

The TRAGEDIES *of* SHAKESPEARE

The text of the OXFORD EDITION
prepared by W. J. CRAIG ; *with*
Introductory Studies of the several
Plays by EDWARD DOWDEN
and a full Glossary

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TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

INTRODUCTION

THE circumstances connected with the publication of this play both in quarto form and in the folio of 1623 are singular. On February 7, 1602-3, an entry appears in the Stationers' Register of 'Master Robertes' copy of 'The booke of Troilus and Cresseda as it is acted by my lord Chamberlens Men', giving permission to Roberts to print the play when he 'hath gotten sufficient authority for yt'. No quarto, as far as we know, appeared until 1609. Mr. A. W. Pollard notices that 'soon after February 1603 the theatres were closed by the Queen's death and the plague'. He maintains that the entry of 'Troilus and Cressida' had been made not after but in anticipation of a theatrical performance, and that as a fact no performance took place. Again on January 28, 1608-9, the play was entered in the Register under the names of Richard Bonian and Henry Walley; it appeared in the same year in two issues, the first named 'The Historie of Troylus and Cresseida', with the added words, 'As it was acted by the Kings Maiesties servants at the Globe'; the second named 'The Famous Historie of Troylus and Cresseid,' and substituting for the words which refer to its performance an extension of the title in which is mentioned 'the conceited wooing of Pandarus Prince of Licia'. The sheets of the play were not reprinted, but for some reason the original title had been cancelled, and a curious address to the reader headed 'A never writer, to an ever reader. Newes.' was inserted after the title. In this address the play is described as new, 'never stal'd with the Stage, never clapper-clawd with the palmes of the vulger'; it goes on to eulogize the writer—whose name both issues bear—to refer to the price of the publication, a testern, and to predict that hereafter copies of Shakespeares

comedies would be scrambled for; the reader, it adds, should thank fortune for 'the scape it has made' in obtaining publication, 'since by the grand possessors wills, I beleeeve you should have prayd for them rather then beene prayd.' The grand possessors were probably the members of the theatrical company to which Shakespeare belonged, who may have objected to its publication. Whether *Troilus and Cressida* was acted, as the title of the first issue of the quarto states, or was not acted, we cannot tell.

When the folio of 1623 was in preparation, Walley, the survivor of Bonian and Walley, may have opposed the inclusion of the present play. It is not mentioned in the 'Catalogue' of contents. At first the intention was to place it after *Romeo and Juliet*, and copies of the folio have been found in which the opening of the play was so printed; the leaf was cancelled, and the following leaf was transferred to a new position. Possibly the editors were uncertain whether *Troilus and Cressida* should be reckoned among the histories or the tragedies; they finally placed it between the two, after *Henry VIII* and before *Coriolanus*; they prefixed a prologue which had not appeared in the quarto, and which may have been written by some unknown hand to fill a blank page; with the exception of one leaf, betraying its original position, they left the pages unnumbered; the signatures of the quires are special to this play. 'We are of opinion,' write the Cambridge editors, 'that the Quarto was printed from a transcript of the author's original MS.; that this MS. was afterwards revised and slightly altered by the author himself, and that before the first Folio was printed from it, it had been tampered with by another hand.' Perhaps, however, the quarto is but an imperfect presentation of substantially the same text as that of the folio.

The questions which some of these peculiarities raise chiefly concern the bibliographer. There is and can be no doubt as to the authorship of the great body of the play; Shakespeare's sign-manual is impressed upon it; but the authenticity of certain passages towards the close, as for example, that which concerns the death of Hector, has been questioned. It is not difficult to admit that the play had been tampered

with, and possibly even before the publication of the quarto.

The date at which *Troilus and Cressida* was written has been the subject of much discussion. Some critics have supposed that the entry in the Stationers' Register of February 7, 1602-3, may refer to a play upon the same theme by Chettle and Dekker, which is mentioned in Henslowe's *Diary*, April 1599; but this is improbable, for the name of their play seems to have been altered from *Troilus and Cressida* to *Agamemnon*. In the old drama *Histrionastix*, which, as we possess it in the printed form, has been supposed to contain some work of Marston, occurs a passage that looks like a mocking allusion to the scene (Act iv, Scene iv) of Shakespeare's play in which Troilus and Cressida exchange a sleeve and a glove as love-tokens; it may also be that the name 'Shakespeare' is played on. Actors enter in the parts of the lovers; Troilus exhibits Cressida's garter, worn on his elbow, so that 'when he shakes his furious *Speare*' the foe may fall in terror before him. Cressida adds the gift of her 'skreene' to be placed within her lover's helmet. *Histrionastix* seems to be alluded to in Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, the date of which is 1599. Did Shakespeare's play exist in some earlier form before *Histrionastix* appeared? or does the passage parody something in the piece by Chettle and Dekker? On grounds of internal evidence, including style and versification, several critics of authority have supposed that our play was written at two different periods; that the love-story was the earlier in date, and the so-called 'camp story' was the later. This idea was elaborated by Mr. Fleay into a theory, which assigned three periods, separated by considerable intervals, to the composition of three several parts of *Troilus and Cressida*. Into a discussion of this theory we need not enter here. If we accept the suggestion of two periods of composition, we may be content to conjecture that an early sketch, whether complete or unfinished, was recast by Shakespeare at a time when he seems to have found it impossible to write comedy in the spirit of genuine mirth, and was about to devote himself to the great series of his tragedies. I cannot see that there are good grounds

for placing any part of *Troilus and Cressida* later than 1602-3. The American editor Verplanck wrote long since words which deserve to be quoted: 'It contains passages fraught with moral truth and political wisdom—high truths, in large and philosophical discourse. . . . Thus the comments of Ulysses (Act I, Scene iii) on the universal obligation of the law of order and degree . . . are in the very spirit of the grandest and most instructive eloquence of Burke. The piece abounds too in passages of the most profound and persuasive practical ethics, and grave advice for the government of life. . . . With all this, there is a large alloy of inferior matter, such as Shakespeare too often permitted himself to use, in filling up the chasms of the scene, between loftier and brighter thoughts. . . . In such a recasting and improvement of a juvenile work, unless it was wholly rewritten—which seems never to have been Shakespeare's method—the work would bear the characteristics of the several periods of its composition, and with the vernal flush of his youthful fancy, it would have its crudity of taste, but contrasted with the matured fullness of thought, and the laboring intensity of compressed expression, of his middle career.'

This is admirably said; but one who believes that the play is essentially coherent and was written at a single heat, may question that there is any 'flush of vernal fancy' in *Troilus and Cressida*. It reads throughout like the work of a mature man, who had suffered some great disillusion; who could dramatically represent the raptures of youth, but who could also, not without a certain bitterness, smile at them. If the *Sonnets* shadow forth facts of Shakespeare's experience and express his personal feelings, we know that Shakespeare had endured the deceptions of both ardent friendship and misplaced passion. Can Cressida have been modelled in a bitter mood from the lady of the *Sonnets*? The versification of the love-story, indeed, seems to indicate an earlier date than 1602-3, but this may have been a manner ironically assumed, and the spirit of the whole play seems charged with the cruelty of disillusion.

The chief sources used by the dramatist are Caxton's *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troy*, translated from

Raoul le Febvre, perhaps the 'Troy-booke' of Lydgate, Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*—especially for the recreated Pandarus of the play—and, for the character of Thersites, Chapman's earlier books of the translation of the *Iliad*. It must be remembered that the Troilus and Cressida legend is not of classical origin. Two writers of the Latin decadence, the pseudo-Dares of Phrygia and the pseudo-Dictys of Crete, but especially the first-named of the two, give us the germ of the story. The authority of the pretended Phrygian was naturally preferred to that of the pretended Cretan in the Middle Ages, when the nations of Europe claimed to be descended from the Trojan heroes. The legend was greatly developed by the Norman trouvère Benoit de Sainte-More, who may be styled its true creator. From him it passed to the Sicilian physician, Guido Colonna, who turned into Latin the *Roman de Troie* of his predecessor. It was again modified by Boccaccio in his *Filostrato*, which supplied Chaucer with the basis of his splendid invention. For the love-story Shakespeare is indebted to Chaucer, but he alters the Cressida of Chaucer from the attractive though inconstant young widow, of whom we exclaim 'The pity of it!' to the wanton of the play; and alters again the Pandarus of Chaucer to the old and worn-out man of pleasure, who indulges his sensuality, as it were, by proxy, and who is at once comic and detestable. Thersites in Chapman's *Iliad* is 'the filthiest fellow' of all that 'had deserts in Troyes brave siege', and Shakespeare assuredly spared nothing in making him filthy, while at the same time Thersites tells no little of shameful truth, and becomes what has been happily styled the 'Satyr-chorus' of the play. But Shakespeare's chief debt is certainly to Caxton, and through Caxton to Raoul le Febvre, though here again the dramatist freely modified at pleasure the matter which he used. In view of certain theories put forward to explain the character of this somewhat enigmatical play, it is of importance to bear in mind that it is not the Homeric siege of Troy which is represented—or, as some will have it, is caricatured, but the siege of Troy as it was refashioned and conceived in the Middle Ages.

A case not without some plausible evidence has been made on behalf of the notion that Shakespeare here in disparaging the Grecian heroes, and in particular Achilles and Ajax, was revenging himself on Chapman, who is supposed to have been the rival poet of the *Sonnets*. Chapman's withers, indeed, could hardly be wrung by what was essentially mediaeval and un-Homeric; yet the argument in support of this theory is not undeserving of consideration. Mr. Fleay and others have argued that *Troilus and Cressida* is Shakespeare's contribution to what has been styled the war of the theatre—the quarrels between Jonson, Marston, and Dekker, which belonged to the close of the sixteenth and the opening of the seventeenth centuries. We are told that Ajax represents Jonson; Achilles, Chapman; Thersites, Dekker; and Hector, Shakespeare himself. We may well be slow to admit that Shakespeare so far departed from his wonted way as to satirize, at once savagely and obscurely, his fellow dramatists, and to exalt his own courage and magnanimity. The play makes no such demand upon our faith or our credulity. It is indeed more cynical than any other play in the Shakespearean canon; more cynical by far than *Timon of Athens*. But the famous love-story—as it reached the dramatist—is that of a great betrayal on the part of Cressida, and on that of Troilus it is the tale of an amorous frenzy, in which judgement is deluded by passion. By Chaucer this tale had been treated with romance and tenderness mingled with humour. What if it were now to be handled in a different way—with a remorseless realism? The central conception of Troilus as a valiant swordsman but a greenhorn in love, and of Cressida as a creature born of the harlot tribe might extend itself to other dramatis personae. If Cressida was a wanton, what was Helen? Did not the whole strife of Greek and Trojan revolve around one who was as morally worthless as Cressida? The mediaeval romance seemed tumbling into an abyss of shame. The Greek heroes, big in brawn, might they not be small enough in brain? The Achilles of the romance was even in the romance ignoble in his jealousy and in the means by which he compassed Hector's death. Was Ajax at all more admirable?

Over against the boy's folly of *Troilus* might stand the large worldly wisdom of Ulysses; but to what unworthy uses in its dealings with Ajax and Achilles might not such worldly wisdom, untouched by any ray of heavenly light, be put. And here was the filthy fellow Thersites to comment as Satyr-chorus upon the whole life of the camp. We know that Goethe wrote *Werther* to relieve and rid himself of the Werther mood. Did Shakespeare write *Troilus and Cressida* to unburden his heart of some bitterness by an indictment of the illusions of romance, which had misled him? Did he on reflection regard it as unsuitable for the stage, and keep the manuscript by him as the record of a mood which he had left behind him? And when a surreptitious copy was given to the publishers of the quarto, was the play in truth 'never clapper-clawd with the palmes of the vulger'? These are but guesses, but there are occasions when we are compelled to guess.

Dryden's alteration of the play, acted in 1679, rendered it more effective on the stage. Since 1733 *Troilus and Cressida* has not, I believe, been performed in an English theatre.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

PRIAM, King of Troy.

HECTOR,

TROILUS,

PARIS,

DEIPHOBUS,

HELENUS,

} his Sons.

MARGARELON a Bastard Son of Priam.

ÆNEAS,

ANTENOR,

} Trojan Commanders.

CALCHAS, a Trojan Priest, taking part with the Greeks.

PANDARUS, Uncle to Cressida.

AGAMEMNON, the Grecian General.

MENELAUS, his Brother.

ACHILLES,

AJAX,

ULYSSES,

NESTOR,

DIOMEDES,

PATROCLUS,

} Grecian Commanders.

THERSITES, a deformed and scurrilous Grecian.

ALEXANDER, Servant to Cressida.

Servant to Troilus.

Servant to Paris.

Servant to Diomedes.

HELEN, Wife to Menelaus.

ANDROMACHE, Wife to Hector.

CASSANDRA, Daughter to Priam ; a prophetess.

CRESSIDA, Daughter to Calchas.

Trojan and Greek Soldiers, and Attendants.

SCENE.—Troy, and the Grecian Camp before it.

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

PROLOGUE

In Troy there lies the scene. From isles of Greece
The princes orgulous, their high blood chaf'd,
Have to the port of Athens sent their ships,
Fraught with the ministers and instruments 4
Of cruel war : sixty and nine, that wore
Their crownets regal, from the Athenian bay
Put forth toward Phrygia ; and their vow is made
To ransack Troy, within whose strong immures 8
The ravish'd Helen, Menelaus' queen,
With wanton Paris sleeps ; and that 's the quarrel.
To Tenedos they come,
And the deep-drawing barks do there disgorge 12
Their warlike fraughtage : now on Dardan plains
The fresh and yet unbruised Greeks do pitch
Their brave pavilions : Priam's six-gated city,
Dardan, and Tymbria, Ilias, Chetas, Trojan, 16
And Antenorides, with massy staples
And corresponsive and fulfilling bolts,
Sperr up the sons of Troy.
Now expectation, tickling skittish spirits, 20
On one and other side, Trojan and Greek,
Sets all on hazard. And hither am I come
A prologue arm'd, but not in confidence
Of author's pen or actor's voice, but suited 24
In like conditions as our argument,
To tell you, fair beholders, that our play
Leaps o'er the vaunt and firstlings of those broils,
Beginning in the middle ; starting thence away 28
To what may be digested in a play.
Like or find fault ; do as your pleasures are :
Now good or bad, 'tis but the chance of war.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Troy. Before PRIAM'S Palace.

Enter TROILUS armed, and PANDARUS.

TROILUS. Call here my varlet, I'll unarm again :
 Why should I war without the walls of Troy,
 That find such cruel battle here within ?
 Each Trojan that is master of his heart, 4
 Let him to field ; Troilus, alas ! has none.

PANDARUS. Will this gear ne'er be mended ?

TROILUS. The Greeks are strong, and skilful to
 their strength,
 Fierce to their skill, and to their fierceness valiant ; 8
 But I am weaker than a woman's tear,
 Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance,
 Less valiant than the virgin in the night,
 And skilless as unpractis'd infancy. 12

PANDARUS. Well, I have told you enough of this :
 for my part, I'll not meddle nor make no further.
 He that will have a cake out of the wheat must tarry the
 grinding. 16

TROILUS. Have I not tarried ?

PANDARUS. Ay, the grinding ; but you must tarry
 the bolting.

TROILUS. Have I not tarried ? 20

PANDARUS. Ay, the bolting ; but you must tarry the
 leavening.

TROILUS. Still have I tarried. 23

PANDARUS. Ay, to the leavening ; but here's yet
 in the word 'hereafter' the kneading, the making of
 the cake, the heating of the oven, and the baking ;
 nay, you must stay the cooling too, or you may chance
 to burn your lips. 28

TROILUS. Patience herself, what goddess e'er she be,
 Doth lesser blench at sufferance than I do.

At Priam's royal table do I sit ;
 And when fair Cressid comes into my thoughts,— 32
 So, traitor ! 'when she comes' ! —When is she thence ?

PANDARUS. Well, she looked yesternight fairer than
 ever I saw her look, or any woman else.

TROILUS. I was about to tell thee : when my heart,
 As wedged with a sigh, would rive in twain. 37

Lest Hector or my father should perceive me,
I have—as when the sun doth light a storm—
Buried this sigh in wrinkle of a smile ; 40
But sorrow, that is couch'd in seeming gladness,
Is like that mirth fate turns to sudden sadness.

PANDARUS. An her hair were not somewhat darker
than Helen's,—well, go to,—there were no more com-
parison between the women : but, for my part, she is
my kinswoman ; I would not, as they term it, praise
her ; but I would somebody had heard her talk yester-
day, as I did : I will not dispraise your sister Cassandra's
wit, but— 49

TROILUS. O Pandarus ! I tell thee, Pandarus,—
When I do tell thee, there my hopes lie drown'd,
Reply not in how many fathoms deep 52
They lie indrench'd. I tell thee I am mad
In Cressid's love : thou answer'st, she is fair ;
Pour'st in the open ulcer of my heart
Her eyes, her hair, her cheek, her gait, her voice ; 56
Handlest in thy discourse, O ! that her hand,
In whose comparison all whites are ink,
Writing their own reproach ; to whose soft seizure
The cygnet's down is harsh, and spirit of sense 60
Hard as the palm of ploughman : this thou tell'st me,
As true thou tell'st me, when I say I love her ;
But, saying thus, instead of oil and balm,
Thou lay'st in every gash that love hath given me 64
The knife that made it.

PANDARUS. I speak no more than truth.

TROILUS. Thou dost not speak so much.

PANDARUS. Faith, I'll not meddle in't. Let her be
as she is : if she be fair, 'tis the better for her ; an she
be not, she has the mends in her own hands. 70

TROILUS. Good Pandarus, how now, Pandarus !

PANDARUS. I have had my labour for my travail ;
ill-thought on of her, and ill-thought on of you : gone
between, and between, but small thanks for my
labour.

TROILUS. What ! art thou angry, Pandarus ? what !
with me ? 76

PANDARUS. Because she 's kin to me, therefore she 's
not so fair as Helen : an she were not kin to me, she
would be as fair on Friday as Helen is on Sunday. But

what care I ? I care not an she were a black-a-moor ;
'tis all one to me. 81

TROILUS. Say I she is not fair ?

PANDARUS. I do not care whether you do or no,
She 's a fool to stay behind her father : let her to
the Greeks ; and so I'll tell her the next time I see her.
For my part, I'll meddle nor make no more i' the
matter.

TROILUS. Pandarus,— 88

PANDARUS. Not I.

TROILUS. Sweet Pandarus,—

PANDARUS. Pray you, speak no more to me ! I will
leave all as I found it, and there an end. 92

[Exit PANDARUS. An alarum.

TROILUS. Peace, you ungracious clamours ! peace,
rude sounds !

Fools on both sides ! Helen must needs be fair,
When with your blood you daily paint her thus.
I cannot fight upon this argument ; 96

It is too starv'd a subject for my sword.

But Pandarus,—O gods ! how do you plague me.

I cannot come to Cressid but by Pandar ;

And he 's as techy to be woo'd to woo 100

As she is stubborn-chaste against all suit.

Tell me, Apollo, for thy Daphne's love,

What Cressid is, what Pandar, and what we ?

Her bed is India ; there she lies, a pearl : 104

Between our Ilium and where she resides

Let it be call'd the wild and wandering flood ;

Ourselves the merchant, and this sailing Pandar

Our doubtful hope, our convoy and our bark. 108

Alarum. Enter ÆNEAS.

ÆNEAS. How now, Prince Troilus ! wherefore not
afield ?

TROILUS. Because not there : this woman's answer
sorts,

For womanish it is to be from thence.

What news, Æneas, from the field to-day ? 112

ÆNEAS. That Paris is returned home, and hurt.

TROILUS. By whom, Æneas ?

ÆNEAS. Troilus, by Menelaus.

TROILUS. Let Paris bleed : 'tis but a scar to scorn ;

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