the House of the Tragic Poet (Pompeii VI 8,3 - MNN 9112). Ellen Perry argues that the Pompeian painting may be a reaction to the literary and rhetorical tradition surrounding the original Greek work - Perry (2002) 154-156. Elsewhere Perry discusses the painting's place within the Roman notion of *decorum* – Perry (2005) 43-44.

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Fig.127 – Priam and Idaeus rest?



Fig.128 – The investiture of Priam as king of Troy by Hercules, photograph from 2013.

South-eastern corner

Although the extra-Homeric episode marks the chronological end of the frieze it is not the very last on the eastern wall and there follow three more scenes which, according to the *Iliad*, would fall between the plague and the battle by the ships, both of which are found on the western wall but with no lacunae in-between. A further extra-Homeric episode sits just before the Euripus door. The south-eastern corner (figure 129) is therefore something of a puzzle in that it is the only section of the frieze in which the chronology of the *Iliad* is not respected, considering that the viewer has followed the narrative consistently in a clockwise direction beginning in the south-western corner of the room with the plague up to Priam resting after collecting Hector's body towards the southern end of the east wall.

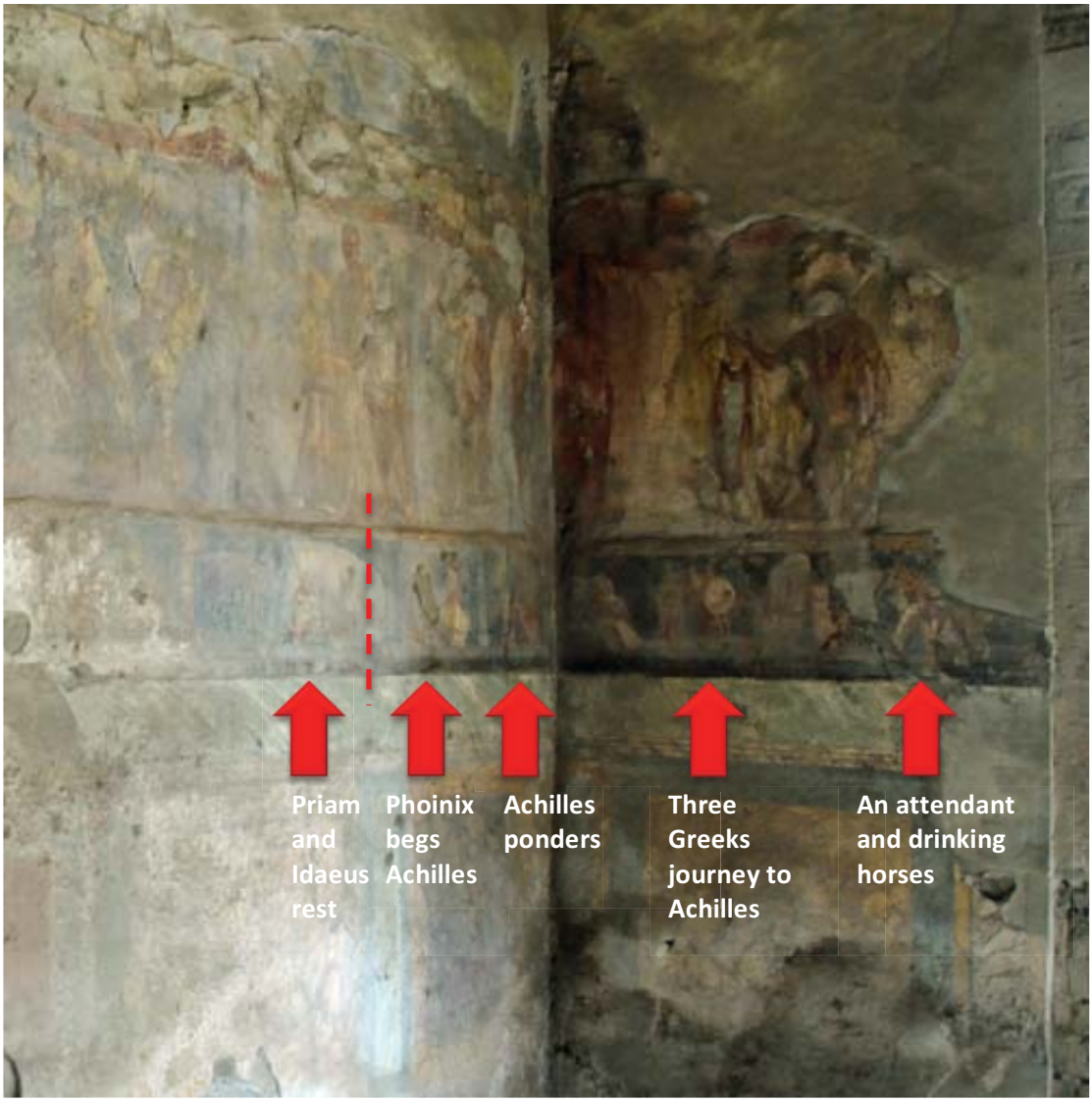


Fig.129 – South-east corner of the oecus, photograph from 2015. Chronological 'end' of the frieze marked by the red dashed line.

Figures 130 and 131 convey another elderly man acting as a suppliant at Achilles' feet, framed by the curtains of his tent. Most of Achilles' torso is missing but we can clearly see that the composition recalls Priam's supplication from two scenes before. The educated viewer thus infers that this is a pictorial evocation of *Iliad* 9.430-605 in which Phoinix beseeches Achilles to return to battle. The men standing in the background are either Patroclus, who was alive at this point in the narrative or, as Lorenz suggests, Odysseus and Diomedes who were also sent as part of the embassy.[196]



Fig.130 – Phoinix kneels before Achilles; Achilles contemplates returning to battle, photograph from 2013.

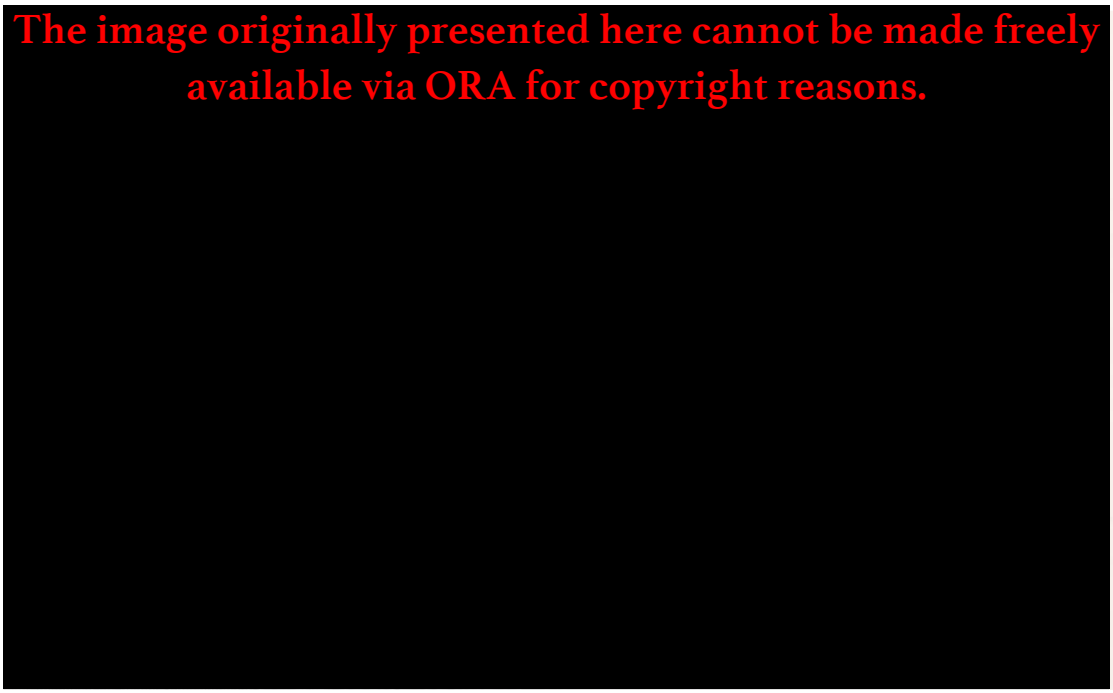


Fig.131 –Phoinix kneeling before Achilles, reconstruction by Sanarica and Spinazzola.

[196] Lorenz (2014) 236.

The most southerly scene on the eastern wall (right side of figure 130) shows a naked, seated warrior whose right arm is raised to his chin, and one or two shadowy figures standing behind him. This may refer to *Iliad* 9.185-191, in which Achilles sings and plays his lyre for Patroclus, but the object resting against Achilles' seat (figure 132) is curious with its two-footed base and does not particularly resemble a sword or a phorminx.[197]



Fig.132 – Musical instrument? Sword?

Southern wall, east side

The frieze continues (still following it in a clockwise direction) on the southern wall and shows three warriors journeying in a rocky landscape (left side of figure 133). It is a pictorial allusion to the embassy sent by the Greeks to persuade Achilles to rejoin the battle, but differs from the text since Homer says (*Il.* 9.168-170) that Phoinix went ahead before Ajax and Odysseus and the heralds Odius and Eurybates followed, yet three men are painted here.[198] In the *Iliad* the group finds Achilles in his tent, singing and playing the lyre, and so the ordering of scenes suggests that we are meant then to read this singular part of the frieze in an anticlockwise direction, beginning with the grazing horses (right side of figure 133) and concluding with Phoinix's supplication to Achilles on the east wall.

[197] Lorenz and Aurigemma identify the object as a sword: Lorenz (2014) 236; Spinazzola (1953) 981.
[198] Lorenz proposes that they are Phoinix, Odysseus and Telamonian Ajax – Lorenz (2014) 235. None, however, wear the long white mantle worn by Phoinix in the supplication scene.



Fig.133 – Embassy to Achilles; drinking horses, photograph from 2013.

In the design of this corner of the room figural composition played a crucial role in the artist's decision to alter the chronology and direction of the frieze since the motif of an old man kneeling before Achilles is repeated twice on the east wall (figure 134), compelling the viewer to consider them as pendants. This is reminiscent of the compositional repetition which occurs three times in the stucco frieze, which the artist used to highlight tandem narrative threads and illustrate moral tales, and here leading to the directional reversal of the narrative.[199]



Fig.134 – Right half of the eastern wall – photograph from 2013.
Sanarica sketch inserted to show the reconstructed Ransom of Hector.

Squire would also add to the sequence of repetition the seated Achilles on the right

[199] Described by Lorenz as "allegorical or abstract connections" – Lorenz (2014) 227. Coralini also notes the parallel compositions and adds that Priam's supplication has a successful outcome whereas Phoinix fails to achieve his mission – Coralini (2001) 172. Heslin arrives at a similar conclusion: "The visual puzzle is to identify the repetition, figure out the difference and use it as a clue to the disrupted narrative order" – Heslin (2015) 105.

of the wall who 'looks over' the former two scenes, interpreting this as the hero foreseeing events in his future and "looking forward (which is to say, spatially backward) to the vision of his own parallel acts of looking at Priam and Phoenix". But this of course depends upon which stage of the narrative the artist intended with the scene: is this the Achilles who has recently withdrawn from the war or the one who still refuses to fight *after* Phoenix's supplication? Squire proposes that the distortion of the chronological narrative in this part of the frieze was intended to reflect Homer's mode of storytelling – his "ordo and taxis" – which itself did not run chronologically since the *Iliad* began its story *in media res* and the *Odyssey* with Odysseus telling his 'story so far' to the court of King Alcinous. Squire's observation that the frieze was intended to appeal to the Roman viewer who "knew their Homer – and who quite literally knew it backwards" is entirely sound, although he does not include its extra-Homeric features and pictorial allusions and evocations in his analysis, which were surely of utmost interest to the educated viewer.

However, Squire's suggestion that the chronological distortion in the south-eastern corner was to allow diners "to appreciate (and even potentially outdo) the narratological complexity of Homer's original" overcomplicates the more obvious explanation of the artist drawing narrative parallels by juxtaposing similar compositional motifs.[200] His proposal that the Roman dinner guest, having noticed and commented upon Achilles' (entirely hypothetical) foreseeing of future events, might then be prompted to compose "new imagined speeches: following the rhetorical models of contemporary mythological *suasoriae* … refashion[ing] Phoinix's Homeric speech to Achilles – and thereby do better in persuading the protagonist to return to the battlefield…"[201] is arguably overstretching the intention (and ability?) of the artist and, although based on documented practice at Roman dinner parties, seems to make overly sophisticated demands on the viewer.

Other scholars have attempted to justify the narrative distortion in other ways. Lorenz proposes that the scenes' "awkward arrangement across the room" is reflective of a ring composition centred around Achilles' tent, thus reflecting the focus on the hero in the *Iliad*.[202] Croisille suggests (although without elucidation) that the frieze should be read in an H-shaped helical figuration beginning with the plague scene on the south wall, then moving to the south side of the east wall, then

[200] Squire (2014) 380-384.
[201] Squire (2014) note 70.
[202] Lorenz (2014) 239-240.

jumping to the west wall, then the north, and then again to the east.[203] Clarke alternatively proposes that the narrative followed the numerical order as shown in figure 135, forming an S shape, to account for the location of the triclinium couch in the room (coloured blue in the diagram).[204]



Fig.135 – Plan of the oecus with the theoretical kline coloured in blue, the position for the guest of honour marked with a red cross, and the sequence of episodes in the Hercules and *Iliad* friezes numbered.

Clarke suggests that the frieze was designed to allow the viewer who was standing "unencumbered" in the southern half of the room, facing south towards the garden, easy reading along the southern wall and partially along the eastern wall. But when seated on the couch he would have to follow the rest of the narrative "with a bit of neck craning" around the reclining diners. Clarke therefore proposes that the guest of honour would be seated in the position marked with a red X in the diagram, which would allow him the best view of the apotheosis scene on the Hercules frieze (indicated by the number 9 on the outside of the plan, but which can only be reconstructed hypothetically since no evidence survives for it) and also giving him the optimal view through the southern door to the garden.[205] But, if this were true, he would still have had a very restricted view of the western wall, with similar difficulties in fact encountered by all those seated around the triclinium with

[203] Croisille (2005) 164.
[204] This would certainly be the most logical placement of the kline, allowing for attendants to serve the various courses of a meal through the two doors of the oecus on a table or tables in the centre.
[205] Clarke (1991) 205-206.

regard to their respective positions. Crucially, Clarke's argument still does not adequately explain *why* the frieze runs mostly clockwise but in one corner changes its direction to anticlockwise. It is far more likely that the desire to draw out narrative and thematic parallels through repeated compositional motifs was of greater concern to the artist, leading to the chronological distortion in the southeastern corner.[206]

The concluding scene in this section of the frieze, being extra Homeric, affords no further clues to the modern viewer concerning the difficulties encountered above, although we are probably meant to associate it with the general activity around Achilles' tent. Here we find a third depiction of two horses, probably Xanthus and Balius again, since one is light-coloured and the other chestnut brown (figure 136). As the embassy to Achilles took place on foot they are unlikely to belong to Ajax, Odysseus or Phoinix.



Fig.136 – Drinking horses and attendant, photograph from 2013.

Aurigemma suggests that the scene was created to fill space on the southern wall so that both embassies to Achilles could be juxtaposed in the southeastern corner of the oecus, allowing the viewer to see the inertia of the horses while their master

[206] Coralini also rejects Clarke's theory – Coralini (2001) 172.

retreated from battle. His further suggestion that the fresco artist was (only here) influenced by a different Iliadic pictorial cycle, based on comparison with an illustration from the *Ilias Ambrosiana* showing Priam and Idaeus accompanied by pairs of horses and mules who have stopped to drink at a fountain, cannot be supported considering the lack of parallels elsewhere in extant Roman art, particularly in artworks contemporary with the frieze (and not dated centuries later).[207] It is more likely that, owing to the discernible propensity for the horses elsewhere, there was some intention to display them at a focal point for the viewer gazing out over the Euripus-facing door onto the extensive garden (figure 137).



Fig.137 – View southwards from the oecus, photograph from 2015.
Horses and attendant outlined in red, plague scene outlined in blue.

Fallen fragments from the *Iliad* frieze

Only three fallen fresco fragments were recorded by Spinazzola, which it seems he was unable to reposition securely at the time of excavation or in the reconstruction that followed. Much of the extant frieze comprises of other displaced fragments

[207] *Ilias Ambrosiana* LVIII - Spinazzola (1953) 979.

subsequently reattached to the walls among the *in situ* plaster, but Aurigemma notes that precise findspots were not recorded for the following:

1. A dark blue-coloured plaster fragment of 10cm width in its upper part with the inscription [...]DANVS (figures 138 and 139).
2. A small fragment with the inscription [Ach]ILLES.
3. A small fragment with the inscription HOS.[208]



Fig.138 – Fresco fragment with the label ...DANVS.

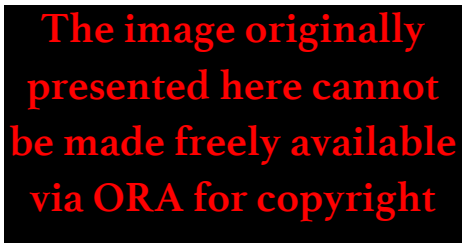


Fig.139 – detail from figure 138.

For the first fragment Aurigemma proposes a reconstruction of [Dar]DANVS but rejects any association with Dardanus, son of Bias, since he is only referred to once in the *Iliad* (20.460). He alternatively suggests that the label might have fallen from the battle by the walls on the west wall where the label DANAVS is used to denote a Greek warrior, and therefore [Dar]DANVS might refer to a generic Trojan.[209] The fresco *is* very fragmentary on this wall and today betrays several lacunae from which plaster fragments have fallen. The adjective *dardanus* (along with *dardanius*) was widely used in Augustan poetry to denote Trojan ethnicity (Prop. 1.19.14, 4.1.40;

[208] Spinazzola (1953) 1007-1008.
[209] Spinazzola (1953) 1008.

Verg. *Aen.* 2.618, 5.119; Hor. *Carm.* 1.15.10; Ov. *Tr.* 5.10.4) and in one instance in epic poetry of the Silver Age to denote *Roman* ethnicity (Sil. *Pun.* 1.14).

The second fragment, bearing the label [Ach]ILLES (Aurigemma does not supply photographs for this or the one cited below), probably fell from the even more fragmentary northern wall, in which the hero's exploits appear in the eastern half. The eastern wall is a possibility but survives in better condition with fewer lacunae and Achilles does not appear to have featured at all on the western wall. The fragment was probably originally positioned somewhere between the arming scene (which *does* include a label for the hero) and the desecration of Hector which preserves labels for [Hect]OR and AUTOMEDON but not Achilles.[210]

The third fragment with the letters HOS is more troublesome and Maiuri *et al* cite a label ///NTHOS, which might refer to the same (or perhaps another) fragment. It would make sense to reconstruct [Xa]NTHOS here if the horse had not been labelled XANTUS in two other places in the frieze. Maiuri *et al* propose the River Xanthos but, as the Greek word is the same (both being yellow), this spelling would still be puzzling.[211] The name is found two further times in the epic: once for a Trojan killed by Diomedes (*Il.* 5.152) and once as the name of one of Hector's horses (*Il.* 8.185) but there is little scope in the extant frieze for either of these to be the true identity of the label. It may even instead be another generic label, perhaps expanding to HOS[tis]/HOS[tes] (military adversary). Curiously, a graffito from the same wall in Pompeii upon which the Xantus and Badius attestations were found includes the following list of names in the bottom right corner of the wall (*CIL* IV.1365):[212]

HERMES
HOSTIS
BENA

Another link to the world of public spectacle can be demonstrated here since Martial devotes a whole epigram to a celebrated gladiator of his day named Hermes (*Spect.* 5.24). It is possible, then, that the HOSTIS graffito written below corresponded to another, probably local, gladiator who bore a name similar in

[210] The fragment cited by Maiuri *et al* with the letters [Achil]LES seems likely to be the same as that recorded here by Spinazzola - Maiuri *et al* (1928) 112, no.136.
[211] Maiuri *et al* (1928) 112, no.137.
[212] Heltulla (1995).

meaning and type to others documented throughout the Roman world: compare Improbus (shameful, wicked),[213] Pugnax (combative – *CIL* IV.2508), Ferox (arrogantly savage)[214] and Tyrannus (tyrant-like).[215]

Additional labels from the *Iliad* frieze

The *CIL* entry for the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio (IV.7533) lists a total of nine fragmentary labels which the author (probably Matteo Della Corte, considering his involvement in the earlier publication of 1928) was not able to assign to specific locations among the *in situ* frescoes. The list includes the two cited by Aurigemma: [Ac]HILLES (p) and DA[r]DANVS (s); the contested [...]HOS or [...]NTHOS label, and the [Achil]LES and HECTOR labels which can be securely repositioned in the non-extant duel scene. A further four are cited both in *CIL* IV.7533 (given here with their respective letters in the below left column) and by Maiuri *et al* (again with their respective numbers) in the right hand column.[216]

u) PATROCL[VS]	140. PATROCLV[S]
v) ATHENE	141. ATHENE
x) V	142. V//////////
y) HECTO[R]	143. [H]ECTO[R]

Label x/142 is so truncated as to be impossible to reposition. Label u/140, clearly for Patroclus, is cited in both *CIL* IV.7533 and Maiuri *et al* as having a penultimate V and not an O as is clear in the extant Patrocleia scene (figure 114). The only position within the extant frieze where this label might fit would be in the lacuna in the fresco showing the removal of a body from the battlefield (figures 110 and 111), based on Sarpedon having been killed by Patroclus (*Il.* 16.426-507), which occurred immediately prior to the Patrocleia. It is also tempting to reposition the fallen [H]ECTO[r] label here (y/143) as the Trojan prince played a prominent role in both the battle over Sarpedon's body and in the subsequent death of Patroclus, which does not seem to have been painted in the frieze.

[213] A fragment of a third century relief, now in the Museo Nazionale Romano in Rome bears the name IMPROBUS beneath an image of a helmeted gladiator – Gagarin (2010) 301.
[214] Ville (1981) 308-9.
[215] Junkelmann (2000) 194.
[216] Maiuri *et al* (1928) 112.

Repositioning label v/141 is far more problematic. Athena appears on the Tabula Capitolina (1A) and in Pompeian single panel wallpaintings (and one wall mosaic) restraining Achilles in his argument with Agamemnon from *Iliad* 1:121-247, but, other than a very narrow section of fresco in the south-western corner, falling between the plague and the door to portico g, there is little available wall space where this particular scene might have been positioned.[217] There are two further possibilities: in *Iliad* 19.351-356 Athene infused Achilles with nectar and ambrosia before his arming scene and may possibly have appeared in the now fragmentary episode (figures 117 and 118). Perhaps more likely is her presence in the climactic duel (*Il.* 22.214-248) since she first appeared to Achilles to spur him on to fight and then went on to dupe Hector into facing his fate.

Gladiators and circus horses in Octavius Quartio or the wider influence of epic?

I proceeded to ask the house-manager what pictures they had in the hall. "The Iliad and the Odyssey," he said, "and the gladiator's show given by Laenas." I could not take the whole multiplicacity in at once....

(Petron. *Sat.* 29-30)[218]

A particularly curious feature of the decoration in the celebrated oecus in the House of Octavius Quartio, which has been wholly unacknowledged in scholarship, is that labels are only painted on the western and northern walls of the *Iliad* frieze and then cease completely; and we have seen above that the fallen fragments of fresco which contain painted labels are best repositioned in the lacunae from these same walls. The eastern and southern walls and the larger Hercules cycle – thus around 75% of the combined friezes – seem not to have included any epigraphy at all. Moreover, the extant labels reveal a number of oddities: one scratched into the wall and then painted where the others show no sign of engraving; generic references to ethnicity alongside named and recognizable warriors from the *Iliad*; and several examples of what appear to be spelling errors and inconsistency regarding Greek and Latin letters.[219] All in all, the labels appear to be somewhat ad

[217] Hodske (2007) taf.99 for Third and Fourth style wallpaintings showing the scene.
[218] Translation by M. Heseltine (1913).
[219] Overall it appears that the artist has made an attempt to 'Latinise' the Greek, admittedly with varying success. For example, he tends towards the letter C where the Greek kappa is originally found: thus PATROCLOS for Πάτροκλος and HECTOR for Ἕκτορ. This does not mean that the

hoc in nature and are concentrated around scenes of combat: the battles by the ships and the walls, the struggle over a body, the Patrocleia, Achilles' arming scene, the duel between Achilles and Hector and the desecration of Hector's body.

It has been shown throughout this chapter that on several occasions the epigraphy corresponds to comparanda in the world of public spectacle, particularly gladiators and chariot racing. The Danaus and Dardanus labels, for example (figures 99 and 138), which are extra-Homeric – although certainly evocative of the epic account – refer to the names of gladiators who trained and probably lived in the nearby House of the Gladiators. The three lines scratched into the plaster under the Danaus label reflect figural parallels on Pompeian walls which record combats fought and won in the arena.[220] The tomb of Aulus Umbricius Scaurus from the Via dei Sepolci in Pompeii (figures 140 and 141), which was contemporary with the Octavius Quartio *Iliad* frieze,[221] reveals that gladiators were even the subject of pictorial and labelled friezes and the following painted inscriptions identify pairs of stucco-rendered fighters, giving an account of their victories and losses (*CIL* IV.1182):

BEBRYX IUL XV V	NOBILIOR IUL XIV	(duelling horsemen)
....O IUL XVI	IV M E	(Samnis vs Threx)
IUL XXX V	SUS IUL XV M Θ	(Threx vs Samnis)
HIPPOLYTUS F V V	CE..ATUS IUL VI	(Secutor vs Secutor)
NEPAMUS IUL V	....P... IUL XV M	(Samnis vs Threx)
IUL IV		(Samnis vs Threx)

presence of the K in [Ly/Ky]KAON is a misreading on the part of the early excavators, however; a linguistic rule carried over from Etruscan was the Latin tendency towards using a *q* before a *u*, *k* before an *a* and otherwise a *c* – all three carrying the same phonetic value. I am indebted to Professor James Adams for this information. Leumann (1977) 10 for further examples.

[220] Note especially Langner (2001) nos 1003, 1007, 1008, 1023, 1024, 1032, 1039 and 1040.

[221] Virginia Campbell proposes that the dedicatory inscription is likely Augustan, but the frieze itself constructed between AD 62 and 79 based on stylistic considerations and part of the tomb showing damage from the earthquake - Campbell (2014) 98, 163-164.

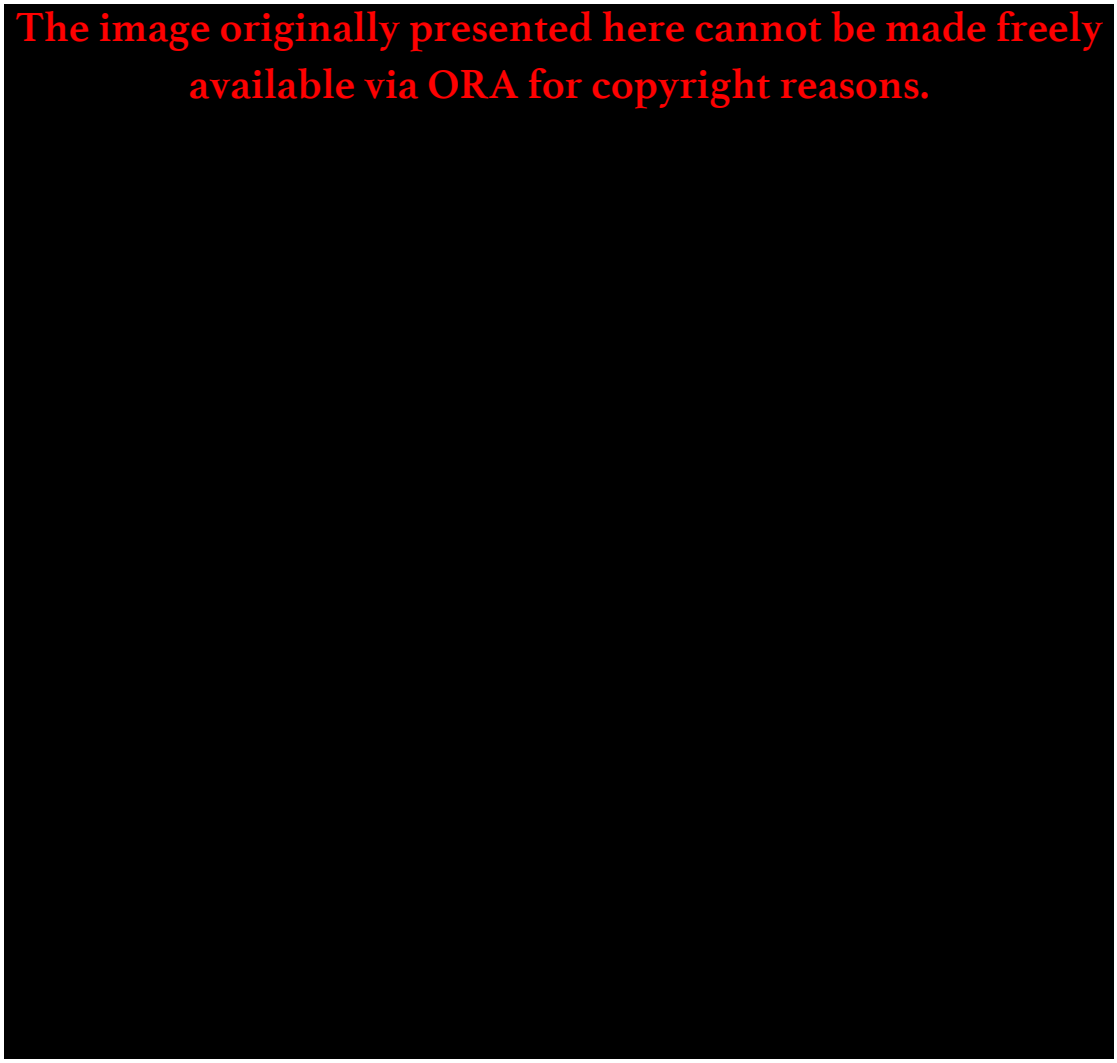


Fig.140 – 1824 sketch by Mazois showing the Tomb of Aulus Umbricius Scaurus.



Fig.141 – 1824 sketch by Mazois showing the detail of the gladiatorial decoration on the tomb of Aulus Umbricius Scaurus.

So far, I have presented a series of correspondences between the more problematic labels of the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio and the world of gladiators and public spectacle. Each alone could certainly be argued to be coincidental, so let us survey the evidence in its entirety.

1. Labels are only found in the *Iliad* frieze when the fresco refers to combat and warriors. This accounts for only around 25% of the whole, thus in the remaining 75% of the narrative friezes (*Iliad* and Hercules cycles) labels seem not to have been painted at all.
2. The DANAVS label is scratched into the plaster and then appears to have been painted over, or perhaps vice versa. Three lines are etched immediately below; a symbolic notation used throughout the town (and beyond) to denote the number of combats fought by a gladiator. The names Danaus and Dardanus were the names of gladiators who lived and fought in Pompeii, as their epigraphic presence in the House of the Gladiators reveals.
3. The peculiar spelling of TAIAMONIVS is only found in one other instance in the ancient world, on a mosaic from Rome upon which named gladiators are depicted.
4. The other famous 'mis-spelling' on the frieze – the use of Badius instead of Balius – can be explained with reference to the literary and epigraphic description of horses who raced in the circus. Both of the labelled horses – Xantus and Badius – are found scratched into a single wall in Pompeii with the exact (mis-)spelling as found in the *Iliad* frieze.
5. Even those labels which we would not consider particularly strange in the context of an 'epic' frieze, some of which are extra-Homeric, present links to the arena: a graffito bearing the vocative of Phrygius is found among gladiatorial names scratched into the Eumachia Building; the name Hector is known to have been used by at least one other gladiator in the empire, whose career probably ran contemporary with the *Iliad* frieze. Even Hostis and Kikaon – although not documented elsewhere in relation to public spectacle – correspond with the 'genre' names afforded to gladiators throughout the Roman world.

Could it be possible then that the small number of puzzling labels in the oecus refer to contemporary Pompeian gladiators and circus horses? Such a proposal would subvert entirely our modern notion of what an 'epic frieze' embodied, with its connotations of elite literary learning and erudition. It might even make us recoil at its vulgarity as the reader of the *Satyricon* was intended to do when learning that Trimalchio displayed pictures of *Laenatis gladiatorium munus* alongside those of *Iliada et Odyssian* in his atrium (Petron. *Sat*. 29-30). Perhaps we would recall Horace admonishing his slave Davus for admiring the images of notorious gladiators *rubrica picta aut carbone* at the expense of *tabellae* painted by esteemed Greek artists (Hor. *Sat.* 2.7.95-101).[222] Would such a suggestion give further weight to the characterisation of the owner of the House of Octavius Quartio as a wealthy but tasteless freedman in the manner of Trimalchio, which Lauren Hackworth-Peterson has recently argued against?[223] The gladiatorial frieze which adorned the tomb of Aulus Umbricius Scaurus on the outskirts of the town is even described by Robert Curtis as having "more than a little of Trimalchio" in it.[224] Nevertheless, the latter confirms that at least one other high quality frieze bearing a gladiatorial theme existed in Pompeii at the time. And, taking into account Pausanias' commentary on the frescoes in Delphi, it is very likely that grand artworks on epic themes were replete with details referring to localised knowledge and tradition.

But there is clearly some disparity between the painted, figural components of the frieze, which run around the entirety of the room and incontestably evoke the narrative of the *Iliad*, and the scratched and painted labels which have been added to them. Furthermore, extant frescoes and mosaics from the wider empire upon which gladiators are found (figures 141 to 143) attest to the identifiable stylistic and thematic differences between the two types, with the latter clearly showing gladiators in their traditional attire, leaving little scope for them being mistaken for mythological or epic heroes, even if their names might suggest otherwise.[225]

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[222] Discussion of the Davus Saturnalia satire in Langner (2001) 103-104.
[223] Hackworth-Peterson (2006) 129-162.
[224] Curtis (1984) 566. Perhaps a particularly harsh criticism when we note that gladiatorial games were originally associated with funerary rites (Livy, *Epit.* 9.40).
[225] Junkelmann (2000) figs 59 and 145.



Fig.142 – Gladiator fresco from the Villa of Mechern Merzig, Germany, second century AD.



Fig.143 – Gladiator fresco from Colchester, England, second half of first century AD.

It would be prudent then to consider the different options regarding the constructive phases of the *Iliad* frieze. Logistically, the figures and background must have been painted first and labels added later, a sequence confirmed by the letters' overlapping of background elements. Note, for example, figure 114 in which the OS of PATROCLOS runs onto the rock on the right and figure 105 where the letters of TAIAMONIVS run across the body and shield of the warrior. Some even seem to be squashed around the figural components, such as where the [kik/kyk]AON label narrows to accommodate the ground line of the scene (best observed in the *lucido* sketch – figure 103). This is also true of the XANTUS label (figure 114) where the letters V and S are smaller than the previous four to allow the artist to fit the name to the left of the horse's ears. The same process of painting the figural elements first and adding labels later must also have been applied to the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus, but the epigraphy is better incorporated into the general design of this earlier artwork and is always positioned *below* the protagonist to which the label belongs; or when referring to a structure placed on, but never above it.[226] This is also true of the surviving Greek epigrams in exedra Y in the House of the Epigrams (Pompeii V 1,18), which sit neatly in the lower right hand corner of their respective panels. Even the labels for OMHPOΣ and the AΛ[i]EIΣ in the Homer and the fishermen painting from the north wall (the only identifying

[226] The only discrepancy is the AΓAMEMNΩN label (figure 14), where the final N is painted below the king's foot. The θETIC label (figure 22) overlaps slightly onto the legs of the stool upon which the goddess sits but the letters are all of regular size.

tags to have been applied in the room) do not overlap with existing figural or background features.[227]

We are left, then, with a range of possibilities. It is clear that the figural components of the frieze were added first and the labels added afterwards, but an exact chronology is impossible to determine, as is the question of whether the patron wished them to be incorporated into the design from the beginning. It should also be acknowledged that some of the extant labels, particularly those on the northern wall of the oecus (Thetis, Patroclus, Achilles), are neither extra-Homeric nor stray from the narrative of the *Iliad*. Squire's discussion of the House of Propertius in Assisi convincingly argues that the epigrams on the fresco panels in the cryptoporticus were painted at a later date than the figural elements – perhaps as much as fifty or a hundred years later – and seem to have been added by several different hands. Margherita Guarducci's analysis of the script detects five different handwriting styles, leading Squire to propose that each subsequent viewer "establish[ed] a serial game in which the objective was not only to respond to each painting, but also to each previously socially invested attempt to do so". Particularly interesting is the discrepancy between image and epigram in a fresco panel which juxtaposes the suicide of Ajax (pictorially) with the gift-giving episode between Ajax and Hector (epigraphically, using a direct quotation from *Iliad* 7.264). Squire comments, "If inscription pulled in one direction, image pulled in another, and respondents were called upon to unpick the significance of the riddlesome juxtaposition of both media."[228]

Clearly in the case of the House of Octavius Quartio we are not witnessing viewers contributing erudite Greek epigrams or poetic compositions to the frieze, but single names relating to local and contemporary concerns, and we are not afforded the luxury of half a century, surely only twenty years at most for the figural elements and labels to be added. But this does create the possibility of at least two different decorative phases: first, the artist or artists painted the figural elements of the fresco decoration and, at a later time, one or more persons added labels to only two walls of the *Iliad* frieze.[229] We should also take into consideration modern, negative notions of graffiti application, which are seen today as an act of

[227] Bergman (2006).
[228] Squire (2009) 268-283.
[229] Unfortunately, the labels themselves do not survive in well-enough detail to discern whether more than one hand was at work, as Biering was able to demonstrate with the *Odyssey* frescoes in Rome and Guarducci with the House of Propertius in Assisi. Biering (1995) 123-128; Squire (2009).

vandalism. In the introduction to *Ancient Graffiti in Context* Baird and Taylor note that "viewing ancient graffiti as acts of defacement is as likely to mislead as to illuminate … Graffiti which appears on/in houses is a case in point; writing on interior walls in particular does not appear to be unusual or undesirable in the ancient world … but it is socially unacceptable for modern audiences."[230] Indeed Varro, who dedicated the third book of his *Rerum Rusticarum* to his friend Pinnius, notes without criticism – and arguably with acclaim – that this same friend's villa was famed for its frescoes which were replete with Pinnius' own writings (Varro, *Rust.* 3.1.10), in a continual act of redecoration and adornment of the walls.

Martin Langner's documentation of graffiti throughout the Roman Empire reveals that domestic graffiti are most commonly found in rooms which attracted visitors who had reason to stay in them for prolonged periods of time; not public areas like atria, as we might expect, but triclinia and structures surrounding gardens, particularly viridaria and peristyles. This is more so the case for graffiti inscriptions than figural graffiti where, on average, triclinia and peristyles in Pompeii bear the largest numbers of examples of the former.[231] Crucially, Langer's study reveals that the most common image type documented in oeci and triclinia is gladiators, accounting for 35.4% of the sample.[232] His case studies include oecus 14 in the House of Obellius Firmus (Pompeii IX 14,2.4), the largest room bordering the peristyle, which featured graffitos of duelling gladiators, all seemingly by the same hand. He argues that they served a decorative function on account of their detailed rendering and fairly successful incorporation into the plain black fresco panels behind, with careful spacing and legibility rendering them a distinct and visible part of the decorative scheme. One of the groupings has a scratched inscription which reports that the victorious Myrinus had so far won thirty one contests but the defeated Inacrius (only) twelve (*CIL* IV.8969), attributions which Langner proposes were added at a later date than the combat groups since they are the only epigraphic references to the gladiators in the room.[233] He suggests that they were probably created by a member of the household, which must surely also have been true of the painted (and scratched) labels added to the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio.

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[230] Baird and Taylor (2011) 4.
[231] Langner (2001) 100, fig.50.
[232] Next are graffitos of animals at 27.1%, then circular rosettes and letters forming the shape of boats (16.7%) - Langner (2001) 102.
[233] Langner (2001) 104. Vivolo (1993) 40-45 for sketches and photographs of the gladiator groups.

A second case study concerns the *venationes* graffiti (also from the world of Roman public spectacle) applied to the celebrated Second Style frescoes in the oecus in the underground complex in the House of the Cryptoporticus (chapter one). Here the inscribed figures also respect the decorative composition of the walls, having been scratched into the plain, yellow fresco panels below the painted *pinakes*. Langner again argues that these graffitos must have been added by a resident of the house when the sumptuously-decorated room was used for dining, certainly prior to the earthquake of AD 62, after which the subterranean rooms were closed off and the adjoining cryptoporticus used as a wine cellar for the winter triclinium on the upper floor.[234] In the latter room graffiti of a drinking cup and a gladiator were found on the southern wall above the masonry kline, recalling both the function of the space and contemporary Pompeian life.[235] Even the House of the Iliac Shrine (chapter two) contained a graffito showing a gladiator labelled as Venustus (*CIL* IV.8017) fighting a lion on the walls of oecus P; a room best known for its magnificent, Second Style elephant megalographia.[236]

There is ample evidence to suggest then that Roman walls – even those decorated with the finest frescoes – were frequently 'complemented' with scenes from everyday life, particularly gladiators, and sometimes the epigraphic musings of owners (recall Varro and his friend Pinnius). Both are present in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio where reference to contemporary public spectacle has been applied to pre-existing, figural scenes evoking events from Homer's *Iliad*: heroes from legendary epic are equated with fighters from first century Pompeii and divine horses recall celebrated circus animals of the day. This is also indicative of a wider phenomenon: figures from the world of public spectacle and theatre were given names relating to Greek mythology and epic. Surely the Xantus and Badius found on the wall on the Via di Mercurio were named with Achilles' talkative steeds in mind? Graffiti tell us of an actor from Pompeii by the name of Paris who is referred to (and reviewed) several times on the walls of the town.[237] There is a gladiator named Hippolytus on the tomb of Aulus Umbricius Scaurus and another called Diomedes is referred to in the House of the Centenary (*CIL*

[234] Langner (2001) 105-106.
[235] Langner (2001) nos 2416 and 812.
[236] Langner (2001) no.1070.
[237] Pensabene (1985) no.158. Cooley and Cooley (2004) 99-100.

IV.5215).[238] A fourth century mosaic from Rome (*CIL* VI.10205), now in the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid, informs the viewer both epigraphically and pictorially that a secutor gladiator named Astyanax defeated and killed a certain Kalendio. The name Astyanax can only refer, mythologically, back to Hector's son who, as an infant, was thrown by the Greeks from the walls of Troy to prevent him maturing and avenging his father's death.[239]

But acknowledging this trend should not lead us to cast away as coincidental the problematic labels applied to the *Iliad* frieze. Their awkward execution, inconsistencies in spelling, divergence from the Homeric text and even inclusion of gladiatorial formulae point strongly towards a chronologically later application than the figural elements, and their correspondence to documented contemporary Pompeian life is tangible. We need not imagine that their 'artist' acted without consideration or wit: he or she added the names of local gladiators and horses which were themselves evocative of the Homeric world – Danaus, Dardanus, Kikaon, Badius, Xantus, Taiamonius – to appropriately themed parts of the frieze, alongside labels which are entirely unproblematic in the epic context.

[238] Vivolo (1993) 30.

[239] In the late nineteenth century Johannes Tolkiehn collected and catalogued the examples *De Homeri auctoritate in cotidiana Romanorum vita*, seemingly having painstakingly gone through the *CIL* volumes available at the time. The study reveals that the names of Homeric men and women were found in all walks of Roman society, from slaves and performers to citizens -Tolkiehn (1897).

Chapter 4 – The *Odyssey* frescoes from the Esquiline, Rome

Context

The study of the archaeological context of the *Odyssey* frescoes from the Esquiline in Rome is notoriously difficult owing to the loss of any original excavation report, the building of the current Via Cavour over the original Via Graziosa between 1871–4, and then the probable destruction of the site in the 1940s during construction of a Metro station.[240] In 1998 Filippo Coarelli suggested that the house was identifiable on a newly-discovered piece of the Severan marble plan, facing onto the Vicus Patricius, but seemed to be unaware of Biering's earlier work with its highly convincing placement of the original site beyond the borders of the fragment.[241] The state of the scholarship as it stands is best summed up by Timothy O'Sullivan who notes that the situation is not quite as bad as is often presumed since the earliest surviving account of the frescoes and details from the excavation were published by Pietro Matranga in 1852, only four years after their discovery. Matranga documents that there originally *were* panels on the other walls of the room in which the extant frescoes were found, but which were in too poor a condition to be removed, and reproduces a drawing by the architect Virginio Vespignani which shows at least one further, perpendicular wall in the room.[242] Figure 145 is my own reconstruction based on Vespignani's excavation plan, Matranga's notes and Biering's research into the later excavations from the early 1940s.[243]

The presence of the wall (B) perpendicular to the one upon which the extant frescoes were found (C) alongside Matranga's note concerning damaged panels suggests that the narrative of the *Odyssey* probably continued to be pictorially evoked around the room in the manner as we have seen with the *Iliad* friezes in

[240] Ralf Biering offers a convincing proposal of the original site on the current Via Cavour based on a certain Filippo Bennicelli who is recorded as being the owner of the land above which some of the frescoes were found, and a man of the same name recording as living at Via Graziosa 639 who applied for tax exemption for his property – Biering (1995) 167-168.
[241] Coarelli (1998) 31-37. O'Sullivan notes that the house on the fragment is aligned on a different axis to the excavated house, leaving Coarelli's argument "hardly conclusive" – O'Sullivan (2007) 502.
[242] O'Sullivan (2007) 502-504 citing Matranga (1852) 2, 109.
[243] Matranga (1852) tafs 1 and 10; Biering (1995) *Plan des Fundgebeits* on p.168.

Pompeii, although with a height of around 116cm with a scale more akin to the Hercules frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio.[244]

What kind of room the panels decorated, however, has been subject to varying proposals. Bernard Andreae and Peter von Blanckenhagen suggest a barrel-vaulted cryptoporticus, but both base their proposals on Matranga's incorrect assumption of the room having a vaulted ceiling on account of on the presence of arcade arches, which Biering argues instead belonged to an earlier building phase.[245] Gallina and Coarelli alternatively propose an extensive series of terraces and porticoes attached to a house,[246] Müller a peristylum,[247] and Biering a rectangular atrium or open peristyle, partially opened up by columns on the southeastern side (facing the Forum Romanum), and side alae to the east beyond wall B.[248] Bastos Marques and Regis Cavicchioli reject the idea of an atrium on account of there not being any evidence of other doors or openings in wall C and propose instead that the room, on account of its apparently great height, was the peristyle of a large villa in the rural zone of the Esquiline. They suggest that the upper edge of the panels was positioned at the utmost edge of the ancient wall and so only the lower details of the frieze were of a height visible to the viewer.[249] This, of course, raises questions regarding the level of interaction available between the frescoes and the observer yet, as Biering rightly notes, there is no indication that the floor of the room was excavated – or even identified – in the 1850s and so the actual height of the walls and the panels' positioning on them remains uncertain.[250] The cross section from excavation included in Matranga's publication (figure 144) reveals no clear ceiling or floor line upon which readings might be based.

The most convincing hypothesis is surely that the frescoes were visible and, most importantly, their details *readable* for the Roman viewer, suggesting a more conservative height for the walls and the paintings' placement on them. Otherwise, why would the artist include labels and figural details which, as will be discussed below, were clearly intended to be engaged with and commented upon? Although

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[244] The dimensions of all the extant panels are found in Biering (1995) Appendix 3.
[245] Andreae (1962) 116; Blanckenhagen (1963) 101; Biering (1995) 175.
[246] Gallina (1961) 15-17; Coarelli (1998) 31-33.
[247] Müller (2000) 172.
[248] Note, however, that there is no evidence of columns or a portico in Vespagni's plan.
[249] Bastos Marques and Regis Cavicchioli (2009) 9, 21-22.
[250] Biering (1995) 169-170. Reviewing Biering's monograph Müller notes that Biering himself is unable to present a clear reconstruction of the wall, estimating both four to five metres *and* two to three metres in height – Müller (2000) n.7, citing Biering (1995) 175, 184.

many scholars have been keen to attribute the landscapes to the upper sections of the walls, thus akin to the architectural vistas visible through painted openings in the upper parts of Second Style walls – such as the cubiculum from the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale, room 23 from the Villa at Oplontis, the frigidarium from the House of the Cryptoporticus and the tablinum in the House of Livia on the Palatine[251] – they have neglected a key detail: that these features are clearly visible from the perspective of a viewer standing almost anywhere the room, being solid, architectural structures, unpopulated by small-scale figures and epigraphy. In the Esquiline frescoes at least two labels, the OPION from panel 8 and the CIRHNEC from panel 9, are painted near the very top of their respective scenes, confirming that the entirety of the frieze was intended to be read and its details appreciated by the viewer.

Current status

Eight of the extant fresco 'panels', using the terminology usually applied to the frames of the frieze which are separated by the red painted pillars, are now displayed in the Sala di Nozze Aldobrandine in the Vatican Museums with a further fragmentary panel, discovered in 1940, now in the Palazzo Massimo alle Terme in Rome. A potential new panel, which was on display in 2014 in an exhibition at the Palazzo Altemps in Rome entitled *Evan Gorga: Il Collezionista*, will be argued below to also belong to the original frieze. The full proposed length of the wall (C) upon which panels two to nine were found in 1848 is suggested by Biering to be 20.5 metres, based on the reasonable assumption that the panels were symmetrically arranged on the wall with panel 6 marking the centrepoint. The maximum width of the room is given by Biering as 16 metres; thus its western corner and the wall running parallel to C would now be destroyed by the Via Cavour Metro line (refer to figure 145).[252]

[251] Peters (1963) 28; Ling (1991) 36; Gallina (1961) 23; von Blanckenhagen (1963) 112, n.48.
[252] Biering (1995) 167-175.

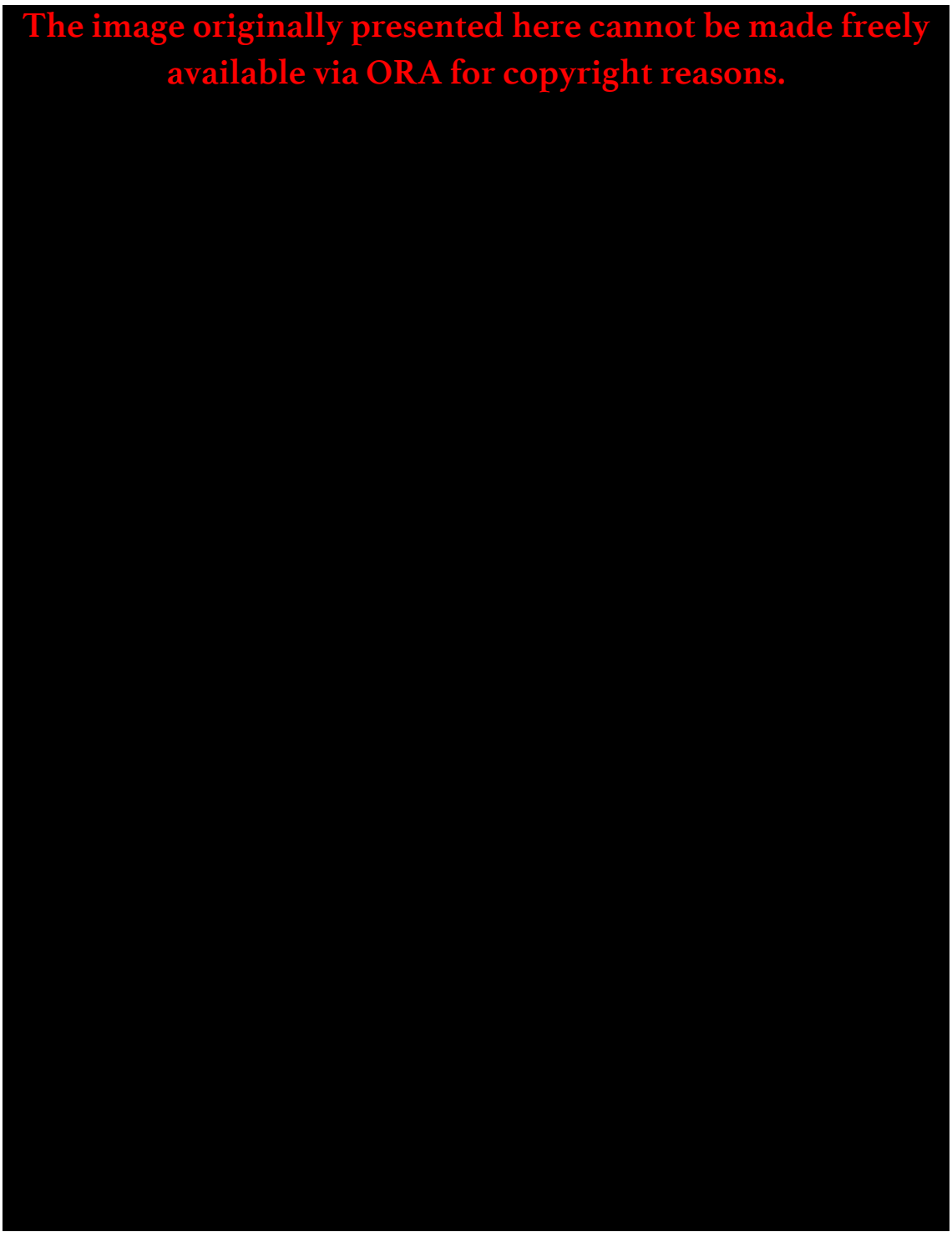


Fig.144 – Cross section of the excavation site by Verginio Vespignani showing panels one to three *in situ*, prior to the removal of panels two and three.

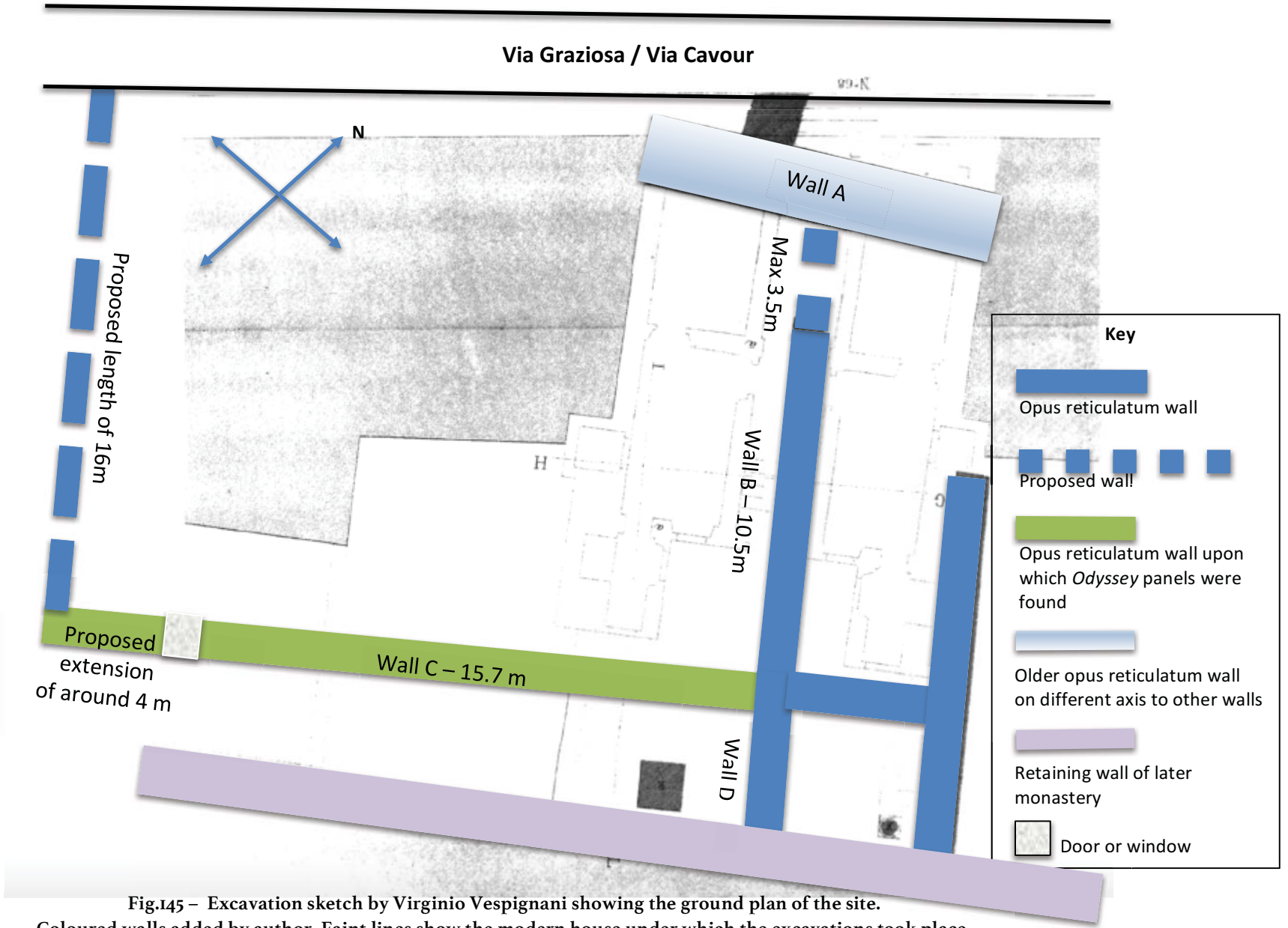


Fig.145 – Excavation sketch by Virginio Vespignani showing the ground plan of the site. Coloured walls added by author. Faint lines show the modern house under which the excavations took place. Dashed blue and green lines show hypothetical reconstructions of walls of Roman-era room, which would since have been destroyed by the construction of the Metro line in the early 1940s.

Biering's 1995 monograph revealed via multi-spectral imaging the overpainting and colour distortions which have occurred in a series of attempted restorations of the frescoes. Panel 10, having been discovered much later, retains the original Roman colouring, even after two attempts at cleaning by the Museo Nazionale Romano.[253] One of the most interesting findings is that the pillars were the first elements to be sketched by the artist onto the wall, indicating that the figural scenes were designed to fit around the pillars. Throughout this chapter reference will be made to details which appear to be additions by the restorers, but which thankfully appear to be minimal.[254] The images used in the discussion are the watercolours made in the 1870s (the earliest visual record available) which reveal the condition of the frescoes around twenty years after excavation, bearing the restorations of the 1850s but without the distorting 'corrections' made in the 1950s, which mar the panels as they are found today.[255]

For an overview of the entire, extant sequence figures 146a and b are my own reconstructions using the early watercolours (reproduced in Biering) and my own photograph of the panel now in the Palazzo Massimo Alle Terme. Figures 147a and b show the frescoes in their current state of preservation. A further reconstruction, including the recently-discovered Scylla panel, is found at the end of the chapter in figure 193.

As with the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii it will become clear that the creator or creators of the *Odyssey* frescoes appear to be very familiar with the epic text and similarly expected their viewers to be.[256] They are, for example, entirely faithful to its narrative chronology: the first four panels depict the catastrophe in the land of the Laestrygonians from the tenth book of the *Odyssey*, the next (and probably the one following) takes place on Circe's island from the latter part of book 10, the final two (or one and a half) evoke the Nekyia from book 11. The fragments in the Palazzo

[253] Biering (1995) 23-25, 115.

[254] Bartolomeo Nogara, having examined the frescoes in the early 1900s, repeats with some relief Karl Woermann's observation that "non ostante alcuni smarrimenti, noi possiamo francamente rallegrarci di una conservazione in tutto eccellente" – Nogara (1902) 39; Woermann (1876) 1.

[255] Matranga provides two engravings by Salvatore Giaconia of panels 2 and 3 of the frieze which must date from their display in the Capitoline Museum in 1849, therefore before the removal of the other frescoes from the Esquiline site in late 1850, and before the second set of restorations applied to the entire frieze once displayed in the Vatican – Matranga (1852) *Tavole* I and II. Biering (1995) 196 for a timeline and 8-20 for further details on the restorations.

[256] Simone Rambaldi concurs: "diverse moments in the Odysseus legend are represented, with great adherence to the Homeric text, which also appear to translate pictorially very minute details" – Rambaldi (2001) 2.

Massimo alle Terme show Odysseus among the Sirens from book 12 and the new fragment shows the Scylla episode, also from book 12. The creators were also inspired by the epic text in what will be revealed to be linguistically sophisticated ways since, alongside the painting of labels taken directly from the *Odyssey* (textual markers), the epigraphic extra-Homeric insertions recall Homer's practice of forming names which describe the nature of his protagonists, which was also seen in the Polygnotan frescoes in Delphi. The analysis will show that these were not only used for "les principaux personnages", as Croisille states, but sometimes for the most peripheral of figures.[257] The only similar form of analysis applied to these most pertinent of features was offered by Stephen Lowenstam in 1995 who observed that they "for some time have not received the attention they deserve."[258] Although our interpretations often differ, this methodology is surely that which can most successfully offer insights into the particular historical, geographical and social context of the frescoes, as the following discussion seeks to show.

[257] Croisille (2005) 155. W.J.T. Peters comments with displeasure that "the painter adopted the old Greek habit of writing the names on the picture. Apparently he did not mind spoiling the illusion of the landscape in this way" – Peters (1963) 31.
[258] Lowenstam (1995) 194.

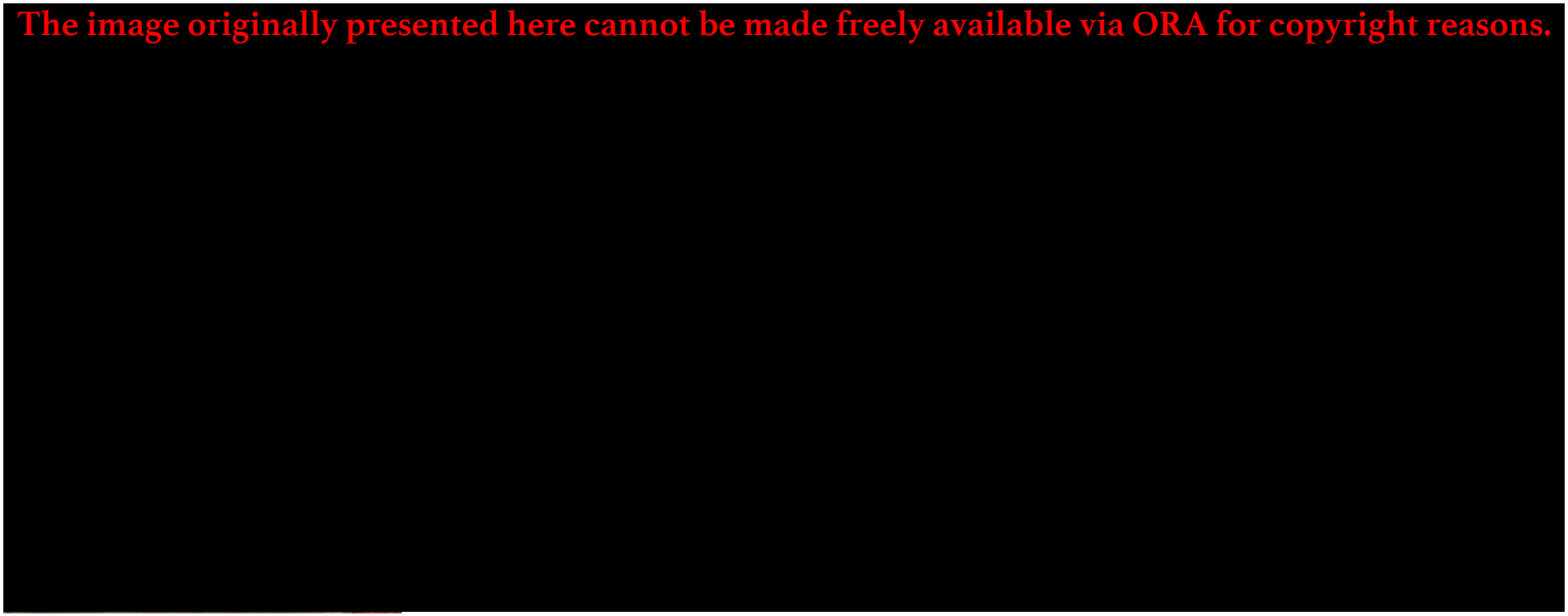


Fig.146a – Reconstruction of the frieze, split into two lines for visibility, using watercolours from the 1870s.

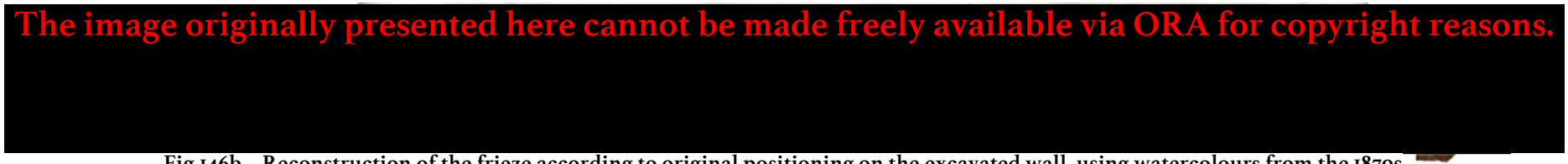


Fig.146b – Reconstruction of the frieze according to original positioning on the excavated wall, using watercolours from the 1870s.

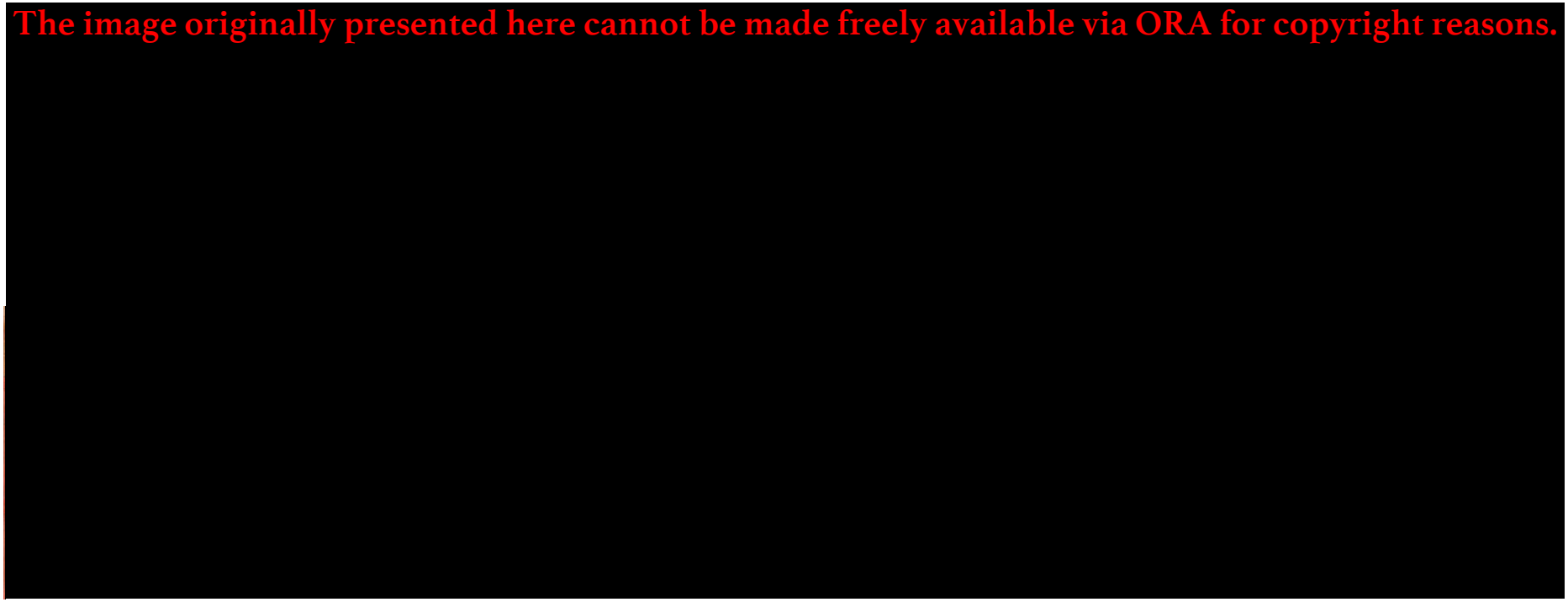


Fig.147a – Reconstruction of the frieze, split into two lines for visibility, using photographs of the extant frieze reproduced in Biering (1995).



Fig.147b – Reconstruction of the frieze according to original positioning on the excavated wall, using photographs of the extant frieze reproduced in Biering (1995).

Panel two

The first panel from the eastern end of wall C was destroyed upon excavation so that which is commonly referred to as the second, or panel two, is our starting point (figure 148).[259]

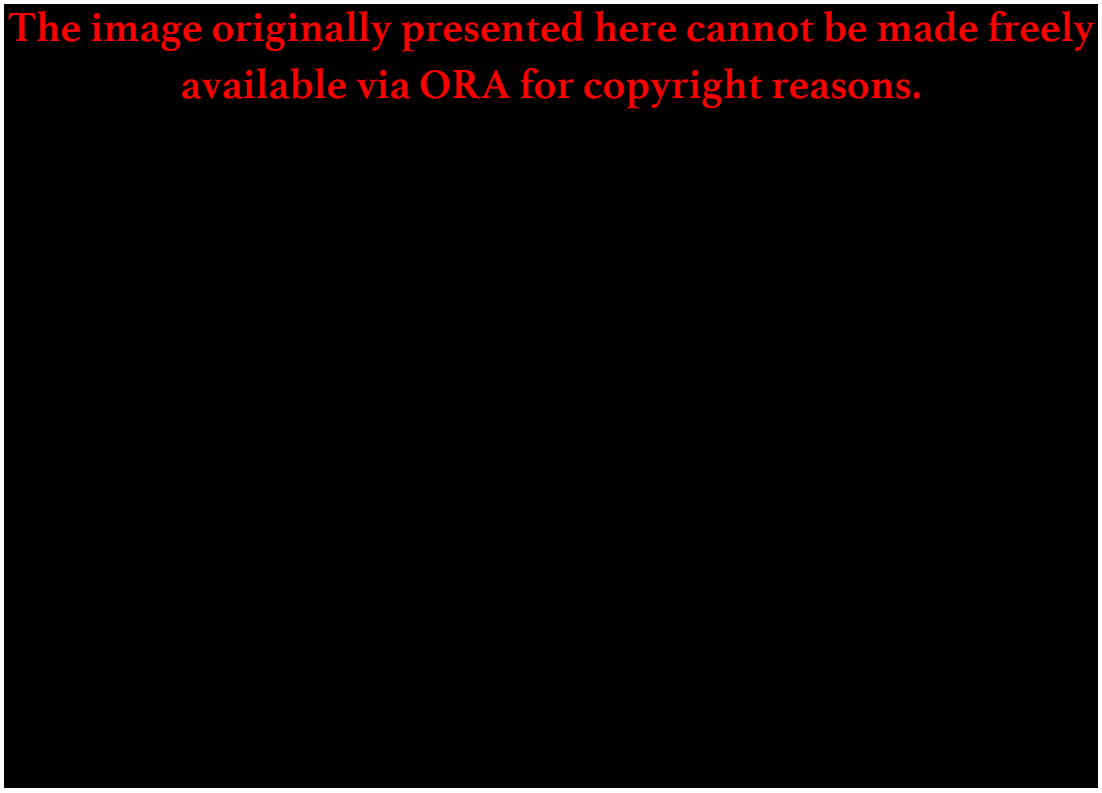


Fig. 148 – Panel 2: Entering the land of the Laestrygonians.

Since we know from the wider context of the series that books 10, 11 and 12 of the *Odyssey* are evoked in the frescoes we are able to infer that the left of panel two, in which three ships sail toward the land, depicts Odysseus and his companions mooring their vessels in the harbour at Telepylos, as Odysseus himself describes (*Od.* 10.87-93):

> When we had come there into the fine harbour, about which on both sides a sheer cliff runs continuously, and projecting headlands opposite to one another stretch out at the mouth, and the entrance is narrow, then all the rest steered their curved ships in, and the ships were moored within the hollow harbour close together.[260]

[259] Biering points out that it is curious that the red painted column on the left of the panel 2 is so well preserved, given that the first was seemingly completely destroyed – Biering (1995) 31.
[260] All translations of the *Odyssey* by A.T. Murray and G.E. Dimock (1919).

Our analysis therefore appears to begin with a textual marker but, for the educated Roman viewer, the presence of the personnified winds above the ships would break with the strict order of the Homeric narrative.[261] Prior to coming to the land of the Laestrygonians the Greeks had received help from King Aeolus who had given Odysseus a bag containing the winds to help him on his journey. Yet the companions, suspecting that the bag was filled with treasure, opened it and released the winds, angering Aeolus who sent the Greeks helplessly on their way (*Od.* 10.1-79). The ships and the winds above them are therefore a pictorial summary of the earlier story, even though the vessels are clearly moored in the harbour at the time (traces of a beach can be seen on the shoreline). Although not visible today the label ΖΕΦΥΡΟC originally accompanied the winds forming a marker with *Odyssey* 10.25 – αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ πνοιὴν Ζεφύρου προέηκεν ἀῆναι (but he sent onwards the west wind to blow for me).[262] This is the first of many detailed references to the epic text for the notice of the Roman viewer since Zephyrus was the only wind *not* contained in the bag in the Homeric account.

Below the ships is a landscape figure labelled AKTAI, denoting a shore or promontory, who stands on the curved prow of a ship at the very edge of the beach (figure 149). Biering questions the authenticity of the "Fährmann", arguing that his presence does not fit well enough with the Odyssean narrative, although notes that there is no evidence from the imaging analysis to suggest that he was not part of the original Roman painting. Lowenstam also argues that the "gondola" appears to be an invention by the "restorer".[263] Yet the curved frontage of the boat, the petasos hat and the AKTAI label can clearly be seen in the engraving made by B. Gioconia when panels two and three were at their temporary home in the Capitoline Museum in 1848–50, thus before the restorations made after the panels had been transferred to the Vatican Museums in 1850. Since these were the first to be removed from the Esquiline site they are naturally the best preserved, not having been subject to the elements for a year (as was the fate of the others), and so needed only the lightest of restorations to the details.[264] Nogara and Schultz suggest instead that the AKTAI figure is one of Odysseus' companions, citing his position in the

[261] Simon, 'Venti' in *LIMC* VIII.1 (1997) 186-192.
[262] Biering (1995) 124, inscription A1.
[263] Lownenstam (1995) n.6.
[264] Biering (1995) 15, 38; Matranga (1852) 15, plate 1. Ernst Heinrich, assessing Biering's use of UV photography, notes that in several instances it was impossible to distinguish between the hand of the restorer and the ancient artists – Heinrich (1997) 221.

painting and his costume as supporting evidence.[265] Although the figure wears the same white tunic and petasos hat as the Greeks found on the right, the label undoubtedly belongs to him and there is no other example throughout the extant frieze of a label denoting the landscape without an accompanying protagonist.[266]

The figure and his label are, in fact, another textual marker referring the viewer to the epic and the unexpected use of plural noun for a solitary figure refers to the **ἀκταὶ** προβλῆτες ἐναντίαι ἀλλήλῃσιν (jutting out promontories facing one another) from *Odyssey* 10.89, which form the Telepylan harbour.[267] A second textual marker is found in the personnification labelled KRHNH (figure 150) recalling *Odyssey* 10.107 – ἡ μὲν ἄρ' ἐς **κρήνην** κατεβήσετο (she [the daughter of Antiphates] had come down to the spring), and perhaps even with the νῆα μέλαιναν (black ship) in the bay (*Od.* 10.95).[268]

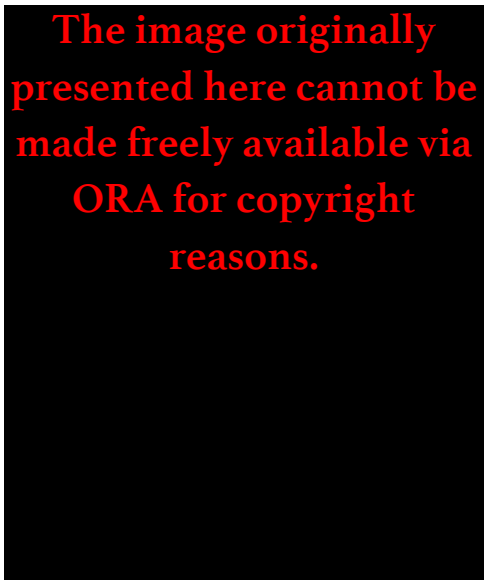


Fig.149 – AKTAI.

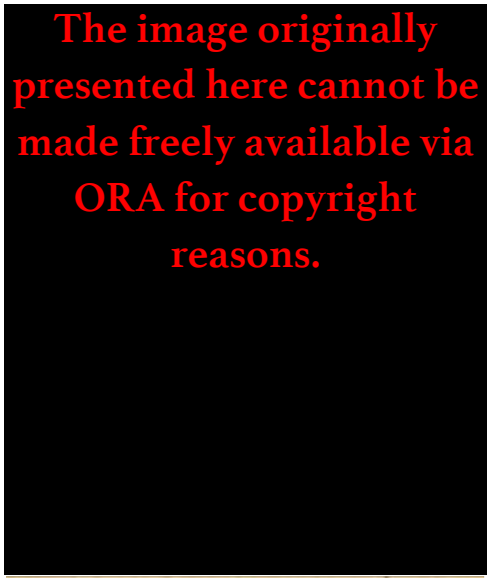


Fig.150 – KRHNH.

In the centre of the panel Odysseus' men approach the daughter of Antiphates, identifiable from her size and stature (ἰφθίμῃ – stalwart or strong), on her way to draw water from the spring as described in *Odyssey* 10.105-106. The companions are

[265] Nogara (1902) 41, citing Schultz (1889) 58.
[266] Only a few lines later in his description Nogara describes the unlabelled, nude, reclining male on the top of the outcrop as "il genio della montagna" – Nogara (1902) 41.
[267] Also noted by Lowenstam (1995) 194.
[268] Peters describes her as a naiad, without reference to the label – Peters (1963) 28.

labelled ANTIΛOXOC, ANXIAΛOΣC and EYPYBATHC, the latter faded but just visible in the water beneath the men's feet (figure 151).[269]

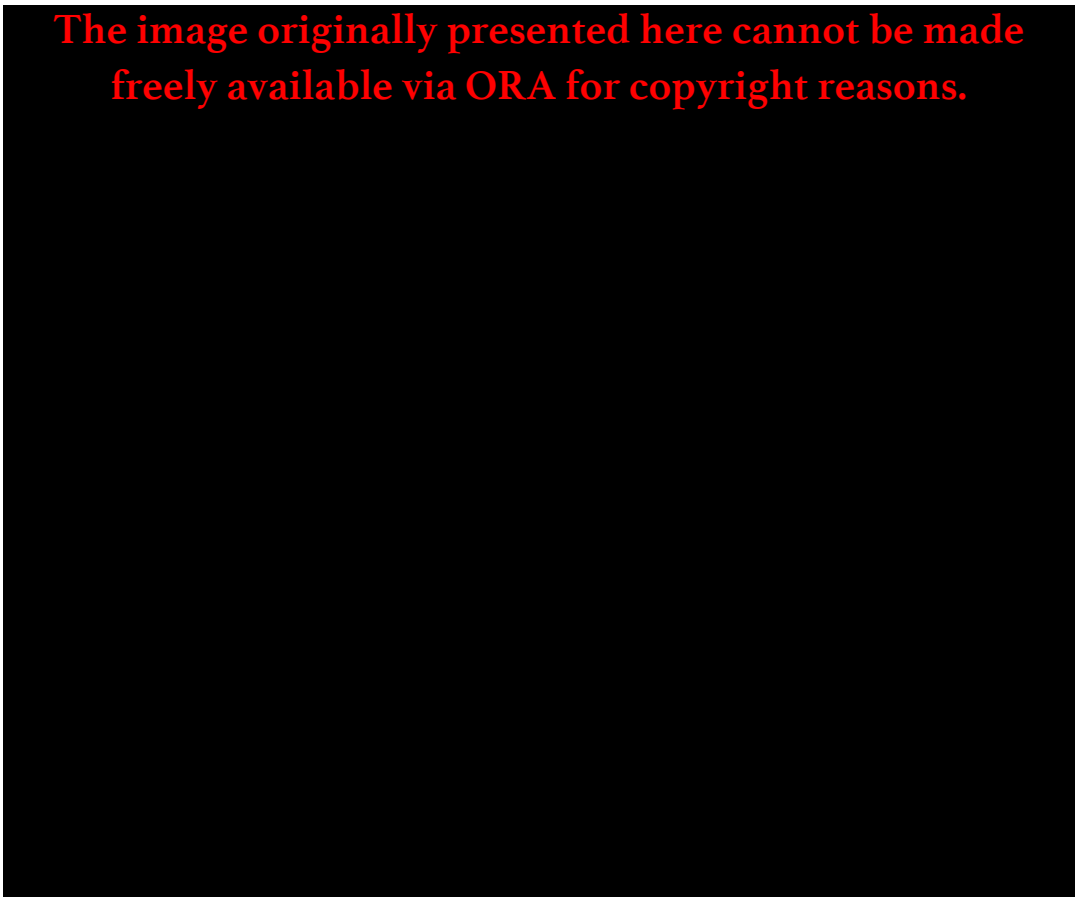


Fig.151 – ΑΝΤΙΛΟΧΟΣ, ΑΝΧΙΑΛΟΣ and ΕΥΡΥΒΑΤΗΣ encounter the daughter of Antiphates.

Antilochus, Anchialos and Eurybates, however, are not mentioned by name in this part of the epic and are an extra-Homeric insertion by the artist since in Odysseus' narration he simply says, "I sent forth some of my comrades to go and learn who the men were, who here ate bread upon the earth – two men I chose, and sent with them a third as a herald" (*Od.* 10.100-102). Antilochus is not once denoted as a companion of Odysseus in the entire *Odyssey*; the only reference to the name pertains to the youth slain by Memnon during the Trojan War (*Od.* 3.112; 4.187; 11.468; 24.16,78). Similarly, Anchialos is never referred to as a companion and the name is instead used in *Odyssey* 1.180 where Athena affects the guise of Μέντης

[269] The Latinised form of ΑΝΧΙΑΛΟΣ (from the Homeric Ἀγχίαλος) reflects a common transliteration from Greek into Latin forms: compare Virgil's use of the name Anchises (*Aen.* 1.617) for the Greek Ἀγχίσης (*Il.* 5.268). This will also be seen in the Latinate CIRHNEC replacing the Greek σειρῆνες below. A similar 'Latinising' of Greek words was also seen in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio (chapter three).

Ἀγχιάλοιο and in *Odyssey* 8.111 for a young Phaeacian who competed in the games in honour of Odysseus. Another Anchialos is found in *Iliad* 5.609 killed by Hector. Only Eurybates, Odysseus' squire, seems appropriate to the context:

> Furthermore, a herald attended him, a little older than he, and I will tell you of him, too, what manner of man he was. He was round-shouldered, dark of skin, and curly-haired, and his name was Eurybates; and Odysseus honoured him above his other comrades, because he was like-minded with himself (*Od.* 19.244-248).

The word εὐρυβάτης means 'widely-travelled'[270] and investigation into the two extra-Homeric labels confirms that they too are evocative of the epic narrative and setting, in the same manner as AKTAI and KRHNH in the same panel and as EYANΘH in the House of the Cryptoporticus in Pompeii. The word ἀγχίαλος in its adjectival form means 'close to the sea'[271] and ἀντίλοχος means 'lying in ambush against',[272] which is all too evocative of what lies in store for Odysseus' men in the next part of the frieze.

In trying to explain the extra-Homeric names Coarelli suggests that the artist of the 'original' frieze, whom he considers to be Alexandrian and working in the third century BC, drew on sources extraneous to Homer's epic "from Hellenistic erudition, perhaps from the philologists of the Library of Alexandria".[273] Lowenstam similarly looks to Alexandrian tradition, using the twelfth century Byzantine scholar Joannes Tzetzes as a conduit. In his description of Polyphemus' cave (*Chil.* 10.879-885) Tzetzes attributes to Homer twelve names for Odysseus' companions of which only two are ever actually mentioned in the *Odyssey*: Antiphos and Eurylochus. Tzetzes refers to an Antilochos, who corresponds with the label above, and an Amphialos, whom Lowenstam argues "is close enough to Anchialos to be interchangeable with him". The latter point is questionable enough but even more so is Lowenstam's assertion that the twelve names were supplied by the Alexandrian scholars in a scholium which, by the twelfth century, had become incorporated into the actual text of the *Odyssey*. By implication then, at some later (but clearly unidentifiable) time, this particular scholium had been rejected and

[270] Miller (2014) 118.
[271] LSJ: ἀγχί-α^λος , ον, also η. *Cf Iliad* 6.240.
[272] Graves (1955) 380.
[273] Coarelli (1998) 25. Nogara notes that the names are found elsewhere in Homer but can offer no reason for their inclusion in the panel – Nogara (1902) 42.

removed from what came to be the canonical text of the epic, as we have it today. Clearly, the evidence for this proposal is negligible. Lowenstam additionally cites Pausanias' reference to an Anchialos in the Iliupersis painting who was positioned alongside Odysseus and Sinon on the Trojan shore, carrying away the body of Laomedon (Paus. 10.27.3), to suggest that that the tradition cited by Tzetzes could be traced at least as far back as the fifth century BC.[274] Yet this is a highly selective reading of Pausanias, who actually indicates that Sinon alone is Odysseus' companion, denoted by the use of the singular form ἑταῖρος:

> Λαομέδοντος δὲ τὸν νεκρὸν Σίνων τε **ἑταῖρος** Ὀδυσσέως καὶ Ἀγχίαλός εἰσιν ἐκκομίζοντες.

Additionally, the *named* companion – Sinon – is not given in Tzetzes' list of Ithacans (*Chil.* 10.879-85):

> In the Odyssey Homer says that Odysseus,
> after Cyclops had eaten six of his men
> – namely Antiphos, Euryleon, Apheidas, Menetos,
> Kepheus, and Stratios – with the six remaining men,
> whose names were Amphidamas, Amphialos, Lykaon,
> Antilochos, Alkimos, and Eurylochos,
> made the Cyclops drunk and blinded him while he slept.[275]

Lowenstam's proposal also does not take into account that earlier in Pausanias' description there is mention of an Amphialos *not* in company of Odysseus, but of Menelaus, pulling down the Spartan leader's hut on the Trojan shore (Paus. 10.25.3). In its adjectival form ἀμφίαλος means 'of two seas',[276] which is a fitting description for a Greek preparing to sail homeward. Indeed, analysis of several names cited in Pausanias' commentary reveals that Polygnotus himself seems to have used similar linguistic devices in his creation of extra-Homeric labels.[277] Even the verb used by

[274] Lowenstam (1995) 203-208.
[275] Translation by Leone (1968).
[276] LSJ: ἀμφία^λος , ον.
[277] Carol Dougherty carries out a similar analytical linguistic exercise on *Odyssey* 8.110-119 where, among the Phaeacian names, are found Akroneos (Steer-ship), Okyalos (Swift-ship), Elatreus (Fir-oar), Nauteus (Ship-y) and Tekton (Shipbuilder) among several others – Dougherty (2001) 114.

Pausanias to describe the artist's process – συνέθηκεν – is often used to denote construction or the bridging together of elements (Hdt 7.36.1; Thuc. 4.4.2).[278]

At the beginning of the Iliupersis description Ithaemenes, Echoeax, Polites, Strophius, Phrontis and Alphius are all said to be assisting Menelaus with his ship on the shores of Troy (Paus. 10.25.2-3). Of course we cannot compare with the text of the *Iliupersis* itself, but Pausanias tells us that the name Phrontis was taken by Polygnotus from the *Odyssey* and that the artist invented (συνέθηκεν) the others (Paus. 10.25.3). It seems then that, as with the Roman-era artist of the Esquiline fresco panel, Polygnotus provided a textual marker in the form of Phrontis (*Od.* 3.282) and then inserted names, often with epic credentials, for the others, some highly suited to the specific context. Ithaemenes, for example, who is mentioned only once by Homer in an entirely different context (*Il.* 16.596), means 'of sure courage';[279] Echoeax aptly translates in this nautical context as 'holding the tiller';[280] Amphialos, which is only ever used in epic for a Phaeacian in the *Odyssey* (8.114), means 'of two seas' or 'living amid seas'.[281] The same adjective is even used by Homer to describe the island of Ithaca (*Od* 1.395).[282]

This offers an interpretation of the reasoning behind the extra-Homeric labels in the Roman frieze which is found in at least two other epic artworks (the Polygnotan frescoes and the House of the Cryptoporticus *Iliad* frieze) and avoids strained efforts to trace a now lost tradition of Hellenistic, or even earlier, scholarship for which there is negligible evidence. Consequently, even after discussion of only one of the *Odyssey* fresco panels, we have encountered the same features as found in the three *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii and the Iliupersis painting in Delphi: textual and pictorial markers which were only fathomable to the viewer who knew the Homeric epic intricately, generalised evocations of episodes and sophisticated word-play in the form of extra-Homeric labels. In the Roman context

[278] LSJ: συντίθημι.
[279] Powell (2014) n.596.
[280] Frazer (1898) 361.
[281] LSJ: ἀμφίαλος , ον.
[282] The name Polites is used for a son of Priam (*Il.* 2.791) and a companion of Odysseus (*Od.* 10.224) and means 'everyman' – Graves (1955) 406. Strophius is the name of a Trojan slain by Menelaus in *Iliad* 5.49 and is given by Ovid as the name of Pylades' father (*Pont.* 2.6.25), thus bearing associations with both sons of Atreus. His name, meaning 'twister' or 'twisted headband', is admittedly difficult to reconcile with the Iliupersis scene, particularly because Pausanias does not give a pictorial description – Graves (1955) 409. Alphius is not mentioned elsewhere in Homeric epic but was the name of a mountain in Aetolia (Pseudo Plutarch, *De Fluviis* 8.3).

this must have greatly appealed to those with a level of Greek literacy who could appreciate the many levels of interplay within the paintings before them.

Panel three

The peaceful, bucolic setting of panel 2 evokes the calm before the storm which is about to decimate the numbers of the Greeks. In the very next frame (figure 152) the Laestrygonians, of whom the giantess is their princess, attack Odysseus' men, pulling at tree branches to use as weapons against them, battering them with boulders, drowning them in the sea and dragging their dead bodies along the rocky ground.

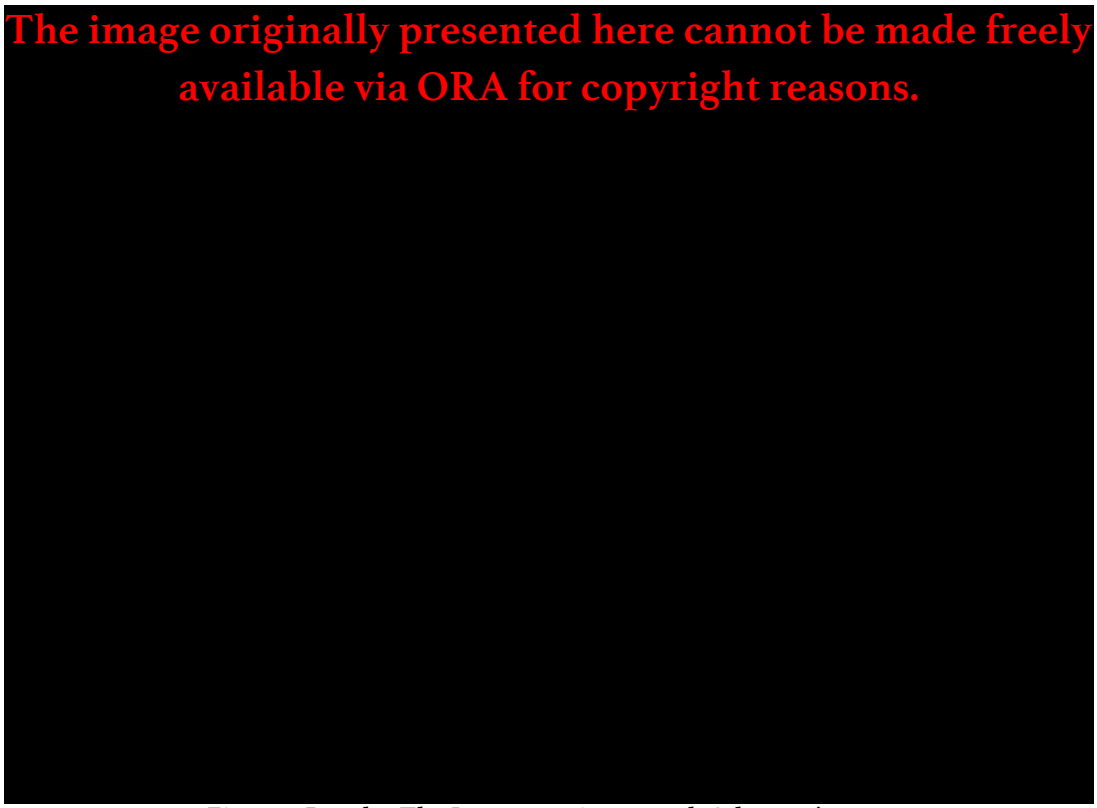


Fig.152 – Panel 3: The Laestrygonians attack Odysseus' men.

In this panel, which is the best preserved of the series and therefore subject to minimal restorations,[283] the *Odyssey* is recalled in the line "herdsman calls to herdsman as he drives in his flock" (*Od.* 10.84-85) and on the left a figure with his back to the viewer calls to another who can be seen moving towards him on the

[283] The typical colour changes are evident, however, caused by the fixative darkening the yellows to browns and the sky grey from its original blue/green. Biering considers only the staff held by the shepherd with his back to the viewer to be an addition by the restorer – Biering (1997) 47-52.

extreme right of panel 2. Even the ἄργυφα μῆλα (white sheep) and cattle from the same line of text can be seen in the bottom left corner of panel 3 and the right of panel 2, in a detailed pictorial rendering of Homer's description. Two landscape figures are given the collective title NOMAI (figure 153), formed from the word νομή meaning 'pasturage' or 'grazing',[284] in a textual marker which recalls the Homeric line τὸν μὲν βουκολέων, τὸν δ' ἄργυφα μῆλα **νομεύων** (*Od.* 10.85).[285] One with horns and an animal skin, evocative of a satyr or other woodland figure, looks over the flock and another languishes on a rock behind; both seemingly unaware of the carnage taking place beside them. Scholars have attempted to explain the horned figure in a number of ways: Matranga proposes Apollo Nomos, and Beyen and von Blanckenhagen Pan,[286] but these are unnecessary diversions since the name recalls the Homeric text and his form is similar to others found in contemporary Roman landscape painting as figure 154, from the the near contemporary frescoes in the winter triclinium of the Villa Farnesina, reveals.

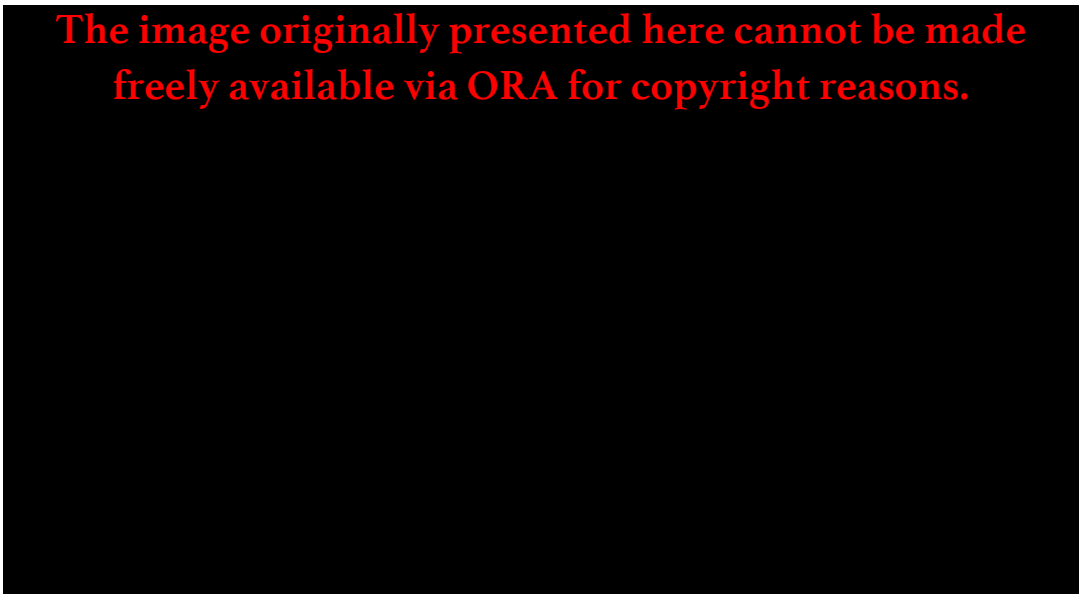


Fig.153 – NOMAI.

[284] LSJ: νομ-ή, ἡ.
[285] Eduard Gerhard's description of the panel, based on a lithograph from the 1850s, gives the label as NOMAIS based on a small, angular 'S'-shaped brushstroke coming after the larger letters – Gerhard (1852) taf. XLVI. However, as sigmas (even those found at the end of words) are rendered as C throughout the frieze, the generally-accepted reading of NOMAI seems the most convincing.
[286] Matranga (1852) 47, *tavola* V; Beyen (1938) 272; Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 104.



Fig.154 – Landscape figures from the Winter Triclinium of the Villa Farnesina.

The panel as a whole strays from the text, however, in having the action take place in the outdoors rather than the Greeks being attacked by Antiphates and his wife in their palace or high-roofed house (*Od.* 10.111-117), which is visible on the hilltop, although obscured behind a branch in figure 152. The box-like structure at the left edge of the frame and shown in detail in figure 156 is extra-Homeric but recalls a similar edifice found in corridor F–G from the Villa Farnesina (figure 155).[287]



Fig.155 – Detail from corridor F–G, Villa Farnesina.

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Fig.156 – Shelter? Detail from figure 152.

On the right of the central boulder in figure 152 King Antiphates (ΑΝΤΙΦΑΤΗC) in white exomis appears among the Laestrygonians (ΛΑΙCΤΡΥΓΟΝΕC), some of

[287] Nogara considers the structure to be the doorway to the city of the Laestrygonians, which also seems plausible – Nogara (1902) 43.

whom wear animal skins reflecting their name which is formed from λαισήιον meaning 'raw hide' or 'skin' and τρυγάω meaning 'to gather'. Further elements of the text are rendered in particularly close detail from the Laestrygonians "pelting us … with rocks huge as a man could lift" (*Od.* 10.121-122) to the slaughter continuing into the harbour, even down to the macabre: "they carried them home for their loathsome meal" (*Od.* 10.124), which is realised pictorially in a giant carrying one of Odysseus' men over his shoulder and dragging another behind him.[288]

Panel four

In the next panel (figure 157) the carnage in the harbour continues and an entire scene is forged from the lines:

> And at once there rose throughout the ships a dreadful din, alike from men that were dying and from ships that were being crushed … While they were slaying those within the deep harbour… (*Od.* 10.122-125).

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Fig.157 – Laestrygonians attack the Greeks in the harbour.

[288] Panels 2, 3, 4 and 5 mark the only extant representation of Laestrygonians from the ancient world – Lochin, 'Laistrygones' in *LIMC* (1992) VI.6, 187-188.

No labels are painted onto the scene which may denote that the text is now *not* being evoked in as much detail as in the preceding panels, and we see here instead an evocation of the Homeric account. Bastos Marques and Regis Cavicchioli note that instead of there being a movement towards the right, as in panels 2 and 3, "the reading focuses on the centre of the frame … This creates a sensation of imprisoning the viewer's gaze, analogous to the imprisoning of the Greeks by the Laestrygonians".[289] Textual markers are still present, however, in the "ships being crushed" (*Od.* 10.123) and the lightly-sketched giant on the left raising his spear and "piercing them like fishes" (*Od.* 10.124). Further comparisons can be made with the Villa Farnesina frescoes and we see in figures 158 and 159 a closeness between the form of two ships from the different friezes. The implications for these comparisons will be explored in chapter six but it worth noting throughout the similarities with near-contemporary and geographically-significant Roman landscape painting.

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Fig.158 – Ship from figure 157.



Fig.159 – Ship from corridor F-G, Villa Farnesina.

Panel five

It is only in the next panel (figure 160) that we encounter Odysseus for the first time in the narrative – although still not yet in person – sailing hurriedly away from Telepylos and denoted by the label OΔYCCEYC above the white sails of the ship. The entire left half of the scene evokes the words spoken by Odysseus in the epic text, right down to the giant in the foreground crushing one of his companions:

> While they were slaying those within the deep harbour, I meanwhile … cut the cables of my dark-prowed ship; and quickly calling to my comrades bade them fall to their oars, that we might escape from our evil plight. And they all tossed

[289] Bastos Marques and Regis Cavicchioli (2009) 13.

the sea with their oar blades in fear of death, and joyfully out to sea my ship sped away from the beetling cliffs; but the other ships, all together, perished where they were (*Od.* 10.125-132).

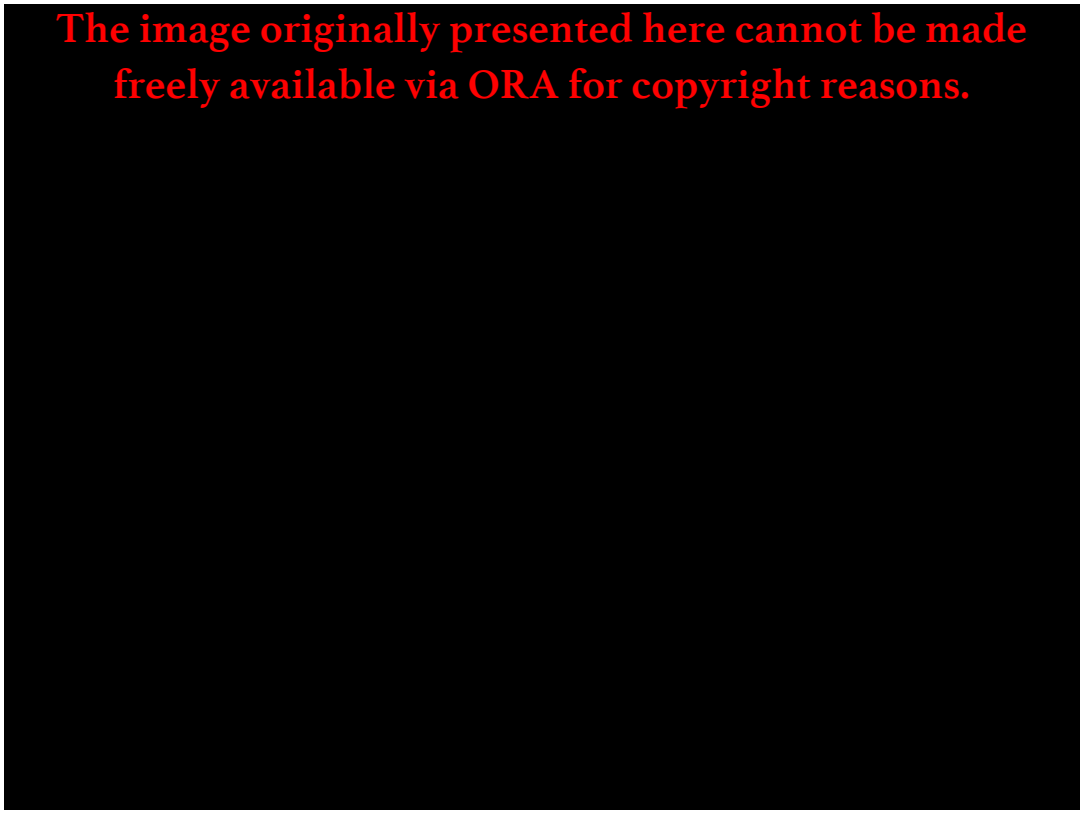


Fig.160 – Panel 5: Odysseus' ship leaves Telepylos.

The left side of the panel shows Odysseus and his (few) remaining men leaving Telepylos and sailing towards Aeaea, which appears alarmingly close by on the right side. In the bottom right three landscape personnifications are found above the label AKTAI (figure 161) forming another marker with the Homeric text. Even the figure pointing the way for the Greeks reflects the Homeric lines:[290]

> ἔνθα δ' ἐπ' **ἀκτῆς** νηὶ κατηγαγόμεσθα σιωπῇ
> ναύλοχον ἐς λιμένα, καί **τις θεὸς** ἡγεμόνευεν (*Od.* 10.140-141).
>
> Here we put into shore with our ship in silence,
> into a harbour where ships can lie, and **some god** guided us.

[290] Biering notes that the reclining figure reverses the pose of the KRHNH figure in panel 2, although his comparison of the figure in blue with the nymph from the Icarus painting in the Villa Imperiale is less convincing – Biering (1995) 74.



Fig.161 – Three landscape figures and the label AKTAI.

If we compare the watercolour in figure 160 with the fresco as it is seen today (figure 162), the latter bearing the 'corrections' made by the restorer in the 1950s, we can see that in their current state the three stick-like figures in the rear right of the panel are almost imperceptible. Biering suggests that the restorer considered them to be additions made in the 1850s and so sought to remove them from the painting.[291] Yet we can see from figure 160 that one figure originally reclined, one stood wide-legged beside him and the third seems to wander in the cliffs. In the *Odyssey* there is an intermediary episode before the Greeks enter Circe's palace where Odysseus hunts and kills a stag and the men mourn for their lost comrades (*Od.* 10.156-202). It is possible then that this is the event evoked by the mysterious figures in the early watercolour. Alternatively, it instead might be a visual rendering of Odysseus' line:

> So I climbed to a rugged height, a place of outlook, and there took my stand, and saw smoke rising from the broad-wayed earth in the halls of Circe.
> (*Od.* 10.148-150)

[291] Biering (1995) 74.

Comparison with another watercolour made in the 1870s (figure 163) shows the standing man on the right in a white garment, perhaps an exomis, thus identifying him as Odysseus, but this must remain speculative. The artist's allusion to the Homeric account, even in the smallest of details, recalls a comparable occasion in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio where lightly-sketched spectators watch the funeral games for Patroclus (figure 123) and evoke *Iliad* 23.448-498.



Fig.162 – Right side of panel 5 as it appears today.



Fig.163 – Upper right side of panel 5, detail from a watercolour made in the 1870s.

Panel six

We now arrive at the part of the narrative set on Circe's island and Odysseus, here certainly identifiable by his exomis and pilos, appears twice in a single frame (figure 164). In the centre left the hero, with partially-preserved label ΟΔΥ[σσευς], is welcomed into the palace by Circe (ΚΙΡΚ[h]). On the right, in the only example of truly continuous narrative in the extant frescoes, we encounter the two again, this time with the goddess (ΚΙΡΚΗ) sitting at the feet of the Ithacan (ΟΔΥCCΕΥC).[292] The two handmaidens could either be the same character, reacting to the interaction of her mistress with Odysseus, or an evocation of the textual τέσσαρες … δρήστειραι (four handmaidens) in *Odyssey* 10.349.[293]

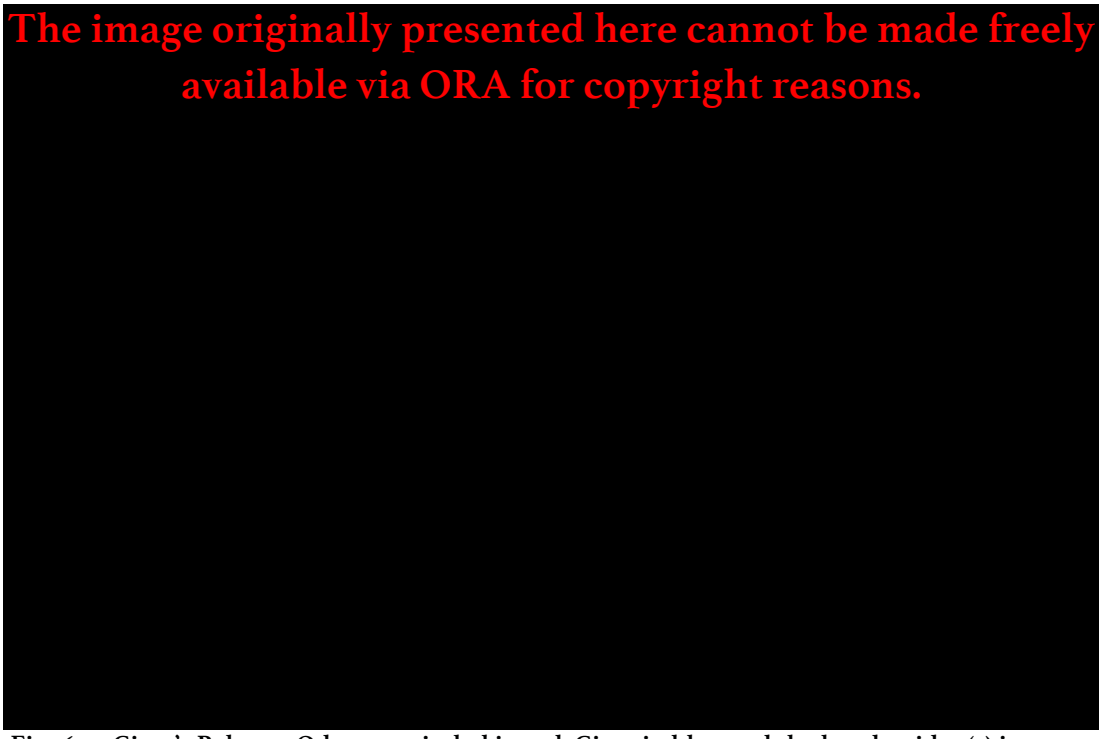


Fig.164 – Circe's Palace – Odysseus circled in red, Circe in blue and the handmaiden(s) in green.

Although the frescoes imply that Odysseus was the first to encounter Circe, in the *Odyssey* a group of companions went ahead as part of a scouting group and were turned into animals by the sorceress. Only Eurylochus escaped and reported back to the remaining men what had happened. Odysseus then approached the palace

[292] Discussion of Hellenistic and Roman continuous narrative in Von Blanckenhagen (1957), with the *Odyssey* frescoes discussed in 79-80.
[293] Lowenstam suggests that since they are not afforded names in the *Odyssey* itself they are left unlabelled in the Roman frieze – Lowenstam (1995) 199.

under the protection of Hermes, who gave him a herb to shield him from Circe's magic (*Od.* 10.203-309). The frescoes therefore rejoin the narrative at this point. The left side of the panel (figure 165) evokes the Homeric text in close detail:

> So I stood at the gates of the fair-tressed goddess. There I stood and called, and the goddess heard my voice. She came out at once and opened the bright doors and called me in; and I went with her (*Od.* 10.310-313).



Fig.165 – Detail from figure 164.

The right side of the panel (figure 166) similarly closely recalls the next part of the Homeric narrative:

> But she, with a loud cry, ran beneath, and clasped my knees, and beseeching me with wailing addressed me with winged words: "'Who are you among men, and from where? Where is your city, where your parents? Amazement holds me that you drank this charm and were in no way bewitched... (*Od.* 10.323-328).

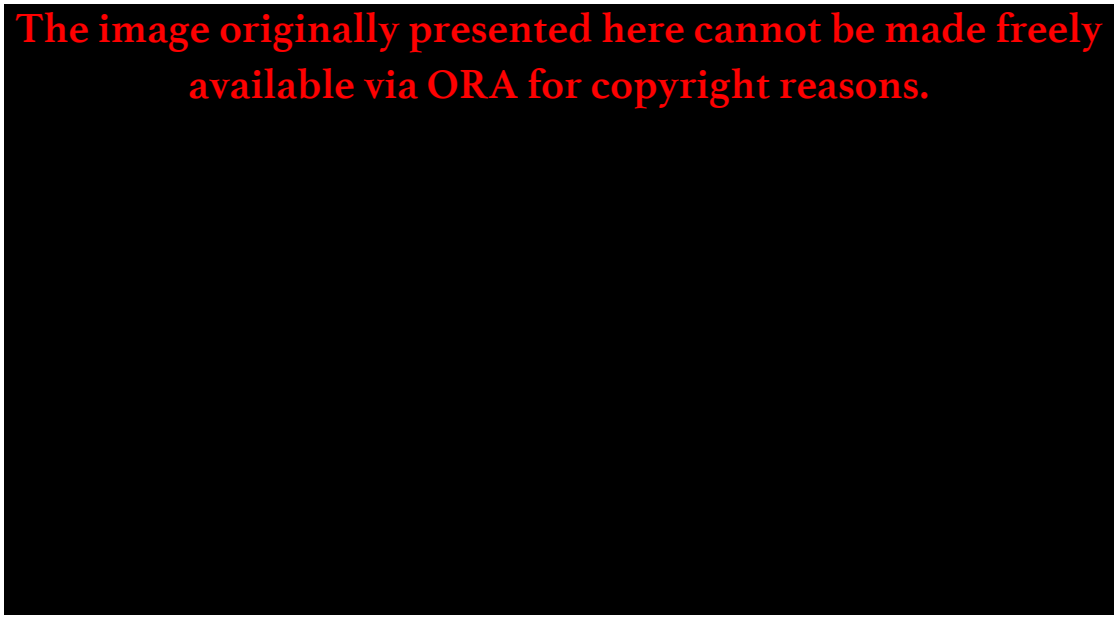


Fig.166 – Detail from figure 164.

Several details in the painting reflect the minutiae of the epic in the form of textual markers, including the θρόνου ... δαιδαλέου (curiously-wrought chair – *Od.* 10.314–315) and the θρῆνυς (footstool – *Od.* 10.315).[294] These are mentioned twice in the Homeric account, as above and in *Od.* 10.366-367. The polished table (*Od* 10.369), or perhaps three of them, may be seen in front of the exedra. Peters' proposal that a *baetylus* can be seen on the central table cannot be confirmed by close examination of the painting.[295] Circe's wand is mentioned three times in the epic (*Od.* 10.38, 293, 319) and is probably reflected pictorially in her holding something resembling a twig at the palace door (figure 165). Odysseus bearing his shield in the same scene reflects the advice from Hermes to bear arms before encountering the sorceress (*Od.* 10.293-295).[296] Various interpretations have been put forward for the two branch-like poles in the ground beside the seated Odysseus, which have a string tied between them. The most convincing is offered by Biering, who proposes that

[294] The LSJ entry for δαιδάλ-εος notes that in Homeric epic the adjective is only applied to objects made of metal or wood, the latter certainly being the case here. It is unlikely that the chair in the painting was painted as ἀργυροήλου (*Od.* 10.314), being more wedge-shaped than having legs.
[295] Peters (1963) 29. The object on the table is far too flimsy to be one of the bulbous stone idols, of which the *omphalos* at Delphi is probably the best known. Fehrentz (1991) for a discussion of the baetylus in Roman wallpainting. For a near-contemporary example compare with the central, sacro-idyllic panel on the east wall of the Room of the Masks in the House of Augustus on the Palatine and, for a later Roman representation, a coin of Elagabalus showing the sturdy *baetyl* from Emesa pulled on a cart – Harvard Art Museums, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, 1983.56.240.
[296] Biering proposes that a sword can be seen in Odysseus' right hand when he is sat before Circe, but this is not clearly discernible in any of the images provided in the publication – Biering (1995) 88.

they are Circe's magical herbs drying between two reeds.[297] Von Blanckenhagen believes that a "magic circle" can be seen on the upper right in the palace.[298] This is certainly a curious part of the architecture and a disc-type object does appear to be suspended in front of the pediment of the aedicula, supported by two very flimsy, diagonally-set poles or ropes. Without identifiable parallels in extant Graeco-Roman art, however, we cannot fully understand the meaning of this feature.

Panel seven

The next panel of the frieze (figure 167) survives in too poor a condition for its details to be analysed in any way, other than noting a tree and the outline of rocks in the upper right corner. Biering reproduces only one early watercolour; the artist of the other series seemingly deemed this part of the frescoes unworthy of replication. It also appears that the earlier restorers left the panel in its excavated state, thus the original colours of the Roman artist are preserved.[299]

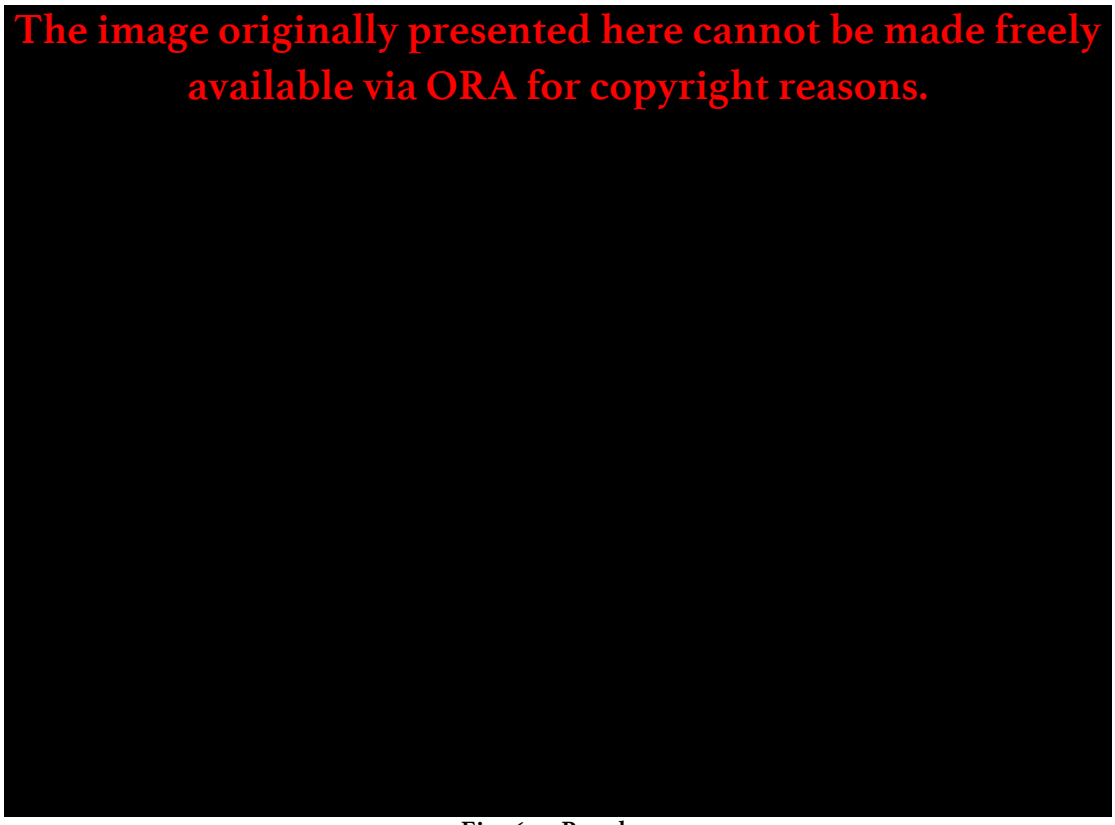

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Fig.167 – Panel 7.

[297] Biering (1995) 84. Von Blanckenhagen suggests "magic brushes" – Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 107.
[298] Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 107.
[299] Biering (1995) 91.

If we were to hypothesise an episode using the *Odyssey* as our guide, noting that it would need to fall between Circe attempting to bewitch Odysseus and the Nekyia (the subject of the next panel), the most obvious suggestion would be the releasing of the companions from the spell which had turned them into animals, as found in *Odyssey* 10.388-399.[300] Representations of this scene are found in several examples of Attic and South Italian vase painting and, most pertinent to this discussion, on the Tabula Rondanini (11H) (figures 168 and 169).[301]

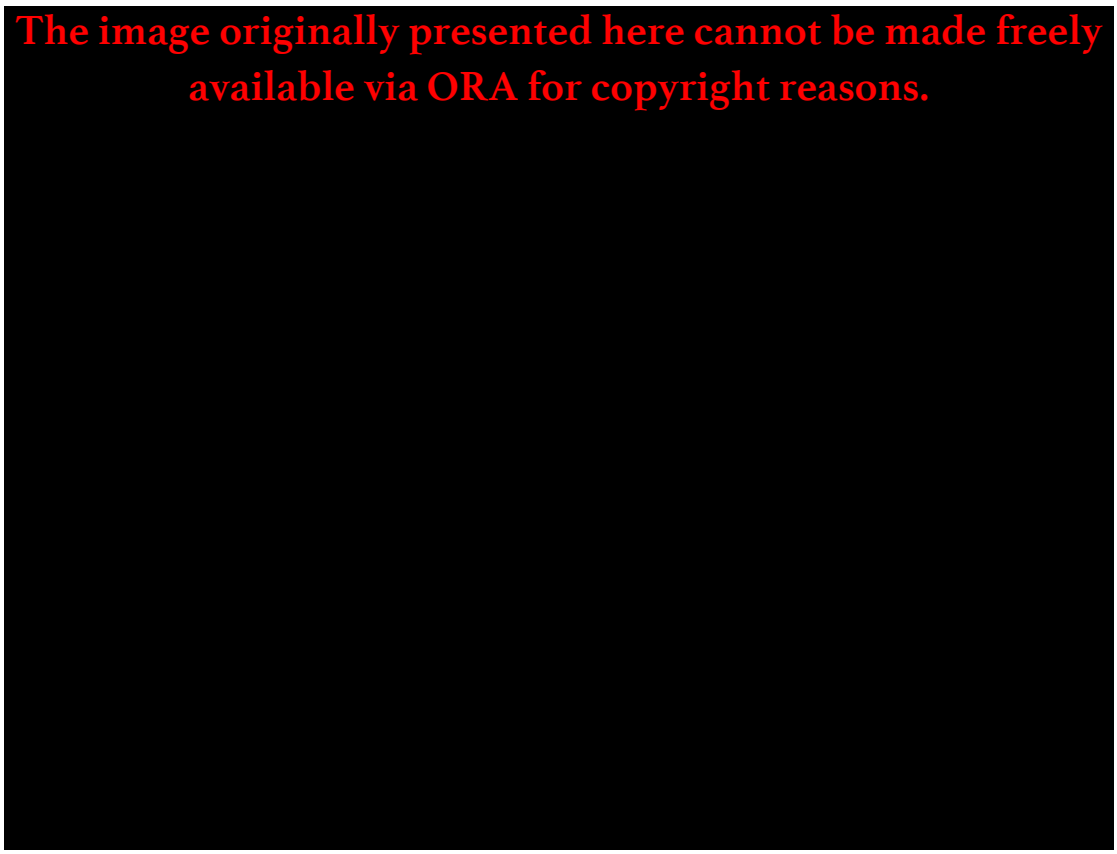


Fig.168 – Tabula Rondanini (11H).

The tabula shows the companions as men with pigs' heads and bears the labels ETAIROI TEΘHPIΩME (companions turned into animals), KIRKH and OΔIΣΣEYΣ in an architectural setting which is clearly intended to be Circe's palace. The other scenes depict Circe at Odysseus' feet and Odysseus led to the palace by Hermes, accompanied by the label OΔIΣΣEI TO MΩLY EPMHΣ (Hermes [gives] the moly to Odysseus). Significantly, at the bottom of the tablet is a larger label informing the

[300] Andreae proposes the restoration of the companions back into men – Andreae (1962) 108-109; Vlad-Borrelli suggests the leaving of Circe's island – Vlad-Borrelli (1956) 294.
[301] Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe, Inv. 147975 MN. Image and discussion in Squire (2011) 401.

reader that the scene is ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΔΙΗΓΗΣΗΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΑΛΚΙΝΟΥΝ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΠΠΑ (from the description to Alcinous of book 10).

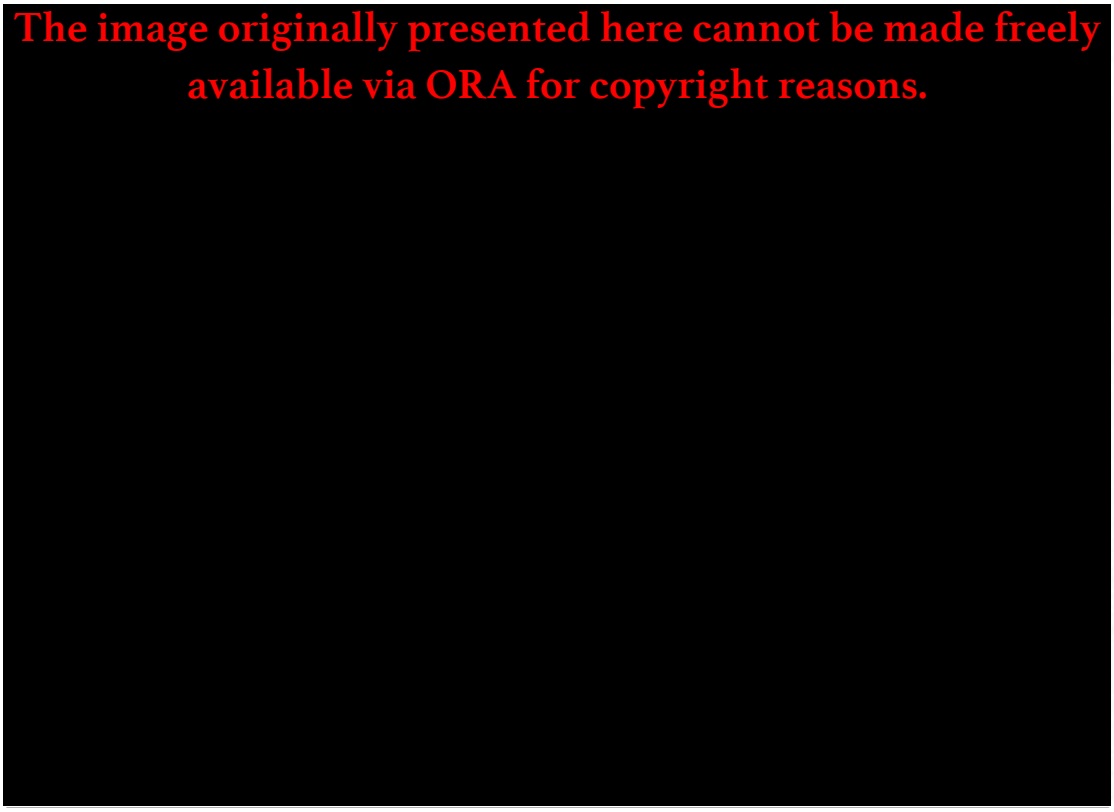


Fig.169 – Drawing of the Tabula Rondanini (11H) after Jahn (1873) taf. IV.

The transformation scene is therefore found in other archaeological contexts which probably originate either in Rome or its vicinity, within an inclusive date range of around fifty or so years, bearing direct textual reference to the *Odyssey*, and so its inclusion in the Esquiline frescoes is a distinct possibility.[302] As the tragic youth Elpenor features in the Nekyia scene which follows (*Od.* 10.550-560) we might also hypothesise that his death after falling from a high ladder featured somewhere in the panel. Eleanor Winsor Leach incorrectly argues that there is no pictorial allusion to Circe's magic in panel six (somehow missing the magic wand, magical herbs, and possibly even a magic circle), contrasting with the "overt" magic in the Tabula Rondanini (11H), and therefore rejects the idea that the reversal of the spell was the subject of the seventh panel.[303]

[302] Although the exact provenance of the Tabula Rondanini (11H) is not known several of the Tabulae Iliacae were found in Rome or in the area surrounding the city – Squire (2011) 65-67, 401.
[303] Winsor Leach (1988) 45. Lowenstam urges caution in Leach's interpretation, listing the factual inaccuracies in the article – Lowenstam (1995) n.36.

Panel eight

The content of the next panel, however, is unmistakeable: here is the Nekyia where Odysseus, following Circe's instructions, summons the spirits of the dead from the Underworld (figure 170).

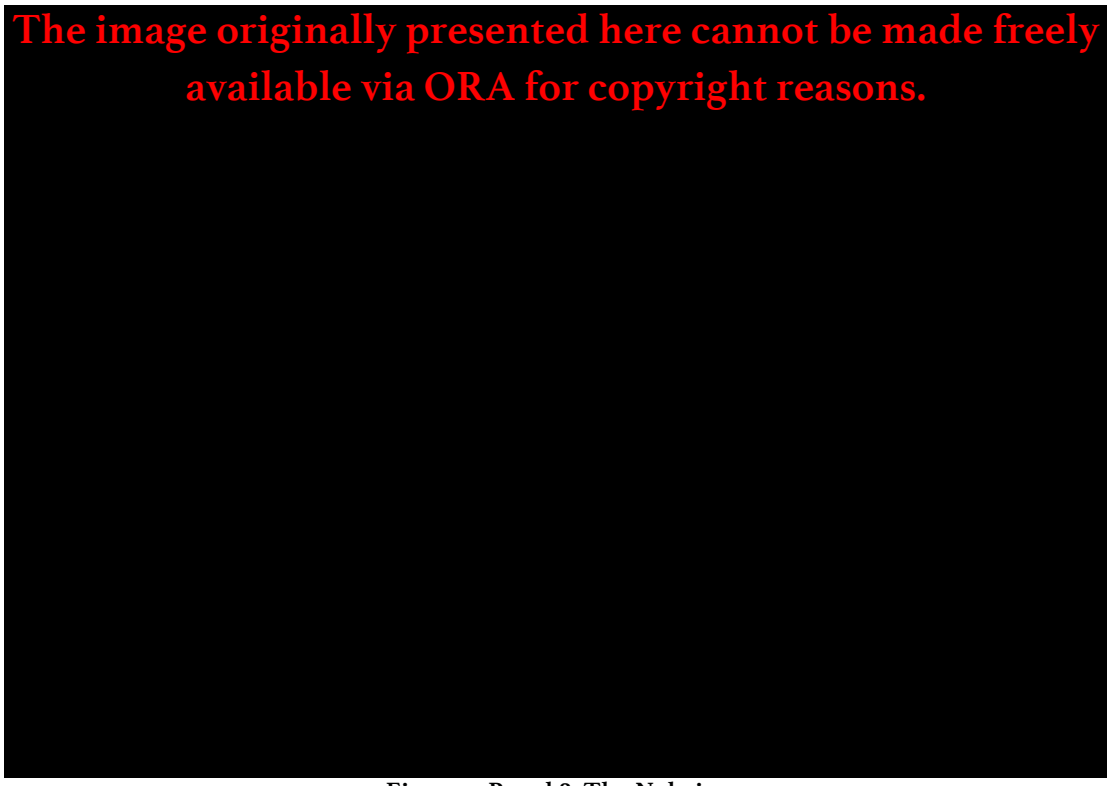


Fig.170 – Panel 8: The Nekyia.

Both the panel and the Homeric narrative begin with the Greeks' journey to the house of Hades. At the end of book ten Circe ordered Odysseus to hoist the white sails of his ship – visible on the left side of the panel – and assured him that the gods would guide him to his destination (*Od.* 10.503-540). Odysseus' description of his arrival on the island of the Cimmerians, where the entranceway to Hades was located, is faithfully rendered in the panel:

> There we came and beached our ship, and took out the sheep, and ourselves went along beside the stream of Oceanus until we came to the place of which Circe had told us. Here Perimedes and Eurylochus held the victims, while I drew my sharp sword from beside my thigh, and dug a pit of a cubit's length this way and that, and around it poured a libation to all the dead … But when with vows and prayers I had made supplication to the tribes of the dead, I took the sheep and cut their throats over the pit, and the dark blood

> flowed. Then there gathered from out of Erebus the ghosts of those that are dead, brides, and unwed youths, and toil-worn old men, and frisking girls with hearts still new to sorrow, and many, too, that had been wounded with bronze-tipped spears, men slain in battle, wearing their blood-stained armor.
>
> (*Odyssey* 11.20-41)

Two male landscape figures recline on the rocks at the entranceway to the island, perhaps unlabelled because their presence is not signified in the Homeric account, unlike the textual ἀκταί, κρήνη and νομαί of the earlier panels. Peters suggests that they may be personnifications of the Acheron and Cocytus, mentioned by Circe in *Odyssey* 10.513-514, but notably alongside the Styx and Pyriphlegethon.[304] Rambaldi alternatively suggests that they represent the land of the Cimmerians itself.[305]

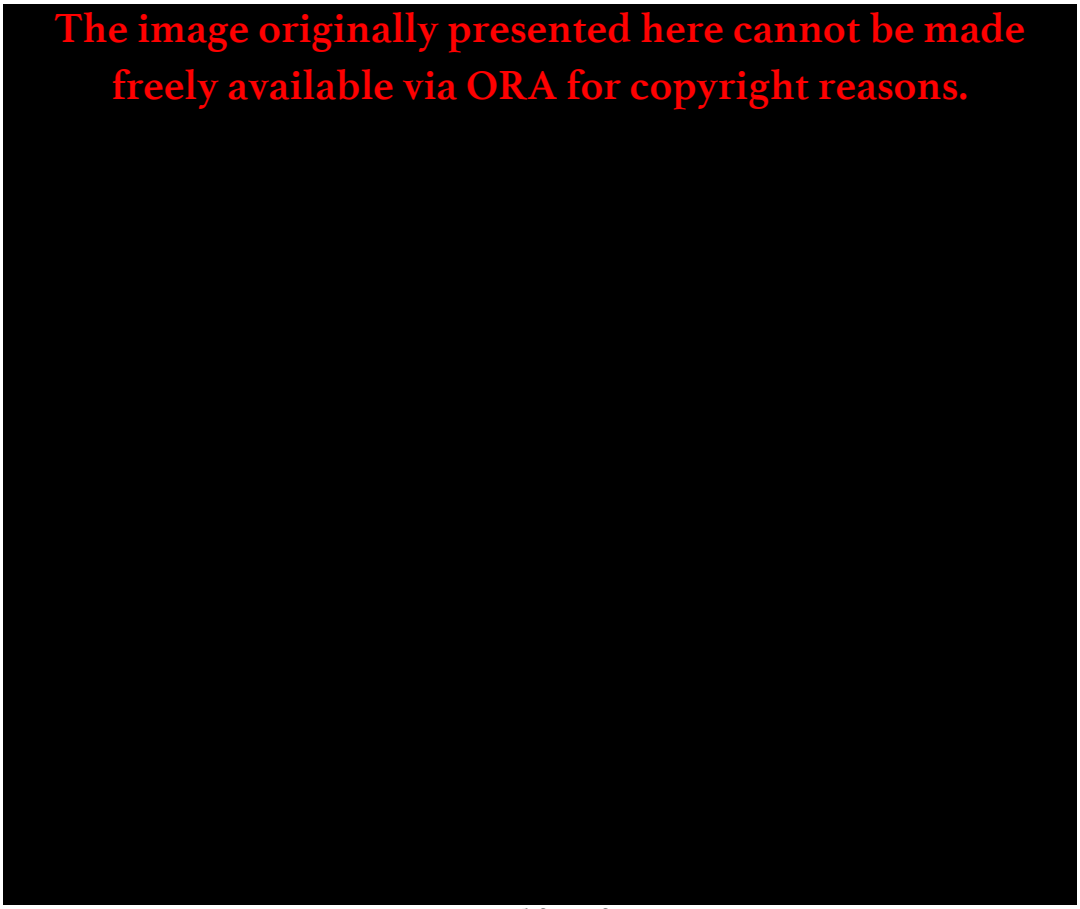


Fig.171 – Detail from figure 170.

[304] Peters does not suggest why these two rivers would be represented at the expense of the others – Peters (1963) 30. Nogara sees the lower figure as the personnification of Acheron but the upper the genius of the mountain – Nogara (1902) 47.
[305] Rambaldi (2001) 4.

On the left of figure 171 two men hold an animal upside down by its legs while making the prescribed sacrifice to the spirits of the dead. In the centre Odysseus speaks to the seer Teiresias – [T]EIRECIAC – who, true to the text, carries his golden staff (*Od.* 11.91). ODYCCEYC is clearly labelled but bears an unusual addition by the restorer in the form of a white torque around his neck.[306] The labels for the companions are extremely faint with that for the man on the left illegible at excavation. Woermann, writing in 1876, notes its condition but remarks that the other clearly denotes Eurylochus and identifies the letters EYR....OS.[307] Biering reasonably suggests, however, that Woermann was commenting 'with Homer in hand' and that the reading cannot be confirmed when analysing the remaining letters today (figures 172 and 173).[308] Indeed, other than the C (sigma) at the end of the word, none of Woermann's proposed letters can be reconstructed from the surviving epigraphy at all.

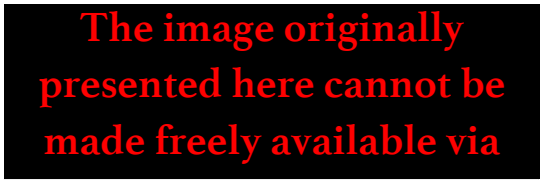


Fig.172 – Monochrome representation as found in Biering.

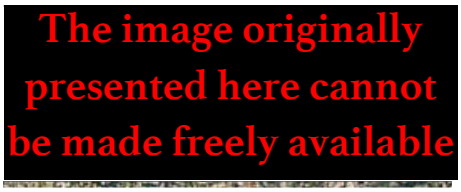


Fig.173 – Detail from panel 8 as it appears today, colours enhanced for legibility.

High up on the cliffs we see the tragic Elpenor – ΕΛΠΗΝΟΡ – sitting with his head in his hands. This is a textual marker referring to *Odyssey* 11.51-81 where Elpenor is the first of the spirits to approach Odysseus and asks him for correct burial on Aeaea. But as to the others among the deceased who are named Biering notes that the artist(s)' choice makes no immediately recognisable sense.[309] Leda, Phaedra and Ariadne are identified by labels but do not play a prominent role in the epic (*Od.* 11.298-321). Yet others who converse with the hero in the text are not identified by epigraphy and notably absent is his mother Anticleia, even though their conversation lasts for over seventy lines in the epic (*Od.* 11.151-225). Rambaldi suggests that she can be "sicuramente" recognised among the women and Croisille writes that "sans doute" the figure is Anticleia, although not specifying which

[306] Biering (1995) 102.
[307] Woermann (1876) 11 and n.38.
[308] Biering (1995) 127.
[309] Biering (1995) 98.

among the women she might be.[310] Nogara tentatively suggests that she might be found in the foreground on the right of Teiresias, owing to the stooping stance, perhaps denoting her advanced age.

In considering why these three women were singled out by the artist it is interesting to compare with their prominence in single panel wallpainting. The comparanda is naturally later and concentrated in the Bay of Naples, rather than Rome, but the houses of Pompeii reveal that Leda, Ariadne and Phaedra are found in numerous single panel frescoes whereas all of the other women named in the epic account – with the exception of Antiope, who is found in a single example – are not found in extant Roman art.[311] According to Jürgen Hodske's catalogue of the mythological scenes in Pompeian wallpainting Leda is found in eleven individual panels, Phaedra in eight and Ariadne in an impressive fifty three.[312] Even accounting for local Campanian taste these numbers are significant and reveal that the three women given prominence by the artist(s) in Rome were clearly popular in a domestic Roman context. Anticleia, although crucial to the Homeric narrative, does not appear in a single extant example of domestic wallpainting.[313]

The fresco artist(s) in Rome has therefore chosen to capture a particular moment in the Homeric Nekyia in the panel, specifically the part of the epic where Odysseus speaks to Teiresias, Elpenor and the doomed women. In the *Odyssey*, after the description of the women in Hades, the textual narrative is immediately interrupted by a reminder that the Ithacan's story is in fact being relayed to listeners in the palace of the Phaeacians (*Od* 11.333-377) and it is only in the second part of Odysseus' speech that the spirits of the dead heroes of the Trojan War are encountered (*Od.* 11.378-567). The subject of the painting therefore follows the epic text closely, evoking as it does the first part of Odysseus' tale, but making no pictorial reference to the male warriors of the Trojan War who are later encountered in the underworld (*Od.* 11.385-562). Indeed, other than the presence of a

[310] Rambaldi (2001) 4; Croisille (2005) 158; Nogara (1902) 48. Leach comments upon Odysseus' "interview with his mother" – Leach (1988) 320.
[311] Other women mentioned in this part of the *Odyssey* but not labelled are Tyro, Antiope, Alcmene, Megara, Epicaste, Chloris, Iphimedeia, Procris, Maera, Clymene, Eriphyle and Arete (*Od. 11*.235-341). Epicaste and Maera do not have entries in *LIMC*; Klymene has only been identified in an Attic bowl of the mid 5th century BC – Kossatz-Deissmann (1992) 'Klymene III'; Eriphyle is only known from Etruscan and Greek art, with no Roman-era examples extant – Lezzi-Hafter (1986) 'Eriphyle I'. Antiope is found in a single example from the House of the Citharist (1, 4, 5.25-28), MNN 112283.
[312] Hodske (2007), Leda pp.219-221, Phaedra pp.232-233, Ariadne pp.154-163.
[313] Touchfeu-Meynier, 'Antikleia' in *LIMC* I.1 (1981) 828-830.

group of three unlabelled and unidentifiable male figures on the extreme right of the panel, two of whom bear spears but are not dressed as warriors, the 'heroes' section seems to have been deliberately omitted. Thus Lowenstam's suggestion that the tradition of the Polygnotan painting directly influenced the *Odyssey* frescoes in Rome can be called into question, certainly in regard to this detail, notwithstanding the more pressing issue regarding the lack of interim evidence in Greek or Roman painting directly or indirectly linking the two.[314]

Furthermore, there is no suggestion of a 'descent' into Hades (as there is not in Homer) in panel eight since within the same visual plane we see the sacrifice made to awaken the shades and their presentation to Odysseus. Then in panel nine the damned in Tartarus appear on the same level of the landscape. This contrasts with Polygnotus' Nekyia painting in which Odysseus is described as καταβεβηκὼς ἐς τὸν Ἅιδην (having gone down into Hades – Paus. 10.28.1). Instead, in panel eight of the Esquiline frescoes, and in the *Odyssey,* the spirits are described as coming ὑπὲξ Ἐρέβευς (from out of Erebus) into Odysseus' earthly sphere (*Od.* 11.37).

[314] Lowenstam (1995) 216-217.

Panel nine

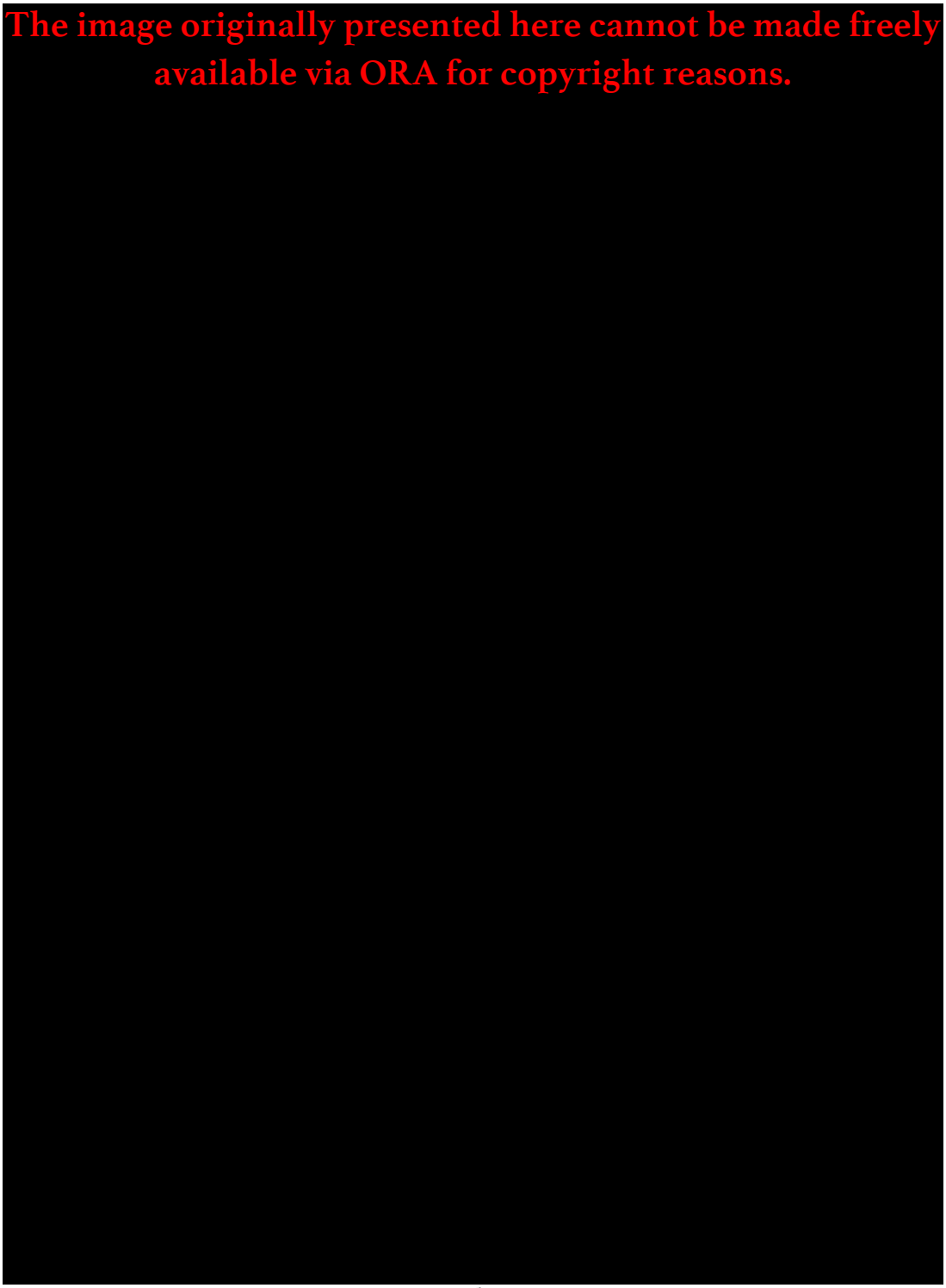
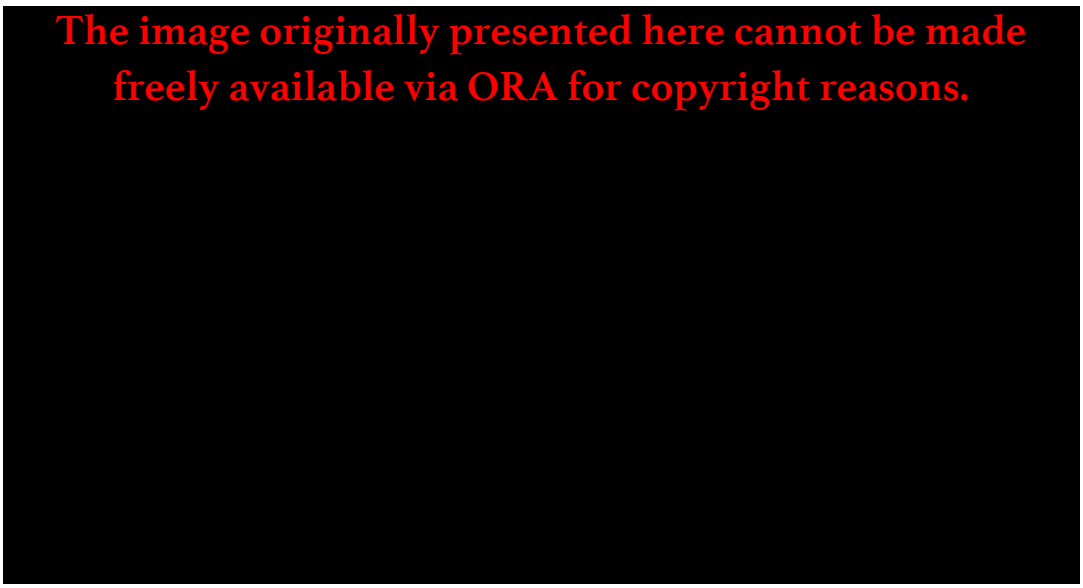


Fig.174 – Panel 9: Tartarus.

Panel 9 is only half of the width of the previous seven, indicating that at this point the frieze terminated on its original wall and possibly, noting the lack of red pillar on the right hand side, continued on the other side of an opening, perhaps a

doorway or window, or even on a perpendicular wall.[315] The change in location from the earthly realm to Tartarus is indicated by the break effected by the painted pillar and the presence of those punished for their crimes against the gods. As there is no obvious difference in the rendering of the landscape (compare figures 170 and 174, positioned sequentially below) the Roman viewer was clearly expected to understand, through his familiarity with the epic, that the narrative had now moved to the darker regions of the Underworld.



Figures 170 and 174.

Reasonably well-preserved labels identify two of the damned and create textual markers referring the viewer directly to the Homeric account: TITYOC, having his liver pecked out by birds, and CICYΦOC, rolling the boulder up the cliff (*Od.* 11.572-600). Faint letters are detectable above the head of the man assuming the stance of a hunter whom we would deduct, being familiar with the Homeric account, to be the doomed Orion. There are, however, difficulties with this identification when considering the remaining lettering of the label (figure 175a).

[315] Biering considers a window most likely, considering that the plaster on the right edge of the panel is only damaged in its upper parts – Biering (1995) 175. Andreae's proposal of door of width 2.5m and height 5m is based on the misreading of the wall height being 5.5m which cannot be verified since there is no evidence that the floor of the room was excavated – Andreae (1962) 113-114; Biering (1995) 169. Nogara suggests that the opening was created after the frieze had been painted, thus destroying the right half of the original scene, arguing that it would be illogical for the artist to choose such a limited space to paint "una delle sue scene più interessanti" – Nogara (1902) 48.



Fig.175a – Label as found in original fresco, contrast enhanced for legibility.



Fig.175b – Label as interpreted by Biering.

Von Blanckenhagen proposes that the man's *lagobolon* (hunting stick) was added by the early restorer and rejects the OPION reading, preferring instead ΠΟΙΝΑ (punishment) as suggested by Zancani-Montuoro, who considers the proximity of the Sisyphus and Orion figures to be indicative of the latter actively participating in the former's punishment by physically preventing him from pushing the boulder to the top of the cliff. She compares with two South Italian vases in which a man identifiable as Sisyphus through his straining against a large boulder (although in neither case labelled) was 'overseen' by a demonic figure wearing hunting attire, who wielded a stick and was labelled ΠΟΙΝΑ.[316] In the article's conclusion, however, Zancani-Montuoro admits the difficulties of her interpretation, noting that in the vases the punishment figure is female, which is certainly not the case in the Roman fresco,[317] and also adds that the letters ΠΟΙΝΑ do not fit with the traces of painted epigraphy on the *Odyssey* panel. [318] Consequently this interpretation remains largely unconvincing.

The two artists responsible for the earliest watercolours of the frescoes also seem to have had difficulty reading the label and neither made attempt at restoration. The first, as found in figure 174, reproduces the letters P/CIY[- - -] and the second TV[.]YC.[319] Nogara, working from early photographs of the frescoes,

[316] Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 109; Zancani-Montuoro (1963) citing MNN 81666, Munich 3297 and a metope from the Heraion at the mouth of the River Sele near Paestum.
[317] The sex of the demons on the South Italian vases is also noted by Holland (2003) 260.
[318] Zancani-Montuoro (1963) 77.
[319] Biering (1995) taf. 22.

interprets the letters as CIY–.[320] In Biering's monograph detailed images from the fresco are included alongside monochrome interpretations of the labels. The first eight – AKTAI to ANTIΦATHC – are published by Matranga but Biering does not state where the remainder are from; presumably they are his own interpretation of the extant paintwork, yet there are a number of difficulties when comparing the two images of the label which he reproduces (figures 175a and 175b).[321] The iota is clear in both and the V immediately to its right in figure 175a is very distinct, but appears to have been shifted too far to the right in the monochrome rendering (figure 175b), which obviously leans towards the OPION interpretation. Lowenstam interprets the letters as CIV–, suggesting that they may instead refer to another landscape personnification, while Müller reconstructs the label as [λ]EIM[wn] – meadow –reflecting *Odyssey* 11.539, but similarly problematic with regard to the extant letters.[322] The difficulty is compounded by the fact that within the extant frieze there is neither an upper nor a lower case omega which which we can compare the formation of the letter in the name Ὼρίων.

In the lowest register of panel 9 the much better-preserved letters [dan]AIΔ[e]C denote the presence of the Danaids (figure 176). Whereas Tityus, Sisyphus and Orion are mentioned by Odysseus in his description of Tartarus (*Od.* 11.572-600) the daughters of Danaus are not found anywhere in the *Odyssey* and appear to be an insertion by the artist. Aeschylus is known to have produced a now-lost trilogy of plays based around the Danaids which saw the women purified through water carrying,[323] but their punishment as expressed in the panel – gathering water and pouring it into a leaking storage vessel – is argued by Eva Keuls only to be identifiable in South Italic art of the fourth century BC onwards where an Underworld setting is clearly discernible.[324] Lowenstam counters Keuls, however, with the observation that in *none* of the examples cited are the women labelled explicitly as Danaids.[325]

[320] Accepting the interpretation of the figure as Orion, Nogara considers the label to be a mistake on the part of the ancient artist – Nogara (1901) 49.
[321] Biering (1995) 123-128; Matranga (1852) tav.6.
[322] Müller (1913) 146, n.2; Lowenstam (1995) n.11.
[323] *Aeschylus: Fragments. Edited and Translated by Alan H. Sommerstein* (2009) 39.
[324] Keuls (1986) 337.
[325] Lowenstam (1995) 210-211

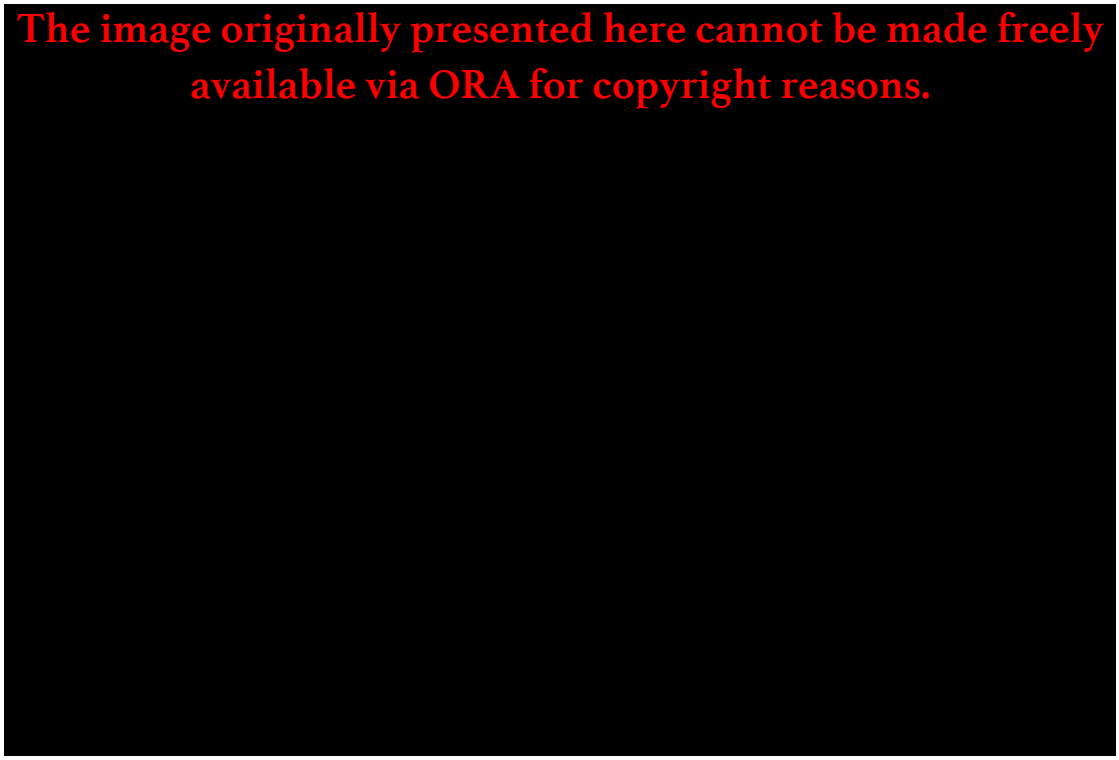


Fig.176 – The Danaids in panel 9 as they appear in the Vatican Museums today.

In literary sources the punishment afforded to the daughters of Danaus in Hades (rather than the notion of a purification ritual) is found exclusively in the work of Roman writers. Particularly pertinent to the chronological and geographical context of the *Odyssey* frescoes is Lucretius who, writing in the mid first century BC, refers to the Danaids as dwelling alongside Tityus and Sisyphus in "deep Acheron" (Lucr. 3.978-1023): "this, I think, is meant by the tale of the damsels (*puellas*) in the flower of their age pouring water into a riddled urn, which, for all their trying, can never be filled".[326] Horace describes the doomed women by name – *Danai puellas* (Hor. *Carm. III*.11.23-32):

> Let Lyde hear about the virgins' crime and their well-known punishment: the urn that was never full because the water leaked away right at the bottom, and the fate which, however delayed, lies in wait for sin even in the depths of Orcus. Those unholy ones (yes, unholy, for what more heinous crime could they have committed?) had the heart to murder their bridegrooms with cold steel.[327]

[326] Trans. W.H.D. Rouse (1924). The murders which caused the Danaids to be sent to Tartarus was embossed on Pallas' sword belt in Verg. *Aen.* 10.495-499.
[327] Trans. Niall Rudd (2004). O'Sullivan discusses the Epicurean leanings of Lucretius and Horace and suggests that the torment in Hades was an allegorical representation of the torment of the soul,

Tibullus, also writing in the Late Republic, describes a similar scene (Tib. 1.3.71-82):

> Then at the gate upon black Cerberus hiss his wide-mouthed snakes as he keeps his sentry-watch before the bronzeshod doors. There is Ixion, who dared to offer force to Juno: on the swift wheel whirl his guilty limbs. And there is Tityos stretched over nine roods of land; on his black vitals feed the birds that never tire. There too is Tantalus, and pools around him; but on the instant, ere he drinks, the wave flies from his raging thirst. And the offspring of Danaus for slighting the godhead of Venus carry the waters of Lethe into leaking butts.[328]

Artistic representations of women pouring water as a punishment are relatively scarce but also seem to begin around the mid to late first century BC.[329] Examples include a sarcophagus relief in the Villa Giulia in Rome where the women fill a vessel cracked at the bottom (figures 177a and b), with the Underworld setting assured by the presence of Ocnus and Cerberus.[330] Another representation is found on a Late Republican altar in the Vatican Museums (figures 178a and b) in which six women gather around a leaking pithos with Ocnus weaving his rope on the left and the ass grazing on the right. None of the women bear epigraphy but the Underworld setting in each strongly suggests that these are the Danaids, particularly when viewed alongside contemporary literary accounts.



Fig.177a – Late Republican sarcophagus showing Underworld scenes.

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and so a similar interpretation was available to the Roman viewer of the *Odyssey* frescoes who could undertake the transformative journey walking alongside Odysseus – O'Sullivan (2007).

[328] Trans. G.P. Goold (1913).

[329] Keuls argues that Roman curiosity about the Danaids' punishment was provoked by a statue group installed near the Palatine Temple of Apollo in 28 BC – Keuls (1974) 4, 105, 112. The group is mentioned in Prop. 2.31.4 and Ovid, *Am*. 2.2.4 but probably dates later than the *Odyssey* frescoes.

[330] The various publications in which this sarcophagus appears disagree on its precise dating. Keuls suggests the 1st century BC but in an earlier publication gives the 2nd century AD, which seems too late on stylistic grounds – Keuls (1974) 178, (1986) no.26. Gasparri (1972) 115-126 offers the third quarter of the 1st century BC and Dunbabin (1986) 237 the Augustan or early Julio-Claudian period.

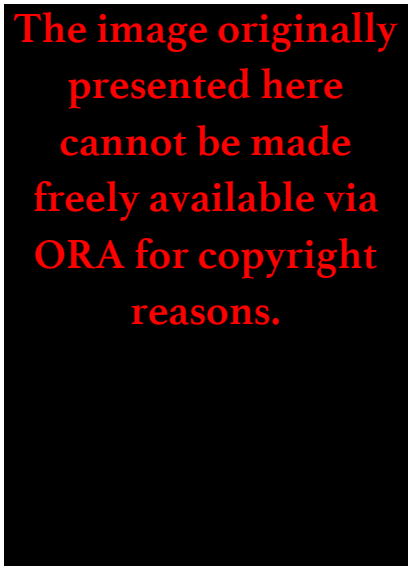


Fig.177b – Detail from figure 177a.



Fig.178a – Sketch by F. Rastaini from 1788 showing the altar relief in the Vatican Museums.



Fig.178b – Detail from Late Republican altar, sketched in figure 178a.

The Esquiline panel differs from the stone reliefs in depicting a much larger vessel – almost a tank – into which the Danaids empty their amphorae, and there is no discernible leak in the container, but the Underworld setting is again unmistakable. The innovation displayed by the Roman-era artist in including this particular, extra-Homeric myth into his Nekyia painting draws comment from Bastos Marques and Regis Cavicchioli: "This myth is mostly cited by Latin authors, which seems to demonstrate the importance of an eminently Roman literary tradition on the choice of figurative motifs and their combinations, appropriating Greek traditions in a unique way."[331] Lowenstam further suggests that "Never before had a Greek or Roman joined these two myths in art or literature, according to our extant evidence."[332]

The Polygnotan Nekyia

With the eighth and ninth panels of the *Odyssey* frescoes we are in the unusual position of being able to compare the Roman artists' work with Polygnotus' Nekyia painting in Delphi by means of Pausanias' detailed description. And, from the very opening lines, we discover that there are several differences between the two, beginning with Odysseus' physical descent into Hades in the Greek painting, as discussed above. It soon becomes clear that Polygnotus included several details not related to Odysseus' description and is instead described by Eva Keuls as "a vast panorama of conventional underworld imagery."[333] Included in the Delphian fresco, for example, is Charon whom Pausanias believes Polygnotus took from the *Minyad* epic (Paus. 10.28.1-3) since he plays no part in the Homeric account. Pausanias also describes a man being throttled by his own father (10.28.4), the demon Eurynomus (10.28.7), Ocnus plaiting a cord (10.29.1), Theseus and Perithous (10.29.9-10), the daughters of Pandareus (10.30.1-2), Acteon (10.30.5), Orpheus (10.30.6), Marsyas (10.30.9-10), Meleager (10.31.3-4), Hector (10.31.5), Memnon and Sarpedon (10.31.5-6), Paris (10.31.8) and Penthesilea (10.31.8-9). The absence of the latter five warriors from the Homeric Nekyia can be explained by their being enemies of the Greeks, and naturally not seeking interaction with Odysseus, yet the Polygnotan painting also includes what are arguably key elements of the epic

[331] Bastos Marques and Regis Cavicchioli (2009) 16.
[332] Lowenstam (1995) 209.
[333] Keuls (1974) 39.

narrative which are missing from the Esquiline panels: Anticleia (10.29.8) and the punishment of Tantalus, which Pausanias curiously considers to have been inspired by an extra-Homeric source – τῷ Ἀρχιλόχου λόγῳ (the account of Archilochus – 10.31.12) – even though it is found in *Odyssey* 11.582.[334]

The details which appear in both paintings are those which occur in the *Odyssey* itself. Only one or two appear to be comparable: the interaction between Odysseus and Teiresias, which takes the form of: "[Odysseus] squatting on his feet, and holding his sword over the trench, towards which the seer Teiresias is advancing" (Paus. 10.29.8) and the description of "the form of a cliff, and Sisyphus, the son of Aeolus, is trying his hardest to push the rock up it" (10.31.10). The two companions who carry out the sacrifice feature in both Nekyiai, and are named as Perimedes and Eurylochus by Pausanias but, as explored above, these may not necessarily have been the names given to the pair in the Esquiline frescoes. Other protagonists are present in both but differ in the details: in the Polygnotan painting Tityus "has been reduced to nothing by continuous torture, an indistinct and mutilated phantom" (10.29.3); Elpenor "has on instead of clothes a mat, such as is usual for sailors to wear" (10.29.9);[335] and Ariadne and Phaedra are seated on a rock and a swing (10.29.3-4), rather than approaching Odysseus as they do in the Roman fresco.[336] Particularly interesting are two consecutive descriptions by Pausanias:

> The women beyond Penthesilea are carrying water in broken pitchers; one is depicted as in the bloom of youth, the other is already advanced in years. There is no separate inscription on either woman, but there is one common to the pair, which states that they are of the number of the uninitiated (τῶν οὐ μεμυημένων γυναικῶν) (Paus. 10.31.9-10).

> There is also in the painting a jar (πίθος), and an old man, with a boy and two women. One of these, who is young, is under the rock; the other is beside the old man and of a like age to his. The others are carrying water, but you will guess that the old woman's water-jar is broken. All that remains of the water in the sherd she is pouring out again into the jar. We inferred that these people too were of those who had held of no account the rites at Eleusis (Paus. 10.31.11).

[334] Nogara notes that the earliest commentators on the Esquiline frieze sought to establish a dependent relationship with the Polygnotan painting, but acknowledges that although there is a shared subject there are vast discrepancies in their respective artistic treatments – Nogara (1902) 48.
[335] The Greek word here is φορμὸν, which LSJ defines as "a seaman's cloak of coarse plaited stuff".
[336] Polygnotus appears to have omitted Leda from his painting, who is mentioned in the Homeric Nekyia and labelled in the Esquiline panel.

Keuls argues that Pausanias is describing two separate scenes, with the label only applicable to one set of women, yet Campbell Bonner and C. Robert consider both descriptions to be of a single scene.[337] Might the female water carriers in the Polygnotan fresco be the Danaids? Their presentation as women carrying water in broken hydriai, towards a pithos, sounds very similar to the women in the Roman fresco. Since Pausanias does not mention the Danaids in this context, however, even though he was certainly aware of their existence (*cf* Paus. 2.37.1-2) it seems unlikely and we may suppose that the women in the Polygnotan Nekyia instead reflect the legends concerning water carrying as punishment as found on the South Italic vases of the fourth century BC.[338] The artist of the Late Republican era seems instead to have been influenced by newly-popular stories concerning the Danaids in the Underworld, and adopted and adapted the pre-existing visual scheme of uninitiated water carriers for his depiction. This supports the wider proposal of this thesis that the extra-Homeric insertions found throughout the various epic friezes are relevant to the geographical and chronological context in which they are found: on this occasion reflecting the emergence of a particular version of a myth occurring in art and literature at a specific time (the Late Republic) and specific place (the city of Rome).

Panel ten

The excavation history of the penultimate panel in this analysis (figure 179) is unclear as, instead of it being taken to the Vatican Museums like the other panels of the frieze, it somehow became part of the Gorga Collection and arrived at the Palazzo Massimo alle Terme in 1954. Biering suggests that it was given directly to the tenor Evangelista Gorga "unter der Hand" some time after 1933 as an exhibition of the Gorga Collection held in the same year made no mention of the fragments. The excavator in question was probably one who was present during the underground works for the Metro on the Via Cavour site during the early 1940s.[339]

[337] Keuls (1974) 39-41; Bonner (1902) 165-166; Robert (1892).
[338] Keuls (1974) for the role of generic water carriers in Hades.
[339] In the construction works of the 1940s other walls of opus reticulatum and one with *un muro di reticulato con dipiniti* were found, which Biering supposes were the remaining walls of the room in which the *Odyssey* frescoes were found. Unfortunately, further details were not recorded at the time – Biering (1995) 173.

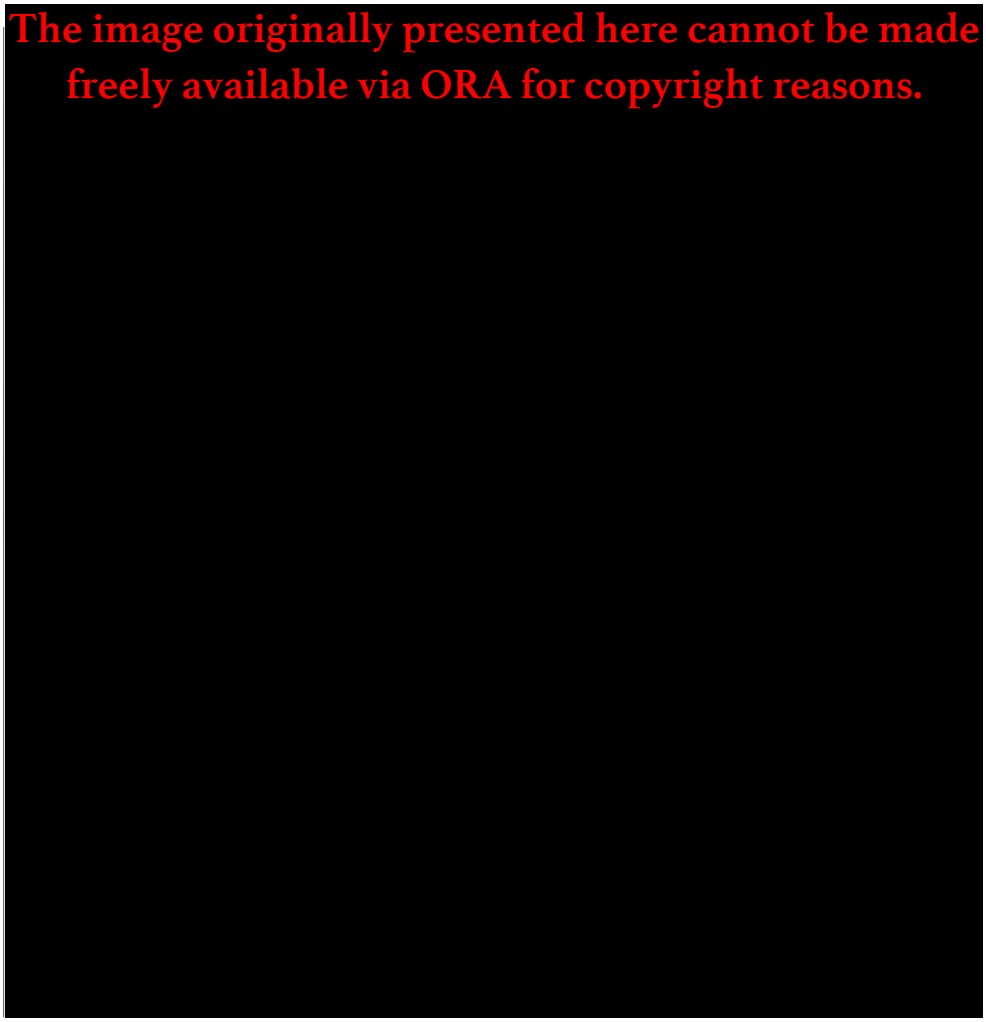


Fig.179 – Panel 10: Odysseus and the sirens.

The repieced fragments show three sirens (figures 180a, b, c) and a landscape figure at the bottom left holding what appears to be an anchor, denoting the marine setting (figure 181). All protagonists direct the viewer's gaze to Odysseus' ship, sailing towards the right (figure 182).



Fig. 180a – Siren.



Fig. 180b – Siren.



Fig. 180c – Siren and label.

The sirens are shown as winged women in long dresses. One shadowy figure on the lower rocks stands with her forearm raised, beckoning sailors to their doom (figure 180a), another siren is now visible only in her lower half (figure 180b) and the third holds her right arm outstretched, again as though beckoning the men (figure 180c). The label beneath the latter gives the Latinate form σιρηνες – CIRHNEC – rather than the Greek σειρηνες. Earlier in the epic narrative Circe, prophesying to Odysseus about this very episode, describes only two sirens (denoted textually by the dual form Σειρήνοιν – *Odyssey* 12.52 – repeated by Odysseus in 12.167). In most extant examples of Graeco-Roman art depicting the scene however, as here, three sirens are overwhelmingly the preferred number.[340]



Fig. 181 – Landscape figure.

A gruesome textual marker takes the form of the bones of the sailors who have succumbed to the sirens' song, evident below the anchor in figure 181 and on the rocks to the figure's left, reflecting the Homeric line, "about them is a great heap of bones of moldering men, and round the bones the skin is shrivelling" (*Od.* 12.45-46). Vlad-Borelli, the first to publish the panel, proposes the existence of an (entirely hypothetical) label NAYTHC (sailor or sea-voyager) accompanying the reclining

[340] Touchfeu-Meynier, 'Odysseus' in *LIMC* VI.6 (1992) nos 150-189.

figure, which she suggests may have been found in a non-extant part of the plaster or have faded over time.[341] For Vlad-Borelli the man's petasos hat identifies him as a voyager and the anchor as a sailor, thus giving him human rather than divine or personified form. Aside from the difficulties concerning the reconstruction of a label from a complete lack of evidence we might also ask how this particular voyager survived the sirens when most others, their bones scattered around as evidence, did not? It is more likely that the reclining figure is a visual representation of *Odyssey* 12.169 – "a god lulled the swollen waves to sleep" – thus in keeping with the other landscape figures of the frieze which overwhelmingly have a textual basis.[342] We may therefore discount Peters' comment that it is "probable here that no direct relation with the story should be looked for" and the figure is merely a personification of the coastline[343] since close reading of the Homeric epic confirms that throughout the *Odyssey* frescoes such figures are often textual and integral to the narrative.



Fig. 182a – Odysseus tied to the mast by his companions – photo of extant fresco.

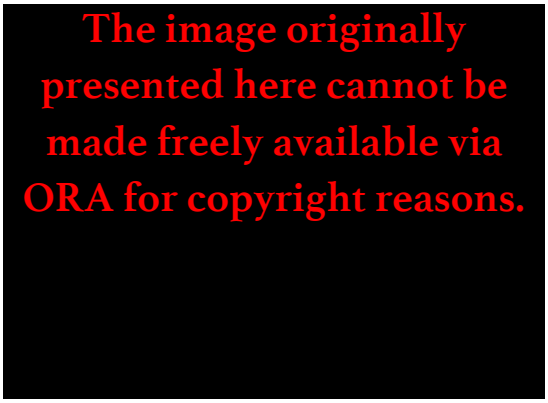


Fig. 182b – Odysseus tied to the mast by his companions – watercolour.

The depiction of Odysseus tied to the mast by his companions forms a further textual marker since this permitted the hero to listen to the sirens' song without being lulled to his doom (*Od.* 12.165-180). Many details of the panel are shared with a single-panel fresco painting from Pompeii (figure 183) which formed a pendant to

[341] Vlad-Borelli (1956) 290. Von Blanckenhagen comments on "a reclining male figure with anchor and petasos, perhaps a 'nautes'", but makes no mention of a label – Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 109.
[342] Croisille offers an interpretation that ranges somewhere between the two, suggesting that this is the personified form of the sailors who have perished on account of the sirens – Croisille (2005) 159.
[343] Peters (1963) 30.

another panel showing the fall of Icarus. The exact provenance of both is unfortunately unknown and they are now found in the British Museum.[344]

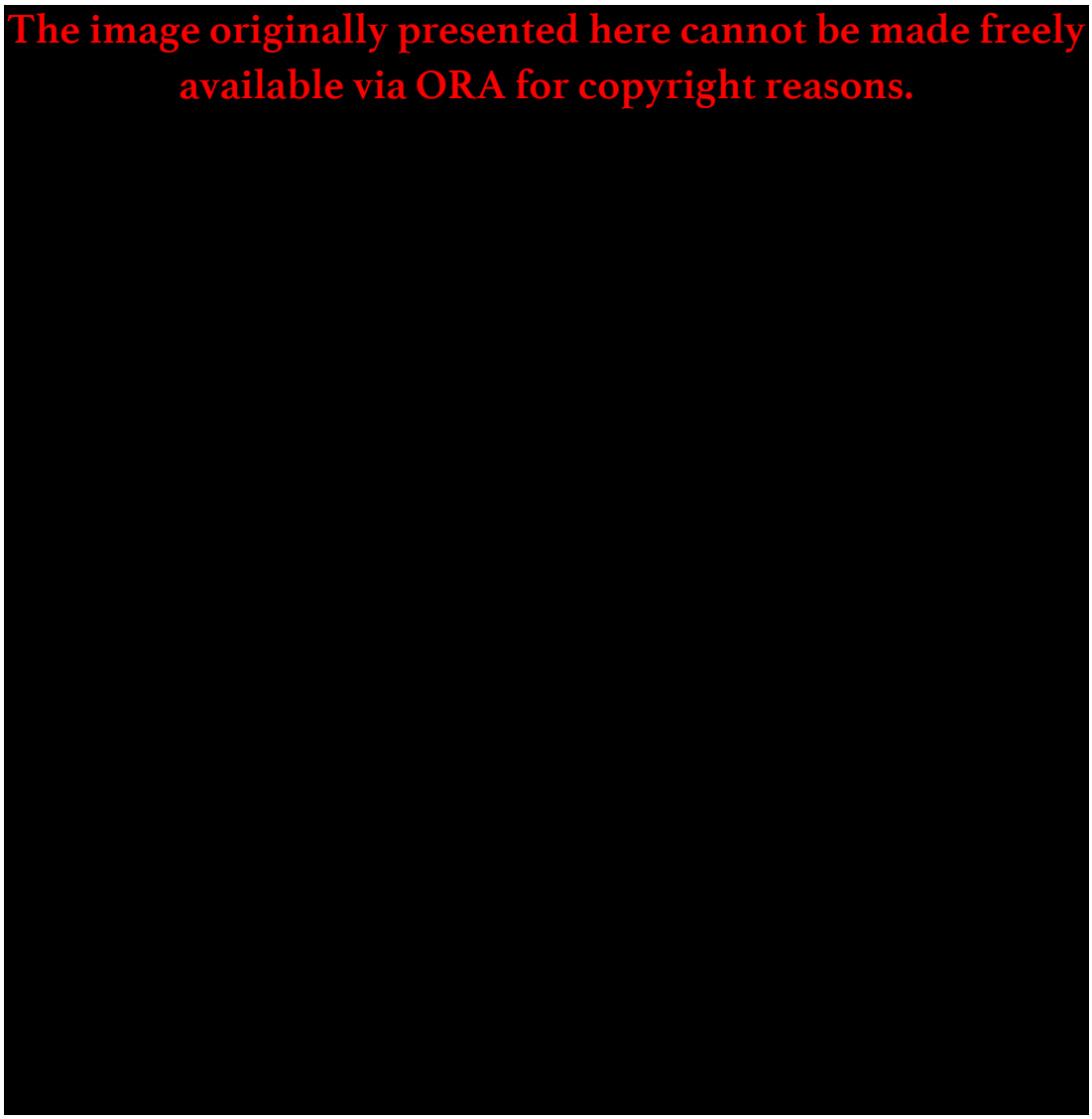


Fig.183 – Odysseus and the Sirens panel painting, London, British Museum, 1867,0508.1354.

Stylistically, the panel bears the features of the Third Pompeian Style with the small-scale figures recessed into the background and so probably dates to the first half of the first century AD.[345] Comparable with the Esquiline fresco is the rocky marine setting, Odysseus tied to the mast of the ship by his companions, three

[344] London, British Museum 1867,0508.1355.

[345] Hodske's catalogue gives "unbekannter Stil" but the stylistic features clearly confirm to his description of panels of the Third Style in which "Die Zusammenstellungen von großen Landschaftsbildern mit mythischen Begebenheiten fehlen während des Vierten Stils fast völlig" – Hodske (2007) kat.822, 110. The British Museum website entry gives a date range of AD 50–75 but says it belongs to the Third Style.

winged sirens and the skeletons of unlucky sailors scattered around the landscape. The siren on the upper right of the London panel is clearly playing the double aulos and, although this is rejected by Biering for the Esquiline siren (figure 180a),[346] it seems the most plausible interpretation for the two lines emitting from what admittedly appears to be her forehead. The pipes and other musical instruments are common in other representations of the scene, even though in the epic the danger comes from the ὄπα κάλλιμον (beautiful voice – *Od.* 12.192) of the women.[347] The artist of the *Odyssey* frescoes has clearly deferred to artistic tradition in this detail (compare the standardised representations of the Desecration and Ransom of Hector in the *Iliad* friezes) rather than aiming for strict textual adherence.

With regard to the original positioning of the sirens panel within the frieze we must consider the narrative chronology of the *Odyssey* itself. Book 11 is entirely devoted to the Nekyia (panels 8 and 9) and book 12 begins with the Greeks returning to bury Elpenor's body on the island of Aeaea (*Od.* 12.1-15), followed by Circe's prophecy and advice concerning the tasks they would have to undertake (*Od.* 12.16-141). The sirens episode is told immediately after (*Od.* 12.165-200). Consequently, unless there was a lengthy depiction of either the burial of Elpenor or Circe's prophecy, which seems unlikely, although not impossible (considering the length of the Laestrygonians episode), the sirens fragments must have followed the extant panels in close succession. Panel 9 was certainly intended to be half-width in size, evidenced by the neat edge on its right hand side which still retains its original plaster, and so seems to have demarcated either the end of wall C or some form of opening in it (discussed above). As the plaster on the left of the Sirens panel is similarly intact it is possible that it was positioned on the same wall but beyond the opening (refer to figure 145). Since the shadowing of its pillar falls on the left, echoing the pillars of panels 6 to 9, this seems the most plausible solution. Biering suggests that the sirens panel may have come from a wall directly opposite wall C, which would have run directly under today's Via Cavour, but this would mean that either 164 lines of the epic were stretched across a whole wall and a half or, even if the perpendicular wall was not decorated, having been opened up with pillars as Biering suggests, that the same number of lines filled at least half of the

[346] Biering (1995) 118.
[347] Touchfeu-Meynier, 'Odysseus' in *LIMC* VI.6 (1992) nos 150-189.

hypothetical opposite wall.[348] Both possibilities seem unlikely. An original placement on wall B can be discounted entirely as its frescoes were considered to be in too poor a condition to remove in the 1850s.[349]

Andreae's reconstruction of wall C is shown in figure 184, which similarly places the sirens panel immediately after the wall opening. The painted decoration which Andreae suggests filled the wall below the *Odyssey* panels must be viewed with caution, however, since it is based on Matranga's misreading of the room height. Vlad-Borrelli favours the same repositioning of the sirens panel and suggests, since all of the expected components are accounted for (Odysseus, companions and sirens) that it, like the Tartarus scene, was also half-width and formed a symmetrical pendant to the former. She notes that it would be out of character within the frieze for two significant episodes from the epic to be squashed into a single panel.[350] Biering questions whether the opening was a door at all, observing that the plaster on the right edge of panel 9 was only damaged in its upper corner, and so proposing instead that it was a high window in the manner of those punctuating the walls in cryptoporticus in the House of the Cryptoporticus in Pompeii.[351]



Fig.184 – Reconstruction of wall C by Bernard Andreae.

A new fragment?

As far as the Esquiline frescoes are concerned we would normally end our analysis at this point. But, in 2013–14, the Palazzo Altemps in Rome held an exhibition of around 1800 items from the Gorga Collection entitled *Evan Gorga: Il Collezionista*

[348] Biering argues that the ratio of panel height to painted pilaster differs in panel 10, suggesting that it was placed on a different wall to the other extant panels – Biering (1995) 174.
[349] A cellar was later built over the northeast corner of the room leading to the poor preservation of wall B and the destruction of the first panel from wall C – Biering (1995) 172.
[350] Vlad-Borrelli (1956) 294.
[351] Biering (1995) 174.

and among them were the twenty repieced fragments shown in figure 185, accompanied by a descriptive label which read simply "probably '[he]tairoi' (companions)".[352] Attempts have clearly been made to restore the panel and what appears to be painted plaster has been inserted to fill in the gaps in the fresco.



Fig.185 – Fragments of fresco from the Gorga Collection, displayed in the Palazzo Altemps in Rome in 2013–14.

The fragments do not appear in the most recent catalogue of the Gorga Collection[353] and are only published as a small note entitled 'Scena odissiaca' by Barbara Maurina in the 1999 edition of the *Bullettino di Archeologia* after a cataloguing project of the fresco fragments from the stores of the Museo Nazionale Romano. Maurina proposes that stylistic considerations, similar spatial depth, brushwork, colour scheme and a Greek label suggest that the fragments probably came from the Esquiline frieze, but offers no detailed analysis of any of the above.[354] It is therefore appropriate to undertake a more in-depth exploration here.

[352] The panel was kindly brought to my attention by Evan Jewell at Columbia University, New York.
[353] Capodiferro (2013).
[354] Maurina (1999).

As discussed above, Evan Gorga was the original owner of the sirens panel, which only came to light in 1954 after it was given as a gift to the Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, and several factors indicate that the new fragmentary panel was also part of the Esquiline frieze.[355] Beginning with its subject matter we can see a melee of men denoted by the label [e]TAIPOI (figure 187), who have been thrown into the sea. At least one is being devoured by a creature with a dog-like head (figure 186), confirming that the scene shows Odysseus' companions at the mercy of the monster Scylla and her canine *protome*, of which this beast is certainly is one. Scylla's torso and arm are visible in the upper centre of the panel (figure 185), grasping an object she may intend to use as a weapon. In the *Odyssey* the Scylla episode follows immediately after the escape from the sirens and so the scene's narrative proximity to the confirmed panels from the Esquiline frescoes make its original provenance as one of them very likely.[356]

And, as with the sirens scene, the fresco here defers to artistic tradition, rather than strictly adhering to the details of the narrative. In the *Odyssey*, for example, there is no mention of the canine *protome* since Odysseus explains that Scylla herself, "...seized from out the hollow ship six of my comrades who were the best in strength and in might ... at her doors she devoured them shrieking and stretching out their hands toward me in their awful death struggle" (*Od.* 12.245-257). The depiction as found in figure 185 instead (as we have seen on several occasions in this study) follows the traditional representation of the scene as found in Graeco-Roman art dating back at least to the fifth century BC.[357]

[355] These particular fragments probably came into the hands of Evan Gorga at the same time as those showing the sirens, during the excavations for the Metro line in the early 1940s – Biering (1995) 173.
[356] Von Blanckenhagen proposes that the remaining panels of the wall must have included the sirens, Scylla and the associated shipwreck – Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 109.
[357] Jentel, 'Skylla I' in *LIMC* VIII.1 (1997) 1137-1145.



Fig.186 – Detail from figure 185.

Comparison of the handwriting styles found in the labels of the authenticated panels of the frieze (figures 188 to 190) with that on the newly-discovered panel (figure 187) yields convincing results. For example, the iotas at the end of [e]TAIPOI and NOMAI show a characteristic 'blob' at the top and bottom of each letter, which is also evident in the iota in the ANXIAΛOΣ label from panel 2 and the ANTIΦATHC label from panel 3. All of these belong to the group which Biering categorises as "Gruppe A", denoting the distinct handwriting style found in the labels from panels 2–5, in contrast to those from "Gruppe B" of panels 6–9, where the iotas lack the distinguishing blob. Also comparable are the alphas, which show a thicker stroke on their right side and another distinct blob at their apex. Furthermore, Biering considers the handwriting in the CIRHNEC label in panel 10 to bear the characteristics of Group A, which supports the close proximity of the latter and the new fragments in the original frieze.[358]

[358] Biering (1995) 123-128 for detailed images of the labels from the frieze.



Fig.187 – Detail from figure 185, label with letters [e]TAIROI.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright

Fig.188 – NOMAI label from panel 3.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via

Fig.189 – Anchialos label from panel 2.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via

Fig.190 – Antiphates label from panel 3.

Comparing the ways in which the artist has rendered highlights on the men's bodies also reveals similarities in technique. If we compare one of the Laestrygonians from panel 3 (figure 191) with the central companion from the Scylla panel (figure 192), we see that the white paint strokes used to reflect the light on the musculature is very similar in each.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Fig.191 – Laestrygonian, detail from panel 3



Fig.192 – Companion, (rotated) detail from fig. 185.

Reconstructing the frieze

It is now possible to offer a new reconstruction of wall C and its decoration, upon which all of the surviving panels and fragments from the frieze appear to have been located. Figure 193 should be referred to throughout the following proposal. If we take panel 6 – the episode in Circe's palace – as the very centre of the wall, based on its painted pillars on either side having shadows that symmetrically frame the scene, we can reconstruct the wall on the left of the centre as being around 943 cm in length. This is calculated from the recorded widths of the existing panels (2 – 151.8cm, 3 – 152.8cm, 4 – 152.5cm, 5 – 152,9cm, half of 6 – 73cm) and adding on an extra 150cm for the non-extant panel from the extreme left of the wall and 22cm for its painted pillar.[359] Assuming that the centre of panel 6 did form the very midpoint of the wall we can hypothesis a similar measurement for the right half of the frieze; thus giving a total length of around 19 metres for wall C, incorporating its window or door on the right side. It is likely that the sirens panel followed directly on from the wall opening and the Scylla episode was positioned immediately after. Although precise measurements for the latter panel are not published Maurina notes that, spatially, it is comparable to the other panels, leading us to assume that the figure size was also similar.[360] Andreae proposes that an encounter with Scylla and Charybdis might have been included in the right half of the sirens panel[361] but it seems more likely that the fragments formed their own distinct panel, given the apparent size of Scylla and the possible need to incorporate the whirlpool into the same space.

As to what may have been depicted in the first, now destroyed, panel we might hypothesise Odysseus encountering Aeolus on Aeolia (*Od.* 10.1-75), noting that the winds sent by the king are found at the extreme left of panel 2. Andreae proposes that it instead contained the adventure with Polyphemus and considers the Aeolian encounter to be evoked in its entirety in panel 2 but, given the apparent revelling in the violence of the brutal Laestrygonian scenes, we might expect a lengthier treatment of the Polyphemus episode and all its gory details.[362] Brilliant erroneously includes the cyclops in his list of extant episodes from the frieze, as

[359] Measurements from Biering (1995) 204.
[360] Maurina (1999) 78.
[361] Andreae (1962) 108, 111; Andreae (1996) 198.
[362] Andreae (1962) 108, 113; Andreae (1996) 194.

well as others which are simply not present, or were certainly not at the time of writing in 1984, including Scylla and Charybdis, and Odysseus among the Phocians.[363] Von Blanckenhagen suggests that the first panel most likely included "a phase of the adventure on the Aeolian isles" and counters Andreae's interpretation with the observation that "there is no parallel in the frieze for depicting an entire episode simply by alluding to it through one detail."[364] Later in the article, however, von Blanckenhagen contradicts his earlier argument by suggesting that that Elpenor's presence in the Nekyia "alludes to but does not represent the [falling from the ladder] incident, by means of symbolic references to the text".[365]

Proposing a hypothetical reconstruction of the *entire* frieze, assuming that it continued around the walls of the room, can only be highly speculative, but we might here return to the near-contemporary Tabula Rondanini (11H) for inspiration (figures 168 and 169). The epigraphy on the marble fragment reads ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΔΙΗΓΗΣΗΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΑΛΚΙΝΟΥΝ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΠΠΑ (from the description to Alcinous of book 10), which informs the viewer that the scenes depicted on it are specifically from Odysseus' telling of his story to King Alcinous in the court of the Phaeacians. It is in this narration that we hear the most fantastical of Odysseus' adventures including the battle against the Cicones in Thrace (*Od.* 9.39-61), the storm sent by Zeus (*Od.* 9.67-83), the companions bewitched in the land of the Lotus Eaters (*Od.* 9.83-104) and the lengthy and lethal encounter with Polyphemus in the land of the Cyclopes (*Od.* 9.105-542) which, being over 400 lines in length, surely found its place (if not places) in the frieze.[366]

[363] Brilliant (1984) 60.
[364] Blanckenhagen (1963) 104. Vlad-Borrelli tentatively offers "arrivo in Eolia?" and Croisille suggests that the Aeolus episode was undoubtedly its theme – Vlad-Borrelli (1956) 294; Croisille (2005) 156.
[365] Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 108.
[366] Farrell notes that on Etruscan cinerary urns of the third to first centuries BC representations of "dramatic moments in the *Odyssey*" are particularly prominent – Farrell (2004) 258-259. Noting the popularity of games and tournaments in the epic friezes in Pompeii we might also wonder whether the athletic and musical contests of the Phaeacians (including a foot face, wrestling, discus throwing, boxing, dancing and lyre playing – *Od.* 8.97-380) might also have been depicted.

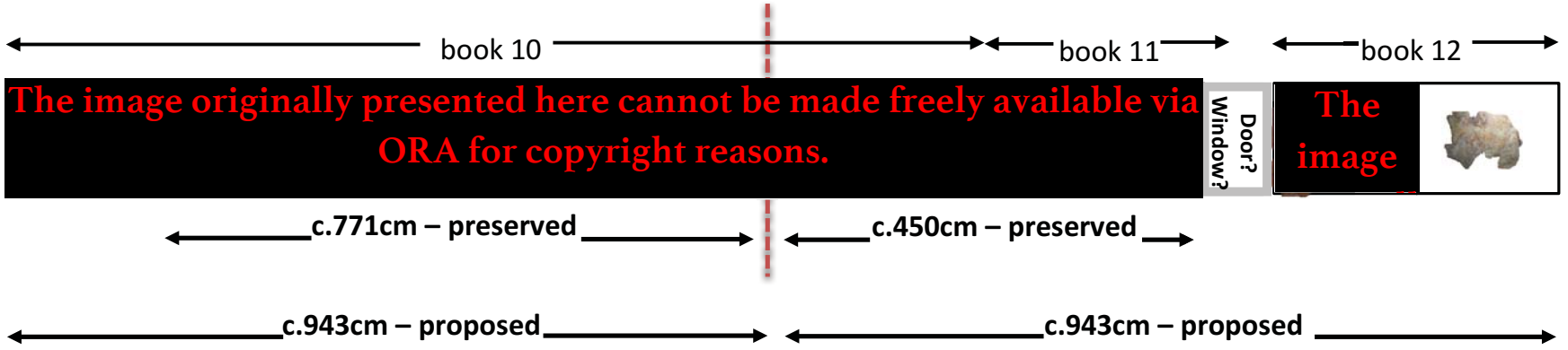


Fig.193 – Proposed reconstruction of wall C, incorporating the sirens and Scylla fragments.

Following on from the episodes which *are* found in the Roman frescoes Odysseus also tells the Phaeacian court of his companions eating the forbidden cattle of Helios and their subsequent punishment by the gods, which sent the Greeks back into the path of Charybdis (*Od.* 12.260-446) and the seven-year romance with Calypso on the island of Ogygia (*Od.* 12.447-453).[367] All of these are possible candidates for inclusion in the wider frieze and, as shown in the unique and innovative interpretation of the Laestrygonian adventure, the fact that many of the above episodes are not found anywhere else in extant ancient art does *not* discount their inclusion in the demonstrably imaginative and original Esquiline frescoes.

A Greek epic theme in a Roman context

As the *Odyssey* frescoes in Rome have attracted considerably more attention and generated more scholarship since their discovery than the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii, more investigation has naturally been carried out into their thematic content. This ranges from scholars noting that minute textual references to the epic are included but without further elaboration on the extra-Homeric details,[368] to the acknowledgment that the latter must be Roman-era interpolations but, again, without any further investigation.[369] Biering attempts to use the distinctiveness of the iconography to propose a specific identity for the original homeowner and suggests (based on an earlier proposal by Gallina) that the unusually long rendering of the episode in the land of the Laestrygonians was because the owner of the house was Horace's friend L. Aelius Lamia, who traced his descent back to King Lamos of the Laestrygonians.[370] Rambaldi, solely discussing the Nekyia panels argues that the artist(s) incorporated different literary sources into the depiction, in particular the Latin tradition of the punishment of the Danaids, into a pictorial

[367] Taking Vitr. 7.5.2 as his guide Andreae argues that in the preserved panels from wall C the artist had exhausted all possible image opportunities from the *Odyssey* – the *Ulixes errationes per topia* – and tentatively proposes that the other walls of the room might have featured scenes from the *Iliad,* thus the *Troianas pugnas* – Andreae (1962) 116-117.
[368] Rambaldi (2001) 2.
[369] Bastos Marques and Regis Cavicchioli (2009) 17.
[370] Gallina (1964) 12; Biering (1995) 191-192. Müller refutes this theory, basing his argument on fairly unconvincing artistic grounds and stating that the artist had no choice but to structure the Laestrygonian scenes in this way. He raises the reasonable objection that Valerius Maximus refers to the home of the Aelii Lamiae as a *domuncula* (Val. Max. IV, 4, 8) when the length of the excavated walls allows us to reconstruct an impressively grand dwelling, and that there is no evidence to suggest that Horace's friend was the same L. Aelius Lamia as the consul of AD 3 – Müller (2000) 174.

representation of the canonical Homeric epic.[371] David Petrain concentrates on the centrality of the Circe scene, observing that its flanking painted pillars demarcate the standing point of the 'ideal' viewer, thus affording extra importance to its particular subject matter. Petrain cites ancient sources which locate Circe's palace at the southern edge of Latium and others indicating that the offspring of Odysseus and Circe founded several sites in Italy, thus stressing the relevance of the episode to the Italian peninsula, which Petrain argues held significance for the frieze owner.[372]

Throughout this chapter it has been observed, as with the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii, that the creator(s) of the frieze has woven extra-Homeric insertions in the form of labels and new protagonists into what is otherwise a faithful rendering of the epic text, all of which were surely intended to be noticed by the educated viewer who was afforded the opportunity, where relevant, to relate the insertions to his particular chronological and geographical context. In the case of the House of Octavius Quartio in Pompeii the extra-Homeric labels probably refer to famous gladiators in the town; in this city of Rome context they appear to recall contemporary literary and thematic interests. This suggests that the frescoes' intended audience was a stratum of wealthy and educated society, possibly residing in the grand houses of the Esquiline, who could recognise the literal meaning of Greek 'heroic' names and appreciate their relevance in an epic context. Elsewhere in the frieze the artist has chosen instead to evoke or allude to particular textual episodes by replicating and adapting long-standing pictorial motifs and compositions in the form of standardised scenes, which would be recognisable for *any* contemporary viewer. Schefold and Jung offer the following conclusion: "der Fries [ist] nicht eine Illustration der Odyssee, sondern eine Deutung".[373]

Thus chapters one to four of this thesis, which contain detailed analysis of the four extant epic-themed friezes from Roman Italy, all contribute towards the same overriding conclusion: that the most fruitful course of enquiry pertaining to them lies not in an argument about whether they are entirely faithful to the Homeric epics or depart from them in puzzling ways, but in the observation that reliance on the text and free play on it go hand in hand as part of the epic reception-culture within which these paintings belong.

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[371] Rambaldi (2002) 6.
[372] Petrain (2013) n.27 and n.28.
[373] Schefold and Jung (1989) 354.

Chapter 5: The origins of the Roman epic friezes – literary evidence

We are still reluctant to attribute any originality to the Etruscans, and continue to seek Greek prototypes behind all their works. We are only slightly less condescending toward Roman paintings … As long as we remain mired in these traditional positions, we shall achieve only limited progress.

(Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway, 1999)[374]

Introduction

Much of the scholarship which discusses the epic friezes under consideration in this thesis seeks to ask questions about their origins. Are they Roman originals or copies of earlier Hellenistic or South Italian artworks? Or perhaps copies of even earlier, Classical Greek artworks? Are they composites, based on pre-existing and famous paintings, but with additions by Roman-era 'copyists'? Or, following the work of Kurt Weitzmann, were the artists working from illustrated manuscripts of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in their creation of the friezes? The *Odyssey* frescoes, being the better-studied of the set, have undergone the most analysis pertaining to these questions but, as we will see below, the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii have also been subject to the same queries.

Although this might be considered a line of enquiry more applicable to older scholarship, such questions are still being asked of Trojan War imagery from the Roman world. In 2015, for example, Peter Heslin argued that many of the scenes in fresco panels in Pompeian houses were copied from a series on display in the Temple of Apollo, which were themselves copies of a Late Classical freestanding painting cycle by Theoros on display in the Temple of Hercules of the Muses in Rome.[375] In 2005 Croisille proposed that the same cycle was used by artists when creating the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus and a second century, South Italian 'original' for the *Odyssey* frescoes.[376] And in 2008, Coarelli argued extensively for the latter being based on an Alexandrian original of the third century BC.[377]

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[374] Ridgway (1999) 520.
[375] Heslin (2015).
[376] Croisille (2005) 155, 160.
[377] Coarelli (2008) 25-26.

The fact that such questions continue to be asked of the friezes suggests that counterarguments are still required and so a critique of the existing scholarship will be offered below. The following two chapters will therefore consider the 'origins' of the friezes and will be divided into four sections. Chapter five will begin with a survey of modern scholarship (spanning the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries) and the arguments therein which propose a variety of origins for the friezes, alongside others who have sought to argue otherwise. It will then consider if there is *any* reference in Graeco-Roman literature to non-extant 'originals' upon which the Roman artworks might have been based. A new investigation into why they should be considered original artworks of their particular chronological and geographical context will be offered in chapter six, which will survey the archaeological record for possible stylistic and thematic precedents or parallels and conclude with a demonstration that several of the iconographic and epigraphic features within each are largely indicative of their being original, Roman creations.[378]

Scholarship

It will be argued below that whenever a scholar has proposed that there once existed an 'original' upon which the Roman friezes were based, or from which they were adapted, or even copied, all such proposals are hypothetical and cannot be supported either by the extant literature or archaeology.[379] As the scholarship on this theme is vast, each category of argument will be considered in turn and the evidence used by each author to propose the notion of an 'original' investigated.

[378] A number of studies over the last three decades, although largely focused on sculpture and the methodology of *Kopienkritik*, have reconsidered the relationship between Roman and Greek art as a much more complex process than the formulaic, wholesale copying of earlier, famed originals. See Hölscher (1987); Gazda (2002), Hölscher (2004), Perry (2005), Marvin (2008) and a response by Hallett (2005). Heslin (2013) 129-135 provides a summary of the same issues with regard to ancient painting.

[379] It should be noted that this argument does not apply to all Roman art, however. Clearly Roman patrons did sometimes wish to own versions (if not exact copies) of famous artworks. However, as Elizabeth Bartman argues and the variations within the Roman 'replicas' reveal, it was not deemed necessary to own an exact copy of the Greek original; in fact sculptural replicas were sometimes deliberately juxtaposed so that readers could see and admire the stylistic differences within them – Bartman (1988) 211-255.

Seeking prototypes for the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii

In our survey of previous scholarly attempts to seek earlier models for Roman epic imagery, we begin once again with the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus (chapter one). Throughout Aurigemma's description of the frieze (sometimes referring to the notes of Vittorio Spinazzola) he compares and contrasts the iconography of individual scenes with other epic-themed artworks, in particular the Tabulae Iliacae and the Late Antique *Codex Ambrosiana*, often forming the conclusion that the three derive from "lo stesso (unidentified) originale". The composition of the farewell of Hector and Andromache panel (figure 13), he theorises, must refer to the Greek painting which Porcia and Brutus saw at Elea (Plut. *Vit. Brut.* 24.2-6) and the council of the Achaeans panel (figure 14) to the bronze statue group in Olympia described (very briefly) by Pausanias (Paus. 5.25.8). In concluding remarks he proposes that the entire frieze refers back to three prototype figurative cycles of the *Iliad*, *Aethiopis* and *Iliupersis*, although gives no further details on the theory.[380]

Vlad-Borrelli is more specific in attributing to the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus "agevolmente" to a Greek original of the fourth century BC, corresponding with the work of Theon or Theoros of Samos, based on the artist's specialisation in *phantasia* or imaginary scenes.[381] Clearly this is not grounded in any verifiable evidence. Santoro has more recently argued that the frieze reproduced the same Theorean series which, at the time, was on display in the Portico of Philippus in Rome, adding that the Greek labels confirm the Hellenistic model. She further cites the existence of the marble *Iliad* frieze from the Temple of Apollo Smintheus in the Troad as corroborating evidence.[382] There is no indication that Theoros' Trojan War series contained labels, however, and the marble frieze will be shown in chapter six to be iconographically distinct from each of the *Iliad* friezes, and so not in any way convincing evidence of the copying process.

While Croisille admits that ascribing an earlier model to the frieze is problematic he still considers the original to have been of the fourth century, again corresponding to the paintings of Theoros, but transmitted to 'copyists' (painters

[380] Aurigemma (1953) 916-956.
[381] Vlad-Borrelli (1961) 296.
[382] Santoro (2005) 107.

and the craftsmen of the Homeric bowls and Tabulae Iliacae) via papyrus rolls.[383] Schefold considers the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus to be the only one of the three in Pompeii to have been copied from monumental paintings of the late fourth century, giving a specific dating of around 320 BC based, in his judgement, on a more 'Classical' rendering of space than the Alexander mosaic but younger than the Alexander sarcophagus. Schefold cites the distress of the mule in the plague scene (figure 7) as an example of typical early Hellenistic emotional and experiential intensity, echoed in sculptural groups of the Niobids of around 325 BC.[384]

The stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine (chapter two) has largely escaped scholarly attempts to find within it evidence of an earlier model, possibly because it is the most under-analysed of the three, and perhaps because it does not contain any labels. Yet Aurigemma's analysis of its iconography follows a similar methodology to his study of the cryptoporticus frieze, with individual scenes compared with similar representations found elsewhere in Graeco-Roman art. In his description of Priam, Hecuba/Andromache and Astyanax imploring Hector not to fight Achilles, and the Trojan prince subsequently led to his fate by Moira (figures 65 and 67), Aurigemma draws our attention to the uniqueness of each composition yet still goes on to suggest that they must repeat motifs from an earlier work, adding (without justification) that they are very unlikely to be original creations by the Pompeian artist (although later admitting that the presentation of the Ransom of Hector is that only found in Roman era artworks).[385]

The *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio has been subject to similar proposals.[386] Once again Aurigemma notes that several scenes within it are unique and have no parallel in extant art (in particular Priam and Idaeus resting after retrieving Hector's body – figure 127) but nevertheless proposes an entire "ciclo iliaco con epigrafi greche" upon which the entire frieze was based, with the Greek labels subsequently (mis)translated into Latin.[387] Schefold attributes a Greek original of the first half of the third century to the *Iliad* frieze, but the Hercules

[383] Croisille (2005) 155.
[384] Schefold (1975) 40.
[385] Aurigemma (1953) 877, 896.
[386] And not only the *Iliad* frieze. For the Hercules series Croisille posits an original by Artemon, who was active in the third century BC and is cited by Pliny the Elder (*HN*. 35.139), whose paintings were transported to Rome and displayed in the Portico of Octavia – Croisille (2005) 164.
[387] Aurigemma (1953) 1006-1007. Like Croisille, Aurigemma considers the Hercules frieze to be based on Artemon's paintings in the Portico of Octavia – Aurigemma (1953) 390.

frieze to a painting of the late fourth century, based solely on a stylistic judgment of the latter's large-scale figures dominating the foreground being indicative of an earlier figural type.[388]

Often the three *Iliad* friezes are considered as a representative group, with little in the way of detailed study of each. Eberhard Thomas, for example, cites the dominance of the figures in the cryptoporticus frieze, along with its Greek inscriptions, as evidence of Greek 'authorship', contrasting with the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio which, for him, reveals a Roman artist making a thorough mess of the late Hellenistic model, mixing up the order of scenes, distorting the proportions of the original figures and creating Latin labels which are simply 'faulty'.[389] Thomas' inherent assumption that paintings from the Roman world with Greek inscriptions are indicative of a Greek model will be challenged in more detail in chapter six, but note again the lack of citation or evidence pertaining to which particular model the friezes might have been based, alongside generalized observations about figural proportion and the use of Greek labels.

Heslin suggests that the friezes (again taken as a whole) are based on earlier models in his wider discussion of the single panel frescoes with Trojan themes in Pompeii. Citing the repetition of compositional types and thematic combinations, in particular the pairing of the anger of Achilles against Agamemnon and Achilles on Skyros in the House of the Dioscouri (VI 9,6) and the House of Apollo (VI 7,23) (and more tentatively in the House of the Ancient Hunt and the Domus Uboni), Heslin suggests that homeowners sought to copy similar thematic juxtapositions in the Temple of Apollo, whose decorative scheme was itself, he argues, modelled on the Theorean cycle in Rome.[390]

Although the repetition of compositional types suggests some form of relationship between the different representations, particularly considering the geographical proximity of the Pompeian examples, exactly how this worked is

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[388] Schefold (1988) 196. Note that Lorenz is incorrect in stating that Schefold connects the Hercules frieze to the painting of Stratonike I by Artemon; Schefold merely notes that Artemon painted the latter in addition to the Hercules series – Lorenz (2013) n.15.

[389] Thomas (1995) 113-114, who also attributes a Hellenistic model to the paintings in the House of the Epigrams, and the same for the painting of Io and Argos in the House of Livia.

[390] Heslin also suggests that the pairing of the anger of Achilles and the removal of Briseis (NMM 9105) in the atrium of the House of the Tragic Poet was influenced by a connected pair of panels in the temple. His link to the Theoros series rests largely on the similarities between *some* of these scenes and those on the Tabulae Iliacae, which he considers to be geographically and chronologically significant for the display of Theoros' paintings in Rome – Heslin (2015).

difficult to assess. Leaving aside the tenuous link to the Theoros series in Rome, of which there is no pictorial description in ancient literature, Heslin's suggestion that Pompeian homeowners were emulating the Apolline temple decoration is too circular an argument to be conclusive, especially when the chronologies of both are in no way secure.[391] The theory seriously falters, however, when Heslin admits that the "miniature Trojan cycles" in the town were influenced by "other visual traditions and other models for paintings of the Trojan War that had little to do with the Temple of Apollo".[392] Surely if the sanctuary decoration and, by association, the paintings of Theoros were so appealing to artists who painted Trojan themes, of all of the domestic decorative forms it would be the epic-themed friezes which would show the greatest influence? Particularly those in the House of the Iliac Shrine and the House of Octavius Quartio which, chronologically, could have been influenced by the temple decoration? The content of the temple panels will be discussed in chapter seven with regard to their apparent inclusion of features similar to those found in the friezes but, we are still no closer to a convincing argument pertaining to the hypothetical 'originals' of the *Iliad* friezes.

In a discussion largely concerned with the iconographic history of Late Antique and Byzantine illustrated manuscripts Bianchi Bandinelli proposes for the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio a series of celebrated Hellenistic paintings upon which the entire composition was based.[393] He forms a similarly low opinion of the Pompeian artist to Aurigemma, commenting that "poiché difficilmente è da pensarsi che tutto questo fosse di invenzione del decoratore della casa pompeiana", hypothesising that it must therefore have emulated a well-known series of Hellenistic paintings. Bianchi Bandinelli theorises that it is in the nature of artistic reproduction for complex artworks to be reproduced in a less-detailed manner by the next generation of 'copyists', becoming more illustrative and sketchy, with the latter then being copied by even later artists, and thus explaining the simple figural style of the cryptoporticus frieze. He rejects, however, the proposal that the latter was based on the Theoros cycle, citing Lippold's argument that the paintings apparently reflect the artistic styles of several different historical

[391] Heslin questions whether the panels were newly added to the temple portico after the earthquake of 62/3, or were 'reinstalled' after being originally painted in the Augustan era – Heslin (2015) 169-183.
[392] Heslin (2015) 161.
[393] Bianchi Bandinelli (1954) 93-94.

periods.[394]

As part of his reaction against those who consider the Pompeian paintings to be Roman 'originals', Bianchi Bandinelli urges the reader to look deeper into the precise historical context of their creation, and stresses the popularity of Greek panel painting in mid to late Republican and early Imperial Italy: Vitruvius, for example, celebrating the (Hellenistic) 'then' and bemoaning the (Italic) 'now' of wallpainting styles (Vitr. 7.5.2);[395] Pliny complaining that the best of painting is from a time past and that great artworks should be on public display, rather than painted as frescoes into walls (Plin. *HN.* 35.2-3, 118); and the Greek artists recorded as working in Rome painting triumphal and popular paintings.[396] Yet to return to our original question concerning any convincing archaeological or literary evidence for any such Late Classical or Hellenistic friezes upon which the Pompeian friezes might be based, Bianchi Bandinelli does not offer any suggestion. Whilst it is clear that ancient writers esteemed Greek masterpieces, there is no indication that fresco artists of the Roman era were unable to create decorative schemes and motifs of their own. Indeed, Quintilian chides those whose only desire is directly to copy paintings with the measuring stick and plumb bob (*Inst.* 10.11.6-7). The following chapters seeks to show that if we truly consider the historical context of the Pompeian friezes, noting their epigraphic and iconography anomalies, we will see that they are original Roman creations with features entirely pertinent to their specific chronological and geographical setting, even if they make use of compositions, styles and motifs which have their beginnings in earlier Greek art. We conclude with the words of Christopher M. Dawson:

> A picture may not be assigned to the fourth century simply because the chief figure is "a compound of Praxitelean beauty, Lysippic tenseness, and Scopaic fire.[397]

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[394] Bianchi Bandinelli (1954) 95; Lippold (1951) 77-86.

[395] For analysis of this passage see Tybout (1989) 55-79.

[396] Also cited as evidence of the reliance of Roman painting upon Greek prototypes is the *literary description* of room decoration on the ship of Ptolemy IV Philopater (Ath. 5.204-205) which, according to Bianchi Bandinelli, recalls both the Third Pompeian Style and the fresco decoration of the Villa of Livia at Prima Porta – Bianchi Bandinelli (1954) 104.

[397] Dawson (1944) 23, responding to Ernst Pfuhl's proposal that the Theseus and the Minotaur fresco from Herculaneum refers back to an original of the second half of the fourth century – Pfuhl (1926) 106-107.

Odyssey frescoes in Rome

Being the better studied of the four epic-themed friezes under consideration in this thesis, the *Odyssey* frescoes from the Esquiline have attracted the most attention with regard to the question of their origin. As O'Sullivan observes, "The temptation to treat the mural as evidence of an elaborate (but almost entirely lost) tradition of Hellenistic landscape painting has been too much for many scholars to resist."[398] Yet the geographical and chronological context of the hypothetical model itself ranges, as we will see, from the early to the late Hellenistic period, and from Egyptian Alexandria to the rocky cliffs of Magna Graecia; usually based on even more tenuous criteria than that offered for the theoretical Greek prototypes of the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii.

The most influential of these proposals was made by Peter von Blanckenhagen in his seminal article 'The Odyssey Frieze' in 1963. Even though the study begins with the line "The Odyssey frieze from the Esquiline in the Vatican library is a unique work. There is nothing like it in ancient landscape painting" most of the following discussion in fact seeks to show that it is based on a Hellenistic original which was positioned much lower on its respective wall in a non-domestic context outside of Rome. The continuity and perspective of the landscape is a key feature of the argument and von Blanckenhagen considers the scenes in the land of the Laestrygonians (panels two to five) to be a complete unit, but the second half of the wall "a more condensed sequence of selected scenes."[399] Biering's ultra-violet analysis of the frescoes confirms von Blanckenhagen's proposal that the painted columns were the first elements to be planned on the Esquiline wall,[400] but it does not necessarily follow that the landscape elements consequently "cannot have been conceived originally for this wall" and so "must be a copy of an uninterrupted frieze". Further arguments concerning an original created for a very different setting are based on the mistaken assumption that the frescoes sat atop a very high wall, thus rendering the labels and smaller figural details illegible, alongside the highly subjective proposal that the landscapes presuppose a viewer looking down upon the painting.[401] Von Blanckenhagen goes

[398] O'Sullivan (2007) 503.
[399] Von Blanckenhagen (1963).
[400] Biering (1995) 23-25.
[401] Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 111-112.

on to argue that panels six to nine did not faithfully replicate the original but were selectively adapted by the Roman-era copyist, on account that "the fabric of realism is torn" where continuous narrative is introduced in the repetition of Circe and Odysseus in the sixth panel (figure 164).[402] Throughout the article the same negative judgement is cast upon the abilities of the Roman-era 'copyist' as that generated by others towards the artists of the Pompeian *Iliad* friezes:

> The direction, formation, shading, and perspective of these rocks (the arch is seen from below) are optically as convincing as those on sections 2-5; they lead diagonally from left to right, from foreground to background and depict a magnificent, somber, and forbidding setting. I cannot imagine the copyist having invented it or having altered the original so successfully. It seems more likely that he copied the original setting faithfully.

There is a general sense throughout von Blanckenhagen's discussion that those parts of the frescoes he finds acceptable, or considers to be of higher artistic quality, must be copied directly from the 'original', yet those elements he finds puzzling or of inferior quality must be the hand of the Roman-era copyist. Thus the extra-Homeric insertion of the Danaids in Tartarus is a new addition and the supposed proportional discrepancies in the Tartarus and Sirens scenes reflect the copyist deviating from the original. He also sees the inclusion of Elpenor in the Nekyia as a copyist's addition, which is puzzling considering that Homer describes the youth interacting with Odysseus in this very episode (*Od.* 11.51-96).[403]

Clearly none of this highly subjective analysis points us towards a definitive original "of some fame" painted onto the wall of a public building of the Late Hellenistic period.[404] Although von Blanckenhagen rightly rejects the scholarly propensity to situate the original in Alexandria on the basis of a lack of any convincing argument (for him the innate differences between the frieze and Nilotic scenes) he then proceeds, as do several others (see table below), to cite the nature of

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[402] Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 114, 119-120. He writes: "I am certain that the original did not combine these two groups of the same persons in exactly the same place, and hence I am not sure whether perhaps other changes did not take place as well."

[403] Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 121-124. A similar strategy is employed by Gallina, who seeks to distinguish between the features of the 'original' and those added by the Roman copyist – Gallina (1961) 34.

[404] Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 125-130. The date is based on observations concerning the elongated figures of the Laestrygonian princess and the Aktai personnifications, and the rendering of the ships as 'Greek-Hellenistic' rather than 'Roman'.

the painted landscape with its "steep cliffs, pierced by openings, rugged promontories, and the entire vocabulary of a dramatic coast" as evidence of an original created in Magna Graecia or Sicily. Despite acknowledging the difficulties in assigning an artwork of the last two centuries BC to a distinct 'Greek' or 'Roman' tradition, von Blanckenhagen considers the representation of space in the frescoes to be typically Greek, particularly when compared with the 'Roman' Pompeian sirens panel in the British Museum (figure 183). He even rejects the entirely possible (in fact probable) notion that several different *Odyssey*-themed friezes were painted onto Second Style walls, which varied in content as much as extant sacro-idyllic landscape painting, citing Vitruvius' linguistic separation of the two types in *De Arch*. 7.5.2: the landscape genre having "varietates topiorum, the troianas pugnas seu Ulixis errationes" then implicitly not. This is given as evidence that somehow "affirms rather than rejects the probability that our frieze is one of many copies or adaptations of a popular Greek painting."[405] In response, we might counter that are there not three entirely different *Iliad*-themed friezes on a single street in Pompeii?

In the interest of clarity, a selection of further arguments concerning the hypothetical original(s) of the *Odyssey* frescoes in Rome are presented in table form below, offering an overview of the sheer amount of variation in date and setting proposed by scholars, along with the evidence or justification for each. Summaries of the scholarship on the subject up to the early 1960s are given in the appendix of von Blanckenhagen's article[406] and up to 1995 by Lowenstam.[407]

[405] Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 133-134. He additionally cites Vitruvius' use of the Greek word *topia* as evidence of the Greek origins of the model, yet all this truly tells Vitruvius' readers is that the architect knew of the Greek term for landscape painting and its usage was widespread enough for his audience to understand the reference.

[406] The appendix offers a survey of scholarship with regard to the question of the frieze's origins, including the arguments of those termed 'the Romanists', beginning with Wickhoff in 1900 and leading to a detailed exposition of Dawson's 1944 *Romano-Campanian Mythological Landscape Painting*. The arguments of Schefold and Beyen are also examined in detail.

[407] Lowenstam (1995) 221-222.

Author and publication	Proposed date of original	Proposed geographical context of original	Evidence offered
Nogara (1902) 49-50	Hellenistic, post Alexander.	Not given	Esquiline frescoes are a free copy of the original on account of the hasty execution and mistakes in the labels.
Rumpf (1947) 19-20	170–70 BC	Not given	"The personification of mountains, meadows, coasts, springs, rivers and winds" are represented "in the old-fashioned way"; the use of Greek inscriptions.
Beyen (1960) 346-347	Unspecified, although *viel altertümlicher als unsere Bilder*.	Not given	Mistakes by the copyists caused by a damaged or sketch-like intermediary of the original, for example the miscopying of the Orion inscription.
Gallina (1961) 34-45	Mid 2nd century BC	Alexandria	Interpretative mistakes by the copyist; the hairstyles of the female figures; stylistic comparison with Alexandrian landscape or relief cups, the Palestrina mosaic and painted glass vessels from Begram.
Vlad-Borrelli (1961) 297-299	2nd century BC	Alexandria	Elongated style of figures is comparable to terracotta figurines from Alexandrian cemeteries; the Alexandrian artist Antilophus was the first to discover and paint 'internal space' as found in the Circe panel; comparison of the Krene figure's headdress with those on female marble heads (supposedly) of Alexandrian origin; comparison with the Palestrina mosaic.
Ling (1991) 100-101	2nd–1st century BC, with the Esquiline frescoes "freely adapted" from the model.	Southern Italy or Rome	Vitruvius' reference to the genre; Greek inscriptions with spelling errors; the Roman frieze placed too high on its wall; similarity of the landscape to the "actual scenery" of southern Italy; iconographic comparisons with South Italic vases for the Danaids and Sisyphus.

Andreae (1996) 198	2nd century BC	Not given	The Hellenistic form of the landscape and the presence of Greek labels.
Rambaldi (2001) 2-3	2nd century BC	Alexandria	None given.
Croisille (2005) 160	2nd–1st century BC	Southern Italy	The presence of the Danaids; similarities of the painted landscape with that of Magna Graecia.
Coarelli (2008) 25-26	3rd century BC	Alexandria	"A number of stylistic elements"; the Greek captions; the extra-Homeric labels recalling Hellenistic philology and the Alexandrian school; dating comparisons with the Palestrina mosaic.

Although counter-arguments to each will not be addressed in detail, it is expedient to offer a number of general observations. The first is that the use of Greek labels cannot be used as evidence to suggest that the frescoes originate in a non-Roman context. The Tomb of Patron from Porta Capena, near Rome, also dated to the mid to late first century BC, contains Greek labels for its protagonists and is clearly not based on a hypothetical original from the Greek world; it was simply deemed appropriate for a Greek doctor and his family to be labelled in their native language.[408] Likewise, the patron of the *Odyssey* frescoes must have stipulated that his frieze, which was based on a Greek epic, be captioned with Greek labels, and the spelling peculiarities within it strongly suggest that they were created in a Latin-speaking context. Beard and Henderson summarise: "For some [the Greek labels] clinches the argument that this is a Roman copy, and that a lost Greek 'original' must lie behind it. But this is to ignore all the complexities of the cultural interplay between Greece and Rome … The writing tells that this Roman painting is about the *Odyssey*, the Greek *Odyssey*: as clear a token of the essential fusion of Graeco-Roman culture as you could wish."[409]

Even more prevalent among scholars is the desire to link the Esquiline frescoes to an Alexandrian original based on a variety of highly-subjective

[408] Blanc (1998) 82-89. Blanc writes: "Les noms inscrits au-dessus des personnages dérivent d'une tradition grecque et dans ce cas indiquent probablement la nationalité du peintre. Pour le style, on a évoqué les fresques odysséenes du Vatican."
[409] Beard and Henderson (2001) 54.

observations, ranging from the apparently Egyptian-style headdresses and elongated form of the female figures to the vague assertion that the literary flavour of the frescoes (particularly the extra-Homeric labelling) is reflective of Alexandrian philology and erudition. The 'Alexandrian' artworks used as comparanda are either in a completely different medium (glass vessels, terracotta figurines or relief-cups) or of very insecure provenance.[410] Although stylistic comparisons can perhaps be made there is no suggestion among the extant comparanda of the *Odyssey* as a theme, let alone any evidence of an extended frieze upon which the Esquiline paintings may have been based.

There are further difficulties in attempting to form comparisons between the Esquiline frescoes and the 'Alexandrian' Palestrina Nilotic mosaic. Other than Greek labels being present on both the subject matter is entirely different, the mosaic presents no evidence of a narrative thread (other than the journey down the Nile) and any suggestion of a Hellenistic Egyptian original is purely hypothetical and not based on the existence of an extant, tangible artwork.[411] The only comparable facts are that both were displayed in a Late Republican context in Latium (not even in the Hellenizing Magna Graecia).[412] Rather than being slavish (or even free) copies of artworks from Hellenistic Alexandria, both are instead evidence of the Roman curiosity about the exoticness of the 'other' and particularly of ancient civilisations with legendary histories; thus the Nilotic landscape with its

[410] The cache of objects from two rooms (10 and 13) in the Palace in the New Royal City at Begram is argued by Sanjyot Mehendale to comprise a merchant's stock of the first century AD, which had been imported from various locations around the Empire and beyond, rendering it "a commercial storage and distribution site" – Mehendale (1996) 51. If this is true, then the attribution of formally comparable objects within the cache to a similar provenance – ie by means of comparison with the so-called Alexandrian Pharos Beaker – is very insecure. Although arguing for an Egyptian origin for the painted glass vessels based on what she considers to be Egyptianising iconography, Rachel Mairs adds: "Even the Mediterranean goods from Begram, I would argue, had diverse points of origin and arrived at the city via different routes or sequences of routes" – Mairs (2012) 5. Another painted glass goblet depicts what *may* be the duel between Achilles and Hector, but could simply show a battle between two warriors – Cambon and Jarrige (eds) (2006) 250-251, 288-289. The vessels are variously dated between the first and third centuries AD – Whitehouse (2001) 437-449.

[411] Von Blanckenhagen is highly critical of Beyen's stylistic comparison of the two, commenting that "[Beyen's] comparison of Odyssey frieze and Palestrina mosaic (312ff.) reveals that he does not see the differences between a realistic representation and a cartographic one ... the two works have nothing in common, belong to entirely different species, and share but insignificant details in rendering certain small objects. Beyen's confusion is crucial and basic: it is the confusion between essential and peripheral elements in works of art." – Von Blanckenhagen (1963) n.53.

[412] Dunbabin (1999) 49-51; Santangelo (2007) 138-143. Whether the mosaic is that referred to in Plin. *HN* 36.189 from the Sullan additions to the sanctuary is now debated. See Swetnam-Burland (2012) 685-689.

strange temples, peoples and beasts, and an imagining of the heroic age of Greece in which the warriors and demi-gods of the Trojan War intermingled with monsters and even the gods themselves.

We must also address here the suggestion of a hypothetical original for the *Odyssey* frescoes having been created and displayed in Magna Graecia, based on the (surely most tenuous of all) observation that the rocky, dramatic landscape in the Laestrygonian scenes can be compared with that in Southern Italy and Sicily.[413] If, for the sake of argument, we accept that the backdrop might be intended to recall a recognizable geographical location, such a proposal permits no artistic imagination at all to the painter who may have intended the scenes to recall the South Italian landscape in which many of Odysseus' adventures were believed to have taken place.[414] It is far more likely that the artist(s) sought to create an atmospheric, unforgiving craggy backdrop to heighten the companions' nightmare in the land of the Laestrygonians than leading us back to a recognisable location.

Lowenstam summarises the nature of the arguments presented by those who seek an earlier original for the frescoes in the following way: "Even those scholars … who believe that the Landscapes are a copy of a Hellenistic original, admit that it is a loose copy." This approach is evident throughout von Blanckenhagen's article and is found repeatedly elsewhere, usually resting on observations concerning the overall uniformity of the frieze and, specifically, the figural and epigraphic differences between panels two to five and six to ten.[415] However, rather than this being evidence of the Roman-era 'copyist' faithfully replicating the part of the original which was set in the land of the Laestrygonians but taking a more selective and piecemeal approach to the Circe, Nekyia and Sirens episodes, it is more likely a consequence of (at least) two different artists working on the frieze, as Biering's iconographic and epigraphic analysis has convincingly suggested.[416]

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[413] Nogara suggests that in the Laestrygonians panels the artist is depicting a *known* stretch of beach on the Tyrrhenian coast, but rejects Matranga's proposal that it is Terracina – Nogara (1902) 43.
[414] Thucydides located the Laestrygonian episode on Sicily (Thuc. 6.2.1); Strabo places the encounter with Scylla and Charybdis on the Strait of Messina (1.2.16); and Euripides has Polyphemus residing on Etna (*Cyc.* 20).
[415] Lowenstam cites Woermann, Nogara, Weisbach, Vlad-Borrelli, von Blanckenhagen, Gallina and Ling – Lowenstam (2005) 88.
[416] Biering (1995) 139-142.

Pattern-books and illustrated manuscripts of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*

Although the weight of scholarship pertaining to the notion of a celebrated original falls most heavily on the *Odyssey* frescoes, they are not (to my knowledge) ever suggested to have been based on illustrated manuscripts of the epic. Von Blanckenhagen and Beyen openly reject the idea on account of the dominant role played by the landscape and because so many narrative incidents are missing from the extant panels.[417] The *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii, however, are frequently subject to this type of proposal, and a number of scholars have suggested that they were created by means of copying (usually Hellenistic) illustrated scrolls or manuscripts of the *Iliad*. Brilliant cites the friezes' narrowness and "miniature figure composition" to suggest an origin in illustrated manuscripts or picture books and thus considers them, in situ, to be "readable only with a great deal of effort". Beyen, Bragantini and more recently Scagliarini Corlàita also suggest that the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus was created by means of illuminated manuscripts.[418] Bianchi Bandinelli considers the stucco *Iliad* frieze to be the only one of the three to show derivation from illustrated scrolls, with the figures appearing (to him) quickly-sketched and linear, in contrast with the depth of colour in the painted friezes which are more attributable to painted originals.[419] Santoro cites Seneca the Younger's complaining of the *nouveau riches* having countless books and libraries which are not used as tools of learning but as decorations (*ornamenta*) for the dining room (Sen. *Tranq.* 9.9.4-6), as reference to the types of illustrated manuscripts which might be used in the creation of friezes, such as that in the House of the Iliac Shrine.[420]

Schefold hypothesises that by the time of Alexander, a complete cycle of epic images was established which could be read sequentially, like a book; the evidence for such a series being the *Iliad* friezes of Pompeii, mosaics, stone and bronze reliefs and, in the cycle's most complete form, the Tabulae Iliacae.[421] Like Brilliant, Schefold cites the small size of the figures in the friezes, marble tablets, and even

[417] Von Blanckenhagen (1963) n.22; Beyen (1960) 298-299.
[418] Brilliant (1984) 60; Beyen (1960) 107; Bragantini in *PPM* I (1990) 194; Scagliarini Corlàita (1997) 120.
[419] Bianchi Bandinelli (1954) 95-97.
[420] Santoro (2005) 103.
[421] Schefold (1954). Gigante asserts that Schefold's is "la corretta tesi" – Gigante (1979) n.39. Horsfall concurs: "the Pompeian artists will have required some form of working copy of manageable size as their direct original, and particularly when, as in this case, there were numerous scenes to be executed, this copy will most conveniently have been in roll form" – Horsfall (1979) 43-44.

certain Third Style wallpaintings (for example Cassandra and the Trojan Horse from Pompeii IX 7,16) as evidence that certain scenes were not derived from monumental paintings, but from Hellenistic picture books. (In a later article Schefold appears to change his mind, arguing the Octavius Quartio frieze had its origins in a Greek painting of the third century BC – above.[422])

Karl Weitzmann was the first to comprehensively publish on the notion of illustrated scrolls being a source of inspiration for Greek and Roman artists. In the highly-influential *Ancient Book Illumination* scenes from a variety of artworks are compared and, it is argued, when iconographic similarities are found, that the original source must be illustrated manuscripts. In his discussion of images from the *Iliad* Weitzmann cites a papyrus fragment dating to the fourth century AD (Pap. Gr. 128 – figure 194) which he considers to be from an illustrated *Iliad* manuscript. The scene shows, in his opinion, Briseis removed from Achilles' tent by Talthybius and Eurybates from *Iliad* 1.355 ff.

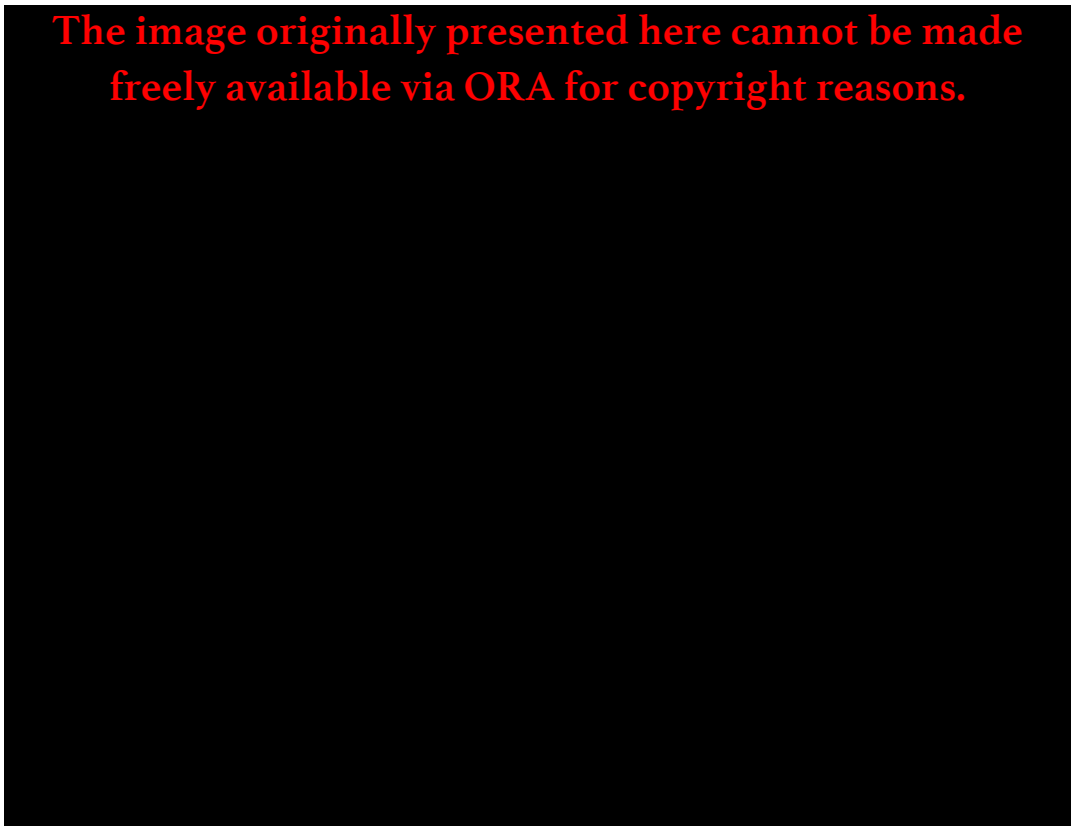


Fig.194 – Pap.graec.mon.128. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.

[422] Schefold (1975) 39-40.

Weitzmann comments, "only the right half of the picture is preserved; the left half undoubtedly represented the mourning Achilles seated in his tent and surrounded by the Myrmidons and Patroclus" and a miniature from the Late Antique *Ilias Ambrosiana* (figure 195) is given as supporting evidence that the scene on the papyrus does indeed represent the removal of Briseis and would have included a mourning Achilles on the missing side. [423]



Fig.195 – Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, F.205.inf (Ceriani et al (1953) VI and VII).

This argument, however, rest on a number of assumptions. First, there is no suggestion of any text preserved with the Munich fragment. Second, other than a compositional similarity with the *Ilias Ambrosiana* miniature – a woman accompanied on either side by two men – there is little to suggest (by way of labels or accompanying text, for example) that this is Briseis, or is in any way a scene from the *Iliad*. The episode in question does not appear to have had a standardised composition (like the desecration and ransom of Hector, for example) and all other suggested representations in Pompeian wallpainting betray a variety of

[423] Weitzmann (1959) 32.

configurations, leading to considerable debate surrounding their identification. There is a general scholarly consensus that figure 196, from the House of the Tragic Poet, shows Briseis taken away from Achilles, yet figures 197 and 198, which are sometimes argued to show the same scene, are in fact subject to a wide range of interpretations.[424] There is therefore no convincing evidence to suggest that the true identity of the papyrus scene is the abduction of Briseis nor, crucially, that it was part of an illustrated manuscript of the *Iliad*.



Fig.196 – The abduction of Briseis?
House of the Tragic Poet, MNN 9105.

[424] House of the Tragic Poet (VI 8,3.5) – Badoni in *PPM* IV (1990) 527-603; House of the Golden Cupids (VI 16,7.38) – Seiler in *PPM* V (1994) 714-846.

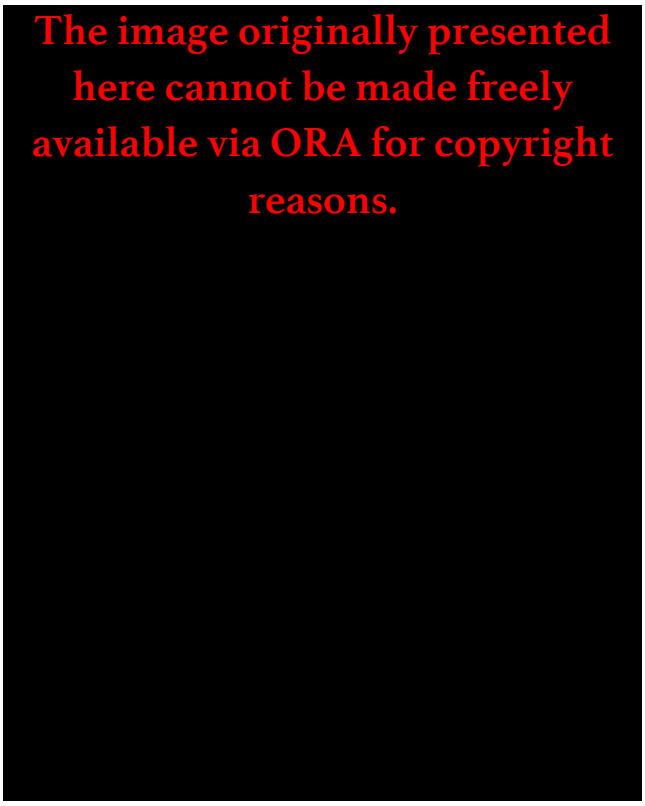


**Fig.197 – Briseis, Agamemnon and Achilles?
Briseis, Achilles and Patroclus?
House of the Golden Cupids, in situ.**



**Fig.198 – The abduction of Briseis?
Helen on her way to Troy?
Chryseis returned to Chryses?
House of the Tragic Poet, NMM 9108.**

Weitzmann makes a number of suggestions concerning the existence of illustrated manuscripts of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* based on extremely diverse chronological and geographical evidence. For example, the hypothetical existence of an illustrated *Iliad* dating to the first century BC, on 24 papyrus scrolls, containing in total around 720 scenes from the epic, is proposed solely on the basis of the compositional similarity of a small number of scenes found on the Hellenistic Megarian bowls, the largely Augustan-era Tabulae Iliacae, first century Pompeian wallpaintings, second and third century Metropolitan sarcophagi and Late Antique codices. Weitzmann's conclusion (which influenced several others after him) that the artist of the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus used illustrated rolls as an iconographic source is made on the basis of the similarities between the death of Lykaon scene (figures 39 and 40) with the same on the Tabula Capitolina (1A). The artists of both these artworks, and indeed the creator of the *Ilias Ambrosiana*, he argues, consulted an illustrated *Iliad,* such as the one reconstructed by Weitzmann below.[425]

[425] Weitzmann (1959) 37. The Penthesilea scene in the House of the Cryptoporticus frieze (figure 49) is argued to originate in an illustrated manuscript of the *Aethiopis*.



Fig.199 – Weitzmann's reconstruction of an illustrated *Iliad* roll from the first century BC.

Weitzmann even proposes reconstructing text from the lost books of the Epic Cycle from artworks traditionally thought to refer closely to the *Cypria*, *Aethiopis*, *Little Iliad* and *Iliupersis*. In this way the Hellenistic Megarian bowls, many of which contain scenes from the Trojan War with inscribed Greek labels, could be used to reconstruct the missing text and allow scholars to gain a fuller picture of archaic poetry, based on the assumption that their images and text originated in illustrated manuscripts of the now-lost epics.[426]

Clearly this method of 'reconstructing' lost text, alongside the assumption that two similarly-presented scenes must be derived from a singular image source, is fraught with difficulty and does not take into account the longstanding iconographic tradition of Homeric scenes, many of which dated back to Archaic Greece (discussed below). Artistic invention and originality, the ability and probability of artists adapting scenes to suit their particular medium are also ignored, as is the inclusion of extra-Homeric details.[427] Perhaps most fundamental

[426] Weitzmann (1959) 43. Pollitt, supporting Weitzmann, believes the illustrated manuscript theory to be "the most likely answer" for the narrative schemes on the Homeric bowls *and* the Telephus Frieze from the Great Altar of Pergamum, "linking what were probably rudimentary landscapes in early Hellenistic book illustration … with the full-blown impressionistic landscapes of Graeco-Roman painting in the late first century B.C. and early first century A.C." Such illustrated scrolls, Pollitt writes, "probably began to be produced on a systematic basis in the library of Alexandria in the time of Ptolemy II Philadelophos". He adds, "the Altar of Zeus … stood near a famous library, and the role of library scholars in planning its sculptural program seems certain" – Pollitt (1986) 204-5.

[427] Several scholars have since refuted Weitzmann's methodology and in the second edition of his *Illustrations in Roll and Codex* (1970) he includes the published counter arguments to his own work. Critics include Heidi Froning, who considers illustrated manuscripts in a discussion of mythological themes on Metropolitan Roman and Attic Greek sarcophagi. Froning rejects Weitzmann's proposal largely because there are not enough extant fragments of papyri from the time to suggest that book illumination influenced sarcophagus sculptors and also because the compositions on sarcophagi do

of all is that the earliest extant papyrus bearing any resemblance to an illustrated, Homeric manuscripts appears to date to the second century AD – P.Oxy.XLII 3001 (figure 200) – which may perhaps show (on the basis of the text surrounding it – *Il.* 23.65ff) Achilles reaching for Patroclus' ghost.[428]

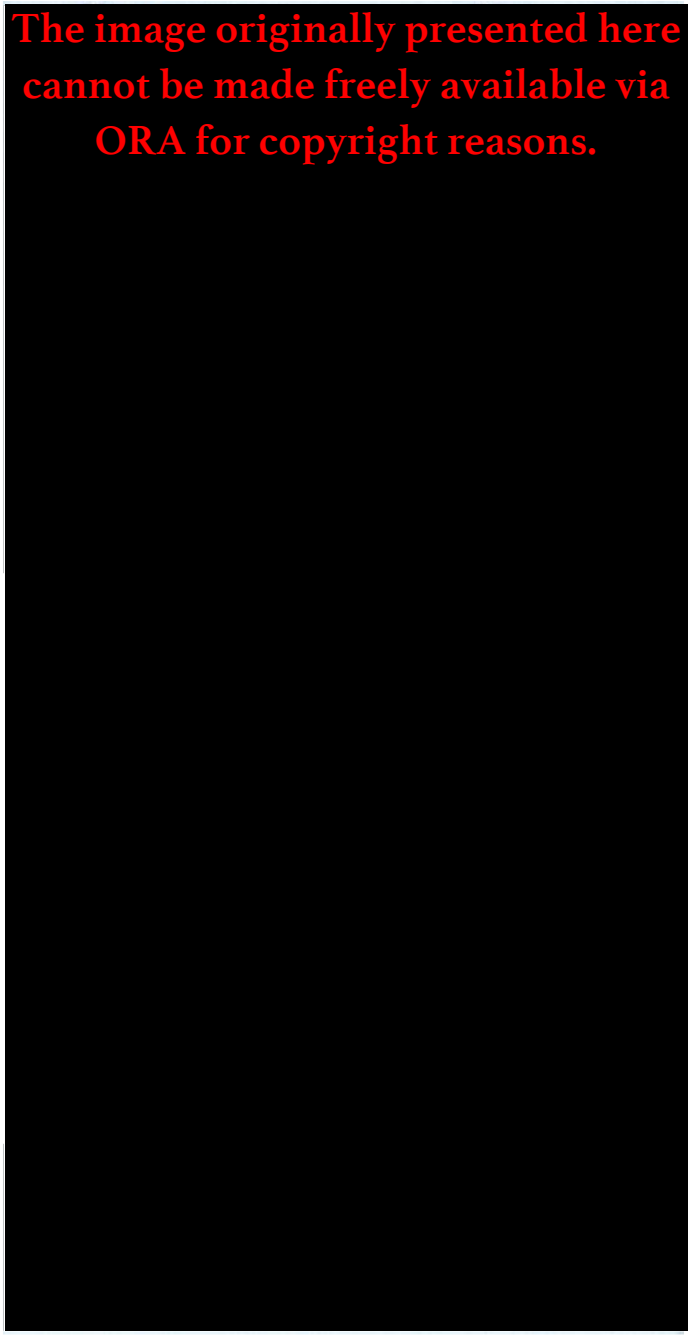


Fig.200 – P.Oxy.XLII 3001, Oxford.

not follow the text of tragedy or epic closely enough to suggest that written manuscripts were being consuted – Froning (1980) 324-326.

[428] Small (2003) 132-134 proposes that rolls which had images integrated within the text were a Roman invention of the second half of the first century BC, although remained rare until the second century AD. This cannot be substantiated by extant papyri, however.

In addition to the fact that no illustrated Homeric papyri survive dating prior to, or even contemporary with, the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii one further and crucial observation weighs against the illustrated manuscript theory: not one of the friezes corresponds exactly with the Homeric epic. In some instances the iconography and epigraphy *alters* the text and, on several occasions, extra-Homeric insertions in the form of protagonists, labels and even entire episodes are included. Such 'deviations' from the canonical epic argue strongly against the Roman-era artists copying from illustrated scrolls of the *Iliad* and furthermore suggest that they were free to adapt the content of the friezes to suit the wishes of the homeowner and his particular interests.

Copybooks

The question of copy or pattern books might legitimately be raised at this point within a discussion concerning the transmission of images and the resources which may have been available to artists. Bianchi Bandinelli hypothesizes the existence of "cartoons" created in Rome and the Hellenistic capitals which were used in the dissemination of iconographic schemes throughout the Roman Empire, but does not specify what precise form they might have taken.[429] More specifically Roger Ling proposes that the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus was constructed from "pattern-books of Iliadic scenes (which) were widely circulated and copied during the late Republic". He adds, "The occasional presence of Greek labels and quotations on wallpaintings of the Second and early Third Styles at both Rome and Pompeii ... need mean no more than that the painters were copying the captions from pattern-books ... Some of the spelling, for instance on the *Odyssey* landscapes, suggests an unfamiliarity with the Greek language." Discussing the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio he proposes, "Most significant is the use of Latin captions on the Homeric frieze ... These were evidently transliterated from a pattern-book with the labels in Greek."[430]

As with the notion that the friezes were created by means of illustrated manuscripts, however, this theory encounters a series of difficulties. Primarily, if the frieze artists *were* working from pattern books (or even illustrated manuscripts)

[429] Bianchi Bandinelli (1955) 18-19.
[430] Ling (1991) 107, 213-214.

which contained captions, surely the Greek within them would have been accurate? The 'erroneous' Greek on the *Odyssey* landscapes in Rome and the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus will be argued in chapter six to be indicative of the Latin-speaking context in which they were created, rather than mistakes in the theoretical 'copying' process. There are similarly convincing reasons for the consistent substitution of Badius for Balios, Xantus for Xanthos and the insertion of the extra-Homeric Danaus and Dardanus in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio (chapter three). If these linguistic details are combined with the reminder that each frieze can in no way be argued to 'illustrate' the Homeric text, an origin in copy or pattern books seems even more unlikely. Perhaps the most crucial difficulty with even the idea of copybooks as an entity is their total lack of survival in the archaeological record and the absence of any reference to them in ancient literature.[431] Here I agree with Froning's observation that of a resource we would assume to have existed in vast quantities in the ancient world, and very likely made of a durable material such as parchment, it is quite extraordinary that none have survived in any archaeological context today.[432]

To conclude, those who hypothesise illustrated manuscripts, copybooks or unattested earlier models from which the artists of the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii and the *Odyssey* frescoes in Rome copied (however loosely) do so without tangible evidence of the existence of such artefacts or celebrated paintings, or even painting series. Such proposals betray the underlying assumption that artists working in

[431] The controversial 'Artemidorus Papyrus', which some scholars have proposed dates in its first 'phase' of life (referring to the Greek text) to the late first century BC on account of the handwriting style, cannot be used to support the existence of copybooks or illustrated Homeric manuscripts. First, the text is a geographical treatise with an unfinished map (which has been argued to show Spain), not an illustrated *Iliad*, *Odyssey,* or other literary work of a similar genre. Illustrated papyri of a geographical nature with maps date back to fourteenth century BC Egypt and so, unlike illustrated Homeric texts, had a long tradition in the ancient world. Second, the human and animal figures do not seem to be literary illustrations but artists' preparatory sketches. There are labels but no extended text and the seemingly random nature of the beasts (both real and mythological) alongside human body parts could accompany no extant text from antiquity. It seems more likely that an artist acquired the discarded papyrus with the geographical text and map and used the blank spaces to create a 'sample' of motifs which could be shown to customers, indicating some of his repertoire. It should not be used therefore as evidence for the existence of copy or pattern books: the papyrus exists in a single version and, due to its ad-hoc nature, seems highly unlikely to have been part of a mass-produced series of copy or pattern books. Small (2003) 118-154 for illustrated texts from antiquity, 120 for the early Egyptian map with labels; Brodersen and Elsner (2009) for papers on the Artemidorus papyrus; Canfora (2007) for arguments against the authenticity of the document. Various contributions in Adornato (ed) (2016) for further discussion of pattern books in light of the Artemidorus Papyrus.

[432] Froning (1980) 327.

Italy in the first centuries BC and AD were not expected, perhaps not even able, to produce original works of such quality and invention as the epic-themed friezes discussed in chapters one to four of this thesis. Conversely, if we base our analysis on the concrete iconographic and epigraphic evidence found within the frescoes themselves real progress can be made in understanding their idiosyncrasies and may reveal to us why Roman patrons wished for such highly-specialised subjects to be painted onto their walls, and perhaps even allow us a glimpse into the lives of the homeowners themselves.

Examining the friezes as original compositions of the Roman era

Since the *Iliad* friezes were first comprehensively published in 1953 only relatively few scholars have argued against the notion that they are copies of earlier originals and consider them to be purpose-made for their Roman context. Clarke, for example, believes the Pompeian artist to have created both the *Iliad* and the Hercules friezes in the House of Octavius Quartio. He notes that the artist made use of scenes with a long-standing iconographic tradition (which can surely only be argued with regard to the *Iliad* frieze), although suggests that pattern books must have been used to gather these compositions together. Clarke concludes that the frieze itself was "tailor-made" for the room and represents a theme especially dear to Romans.[433] The stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine is similarly considered by Croisille to have been personalized for the owner of the house, being highly selective in its narration, and thus indicative of his cultural sensibilities and taste.[434] Lorenz follows an even stronger line of personalisation in her discussion of the 'split-screen vision' of the Hercules and *Iliad* friezes together, suggesting that the celebration of male *virtus* and just leadership in each, alongside *matrimonium* as displayed through the portrayal of *dextrarum iunctio* in the Hercules frieze, "morph… into a point of reference for the self-image of the *dominus* and *matrona* of the house … [which] constitutes a truly Roman feature."[435]

[433] Clarke (1991) 203-207.
[434] Croisille (2005) 161.
[435] Lorenz (2013) 244.

Odyssey frescoes in Rome

One of the first scholars to consider the *Odyssey* frescoes to be an original product of the Roman era was Franz Wickhoff who, in fact, offered a Trajanic date for their creation based on the use of continuous narrative and illusionism and, comparing directly with Trajan's Column, rejected entirely the notion that they were painted before Vitruvius wrote *De Architectura*.[436] Another defence of the originality of the paintings was offered by Christopher Dawson in 1944 who, based on his overall thesis that "the Second Style of Romano-Campanian wall painting was formulated in Italy, not imported from an outside source", locates the date of the *Odyssey* frescoes firmly in mid-first century BC Rome.[437] Reacting to von Blanckenhagen, Josef Engemann refuted any notion of a Hellenistic original, contesting particularly the opinion that the perspective of the landscapes assumes a higher viewer and thus an original placed lower on its own respective wall. Offering comparisons with the *Durchblick* decoration in room N in the villa at Boscoreale and noting the Roman enthusiasm for marine and river landscapes, Engemann correctly proposes that rather than the Roman artist faithfully copying panels 2 to 5 of the *Odyssey* frescoes but being more selective with panels 6 to 10, several painters may have had a hand in creating the frieze, accounting for varying levels of skill and artistry within it.[438]

The most detailed exposition of the *Odyssey* frescoes which proposes that they are original creations of the Roman era is offered by Biering, who brings forward the generally-accepted date of their painting from the mid first century BC (based on Canina's comparison of the *opus reticulatum* of the supporting wall with that used in the Theatre of Pompey) down to the last years of the first century.[439] Biering suggests that the more accurate designation of *opus quasi-reticulatum* should have been applied (although acknowledges that the name was not coined at the time), and comments that if a new masonry style was created for the Theatre of Pompey then its wider usage and spread into domestic architecture would be gradual, rather than instantaneous. He also makes the valid point that the date of the actual construction of a wall is not necessarily the date of its painting and notes

[436] Wickhoff (1900) 154.
[437] Dawson (1944) 75, 180, 188, 196.
[438] Engemann (1967) 141-146.
[439] Biering (1995) 181-190 gives an overview of the dating proposals hitherto offered for the panels.

that the masonry type of the painted wall itself was never accurately documented, implying that it may have been built later than the rest of the structure.

To support his re-dating Biering uses iconographic, stylistic, and often fairly tenuous observations, citing the presence of the supposed baetylus in the Circe panel as a cultic feature which became a focal point of paintings in the late Second Style but especially prominent in the sacro-idyllic landscapes of the Third representing, he argues, an embodiment of the Augustan restoration of ancient religiosity. Similarly, the presence of the eagle on the abacus of the Corinthian capitals of the painted pillars is cited as a decorative feature which only began to be used in the later first century and which also became an iconographic piece of the Augustan repertoire.[440] Biering suggests that the simple, inornate style of the pillar shafts is more reflective of those found on Third Style walls than, for example, the dynamic herm-like caryatids and satyrs of the Second Style walls of the House of the Cryptoporticus in Pompeii, or the ornate, jewel-incrusted pillars from the villa at Oplontis. Additionally, Third Style walls in which the display of wealth is communicated by the framing of large, panel-style pictures with muted tones, Biering argues, reflect the *Odyssey* frescoes much more closely than the vibrant colours of Second Style architectural vistas.[441] He compares the rock formations of the Esquiline frescoes with the Third Style mythological panels in the House of Jason in Pompeii, particularly the Europa and the bull, Pan and the nymphs and Hercules and Nessus paintings, noting the subordination of the figures to the landscape in each, which he describes as a chronologically relevant feature.

Biering's revised dating proposal has been judged harshly by some, with Müller advising his readers not to waste their time reading the latter chapters of the book: "To sum up: pages 171 to 192 can best be left unread (with the exception of pages 176 to 180)". Müller's assertion that the Esquiline frescoes "display[s] all of the characteristics of the Second Style" cannot be verified, however, considering that the painted decoration on the wall below them was never fully excavated or even recorded at the time. He is correct in asserting that the *baetylus* is found in pre-

[440] Biering (1995) 183. Even more questionable is Biering's use of the Imperial-era funerary terracotta figures from Tarentum as 'contemporary' figural comparanda, after having rejected stylistic dating analysis with large sculptural groups (explicitly the Borghese gladiator and the Farnese bull).
[441] Biering cites the punishment of Dirce from the House of the Grand Duke of Tuscany in Pompeii (VII 4, 56), the freeing of Andromache from the House of the Dioscouri (Pompeii VI 9,6) and the Hercules and Nessus panel in the House of the Centaur (Pompeii VI 9,5) as 'contemporary' comparanda – Biering (1995) 184-187.

Augustan art (for example in the frigidarium in the House of the Cryptoporticus) although on shakier ground when advising his reader that dating comparisons should not be made on the content of panels themselves but on the stylistic characteristics of the architectural frame. Bergmann, who also reviewed the monograph, is more accommodating of the revised dating, commenting that it "...deserves consideration. After all, there are no direct parallels in the 40s B.C. to anchor the frieze in that phase of the Second Style defined by H.G. Beyen, who actually used it as a benchmark in his chronology." Strangely, Coarelli's article on the frescoes, published only four years after Biering's study, makes no direct reference to the publication other than listing it in a small bibliography, but one wonders if his complaint concerning the "tendency apparent in several recent studies to lower the dating of the paintings to the Augustan period" is not aimed in part at Biering, stating with unjustified confidence that "the complete reliability of the opposite opinion has by now been amply demonstrated" and "Hellenistic painting should be seen as the ultimate origin of such naturalistic solutions."[442]

Thomas, forming a different conclusion to his assessment of the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii, argues that since the frescoes are unique and no earlier examples exist, that they are a product of their Roman context, noting that at least two different artists' hands can be identified. Schefold also advances a different conclusion to his analysis of the *Iliad* friezes and suggests that, although the elements within the *Odyssey* frescoes are certainly Greek, the synthesis is distinctly new and Roman. Winsor-Leach offers a more neutral assessment and notes that whatever the frescoes' 'model' might have been, in their present embodiment they are directed towards a Roman audience. Penny Small argues that with the increase of literacy and the availability of reading material (particularly through the building of libraries) during the Roman period it is more likely that artworks 'illustrating' literature would be a more prominent feature in Roman than earlier Greek art.[443]

Chapter six of this thesis will proceed largely in agreement with the following quotation by Lowenstam, particularly with regard to the strategies employed in the creation of the frescoes by the Roman-era artists, and will seek to show that the same can indeed be said of the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii:[444]

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[442] Müller (2000) 173-175; Bergmann (1997) 803; Coarelli (1998).
[443] Thomas (1995) 112-113; Schefold (1952) 84; Winsor-Leach (1988) 29; Small (2003) 93.
[444] Lowenstam (1995) 221-222, agreeing with Pollitt that "the question of whether the Odyssey landscapes are Greek or Roman is a non-question. What they are is a late Hellenistic work of the

> The problem is that the questions that have been asked in the past about the Landscapes – Greek or Roman, original or copy? – are incompatible with the processes of ancient art and literature, as has been recognized in regard to other Roman frescoes. Ancient artists interacted with the tradition: they retained and repeated very old material, and significant changes might seem very subtle. The Odyssey Landscapes are a synthesis of Greek and Roman elements, the Roman development of a Greek tradition. If one had to choose between characterizing the Landscapes as Greek or Roman, one would have to choose the latter, in the same sense that Horace's Odes are Roman poems despite their use of Greek models.

Investigating epic-themed artworks in Graeco-Roman literature

Throughout this rest of this and the following chapter, the questions concerning us will be:

Is there any definitive evidence, beyond the friezes themselves and beyond a long-standing iconographic tradition of individual scenes, of any earlier Greek or Roman painted epic friezes upon which the Roman friezes might have been based, or adapted or copied from, either in the archaeology or in extant literature?

We can answer the archaeological question definitively: there are no extant remains of a painted epic frieze which predates the earliest two in our set: the *Odyssey* frescoes from Rome and the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus, both dating to the mid to late first century BC. This is not to say that none ever existed. It is very likely that they did, considering the eminence of Homer throughout the Greek world and the popularity of Trojan War themes in Greek art.[445] But scholars who try to reconstruct *tangible* Hellenistic friezes or panel paintings solely on the basis of the Roman exempla are guilty of the "wishful thinking" described by Dawson in 1944, in one of the earliest comprehensive defences of the originality and creativity of Roman painting, and of the propensity

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first century B.C., and they are therefore, like the culture that produced them, 'Graeco-Roman' … They are a product of the fusion of the two cultures" – Pollitt (1986) 208.

[445] Buitron (1992); Bulas (1929); Cook (1983); Johansen (1967); Lowenstam (1997); Lowenstam (2008); Robert (1890); Schefold and Jung (1989); Sherer (1963); Sinn (1979); Squire (2011); Touchefeu-Meynier (1968). Chapter six will discuss the *only* extant fresco paintings (not in frieze format, however) from the Greek world to preserve Trojan War themes.

towards *Kopienkritik*, as articulated by Ridgway in the quotation found at the beginning of this chapter.[446] The fragmentary sculptural frieze from the Temple of Apollo Smintheus on the Troad is certainly the closest with regard to format and theme, comprising a succession of scenes from the epic cycle but, as will be shown in chapter six, there are considerable differences between it and the painted and stucco friezes under study in this thesis. Thus, we must turn to ancient literature for clues pertaining to other potential models or prototypes.

Extended artworks with epic themes

As examined throughout chapters one to four of this thesis, Pausanias describes two celebrated frescoes in Delphi, dating to the fifth century BC, which were certainly based on epic themes but, as we have also seen, the many differences between the Greek paintings and the Roman friezes mean that the former cannot have been used as prototypes or models for the latter.[447] Aside from the paintings of Polygnotus only two other references to Greek artworks with continuous, epic themes are found in ancient literature. Earlier in his *Description of Greece*, Pausanias describes the Archaic cedar chest of Cypselus in Olympia which had a series of carved wooden, ivory and gold figures as decoration which occasionally narrated epic themes and had accompanying labels (ἐπιγράμματα), although whether the writer was able to read these is unclear as he comments that they were written in ἀρχαίοις γεγραμμένα (ancient characters).[448] The chest apparently included scenes of Menelaus about to kill Helen after the Fall of Troy (Paus. 5.18.3), Ajax fighting Hector (Paus. 5.19.2), Agamemnon holding a decorated shield (Paus. 5.19.4-5), the Judgement of Paris (Paus. 5.19.5), the rape of Cassandra (Paus. 5.19.5) and Thetis receiving the divine armour from Hephaestus (Paus. 5.19.8). These Trojan scenes were combined with characters and episodes from other mythological cycles, including (among many others) the wrestling bout between Jason and Peleus at the

[446] Dawson (1944) xii. In the opening lines of his *Romano-Campanian Mythological Landscape Painting* Dawson acknowledges the reputational dangers of the task he seeks to undertake, citing the academic vitriol launched on Wickhoff after the publication of *Die Wiener Genesis* in 1912 and on Rodenwaldt after the publication of *Die Komposition der pompejanischen Wandgemälde* in 1909.
[447] Reconstructions and discussion of the Polygnotan frescoes in Robert (1892) and (1893); Stansbury-O'Donnell (1989) and (1990).
[448] See Snodgrass (2006) for discussion of Pausanias' description of the chest. Snodgrass dates the decoration of the chest to "somewhat after 600 BC" based on similarities with Corinthian vase scenes.

funeral games for Pelias (Paus. 5.17.10), Herakles fighting the Hydra (Paus. 5.17.11) and the Gorgons chasing Perseus (Paus. 5.18.5). Perhaps on the chest of Cypselus, where events from the Trojan Cycle are combined with other mythological episodes, we encounter an attitude to myth and epic comparable to that found in the single panel wallpaintings in Pompeii where, although thematic connections are sometimes found, programmatic schemes are usually open to a wide range of interpretations.[449] There is no sense, according to Pausanias' description, of a discernible narrative thread.

In a different medium, but especially Homeric in its focus, is Athenaeus' description (based on the treatise by Moschion of Phaselis) of the *Syracusia* transport ship built by Hiero II, King of Syracuse (270–215 BC), whose captain's quarters contained a mosaic floor depicting "the whole story of the Iliad…in a marvellous manner" (Ath. 5.207d).[450] Athenaeus furnishes us with no further details about the mosaic, but he specifically notes the Homeric work which it illustrated.

Only two Roman authors describe continuous, epic-themed artworks, although their contexts are generally humbler than those documented by the Greek writers. In Vitruvius' famous passage on *decor*, he describes:

> "ambulationibus vero propter spatia longitudinis varietatibus topiorum ornarent ab certis locorum proprietatibus imagines exprimentes; pinguntur enim portus … nonnulli loci item signorum megalographiam habent et deorum simulacra seu fabularum dispositas explicationes, non minus troianas pugnas seu Ulixis errationes per topia, ceteraque, quae sunt eorum similibus rationibus ab rerum natura procreata" (Vitr. 7.5.2).

Such walkways (*ambulationes*) as exemplified by porticos and cryptoportici are certainly found in Roman houses and the closest to Vitruvius' description is the *Iliad frieze* in the cryptoporticus of the House of the Cryptoporticus in Pompeii, appropriately dating to the Late Republican era. Vitruvius quantifies the frequency of such artworks as being *nonnulli* (some, or several) and so it seems we are not to imagine that these were particularly rare or grand commissions. Crucially, however, he makes no mention of a famous original or originals upon which the epic-themed friezes known to him were based which, given his listing of the names of Greek architects and artists in the preface of the seventh book of *De Architetura*

[449] Discussed in chapter seven.
[450] Trans. C.D. Yonge (1854).

(11-18) and his admiration of the ways of the *antiqui*, would seem to be something of an omission if all such artworks harked back to a particular, celebrated prototype.

More common in Greek and Roman literature is discussion of freestanding, removable paintings in galleries, public buildings and sanctuaries, which were often painted by artists from the Greek world and were highly prized. They, like the single panel frescoes of the Third and Fourth Pompeian Styles, usually depicted a single subject or theme and, if they did contained themes pertaining to the Trojan War, are much more difficult to ascribe directly to a literary source than the continuous friezes, unless explicitly stated so by the writer. Archaeologically, none survive today to allow close examination. Some were combined in a series and, as seen above, several scholars assign such paintings as models for the painted *Iliad* (and Hercules) friezes in Pompeii, in particular the works of the painter Theoros.

Pliny, who is the source of confusion over the names Theon and Theoros, who are often confused in modern scholarship, writes in close succession of two artists: *Theon* who painted among other subject a Madness of Orestes and a Clytemnestra (Plin. *HN.* 35.144) and *Theoros* who painted Orestes killing Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, a depiction of Cassandra which was displayed in the Temple of Concord and a series of paintings on the Trojan War which, in Pliny's day, could be seen in the Portico of Philippus in Rome (Plin. *HN.* 35.144). Of most relevance here is the latter artist yet, considering the very brief mention by Pliny, we must agree with Heslin's assessment of the situation: "Unfortunately, there is no direct evidence at all to confirm what the cycle of Trojan paintings that hung there looked like, or what particular episodes were represented."[451]

The earliest commentator to consider the connection between Theoros' masterpieces and Pompeian wallpainting appears to be Rodenwaldt, whose work directly influenced Kazimierz Bulas who, in his much-cited *Les illustrations antiques de l'Iliade* of 1929, links many of the Trojan War scenes of the Hellenistic and Roman era to Theoros (although calling him Theon).[452] Bulas was the first to argue that the artist's work was replicated in the Temple of Apollo in Pompeii and could also be seen in the Removal of Briseis fresco from the House of the Tragic Poet (MNN 9105), several of the Roman representations of the Desecration of Hector and

[451] See above for Heslin's proposals concerning the Theoran cycle and the Temple of Apollo series in Pompeii. He provides a useful summary of the confusion surround the names Theoros, Theon and even Theodorus in Heslin (2015) 240-241.
[452] Rodenwaldt (1909).

the majority of battle and combat scenes depicting events from the Trojan War. Although Bulas does not explicitly link the friezes in the House of Octavius Quartio and House of the Cryptoporticus to the paintings of Theon/Theoros, he notes that their artists must have drawn upon the same sources as the other painters and craftsmen of the Roman era.[453]

Pausanias comments upon another painting series by Polygnotus (described as γραφάς) in a building somewhere to the left of the Propylaea on the Acropolis (Paus 1.22.6-7).[454] It seems that these were also frescoes since he says that among those not effaced by time were depictions of Diomedes taking the Palladium from Troy, Odysseus removing Philoctetes' bow, Orestes killing Aegisthus, the sacrifice of Polyxena and Odysseus encountering Nausicaa. Although Pausanias describes the latter as "just like the description in Homer" (Paus. 1.22.6), almost certainly referring to its origins in the *Odyssey*, there does not seem to be the same cohesive narrative thread as found in the Nekyia and Iliupersis frescoes and most of the episodes were probably not necessarily intended to invoke literature as their primary aim. Perhaps more likely to do so, however, was a painting in Elea which Porcia, wife of Brutus, used to visit and weep beside:

> A certain painting ... its subject was Greek – Andromache bidding farewell to Hector; she was taking from his arms their little son, while her eyes were fixed upon her husband ... When Acilius, one of the friends of Brutus, recited the verses containing Andromache's words to Hector, 'But, Hector, thou to me art father and honoured mother and brother; my tender husband, too, art thou,' Brutus smiled and said: 'But I, certainly, have no mind to address Porcia in the words of Hector, "Ply loom and distaff and give orders to thy maids," for though her body is not strong enough to perform such heroic tasks as men do, still, in spirit she is valiant in defence of her country, just as we are' (Plut. *Vit. Brut.* 23).[455]

Plutarch's framing of the story and use of direct quotations from the *Iliad* (6.429, 491) are undoubtedly intended to bring to his viewers' minds the Homeric epic in a much more direct way than any of the more generic Trojan War paintings listed above. Overall, there seems to have been a preference by panel painters (not given the luxury of space available to frieze artists) to depict key events from the Trojan

[453] Bulas (1929) 80, 96, 98, 137-138. Where the stylistic features of the artwork in question do not seem to correspond to the work of Theon, another, unidentified "modèle commun" is often suggested.
[454] *Cf* Elsner (2002) on Pausanias' structuring of his periegesis.
[455] Trans. B. Perrin (1918). Unfortunately, Plutarch does not name the artist.

War which had the potential to offer a moral message or to show a decisive moment from the war which often led to devastating consequences.[456] The emphasis in these artworks was not so much the direct link with written text but on reflecting upon the *nature* of epic; a weighty and serious genre whose heroes and heroines were revered and held up as moral paradigms and exempla.[457] Note Quintilian's criticism of Ovid for not assuming an appropriately reverential tone when composing works in the epic style: "Ovid has a lack of seriousness even when he writes epic and is unduly enamoured of his own gifts" (Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.88).[458] Indeed, several paintings brought to Rome after the conquest of Greece appear to have been admired for these very reasons.[459]

Trojan War paintings in fiction literature

The *Satyricon*

Our final references to painting with epic themes are found in entirely disparate, fictitious settings. The first is in the bawdy, comic novel, *Satyricon*, and takes the form of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (we imagine) frescoes in the house of Trimalchio:

> Interrogare ergo atriensem coepi, quas in medio pictures haberent. 'Iliada et Odyssian' inquit (Petron. Sat. 29.4).

Although found (but sadly not described) in the context of a comic novel it seems fair to imagine that they were probably based on similar artworks seen by Petronius, but since Encolpius needs to ask the porter *what* subjects are depicted in them it seems either that they did not contain labels or that the Homeric narrative was distorted within them (as with everything under the freedman's influence).[460] It is also not absolutely certain what form these *Iliad* and *Odyssey* depictions take. The paintings in the entranceway showing the life of Trimalchio are certainly frieze-

[456] *Cf* Walker (2004).
[457] Newby (2016) 160-163 for discussion of 'Myth as exemplum'.
[458] Trans. Harold Edgeworth-Butler (1922).
[459] For paintings from the Hellenistic East brought to Rome see Pli. *HN.* 35.8-10. Newby discusses moments of dramatic tension and consequence in a series of panel paintings in the House of Jason and similarly compares the Hector and Andromache painting in Elea – Newby (2017) 177-184.
[460] Courtney (2001) 79.

like, containing continuous narrative and taking up the *totum parietem*. Their labels are described as *inscriptio*, perhaps suggesting text even more detailed than *tituli*. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* paintings, however, are puzzlingly described as *in medio picturas* and it seems likely that they are displayed in the atrium, on account of the *atriensem*. It is tempting to think that these are friezes, particularly as the titles of the epics are used to describe them, but the Roman atrium with its numerous doorways leading off to other rooms does not seem to be the most appropriate setting for a continuous frieze.

Petronius is instead emphasising the vulgarity and inappropriateness of Trimalchio's decoration. The painted frieze described by Encolpius was certainly not a suitable medium for depiction of a common slave market (imagine Vitruvius' reaction) and the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* paintings, whatever their form, are jarringly juxtaposed with scenes of *Laenatis gladiatorium munus*. This appears to subvert the Roman ideals of *decor* although, perhaps not as much as we might otherwise have thought, given the combining of the two in the House of Octavius Quartio.[461]

A second reference to a painting with a Trojan War theme comes later in the *Satyricon*, although using it to garner information about epic-themed paintings, as Elsner discusses, is problematic. Encolpius, having escaping from the *Cena Trimalchionis,* is conversing with the poetaster Eumolpus in an art gallery (*pinecotheca* – Petron. *Sat.* 83.4) which we find out later is in a *templum* (90.68).[462] Encolpius asks his companion about the age of the pictures (*aetates tabularum*) (88.1), but only that which shows *Troiae Halosin* (89.1) is named specifically. Eumolpus then goes on, at great length, to describe in verse all of its details: the weary Trojans, the construction of the Wooden Horse, the warriors hidden inside, the Trojans rejoicing while bringing the horse into the city, Laocoön striking the horse with his spear *and* being devoured by the serpents, then night-time when the Greeks escape from the horse and attack Troy. However, although it is presented as ekphrasis, Eumolpus' description in fact *not* based on the painting before him and

[461] *Decor,* described by Gazda as the "aesthetic of appropriateness" is referred to in Vitr. 1.2.5 and extensively by Quintilian in the *Insitutio Oratoria*. Although he does not use the word *decor* itself, Cicero speaks of the appropriateness of decorative themes according to the function of the particular room in *Ad Atticus* 10.1. Discussion in Gazda (2002) and Trimble (2002) 226-247.

[462] Heslin suggests that Petronius intends us to think of the panel painting series by Theoros in the portico of Philippus which surrounded the temple of Hercules of the Muses in Rome – Heslin (2015) 309-316.

is, as Elsner notes, "entirely textual".[463] It is used instead by the author as a device to demonstrate the obsessive oratorical tendencies of the poetaster, which were certainly not appreciated by his audience.

The *Aeneid*

Ekphrasis is a much-admired and much-discussed device in studies of Homeric and Virgilian epic and a number of artworks are described in detail by the respective poets: the shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18.407-608, the shield of Aeneas in *Aeneid* 8.626-731, the doors of the Temple of Apollo at Cumae in *Aeneid* 6.14-41 and the paintings in the Temple of Juno at Carthage in *Aeneid* 1.450-493.[464] It is the latter which are of interest to us here, however, as they appear to have formed either a frieze or a succession of paintings detailing the events of the Trojan War and, it has been argued, the Greek victory at Troy and the triumphs of Achilles.[465] The passage appears to have had some effect on later Roman writers and Elsner argues that in the *Satyricon,* which was probably written around seventy or so years after the *Aeneid*, Petronius was making a comic contrast between Aeneas, who could accurately claim agency in the scenes he was narrating (having taken part in many of them), and Eumolpus, who frames his narrative in the first person in an attempt to render *phantasia*, or vividness, but ultimately (and spectacularly) fails.[466]

Unfortunately, little indication is given by Virgil in the Latin text as to what precise form the images on the temple took: Aeneas describes them as *singula* (1.453) and *pictura inani* (1.464), which depicted *Iliacas ex ordine pugnas bellaque* (1.456-7), and nine scenes are recounted:

1. Greeks in retreat
2. Trojans in retreat and Achilles in pursuit
3. Rhesus
4. The death of Troilus
5. The supplication of the Trojan women to Athena

[463] Elsner (1993). Slater suggests that Eumolpus' poem is reminiscent of a soliloquy from Senecan tragedy and "the suspicion arises that Eumolpus has seized the opportunity to recite a previously composed poem" – Slater (2009) 25. See also Rimell (2002) 66-67.
[464] Elsner classifies these types as "interventive ekphrasis" in which the description of an artwork is embedded within a longer narrative – Elsner (2002) 2-3.
[465] Torelli (1999) 9 interprets the paintings as a frieze; Elsner (2007) as frescoes; Heslin (2015) as a succession of individual, freestanding paintings – 258-259. Further discussion in Leach (1988) 312-323.
[466] Elsner (1993).

6. The ransom of Hector's body
7. Aeneas
8. Memnon
9. Penthesilea

Close reading of the text does not reveal with any certainty whether these are individual paintings or individual scenes within a larger frieze. *Singula* could refer to either format and, although the scenes are recounted in general chronological order with regard to their sequence in the war (with perhaps one exception), the narrative is not continuous. This could mean that they are separate, freestanding panels, or that the frieze omitted a number of episodes from the narrative of the Trojan War, or even that Aeneas is not giving us a full description of what he sees. The hero certainly seems to jump around from scene to scene: *hac fugerent Grai … hac Phyrges* (1.467-8), *nec procul hinc Rhesi* (1.469), ***parte alia*** *fugiens amissis Troilus armis* (1.474), *interea ad templum* (1.479). I would argue that the best clues to interpretation are found in the phrases *ex ordine* (1.456) – in order – and *parte alia* – in another part – suggesting that the episodes described are parts of a larger whole, which is more suggestive of a continuous frieze than individual panel paintings. Consequently, we cannot agree with Peter Heslin's bold statement that, "Virgil's readers … would not have hesitated to infer that Aeneas was looking at a cycle of panel paintings arranged around the portico of the temple."[467]

Aside from their format, a number of details concerning the paintings are interesting. The first is that scenes three, five and six are taken from the narrative of the *Iliad*. Heslin convincingly argues that, on occasion, Aeneas misinterprets the scenes since he only witnessed the Trojan side of events and, of course, had never read the *Iliad*. For example, where the hero believes he can see a depiction of Achilles routing the Trojans in scene two, the educated reader would know that this is Patroclus in disguise. Less convincing, however, is Heslin's suggestion that Aeneas misinterprets the fourth scene as the death of Troilus when it may actually have been the desecration of Hector. We are told that the warrior in the scene is *lora tenens tamen* (1.477) but this cannot be linked with Hector's death as the Trojan prince was tied to the chariot by ropes threaded through his calves, and the desecration scene adheres to a standard formatting in the entirety of extant Roman

[467] Heslin interprets *singula* as individual, freestanding paintings located in the sacred grove of the *templum* (sanctuary) and argues that this format, being more expensive and desirable, would be more likely – Heslin (2015) 260.

art.[468] Aeneas' description is therefore far more suggestive of Troilus than Hector. This muddies the water slightly in having the *Iliad* sequence broken up by an extra-Homeric scene, but the death of Troilus *is* mentioned by Priam in the *Iliad* and so his loss is certainly felt in the narrative: "I had the best sons in the broad realm of Troy. Now all of them are gone – godlike Mestor, Troilus the charioteer and Hector, a god among mortals" (*Il.* 24.257-8).

Also interesting with regard to the series of episodes in the Virgilian account is the grouping of Aeneas, Memnon and Penthesilea as these three are similarly juxtaposed at the end of the painted frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus in Pompeii (chapter one). As the latter frieze was probably painted decades prior to the publication of the *Aeneid* it cannot be suggested that Virgil's epic was used in its formation, but the two groupings might suggest that other friezes of this nature, perhaps with these particular combinations, were visible in Roman Italy. Indeed, a similar combination (the death of Penthesilea followed by the death of Memnon) on the lower bands of the Tabula Capitolina (1A) reveals that these were events often singled out for illustration from the post-*Iliadic* narrative or the *Aethiopis*. Heslin concludes, "when Aeneas gazes at length upon the scenes of the Trojan War in the temple, every Roman reader of Virgil would have recognised the kind of artwork described there."[469]

Having surveyed both the scholarship which considers the Pompeian and Metropolitan Roman friezes to be 'copies of Greek originals', and the Greek and Roman literature which describes ancient artworks (fictional or non-fictional) with epic themes, we can conclude that although the four extant were almost certainly not the only example of their type, there is no convincing literary evidence of any famed originals upon which they were based. The following chapter will therefore survey the archaeological evidence for such a proposal, considering any stylistic or thematic precedents in the archaeological record, and finally offering a detailed exposition of the details of the painted and stucco friezes which situates them firmly in a Roman, Italian context.

[468] Discussion in chapter seven. Note an earlier discussion of Aeneas' 'misreading' of the frieze in Boyd (1995).
[469] Heslin (2015) 256.

Chapter 6: The origins of the Roman epic friezes – archaeological evidence

In the dearth of any evidence, we must resist the inherent philological urge towards Quellenforschung*: it is wholly typical of classical archaeologists to judge objects that do survive as secondary copies of supposed prototypes that do not.*

(Michael Squire, 2011)[470]

Stylistic and thematic precedents or parallels in the archaeological record

It is imperative to begin this archaeological survey with the fundamental point that no continuous, painted friezes narrating the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* survive from Archaic, Classical or Hellenistic Greece or Italy, thus any claims pertaining to the Roman era artists' copying of earlier originals is purely hypothetical.[471] Did Greek, Etruscan or Italic painted, epic-themed friezes exist? It seems very likely that they did, considering the survey of ancient literature conducted in chapter five. Unfortunately, we are hindered by the poor survival of wall and panel painting from outside of the Bay of Naples and Metropolitan Rome areas, particularly from domestic contexts, to form any comprehensive analysis.[472] Nevertheless, each of the Roman friezes under discussion in this thesis exist only in a single version with no known parallels or precedents and are undeniably Roman examples of the type (however far back it stretched chronologically) described by Vitruvius in *de Architectura* 7.5.2, as evidenced by their inclusion of features entirely pertinent to their Pompeian and city of Rome contexts. Yet their compositional and stylistic elements, and even their thematic content, finds precedent in the Greek world, as will be explored below.

Stylistic precedents

Outside of Italy, some of the best surviving ancient fresco painting is found in the Hellenistic and Late Classical-era tombs of Macedonia and so it is here that we begin our

[470] Squire (2011) 63.
[471] It should be noted that this study does not argue that *all* Roman-era wall paintings lacked any relationship with earlier models. R.R.R. Smith's article on the figural frieze from room H in the villa at Boscoreale convincingly argues that the painting was a version of an early Antigonid composition. The presence of overt Macedonian royal symbolism (the *kausia* and diadem worn by 'Macedonia', starred shield and use of *kataptromanteia*) in a Roman context renders the iconography somewhat out of place in a Late Republican villa and points strongly towards a non-Italic model – Smith (1994) 100-128.
[472] Dawson (1944) 1-7 for surviving Greek painting in tombs and houses.

search for stylistic or thematic precedents for the Roman friezes. The paintings which survive in this context are decidedly figurative and anthropocentric, with large human figures dominating the scenes and landscape features reduced to an occasional symbolic tree or altar: note, for example, the Abduction of Persephone from Vergina Tomb I of around 340 BC (figure 201).[473] The best comparanda for this in the Roman world are the large scale megalographiae (*cf* Vitr. 7.5.2), examples of which can be found in the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii and the so-called Macedonian frieze from Boscoreale.[474] With regard to landscape painting, the lion and boar hunt fresco from the Tomb of Philip at Vergina features the Macedonian countryside as an integral part of the expedition, but the hunters and beasts are not subordinate to it as the figures are in the Roman *Odyssey* frescoes. It is interesting to note, however, the inclusion of sacred paraphernalia (ribbons and garlands hanging on trees and architectural pillars supporting statues) which is also a common feature of the sacro-idyllic landscapes of the Augustan era.[475] With regard to the structure and placement of the decoration on its respective wall, there are compositional similarities between Vergina Tomb I and the oecus in the House of Octavius Quartio: each has a larger-scale, dominating, figural narrative running above with a smaller frieze running beneath. The small frieze in the tomb is additionally similar in colour and comparative size to the *Iliad* stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine.



Fig.201 – Vergina Tomb I.

[473] Pollitt (1986) 187-195 for a stylistic analysis of extant Classical and Hellenistic painting; Andronicos (1994) 86-95 for plates and description of the tomb painting from Vergina.
[474] See note 471. See also Davis (2000) 83-95 for discussion of the origins of the Villa of the Mysteries megalographia, in which she concludes that it is a "product of first-century BC Southern Italy".
[475] Andronicos (1994) 96-115.

Particularly analogous with the Pompeian stucco frieze is that found beneath the upper, engaged colonnade from the façade of the Tomb of the Judgement in Lefkadia from the late fourth century BC (figure 202). The pale blue background and white stucco with painted figures creates a very similar effect in each, as does each frieze's placement on its respective wall, 'supporting' the higher decorative elements. This suggests that a stucco frieze style developed in the early Hellenistic period (or possibly earlier) which was still known and used in the Imperial Roman period. The comparison might also provide some clue as to the intended function of the (much debated) *sacellum* in the House of the Iliac Shrine and lend weight to the idea, proposed by Nicole Blanc, that the room was indicative of the reverence of ancestors, considering that two similarly-formatted friezes are found in Macedonian tombs.[476]

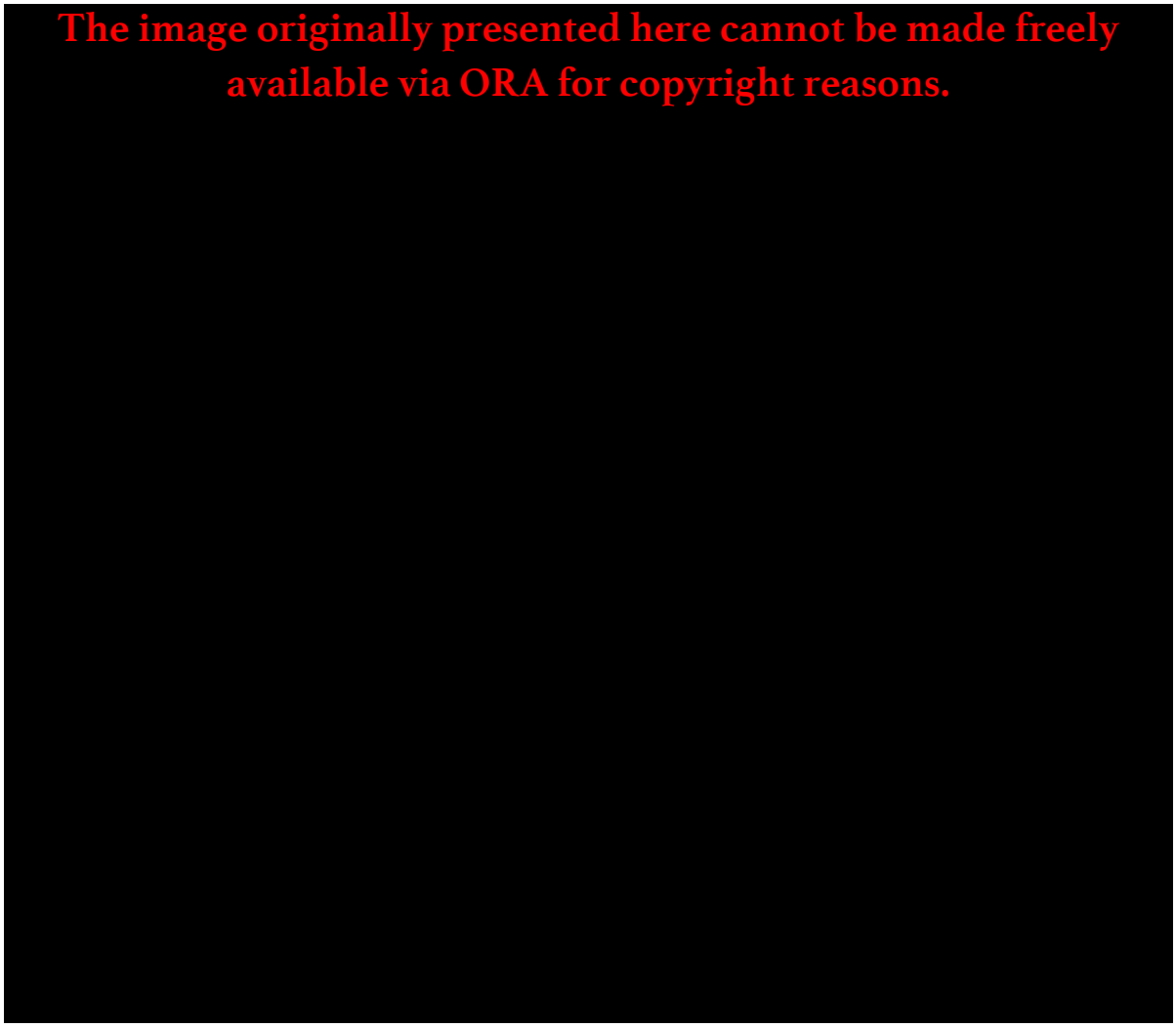


Fig.202 – Reconstruction of the façade of the Tomb of the Judgement, Lefkadia.

[476] Blanc (1997) 37-41.

Domestic decoration from Hellenistic Delos provides rare stylistic comparanda with the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii, particularly that in the House of Octavius Quartio. Figures 203 and 204 show the same fragment of a frieze from La Maison de Dionysos in Delos, dating to around the late second or early first century BC, in which a warrior wearing a Phrygian cap and trousers falls onto his shield. His opponent stands menacingly over him with spear raised. The similarities in the figural style of the warriors and the darkly-coloured backgrounds are discernible in the Delian (figures 203–4) and Roman (figure 205) frescoes.

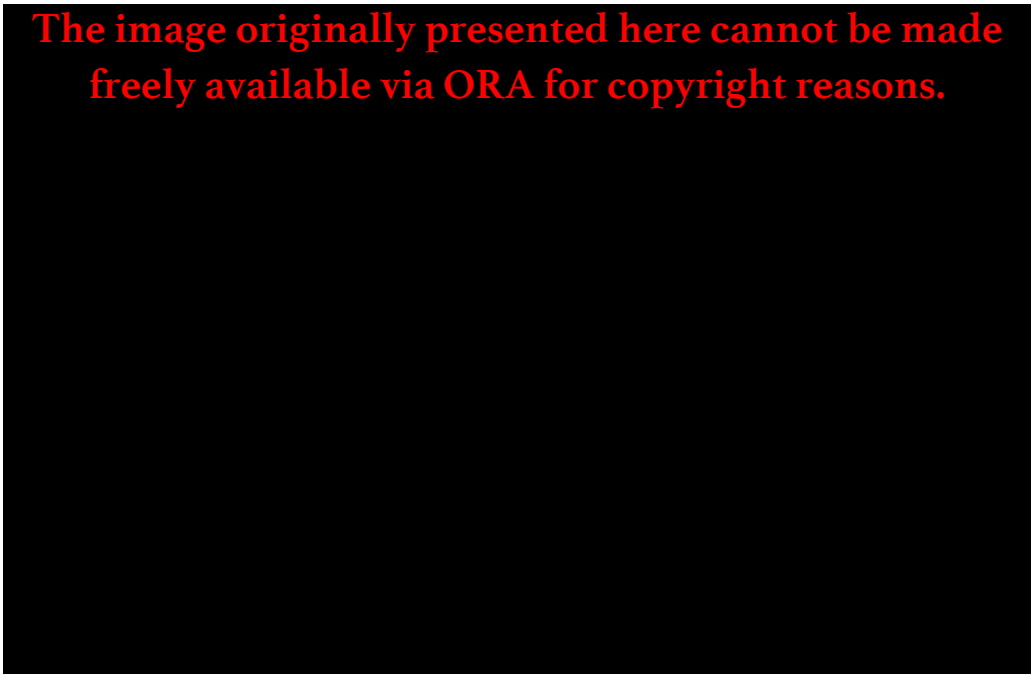


Fig.203 – Fragment from the black-background frieze in La Maison de Dionysos, Delos.

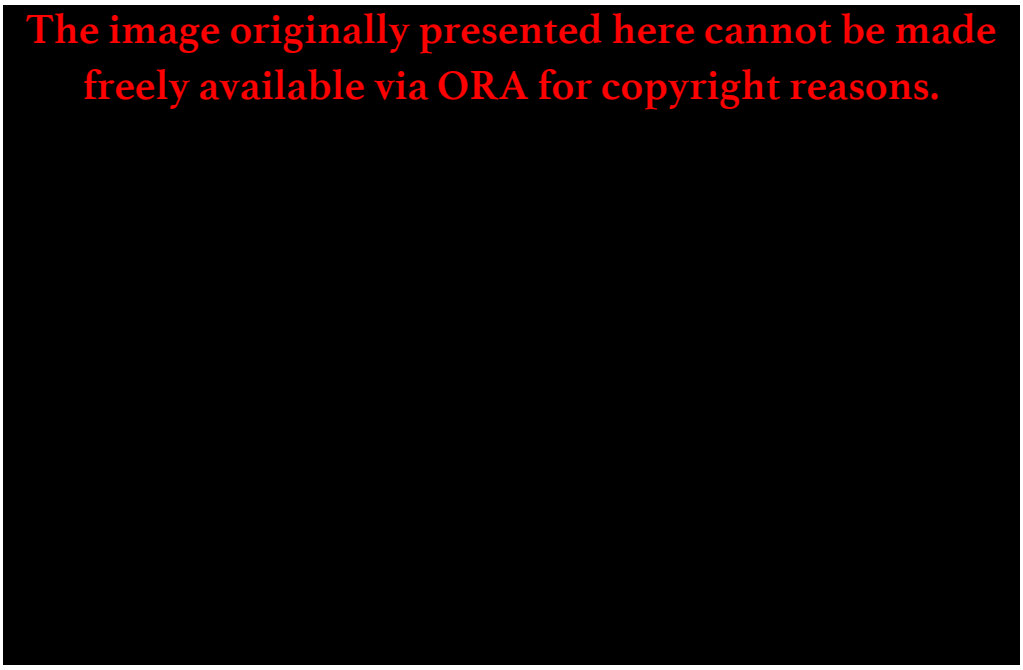


Fig.204 – Artist's copy of the fragment, painted in 1904.



Fig.205 – Greek embassy scene from the House of Octavius Quartio.

Although comparisons can be made between the colouration and figural styles, analysis of the subject matter of the Delian scene is more problematic. Only a small number of fresco fragments from its particular context (the end of a hallway) appear to have been readable, with the pieces so few that Joseph Chamonard, writing just after the excavation of the Maison de Dionysus in 1906, suggests that they probably fell from a domestic altar rather than a wall. He records that at least one figure had a Greek label preserved and identified the letters ειος, leading Vincent Bruno to suggest that this might be Epizelos (Επίζηλος) who was struck blind in Herodotus' description of the Persian Wars (Hdt. 6.117), seemingly not trusting Chamonard's interpretation of the letters.[477] Other fragments depicting warriors in brightly-coloured tunics and bearing arms led Chamonard to propose that a series of single combats between Greek and barbarians was the subject of the frieze.[478] This seems plausible, although *which* particular barbarians cannot be verified, particularly because Bruno's suggestion of Epizelos is not at all convincing based on the surviving letters on the label.

Note, however, that even with such a small amount of fresco surviving, Bruno is still determined to assign an 'original' for the Delian frieze, commenting: "It seems probable that the artist of the fallen-warrior fragment had some prototype in mind, for

[477] Bruno (1985) n.17.
[478] Chamonard (1906) 531-533.

there were many famous monuments in Greece illustrating the various battles of Greeks and barbarians…".[479]

An earlier Hellenistic tomb frieze dating to the late fourth or early third century BC, from Agios Athanasios in Macedonia, also shows warriors set against a black background (figure 206), although here taking part in a funerary banquet. At 35cm high it is of similar scale to the House of Octavius Quartio *Iliad* frieze but includes men wearing typical Macedonian attire: the section shown in figure 206 contains three men wearing the kausia hat and the central two in winged helmets. The Vergina sun or starburst decorates the centre of each shield, placing the iconography in a distinctly Macedonian context, in a similar way to the fresco from the villa at Boscoreale.[480]



Fig.206 – Detail from an early Hellenistic tomb in Agios Athanasios, Thessaloniki.

The stylistic and compositional similarities between the Roman and Hellenistic friezes suggest that artists working in the first centuries BC and AD in Italy were trained in a tradition fully aware of Hellenistic wallpainting with elements probably even developed from it. Indeed, Rhomiopoulou describes the frescoes on the Lefkadia tombs as the "forerunners of Pompeian and of later west European painting".[481]

From the archaeology of the Hellenistic East as it stands, there are only two preserved examples of paintings possibly showing Trojan war themes, although neither are in the frieze format and neither can be securely linked to Homeric epic. The first is part

[479] Bruno (1985) 32-39. The better preservation of the façade of the Tomb of the Judgement in Lefkadia allows us to more confidently suggest that the battle depicted on the blue and white frieze is between Greeks and barbarians: possibly, considering its specific context, Macedonians and Persians – Rhomiopoulou (1997) 28.
[480] Tsimbidou-Avlonitou (2002).
[481] Rhomiopoulou (1997) 23. Descamps-Lequime (2007) and Miller (2014) for recent surveys of Greek and Macedonian painting.

of a series of mythological panels decorating the ceiling of the late fourth century Tomb of the Coffers in Thrace. Among vignettes of Bellerophon and the Chimaira, Dionysus, Silenus and other mythological themes are six scenes from the life of Achilles, including Phoinix's embassy to the hero, his mourning after the death of Patroclus and Thetis in Hephaestus' workshop, alongside four other panels showing Nereids bearing arms. With regard to formatting the paintings are similar to the single panels of the Third and Fourth Pompeian styles with large scale figures dominating the pictorial space, and even seem to highlight similar themes. Chapter seven will discuss the programmatic panel schemes with Trojan subjects in Pompeian houses, including one based around the 'arming of Achilles' which, like the Thracian panels, defers to standardised motifs to illustrate a theme. We cannot say with any certainty, therefore, as Miller suggests, that they narrate "the life of Achilles taken from the *Iliad*".[482]

The other extant Hellenistic painting which *may* have a Trojan War theme is found on a fragmentary, frescoed, second century loculus slab from Alexandria which appears to show segments of a Nekyia scene. A graphic reconstruction is shown in figure 207.



Fig.207 – Graphic reconstruction of a loculus slab from Alexandria, second century BC.

[482] Miller (2014) 200; Valeva (2005).

Only Ixion and Charon can be securely identified, the former strapped to the wheel in the upper right hand corner and the hooded boatman guiding his boat to the pier. Daszewski and Abd-el-Fattah tentatively identify Sisyphus, Tityus and Orion but their suggestion that the Danaids are also represented (based on direct comparison with the *Odyssey* landscapes) meets the same issues as those discussed in chapter four, since there *is* a woman drawing water from the river, but no other feature confirms that she is a Danaid.[483] The loculus panel in fact confirms how unique a presentation the Roman panel (figure 174) is since the former has more in common with Polygnotus' Nekyia fresco, which also depicted Charon (where both the *Odyssey* and the Roman panel do not) and conveyed a sense of a descent in Hades (Paus. 10.28.1).

From the western Mediterranean, of a similar date to the Thracian coffer panels, are the frescoes in the Etruscan François Tomb in Vulci, which show a series of disparate vignettes and characters from the Epic Cycle forming pictorial pendants to the deeds of the Saties family on the opposite side of the hypogeum. Nestor is paired with Vel Saties reflecting their roles as wise patriarchs, and an extended painting showing the sacrifice of the Trojan captives by Achilles (*Il.* 23.108-191) faces scenes of Etruscans vanquishing their enemies: according to Brilliant "visual similes in the form of parallel pendants". Rouveret notes that the paintings "reveal a detailed knowledge of Homeric poetry, which is sometimes followed with great precision" and so can be compared with the Roman epic-themed friezes in this way but, instead of providing a visual rendering of a specific epic, the family appears to have used a range of themes within the Epic Cycle (the extra-Homeric Ajax slaying Cassandra) and beyond (Amphiaraus from the Theban Cycle) to "ennoble" their Etruscan heritage.[484]

Crucially, the ceiling panels in Thrace, the loculus slab in Alexandria and the tomb paintings in Vulci are not continuous friezes with a discernible following of the Homeric narrative and so an immediate connection with epic literature cannot be confirmed. The only verifiable frieze to survive from the Greek world with the Trojan War as its theme is not, in fact, painted, but is a sculpted temple relief from Asia Minor.

[483] Daszewski and Abd-el-Fattah (1990).
[484] Brilliant (1994) 31-34; Rouveret (2014) 250-252 for discussion and extended bibliography.

A thematic precedent? The Trojan War frieze from the Temple of Apollo Smintheus in the Troad

The marble relief fragments discussed below are the only example of a monumental, continuous, narrative frieze with an epic theme to survive from the Greek world. The temple on which they were originally displayed is located in the Troad, near to the modern village of Gülpinar in Turkey, and the decoration itself is thought to date from the mid to late second century BC.[485] The fragments were published in 2003 after excavation throughout the twentieth century and Coşkun Özgünel's interpretation of the iconography, much like that of Spinazzola and Aurigemma concerning the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii, appears never to have been questioned until this study.

It is probably no coincidence that the relief panels adorned the temple of a Homeric god – Apollo Smintheus – the very deity whose arrows caused the plague which devastated the Greek army in *Iliad* 1.39. Indeed, the entire decorative scheme of the temple appears to have referred to the Trojan War, from the three extant columnae caelatae to the nineteen extant relief blocks from its entablature.[486] The narrative, if considered in order of the Homeric chronology, begins by encircling the temple columns and then moves to the entablature, compelling us to question how readable it would have been for the viewer, even if painted. Nevertheless it is remarkably detailed in its iconographic representation of the *Iliad*, in particular, and will be shown to reflect almost all of the features we have come to expect of an epic-themed frieze.

Columnae caelatae

The first scene, if considered in order of the Homeric narrative, is found on what was numbered by the temple excavators as columna caelata 1 (figure 208). Although the relief is damaged, Apollo's arrow is discernible (see blue box, reflecting a similar iconography as found in the Pompeian friezes), revealing that the left side of the rollout almost certainly showed the plague scene from the first book of the *Iliad*. The outline of a ship and bodies strewn on the floor are faintly visible. Özgünel uses the uppermost row of Tabula Veronensis I (3C) to identify on the right side of the rollout Chryses (6) standing before the

[485] Özgünel (2003) 284. Earliest excavation report of the temple in the *Antiquities of Ionia. Published by the Society of Dilettanti. Part the Fourth* (London, 1881) 40-48.
[486] Özgünel notes that early excavators identified six columnae caelatae, but discusses only three – Özgünel (2003) n.48.

seated Agamemnon (5) requesting the return of his daughter Chryseis (7) and offering a ransom (8) in recompense. Özgünel considers the Tabulae Iliacae themselves to be based on early Hellenistic models and so, somewhere on the temple (although not extant), suggests there would have been another relief scene showing Chryses praying to Apollo, corresponding to the same on the upper band of the Tabula Capitolina (1A).[487]


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Fig.208 – Graphical rollout of a sketch of columna caelata 1.

On the centre right of the second columna caelata (figure 209) the narrative context and the upper band of the Tabula Capitolina (1A) allows us to identify Thetis (8) at the feet of Zeus (7), although here with their order reversed compared to the tabula. Özgünel suggests that on the extreme right are a priest (9) and a helper (10) who would receive the sacrifice offered by Odysseus to placate Apollo Smintheus; the group in the centre would therefore include Odysseus, Chryses and additional companions.[488] Both scenes appear on same band of the Tabula Capitolina (1A) although with very different compositions to the temple relief, moving us away from the notion that their respective artists used a common iconographic source or model. Neither episode is discernible in any of the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii although might be a candidate for the extensive lacunae on the western wall of the west wing of the cryptoporticus frieze, or the small section of wall next to the plague scene in the House of Octavius Quartio.


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Fig.209 – Graphical rollout of a sketch of columna caelata 2.

[487] Özgünel (2003) 265-267.
[488] Özgünel (2003) 267-268.

The punctuated figures of the third columna caelata (figure 210) can only be identified from their attributes, rather than through any engagement with the Homeric narrative. Özgünel suggests that they represent the deities cited in the opening lines of the *Iliad*: "Which of the gods was it that made them quarrel? It was Apollo, son of Zeus and Leto, who started the feud" (*Il.* 1.1, 9), with the addition of other Olympians who would be relevant to the setting: Zeus (8), Artemis (9), Leto (10) and Apollo (11) and the muses flanking them.[489] If the identifications are correct, bearing in mind that Özgünel expresses some uncertainty, then we have here a strange rendering of the Homeric account, being textually literal, but not reflecting the Iliadic narrative in any way. We might even categorise it as an extra-Homeric scene. Yet, as with the epic-themed friezes of Roman Italy, its details are entirely relevant its specific context: what more suitable addition to a temple than a series of deities? And, as with the Roman friezes, detailed knowledge of the text was necessary to fully understand the reference, as are the more 'faithful' representations of the epic in the other columnae caelatae to contextualise the scene.



Fig.210 – Graphical rollout of a sketch of columna caelata 3.

Entablature panels

Özgünel orders his description of the relief blocks from the entablature frieze according to his proposed identifications of them. As they were found strewn around the temple grounds, however, and even in the nearby village of Gülpinar, any helpful archaeological context has long been lost. Özgünel states that "nur Szenen aus der Ilias darsgestellt waren", yet goes on to describe a scene showing the education of Achilles by Chiron, which is certainly not from the *Iliad* (figure 211). The centaur's torso and horse legs can be identified and other poorly-preserved figures flank him; Özgünel suggests the young

[489] Özgünel (2003) 268-271.

Achilles, Hermes, Chariklo or Thetis and Peleus.[490] There is an extremely brief allusion to this part of Achilles' childhood in *Iliad* 11.830-832 but the detailed rendering of the episode in the marble panel cannot be convincingly argued to originate in the epic.

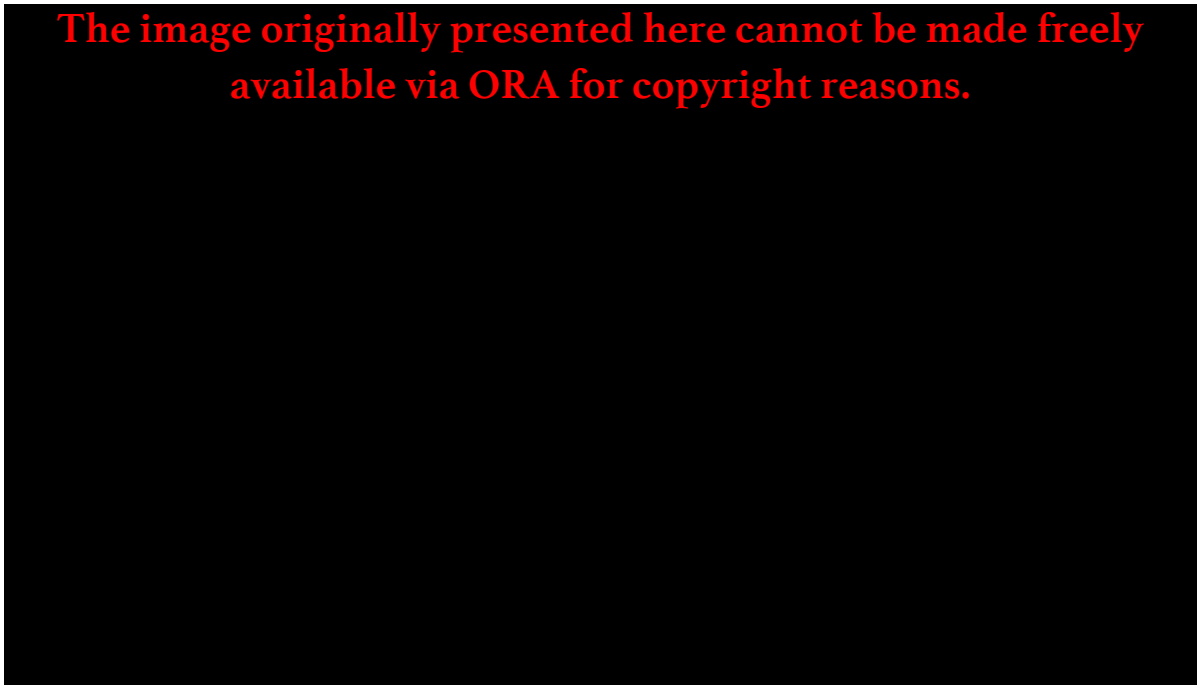

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Fig.211 – The education of Achilles under Chiron.

The other preserved parts of the entablature frieze largely focus on the death of Patroclus and Achilles' return to battle. Özgünel argues that their chronology begins in the eleventh book of the *Iliad* – thus incorporating the brief allusion to Achilles' education under Chiron – but it can more convincingly be shown that the remaining scenes are all found in book 17 onwards. This negates the need for Özgünel's awkward hypothesis that scenes from books 12 to 16 have yet to be discovered in the surrounding area of the temple.[491] The concentration of scenes therefore suggests that either large swathes of the frieze are no longer extant (the temple long being used as a source of marble in the area) or, more likely, that it narrated a particular section of the *Iliad* in the same way that the stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine concentrated on the final three books of the epic, possibly with the columnae caelatae evoking the earlier books. Taking into account the inclusion of extra-Homeric episodes from Achilles' childhood and the part he played in the war after

[490] Özgünel (2003) 271.
[491] Özgünel (2003) 271.

the events of the *Iliad*, it appears that Achilles was a particular focal point of the narrative.[492]

Figure 212 shows the remains of two warriors standing in front of a chariot, with the man on the right covering a body which lies at his feet. These are probably Menelaus and either Ajax or Meriones defending Patroclus' body from the Trojans (*Il.* 17.656-721). Özgünel suggests that the chariot belongs to Hector, but on the Tabula Capitolina (1A – band ∏) it belongs to the Greeks, who use it to carry the body away to safety.[493]

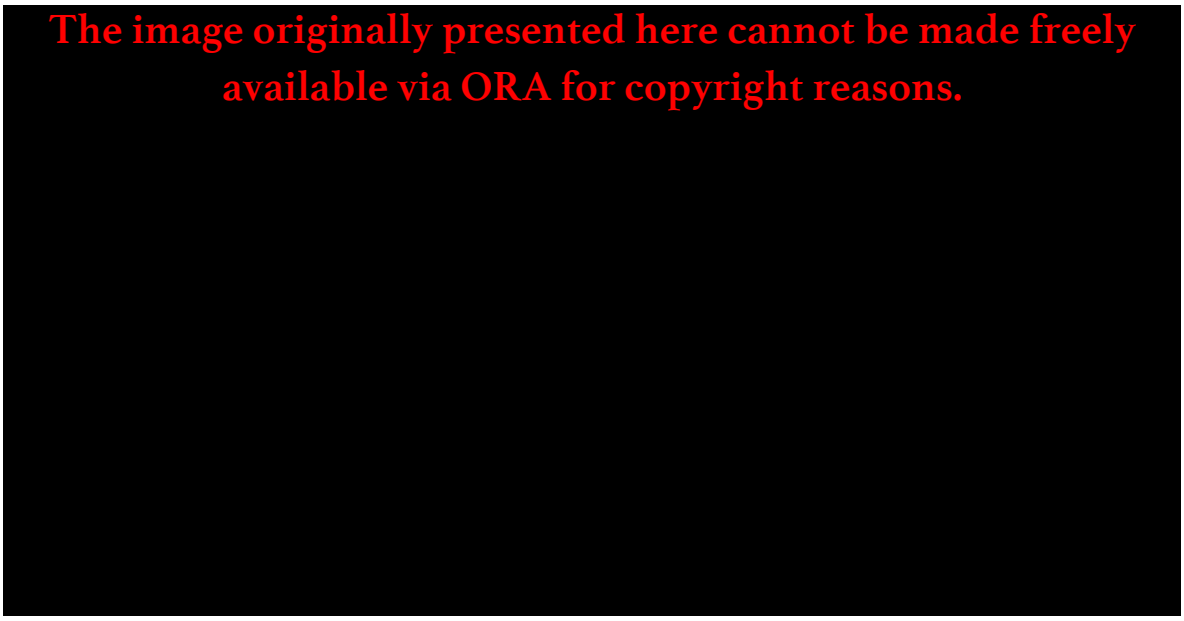


Fig.212 – The retrieval of Patroclus' body from the battlefield.

The next frieze block (figure 213) shows a duel between two warriors whose identity is very difficult to decipher. Özgünel tentatively suggests the duel between Menelaus and Podes, which took place after the death of Patroclus (*Il.* 17.575-581), but this cannot be securely confirmed.

[492] Note also the Late Antique tableware which focuses on the life of Achilles, for example the silver lanx from Thessalonica, now in KaiserAugst, Museum Augusta Rarica, Inv. 1962.1. Gasser (2000); and the ceramic lanx from El Djem, now in London, British Museum, Inv. 2002, 1029.3.

[493] Özgünel (2003) 271-273. Compare the scene in the House of the Cryptoporticus (figure 21) in which the Ajaxes remove the body, which lacks any trace of a chariot.

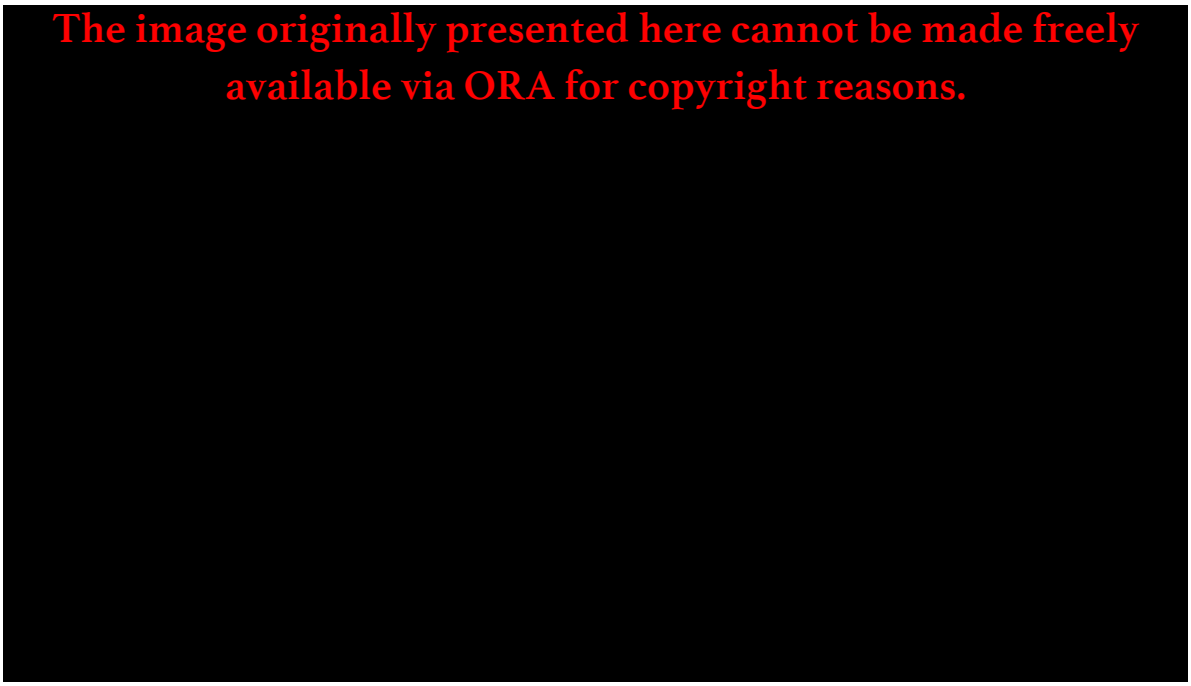


Fig.213 – Duel between two warriors.

Although the heads are missing from five out of the six protagonists in figure 214, the composition of the scene, rendered according to its traditional presentation in Graeco-Roman art, makes the identification of Achilles grieving for Patroclus secure.[494] The hero sits on the kline on the left and tenderly touches his deceased companion while Briseis stands in attendance. The breastplate in the bottom left corner indicates that Thetis has already delivered Achilles' divinely forged weapons to him, making this a uniquely-rendered scene (at least with regard to all other extant representations) because in the epic the arms are forged *after* this episode. Such individualising details should encourage us to think of the friezes as original creations, rather than seeking to find earlier models or even assigning illustrated manuscripts to the 'toolkit' of the artists who created them. The three seated men on the right are identified by Özgünel as (from left to right) Nestor, Phoinix and Odysseus, comparing with the embassy to Achilles on the Berthouville oinochoe.[495] On the vessel, however, other than Odysseus who wears traditional pilos and exomis, Phoinix and Nestor cannot be distinguished. The identifying motif of Achilles seated on Patroclus' kline (the visual indicator of the episode) is repeated, but the right hand side of the composition does not correspond closely enough for comparison.[496]

[494] Kossatz-Deissmann, 'Achilleus' in *LIMC* I.1 (1981) nos 478-486a.
[495] Özgünel (2003) 273-275.
[496] Berthouville oinochoai in Lehmann-Hartleben (1928) and Baratte (1989).

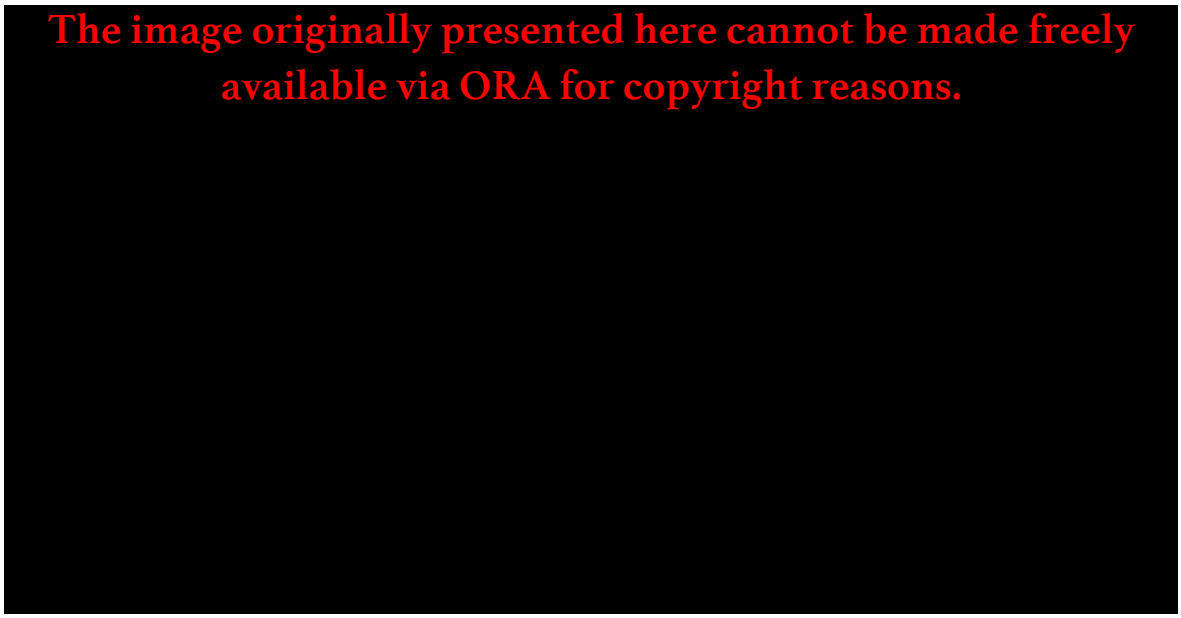


Fig.214 – Achilles grieves for Patroclus.

The next, smaller fragment (figure 215) shows an enthroned, bearded male and two arms reaching out to him in supplication. Özgünel proposes that this is the psychostasia (weighing of fate) which came immediately before the climactic duel between Achilles and Hector, with the god therefore Zeus and the arms belonging to Athena.[497] In the epic, however, the goddess is not described as a supplicant (*Il.* 22.177-187) and, in Greek art, the psychostasia is usually identified by the scales held by Zeus, which are not visible on the fragment. Another possibility is that this is Chryses pleading for the release of his daughter from Agamemnon from the first book of the *Iliad*, whose composition is known from South Italian vases, such as figure 216, and possibly a Late Antique mosaic from Nabeul.[498] A third possibility is that the fragment depicts another episode from the first book of the epic, in which Thetis pleads with Zeus to punish the Greeks because of Agamemnon's theft of Briseis from her son (*Il.* 1.488-530), with a miniature from the *Ilias Ambrosiana* (figure 217) revealing a very similar composition to the frieze panel. If either of the latter two identifications are correct, it would suggest that scenes found on the columnae caelatae were repeated in the entablature frieze, which by consequence must have featured episodes from the entirety of the *Iliad*.

[497] Özgünel (2003) 275-276.
[498] Fourth century AD mosaic from the House of the Nymphs in Nabeul, now in Nabeul Museum – Ben Abed Ben Khader (2006) fig.6.13.

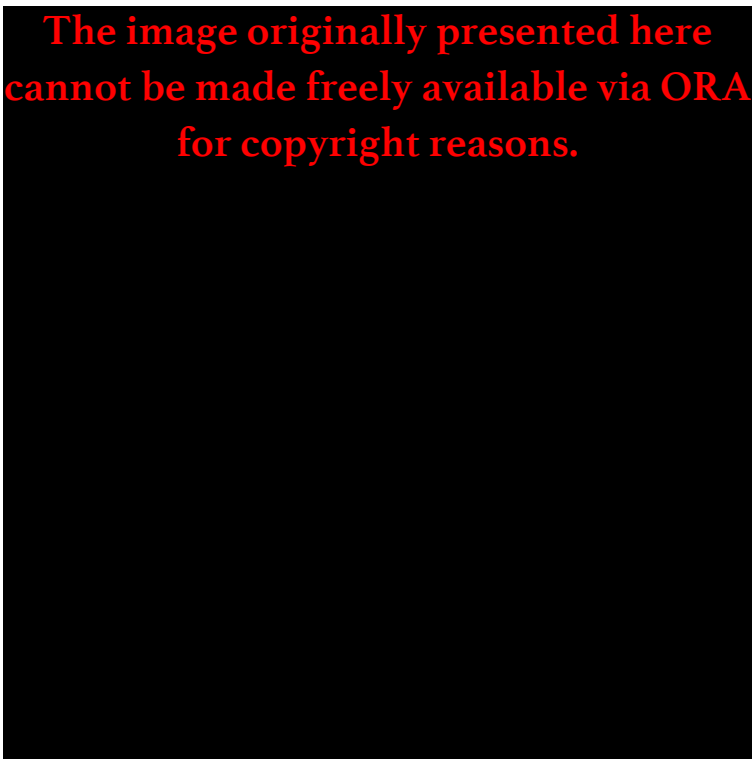


Fig.215 –An appeal to Zeus?



Fig.216 – Chryses and Agamemnon,
Apulian red-figure volute krater, mid 4th century BC.



Fig.217 – Zeus and Thetis,
***Ilias Ambrosiana* IX.**

The next extant fragment (figure 218) is identified by Özgünel as the climactic duel between Hector and Achilles, with the robed figure behind the dominant warrior Athena. He suggests that Hector can be seen at Achilles's feet, grasping his shield arm, thus making

Apollo the better-preserved figure behind Hector, leaning away from the pair.[499] The identification flounders somewhat when we note that Apollo does not usually appear in battle attire or armed with a shield in Classical art, however.[500] There are instead compositional similarities between this scene and that in the House of the Cryptoporticus frieze showing Achilles killing Lykaon in the Scamander (figure 219), which is also found in band Φ of the Tabula Capitolina (1A – figure 220). Since this is an event from *Iliad* 21.136-138 its narrative chronology therefore fits more comfortably in the context of scenes from the latter books of the epic.



Fig.218 – Achilles versus Hector / Achilles kills Lykaon in the Scamander.



Fig.219 – Achilles kills Lykaon in the Scamander. Reconstruction by Sanarica and Spinazzola.

[499] Özgünel (2003) 276.

[500] Kossatz-Deissmann, 'Achilleus' in *LIMC* I.1 (1981) nos 565, 570. Compare also a beryl intaglio in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore (42.1059), dated to the first century BC, which shows Achilles recognising Apollo from *Iliad* 22.7ff, in which the god is nude but recognisable via his traditionally-rendered hairstyle and the quiver strap running across his chest – Boardman (2009) no.339.

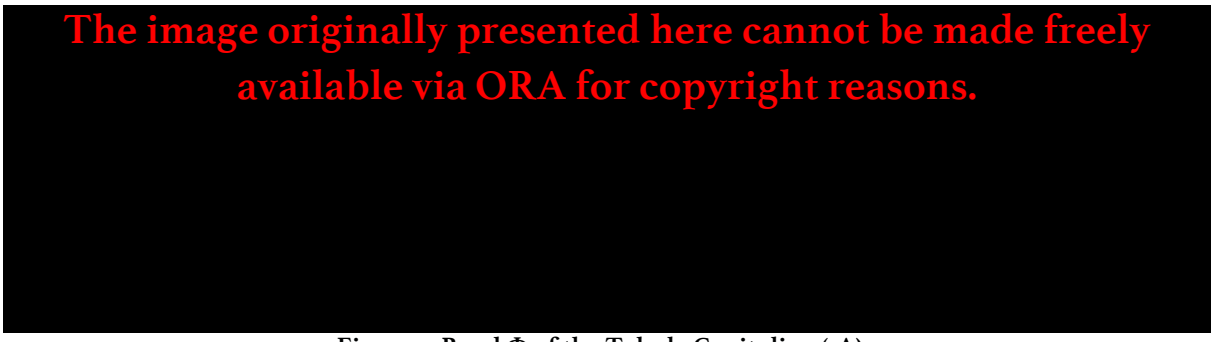


Fig.220 – Band Φ of the Tabula Capitolina (1A).

The identification of the next scene (figure 221) as the desecration of Hector's body ought to be secure, having been largely carved according to its traditional composition in Graeco-Roman art, but in its current state it is missing the crucial element of Hector's body dragged behind the chariot. The horses charging to the right and the presence of Achilles and Automedon in the wagon conform to the standardised motif, but without the corpse dragging behind the identification must remain insecure.



Fig.221 – The desecration of Hector?

Özgünel considers the next panel (figure 222) to show the teichoscopia, where Hector's family view his death from the walls of Troy. He suggests that here are Priam resting on a cane (1), then Andromache and Cassandra (2 and 3), then Apollo or Paris (4) and finally Hecuba (5).[501] As there is no suggestion of the city or walls of Troy, however, which was made explicit in the scene in the House of the Iliac Shrine (figure 65), the poor preservation of the figures means that we cannot successfully confirm or reject the identification.

[501] Özgünel (2003) 280.



Fig.222 – The teichoscopia?

Figure 223 can also be compared with similar scenes in the House of the Iliac Shrine and probably shows Priam (standing and bearded) and Idaeus (driving the wagon), setting off for the Myrmidon camp with the ransom loaded onto the cart. The figure on the right is almost certainly Hecuba, who pleads with her elderly husband not to undertake such a dangerous mission then gives him honeyed wine to offer as libation to the gods for his safety (*Il.* 24.200-280). It is therefore a close rendering of the epic account in the form of a marker. Figure 224 must have followed in close succession, showing Priam or Hermes either driving the chariot towards Achilles' camp (*Il.* 24.322-467) or perhaps driving back to Troy afterwards (*Il* 24.677-717). Presumably, as in the House of the Iliac Shrine, the wagon emptied of the ransom and now bearing Hector's body was shown nearby.



Fig 223 – Priam and Idaeus set off for the Myrmidon camp.

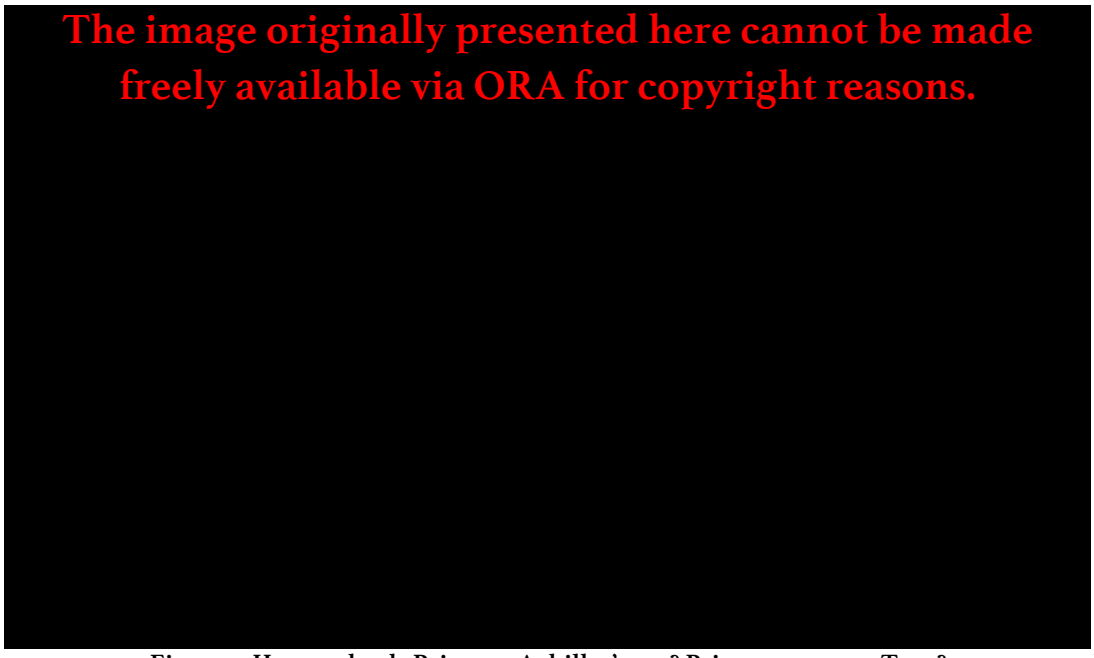


Fig 224 – Hermes leads Priam to Achilles' tent? Priam returns to Troy?

Özgünel suggests that the small fragment shown in figure 225 is from the Ransom of Hector, thus making the owner of the naked torso Achilles, reclining on a kline in a particular version of the composition known mainly from Attic and South Italian vases.[502] If the scene followed the presentation as found on the ceramics we would see Hector's body beneath the couch and Priam, holding a knife or a wine cup, approaching Achilles. It is naturally impossible to be definitive with such a small fragment but, noting that this crucial scene does not seem to be represented elsewhere in the extant panels, Özgünel's identification here seems a distinct possibility.[503]

[502] Kossatz-Deissmann, 'Achilleus' in *LIMC* I.1 (1981) nos 649, 645, 644, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 661.
[503] Özgünel (2003) 282-284.



Fig.225 – Torso of Achilles?

The final panel described by Özgünel is shown in figure 226 and reveals the skill of the stonemasons who carved the frieze. In the centre, with billowing hair, we see Andromache mourning the death of Hector. Surrounding her are the outlines of other grieving Trojans, probably Hecuba and perhaps the infant Astyanax if we compare with the same episode as found in the painted frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus (figure 42).[504]

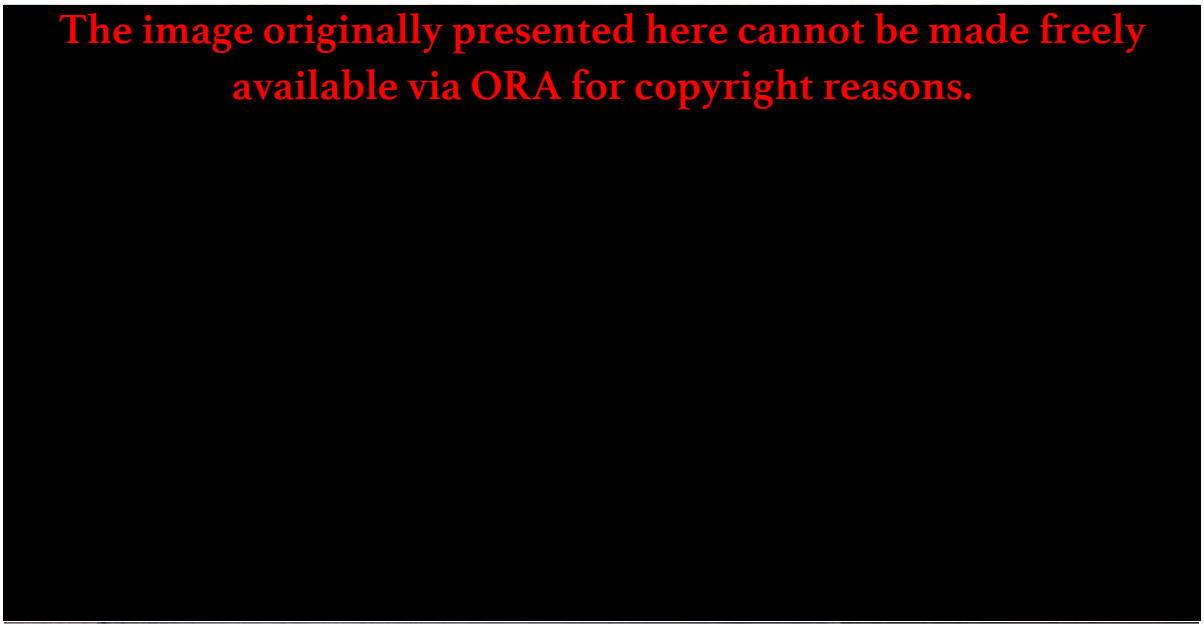


Fig.226 – Lament of the Trojan women.

[504] Özgünel proposes that the flanking figures may also have included Helen, making the scene representative of the royal women of Troy who all publically lament Hector's death at his funeral pyre (*Il.* 24.718-775) – Özgünel (2003) 284.

New fragments?

Özgünel's exposition of the temple frieze, which was published in 2003, ends with his description of the grieving women, but four other fragments from the frieze (figures 227–230) are now shown on the Facebook page of the Turkish Archaeological News (presumably having been found after 2003), from which all of the colour photographs in this chapter are taken.[505] They are posted with the following labels: *Achilles kills Troilos* (figure 227), *Pillage of the Temple of Athena* (figure 228), *Achilles kills the Amazon queen (*figure 229) and *Pallas Athena and chariot driver from Troy* (figure 230). Each, seemingly unpublished in print,[506] will be considered below and further support our earlier observation that temple frieze did not exclusively contain scenes from the *Iliad* but included others from the wider epic cycle, with a specific focus on Achilles. This was also seen in the painted frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus (chapter one) and the fictional frieze in the Temple of Juno in Carthage in *Aeneid* 1.450-493 (chapter five) in which the death of Troilus was inserted among episodes from the *Iliad*, and was followed by Aeneas' recognition of his own, Memnon's and Penthesilea's adventures towards the end of the narrative. It appears then that Vitruvius was striving for thematic accuracy in not describing the friezes known to him as *ex Ilias* but instead as [*de*] *troianas pugnas* (Vitr. 7.5.2).

If figure 227 does indeed show the killing of Troilos, as the online caption suggests, then it is an unconventional representation of the scene as Achilles (on the far left, identifiable from the armour worn by him elsewhere in the frieze) has concealed himself in a tree, rather than behind the altar of Apollo Timbraeus as is usually found. Some vase representations show Achilles hiding behind a tree but they are relatively scarce in comparison with his concealment behind an altar or fountain.[507] Troilos is certainly the youth in a himation in the centre of the panel, and Polyxena stands beside him. According to the pictorial tradition she would be drawing water from a fountain or spring.

[505] https://www.facebook.com/turkisharchaeonews/?fref=ts – last checked 17.3.2017.
[506] Certainly not published in the *Studia Troika* journals in which Özgünel's 2003 article is found.
[507] Attic black-figure hydria in Gottingen, Georg-August-Universitat: J12 (Beazley Archive 6901); Attic black-figure, white-ground lekythos in Copenhagen, National Museum CHRVIII383 (Beazley Archive 11504); Attic black-figure, white-ground lekythos in Amsterdam, Allard Pierson Museum 3737 (Beazley Archive 351609).

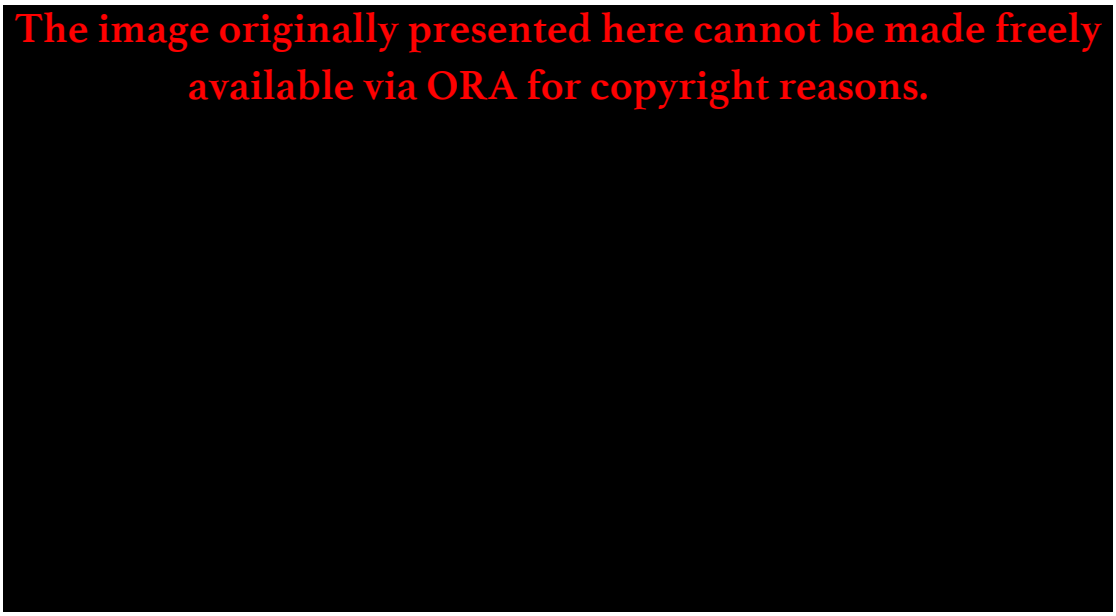


Fig.227 – Achilles waits in ambush for Troilos?

As the death of Troilos occurs at the very beginning of the war so the scene found in figure 228 falls almost at its conclusion, showing the Greeks [1] storming the temple of Athena in Troy, possibly killing the temple guard [2], and Cassandra raising her hands in protest at the act of sacrilege [4]. A body-less arm [3] pulls at the clothing around her waist, suggesting that the lesser Ajax was originally present in the scene and the artist has combined the rape of the Palladion with the rape of Cassandra. Proclus' summary of the *Iliupersis* also conflates the two acts: "Ajax the son of Ileus, in dragging Cassandra away by force, pulls Athena's wooden statue along with her"[508] as do several Greek and Roman artworks, making it a particularly popular theme for gems and seal rings, probably due to its themes of piety and morality.[509] The Palladion itself cannot be seen on the relief, unless it is the figure on the right [5] beyond Cassandra.[510]

[508] *Iliupersis* 3 – West (2003) 147.

[509] Walker (2004) for a discussion of the moral tale on the Felix Gem in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Artworks which combine both scenes include a Roman fresco panel from the House of the Menander (Pompeii I 10,4); a fresco panel from the House of the Actors (I 2,6), now in Naples (MNN 109 751); a glass paste intaglio of the 1st century BC in Hannover, Kestner Museum, K.666 – Schulter, Platz-Horster and Zazoff (1975) no.341; a gold seal ring of the early 4th century BC in New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 53.11.2 – Richter (1956) no.80. Other examples in Paoletti, 'Kassandra I' in *LIMC* VII.1 (1994) nos 43-191.

[510] The cult statue was shown in varying sizes, from miniature to full-size – Penkova, 'Athena' in *LIMC* II.1 (1984) nos 67-117.



1 2 3 4 5

Fig.228 – Rape of the Palladion / Rape of Cassandra.

Although it is tempting to see the tragic love story of Achilles and Penthesilea in figure 229 (as the unattributed author of the captions certainly did) there is actually very little within the panel to suggest that this was its true meaning. The horse on the right would not be out of place in a scene featuring the Amazon queen (compare with figure 49 in the House of the Cryptoporticus) but without other identifying features this could be any warrior overcoming another. Note what appears to be a bow in the hand of the standing warrior, perhaps suggesting that this is Penthesilea, but in this instance defeating an enemy of her own before the climactic duel with Achilles.



Fig.229 – Achilles and Penthesilea? One warrior defeats another?

The final panel of the frieze (figure 230) is equally difficult to identify. From the helmet and what appears to be a long cloak on the rider we may see here Athena driving a chariot, which may evoke *Iliad* 5.835-841 where the goddess evicts Sthenelus, joins Diomedes in his chariot and wounds Ares. Yet the chariot seems to be driving past or emerging out of a solid structure which another warrior is waiting behind, which may suggest that this is a slightly earlier episode where the gods emerge from Olympus ready for battle and where Athena "stepped into the fiery chariot" ready to fight for the Greeks (*Il.* 5.733-747).

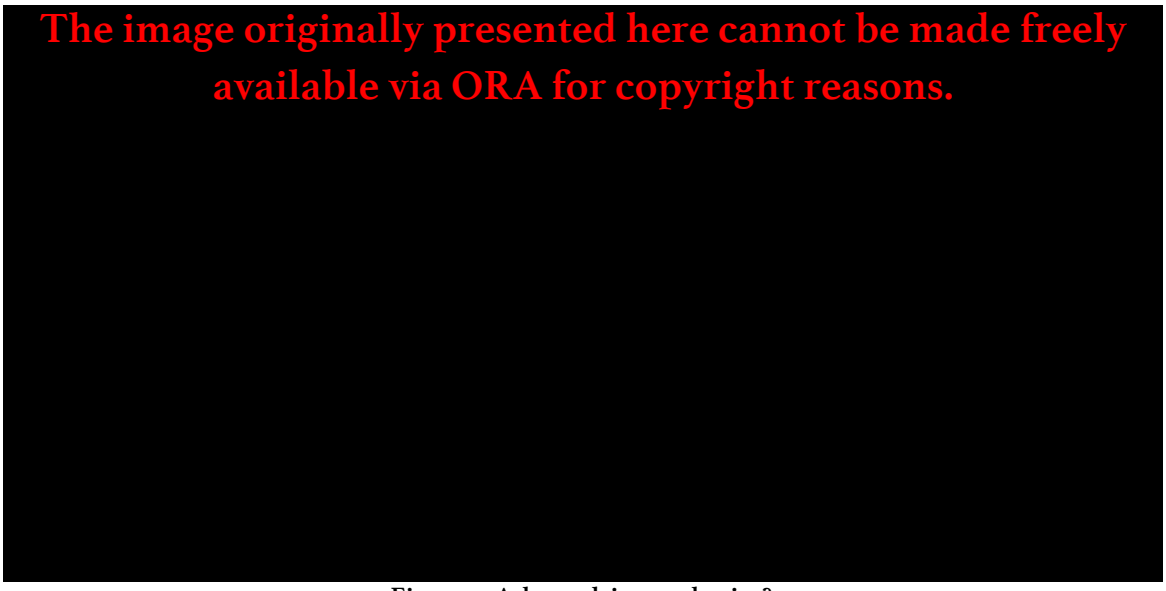


Fig.230 – Athena drives a chariot?

This particular identification is problematic, however, as it brings the chronology of the frieze back to the fifth book of the *Iliad,* when almost all other representations suggest a focus on the second half of the epic, or on extra-Homeric episodes which come long before and immediately after it. These are problems which cannot easily be resolved with the current state of the archaeology, but nevertheless confirm that the inherent difficulties in offering secure interpretations for scenes – even after studying in detail four 'intact' versions of the genre in which narrative order and labelling makes the reading somewhat easier – gives weight to the argument that epic-themed friezes were usually unique compositions and not copies of earlier models, even if their subject matter was decidedly similar. Each defers to standardised motifs and figural types when appropriate, but each also contains iconographic details which must have been particular to the artist or workshop responsible for them, and which were relevant to the specific geographical and chronological context in which they were created.

Homeric friezes in a Roman context

The literary investigation in chapter five of this thesis and the archaeological investigation so far conducted in chapter six confirm that there is no convincing evidence, either in the literary or the archaeological record, of earlier, illustrious artworks upon which the painted and stucco Roman friezes were based. This can only point us towards the conclusion that they were original compositions of the first centuries BC and AD, tailored to the houses in which they were displayed and for the homeowners who paid for them. As will become clear in the following discussion, their iconographic, epigraphic and thematic peculiarities not only support this conclusion, but may even provide insight into the social and historical contexts in which the friezes were created, displayed and viewed.

The nature of the comparanda

When discussing and comparing artworks from the Graeco-Roman world with extended epic themes our evidence is relatively limited. Greek and South Italian vases mostly show single scenes or occasionally a series of two or three on a single vessel,[511] and tend towards the more frequently replicated and recognisable, standardised motifs. From the Hellenistic era we have the relief frieze from the Temple of Apollo Smintheus in the Troad and the Megarian or Homeric cups, which appear to have been produced in Greece and Macedonia and occasionally by more remote workshops (for example in Syria), and are themselves subject to scholarly scrutiny pertaining to whether they were based on better-quality originals (usually Alexandrian silverware).[512] Several contain miniature relief friezes showing episodes from the Epic Cycle, which are usually accompanied by labels relating to the literary origins of the narrative, the protagonists, topographical details and sometimes whole verses of text, reflecting, according to Sinn, "einer ausgeprägten Detailfreudigkeit".[513] Probably dating to the third and early second centuries they are our earliest surviving archaeological example of pictorial continuous narrative relating to the Trojan War epics and, via a small number found on the Italian mainland, provide a link between the Hellenistic Greek artistic world and the Roman.[514] However, even Weitzmann

[511] *Cf* Snodgrass (1998); Lowenstam (2008).
[512] Ulrich Sinn argues that they are produced largely in geographical locations with close ties with Macedonia, particularly with the Magnesian city of Demetrias – Sinn (1979) 17-21, 25-26.
[513] Sinn (1979) 21.
[514] The production techniques of the bowls are particularly interesting. The figural elements appear to have been created by means of stamps which were widely shared and replicated, but the fact that no two extant

admits that the relief bowls very rarely 'match' Roman fresco painting as regards their respective iconographies. Because of this he categorises them in his "Grecian recension", as opposed to the Roman frescoes and sarcophagi which are deemed to belong to the so-called, alternative "Alexandrian-Roman recension".[515]

As seen throughout this thesis, the Tabulae Iliacae, dating mostly to the Late Republican and Early Imperial periods, furnish us with our most detailed and closest chronological iconographic comparanda for the Roman friezes.[516] Considered to have been produced in workshops around the city of Rome they are invaluable for preserving comparably detailed (but not always textually faithful) evocations of Trojan War epic, via an alternative medium through which such stories could be told.[517]

Standardised scenes and motifs

With regard to the individual or contained narrative episodes within the Roman friezes and the archaeological comparanda cited above it is clear that, whenever possible, artists deferred to commonly-rendered iconographic schemes for the more popular scenes. If we compare, for example, a very early representation of the desecration of Hector from the sixth century BC (figure 231) with a Late Antique example from the fourth century AD (figure 232), alongside two versions of the same scene from the House of Octavius Quartio (figure 233) and House of the Iliac Shrine (figure 234), both from the first century AD, we see that there is adherence to a generalised compositional scheme throughout the centuries, artistic media and geographical contexts, although with minor variations which will be discussed below.

bowls are the same suggests artists had flexibility in the specific parts of the epic narrative they chose to include. Smaller attributes and the lettering of the labels were applied freehand, as exemplified by the spelling errors present on several of the vessels – Sinn (1979) 37-41.

[515] Weitzmann (1959) 60.

[516] Squire (2011) 58-60.

[517] Seventeen out of the 22 extant were discovered in Rome or the surrounding area, three of which from aristocratic villas – Squire (2011) 65-66.

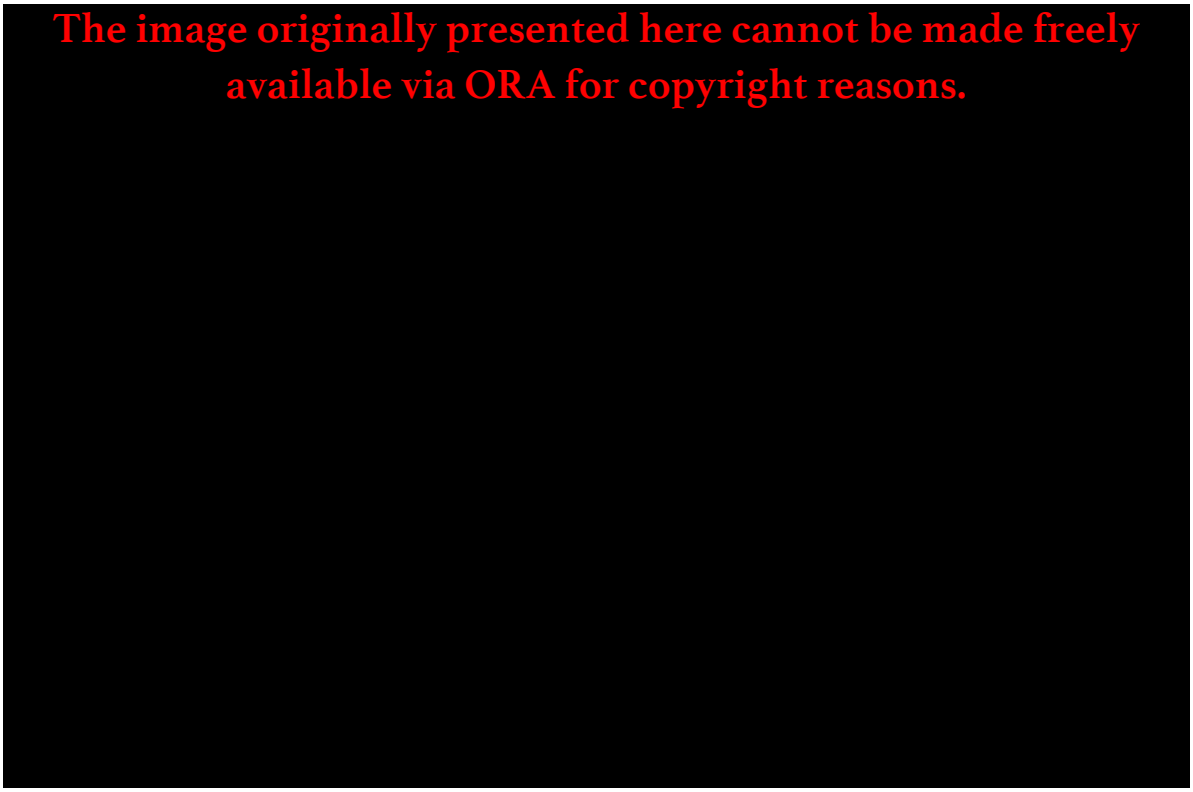


Fig.231 – The desecration of Hector, Attic black-figure hydria, 6 century BC.



Fig.232 – The desecration of Hector, marble puteal, 4th century AD.

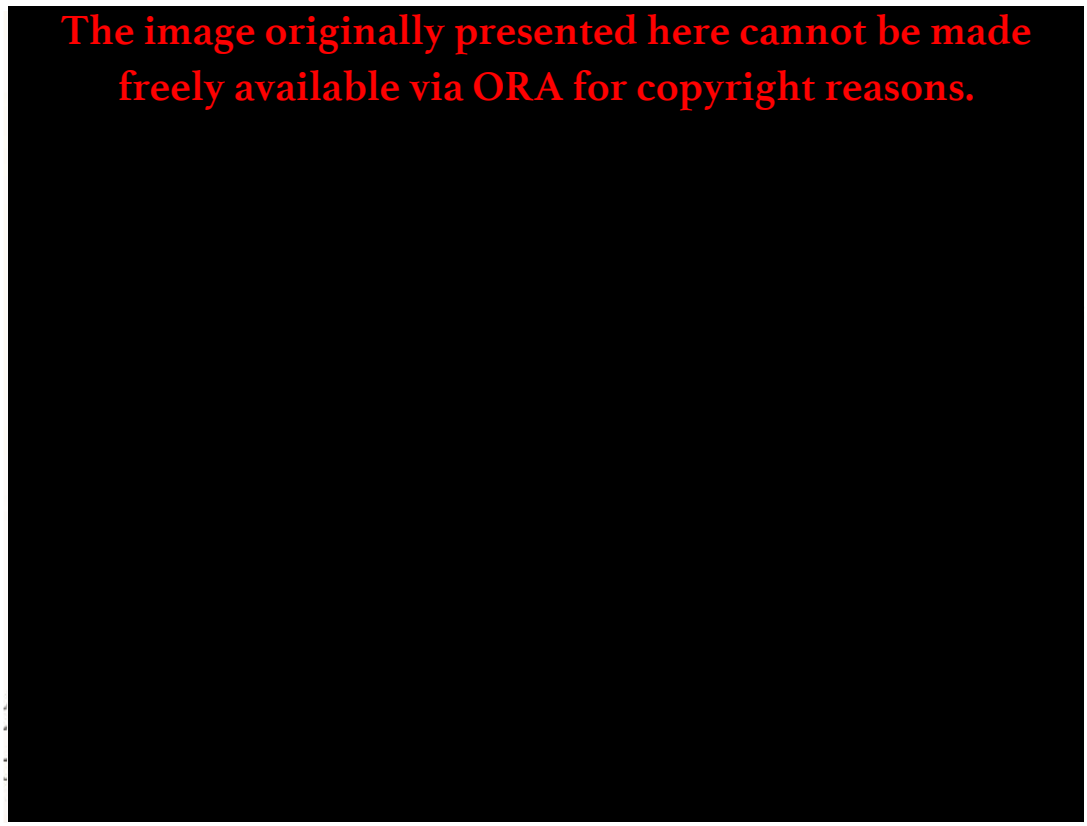


Fig.233 – The desecration of Hector, House of Octavius Quartio, 1st century AD.

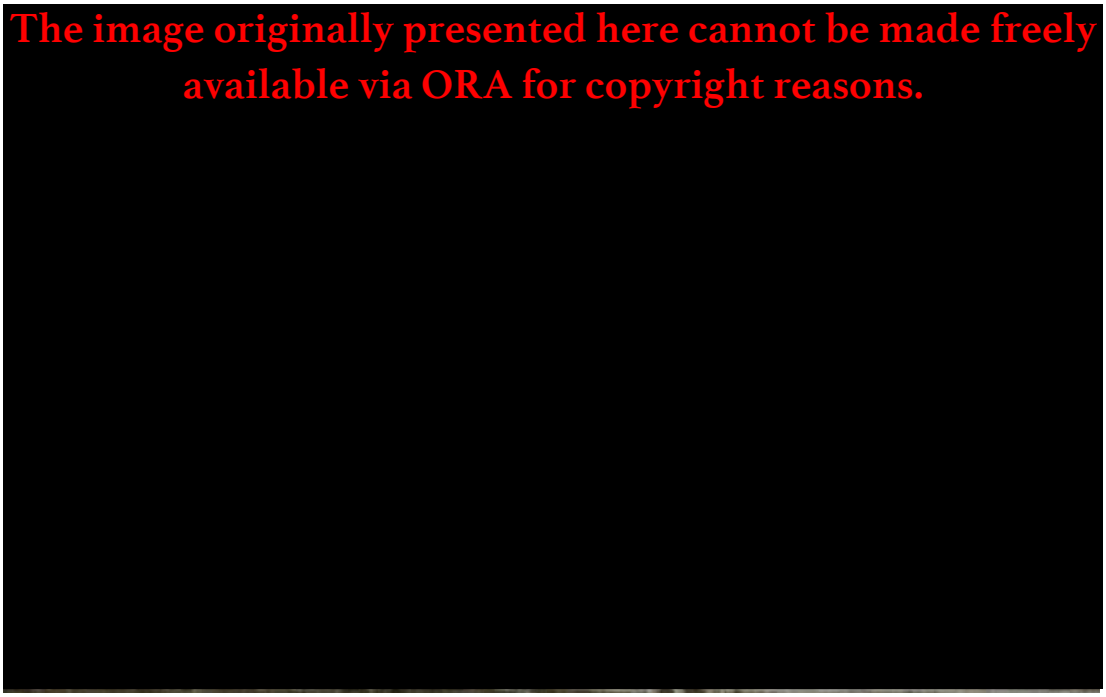


Fig.234 – The desecration of Hector, House of the Iliac Shrine, 1st century AD.

The same is true of representations of the ransom of Hector's body which, in the Roman friezes (figures 237 and 238), defer to the traditional composition of the scene as found throughout Graeco-Roman art (compare figures 235 and 236).



Fig.235 – The ransom of Hector, Apulian calyx krater, around 350 BC.



Fig.236 – The ransom of Hector, tomb fresco from Tyre, Lebanon, 2nd century AD.



Fig.237 – The ransom of Hector, House of Octavius Quartio, 1st century AD.

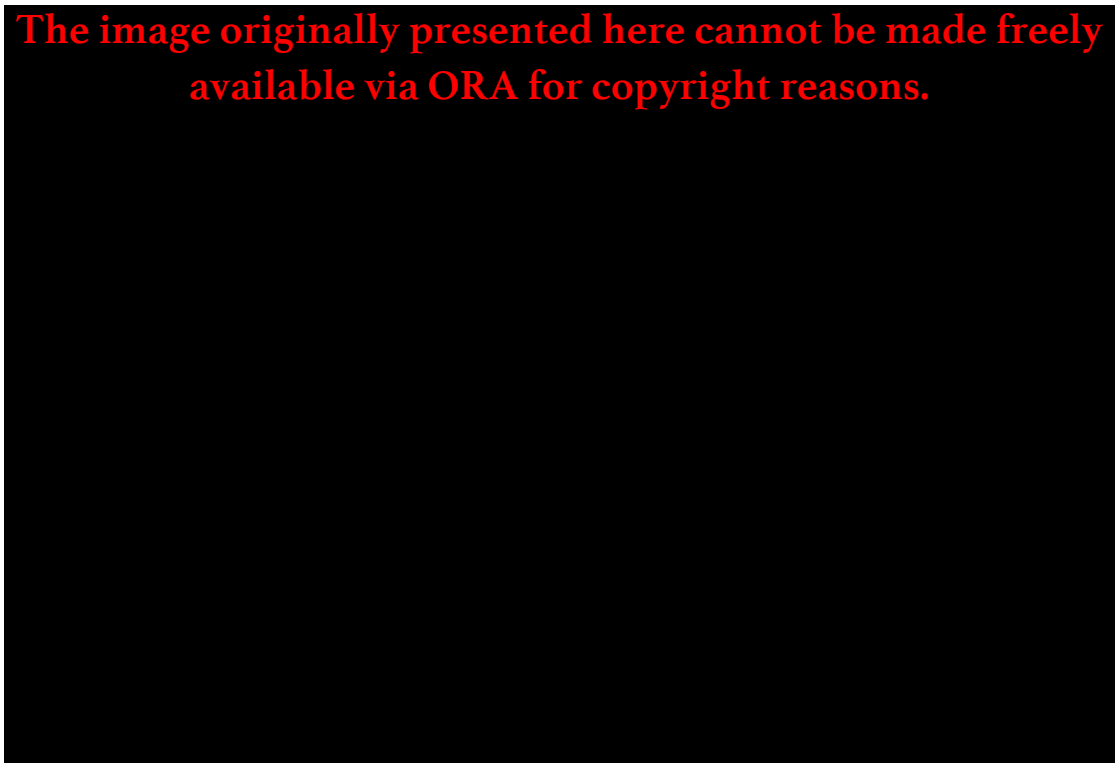


Fig.238 – The ransom of Hector, watercolour based on the scene in the House of the Iliac Shrine, 1st century AD.

It becomes clear from a more detailed study of the iconography, however, that each composition corresponds to the standardised imagery of its own particular era. In Roman representations of the desecration scene Achilles and Automedon *always* ride a biga, contrasting with the quadriga consistently found in artworks of the Greek Classical and Archaic periods. Achilles *always* sits or leans in a chair in depictions of the ransom scene from Roman Italy, rather than reclining on a kline as is far more frequently found in the Greek examples.[518] As each frieze considered in this study includes extra-Homeric episodes and scenes not commonly found in extant art, some appearing to be entirely unique compositions, traditionally-rendered motifs and schemes would have been necessary to 'ground' the viewer in visually familiar parts of the Homeric account before asking him to decipher the non-canonical or unfamiliar insertions into the narrative.

An example of the latter, the Homeric yet rarely-found plague scene, which is only ever found on artworks with extended epic narrative (figures 208, 239, 240 and 241), shows considerable variation within the composition and details in each rendering: on the temple columna caelata the presence of the ship is unique; on the Tabula Capitolina (1A) Apollo and his deadly arrows may not even have originally appeared;[519] and the mule cart only features in the House of the Cryptoporticus frieze. Therefore, as long as the scene was recognisable by means of typically represented protagonists and types – Apollo, usually with bow, inflicting devastation on pained humans whose positions were familiar from representations of other unfortunates who had met a similar fate – artists were free to alter the composition and details of their own version of the episode on its respective wall, column drum or marble slab.

[518] See Lowenstam (2008) 51-63 for the development of the ransom scene in the Archaic and Early Classical periods.

[519] Sketches made by Louis Schulz in 1873 and Salomon Reinach in 1909 do not include Apollo firing his bow. Only Otto Jahn's 1873 reconstruction includes it. Squire (2011) 387-390.



Fig.239 – The plague in the Greek camp, House of the Cryptoporticus, mid 1st century BC.



Fig.240 – The plague in the Greek camp, House of Octavius Quartio, 60s or 70s AD.



Fig.241 – The plague in the Greek camp, Tabula Capitolina (1A), Augustan. Jahn reconstruction of 1873.

The final section of this chapter will be in the form of an iconographic and epigraphic study of the painted friezes, whose findings will confirm that they are original products of the Roman era. Although the intention is not to offer a new dating analysis we will see that the composition of scenes, iconography, epigraphy and themes found within them corroborate with the broad dating traditionally given to the decoration of the rooms in which they were situated, suggesting that each was composed and created at the same time as the wider decorative scheme of their immediate context.

Iliad frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus

Epigraphy

In the very first extant scene in the cryptoporticus frieze, which shows the plague in the Achaean camp (figure 239), the label for Apollo is written as ΑΠΟΛΛΟΝ instead of the Greek Ἀπόλλων, with the replacing of the omega with an omicron clearly a move towards Latinising the god's name in a predominantly Latin-speaking context.[520] Indeed, the spelling errors found throughout the frieze are consistent with the types of mistakes documented on non-literary, Greek papyri of the Roman and Byzantine periods which show evidence of bilingual interference.[521] Francis Gignac, who compiled a volume on the errors, comments, "The validity of orthographic variations for determining the pronunciation of a dead language is based upon the observation that symbols are not generally confused in writing unless the sounds they represent have become identified in speech … when they are confused frequently … this in itself establishes a strong presumption that such a departure from a traditional norm of orthography has a meaning, and that it expresses some reality in the speech of the writers concerned."[522]

On the northern wall of the north wing of the cryptoporticus there are several inconsistencies in the Greek labels and there are two instances where we would expect to find aspirated consonants but do not. In the council of the Greeks we find MENECTEOC instead of MENECΘEOC and possibly TPRACYMHΔHC instead of ΘPACYMHΔHC.[523] Yet, on the other walls of the frieze, aspirated consonants appear: thus ΘETIC, EYANΘH, HΦAICTOC, ΠENΘ(e)CIΛHA and TAΦOS. Cicero notes that during his lifetime there was still some inconsistency in their use because of the increasing influence of Greek on the Roman elite (Cic. *Orat*. 160):

> In my own case, knowing that our forefathers did not use the aspirate except with a vowel, I said *pulcer, Cetegus, triumpus Cartago*; after a while —a long while indeed— the reproof of the ear forced me to abandon the correct pronunciation; I yielded to the people in the matter of usage, and kept the knowledge for myself.[524]

[520] Compare Virg. *Aen.* 9.649, 654, 656 for a near-contemporary, textual comparandum.
[521] I am indebted to Dr James Adams for his advice on bilingual interference and guidance towards the most relevant linguistic research to my own analysis.
[522] Gignac (1976) 57.
[523] See chapter 1 for the different possibilities regarding this label.
[524] Trans. Henderson and Hubbell (1939).

Having been written in 48 BC, Cicero's observation corresponds with the period in which the cryptoporticus frieze was painted and provides contemporary commentary on bilingual interference among Latin speakers of Greek.[525] Sidney Allen comments upon the variables which may have affected the use of aspirates at the time: "It seems more probable … that the aspiration represents a special but natural development in Latin itself, which may possibly have varied in different areas and social strata."[526] The Roman-era papyri cited by Gignac document a trend in the interchange of aspirated and voiceless stops (the earliest example around 20 BC) especially when following a sigma, as seen in the frieze's MENECTEOC label.[527]

Similarly, the diphthong ei replacing the iota in the BPEICHIC label (*cf* the Homeric Βρισηὶς) from the western wall of the east wing (figure 28) and the reverse process on the eastern wall of the west wing, where ΠΙCΑΝΔΡΟC replaces the Homeric Πείσανδρος,[528] reflect another common phonological interchange in bilingual environments.[529] On two occasions the Latinised ΠΕΝΘΕCΙΛΗΑ replaces the traditional Greek spelling of Πενθεσίλεια (compare *Penthesilea* in Verg. *Aen.* 1.491)[530] and the vowel discrepancy in the ΑΠΟΛΛΟΝ label marks another which "occurs very frequently in all phonetic conditions throughout the Roman and Byzantine periods."[531]

Elsewhere in the frieze we find difficulties and inconsistencies with the rendering of Greek letters which are not found in the Latin alphabet: thus ΕΚΤωΡ with a lower-case omega where we would expect an Ω (compare with the ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ label from the eastern wall of the west wing); the peculiarly-rendered theta in ΘΕΤΙC (figure 242) and the irregular theta and beta in ΤΑΛΘΥΤbΙΟC (figure 243). On the southern wing of the northern wall the lunate sigma, found consistently throughout the frieze, is replaced by a Latin S in the word ΤΑΦOS (figure 42).



Fig.242 – ΘΕΤΙC.



Fig.243 – ΤΑΛΘΥΤΒΙΟC.

[525] Henderson and Hubbell (1939) 297. Clackson and Horrocks (2007) chapter 6 for discussion of the influence of Greek on Latin speakers of the Late Republic.
[526] Allen (1978) 27.
[527] Further examples in Gignac (1976) 87.
[528] The latter also reflecting the Latin spelling of the name: note *Pisandrum* in Ov. *Her.* 1.91.
[529] Gignac comments "There is a very frequent interchange of ει and ι (whether long or short etymologically) in all phonetic environments throughout the Roman and Byzantine periods. This [orally] indicates the identification of the classical Greek /ei/ diphthong with the simple vowel /i/" – Gignac (1976) 189.
[530] Gignac (1976) 240-241 for examples occurring from the first century BC onwards.
[531] Gignac (1976) 275.

The inconsistencies in spelling and letter formation suggest that more than one artist was adding the labels to the frieze and that there was a particularly ad hoc nature to their application. Clearly they were not copying from an illustrated manuscript or replicating a famous Greek painting upon which the labels would certainly have been rendered in accurate Greek. Recall that although Pausanias comments on the extra-Homeric insertions in the Polygnotan frescoes he never mentions anything in the vein of a spelling mistake within them. At least one artist seems to have had considerable difficulties with the labelling in the cryptoporticus frieze, perhaps giving us an insight into the painting process, at least with regard to the addition of epigraphy.

Iconography

Perhaps the clearest iconographic indication that the frieze was created in an Italic context is found in the first extant scene (figure 239), where the Temple of Apollo Smintheus is represented in an Italic style with a four-columned portico, a distinct proanos and the walls of the cella visible at the rear. A similar architectural type can be seen on the upper band of the Augustan-era, metropolitan Roman, Tabula Capitolina (1A – figure 241) and in the Second Style architectural landscapes in the atrium of the Villa at Oplontis.[532]

Themes

It was noted in chapter one that the extra-Homeric insertion of Euanthe into Hephaestus' workshop (figure 22) corresponds to a note by the mid-first century Stoic Cornutus, who wrote of an opinion, circulating in Rome during his day, that Euanthe was the mother of the Graces and of Charis, wife of Hephaestus.[533] Although it is difficult to trace whether any form of this myth was widespread earlier than the Neronian period no earlier sources mention the association.[534] There is also a strong possibility that the inclusion of two episodes featuring Aeneas is indicative of a growing interest in his story in the mid first century BC, promoted by the ancestral claims of Julius Caesar and the gens Iulia. The *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus is the only one of the three Pompeian friezes to refer to the Trojan hero, which we might find surprising considering that the other two

[532] Hinterhöller-Klein (2015) Abb.176.
[533] *Theologiae Graecae Compendium* 15. Lang (1881) for 'Cornuti Theologiae Graecae Compendium'.
[534] Ovid (*Am*. 6.39-42) mentions a Euanthe who was beloved by the Nile River – Krisak (2014) 198, III.6. Torres (2011) for the 'Romanness' of Cornutus' writing. See especially the summary of his linguistic features on p.53.

were created after the publication of Virgil's *Aeneid* and because Aeneas did not play a particularly prominent role in Homer's *Iliad*. In the cryptoporticus frieze he is first seen (in the extant fresco) on the western wall of east wing being rescued by Poseidon in an episode placed, uncharacteristically, out of chronological order with regard to the epic, and instead forming a compositional parallel with Hector being rescued by Apollo. The second time we encounter Aeneas is just as the viewer leaves the underground complex through the door out onto the street (southern wall of west wing), where he is shown in his role as new leader of the Trojans and ultimate founder of the Roman race. It is therefore likely that, given the prominent positioning of the Flight of Aeneas episode, the frieze reflects (and arguably promotes) contemporary political propaganda concerning the origins of the Romans and the gens Iulia, situating the Homeric story firmly in a mid-first century BC, Roman context.[535]

Could it be, then, that the absence of Aeneas in the later friezes indicates that after the publication of Virgil's *Aeneid* the motif and hero became firmly associated with the Roman (and arguably Julio-Claudian) story, and were perhaps deemed somewhat out of place in a Greek epic context? Both the stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine and the fresco frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio are contemporary with the single panel paintings of the Third and Fourth Pompeian styles which also, quite starkly, avoid pictorial reference to Virgil's *Aeneid*.[536] Both will be explored in more detail below but it is important to note how their exclusion of Aeneas is entirely in keeping with other domestic decoration of this precise geographical and chronological context.

Iliad frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine

Iconography

As the stucco frieze does not contain labels we must look exclusively to its iconography for clues relating to the date of its composition.[537] Chapter two has revealed that several of the

[535] Squire follows a similar line of argument in the dating of the Tabula Capitolina (1A), suggesting that the emphasis on Aeneas and his role in the Fall of Troy alongside the similarity between the central motif and the sculptural group from the Forum of Augustus (completed in 5 BC) confirm an Augustan dating – Squire (2011) 58-59.

[536] The only convincing reference to Virgil's epic is the wounded Aeneas panel (MNN 9009) from the triclinium of the House of Siricus (VII 1,25.47) from *Aeneid* 12.383-400.

[537] It is noted above that of all the four epic friezes under consideration in this thesis this is the one least suggested by scholars to have been based on an earlier original, probably owing to its omission of epigraphy,

figures within the frieze appear to appropriate common sculptural types from the Classical world (striding goddesses for Moira – figures 67 to 69; battle compositions of the Archaic period – figures 78 and 79) and, significantly, motifs and compositions which only occur in a Roman context, as far as extant art is concerned. The pose of the goddess on the left of the rear wall mirrors contemporary (and later) Roman representations of the muse Polyhymnia, with a remarkably similar sculptural parallel in a nearby Pompeian house (figures 70 to 72). The formatting of the desecration of Hector with Achilles and Automedon riding a biga rather than a quadriga (figure 81), alongside the formatting of the ransom scene with the chair found in place of a kline (figure 85), places the iconography in a specifically Roman setting. If the homeowner had wished to replicate a famous Greek frieze in his home then surely he would have instructed the artist(s) to remain faithful to the original, rather than incorporate Roman-era motifs and compositions?

Iliad frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio

Epigraphy

Chapter three of this thesis argues that the labels applied to the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio recall contemporary gladiators and circus horses and that their author – very likely a member of the household – must have applied them in the twenty or so years before the eruption of Vesuvius. Like the labels from the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus they also betray evidence of linguistic trends particular to their chronological context. For example, in the labels for HECTOR (figure 105), LYKAON/KYKAON (figures 101 to 103) and PATROCLOS (figure 114) the painter, when transliterating from the Homeric Greek to the Latin, adheres to the rule inherited from the Etruscan language where a *q* was used before a *u*, a *k* before an *a* and a *c* before all other vowels – all three carrying the same phonetic value.[538] The peculiar rendering of the name AI[as] TAIAMONIVS for Αἴας Τελαμώνιος (figure 105) appears to reflect another usage of the name in the gladiatorial sphere. The same is probably true of the XANTVS and BADIVS 'mis'-spellings.[539] The unaspirated T is discussed above and is related both to the

even though, ironically, the anomalies within the labels appear to be the main criteria which situate the friezes most securely in a Roman, Latin-speaking context.

[538] I am indebted to Professor James Adams for this information. Leumann (1977) 9-10 for explanation.

[539] The failure to aspirate the stop in XANTVS (*cf* the Homeric Ξάνθος) is not replicated in all Latin usage of the word: when referring to the Trojan river Pliny the Elder (*HN*. 5.28.100), Virgil (*Aen*. 5.808) and Ovid (*Met*. 9.646) all use the spelling *Xanthus*.

history of h digraphs in Latin and, as shown in chapter three, contemporary Pompeian graffitos of the same word with the exact spelling. Similarly the use of BADIVS for the Homeric βαλίος may very well reflect the common interchange of l and d in Latin,[540] but is also found in this exact form in conjunction with the name Xantus in another Pompeian context. The linguistic trends noted in these labels alongside the replication of the same spellings elsewhere in Roman Italy should not be considered two distinct phenomena. The very fact that the names Xantus and Badius occur in at least two known examples is indicative of the peculiarities of translating Greek words into Latin, and then their replication and spread to a wider context. More important for the purposes of this argument, however, is that they firmly situate the painting of the frieze in a particularly Roman (linguistic) and Pompeian (epigraphic) geographical and chronological context.

Iconography

As the frieze is now very faded and fragmentary with large lacunae it is difficult to consult its figural details in any depth beyond the *lucido* sketches and reconstructions published by Aurigemma. Note, however, the similarities between the formal elements of the lengthy funeral games on the eastern wall of the oecus and a representation of chariot racing from Prima Porta (figures 244 and 245).[541]



Fig.244 – Composite of three paintings by A. Sanarica of the races in the funeral games for Patroclus, eastern wall of oecus in the House of Octavius Quartio.

[540] The interchange of l and d is considered a remnant of the Sabine dialect. Leumann discusses βαλίος/Badius noting that the transliteration was appropriated to describe chestnut-coloured horses – (1977) 156.
[541] Dunbabin (1982) for a discussion of Roman mosaics showing chariot racing and victors.

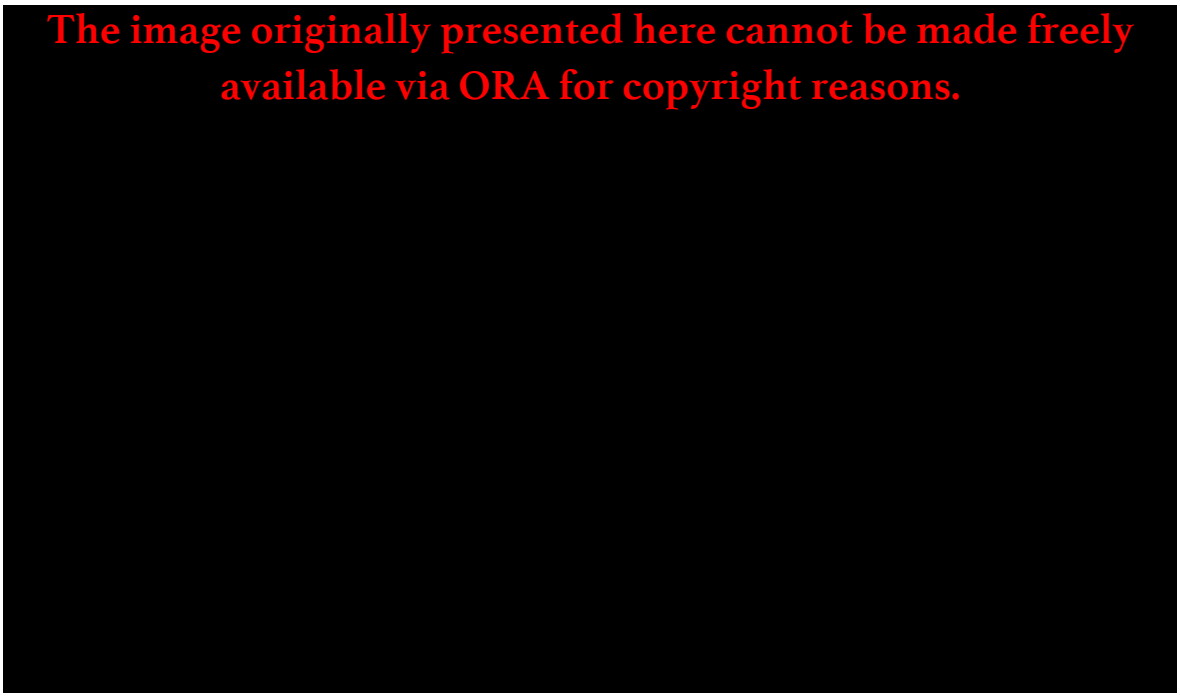


Fig.245 – Chariot racing mosaic from a bathing complex at Prima Porta.

Dunbabin notes that in extant Roman artworks it is relatively unusual to find depictions of chariot racing which show riders in a biga, rather than a quadriga, as seen in the Prima Porta mosaic of the early third century AD (figure 245). It is probably no coincidence that the two representations betray display distinct similarities, including the shape of the cars in which the charioteers stand and the rearing stance of the horses. Also comparable is the standing attendant in the Prima Porta mosaic and the three in the Pompeian fresco, particularly the man brandishing a staff or stick on the left of figure 245. This is not indicative of a common model for both but of the formulaic nature of Roman art, in which motifs were learned by artists and repeated in a variety of contexts. An early Hellenistic wallpainting from the Tomb of the Prince in Vergina shows a similar composition of riders driving bigas (but no attendants), suggesting again that such motifs had a long history in Graeco-Roman art.[542]

In the House of Octavius Quartio, the decision to show such a lengthy depiction of the funeral games – encompassing at least one eighth of the entire frieze – is very much in keeping with the interests of the homeowner (or at least one of its inhabitants) in the world of public spectacle, who would surely have had some influence over the themes included in his frieze. Perhaps he even requested that the painter emphasise the funeral games for Patroclus in which chariot racing featured prominently (*Il.* 23.362-446). Naturally the artist

[542] Dunbabin (1982) 65. Tomb of the Prince in Vergina in Miller (2013) 197-199.

would refer, pictorially, to the form of the sport most familiar to him as an inhabitant of the Roman Empire, adapting the details (such as replacing the commonly-depicted quadriga with the biga) as per the details of the epic.[543]

As with the stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine a Roman dating for the painting of the figural elements of the frieze can also be convincingly argued on the basis of the formatting of the desecration and ransom scenes, both of which adhere to the composition most favoured in the Roman era: Achilles driving a biga in the desecration scene (figures 119 and 120) and sitting on a chair in the ransom scene (figures 125 and 126). And, as discussed above, the omission of Aeneas is entirely in keeping with his conspicuous absence in contemporary Fourth Style domestic decoration in Pompeii.

Finally, although the iconography of the larger Hercules frieze will not be discussed in detail here, it would be remiss of any dating analysis not to note the pictorial reference to the practice of *dextrarum iunctio* on its eastern wall.[544] Here Hercules presides over the union of Telamon and the appropriately-veiled Hesione (figure 246), who clasp right hands in an unmistakeable depiction of the Roman marriage bond.[545]



Fig.246 – Marriage of Telamon and Hesione.

[543] The *Iliad* (23.287-304) makes it clear that the warriors yoke two horses apiece to their ἅρματα.
[544] For a recent examination of the Hercules frieze see Lorenz (2013).
[545] Reekmans (1958) 69-73.

Odyssey landscapes

Epigraphy

Biering's analysis of the handwriting styles discernible in the labels painted onto the *Odyssey* frescoes convincingly suggests that (at least) two different hands were at work on the frieze.[546] The artist responsible for the first half of the extant frieze (painter 'A') seems to have been comfortable with Homeric Greek, as conveyed by his close adherence to the epic text – AKTAI (*Od.* 10.89), KRHNH (10.107), EYPYBATHΣ (11.184), NOMAI (10.85), ANTIΦATHC (10.106), ΛAICTPYΓONEC (10.119), AKTAI (10.140) – and the insertion of extra-Homeric Greek names which intelligently evoke the scene being illustrated: ANTIΛOXOΣ (waiting in ambush against), ANXIAΛOΣ (by the sea).

The artist apparently responsible for the second half of the frieze (painter 'B') seems to have been largely familiar with Homeric Greek, thus EΛΠIHNOP (*Od.* 11.57), [t]EIRECIAC (12.267), ΦAIΔPA (11.321), APIAΔNH (11.321), TITYOC (11.576) and CICYΨOC (11.593),[547] but two spelling errors occur: Leda is labelled (λη)ΔA instead of the Homeric Λήδη (11.298)[548] and the sirens are denoted as CIRHNEC instead of the Homeric σειρῆνες (12.39).[549] Leda, with a final *a* instead of an eta, is clearly a Latinised form of the name (*cf* Ov. *Met.* 6.109) and Gignac provides several examples of Roman-era papyri which show feminine personal names normally declined in η ending instead with an *a*.[550] Likewise the interchange between the diphthong ei and the letter iota is found repeatedly in the papyri and again reflects the Latin spelling of the word Sirens (*cf* Hor. *Ep.* 1.23; Ov. *Met.* 5.555).[551]

Iconography

As discussed in chapter four, the extra-Homeric inclusion of the Danaids in Tartarus reflects a particular branch of mythology first reported by Late Republican authors and is first seen artistically in stone relief-work of a contemporary date from a city of Rome

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[546] Biering (1996) 123-128.
[547] Biering incorrectly transcribes EΛΠIHNOP from the Underworld panel as EΛΠENOP; on the detailed image he provides of the label the medial vowel is clearly an eta, rather than an epsilon – Biering (1996) 124-127.
[548] The first two letters of the label are fairly unclear, but the final *a* or alpha is legible – Biering (1996) 127.
[549] Compare with the CEIPHNAC label from the Hellenistic Homeric bowl MB19 – Sinn (1979) abb 4.1.
[550] Gignac (1976) 9-11.
[551] Gignac (1976) 189.

context. Likewise, the small number of women from Greek mythology selected by the artist for labelling in the Nekyia panel are each found in numerous examples in single panel form in Pompeian wallpainting, reflecting a clear Roman Italian interest in their particular stories as far as domestic decoration is concerned.

The most in-depth discussion of the iconography of the *Odyssey* frescoes pertaining to a Roman dating for their creation is offered by Biering, who argues for an early Augustan chronology, lowering their more traditional placement in the mid first century BC.[552] A summary of Biering's analysis is given in chapter five but I would add that, although the iconographic features cited are certainly indicative of a first century BC dating, using them to differentiate between the later phases of the Second Style and the beginning of the Third is a far more problematic exercise than Biering would care to admit, especially since his proposals for a later dating are based on the idea of iconographic spread over time, that is to say features which can be found in decoration of the mid first century BC, but which become more prominent in later paintings.

Nevertheless, analysis of the landscape or staffage figures from the *Odyssey* frescoes reveals that they have close stylistic and thematic parallels in painted landscapes from villas in the Bay of Naples and the city of Rome, traditionally dated from the mid to late first century BC. Figures 247 to 251 are details from panels two and three of the Esquiline frescoes and figures 252 to 256 are landscape figures found in the decoration of the villas. They have all been painted in a similar manner with rapid, sketchy brushwork, a diminutive stature in comparison with the vastness of the landscape and a tranquil, almost incidental nature. From the atrium of the villa at Oplontis are stick-like figures standing on a rocky promontory (figure 252 – mid first century BC); from the White Frieze of the Villa Farnesina at Rome numerous diminutive, similarly-executed figures populate the coastline (figures 253 and 254 – around 30–20 BC); from the Red Room in the Villa at Boscotrecase is a male figure, probably a shepherd, leaning on a column base (figure 255 – late first century BC) and from the panel painting of Perseus and Andromeda in the Mythological Room of the same villa is a seated female who seems completely unaware of the rescue being undertaken nearby (figure 256 – late first century BC).[553]

[552] Squire (2011) 76 argues for around 50 BC; Simon (1986) 195 for 30–20 BC; Von Blanckenhagen (1963) 127 for 50–40 BC; Coarelli (1998) 26 for 55–40 BC; Pollitt (1986) 185 for the mid first century BC.
[553] Oplontis – Mazzoleni (2004) 126-165; Farnesina – Mazzoleni (2004) 210-240; Boscotrecase – Mazzoleni (2004) 258-260.

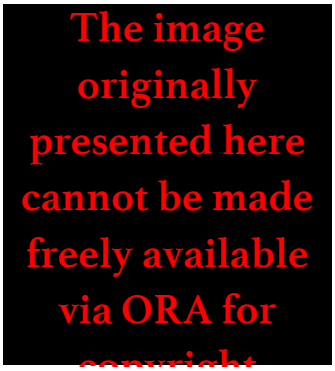


Fig.247 – AKTAI
Odyssey frescoes, panel 2.



Fig.248 – KRHNH
Odyssey frescoes, panel 2.



Fig.249 – NOMAI
Odyssey frescoes, panel 3.



Fig.250 – landscape figure
Odyssey frescoes, panel 2.



Fig.251 – wind personifications
Odyssey frescoes, panel 2.

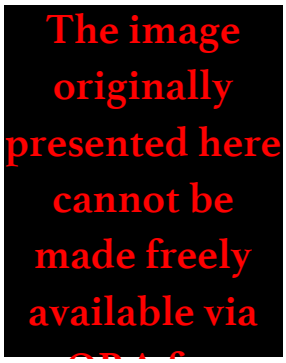


Fig.252 – landscape figures
Villa of Poppaea at Oplontis.



Fig.253 – landscape figures from the 'White Frieze'
Villa Farnesina, Rome.



Fig.254 – landscape figure from the 'White Frieze', Villa Farnesina, Rome.

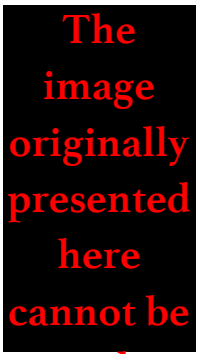




Fig.255 – landscape figure from the 'Red Room'
Fig.256 – landscape figure from the 'Mythological Room'
Both from the Villa of Agrippa Postumus, Boscotrecase.

Diminutive personifications and landscape figures were clearly a key component of Roman landscape painting and, as they are presented in a very similar way throughout Roman Italy during the mid to late first century BC, occurring in several frescoes not suggested by scholars to have been 'copies of Greek originals', provide further evidence that they and the friezes in which they belong are original products of Roman-era painters.[554] Janusz Ostrowski's study of personifications in Graeco-Roman art determines that anthropomorphic representations of landscape features were a particularly Roman phenomena and that reclining and floating personified figures in particular were "highly widespread in Roman times".[555] As evidence of Greek fresco painting is scarce we can only compare with relatively few examples, but a survey of the surviving material ranging geographically from Etruria to Macedonia to Turkey reveals that diminutive, passive landscape figures do not appear in earlier Classical art.[556] Pollitt accurately summarises the extant evidence then cannot resist the temptation to amalgamate several different (to his eyes) Greek exempla – Hellenistic marble reliefs, the Telephus frieze, the Nile mosaic from Praeneste and the Homeric bowls – to seek some form of precedent for the Roman *Odyssey* landscapes:

> There is, in short, little in Classical or early Hellenistic painting which anticipates the art of the Odyssey landscapes ... Are there then any Greek precedents at all for the style of painting in which series of tiny figures are set in a vast atmospheric landscape and are used to narrate a continuing story? There are, but the features of these precedents are diverse and have to be fused in order to bring one to the stage found in the Odyssey landscapes.[557]

Studius/Ludius

In the 1940s Christopher Dawson argued that landscape and sacro-idyllic painting as a genre was developed in Italy in the first century BC and included the *Odyssey* frieze as one

[554] Rodenwaldt cites this as one of his key criteria for a Roman dating for the Esquiline frescoes – Rodenwaldt (1909) 29. Bianchi Bandinelli (1963) and von Blanckenhagen (1962) both consider the landscapes in corridors F–G of the Villa Farnesina to be original, Italic creations.
[555] Ostrowski (1991) 26-27.
[556] Macedonia and Magna Graecia – Pontrandolfo (2002); Paestum – Pontrandolfo, Rouveret and Cipriani (2004); Tombs from the Greek and Turkish mainland – Blanc (1998).
[557] Pollitt (1986) 192, 196.

of its earliest surviving examples.[558] Pliny the Elder attributes the origins of landscape painting to a Studius or Ludius,[559] active late in the reign of Augustus (Plin. *HN.* 35.37) and, although it is unlikely that he was the originator of the genre – his *floruit* being rather later than the extant examples – it seems likely, as Ling suggests, that "Studius was the first great name in his field ... the personality who brought together previous developments and fused them into a vivid and individual style which assured his fame – in other words he was the *first major figure* in a particular genre of landscape painting."

Ling, however, rejects the *Odyssey* landscapes as an example of the genre in which Studius made his name and argues that the artist was *instead* renowned for painting "human figures ... everyday people engaged in everyday activities: walking, sailing, riding donkeys, travelling in carriages, fishing, fowling, hunting, gathering the vintage". Yet close analysis of the Esquiline frieze, particularly the scenes in the land of the Laestrygonians, reveals that the landscape figures are engaged in these very activities. Between panels two and three a shepherd drives his cattle to the right and two goats drink at a pool; in the same scene the daughter of Antiphates carries water drawn from the spring and a small boat sails past the shoreline. Panel 3, although dominated by cannibals battling Odysseus' companions, finds more animals grazing while the NOMAI character contentedly looks on. The right half of the fifth panel is similarly bucolic, with three landscape figures in the foreground reclining and conversing. Ling also cites "every-day architecture: villas and porticoes ... with gardens like those in rich men's estates" as features of Studius' painting, yet the scene in Circe's palace clearly takes place in such a setting. We might even see in the juxtaposition of violence and idyllic harmony within panels two to five evidence of the "strong element of humour" also argued by Ling to be a characteristic of the artist's work.[560] There is no convincing reason, therefore, to believe that the *Odyssey* landscapes were not created as part of the fresco genre made famous by Studius. And crucially, in the *Natural History*, Pliny – a learned Roman writer and historian with a serious interest in art – did not consider the genre to be derived from Hellenistic precedents (Plin *HN.* 35,37).

[558] Dawson (1944) xii, 62-84.
[559] See Ling (1977) 1-3 for the controversies surround the artist's name and identity.
[560] Ling (1977).

Odyssey frescoes and the Roman villa from Farnesina

Stylistically, the most convincing comparanda available for the Esquiline frescoes derives from near-contemporary, geographically-significant villa contexts. The similarities between the painted staffage and landscape figures in particular point strongly towards the *Odyssey* frieze being an original Roman creation, even if the subject matter is decidedly Greek.[561] Chapter four of this thesis revealed that there are a number of iconographic and stylistic similarities between the *Odyssey* frescoes from the Esquiline and the Farnesina Villa in Trastevere, the latter dating to the early Augustan era (30s–20s BC).[562] The NOMAI personnification, for example, can be compared with the landscape figures from the Winter Triclinium (figures 153 and 154); the cube-like shelter in panel 3 recalls a similar structure in corridor F–G of the Villa Farnesina; and a ship from the latter is formally very similar to one moored in the Pylos harbour in panel 2 (figures 158 and 159). Further comparisons can be made. Widening our gaze out from the shelters we can see in figures 257 and 258 that the landscapes in which they are set are also comparable, with the angular structures on the left forming an entranceway to a palace-like building in the background on the right in each, and with animals and herdsmen filling their respective foregrounds.



Fig.257 – Detail from the White Frieze of the villa at Farnesina.

[561] See especially the figural similarities between the AKTAI personnification in figure 247 and the reclining, male landscape figure in figure 254. Pollitt, although including study of the frescoes in his *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, reaches a similar conclusion: "Misty atmosphere, impressionistically rendered landscape features, and diminutive human features abound in Romano-Campanian painting of the late first century BC and of the first century AC. The very sensitivity which made the creation of such scenes possible, it can be argued, is an Italic phenomenon" – (1986) 186.

[562] Bragantini and De Vos (1982).



Fig.258 – Detail from panel 3 of the Esquiline frescoes.

Smaller iconographic features also correspond. The sacred branches from Circe's palace (figure 260) are also found in a large panel painting in cubiculum E in the Villa Farnesina (figure 259). The motif of a figure swinging on a tree is replicated in each fresco, whether impassively watching the landscape (figure 261) or pulling down the trunk with which to batter Odysseus' men (figure 262).



Fig.259 – Detail from cubiculum E, Farnesina villa.



Fig.260 – Detail from panel 6, *Odyssey* frescoes.

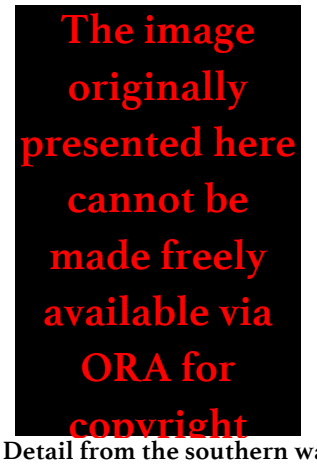


Fig.261 – Detail from the southern wall of corridors F and G, Farnesina villa.

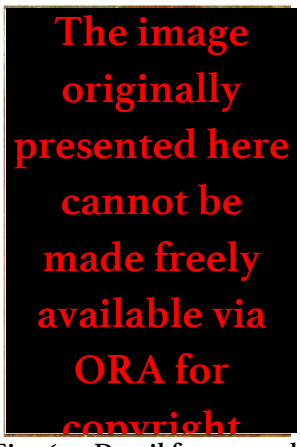


Fig.262 – Detail from panel 3, *Odyssey* frescoes.

Bragantini and De Vos propose that the workshop responsible for the Farnesina frescoes was also employed to decorate the House of Livia, the Aula Isaica and the House of Augustus on the Palatine, and was therefore instrumental in the creation of the new Third Style. Their proposal is based on similarities between corresponding rooms which feature large panels in central aediculae and the Egyptianising elements found in each residence, supposedly representing the victory at Actium.[563] With regard to the *Odyssey* frescoes, however, the closest iconographic and stylistic parallels are found in the sacro-idyllic scenes and narrow figural friezes from cubiculum E and corridors F and G of the Villa Farnesina. As little is known, or can certainly be verified, concerning how ancient workshops functioned it would be positivistic to assume that the same artists were responsible for each, and without preservation of other rooms of the Esquiline house we would be basing our proposals on very scant evidence. Nevertheless, the *Odyssey* frescoes share several stylistic and iconographic features with near-contemporary, inherently innovative and specifically Roman sacro-idyllic landscapes from a contemporary city of Rome context. Thus, even if we consider the argument concerning the *Odyssey* frescoes being a loose copy of an earlier artwork, with the implication that the 'copyist' added elements to create a contemporary veneer, we would still encounter the problem of the non-existence of the entirely hypothetical original and would be ignoring the tangible and visible evidence presented in the Esquiline frescoes themselves.

Conclusion

Ebhard Thomas is entirely correct when he suggests that the use of inscriptions in Roman wallpainting is a continuation of their occurrence in Greek art, but analysis of the epigraphy applied to the Roman, epic-themed friezes reveals that he is incorrect in asserting that their very presence indicates that they are copies of Greek originals.[564] In fact, the morphological and phonological discrepancies in the labels, which are symptomatic of bilingual interference, are tangible evidence of artists working and creating in a predominantly Latin speaking environment and not copying from an earlier, labelled model. The epigraphy applied to the friezes instead elevates them above mere decoration and imbues them with a literary flavour, as Elsner notes concerning the Roman

[563] Bragantini and de Vos (1982) 30-31. Von Blanckenhagen proposes that the Villa of Agrippa Postumus at Boscotrecase was decorated by the same workshop as that which was responsible for the frescoes in the Roman villa at Farnesina – Von Blanckenhagen (1962).
[564] Thomas (1995) 111-114.

epigraphic habit, "The text, including the style of the inscription's incised lettering and its language (whether Greek or Latin), functioned as a visual sign as well as a literary one – giving an enhanced dignity and an inscriptional monumentality even to relatively humble objects, as well as helping to determine their meanings."[565]

Furthermore, the friezes contain several iconographic and thematic details which are only found in extant art with a Roman Italian dating and provenance. Both of these factors, alongside the total absence of any similar, or even comparable friezes in either the archaeological or literary record, can only lead us to the conclusion that the painted and stucco *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii, and the *Odyssey* frescoes from Rome, are original creations of the Late Republican and Early Imperial eras, tailored and adapted for the Roman homeowners who wished to display them on the walls of their homes.

[565] Elsner (2005) 300.

Chapter 7 – The reception of epic in Roman life and the nature of the narrative frieze

What is interesting is that among the Romans as well as the Etruscans there existed a powerful tradition of representing not merely Homeric episodes, but Homeric narrative as well … the procedure of focusing on sequences rather than on individual episodes implies an interest not in detachable stories but in monumental narrative structures. Furthermore, the structures in question are undoubtedly Homer's masterpieces, and not popular treatments of this or that story in tragedy or any other, less expansive genre.

(Joseph Farrell, 2004)[566]

The final chapter of this thesis will investigate two significant themes. It will primarily consider the reception of epic poetry in the Roman world and seek to understand why and how extended artworks with epic themes permitted both detailed reference to the Homeric text *and* free play on it. It will then investigate the nature of the narrative frieze format and the ways in which writers of the Late Republic and Early Empire discussed the genre of epic with a view to understanding if any relationship can be discerned between the terminology used and the nature and content of the artworks in question.

The nature and reception of epic in Late Republican and Early Imperial Roman society

In his article on 'Roman Homer' Joseph Farrell argues that accurate knowledge of and ability to quote epic was an identifier of social class and rank. He writes:

> Easy familiarity with Homer was the mark of an expensive education, and those who had had one liked to sneer at frauds … Literary representation takes it for granted that some generalised, very imperfect knowledge of Homer did exist among the uneducated and alleges that social climbers pretended to greater knowledge than they actually had … It is clear that knowledge of Homer was valued by the elite not merely as a context for appreciating Latin literature but as a mark of their social rank, and that this knowledge could not be counterfeited if one wished to be accepted by polite society.[567]

Yet how do we reconcile this view with the epic friezes adorning the walls of (not insignificant) houses in Pompeii and Rome, in which strict faithfulness to the Homeric text was clearly not the homeowner's nor the artist's priority, or even a requisite of the genre

[566] Farrell (2004) 259, 262.
[567] Farrell (2004) 267.

itself? Are we to see each patron as a real-life Trimalchio (as has often been accused of the owner of the House of Octavius Quartio[568] or the purchasers of the Tabulae Iliacae[569]) or were there different expectations at play in art as opposed to erudite dining conversation? It appears from the extant artworks that the latter is the case and that the genre of epic adhered to a different framework in the visual sphere. Perhaps this was even noticed by Vitruvius in his remarks on the appropriateness of themes since he describes comparable wallpaintings depicting the *troianas pugnas* and the *Ulixis errationes*, not the *Ilias* or *Odyssea* (Vitr. 7.5.2 – compare with the *atriensis* in the *Cena Trimalchionis* who describes the paintings as *Iliada et Odyssian* – Petron. Sat. 29.4). Squire has recently explored the relationship between epic text and image (and epic text and epigraphy) on the Tabulae Iliacae and, noting a similar playfulness with the epic genre on the tabulae, suggests that "There was learned pleasure to be had from tracing the 'infidelities' – in noting the similarities and the differences between prototype and creative imitation."[570] This type of free interaction does not even seem to be an anomaly of the Roman era as the Hellenistic temple frieze in the Troad, discussed in chapter six, also reflects a fairly loose adherence to the *Iliad*, as did Polygnotus' extended frescoes in Delphi to their respective epics.[571] Yet the analysis conducted in chapters one to four of this thesis reveals that the Roman friezes form a very close relationship with the epic text in parts, and that detailed knowledge of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* was required for full comprehension. We will therefore proceed with a brief overview of the history of epic and investigate the apparent contradiction between the discernible pre-eminence of Homeric themes alongside the fluidity with the epic text in Roman art.

A brief history of Greek and Latin epic

By the late first century AD, when all four of this study's painted *Iliad* and *Odyssey* friezes had been created, the literary genre of epic had taken on a number of forms. Greek in origin, it was traditionally regarded as beginning with Homer and was later adapted by Hellenistic writers like Apollonius of Rhodes and doubtless many other Greek writers whose works do not survive. There also existed the other works of the Epic Cycle which 'filled in the gaps' before and after Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and included the *Cypria,*

[568] Discussion in Hackworth Peterson (2006) 163-183.
[569] Horsfall (1979); Brilliant (1984) 53-59.
[570] Squire (2011) 93-94.
[571] See the introduction to this thesis for a discussion of which particular epic the Iliupersis painting may have evoked.

Iliupersis, Ilias Parva, Aethiopis, Nostoi and *Telegony*. All were extant in the Roman period (and are cited by Pausanias) but only survive today summarised in the Late Antique works of Proclus and Photius, and in a number of fragments. All of the Greek epics were composed in hexameter (although the *Odyssey* was changed into Saturnian when translated into Latin by Livius Andronicus in his *Odusia* in the third century BC[572]) and told of battles, adventures, heroes and their interaction with the gods. Perhaps considered by their Greek audience to be rooted in history they were nevertheless set in the distant heroic past when monsters and mythical creatures were an ever-present threat and semi-divine heroes fought even the gods themselves.

When the form was taken on by the first Latin writers of epic in the Middle Republic it was transformed primarily into a means by which to glorify the origins, achievements and leaders of Rome. In the words of A.J. Boyle, these now fragmentary early epics – Naevius' *Bellum Punicum* (late third century BC) and Ennius' *Annales* (early second century BC) – "set the ground rules for politico-historical epic".[573] Although they still featured the gods and the heroes of the Trojan War (largely through the story of Aeneas) they told of the founding of the Roman race and included contemporary or recent historical events, naming current political and military leaders.[574] Both were heavily indebted to the Homeric epics and the wider Epic Cycle yet their primary purpose was not to tell of the wrath and wanderings of heroes but to glorify the Roman state and its leaders. There then followed a wave of panegyric and politicising works throughout the Late Republic (also written in hexameter in the lengthy epic style) glorifying, for example, the Roman victory over the Illyrian Iapydes (Hostius, *Bellum Histricum*), Julius Caesar's campaign over the Germanic tribes (Varro Atacinus, *Bellum Sequanicum*) and his victories in the Gallic Wars (Furius Bibaculus, *Bellum Gallicum*).[575] Other variants of epic were available to those with the means or desire to read them including Varro Atacinus' Latin translation of the *Argonautica* or neoteric miniature epics such as Catullus 64, or even didactic works like Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, Virgil's *Georgics* or Manilius' *Astronomica*.

Epic as a genre was to be redefined, however, with the posthumous publication of Virgil's *Aeneid* in 19 BC. Although three epics are known to have glorified Octavian's

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[572] William Allan notes that Livius did not offer a straightforward translation of Homer's *Odyssey* but changed elements and particular lines to suit Roman values of the third century BC – Allan (2014) 27.
[573] Boyle (1993) 3. Ennius, along with Homer, was to become a staple of Roman education until superseded by Virgil.
[574] Goldberg (1993) 19-36 for Livius and Naevius; Dominik (1993) 37-58 and Skutsch (1985) for Ennius.
[575] Boyle (1993) 3 for a more comprehensive list of Roman panegyric and political epic composed in the mid to late Republic.

victories over Antony and Cleopatra at Actium,[576] the *Aeneid* became the politico-historical and panegyric epic *par excellence* and, like the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, was to become a staple of children's education throughout the Roman period. Virgil's seminal work self-consciously reworked both Homeric epics (including their stories of gods and monsters) and combined them with praise of Augustus, the newly-created principate and the divine ancestry of the ruling *gens Iulia*. As Boyle notes, the *Aeneid* "extended the [socio-political] genre to embrace fully mythological epic".[577] There then followed a wave of Latin epics in the Augustan era with a much more mythical flavour than had previously been encountered in Roman Italy, with writers often recounting the adventures of individual heroes including Theseus (Ponticus' and Lynceus' *Thebaid*), Hercules (Carus' and Lynceus' *Heracleid* and Camerinus' work on the hero's capture of Troy), the Amazons (Domitius Marsus' *Amazonis*), Antenor (Largus) and Diomedes (Iullus Antonius' *Diomedea*). Probably prompted by Virgil, other authors chose to fill out and retell the events of the Trojan War (Arbronius Silo, Macer and Lupus).[578] Under Nero and the Flavians (the so-called 'Silver Age') there was another flourishing within the genre, including the historico-political *Bellum Civile* of Lucan and Silius Italicus' *Punica*, alongside more mythological themed works such as Statius' *Thebaid* and *Achilleid* and Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*.[579]

The pre-eminence of Homer

Literate Romans therefore had a wealth of historical, military, political, didactic and mythological subjects at their disposal through the epic genre. Countless further topics from Greek mythology were available in the form of performed tragedies, pantomimes and comedies, enabling those who were unable to afford books or without the ability to read to become immersed in the adventures of Hercules, Theseus, Jason and Perseus and in the battles of the Trojan War (to name just a few among many themes). Yet, there are no extant continuous friezes from houses in Roman Italy in painted or stucco format relaying the adventures of Jason and his Argonauts, or Theseus on Crete, or the Twelve Labours of Hercules. The only two extra-Homeric exceptions (Hercules in Troy and the Founding of

[576] The civil war epics of Gaius Rabirius, Sextilius Ena and the anonymous *Bellum Actiacum* – Boyle (1993) 3.
[577] Boyle (1993) 3.
[578] Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* although combining a number of different literary styles, was certainly also epic in length and narrated in dactylic hexameter the fortunes and adventures of the heroes and heroines of Greek and Roman mythology.
[579] Of course, Greek writers continued to compose epic into Late Antiquity: Triphiodorus (3rd century AD) – Miguélez Cavero (2013); Quintus Smyrnaeus (4th century AD) – Maciver (2012); and Nonnus (4th–5th century AD) – Spanoudakis (2014),

Rome) will be discussed below, but still retain a discernible link to the Trojan War. So why were the Homeric epics in particular chosen for depiction? Pausanias' description of the Polygnotan frescoes confirms that the other books of the Epic Cycle were extant in the first and second centuries AD – the writer makes direct reference to them when he feels necessary – yet, at least for four homeowners in Pompeii and Rome in the first centuries BC and AD, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were preferred for depiction on the walls of their homes.[580] This seems to have been a feature exclusive to the Roman painted friezes, contrasting with the Tabulae Iliacae or Megarian bowls, in which immediate reference to the *Iliupersis, Ilias Parva, Cypria* and *Aethiopis* is found, and arguably in opposition to the programmatic single panel schemes of the first century AD in which no discernible link to literature can be ascertained, even when the events of the Epic Cycle are evoked.

The supremacy of the *Iliad* and to a slightly lesser extent the *Odyssey* is pronounced in the commentaries of Greek and Latin authors.[581] Works by writers living during the Late Republic and Early Empire are our best source for uncovering contemporary, but largely elite thoughts on the subject, but the opinions of earlier writers were certainly available to those who had the means to to consult them. Aristotle, for example, was clear in his preference and declared Homer "supreme poet in the serious style (σπουδαῖα)" (Arist. *Poet.* 1448b). He elevated Homeric epic above the other works of the Epic Cycle and praised the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* for their unity and simplicity in comparison with the multiplicity of storylines and characters within the latter (*Poet.* 1459b). Later, Quintilian would write: "No one has surpassed [Homer's] sublimity when it comes to great things (*in magnis rebus*), nor his propriety when it comes to small. He is at once luxuriant and concise, light and heavy, marvellous in thoroughness and brevity alike, pre-eminent not only in his poetic manner but also in his oratorical brilliance" (Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.46).[582]

Homer's compositions were elevated above the other works of the Epic Cycle throughout ancient literature but sometimes the allusion was rather subtler. In Hyginus' *Fabulae*, for example, the events of the wider Epic Cycle (from the infancy of Paris to the death of Laocoön) are listed chronologically with little reference to the cyclic epics but section 106 forms a very distinct summary of the *Iliad* beginning with the return of

[580] The frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus contains scenes which may have featured in the *Aethiopis* but the narrative is overwhelming dedicated to the *Iliad*. Horsfall discusses the potential availability of the cyclic epics and related ὑποθέσεις during this period – Horsfall (1979) 46-47.
[581] The testimony of Roman writers (Quint. *Inst.* 1.8.5-8; Petron. *Sat*. 68; Juv. 6.434-440; 11.180-182; Prop. 2.34.66) would also lead us to think that Virgil's *Aeneid* joined the ranks of Homeric epic with regard to its esteem in elite circles, but this is certainly *not* reflected in Roman art. See Conclusion for further discussion.
[582] Trans. M. Squire (2011).

Chryseis and ending with the burial of Hector. Similarly sections 124 and 125 neatly summarise the events of the *Odyssey*, beginning with Odysseus visiting the land of the Cicones and ending with the death of the suitors. Statius remarks at the beginning of the *Achilleid* that although many of Achilles' deeds have already been celebrated by Homeric song, he himself will not end his work *in Hectore tracto* (Stat. *Achil.* 1.3-4, 6). Criticism of Homer was also frowned upon in certain circles. Vitruvius relays that the *Homeromastix* Zoilus criticized Homer and the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the presence of Ptolemy II Philodelphos who, "seeing the father of poets and captain of all literature abused in his absence, and his works, to which all the world looked up in admiration, disparaged by this person, made no rejoinder, although he thought it an outrage. Zoilus, however … sank into poverty…" (Vitr. 7.1.8).[583]

The *Imagines* of Philostratus the Elder

The supremacy of (and arguably obsession with) Homer is pronounced in the *Imagines* of Philostratus the Elder, who sets his own descriptions of epic-themed artworks in the portico of a villa in the Bay of Naples.[584] He describes in detail a series of panel paintings set in the walls of the home (γραφαῖς ἐνηρμοσμένων αὐτῇ πινάκων) (*Philostr.* Imag. 1.28) and it is striking to observe how keen he is to link events from the wider Epic Cycle directly with Homeric epic, even when the two are not closely related. As Elsner and Squire note concerning the Scamander painting, "the passage goes out of its way to underscore its Homeric credentials, announcing Homer's name in the fifth word and repeating it twice (not least in the final word of the description)."[585] And, like Pausanias in Delphi, Philostratus compares and contrasts the artwork before him with the related Homeric account, but casts no negative judgement when the text is not closely followed.

The first description is of a painting based on *Iliad* 21 in which Hephaestus repels Achilles from the Scamander. Philostratus tells us in the first line that the painting is "based on Homer" (ταῦτα Ὁμήρου ὄντα – *Philostr.* Imag. 1.1.5) and asks the boy(s) accompanying him, "Surely you are familiar with the passage in the *Iliad* where Homer makes Achilles rise up to avenge Patroclus…?" (1.1.10-11). Yet the reader (or listener) soon realizes that although the painting may evoke the Homeric text it does not follow it in

[583] Trans. M. Hicky Morgan (1914).
[584] Newby (2009) notes 5 and 6 for a recent bibliography surrounding the question of whether Philostratus was describing real paintings. Bowie and Elsner (2009) for a volume of collected papers on Philostratus and his works.
[585] Squire and Elsner (2016) 63.

every detail: Philostratus says that the painter has omitted several of the gods who were involved in the battle and, since the river is not painted with long hair, nor is Hephaestus painted as lame, "Homer is no longer followed" (ταῦτα οὐκέτι Ὁμήρου – 1.1.27). In the Homeric account, however, no mention is made of the river god's hair, nor is Hephaestus' lameness a crucial feature of the narrative, and so these are not true corrections or extra Homeric insertions as found in the Polygnotan frescoes or Roman friezes, perhaps leading us to wonder whether Philostratus had in mind another artistic rendering of the episode and was working from memory of this, rather than the epic text.[586] Squire and Elsner note that this scene was not a particular favourite among ancient artists and that in each of the extant representations (ranging over several centuries) the depiction differs substantially and so, instead, Philostratus is playing on the theme of 'presence and absence' throughout his description (thus the river is *not* painted with long hair and Hephaestus is *not* painted as lame).[587] In the final section of the article they conclude:

> The passage does not provide any straightforward description of a painting ... nor does it simply probe how that painting draws on an earlier Homeric text. Rather, Philostratus acts out the very problem of reading Homeric poetry through pictures, no less than of seeing pictures through the prismatic lens of Homer.[588]

This observation becomes all the more acute since Homer is cited in another panel painting whose theme was entirely extra-Homeric: the education of Achilles by Chiron (Philostr. *Imag.* 2.2).[589] Philostratus keenly relates it to Homer and begins his description with a summary of Achilles' adventures in the *Iliad*, affirming "all this has been depicted by Homer", and then goes on to contrast the adult Achilles with the child in the panel. His summary is particularly interesting because many of the cited episodes are found in the Roman *Iliad* friezes:

> Nay, the Achilles who fights at the trench, who puts the Trojans to rout merely by his shouting, and who slays men right and left, and reddens the water of the

[586] The same episode in the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus does show Xanthus with long hair, but there is no suggestion of Hephaestus' lameness (chapter one).
[587] Squire and Elsner (2016) 64-69. My own analysis of the Scamander episode in the House of the Cryptoporticus (chapter one) suggests that the figure on the right could be Hephaestus.
[588] Squire and Elsner (2016) 76.
[589] Newby also comments upon the painting showing Poseidon's pursuit of Amymone, in which another Iliadic passage is (tenuously) cited. Newby writes "When one considers the image which Philostratus has described – a joyful looking Poseidon riding in a chariot pulled by hippocamps, in amorous pursuit of Amymone – one wonders where he found need for Homer's Poseidon, all bronze-hoofed horses, angry countenance and mind full of war" – Newby (2009) 328.

> Scamander, and also his immortal horses, and his dragging of Hector's body around the walls, and his lamentation on the breast of Patroclus — all this has been depicted by Homer, and he depicts him also as singing and praying and receiving Priam under his roof (2.2.27-33).

Here, Philostratus lists a series of artistically standardised scenes (which paradoxically do not appear in the painting itself) that occur repeatedly throughout the friezes (and in several other genres of Roman art), reflecting the importance of the visual alongside the literary tradition in both Philostratus' writing and the ancient viewing experience involving artworks with epic themes.

In a third painting showing the death of Antilochus, son of Nestor (Philostr. *Imag.* 2.7), the description begins with the line, "That Achilles loved Antilochus you must have discovered in Homer" and is followed by a summary of the deeds of the youth in the *Iliad*. Philostratus concludes: "Now such is the scene in Homer" (2.7.1,2). Curiously, he never cites the *Aethiopis* as a source, in which the episode was certainly found, reflecting a widespread trend in commentary on epic themes (in particular Pausanias' description of Polygnotus' frescoes) as chapter one of this thesis discussed; instead, he attributes the details of the painting to the artist: "but the events depicted by the painter are as follows…" (2.7.2).[590] Like Pausanias, Philostratus often interprets and infers unwritten and unconfirmed details – *allusions* to the epic narrative – from the (epigraphy-free) paintings he (may or may not) see before him:

> The Ithacan is made known by his austere and vigilant look, Menelaus by his gentleness, Agamemnon by his god-like mien, while the son of Tydeus is marked by his nobility, and you would recognize the Telamonian Ajax by his grimness and the Locrian by his alertness … You are not to recognize Achilles by his long hair, for that is gone since the death of Patroclus, but let his beauty make him known to you, and his stature, aye, and the very fact that he does not wear long hair (7.2-3).[591]

In the panel paintings themselves there does not seem to be any suggestion of overt *extra Homeric insertions* of the type elucidated by Pausanias or found in the Roman friezes. Yet Newby notes that whenever Philostratus refers to Homer, or urges his listener to compare text with image, it is in these paintings (as opposed to those evoking Euripides, for

[590] A fourth panel based on events from the Epic Cycle is the death of Memnon (1.7) whose narrative, again, is *not* linked by Philostratus to the *Aethiopis*.
[591] Note again the theme of 'presence' and 'absence'.

example) that "we find the images deviating most from the textual account",[592] perhaps (bearing in mind the complexities of reading and interpreting Philostratus) confirming our previous observation that although commentators may have been keen to compare directly with the epic text, artists were much freer in their interaction with and interpretation of it.[593]

Apart from the commentaries of Pausanias and Philostratus the Elder, ancient writers made little mention of the transference of epic literature into art and more frequently compared the wider genres of poetry and the visual arts. Philostratus, for example, writes, "Whosoever scorns painting is unjust to truth; and he is also unjust to all the wisdom that has been bestowed upon poets – for poets and painters make equal contribution to our knowledge of the deeds and the looks of heroes" (τὰ τῶν ἡρώων ἔργα καὶ εἴδη) (*Philostr.* Imag. 1). Other Greek writers also compared art and poetry with regard to each medium's potential for description and narrative (eg. Plut. *Mor. Quomodo adul.* 18a[594]). Here we might enter into discussion of μίμησις and φαντασία and the artist's inspirational process, as recently explored by Anne Shepherd,[595] but it would be something of a leap to forge a direct link between this highly-philosophical thought system (which generally refers to depiction of the gods) and the practical realities of what might drive the artistic choices of a Roman fresco or stucco artist. More concrete and tangible considerations will therefore be considered in the examination of Roman libraries, geographically and chronologically comparable artworks and the more immediate discussion of the epic genre among Roman writers, which will follow below.

Epic texts in Roman libraries

The discrepancy between the literary sources which attest to the expectation among the Roman elite to quote with accuracy from the epic alongside the realities of the painted and stucco friezes, in which evocation rather than faithful adherence to the epic account was prioritized, ought to be addressed practically and with a mind to the availability of the epic

[592] Newby (2009) 329.
[593] The Younger Philostratus also describes a series of paintings but does not set his *Imagines* in a specific location and only two have subject matter relating to the Epic Cycle: (1) and (17). Both contain literary references but this time related more to Sophocles than Homer. The younger Philostratus seems to have had something of a penchant for the tragedian as he is described as "the sweetest of poets" (3), is the subject of his own painting (13) and is described as "divine" (1).
[594] The cited phrase, usually attributed to Simonides, is quoted by several ancient authors – Sheppard (2014) 30-33.
[595] Sheppard (2014) 88. Further discussion in Morales (1996) 190-195.

text to the average homeowner, either in its entirety or as individual books preserved on single papyrus scrolls. George Houston's recent work on Roman libraries is particularly pertinent to this discussion and reveals that although some households appear to have owned the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in their entirety, this was something of a rarity and, in most cases, acquiring all twenty four books (on separate scrolls) of each was not achievable. Houston comments, "You might never succeed in acquiring all the books in a multivolume work, for some books in, say, Homer's *Odyssey* seem to have been much less popular than others, and finding an archetype of a less popular book could well be difficult."[596]

In his discussion of the book lists documented on papyri, which appear to be inventories of literary works owned by a household, Houston's first example ('list 1') is from the mid first century AD and comes from the Arsinoite nome in Egypt. Although the fragment only preserves reference to books 14 to 16 and 20 to 24 of the *Iliad,* it appears that all 24 were originally listed. Similarly all books of the *Odyssey* appear to have been accounted for and, curiously, extra copies of books three and four.[597] Another papyrus ('list 6'), discarded around AD 300, lists two copies of *Iliad* books 6 and 9 and single copies of books 10, 23 and 24, alongside *Odyssey* books 5 and 6.[598] Houston notes, "The very fact that each book in the Iliad and the Odyssey is listed separately in lists 1 and 6 may be due to the difficulty involved in assembling a complete set of Homer: you could not assume that you had, or could acquire, the complete work." The frustration of this reality is perhaps documented in 'list 7', in which the scribe writes "Homer, *whatever is available*".[599]

Nevertheless, the papyrus remains from Oxyrhynchus confirm that Homer was overwhelmingly the most popular author with a documented 236 fragments, compared to 76 for Hesiod in second place.[600] Some books were clearly more popular than others and Julian Krüger's cataloguing of the Homeric fragments from Oxyrhynchus, which I have compiled in table form below, reveals not only that the *Iliad* was considerably more popular among readers than the *Odyssey*, but also that the first five books of the former have a noticeably higher frequency:

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[596] Houston (2014) 38, n.117.
[597] Houston (2014) 49-53.
[598] On the possession of more than one copy of the same book, Houston notes: "It is thus possible that various members of the family acquired book collections for their own use, and over time those separate collections were passed down and combined … What began as two copies of, for example, the *Iliad*, in separate households of the Sarapion family, might have ended up in one single collection" – Houston (2014) 149.
[599] Houston (2014) 72-74.
[600] Other 'epic' poets include Stesichorus with a possible eight fragments and Virgil with five, but no mention of the authors of the *Cypria, Aethiopis* or *Ilias Parva*.

Iliad book number	Number of fragments	*Iliad* book number	Number of fragments
1	17	13	5
2	16	14	3
3	10	15	7
4	10	16	4
5	14	17	5
6	7	18	3
7	8	19	3
8	3	20	3
9	9	21	1
10	6	22	4
11	8	23	8
12	0	24	5

Fig.263 – Table showing the number of fragments of papyri from Oxyrhynchus citing lines of the *Iliad*.[601]

Odyssey book number	Number of fragments	*Odyssey* book number	Number of fragments
1	4	13	2
2	2	14	2
3	3	15	1
4	7	16	3
5	3	17	4
6	2	18	2
7	0	19	1
8	0	20	0
9	1	21	1
10	4	22	1
11	6	23	3
12	3	24	1

Fig.264 – Table showing the number of fragments of papyri from Oxyrhynchus citing lines of the *Odyssey*.[602]

In the tables I have omitted vocabulary lists, lexica, writing exercises, scholia and glossaries as our interest is in the epic text itself and the availability of it for readers. Even if we agree, as Houston argues, that "readers and book collectors in Italy and Egypt seem to have behaved in very similar ways"[603] the above data from Oxyrhynchus will not be used

[601] Data from Krüger (1990) 324-327.
[602] Data from Krüger (1990) 327-328.
[603] Houston (2014) 48.

to form comparisons with the choice of scenes found in the Homeric friezes in Roman Italy, considering the geographical and chronological disparities between the two data sets, alongside the sheer lack of evidence pertaining to how artists went about composing and creating extended artworks. Indeed, chapter one of this thesis discusses the significant lack of scenes relating to books two, three, four and five of the *Iliad*, which contrasts with these books' plentiful attestation among the papyrus fragments. It seems more likely that the owners of epic friezes, like the purchasers of papyrus scrolls, had their own personal preferences and favourite sections of the Trojan story and that, since for most households owning a complete set of *Iliad* or *Odyssey* scrolls was not achievable (either through financial constraints or even the availability of accurate versions of the books from which copies might be made[604]), so homeowners with limited wall space had to make thematic decisions based on favoured episodes.[605] This probably explains why in the spatially-limited rooms in the House of the Iliac Shrine and the House of Octavius Quartio there is a discernible 'selection' of scenes from the epic, compared with the comparatively luxurious amount of wall space running around the wings of the cryptoporticus which conveys a much more comprehensive account of the *Iliad*. We conclude this discussion with an observation by Houston on the book collections documented throughout his study, and suggest that the same processes were responsible for the scene choices evident in the epic friezes:

> As for contents, what emerges most strikingly from these collections is how different they are from one another. In each case, the collector has made choices in accordance with his interests or needs or both, and the manuscripts reflect those interests.[606]

Epic and narrative on the Tabulae Iliacae

The Tabulae Iliacae have recently undergone something of a resurgence in scholarship and so will not be investigated in detail here, but their interaction with their respective Trojan War epics (*Iliad*, *Odyssey, Aethiopis, Iliupersis* and *Ilias Parva*) is pertinent to this study since the objects are largely contemporary with the Roman friezes and similarly

[604] Houston (2014) chapter one on 'Assembling a Collection'.
[605] This may have been related to familiarity through rote learning at school. The literary graffiti from Pompeii certainly suggests this phenomenon since references to the first two books of the *Aeneid* account for 77% of the entire sample – Milnor (2014) Appendix 5.1 'Quotations from Virgil on Pompeian Walls'.
[606] Houston (2014) 177.

derive from an Italian, probably domestic context.[607] Applying a similar methodology to that used in this study Nicholas Horsfall compares the pictorial scenes on the Tabula Capitolina (1A) with the epic text, in this instance the fragments of the *Iliupersis* as preserved in Pausanias and other sources, and concludes: "It should ... be stressed that where a comparison between the Tabula and the fragments is possible it does nothing to increase Theodorus' credibility. Indeed analysis of fr. 201 goes far toward shattering it." Horsfall lists the discrepancies between the tablet and the text and posits that the artist abandoned the epic entirely, preferring his own 'sources', including Virgil's *Aeneid* and, crucially, "Roman artistic models".[608] Where agreements between epic text and image can be found, such as Andromache losing Astyanax and the wooden horse brought into Troy, they are demoted as details which have no significance to the argument, being apparently common to any account of the Fall of Troy.[609]

Both Horsfall and Brilliant compare the epigraphic epitomes found on the tabula with the bands of relief, adding an extra layer of potential reference with the epic text, but the conclusions reached are cohesive and Brilliant declares, "Theodorus's resume and the Iliadic imagery of the Capitoline Tablet are not complementary. Their dissonance produces through plot distortions a dissociative message that fails to convey a fully coherent version of the original Homeric epic, since text and image are not parallel." This leads Brilliant to conclude that the tablets were intended for a "vulgar clientele that cared little for learning" and Horsfall to declare them "a bewildering artistic farrago".[610] Yet we have noted that Pausanias, when noting similar divergences between epic and image, casts no such negative judgement on Polygnotus – a most esteemed Classical artist – confirming the need to give more credence to the opinions of writers contemporary with the artworks under discussion with particular regard to the fluidity of the pictorial representation of the epic text.[611]

More recently, Squire has placed considerable emphasis on re-evaluating the tabulae as "exceedingly sophisticated objects" which "play with the meaning of

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[607] Squire (2011); Petrain (2014). Overview of earlier scholarship in Squire (2011) 15-19. Tabulae not bearing subjects related to Homer or the Trojan Cycle include 10K (Theban epic cycle); 19J (exploits of Heracles); 17M (celebration of Alexander the Great's victory at Arbela); 18L and 22Get (life of Alexander and chronicles of Greek and Roman history).

[608] Horsfall notes that Anchises' carrying of the Trojan *sacra* and his positioning on Aeneas' left shoulder derives either from denarius reverses of Julius Caesar or the statue group in the Forum of Augustus.

[609] Horsfall (1979). Noting similar discrepancies between text and image in the Homeric or Megarian bowls Luca Giuliani supposes that "Je vielfältiger die Bilder und je rätselhafter die Zitate, desto reizvoller das Spiel" – Giuliani (2003) 277.

[610] Horsfall (1979) 26; Brilliant (1984) 57.

[611] Paus. 10.25.3; 26.1, 4; 28.7; 30.2.

representation and the representation of meaning … in mind-bogglingly sophisticated ways."[612] Thoroughly (and rightly) rejecting the notion that the tablets were intended to 'illustrate' the epic text, a lens through which earlier scholars commented upon "infidelities" and even "blunders", Squire argues against what he terms "the literalist fallacy" and proposes that ancient narratives "exist not *in* but *through* pictures".[613] Although Squire's overall conclusions on the interaction between literature and image are sound, where the friezes differ from the tabulae is in the inclusion of the "telltale minutiae" of the text in the form of textual markers, which refer the reader to the smallest details of the epic. Although Squire acknowledges that the viewer was intended to enjoy the interaction between tabula and epic text, he calls into question Snodgrass' suggestion (relating to early Archaic vases) that "to see a poetic resonance in a picture, one must find evidence of 'some acknowledgement of the debt to the literary source … either by the use of an explicit title, or … by a confluence in the details of action, attribute and setting'.[614] Yet the repeated attestation of the titles of the Trojan War epics on the Tabulae Iliacae, the adherence to the Homeric chronology of episodes in the friezes and, in particular, the textual markers found throughout the latter, show a discernible (however loose) relationship with the literary source. It is not simply a peculiarity of "our modern cultural wiring" to see the friezes and tabulae in this way; Pausanias and Philostratus would not have cited Homer with as much frequency as they did if the intention of both genres of epic artwork was not to invite the viewer to do the same.

Our conclusions also differ in the expectations of the audience. Where Squire critiques Horsfall's and Brilliant's suggestion of a particularly lowbrow clientele, he conversely places their ownership (and thus artistry) at the entirely opposite end of the spectrum, in the realms of the highly-educated and erudite. With regard to the epic friezes, however, the reality was probably somewhere in the middle. Rather than requiring the viewer to recognize and cross reference a plethora of Greek and Latin texts down to the most obscure of authors, or make sophisticated visual and thematic associations enshrined in the iconography, comprehensive interpretation and understanding demanded only knowledge of the Homeric epic and its narrative chronology, with those unfamiliar afforded general recognition through the inclusion of standardized and recognisable scenes. Even the extra-Homeric insertions are firmly rooted in the everyday: gladiators and circus horses, contemporary political propaganda, with perhaps the more erudite able to

[612] Squire (2011) 21, 24.
[613] Squire (2011) 128.
[614] Squire (2011) 142 citing Snodgrass (1998) 67.

recognize the wider significance of the extra-textual names applied to some of the protagonists in the *Odyssey* frescoes.

The nature of the narrative frieze

The second part of this chapter will investigate the nature of continuous epic narrative in art and argue that the frieze format itself, alongside the very few extant occasions in which several singular episodes relating to the epic cycle are combined in a single architectural or monumental context, is crucial to discerning true fluidity with the epic text. It will seek to distinguish between artworks which depict Trojan War themes as a more generalized subject and those, like the friezes, which reflect a discernible relationship with a literary text. The investigation will conclude with exploration into the way that Roman writers of the Late Republican and Early Imperial periods talked about the epic genre and will argue that this is key to our understanding of the epic-themed friezes central to this study.[615]

The Temple of Apollo in Pompeii

A thematic contemporary for the friezes in Rome and Pompeii, although presented in a different format and situated in a non-domestic architectural context, are the Trojan War panels in the Temple of Apollo in Pompeii. As the series has recently been extensively explored by Peter Heslin there is no need to go into detail here about its contents, but a brief overview will confirm many of the observations made throughout this thesis pertaining to the display of several scenes from the Trojan War in a single artistic context.[616] Although the temple was decorated with single panels rather than with a continuous frieze, and even though only seven were extant at excavation, the following episodes have been convincingly identified by Heslin from sketches and descriptive accounts of early visitors to the site:

[615] The Megarian or Homeric bowls will not form part of this discussion since they simply do not possess the physical surface area to allow for a quantifiable depiction of continuous narrative in the manner of the friezes or Tabulae Iliacae, nor will the epic-themed sculptures at Sperlonga for the the same reasons. Recent bibliographies on Sperlonga in Newby (2016) 93-105 and Squire (2009) 202-221.

[616] Moormann suggests that there were originally forty panels on display in the temple portico – Moormann (2011) 78.

East wall
Calchas addresses Achilles and the Greek assembly[617]
Achilles, restrained by Athena, draws his sword against Agamemnon
Diomedes injures Aphrodite as she protects Aeneas
Menelaus healed by Machaon

North wall
The dragging of Hector's body / The death of Troilus
The ransom of Hector's body

South wall
The child Aeneas presented to Aphrodite and Anchises by nymphs?[618]

The panels do not seem to have included labels and are argued by Heslin to have been painted initially during the Augustan era and then restored during the repair of the portico in the 60s AD, making them contemporary with the epic friezes.[619] The first two episodes, situated immediately on the viewer's right as they entered the temple from the Via Marina, are from the first book of the *Iliad* and then follow the Homeric account sequentially, although selectively, towards the north wall. Then, instead of progressing westwards along the north wall in an anti-clockwise direction, the narrative jumped to the southern end of the west wall, in a similar manner to the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio.

Heslin comments that the first two panels on the east wall "are faithful to Homer down to the smallest detail", thus falling into our category of textual marker, but the third, showing Diomedes wounding Aphrodite, includes a representation of Athena who, textually, appeared in a slightly later Iliadic episode encouraging Diomedes to wound Ares. Like the domestic Pompeian friezes, then, the artist has combined different parts of the epic text into a single scene. On the north wall there is a typically-presented Ransom of Hector, in the form of a standardised scene, alongside the archaeologically unique representation of the death of Troilos (although argued by Heslin to be a non-traditional representation of the dragging of Hector). The portico may also have included episodes from the wider Epic Cycle, or possibly even non-textual insertions if Heslin's interpretation of the only documented figural scene from the south wall as the infant

[617] Moormann proposes that this panel alternatively shows the embassy to Achilles – Moormann (2011) 77.
[618] Heslin goes on to propose further Trojan War episodes which *may* have been included in the temple paintings including Achilles on Skyros, the removal of Briseis and Thetis in Hephaestus' workshop. However, as these are based on hypotheses pertaining to the replication of certain thematic compositions in Pompeian houses rather than concrete documentation relating to the temple, they will not be included in this discussion – Heslin (2015) chapter 4.
[619] Heslin (2015) 176-185.

Aeneas returned to Anchises in the presence of Aphrodite is correct. The latter panel would fittingly situate the series in an early Roman Imperial context, in the same manner that the inclusion of the Flight of Aeneas scene in the House of the Cryptoporticus reflected emerging propaganda employed by the leading politicians of the Late Republic.[620] Particularly pertinent to the findings of this thesis is Heslin's comment that:

> We must confront the likelihood that everywhere in Pompeii we have an inextricable combination of the quotation of motifs familiar from the metropolis and the creative, intelligent reinvention of those motifs to suit a local purpose.[621]

This follows on from his proposal that the themes of the first two panels were specially selected for inclusion because of their focus on Apollo – the god of the temple – echoing the emphases of several scenes in the relief frieze of the Temple of Apollo Smintheus in the Troad, in which representations of the Olympians appear to be commonplace. Heslin also proposes that the painted decoration of the Pompeian temple took into account the statuary display in the sanctuary, tentatively suggesting that in the first panel the priest Calchas in fact pointed the viewer's gaze to a bronze statue of Apollo.[622] Similarly, the Nilotic scenes of pygmies which ran at a lower level around the portico walls depicted mock-battle scenes against cranes, mimicking the heroic combats featured above. The juxtaposition would have been even more meaningful for the educated Roman viewer who could recall the simile from *Iliad* 3.1-8 in which the clamour of the Trojans was compared to battling pygmies and cranes.[623] This, combined with the Aeneas-themed episodes (at least two from a survival rate of only seven) situates the panel series firmly in a post-Virgilian, Roman setting; in Heslin's words, "reframing the *Iliad* so that it becomes subsumed within the Roman national narrative."[624]

Single panel wallpaintings

Taken individually, however, a close relationship with literature cannot be discerned for the single panel wallpaintings which became popular in the so-called Third and Fourth Pompeian Styles in the first century AD. In this spatially-limited medium extended

[620] Heslin (2015) 100-126.
[621] Heslin (2015) 81.
[622] Found during excavation in the early nineteenth century – Heslin (2015) 48-51.
[623] Heslin (2015) 107-110, who notes that this was a theme picked up and parodied by Roman writers.
[624] Heslin (2015) 127.

narrative is difficult to develop and so an instantly recognisable, singular scene with easily-identifiable protagonists is necessary. Even rarer is the inclusion of labels, which are a prominent feature of the painted friezes but not generally employed by the artists of single painted panels. Although heroes and events from Homeric epic are found in this medium there is little to link them directly with the written text and the exploits of the warriors of Troy are relatively few in comparison with depictions of Theseus slaying the Minotaur or Perseus rescuing Andromeda.[625] Although Hodske catalogues 106 individual panels referring to the Trojan Cycle (figure 265), only 88 can be confidently or securely identified and I have used this data to identify 39 scene types of which the most popular, with nine examples, is the Judgement of Paris (figure 266).

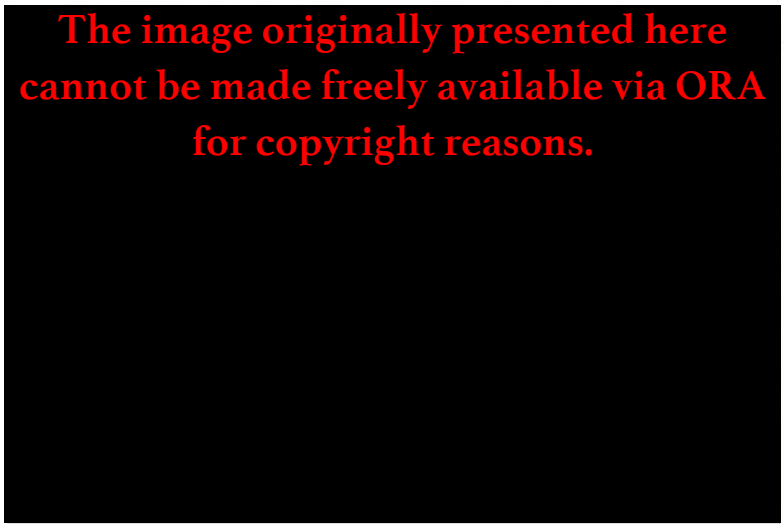


Fig.265 – Hodske's table showing the most popular mythological wallpainting themes in Pompeii.

[625] Hodske's 2007 catalogue of the single fresco panels known from Pompeii to convey mythological subject matter documents only 53 houses in the town which displayed single scenes which can be assigned to the Epic Cycle, with the total number of panels only accounting for only 14% of the whole mythological corpus.

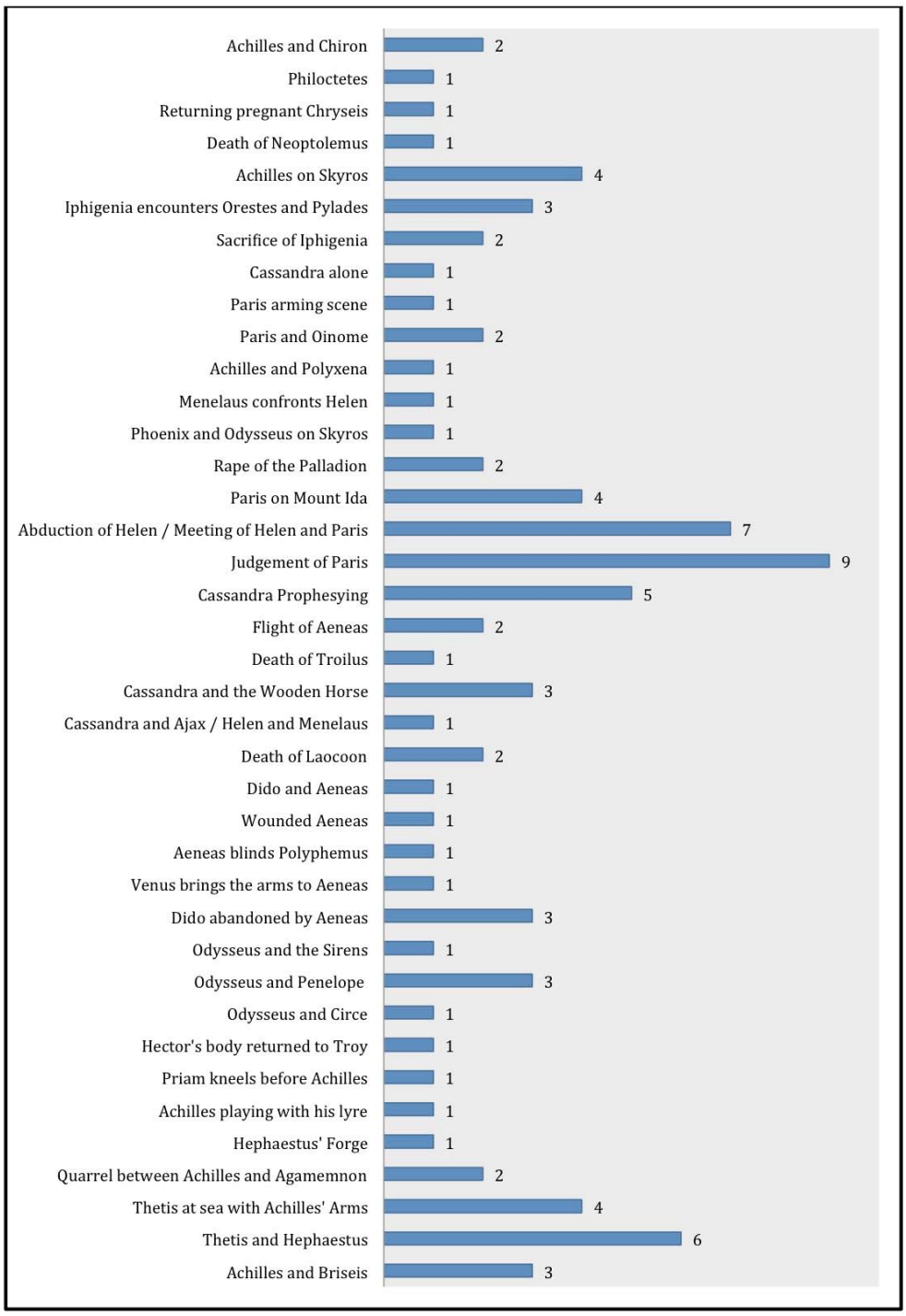


Fig.266 – Frequency table of Epic Cycle themed scene types in Pompeian wallpaintings.[626]

Most of the fresco panels recorded in figure 266 were displayed with scenes from other mythological cycles, some even standing on their own within a room, and so, with an overwhelming absence of labels or even thematic context in the majority of cases, artists had to develop ways to allow viewers to recognise intended episodes, leading to the development of standardised motifs and compositions; a phenomenon which is certainly

[626] Data compiled from Hodske (2007).

not limited to Trojan War iconography. Hodske divides the Judgement of Paris panels into three types: the first with one extant example (figure 267), the second with five (figure 268) and the third with three (figure 269). Although all three variants are rendered with different backgrounds, colouring and formatting the same visual motifs are repeated in each: the three goddesses grouped together, Paris in Trojan attire and Hermes in discussion with Paris. The combination of all three in a single scene gave the Roman viewer enough signposting to allow them to identify the Judgement of Paris, although little with which to refer them to a literary text, strongly suggesting that this was not the intention of the artist or homeowner in the display of single panel scenes.

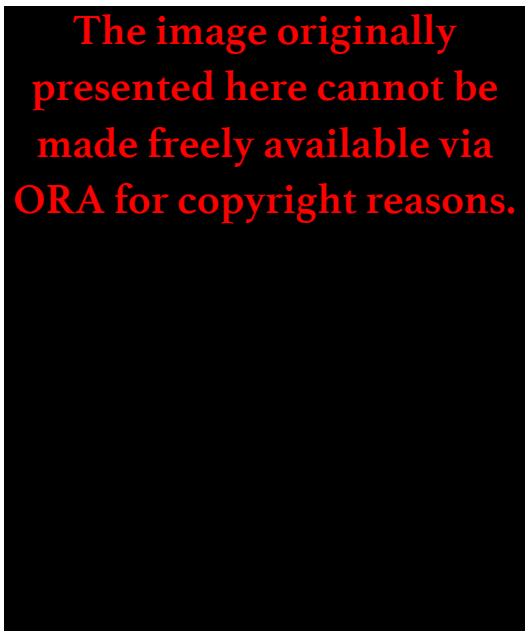


Fig.267 – Judgement of Paris (type 1), House of the Citharist (I 4,5).

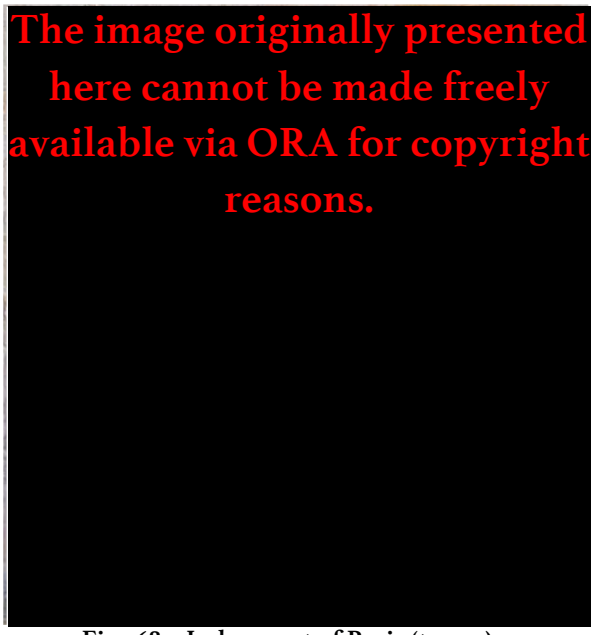


Fig.268 – Judgement of Paris (type 2), House of Venus in a Bikini (I 11,6-7).



Fig.269 – Judgement of Paris (type 3), House of Optatio (VII 2,14).

Programmatic displays of single panels

There are four houses in Pompeii in which scenes from the Epic Cycle were combined in a programmatic display in a single room which, although showing little allegiance to a particular written epic, did require the viewer to have knowledge of the wider Trojan Cycle for full understanding.[627] The first series is from the House of the Menander (I 10,4) in which three scenes from the Fall of Troy are displayed in ala 4 (figures 270 to 272).[628]

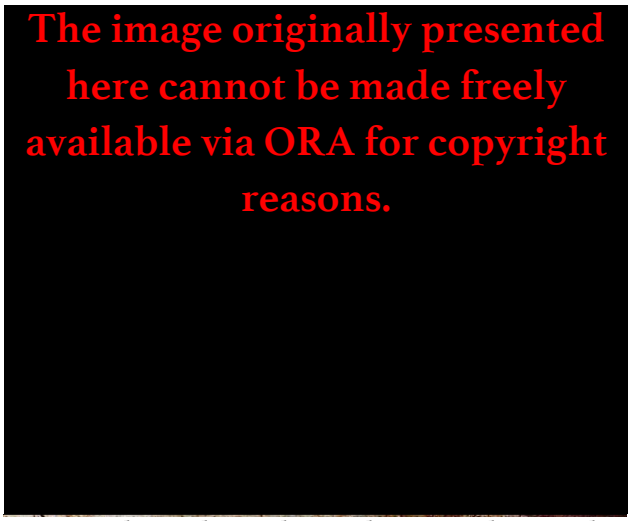


Fig.270 – Helen and Menelaus; Odysseus and Cassandra.



Fig.271 – Cassandra and the Wooden Horse.



Fig.272 – The Death of Laocoön.

[627] Recent discussion of painted programmatic schemes in Newby (2016) 137-227. Although Newby argues for an 'epic-theme' in the House of the Golden Cupids (VI 16,7), the poor preservation of many of the relevant fresco panels and uncertain identification makes interpretation problematic – 166-177. See also Lorenz (2008); Bergmann (1994); Brilliant (1984) 53-89; Schefold (1952); Thompson (1960–1961).

[628] House of the Menander (I 10,4): Ling in *PPM* II (1990) 240-397.

The panels are argued by Ling and Ling to evoke Virgil's *Aeneid*, although the attribution encounters a number of difficulties, even bearing in mind the free play with the epic text evident in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* friezes.[629] Laocoön and his son killed by serpents and the Trojan horse brought into Troy both appear in the second book of the *Aeneid* (2.195-227; 240-249), but figure 270 cannot be convincingly argued to be based on events within the epic. In the centre of the panel the aged Priam looks despairingly at the violent scenes around him: on the left (probably) Menelaus seizes Helen by the hair and, on the right, Odysseus grabs Cassandra who clings to the Palladium. Although the Rape of the Palladium is mentioned in the *Aeneid* (2.154-194) its theft is linked exclusively with Odysseus and Diomedes, with no priestess present. In a separate incident Cassandra is dragged away from the Temple of Athena by the Locrian Ajax (2.402-437) – not by Odysseus. The painting may actually represent a version of the myth known from the *Iliupersis*, in which Cassandra is dragged away from the cult image by the lesser Ajax, yet the Pompeian fresco portrays Odysseus wearing his trademark *exomis* and *pilos*. The presence of both Cassandra and Odysseus at the Palladium suggests instead that the artist or patron wished to combine two famous episodes crucial to the Fall of Troy (the rape of Cassandra and the theft of the Palladium) but the left hand scene showing Menelaus seizing Helen by the hair is completely absent from the *Aeneid*. It seems more likely then that the patron's intention was to decorate his room with significant and easily-recognisable scenes from the Fall of Troy than to create any direct link with epic literature.[630]

A second Pompeian house in which panels referring to the Epic Cycle are found is the House of the Five Skeletons (VI 10,2). The series was originally displayed in the triclinium but has since been removed to the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples (figures 273 to 275).

[629] Ling and Ling (2005) 72. Elsewhere Roger Ling argues that all three were painted by the same artist in renovations to the house undertaken after the earthquake – Ling in *PPM* II (1990) 281.
[630] Brilliant argues that the panels proclaim the will of the gods despite the efforts of Troy's prophets alongside a moralizing commentary on the inexorability of fate – Brilliant (1984) 69.

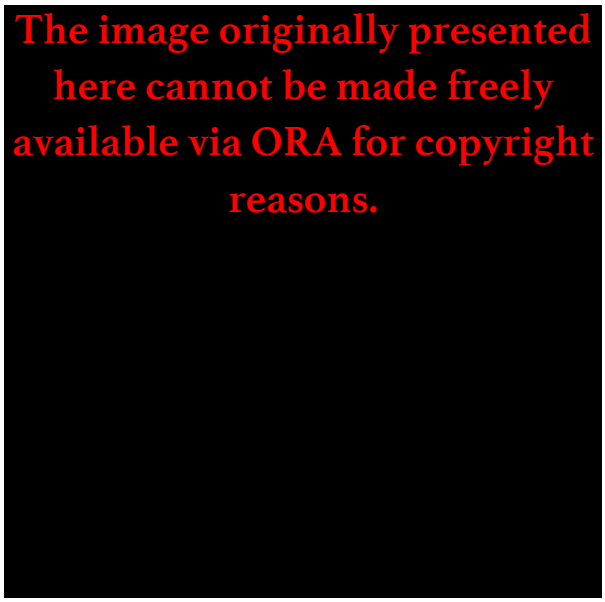


Fig.273 – Cassandra Prophesying (MNN 8999).

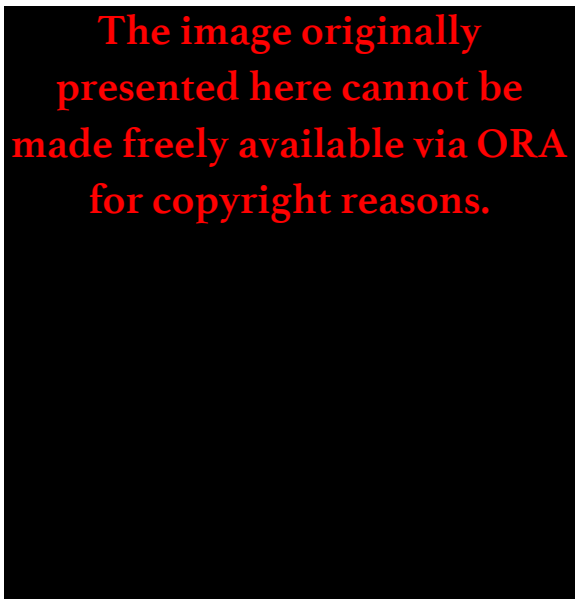


Fig.274 – Meeting of Helen and Paris (MNN 9002).

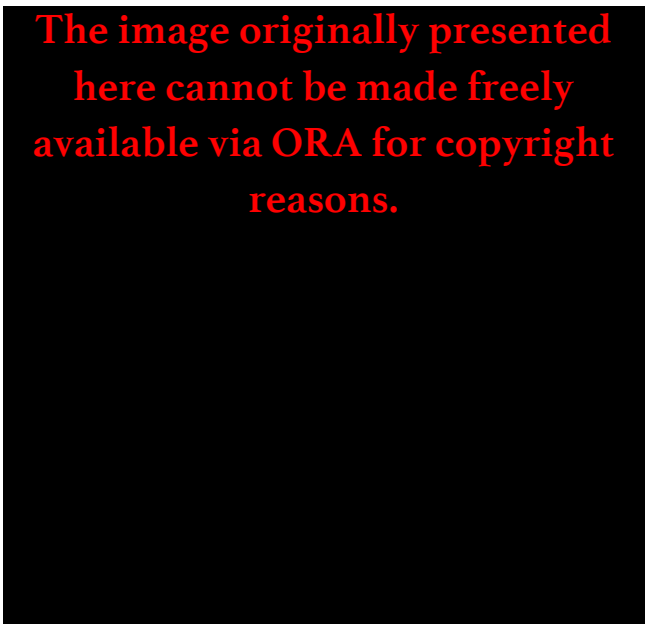


Fig.275 – Odysseus and Penelope (MNN 9107).

The panels seem to have a 'beginnings and endings' theme since the first may show Cassandra prophesying to Priam and the infant Paris,[631] the second possibly the meeting of Helen and Paris in the palace of Menelaus – both events from the very beginning of the Trojan Cycle – and the third almost certainly the reuniting of Odysseus and Penelope from the end of the narrative of the war.[632] With respect to possible inspiration from literature

[631] This scene has also been interpreted as another from epic – Aeneas consulting Anius or Helenus from Verg. *Aen.* 3.80 or 3.370 – Helbig (1868) 1391b for discussion.

[632] A further scene of Cassandra prophesying in the presence of Apollo and two older men is found in cubiculum 12 of the same house as a pendant to a panel showing Perseus and Andromeda – *PPM* VI (1993) 1042-3.

Cassandra's prophecy to Priam and Paris concerning the Fall of Troy and the meeting of Helen and Paris were both found in the *Cypria*, and Odysseus returning to Penelope is from the twenty-third book of the *Odyssey* but, once again, there is no allegiance to a particular epic in the series nor any suggestion that we should have literature in mind when viewing.

The third house in which an Epic Cycle-themed room is found is the House of the Quadriga (VII 2,25) in which three scenes inspired by the *Iliad,* in particular the weapons of Achilles, were arranged around the triclinium (figures 276 to 278).[633]



Fig.276 – Thetis and Hephaestus.



Fig.277 – Hephaestus' Forge (MNN 9531).



Fig.278 – Thetis at sea with Achilles' Weapons (MNN 8863).

[633] House of the Quadriga (VII 2,25): Sampaolo in *PPM* VI (1996) 683-717.

Figure 276 is only known from a sketch and shows Thetis in Hephaestus' workshop, the second panel shows the smith god and his cyclops helpers at work in the forge and the third shows Thetis at sea carrying the newly-forged arms to her son (the latter two panels are now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples). This is the first instance that we have been able to assign a panel series to a singular epic, but two out of the three are in the form of standardised scenes: Thetis in Hephaestus' workshop is found in six extant paintings (compare the table in figure 266), all of which contain the repeated motifs of Thetis seated on the right hand side, usually with another female behind her, and Hephaestus holding up the shield for Thetis to admire. The artist adhered to this basic composition to allow the viewer to recognise the subject but was clearly free to add details as he saw fit: sometimes the other female blows a trumpet and sometimes not; sometimes Achilles' helmet and breastplate are scattered on the floor and sometimes placed behind Hephaestus. Even the decoration on the shield varies from painting to painting.[634]

Conversely, the panel showing Hephaestus and the cyclops is unique among extant Pompeian wallpainting and without seeing it within the context of the other scenes in the triclinium its identity could be problematic. The panel showing Thetis at sea carrying Achilles' weapons, however, also follows a standardised format in its four extant examples: although colouring and minor details vary we consistently find an ocean setting, a reclining Thetis in the centre of the panel and the large shield carried either by her or the sea centaur.[635] Although it could be argued that the *Iliad* is evoked through the inclusion of scenes loosely related to a relatively small section of the epic (the latter half of book 18 and the beginning of book 19), the subject appears to be the divine weapons rendered though recognisable visual motifs rather than any direct allusion to the Homeric text.

The final house containing a panel series relating to the Epic Cycle is the aptly named House of Achilles (IX 5, 1–3). Three scenes from the hero's life are found in room u: Achilles on Skyros, Thetis and Hephaestus and Thetis at sea with Achilles' weapons (figures 279 to 281).

[634] Other examples are found in the House of Meleager (VI 9,2.3) – Hodske (2007) taf.116; House of Achilles (IX 5,1-3) – Hodske (2007) taf.115; House of Paccius Alexander (IX 1,7) – *PPM* VIII (1998) 879; House of the Golden Cupids (VI 16,7) – *PPM* V (1994) 786; House of Siricus (VII 1,47) – Hodske (2007) taf.115.

[635] Other examples in the peristyle of the House of Meleager (VI 9,2.13) – Hodske (2007) taf.117,5; oecus 43 of the House of the Dioscouri (VI 9,6.7) – Hodske (2007) taf.117,4; and in the House of Achilles (IX 5,1-3) – Hodske (2007) taf.117,3.

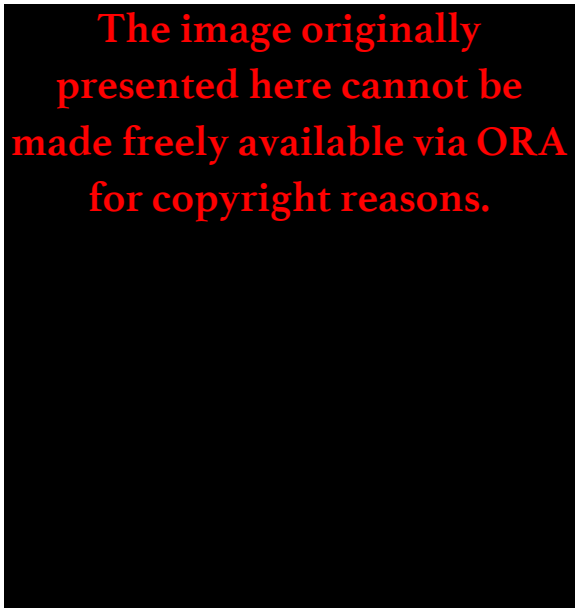


Fig.279 – Achilles on Skyros (MNN 116085).

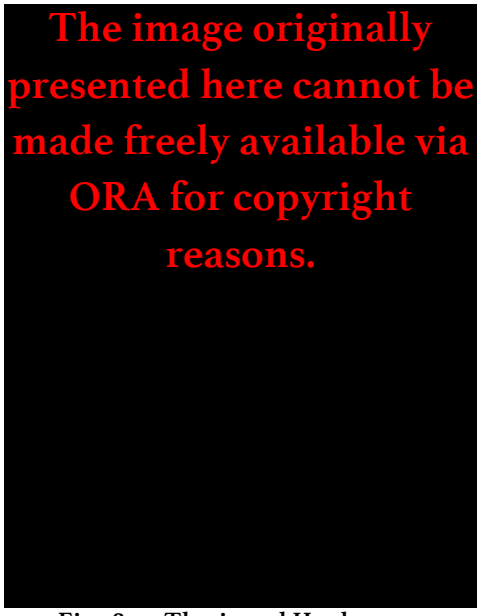


Fig.280 – Thetis and Hephaestus.

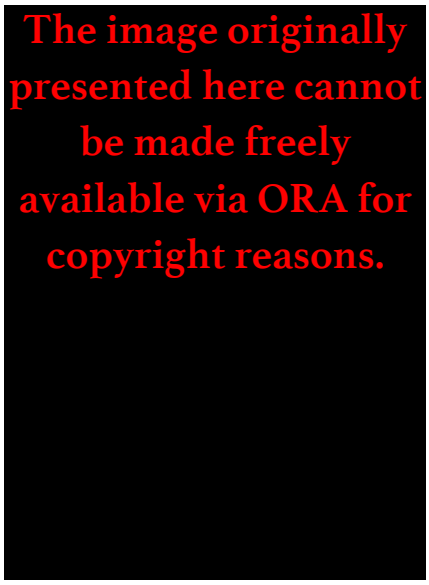


Fig.281 – Thetis at sea with Achilles' weapons.

The panels showing Thetis and Hephaestus and Thetis at sea adhere to the standardised formatting of the episode, as does the Achilles on Skyros painting, which closely matches its counterparts in three other Pompeian houses.[636] The theme can again be best interpreted as an interest in the military activities and hardware of Achilles, from his taking up arms as a youth to the delivery of the weapons with which he will make his name in history. The account of Achilles on Skyros in fact does not derive from *any* known or lost epic and is mainly known from Roman sources including Ovid (*Met.* 13.162-169), Hyginus (*Fab.* 96) and Statius *(Achil.* 1.560-926). It was such a popular subject in art that

[636] House of the Dioscouri (VI 9,6.7) – Hodske (2007) taf.96, 2.3; House of the Vettii (VI 15,1) – Hodske (2007) taf.97,4; House of Holconius Rufus (XIII 4,4) – Hodske (2007) taf.97 1-3.

Alan Cameron suggests that by the early second century AD the exposure on Skyros was the "single most hackneyed theme in the Achilles cycle".[637]

To conclude, examination of four Pompeian houses which each display three fresco panels from the Epic Cycle within a single room strongly suggests that each series' intention was not the evocation of epic literature but the transmission of programmatic themes based on events from the Trojan War alongside its causes and aftermath: the Fall of Troy, beginnings and endings and, on two occasions, the weapons of Achilles. This was achieved artistically through the painting of standardised scenes for both easy recognition and the contextualising of less familiar episodes. Although both scene types are found in the epic friezes we should remember that Roman homeowners in the first century AD had the option to choose either decorative format (wall space permitting) thus suggesting a difference of intention in the display of each. The evidence from Pompeian houses reveals that whereas in the single panel format Trojan themes are by no means the most popular subject matter, the events centred around Troy are the only literary themes to be afforded representation in the frieze format. Why this might be will be discussed below.

The nature of the narrative frieze and the nature of epic: *carmen heroum*

Writers active during the Late Republic and Early Empire often referred to epic as *carmen heroum* – the song of heroes. Propertius writes of Apollo chastising him and asking who bid him to take on the genre (*carminis heroi*) (Prop. 3.3.16) and when Tacitus describes the delight he finds in eloquent literature he says that he loves all forms of poetry, including the sound of epic verse (*heroici carminis sonum*) (*Dial.* 10.4). Quintilian advises that the young should be steeped first of all in Homer and Virgil so that their minds be lifted by the sublimity of heroic verse (*heroi carminis*) (*Inst.* 1.8.5) and elsewhere chastises Ovid for not assuming an appropriately reverential tone when composing works in the epic style (*in*

[637] Cameron (2009) 3. Mention of the episode in Greek literature can be found in fragments of Euripides' *Skyrians* (Eur. fr. 682-686, 880, 888) and Sophocles' *Skyrioi* (TrGF IV. Fr. 551-561). Homer remarks that Achilles sacked the island (*Il.* 9.668) and that his son Neoptolemus was brought up there (*Il.* 19.326-7) but there is no reference to the hero hiding among the daughters of Lycomedes. The *Cypria* includes the marriage to Deidameia and the *Ilias Parva* told of Achilles landing on Skyros, but again, no mention of disguise as a girl. The version of the myth known today possibly entered the Greek corpus after Athens' conquest of Skyros in the 470s/460s BC. Thucydides reports (i.98.2) that Cimon, who may have been the original patron or commissioner of a famous Polygnotan painting of Achilles on Skyros, was the Athenian commander during the colonisation of Skyros and the people of the island, hoping to counter Homer's negative report, imparted to them the "Achilles exposed" myth – Heslin (2005) 199. The only extant Hellenistic source to survive on the theme is the late second century BC fragmentary poem *Epithalamium of Achilles and Deidameia* by Bion (*Idyll* II.1-25).

herois) (*Inst.* 10.1.88). Pseudo-Plutarch writes that Homeric epic has "the most perfect metre, the hexameter, which is also called heroic … It is called heroic because in it the deeds of the heroes are recounted" (Ps-Plut. *Cons. ad Apoll. Vit. Hom*).

Although 'the song of heroes' could refer to any epic describing the exploits of legendary adventurers, further investigation into Roman literature reveals a more specific focus: songs of the battles of heroes and the deeds of kings. In the *Eclogues* Virgil, in the guise of Silenus, refuses to compose in epic form (*cum canerem reges et proelia*) (Verg. *Ecl.* 6.3) and Horace describes Homeric epic, in particular, as the recounting of the deeds of kings and leaders and the sorrows of war (*res gestae regumque ducumque et tristia bella*) (Hor. *Ars P.* 73-74). In a more critical mood, he says that the events of the *Iliad* are caused by the passions of stupid kings and peoples (*stultorum regum et populorum*) which led Greece to be trapped in tedious war (*lento duello*) (Hor. *Ep.* 1.2.8). In a poem dedicated to his father Statius tells how the grammaticus' students learned of the fate of Troy, Odysseus' lateness and Homer's power to run through in verse the horses and combats of heroes (*equos pugnasque virum*) (*Silv.* 5.3.146-150).[638]

Mainly for Roman authors, then, to write of epic was to talk of the battles and deeds (and even horses) of heroes and kings and no other literary work or even mythological cycle embodied this better than Homer's *Iliad* – even if it was infrequently mentioned by name – which told of kings Priam and Agamemnon whose forces were pitched in battle against each other and of the deeds of the Trojan and Greek heroes who fought in the Trojan War. All of these elements feature prominently in the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii which focus on the exploits of the heroes in battle at Troy and even their kings (*stulti* or otherwise) and horses. The *Odyssey* frescoes in Rome concentrate both on combat (with the Laestrygonians) and Odysseus' adventures with the mythical and divine. As discussed in chapter six, their formal features place them more fittingly in the realm of contemporary, sacro-idyllic landscapes which, nevertheless, narrate the *carmen herois*.

This observation, supported by Vitruvius' comments concerning painted representations of the *troianas pugnas* and the *Ulixis errationes* (Vitr. 7.5.2), confirms that the tales of the Trojan War, with their emphasis on the wanderings and battles of heroes, were a highly-appropriate subject for depiction in the frieze format. Perhaps this goes towards explaining why there are no extant friezes relaying the adventures of Theseus or Perseus

[638] Livy is sceptical of their veracity however: "Such traditions as belong to the time before the city was founded, or rather was presently to be founded, and are rather adorned with poetic legends (*poeticis magis decora fabulis*) than based upon trustworthy historical proofs, I purpose neither to affirm nor to refute. It is the privilege of antiquity to mingle divine things with human" (Livy. *Epit.* 1.6-7), trans. B.O. Foster (1919).

or even the Labours of Hercules from the Roman world. The only comparable examples of friezes conveying extended narratives from the mythological or legendary realm would be the frieze-like frescoes from the Columbarium of the Statilii from the Esquiline in Rome and the Hercules in Troy frescoes in the House of Octavius Quartio in Pompeii, although neither can be linked to a literary source.[639] The columbarium frieze (selections in figures 282 and 283) narrates through images and epigraphy the founding of Rome from Aeneas' arrival in Italy to the birth of Romulus and Remus.[640] The painting originally had Latin captions but these are extremely faint and largely illegible today.[641]



Fig.282 – Battle between the Rutulians and Trojans / Foundation of Lavinium, Columbarium of T. Statilius Taurus, western wall.



Fig.283 – Battle at the River Numicus / Apotheosis of Aeneas? Columbarium of T. Statilius Taurus, southern wall.

[639] Lorenz (2013) 228. Holliday dates the columbarium frieze to 55–35 BC. He compares the separation of scenes by the use of painted pillars with the same on the *Odyssey* frescoes – Holliday (2005) 90, 104 and n.6.
[640] Full description in La Regina (1998) 51-58 and Holliday (2005). The frescoes are now in Rome, Palazzo Massimo Alle Terme, sala V.
[641] Labels identifiable at excavation include one for Mezentius, and PUERI denoting the infants Romulus and Remus – Brizio (1876).

A scene by scene identification of the narrative is notoriously difficult to provide but figure 282 may show the battle between the Rutulians and Trojans (and their Latin allies) and, on the right side beyond the white pillar, the construction of Lavinium by the exiled Trojans. Figure 283 depicts another battle, possibly that at the River Numicus, with the apotheosis of Aeneas on the right realised by a winged Victory crowning the newly-deified hero. The frieze continued along the eastern and northern walls of the tomb with the rape of Rhea Silvia and the birth of Romulus and Remus. Although no literary 'source' for the entire narrative can be traced, accounts of relevant episodes in Ovid, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Virgil relay the interest in Aeneas' escape from Troy and the Roman foundation myths in the mid to late first century BC, no doubt prompted by the ancestral propaganda of the gens Iulia.[642] Indeed T. Statilius Taurus, suggested to have been part of the family who owned the tomb complex, fought at Actium with Octavian.[643] Crucially, all of the features of *carmen heroum* are represented here in the distinctive frieze format: battles and kings (although no horses), all found within a narrative directly related to the Trojan War.

The second comparable narrative frieze is found in the same room as the *Iliad* frieze in the House of Octavius Quartio and shows Hercules' activities in Troy. It has recently been explored by Katharina Lorenz who argues that the 'split screen' created by the parallel friezes (figure 284) echoes the programmatic panels of the Fourth Style in the interaction of themes between the two.[644] Figure 285 is Lorenz's diagram showing the layout of the oecus and the layering of the scenes. The following, usually separated by painted columns, have been identified:

1. Rescue of Hesione (North wall)
2. Telamon and Laomedon (East wall)
3. Hercules argues with Laomedon about his reward and attacks him (East wall)
4. Wedding of Hesione and Telamon with *dextrarum iunctio* (East wall)
5. Investiture of Priam as king of Troy (South wall)
6. Hercules fights Nessus (West wall)
7. Nessus gives the poisoned cloak to Deianeira (West wall)
8. Hercules on the pyre at Mount Oeta (West wall)
9. Hercules' apotheosis? (South wall).

[642] Aeneas given immortality in the Numicus is found in Ov. *Met.* 14.596-608 and Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.64.4. The battle between the Trojans and Rutulians encompasses most of *Aeneid* book 12 and the deification is hinted at: in 7.242 the waters of the Numicus are described as *sacra* and Jupiter's prophecy reassures Venus that *sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli magnanimum Aenean* (Verg. *Aen.* 1.259-260). Hawkins (2004) 84-85 for discussion. Holliday argues that the frieze copied and condensed the marble relief from the Basilica Aemilia, even while acknowledging the substantial differences between the two – Holliday (2005) 105-10.
[643] Holliday (2005) 113-4 for a biography, 118-119 for debate surrounding the ownership of the tomb.
[644] Lorenz (2013) 245. Bibliography for the Hercules frieze in n.2.



Fig.284 – Hercules and *Iliad* friezes in the House of Octavius Quartio.



Fig.285 – Positioning of scenes from the Hercules and *Iliad* friezes.

Although acknowledging that the Hercules frieze is not based on any known epic concerning the life of the hero, Lorenz argues that the "epic aura" of the *Iliad* frieze "permeates the life of Heracles" and that "the figural decoration of the room displays considerable efforts to reappropriate the life of Heracles as an epic subject, in its formal appearance, as a frieze, and in its rare focus on his involvement in Trojan matters" (underlining my own).[645] Thus the primary considerations of *carmen heroum* are appropriated for a non-literary theme, but packaged in a way so as to create, as Lorenz notes, an epic aura about it, since "epic-ness added value." Within the iconography we again find heroes, kings (one of whom is arguably *stultus*) and a plethora of horses.

The Tabula Homerica (14G) is also interesting in this respect. Although only a single fragment survives (figures 286a, b) we find all of the elements of *carmen heroum*. On the recto are warriors in a battle scene (presumably a Greek vanquishing a bearded Trojan) and, on the obverse, above a portrait of Homer, are inscribed summaries of episodes from the *Iliad*, mainly referring to warfare: The wounding of Hector, The support of Apollo and the flight of the Trojans, The battle by the ships, Patroclus' call to arms, The death of Sarpedon, The battle by the walls, The death of Patroclus, The struggle over the body, Antilochus tells Achilles of Patroclus' fate, The arming scene.[646]

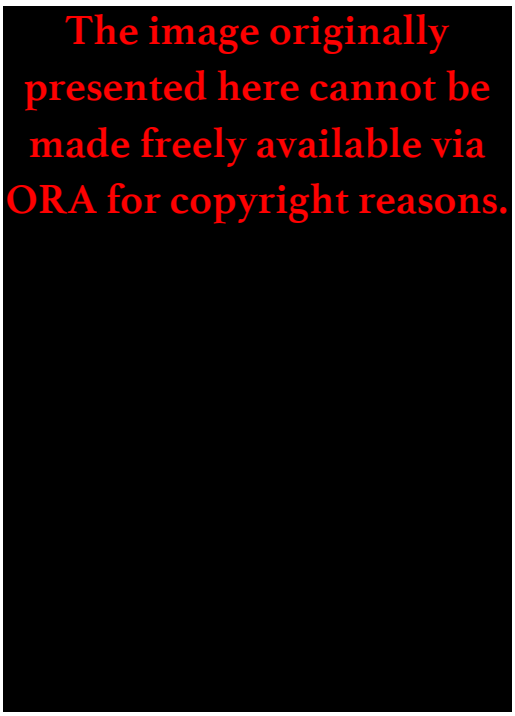


Fig.286a – obverse

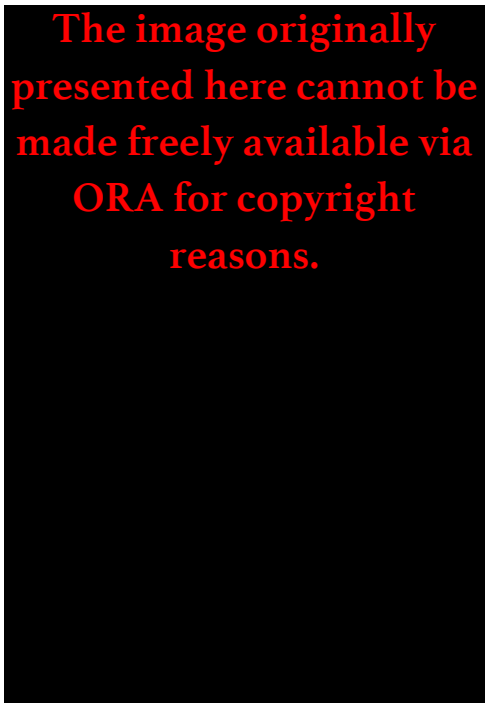


Fig.286b – recto

The Tabula Homerica (14G)

[645] Lorenz (2013) 228, 239. Lorenz's evaluation of the allegorical themes – "double-platform narration" – that might be drawn from the 'double frieze' is less convincing – pp.242-245.
[646] Greek inscriptions in Montenegro (2004) 252.

The nature of the narrative frieze and the nature of epic: beginnings and endings

One of the major contrasts Lorenz draws between the two cycles in the House of Octavius Quartio is on the nature of the narrative in each respective frieze. She argues that:

> The *Iliad* frieze is driven by a detail-rich stringency, despite its awkward arrangement across the room. It leads its viewers to a point of closure, thereby presumably displaying the qualities that rendered a Homeric frieze in Vitruvius' eyes particularly suitable. With its divergent arrangement, and its two points of closure, the Heracles frieze lacks this type of homogeneous flow and instead concentrates on the condition, not the process, of heroic accomplishment.[647]

Much attention has been given in recent scholarship to 'beginnings and endings' in epic artworks, with both Squire and Petrain suggesting (largely through studies extending from analysis of the Tabulae Iliacae) that viewers were generally free to create their own narratives by making playful associations between scenes, themes and spatial relationships.[648] The same is argued by Lorenz for the Hercules frieze in which the viewer was offered two routes around the room, either towards the hero's apotheosis or Priam's investiture as king of Troy. This clearly contrasts with the *Iliad* frieze in the same room, the two other *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii and the *Odyssey* frescoes Rome in which the sequence of episodes runs, with only few exceptions, 'chronologically' according to Homer's account. Petrain cites a quotation from J. Elkins on the matter: "Visual art, unlike written narrative, possesses no certainty about order of telling, but there can be strong hints."[649]

Indeed, if we propose a hypothetical reconstruction of the original starting points of two of the *Iliad* friezes we see that they are far more conventional in their sequencing and ordering than has sometimes been presumed.[650] The 'opening' scene in both *Iliad* friezes in the House of the Cryptoporticus and the House of Octavius Quartio is usually considered to be the plague in the Greek camp from early in the first book of the epic, largely owing to the current state of the fresco in each.[651] But this would mean architecturally, in both instances, that the friezes would commence part way along, instead of at the beginning of their respective walls. Figure 287 is an architectural rendering of the

[647] Lorenz (2013) 240.
[648] Squire (2011) and (2014); Petrain (2013).
[649] Elkins (1991) 351.
[650] Lorenz (2013); Squire (2014) 380-384; Heslin (2015) 105; Clarke (1991) 205-206.
[651] Brilliant (1984) 62-63, who describes the plague scene as "Episode I" of the frieze and writes "This Trojan cycle [in the House of the Cryptoporticus] begins – as does the corresponding frieze in the House of D. Octavius Quartio – with the rage of Apollo and the plague in the Greek camp"; Squire (2014) 377.

wall in question from the House of the Cryptoporticus, showing the positioning of the *in situ* plague scene (A), revealing that there is room for two or three scenes before it. To account for the puzzling placement of the 'opening' episode Schefold proposes that there must have been around five scenes preceding the events of the *Iliad* painted before it on the extreme left of the wall.[652]



Fig.287 – Architectural rendering of the west wall of the western wing of the cryptoporticus.

The same is true of the plague scene in the House of Octavius Quartio, which is situated a little way along the southern wall, leaving space for at least one episode before it if we compare with the formatting of the frieze on the opposite side of the door (figure 288). In the *Iliad* (1.1-42) we read that the plague was caused by Chryses' prayers to Apollo after his daughter had been taken by Agamemnon and both the Tabula Capitolina (1C – figure 289) and the Tabula Sarti (6B – figure 290) begin their representation of this event with the Trojan priest's prayers at the Temple of Apollo Smintheus (reflecting *Il.* 1.37-42). Both, however, are damaged on their left sides and so if we consult Tabula Veronensis I (3C – figure 291), which is intact here, we also find Chryses kneeling before Agamemnon and the Greeks unloading the ransom. It is entirely possible then that the two painted friezes in Pompeii began their own narratives with depictions of one of these episodes from the very opening lines of the epic, at the extreme left of the available wall space.

[652] Schefold (1975) 40.



Fig.288 – View southwards from the oecus/triclinium, photograph from 2015. Horses and attendant outlined in red, plague scene outlined in blue.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Fig.289 – Uppermost row of the central section of the Tabula Capitolina (1A).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Fig.290 – Upper part of the Tabula Sarti (6B).



Fig.291 – Upper left band of the Tabula Veronensis I (3C).

Conversely the *Iliad* stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine certainly 'begins', according to the chronology of the *Iliad*, over half way along the east wall where, cyclically, it also ends. As discussed in chapter two it was almost certainly arranged this way to create a balanced and quasi-symmetrical composition around the climactic dual on the southern wall (figure 292).



Fig.292 – Line drawing of House of the Iliac Shrine frieze by A. Sanarica.
Beginning and end of narrative marked by red line.
Labels added by author.

The Tabula Capitolina (1A) also arranges its Iliadic account in ordered form and the most plausible reconstruction of the tablet has the first book of the epic evoked (though not 'illustrated') across the upper band of the central register (extant) with the narrative continuing down the left hand side (reconstructed) and then across to the lower right corner when it moves upwards towards the twenty-fourth book of the epic (extant). A reconstruction is shown in figure 293. Brilliant comments, "The labeling of figures from

below and the abundant inscriptions ostensibly provide a readable, narrative framework for the viewer" and even compares with the cyclic nature of temple relief metopes.[653]

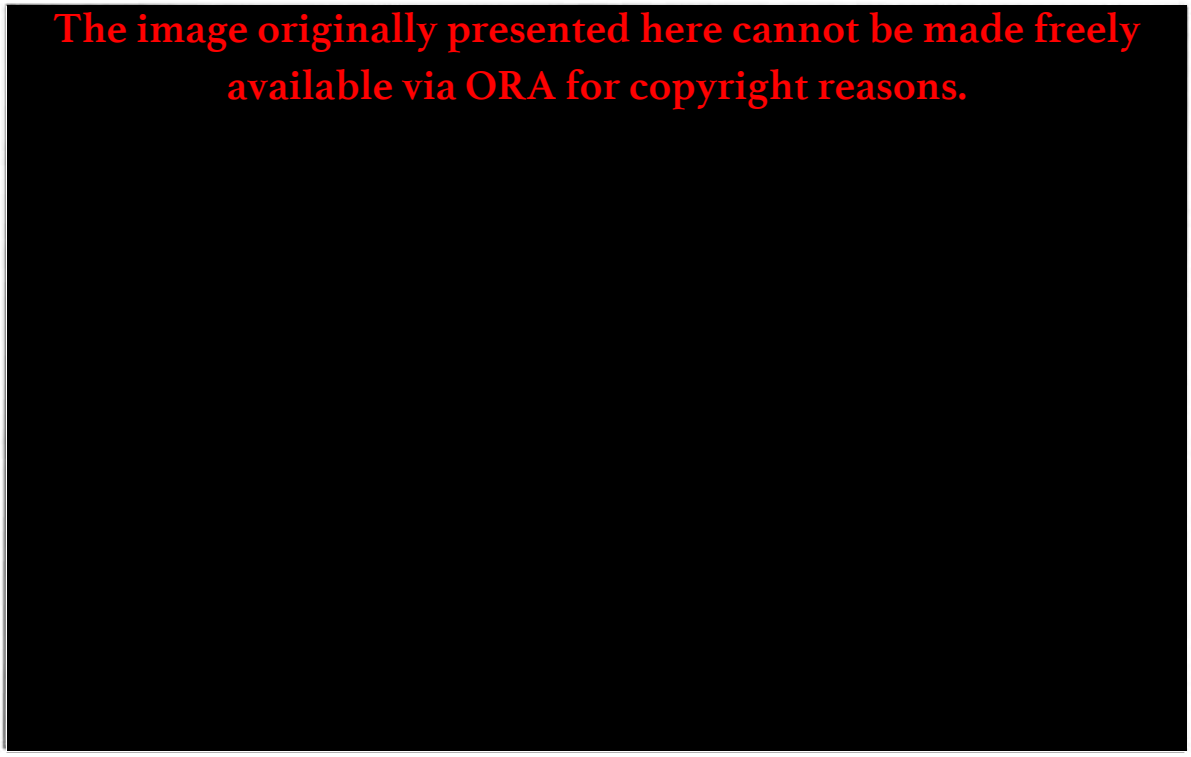

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Fig.293 – Reconstruction of the missing sections (lighter grey) of the Tabula Capitolina (1A).

The painted friezes were certainly meant to have been experienced as a continuous narrative and so we must disagree with Brilliant's proposal that the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus was experienced by the ancient viewer "in the manner of the precious visitor to a picture gallery" and instead concur with Aurigemma who correctly notes that "Questi quadri, per l'unità del soggetto e per la loro disposizione lungo tutta la fascia sull'alto delle pareti costituiscono un vero e proprio fregio".[654] Similarly, chapter two has revealed that the stucco frieze in the House of the Iliac Shrine does not portray "five discrete scenes on the death of Hector,"[655] as Brilliant suggests, but a continuous and cyclic narrative which evokes the *Iliad* in its following of the Homeric chronology and pictorial reflection, in parts, of the minutiae of the text.

[653] Brilliant (1984) 57, 59. There are certainly other, more convoluted readings possible: the repeated presence of Aeneas in the Iliupersis panel gives the Greek epic narrative (for the Roman viewer) a continuity that spans to the present day in Augustan Rome.
[654] Brilliant (1984) 63; Spinazzola (1953) 907.
[655] Brilliant (1984) 63-64.

Thus, as exemplified by the Roman friezes and the reconstructions of several Tabulae Iliacae (1C, 2NY, 6B, 9D, 17Sa, 20Par[656]) the book by book ordering of the Homeric work was deemed the most appropriate means by artists for the conveyance and evocation of the epic narrative in visual form. The continuous and sequential nature of the frieze can even be compared with the form of the Roman scroll itself, and as the reader would unroll the papyrus to follow the story so he or she would perform a similar reading of the painted narrative around the frescoed walls of the respective room. Such conventional formatting should give caution to the scholarly temptation to over-interpret the iconographic details and structure of epic-themed artworks, particularly when we recall the dearth of ancient literary commentary relaying similarly complex readings of comparable artefacts.[657] Squire's multiple proposed readings of the Tabula Capitolina (1A), for example, which range from the ordering of the narrative to the programmatic parallels which might be drawn from the repetition and placement of iconographic motifs, although fascinating, tends to marginalise the clues the artist afforded the ancient viewer as a guide to reading the objects.[658] Not for nothing are the Iliadic bands laid out in frieze format, to be read from left to right, or labelled according to their evocation of the sequential books of the epic; likewise for the *Aethiopis* and *Ilias Parva* bands which are differentiated by means of labelling and a longer width. Even the central Iliupersis panel is structured according to geographical setting: in the upper two thirds we see the chaos inside the walls of fallen Troy; in the lower third we find its aftermath and the subsequent flight of Aeneas. It would also be unwise to neglect the formulaic nature of Roman art and the ways in which artists favoured replicated motifs and compositions in their work. The repetition of warriors carrying a corpse in bands P and Ω might, as Squire suggests, be intended to prompt us to ruminate upon the relationship between the deaths of Patroclus and Hector, but this would rely on the viewer noticing two fairly similar compositional schemes among an admittedly busy cluster of scenes, and leaves us with the more practical question of how else the artist could have depicted the endeavour? Likewise the repetition of horse and chariot on the extreme right of bands X and Ψ may have urged the ancient viewer to form a semantic relationship between the dragging of Hector and the funeral games for

[656] Squire (2011) 168-196.
[657] In the prologue to *Roman Eyes* (2007) Elsner notes the difficulties of viewing ancient art as a modern observer and raises concerns surrounding "'pushing' an interpretation of an object or text well beyond what would have been credible in antiquity or not far enough."
[658] Squire (2011) 148-176.

Patroclus, but again neglects the fact that throughout the tabula horses and chariots are repeatedly shown in this way.[659]

Crucially, the structured frieze format permitted the artist the fluidity to include extra-Homeric insertions and corrections alongside the textual markers and standardized scenes which are evident in each example of the Roman epic frieze. Virgil (through Aeneas) instructs us that the painted episodes on the Temple of Juno in Carthage were presented *ex ordine* – in order – (Verg. *Aen.* 1.456) which enabled the hero to decipher the narrative content before him. The free play with the epic text evident in each of the friezes is not an "underworld of scholarship", as Horsfall states, but with the documented approval of Pausanias was clearly an accepted means of interaction with the epic itself.[660] The iconographic emphases relate directly to contemporary writers' discussion of the epic genre as the song and battles of heroes and kings and situate the friezes firmly in a Late Republican and Early Imperial setting.

[659] Squire (2011) 175.
[660] Horsfall (1979) 43.

Conclusion

This study of the epic-themed friezes of Roman Italy has sought to interact with them as they might have been experienced by contemporary viewers in the first centuries BC and AD. By deconstructing their iconographic and epigraphic components we have shed light on the compositional techniques used by the artists responsible for them and, in one instance, a member of a Pompeian household who sought to improve the artists' work. In acknowledging the fluidity with which artists interacted with the epic account and investigating the extra-textual details not as errors, but as intentional insertions of a type fully-expected in the epic-frieze format, we have even been afforded a glimpse into the extra-literary interests of the men and women who frequented the rooms in which the friezes were displayed. Recognising that each is a unique and personalised composition, containing its own idiosyncrasies and emphases, we gain further insight into the thematic choices made by the homeowner and the ways in which artists transposed the genre into different architectural and material contexts.

Examination of the iconographic and epigraphic peculiarities of the frescoes alongside contemporary writers' description of Homeric epic as *carmen heroum* strongly suggest that the *Iliad* friezes in Pompeii and the *Odyssey* frescoes in Rome were particularly Roman expressions of the genre. Literary and archaeological evidence attests to other examples of the type in the Greek world but there is no convincing evidence to suggest that the Roman friezes were copies or versions of earlier artworks. The pre-eminence of Homer – and the *Iliad* in particular – is assured throughout the Classical world and the stories of the Trojan War were clearly deemed by Romans of the Late Republican and Early Imperial periods to be the most appropriate subjects for display in the narrative frieze format. Dué and Nagy provide an excellent summary: "The Trojan War was viewed by the ancients as the primary testing ground for the ancient concept of the hero. The heroes who populated the stories about the Trojan War were the primary focus of interest. These heroes were the real agenda."[661]

Since the *Iliad* was the precursor to the Fall of Troy, which all Romans knew was the cataclysmic event which propelled Aeneas across the Mediterranean and led eventually to the founding of Rome, pictorial display of the epic finds extra resonance on the walls of Roman houses. It is no coincidence that the *Odyssey* frescoes in Rome, the Hercules frieze in Pompeii and the columbarium frescoes from the Esquiline, which were

[661] Dué and Nagy (2002) 15.

also selected for depiction in narrative friezes, relate directly to the beginnings of the Troy story. Thus when we ask why Trojan themes were favoured above other mythological cycles in this format we are perhaps looking at the question from a twenty-first rather than first century standpoint, in that today we tend to use the catch-all phrase 'mythology' to incorporate the tales of the Trojan War as told in Homeric epic alongside the wider corpus of stories concerning Greek heroes and gods and monsters, when this may not necessarily have been a viewpoint shared by the inhabitants of Roman Italy. It may be, in fact, that the friezes were not deemed mythological in the manner of the fantastical tales of the golden fleece or the apples of the Hesperides or the many-headed Hydra – as often made their way into other forms of artistic display – but that epic was used to illustrate legendary history with weighty themes appropriate for discussion in a Roman household.

The friezes' appeal to homeowners must therefore be elevated beyond the promotion of *paideia* through recognition of mythological themes and immersion in Hellenic culture to acknowledgement that intimate knowledge of Homer and a high level of literacy was on display in *their* display. Clarke is absolutely correct when he states that their aim was to "tease the literary mind" and Elsner's comments on the more frequently-addressed technique of ekphrasis also hold true for the reverse process of translating literature into art: "Bringing to mind the described object with *enargeia* required listeners or readers to have sufficient familiarity with the kinds of art that were the subject of ekphrasis."[662] Likewise, without sufficient familiarity with the Homeric text the battles of heroes and kings, their talking horses and their interaction with gods and monsters, which were painted and moulded onto the epic friezes, could not truly be brought to life.

One question still needs to be addressed. Why was it that although Virgil and Homer, the supreme epic poets, were often given equal billing by Roman writers when discussing education, dining culture and erudite conversation, display of the adventures and battles of Aeneas did not makes its way into domestic art?[663] Archaeology from the Bay of Naples area (and the limited evidence from Rome) overwhelmingly suggests that homeowners preferred to depict subjects from Greek mythology and literature on their walls rather than scenes from their native, national epic.[664] Unfortunately, detailed investigation is beyond the realms of this study but certainly warrants further analysis in

[662] Clarke (1991) 207. Elsner (2002) 15.
[663] Quint. *Inst.* 1.8.5-8; Petron. *Sat.* 68; Juv. 6.434-440; 11.180-182; Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 16.
[664] Hedrick (2011) and Horsfall (1984, 1995) for contrasting views on the status of the *Aeneid* in the first century AD. Only a single fresco panel from Pompeii can be securely argued to illustrate a scene from Virgil's epic: MNN 9009 from the House of Siricus (Pompeii VII 1,47), which shows the wounded Aeneas being healed by Iapyx with his infant son beside him and his divine mother in the background (Verg. *Aen.* 12.383-440).

its own right. Perhaps at the time when our friezes were created Virgil's *Aeneid* was not deemed an appropriate subject for private decoration since it was so highly politicised and panegyric and contained themes which, via the propaganda of the newly-created principate, were disseminated by other means, usually *outside* of the home?[665] The only reference to Aeneas is found in those friezes which were created prior to the publication of the *Aeneid*: the founding of Rome frescoes in the Tomb of the Statilii and the *Iliad* frieze in the House of the Cryptoporticus, whose Flight of Aeneas motif reflects a composition which would soon become replicated in Roman fora throughout the empire and was perhaps even parodied for its ubiquity.[666] Yet in the two later friezes, in the House of the Iliac Shrine and the House of Octavius Quartio, the hero does not appear at all.[667]

It appears that by the mid first century AD Aeneas had become inextricably linked with Virgil's epic and the divine claims of the Julio-Claudians yet even Nero, the last of the dynasty, promoted his Trojan ancestry (visually, at least) through display of scenes from the *Iliad* instead of the *Aeneid*.[668] For all strata of society then a hierarchy of epic ran alongside a hierarchy of domestic display and Homeric epic undoubtedly reigned supreme for Romans who wished to illustrate the songs of heroes on the walls of their homes.

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[665] *Cf* the aureus and denarius in figures 58 and 59; the sacrifice of the sow scene on the Ara Pacis (which may show Numa instead of Aeneas) – Rossini (2007); the statuary groups of *summi viri* in the Forum of Augustus – Zanker (1988) 193-195. A small number of surviving statuettes and oil lamps seem to have displayed the Flight of Aeneas motif – Galinsky (1969) for examples.

[666] Goldbeck (2015) for the Forum of Augustus and its influence throughout the empire, including the Flight of Aeneas statue group from Merida (68-80). In Pompeii, a painted representation of the group and the flanking Romulus statue was painted on either side of the door of the fullery of M. Fabius Ululitremulus (Pompeii IX 13,5) – Spinazzola (1953) tav. X. A highly-debated parody of both statue groups was found in fresco form in a villa near Stabiae – De Vos (1991); Zanker (1988) 209; Fuchs (1973) 630; Galinsky (1969) 32; Cebe (1966) 369-70.

[667] The only suggestion of an *Aeneid* frieze anywhere in the Roman Empire is from a villa from Otford in Kent, dated to the second century AD (based on pottery found in a kiln belonging to the villa), which yielded two fragments relating to the epic (Verg. *Aen.* 1.313; 12.165) (London, British Museum P&EE 1928 10-11 1), found in a long, corridor-type structure with several other pieces of fallen fresco. Sevenoaks Society (1927, 1928) 3-4. Ling (2007) 84 for discussion.

[668] The nymphaeum dining room of the Domus Transitoria (the so-called Baths of Livia) had frescoed scenes from the Epic Cycle and *Iliad* adorning its vaults and lunettes - Bragantini (2011); Tomei (2011).

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