

The Epic Cycle

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Proclus' Summary of the *Cypria*, attributed to Stasinus of Cyprus

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13 Zeus, together with Themis, plans the Trojan
14 War. For Eris, while attending a feast of the gods
15 at the wedding of Peleus, instigates a feud [*neikos*] among Athena,
16 Hera, and Aphrodite about beauty. They, by
17 order of Zeus, are led by Hermes to Mount Ida for judgment by
Alexandros. Alexandros
18 judges for Aphrodite, encouraged by a promise of Helen in marriage.
19 On the advice of Aphrodite, he has ships built.
20 Helenos prophesies to him about what is going to happen.

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1 Aphrodite tells Aeneas to sail with him. Then
2 Cassandra foretells the events of the future. When he gets
3 to Lacedaemonia, Alexandros is entertained as a *xenos* by the sons
of Tyndareus,
4 and afterwards by Menelaos at Sparta.
5 Alexandros gives Helen gifts during the feast. After
6 this Menelaos sails off to Crete, telling Helen to provide proper
hospitality for their guests [*xenoi*] while he is away.
8 Aphrodite brings Helen and Alexandros together.

9 After their intercourse, they load up a great many valuables and
10 sail away by night. Hera sends a storm down upon them.
11 Landing at Sidon, Alexandros captures the city.
12 They sail to Ilion. Alexandros marries Helen.
13 In the meantime, Kastor and Polydeukes
14 are caught stealing the cattle of Idas and Lynkeus. Kastor
15 is killed by Idas, but Idas and Lynkeus are killed by
16 Polydeukes. And Zeus gives them both immortality on alternate
17 days.
18 After this Iris goes and tells Menelaos
19 what has been happening at home. He returns and
20 plans an expedition against Ilion with his brother.
21 Menelaos goes to see Nestor. Nestor, in
22 a digression, tells him the story of how Epopeus seduced and
23 carried off the daughter of Lykos, and the story of Oidipous
24 [Oedipus], and the
25 madness of Hēraklēs, and the story of Theseus and Ariadne.
26 Then they go through Hellas and gather the leaders together
27 Odysseus pretends to be insane because he does not
28 want to go to the war. But they find him out; on advice of
29 Palamedes,
30 they kidnap his son Telemachus as a threat, thus forcing him to go.

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After this the leaders come together at Aulis to sacrifice. The happenings

2 concerning the snake and the sparrows are described.

3 Kalkhas foretells the future events for them.

4 They put to sea and land at Teuthrania, and they mistake it

5 for Ilion and destroy it. Telephos comes to its aid,

6 and kills Thersandros, son of Polyneikes; but he himself is wounded
by Achilles.

7 As the Achaeans sail away from Mysia a storm comes on them and

8 their ships are scattered. Achilles lands at Skyros

9 and marries Deidameia, daughter of Lykomedes. Telephos,

10 guided by an oracle, comes to Argos.

11 Achilles heals him, in order that he become their guide for the
voyage to Ilion.

12 The expedition gathers at Aulis for the second time.

13 Agamemnon kills a deer on the hunt and boasts that he surpasses

14 even Artemis. The goddess gets *mēnis* and holds them back

15 from the voyage by sending them bad weather. But Kalkhas explains

16 the *mēnis* of the goddess and tells them to sacrifice Iphigeneia to
Artemis.

17 They summon her as if for a marriage to Achilles and

18 are about to sacrifice her. But Artemis snatches her away and

19 carries her to Tauris and makes her immortal, meanwhile placing a
deer instead of the girl

20 on the altar.

21 Then they sail off to Tenedos. During a feast,

22 Philoctetes is stung by a snake and because of the bad smell

23 is left behind on Lemnos; and Achilles quarrels
24 with Agamemnon because he was invited too late. Then when they
disembark at Iliion,

{p105 } 1 the Trojans prevent them and Protesilaos is killed by Hector.

2 Then Achilles turns them back and kills Kyknos,
3 son of Poseidon. And they bring away the corpses and send an
embassy

4 to the Trojans, demanding Helen and the valuables.

5 But since the Trojans do not comply,

6 they besiege them at once. Going into the countryside, the
Achaean destroy

7 the surrounding cities. After this Achilles

8 longs to have a look at Helen and

9 Aphrodite and Thetis arrange a place for them to meet. Then when
the Achaeans are eager to return home,

10 Achilles holds them back. He drives off

11 the cattle of Aeneas and destroys Lyrnessos and Pedasos and

12 many of the surrounding cities and he kills Troilos.

13 Patroklos takes Lykaon to Lemnos and sells him and

14 from the ransom Achilles takes Brisēis as his prize and

15 Agamemnon, Khryseis. Then there is the death of Palamedes

16 and Zeus' plan to relieve the Trojans

17 by pulling Achilles out of the Achaean alliance and a catalogue

18 of all those who fought together against the Trojans.

[The *Iliad* follows the *Cypria* and precedes the *Aithiopsis*.]

Proclus' Summary of the *Aithiopsis*, attributed to Arctinus of Miletus

[The *Aithiopsis*, in five scrolls, follows the *Iliad*.]

22 The Amazon Penthesileia arrives,
23 as an ally of the Trojans. She is the daughter of Arēs and Thracian
24 by birth. In the middle of her *aristeiā* [= greatest epic moments],
Achilles kills her, and the Trojans
25 arrange for her funeral. And Achilles kills Thersites, who reviled
26 him with abusive words for conceiving a passionate love for
Penthesileia,
27 so he said. From this a quarrel arises
28 among the Achaeans about Thersites' murder. After this, Achilles
29 sails to Lesbos, sacrifices to Apollo, Artemis,

{p106 } 1 and Leto and is purified of the murder by Odysseus. Now Memnon,
2 son of Eos [Dawn], who owns armor made by Hephaistos, comes
3 to the aid of the Trojans. Thetis tells her son about the outcome of
events concerning
4 Memnon. When a battle occurs, Antilokhos
5 is killed by Memnon but then Achilles kills Memnon.
6 At this, Eos asks from Zeus the dispensation of immortality for him
[Memnon],

7 and it is granted. But Achilles, while routing the Trojans and
8 rushing into the citadel, is killed by Paris and
9 Apollo. When a heated battle starts over the corpse,
10 Aias [Ajax] picks it up and carries it off to the ships while Odysseus
11 fights off the Trojans. Then they hold funeral rites for Antilokhos
12 and lay out Achilles' corpse; Thetis
13 comes with the Muses and her sisters and makes a lament [*thrēnos*]
for her son.
14 After that, Thetis snatches him off the pyre and carries her
15 son over to the White Island [*Leukē*]. Meanwhile the Achaeans
16 make [for Achilles] a tomb [*taphos*] and hold funeral games.
17 and a quarrel breaks out between Odysseus and Aias [Ajax] over
the armor of Achilles.

Proclus' Summary of the *Little Iliad*, attributed to Lesches of Lesbos

[The *Little Iliad*, in four scrolls, follows the *Aithiopsis*.]

20 There is the judgment for the armor,
21 and Odysseus wins by the machinations of Athena,
22 but Aias [Ajax] goes mad
23 and defiles the herds of the Achaeans and kills himself. After this
Odysseus
24 goes on an ambush and captures Helenos, and as a result of Helenos'
prophecy about the city's conquest
25 Diomedes fetches Philoctetes from Lemnos.
26 Philoctetes is healed by Makhaon; he fights in single combat with
Alexandros and

27 kills him. The corpse is mutilated by Menelaos,
28 but the Trojans carry it off and hold funeral rites. After this Deiphobos
29 marries Helen. Odysseus fetches Neoptolemos from Skyros;
30 he gives him his father's armor, and Achilles
31 appears as a spirit to Neoptolemos. Eurypylos the son of Telephos

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7} 1 comes to the aid of the Trojans as an ally, and while he is having his
best epic moments [*aristeiā*]
2 Neoptolemos kills him. Troy is under siege. Epeios
3 constructs the wooden horse, under direction of Athena.
4 Odysseus, disfiguring himself,
5 goes into Ilion as a spy. He is recognized by Helen;
6 jointly, they plan the capture of the city. Odysseus kills several
7 Trojans and returns to the ships. And after this [= after Odysseus
infiltrates Troy in a previous adventure] he [= Odysseus] along with
8 Diomedes takes out [*ek-komizein*] the Palladium from Ilion. Then
9 after putting the best men [*aristoi*] into the wooden horse and
10 burning their tents, the rest of the Greeks
11 sail away to Tenedos. The Trojans conclude that they have been
released from the siege.
12 They accept the wooden horse into the city,
13 pulling down part of the wall, and they feast as if they had conquered
14 the Greeks.

[The *Iliou Persis* (Destruction of Ilium), in two scrolls, follows the *Little Iliad*.]

- 16 After the preceding [= four scrolls of the *Little Iliad*, by Lesches of
Lesbos], there follow two scrolls of the *Iliou Persis*, by Arctinus
- 17 of Miletus, containing the following. With regard to the things
concerning the Horse, the
- 18 Trojans, suspicious about the horse, stand around wondering what
they should
- 19 do. Some think it should be pushed off a cliff, while others
- 20 think it should be burned down, and still others say that it should be
dedicated as sacred [*hieros*] to Athena.
- 21 In the end, the opinion of the third group wins out. They turn
- 22 to merriment, feasting as if they had been freed from the war.
- 23 At this point two serpents appear and
- 24 destroy Laocoön and one of his sons. At the sight of
- 25 this marvel, Aeneas and his followers get upset and withdraw
- 26 to Mount Ida. Sinon lights signal fires for the Achaeans.
- 27 He had previously entered the city, using a pretext. And they [= the
Achaeans], some of them sailing from Tenedos
- 28 [toward Troy] and others of them emerging from the Wooden Horse,
fall upon
- 29 their enemies. They kill many, and the city
- 30 is taken by force. Neoptolemos kills
- 31 Priam, who has taken refuge at the altar of Zeus Herkeios.

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- 1 Menelaos finds Helen and takes her back down to the ships, after
- 2 slaughtering Deiphobos. Ajax son of Oileus takes Cassandra by

3 force, dragging her away from the wooden statue [*xoanon*] of Athena.
At the sight

4 of this, the Achaeans get angry and decide to stone

5 Ajax to death, but he takes refuge at the altar of Athena, and so

6 is preserved from his impending destruction. Then

7 the Achaeans put the city to the torch. They slaughter Polyxena on
the

8 tomb [*taphos*] of Achilles. Odysseus kills Astyanax,

9 and Neoptolemos takes Andromache as his prize. The rest

10 of the spoils are distributed. Demophon and Akamas find Aithra

11 and take her with them. Then the Greeks sail off [from Troy],

12 and Athena begins to plan destruction for them at sea.

Proclus' Summary of the *Nostoi*, attributed to Agias of Trozen

[The *Nostoi* (Songs of Homecoming), in five books, follows the *Iliou Persis*.]

16 Athena causes a quarrel between Agamemnon and

17 Menelaos about the voyage from Troy. Agamemnon

18 then stays on to appease the anger of Athena.

19 Diomedes and Nestor set sail and arrive back home safely.

20 After them, Menelaos sets sail. With five ships

21 he reaches Egypt, the rest having been lost in a storm

22 at sea. Meanwhile, those who followed Kalkhas and Leonteus and

23 Polypoites travel by land to Kolophon, and

24 they arrange a funeral for Teiresias, who died there. As for those who
followed Agamemnon,

25 the image [*eidōlon*] of Achilles appeared to them as they were sailing
off, and it tried

26 to prevent them from going on by prophesying future events. Then

27 the storm at the rocks called Kapherides is described, and the
destruction of Ajax

28 the Locrian. Neoptolemos, warned by Thetis,

29 makes his journey by land, and,

30 coming to Thrace, meets Odysseus at Maroneia, and

31 then finishes the rest of his journey, after arranging a funeral for
Phoinix [Phoenix], who dies along the way. He himself

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} 1 arrives in the land of the Molossoi and is recognized by Peleus. Then

2 comes the murder of Agamemnon by Aigisthos [Aegisthus] and
Klytaimestra [Clytemnestra] and

3 the vengeance of Orestes and

4 the safe return of Menelaos.

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