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'Properer Men': Myth, Manhood and the Trojan War in Greene, Shakespeare and Heywood

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[1]

Aristotle that Prince of Philosophers...having the tuition of young Alexander, caused the destruction of Troy to be acted before his pupill, in which the valor of Achilles was so naturally exprest, that it imprest the hart of Alexander, in so much that all his succeeding actions were meerly shaped after that patterne, and it may be imagined had Achilles never lived, Alexander had never conquered the whole world...Why should not the lives of these worthyes, presented in these our days, effect the like wonders in the Princes of our times, which can no way bee so exquisitly demonstrated, nor so lively portrayed as by action...to see a souldier shap'd like a souldier, walke, speake, act like a souldier: to see a Hector all besmered in blood, trampling upon the bulkes of Kinges. A Troilus returning from the field in the sight of his father Priam...Oh these were sights to make an Alexander. (Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors*, 1612: B3^r-B4^r)

[2] In *An Apology for Actors*, the playwright and keen classicist Thomas Heywood argues that classical exempla have the power to influence a Jacobean audience, to encourage them to reform their own conduct in line with what they have seen. Specifically, he argues that the male members of a playwright's audience can be encouraged towards ideal masculine behaviour by watching the exploits of Achilles, Hector and Troilus, participants in that most iconic of classical myths, the story of the Trojan War. Three Elizabethan and Jacobean treatments of the Trojan story, one by Heywood himself (*The Iron Age Part I*, c.1611-1613), and the others by Robert Greene (*Euphues His Censure to Philautus*, 1587) and William Shakespeare (*Troilus and Cressida*, 1601-1602) reflect the connection that Heywood perceives between myth and the contemporary performance of manliness, though they all problematise his implication that the heroes of antiquity are always exemplary. These works use the Troy legend to foreground relationships between men, and simultaneously to reflect their mythical characters' deep uncertainty about what it is to be an 'ideal' man. In this emphasis on and anxiety about male behaviour, Greene's prose tale and Shakespeare's and Heywood's plays reflect a concern that was not just literary, but societal, for early modern culture simultaneously privileged and interrogated masculinity and manhood.^[1] Alexandra Shepard has found in the conduct books of the period 'a dirge of concern about men's failure to live up to patriarchal ideals', and suggests that 'While maleness as cultural category was automatically celebrated in terms of superiority, men as a group of people were far less confidently endorsed' (Shepard 2003: 10). Other critics have also demonstrated early modern masculinity to be somehow unstable, or a source of anxiety (see for example Breitenberg 1996, and Foyster 1999), and Gary Spear sees this uncertainty about masculine identity as being particularly prominent in *Troilus and Cressida* (Spear 1993: 412).

[3] J. S. P. Tatlock noted long ago that 'No traditional story was so popular in the Elizabethan Age as that of the siege of Troy' (Tatlock 1915: 673), and the Trojan War setting of Shakespeare's and Heywood's plays, and of Greene's prose tale, provided a particularly fertile ground for a reconsideration of masculine identity, because of the ubiquitous nature of the myth, its preponderance of strong male characters, and its association with British

national identity. In the *Apology for Actors*, Heywood had argued that seeing the heroic exploits of mythical figures, such as 'Hector all besmured in blood', had a transformative power: 'these were sights', he declares, 'to make an Alexander' (Heywood 1612: B3^v-B4^r). As Heywood's declaration suggests, the Trojan story allowed authors to look back, to known and familiar stories, but also to be creative and transformative, to mould and shape their audiences. In her work on the Troy story in the medieval imagination, Sylvia Federico draws attention to this dual appeal:

The symbolic appropriation of Troy is at once a means of creating a past, present and future in accord with specific ideals and also a means of mobilizing that imagined historicity in gestures of self-invention and self-definition (Federico 2003: xii)

Turning back to the legend provided writers and readers with 'specific ideals' for men that were at once comfortingly familiar, and available for reappropriation and rewriting in line with contemporary concerns about manliness. Indeed, Heather James has suggested that the malleability of the subject was of particular interest to Shakespeare. She argues that the myth of Troy was only 'ostensibly monolithic', and that *Troilus and Cressida* should be viewed 'within the context of the interrogative tradition' of the story (James 1997: 22, 13). In *Euphues His Censure to Philautus* and *The Iron Age* too, a well-known myth (and one that was central to the Elizabethan and Jacobean cultural imagination) could be interrogated, adapted and made responsive to contemporary male concerns and anxieties.

[4] *Euphues His Censure to Philautus* (1587) is styled on its title page as a 'philosophicall combat' between Hector and Achilles, dedicated to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, and addressed to Greene's gentlemen readers. In the text, legendary Greek and Trojan warriors put off fighting in order to tell a series of euphuistic tales, which seek to uncover the true essence of manliness (and, particularly, of soldiery). Though he does not recount the most well-known episodes of the story (such as the judgement of Paris or the rape of Helen), through storytelling Greene's men seek to make sense of the conflict they are embroiled in, and their own different masculine virtues. Moreover, Greene, who claims in his preface to the reader that he has written his prose treatise because 'the tyme required such a discourse' (Greene 1587: A4^r), implicitly challenges this reader to consider the question of his title page, which asks what are 'the vertues necessary to be incident in every gentleman' (Greene 1587). Greene's *Euphues* 'has long been considered a possible minor source for *Troilus and Cressida*' (Gillespie 2001: 213).**[2]** It is not just the common Greco-Trojan setting that suggests Shakespeare's (and Heywood's) use of Greene, though, but also the earlier work's concern with what it is to be a man, and with how men create their own visions of manliness, before holding these up for scrutiny and approval by other men. Bruce R. Smith points out that in the early modern period, 'masculine identity of whatever kind is something men give to each other', but that this 'definition of masculinity in terms of others is an inherently unstable business' (Smith 2000: 60, 128). Greene's tale, and Shakespeare's and Heywood's subsequent plays, all interrogate the coherence and value of masculine identity. All are particularly concerned with masculine identity that is endorsed by other men, and mediated through existing mythological archetypes, which were gleaned from Homer and Ovid, and from medieval sources including Caxton and Lydgate. At the same time, all three works emphasise the instability that Smith notes, demonstrating that there are multiple ways to prove oneself a man, and that male identity is always subject to question and challenge, both in Troy and in early modern England.

[5] Greene's *Euphues* clearly owes a debt to medieval English Troy-narratives by authors like Caxton, Lydgate and Chaucer, and also to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and to Arthur Hall's translation from French of the first ten books of the *Iliad*, printed in 1581. For example,

Caxton's *Recuyell of the Hystories of Troye*, translated from the French of Raoul Lefèvre, hints at the exchange of news or stories between Hector and Achilles during a truce, and this idea of rhetorical exchange would be key to Greene's work:

The triews duryng hector wente hym on a day vnto the tentes of the Grekes /
And Achylles behelde hym gladly for as moche as he had neuer seen hym vnarme
/ And at the requeste of Achylles. Hector wente in to hys tente / And as they
spack togeder of many thynges. (Caxton 1473/1474: Book III, no sig.)**[3]**

Caxton alludes to an encounter that provides a setting for Greene's tale: the social rather than the martial nature of the meeting is stressed, and Achilles welcomes this new and different way of interacting with his rival, exchanging words rather than blows. Also important, though, is the reputation of famous men, the iconic status that means Caxton's Achilles beholds Hector 'gladly', and treats him as an equal. Ideal masculinity is extravagantly foregrounded in Greene's work, but he often creates doubt about the hierarchy of men, where Caxton had emphasised the equal status of Achilles and Hector. In Greene's work, Achilles and his followers are figuratively wounded by Hector's very manliness, 'feeling in their mindes the scarres of his man-hoode' (Greene 1587: B^v). Here, Greene is echoing the classical and medieval emphasis on Hector's exemplary masculinity: for example, in the 1555 printing of John Lydgate's fifteenth-century *Troy Book* (originally completed in 1420), Hector is described as the 'Floure of manhod' (Lydgate 1555 [1420]: Kii^v). However, *Euphues* adds a note of uncertainty, making the reader privy to the Greek sense of inadequacy about their collective male identity, in comparison to Hector.

[6] In its implicit concern with competition between men (which would become explicit as the tale continued), *Euphues* is also indebted to very current Elizabethan literary fashion: particularly, to the euphuistic style and subject matter pioneered by John Lyly, in his works *Euphues The Anatomy of Wit* (1578) and *Euphues and his England* (1580). The first of these prose fictions dealt with Euphues' competition with his friend Philautus for the hand of Lucilla. Greene explicitly suggests a relationship between his work and Lyly's, through his title and through the prefatory lines that tell his readers he is able to recount this tale because 'by chance some of Euphues loose papers came to my hand' (Greene 1587: A4^r). However, the similarity runs deeper than this. In both his framing narrative, which deals with the hospitality the Greeks and Trojans offer one another during a truce, and in the tales the rivals tell each other, Greene's tale recalls the linguistic style, and the pattern of debate and counter-debate, which was central to Lyly's pioneering work. Moreover, Helen Hackett notes of Lyly's *Euphues* and *Philautus* that 'Their homosocial bond is the primary relationship which runs through both volumes' (Hackett 2000: 80). Relations between men are similarly privileged in Greene's work, despite the Trojan War's origins in Paris' theft of Helen. Greene takes a fashionable style of writing and a popular Elizabethan hero, and grafts these onto the iconic story of the Trojan War. In having Euphues 'censure' Philautus through the use of the Troy story, he suggests masculine identity to be an issue that was at once rooted in antiquity, and a very current concern, both to Euphues and to those Elizabethan readers who eagerly awaited his next adventures.**[4]**

[7] Despite Greene's use of medieval and Elizabethan examples of male interaction and competition, it is women who give rise to the occasion for Greene's tale, as Hector explains: the Trojan ladies desired to see the Greek camp. Moreover, Greene's women wield a surprising rhetorical power. For example, Polyxena is easily able to meet Achilles' flattery with cutting retorts, and he is stunned, 'perceiving that the Ladyes of Troie had a deepe insight into the Gretian actions' (Greene 1587: B3^v). Greene's Cressida, too, speaks her mind at least as clearly as she does in Shakespeare's later play, suggesting that the Trojans shame themselves in their misguided attempts to keep Helen. That such pointed and critical

interventions are put into the mouths of female characters suggests that 'the real story [...] is carried by the women' (Wilson 2006: 95). In fact, *Euphues*' focus on rhetorical sparring, rather than combat, may be Greene's gesture towards his female readers, for Lorna Hutson has argued that scenes of debate and discussion in early modern fiction indicate an increased focus on a female readership (Hutson 1994: 96-97). However, it is also true that, once they have been introduced, Greene's female characters are here 'tolerated only on the margins of the discussion' (Wilson 2006: 95). Helen Hackett suggests of Lyly's *Euphues* and *Philautus* that 'all their encounters with women may be seen as significant only in so far as they have bearing upon [their] bond' (Hackett 2000: 80), and the same may be said of Greene's male warriors, most of whom have scant patience for these interrupting women. When Greene's Nestor urges his fellow men to seek to define ideal soldiery while 'omitting women's prattle, and leaving the Ladyes to their private chatte' (Greene 1587: E4^r), and Priam complains that 'these women are but stumbling blocks for our eyes, and our thoughts: let them chat with them selves, and leave us to our discourse' (Greene 1587: K4^v), his mythological heroes express a fear that women may prevent them from realising their goal, to decide on the most admirable model of manhood. In this, they also reflect the anxieties of early modern men, for Elizabeth Foyster has noted early seventeenth-century male suspicion of women speaking among themselves. Particularly relevant is the fact that 'Women's talk was popularly regarded as a destructive force to manhood', not least because of the risk that women might use their speech to denigrate men (Foyster 1999: 58-65, 64). Nestor and Priam defuse this potential threat by belittling the women's speech, to the presumable relief of the Greek and Trojan heroes, and Greene's male addressees.

[8] Such a male-oriented focus persists into Shakespeare's play: Gary Spear has noted the 'public stigmatization of the feminine' in *Troilus and Cressida* (Spear 1993: 420) as manifesting itself in a suspicion of both women and 'effeminate' men, while Bevington argues that in the play 'Women are relegated to the margins of the male world' (Shakespeare 1998 [1601-1602]: 32). *Euphues* incorporates a host of witty and informed female characters, who are set against largely unsuccessful male storytellers (none of Greene's speakers is able to win the others round to his point of view), but it also demonstrates what Constance C. Relihan terms 'the attempts of popular Elizabethan male writers to subdue and control the ever-present female Other' (Relihan 1994: 80), a clear sense that giving too much space to compelling female characters might impede the men's efforts to define themselves (and crucially, to decide on a 'best' man). Helen Hackett argues that in Lyly's *Euphues the Anatomy of Wit*, which ended with the dismissal of his witty heroine Lucilla and the reunion of the two friends who had quarrelled over her, 'The deletion of Lucilla enables the even firmer establishment of homosocial allegiance' (Hackett 2000: 80). Likewise, in Greene's work, the introduction and then the pointed rejection of the female voices indicates Greene's intention to write with a specifically masculine agenda. In *Euphues*, Greene writes for gentlemen, giving them a tale written by a man, to a man, that is primarily about men and manliness, despite the early intrusion of famous female voices.

[9] Most of Greene's narrative is taken up by the embedded and invented stories, so characteristic of euphuistic prose, by which the male warriors seek to pinpoint the most important virtue of a soldier. However, as the first story, told by Ulysses, demonstrates, these embedded narratives can reflect – often uncomfortably closely – the situations of the Greeks and Trojans who tell them, just as the very act of debating mythical manliness reflects an anxiety that was ingrained in at least some of Greene's male readers. For example, Ulysses' tragedy centres on the faithless Moedina, who leaves her husband Polumestor for Vortymis, before repenting in the face of Polumestor's forgiveness, poisoning Vortymis, and killing herself. After the tale has concluded, Hector 'perceived that this Tragicall hystorie was induced in hope of a restitution of Helena' (Greene 1587: E3^r-

E3^V). He notes of Vortymis that 'it ill fitted a subject to be so treacherous' (Greene 1587: E3^V), and Diomedes pointedly rejoins that the same could be said of Paris (who is, like Helen, absent from Greene's tale). Tension escalates as fiction is likened to the facts of the warriors' own situation, and Agamemnon steps in to ask that 'neyther the plaintiffe Menelaus, nor the Defendant Paris should bee once named, sith the rehersall of their actions were but an alarum to further quarrell' (Greene 1587: E3^V). However, the Greek and Trojan storytellers continue to allude to their own situation, both individual and collective, and particularly to their own distinctly personal interpretations of masculine virtue during wartime. So the Trojan priest Helenus, who is criticised repeatedly in medieval Troy-narratives, and later in Heywood's *Iron Age*, for his argument that Priam's sister Hesione should not be recovered from the Greeks, and in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* for his opinion that Helen should be returned, here argues for the importance of wisdom over all other virtues. In his tale, Cimbriana's wisdom means that she is able to avoid the advances of Rascianus, and repel an invasion of her city, so that her people 'longe after maintained their cyvill estate with a peaceable and quiet democracy' (Greene 1587: H2^F). Although Steve Mentz notes that 'wisdom', as Helenus describes it, is 'a relatively feminized virtue' (Mentz 2006: 148), and he uses a female character to exemplify it, it is easy to draw parallels with his own consistently pacific and conservative arguments in Shakespeare's and Heywood's plays.

[10] In his espousal of a non-military model of masculinity, Greene's Helenus also reflects the situation of some of Greene's Renaissance readers. Both Alexandra Shepard and Jennifer Jordan have shown that in early modern England there were a *range* of qualities that were considered ideally masculine, and a variety of ways to be a man (Shepard 2003: 6, 252, Jordan 2011: 245 and 257). Helenus' tale recommends his own most obvious asset, and shows him drawing on the availability of what Shepard calls 'conflicting codes' of manhood, to attempt to win the impromptu debate, and prove his own worth (Shepard 2003: 253). However, although *Euphues* has used him to suggest an alternative, thoughtful kind of manliness, Helenus and his circumspect counsel are fated to be ignored. More than this, his defence of wisdom rather than action means that, although he has presented a different way to be an ideal soldier, he falls short of the militarised ideal of manhood that is most admirable in a martial setting (and that had been foregrounded by Greene, in his dedication to Essex). Helenus' perceived inadequacy had been demonstrated in earlier Troy-narratives, where his reluctance to fight, and his reliance on debate and reason, were held up by Troilus in particular as evidence of unmanliness. For example, in the *Recuyell of the Hystories of Troye*, Caxton's Troilus demands of his fellow Trojans 'O noble men and hardy / how be ye abasshid for the wordes of this Coward preste here' (Caxton 1473/1474: Book III, no sig.). Lydgate's Troilus urges Priam to ignore Helenus' advice, and in both works, Troilus goes on to accuse priests of lacking the manliness of soldiers. Troilus' cruelty to his brother indicates that in these medieval works, as in Greene's text, male *competition* is key to the establishment of masculine identity, and in criticising his brother, Troilus attempts to define himself and endorse his own manliness, to reassure both himself and the other men that he is very different, and superior.

[11] Both Troilus and Hector react sceptically to Helenus' tale, and if their lack of enthusiasm suggests the insufficiency of wisdom as the paramount soldierly virtue, the reader might expect Hector or Achilles, the greatest warriors of Troy and Greece, to be more successful. Hector's tale of the three brothers, Frontinus (representative of fortitude), Martignanus (representative of wisdom) and Ortellius (representative of liberality), has fortitude literally overcoming the other virtues, as Frontinus slaughters his two younger brothers. Here, Mentz suggests, 'Hector's tale operates as a linguistic substitute for the martial activity that Greene's text excludes' (Mentz 2006: 148). However, though Hector's tale praises that for which he himself is famed, his own fate will eventually prove that

strength in arms is no sure predictor of success in war, where men are not neatly arranged in descending order of fortitude, and where for every Hector there is an equally mighty Achilles. The reader's prior knowledge of Hector, and of how his story will end, thus destabilises his argument even as he makes it. Moreover, the essential insufficiency of the manly virtue he espouses is further suggested by his inability to defend his tale convincingly against the criticism of his rival storyteller Helenus: Greene describes how Hector 'stammered' (Greene 1587: K3^v) as he continues to insist on the importance of fortitude.^[5] Finally, Achilles' tale of a war between Athens and Thebes, over 'the deflowering of a maide of Athens' (Greene 1587: L4^l), refers clearly to the current war between Greece and Troy, occasioned by Paris' rape of Helen, but also to his own personal conflict with Agamemnon, who has stolen his concubine Briseis. In Arthur Hall's translation of the *Iliad*, Achilles demands of his king 'what Gréeke shall readye make / Himselfe to fight at thy commaund, thy party for to take?' (Hall 1581: Biii^l).^[6] Greene's Achilles is more subtle in his criticism of the king, using storytelling to champion liberality (that is, the generosity of a commander to his men) as the most admirable manly virtue. Once again, though, Achilles' tale shows that men attempt to prove their worth (and the value of their chosen attribute) by criticising and clashing with their fellows. Moreover, the pointed relevance of the fiction is intended to reflect genuine tensions in the Greek camp, just as Greene's tale is intended to reflect his real readers' anxieties about masculine ideals.

[12] Greene's narrative ends with Priam commending Achilles' final tale, but concluding, diplomatically but anticlimactically, that it is impossible to decide which virtue, fortitude, wisdom or liberality, is the most important. Mentz suggests that for Greene, Homeric epic is an 'insufficient model', and that he seeks to show through his storytelling how 'even Hector and Achilles valued rhetorical warfare' (Mentz 2006: 142, 145). Nevertheless, despite this suggestion that it is the debate, not the outcome, that is of interest, Greene's reader cannot help but reflect that the Greeks and Trojans have alluded obliquely to their own situations, and repeatedly espoused their own versions of ideal manliness, without coming any nearer to a solution to the problem of the Trojan War, or answering the question Greene has set his readers. In fact, Greene's focus not on battle, but on fruitless storytelling, not only declines to move his narrative any nearer a solution, but may also constitute a reflection on his own masculine identity, and, specifically, his own status as a male author. Drawing on the influential work of Richard Helgerson, Helen Hackett points to the ways in which prose fictions by writers like Lyly and Greene often foreground inaction, of the kind seen in Greene's work, and how this inaction potentially constitutes a serious reflection on the author's place in the world, and his failure to find paid employment or patronage: 'Their writings [...] combine displays of wit and rhetorical prowess with defiant assertions of the pleasures of purposelessness, and with degrees of self-disgust at being reduced to redundancy' (Hackett 2000: 77).^[7] Greene's characters speak when the Greek and Trojan heroes would more commonly act, but even the power of their storytelling is undermined by their failure to reach any consensus. Greene's reworking of the familiar story of the Trojan War allows him to privilege his own interest in creating fictions, in euphuistic debate and what Hackett terms 'rhetorical prowess', while simultaneously betraying an anxiety that words are not the same as action. Polyxena might claim that for her father Priam, 'a Schollers Lawrell wreath' is as worthy as 'a Souldiours steeled Helmet' (Greene 1587: B3^l), but his characters' ability to debate endlessly, but without resolution, might also reflect Greene's own worries about his failure to achieve material success and security through his writing.

[13] Greene's engagement with his classical sources has been seen as deliberately lacking in substance: James Applegate points to the 'basic lack of seriousness in Greene's use of classical materials', and associates this playfulness with 'the essentially frivolous nature of the interest in classical antiquity in the strata of the Elizabethan reading public which made

Greene popular' (Applegate 1966: 367-368). However, in *Euphues* Greene does something more than indulge in pseudo-classicism to pander to the intellectual vanity of his readership. Firstly, like Chaucer, Lydgate and Caxton before him, Greene participates in the English tradition of reshaping the story of Troy to his own literary ends, making his characters do and say original things. Secondly, and linked to this, in his deliberate and self-conscious display of the failure of male storytelling, Greene reflects on the difficult lot of the aspiring Elizabethan author, who is attracted to fashionable but never-ending scenes of debate that begin to seem purposeless in their repetition. Finally, using the Trojan War as a backdrop allows Greene to simultaneously use and distance himself from Lyly's immensely influential work, to turn his attention to a wider stage, and to use competition between antiquity's greatest heroes, over the world's most beautiful woman, to interrogate the nature of Elizabethan masculinity, male friendship, and competition. This same double focus, on the story of Troy, and on the nature of maleness, can be discerned in the works of Shakespeare and Heywood, who retell the story of the war not through fortuitously discovered 'loose papers' (Greene 1587: A4^r), but on the early modern stage.

[14] *Troilus and Cressida* was entered in the Stationer's Register in 1603, though not printed until 1609. Heywood's play was not printed until 1632, when it appeared alongside *The Iron Age 2*, and joined the rest of his mythological cycle, *The Golden Age*, *The Silver Age*, and *The Brazen Age*. Though Shakespeare's was printed far earlier, the chronological relationship of the two plays has been hard to determine, though Heywood's is now often thought to be the later. A century ago, John S. P. Tatlock suggested that a play identified only as 'troye' in the 1596 diary of Phillip Henslowe might be Heywood's play, or at least his source, meaning that the *Iron Age* would antedate Shakespeare's work. Moreover, he suggested Shakespeare as the more likely borrower from Heywood, '[Shakespeare's] [play] being the less primitive' (Tatlock 1915: 718, 754n.). Subsequent critics have argued that the *Iron Age* is the later, postdating Heywood's mythological epic of 1609, *Troia Britanica*.^[8] Robert K. Presson (Presson 1953: 19) suggests that there is room for both possibilities: that the 'troye' entered in Henslowe's diary in 1596 may be an early version of Heywood's *Iron Age*, but that he might have revised the play after composing *Troia Britanica*.^[9] The difficulty in dating the plays is reflected in a surprising reluctance to see similarities between them: for example, N. H. Hillebrand and T. W. Baldwin argue that 'resemblances are few and with one exception not in any way remarkable' (Shakespeare 1953 [1601-1602]: 462). This 'exception' is both plays' amplification of the scurrilous Thersites, described in Arthur Hall's Elizabethan translation of the *Iliad* as 'a surly knaue, and eke a dogged swine' (Hall 1581: E^r). Even here, though, the editors are reluctant to find too much common ground, arguing that Heywood's character 'is made as unlike Sh[akespeare]'s Thersites as two snarling cynics can be' (Shakespeare 1953 [1601-1602]: 462).^[10] However, while in some ways it is true they are very different works, with Heywood's drama giving far more space to the Paris/Helen/Menelaus affair, and paying much less attention to Troilus and Cressida, the similarities are equally obvious, particularly with regard to the interrogation of masculine identity by and through other men.

[15] Just as Greene sidelines the usual story of Troy to have his characters tell their own tales, as they negotiate with their literary predecessors both *Troilus and Cressida* and *The Iron Age 1* adopt what Douglas Cole has usefully termed the 'anti-mythic' stance:

An anti-mythic method depends on our familiarity with a received legend and its important associations, which then are subverted by the texture of the adaptation or new presentation. It is not merely a question of the manipulation of sources which may or may not be known to the audience; it is rather a direct challenge to the assumptions and associations underlying the familiar myth. (Cole 1980: 78)

Such 'assumptions' about the Trojan myth include the fame and idealisation of its male characters. In fact, though, as Linda Charnes has argued, Shakespeare's characters suffer in comparison to their mythical predecessors: *Troilus and Cressida* presents 'subjectivity crippled by cultural inscription' (Charnes 1989: 415). In both plays, identities are simultaneously fixed and uncertain, and apparently famous men are peculiarly insecure and interchangeable. Shakespeare's Pandarus enthusiastically recommends Troilus as 'the prince of chivalry!' (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 1.2.194), but only after he has confused him with his brother Deiphobus. When Diomedes arrives in Troy to collect Cressida, in 4.1, he responds to Paris' question, about who most deserves Helen, himself or her husband Menelaus, with the dismissive 'Both alike' (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 4.1.55) and suggests that the lines that divide husband and lover, Greek and Trojan, have been irrevocably blurred: 'Both merits poised, each weighs nor less nor more, / But he as he, the heavier for a whore' (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 4.1.66-67). In Act Three of *The Iron Age*, the stage directions indicate a deliberate similarity between the Greeks and Trojans in their use of stage space: 'Enter all the Greekes on one side, and all the Troians on the other: Every Troian Prince intertaines a Greeke, and so march two and two, discoursing' (Heywood 1632: F2^v). Later, too, and even when they are fighting rather than 'discoursing', attitudes to Helen bring out unflattering similarities between the two sides: Heywood's Thersites tells Troilus 'The Troians are all mad, so are the Greeks, / To kill so many thousands for one drabbe' (Heywood 1632: I^v). There was a tendency in early modern England to elevate the Trojans over the Greeks, because of the belief that Britain had been founded by Aeneas' descendant Brutus: indeed, some critics have argued that Shakespeare privileges his Trojans in this way.^[11] However, these examples show that, just as Greene's characters are driven by shared storytelling to realise their likenesses as well as their differences, the legendary warriors of Greece and Troy are uncomfortably united, in both Heywood's and Shakespeare's plays, by their often unflattering similarities.

[16] This blurring of individual male identity is so significant, and so concerning, because key to early modern manliness was the idea that a man was endorsed as such, and had his masculine identity secured, by the recognition and approval of his peers: a recognition that might involve an element of competition or comparison, as it did in Greene's abortive storytelling contest. In a recently published revision of her arguments about early modern male identity that were set out in her seminal *Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare* (1981), Coppélia Kahn explains 'I have since realized that men are co-creators of masculine identity along with women: homosocial relations, whether in the form of friendship and camaraderie, competition, or shunned and dreaded sodomy, are at least as important as heterosexual ones' (Kahn 2013: 232). Men rely on other men to create their masculine identities, to endorse or identify their own manliness, and to recognise them as individual and admirable men.^[12] Shakespeare's Ulysses knows the extent to which men rely on their fellows to confirm their eminence, and he ruthlessly manipulates this reliance to exploit Achilles. He proposes a faked lottery that will give Ajax the honour of fighting Hector, before explaining the effect this will have on Achilles:

...by device let blockish Ajax draw
 The sort to fight with Hector; among ourselves
 Give him allowance for the better man,
 For that will physic the great Myrmidon,
 Who broils in loud applause...
 If the dull brainless Ajax come safe off,
 We'll dress him up in voices: if he fail,
 Yet go we under our opinion still
 That we have better men. (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 1.3.374-383)

Ulysses knows that the faked result will anger Achilles because it will result in the public adulation of the 'dull brainless Ajax', his identification as 'the better man', an endorsement that is in turn a slight on Achilles. Moreover, the plan will also conveniently protect the collective masculine identity of the Greeks, since Ajax will either defeat Hector, or, if he fails, the Greeks will be secure in the knowledge that they actually have 'better men' in their ranks. Robert Kimbrough points out that for both Greeks and Trojans in Shakespeare's play, a man's worth 'both resides in the man and is attributed to him by others' (Kimbrough 1964: 145, and see Smith 2000: 60). Ellen R. Belton makes a similar point about Heywood's play, in which acting as the ideal soldier, and being *known* as a man who acts in such a way, are equally important. In the play, she suggests, 'there are two kinds of honor, one the performing of glorious deeds like Hector's, the other the achievement of a glorious reputation' (Belton 1977: 178). It is this reliance on the public, male endorsement of one's individual masculine worth that makes the confusion of identities, or the refusal to positively distinguish one man from another, and to reward the 'better' man as he deserves, so troubling for the men in these plays, and for the male spectators in the audience.

[17] Like Shakespeare's Ulysses, Heywood's Paris is keenly aware of the importance of a masculine hierarchy, the way in which men define themselves as better, or worse, than the other men they encounter. This awareness is manifested in his determination to lionise himself through comparison to Menelaus, the husband he has cuckolded. In fact, such is Paris' interest in measuring himself against Menelaus that Helen, the object of his supposed passion, recedes into the background, just as she does in *Troilus and Cressida* (where she appears only once) and in *Euphues* (where she is entirely absent). In his *Recuyell*, Caxton described a first meeting in which Paris is keenly attuned to Helen's feelings:

And anone parys satte doun beside her / whilis that the peple playde in the temple And spack to her wyth a softe wys ryght swetely and she to hym / And exposid eche to other how they were surprysid of the loue of that one and of that other / And how they myght come to the ende after her desire. (Caxton 1473/1474: Book III, no sig.)

On their first meeting in Heywood's play, Paris is thinking not of Helen, or of his own love for her, but of her husband, and he urges her 'You needes must say I am the properer man' (Heywood 1632: C4^f). This is an echo of the Nurse's words in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, when she tells Romeo how she teases Juliet: 'I anger her sometimes, and tell her that Paris is the properer man' (Shakespeare 1984 [1597]: 2.4.170-171).^[13] This attempt at masculine self-fashioning on Paris' part reappears in Act Three, when Paris remains bullishly confident that Helen will choose him over Menelaus, declaring 'All that I have for comfort is but this, / That in the day I show the properer man, / Ith' night I please her better than hee can' (Heywood 1632: F4^v-G^f). The boasting here ostensibly relates to Helen, but is very clearly targeted at the watching men. As in Greene's and Shakespeare's works, women (even such a superlative woman as Helen) are of comparatively little importance. Rather, a man's identity, his 'ideal masculinity', must be witnessed and endorsed by other men, and Paris' insistence that he is 'the properer man', that he has won a competition against Menelaus, recalls Shakespeare's Ulysses' hope that the Greeks can manipulate Achilles not by directly criticising him, but by lauding Ajax. In the *Apology for Actors*, published in 1612 and quoted at the beginning of this article, Heywood insisted that reading about mythical heroes is not sufficient: they must be seen on the stage, and it is this act of perceiving that has the power to alter the behaviour of the watching men, 'to make an Alexander' (Heywood 1612: B4^f). The stress on *seeing* these ideals of manhood, rather than reading about them, differentiates Shakespeare's and Heywood's plays from Greene's prose treatment of similar material. Moreover, at moments such as this, when Paris preens for the watching Greeks and Trojans, Heywood shows how the *performance* of manhood, the public aspect of victory

over another man, is of paramount importance. Caxton's Helen and Paris have stolen a moment of privacy, but Heywood's lovers are on display even when they are alone, and his Paris and Menelaus are weighed against one another, by the audience in the playhouse, and by the observing Greeks and Trojans.

[18] This focus on public approbation, and the concurrent sidelining of women in favour of the male concern with how men appear to one another, persists through both plays, as it did through Greene's *Euphues*. In Act Two of *Troilus and Cressida*, both the Shakespearean Hector's insistence that they return Helen to the Greeks, and his famous change of heart, are dictated by how the Trojans should appear to the watching patriarchy of Greece and Troy:

If Helen then be wife to Sparta's king,
As it is known she is, these moral laws
Of nature and of nations speak aloud
To have her back returned. Thus to persist
In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,
But makes it much more heavy. Hector's opinion
Is this in way of truth; yet ne'ertheless,
My sprightly brethren, I propend to you
In resolution to keep Helen still,
For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependence
Upon our joint and several dignities. (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 2.2.183-193)

Bruce Smith argues that Hector's reversal of opinion is a moment when he 'retreats to his group identity' (Smith 2000: 144). Here, it is a collective male identity that is emphasised, just as it was when Ulysses argued that the (male) group identity of the Greek warriors would be safe, even if Ajax were to be defeated by Hector, because they would know that he was never really the best of them. In the same scene, Troilus and Paris have insisted on Helen's power to make men appear magnificent through their willingness to fight for her: Helen is, as Troilus puts it, 'a theme of honour and renown / A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds' (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 2.2.199-200). Of course, it is the deeds and 'renown' that are important, far more so than any personal attachment to Helen. The debate scene itself is inspired by Caxton, and earlier, in an echo of medieval Troy-narratives by both Caxton and Lydgate, Troilus had accused his brother Helenus of cowardice. He launches a scathing attack on the 'reason' which dictates that Helen is returned, but which takes no account of the slight to male reputation and honour that Troilus sees in such a surrender:

[...] Nay, if we talk of reason
Let's shut our gates and sleep: manhood and honour
Should have hare hearts would they but fat their thoughts
With this crammed reason. (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602] 2.2.46-49)

Helenus is attacked for countenancing the return of Helen, while in Lydgate and Caxton, Troilus ridicules him for his reluctance to recover Hesione: the women are interchangeable, but the slight on manliness remains, and it is masculine honour and reputation that are really important.

[19] Heywood has no such scene of debate between the various Trojan brothers at this point, but he does have Paris describe his judgement of the goddesses, and suggest that he go to retrieve the woman he has been promised by Venus, in order to avenge the Greeks' capture of Hesione. Again, Hector's is the dissenting voice, and again he is concerned not

with the women under discussion, but with the effect that male actions may have on the public perception of the Trojans. Heywood's Hector argues that fighting to avenge Hecuba will actually compromise Trojan reputation, not enhance it: he begs Priam, 'oh for your honour / Take not up uniuert Armes' (Heywood 1632: B2¹). In Lydgate's *Troy Book*, Hector argues that Hecuba is not worth the human cost they may pay for her, stating bluntly 'I rede not that we bye her halfe so deare' (Lydgate 1555 [1420]: Hi^v), a pronouncement that, in its mercenary overtones, foreshadows Shakespeare's Hector's more anguished insistence, that Helen is 'not worth what she doth cost' (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 2.2.51). In Lydgate's poem, Paris does not directly address Hector's speech. Caxton's *Recuyell* does hint at discord, noting 'Parys was no thyng well contente therwyth' (Caxton 1473/1474: Book III, no sig.). Heywood's play goes much further, and Paris goads his brother, as Shakespeare's Troilus goaded Helenus, by forecasting the effect on Hector's renown if he does not agree to their plan:

'Twill be registred
That all King Priams sonnes save one were willing
And forward to revenge them on the Greekes,
Onely that Hector durst not. (Heywood 1632: B2¹)[14]

Finally, despite the strength of his feelings, and in another parallel between Heywood's play and Shakespeare's, it is concern with reputation that drives Heywood's Hector to capitulate, to return to what Smith terms the masculine 'group identity' (Smith 2000: 144) and agree with his more bellicose brothers that revenge should be sought. Shepard argues that in the period, 'Men primarily sought validation of their manhood from each other' (Shepard 2003: 11), and here, for both Heywood's and Shakespeare's Hectors, it is what other men think of them, and how Trojan reputation, individual and collective, is perceived in Greece and in the wider world, that forces them to change their opinions. This mutually conferred, collective reputation as 'ideal' men is, in the end, far more pressing than any personal attachment to a ravished aunt or a Greek mistress.

[20] If women are so clearly sidelined in all three works in favour of men's relations with one another, it is unsurprising that these men could relate to one another in ways that are not just competitive and aggressive, but also erotic. Themes of homoeroticism have long been identified in Shakespeare's play: for example, Carol Cook points to Hector's desire, when he proposes to duel with any Greek who will accept his challenge, to meet a warrior whose lady is such that he will 'dare avow her beauty and her worth / In other arms than hers' (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 1.3.272-273). She suggests that here, with the pun on 'arms', 'The challenge [...] becomes something of a proposition, a seduction' (Cook 1986: 43). Women are not mentioned when Heywood's Hector makes his challenge, but in both plays a homoerotic subtext can often be discerned, paradoxically, in the apparent focus on women. For example, in John Barton's 1968 production of *Troilus and Cressida*, a figure assumed to be Helen is brought forward as the Greeks and Trojans prepare to feast. Then, however, this figure is revealed as Achilles, lewdly gesturing to Paris, in a moment that confirms Eric S. Mallin's suggestion that the entire play 'moves along the patent or submerged axis of homoeroticism, the dedication to male intercourse' (Mallin 1990: 162).

[15] In Heywood's play, the 'dedication to male intercourse' again comes to the fore, as Achilles' desire for Polyxena is seen as impeding his ability to recognise his potential on the battlefield. Thersites makes this clear with reference to the social and quasi-erotic interaction that Achilles would more properly be having with other men. An infatuated Achilles plays the lute, while Agamemnon, Ajax, Ulysses and Menelaus plead with him to fight. Thersites then chides him with comparison to other, more 'ideal' men, here Hector and Ajax:

...hee's in the field, thou in thy Tent,
 Hector playing upon the Greekish burgonets,
 Achilles fingring his effeminate Lute ...
 Ajax is valiant, and in the throng of the Troians,
 Achilles is turn'd Fidler in the Tents of
 The Grecians. (Heywood 1632: G3^r-G3^v)

There is the suggestion of homoeroticism here not just in Achilles' indulgent strumming of his 'effeminate Lute', but also in the more martial images of Hector playing on the 'Greekish burgonets', and Ajax being pressed 'in the throng of the Troians'. Greene had described his Achilles, in typically euphuistic terms, as one 'who knewe as well how to tune the Lute with Venus, as to sound the Trumpet with Mars' (Greene 1587: B2^v). *Euphues* had also included Achilles' desire for the Trojan princess, suggesting it distracts him from manly duty: Greene notes that Achilles was so 'fettered with the love of Polixena' that he would have stayed in Troy, 'but that his thoughts would have bene discerned' (Greene 1587: M3^r). Heywood's Achilles, unlike both Shakespeare's and Greene's, is unconcerned with the opinions of his fellow soldiers, and he cannot be manipulated by unflattering comparisons to other, 'better' men. He eventually enters battle, but does so to revenge Patroclus, while Shakespeare's character fights to defend his own reputation.

[21] Heywood's Achilles is chided by his fellow soldiers for an unseemly interest in Polyxena, and urged to refocus his attention into militarised but also homoeroticised interaction with enemy men in battle. However, when the homoerotic relationship is presented without this veneer of violent warmongering, men are also vulnerable to criticism, a paradox which suggests the fragility of 'ideal' masculine behaviour. In *Troilus and Cressida*, Achilles' relationship with Patroclus is at the centre of any effort to emphasise the homoerotic elements of Shakespeare's play, and Anthony B. Dawson provides a useful overview of the ways the 'erotics of war' have been staged (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 52-55). Dawson also shows that for a modern audience, Achilles' love for Patroclus might mitigate his unsympathetic character (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 55). However, Achilles' closeness to his companion can be a source of anxiety for other male characters, because, like the passion that Heywood's Achilles feels for Polyxena, it keeps him from battle and thus prevents him from expressing his manliness in appropriately militaristic ways. Indeed, Shakespeare's Patroclus and Heywood's Polyxena can be seen as two sides of the same coin, reflecting negatively on Achilles' masculinity in similar ways. While Alan Bray (1982, 2nd ed 1995, and 1990) has noted early modern alarm at the idea of sexual activity between men, Breitenberg has argued that it is the excessive and unmanly display of desire that the Shakespearean Thersites really objects to: 'The play is concerned with Achilles' homoerotic relationship to Patroclus only inasmuch as it has sapped his will to act and thus cast him in the role of a woman, not because of any intrinsic opposition to homoeroticism' (Breitenberg 1996: 165). Similarly, Presson argues that Shakespeare's inclusion of Achilles' desire for *both* Patroclus and Polyxena is intended to make him 'a seventeenth century exemplum of passion overcoming reason' (Presson 1953: 27-28). Here, then, both of Achilles' relationships, in both Heywood's play and Shakespeare's, become a caution to early modern men about the weakening (and feminising) effect of excessive desire, whether heterosexual or homosexual. [16] This concern had reared its head as early as the *Iliad* (where it is Paris who is chided by Hector for similarly intemperate and emasculating lust). When Shakespeare's and Heywood's plays are considered side by side, though, it becomes apparent that the ideal man has a fine line to tread, if he is to avoid excessive or unmanly attachment to either sex.

[22] Daniel Juan Gil points out that 'Shakespeare's version of the Trojan War is [...] troubled from the outset by the fact that men on both sides seem disinclined to fight for or

about women, or to use women as a currency for negotiating relationships between men' (Gil 2005: 80). For Heywood and Greene too, and despite their increased focus on characters such as (in Greene) Polyxena and Briseis, and (in Heywood) Hecuba and Helen, it is relationships between men, and male performances towards and around one another, that are both defining and definitive. Greene's women are mocked for their speech, and then silenced, and Heywood's Achilles is urged to be a 'properer man' (Heywood 1632: C4^F), as Paris would put it, to forget Polyxena and to take up his place in the strangely eroticised 'throng of the Troians' (Heywood 1632: G3^V). However, the sidelining of women does not mean that male identity is secured. In his work on *Troilus and Cressida*, Gary Spear notes 'the essential instability lodged at the centre of all constructions and embodiments of masculinity', and suggests 'The play repeatedly challenges our notions of masculinity' (Spear 1993: 409, 412). Shakespeare's play has attracted vastly more critical attention, particularly in the last forty years, than either Heywood's or Greene's works. However, all three are equally concerned with the 'essential instability' of manhood, with the extent to which it needs to be constructed and confirmed (often by public display or affirmation from other men), and also, and paradoxically, with the impossibility of ever being judged the 'best', most ideal man by one's peers.

[23] The constant threat of masculine 'failure', of being judged as somehow lacking as a man, might seem to be a reductive focus for an author. However, in his study of 'anxious masculinity' in the early modern period, Mark Breitenberg draws on Freud's theorising of anxiety as a kind of pre-emptive, self-protecting response to a perceived danger, to show how in early modern England, anxiety becomes both public and strangely productive. He argues that 'anxiety is largely a discourse articulated and played out between men, a way for men to confirm their identity through a shared language of suffering and distress', and suggests 'the very "expression" of anxiety [...] contributes in a positive way to the formation and positioning of masculinity if only by upholding the discursive authority of the writer in relation to the supposed source of his anxiety and, in so doing, by linking him to fellow sufferers' (Breitenberg 1996: 12-13). In its rhetorical competition between the Greeks and Trojans, Greene's text foregrounds this social or public aspect of anxiety about masculinity, and the way in which it can become, perversely, a source of creative inspiration and literary production. Simultaneously, in writing about the failure of storytelling, Greene the author is able to confront, and perhaps exorcise, some of his fears about the futility of his own literary endeavours. For Shakespeare and Heywood, meanwhile, it is the *theatricality* of their works that allows them to comment on the highly performative nature of the masculine ideals they present to their audiences. Indeed, Smith suggests that the public, communal nature of the early modern theatre might make it particularly suited to advancing arguments about masculinity:

In addition to proverbs and conduct books, a man trying to shape himself to the expectations of his peers might turn also to the theatre [....] The relationship between dramatic fictions and social realities was, and is, a *reciprocal* matter: Shakespeare's plays represent masculine identity in ways that must have been recognizable from everyday life even as they set up models of action and eloquence that a man might want to imitate. (Smith 2000: 40-41)

Smith suggests that the male characters presented by early modern theatre might be simultaneously recognisable figures, with whom the audience might identify, and aspirational models of manhood. In *Troilus and Cressida*, *The Iron Age 1* and *Euphues His Censure to Philautus*, both the familiarity and the exemplarity of these figures are emphasised; they are immediately identifiable not just as men, but as famous heroes. They seem on the one hand to reflect, by virtue of their fame, anxieties about heroic and mythical masculine identity that would not be shared by the more ordinary men reading or seeing

these tales. On the other hand, though, the concerns about masculinity that are articulated by these men and these works are somehow universal. Greene, Shakespeare and Heywood set a deeply familiar myth against more current concerns about male identity and achievement, whether creative or martial. In all three cases, men and masculinity are far from secure, but it is through sidelining women and interacting with one another, by arguing, debating, embracing, criticising and fighting, that these mythical men seek to make sense of themselves, and one another. Their anxieties and fraught interactions reflected the real concerns of early modern men, resulting in fictions that were at once escapist and instructive, rooted in a mythical past but resolutely of the Renaissance.

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[1] For a discussion of the subtle differences between 'manliness' and 'manhood' in early modern thinking, see Jordan 2011. [\[back to text\]](#)

[2] See also Whitaker 1953: 194, Kimbrough 1964: 34-36, Muir 1977: 150-151, and for Heywood's use of Greene, Shakespeare 1998 [1601-1602]: 395. [\[back to text\]](#)

[3] John S. P. Tatlock suggests that the truce during which these tales are told may have its source in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 12. Tatlock 1915, noted in Wilson 2006: 94n. [\[back to text\]](#)

[4] On the huge popularity of Euphues as a character, see Kesson 2014: Ch. 2. [\[back to text\]](#)

[5] See Andrew in Chaucer 1993: 247. Drawing on the work of Flügel (1901) and Curry (1916) he notes that Hector lisps and stutters in Dares the Phrygian's account of the Trojan War, and that stuttering was associated with 'great men' in medieval writing. However, Kimbrough 1964: 31 notes that Hector lisps in Caxton's account, and suggests that such details show that 'Trojan worth is strongly questioned'. [\[back to text\]](#)

[6] Although Mentz (2006: 149) suggests that Book One of the *Iliad* would not be widely known outside the universities at this point. [\[back to text\]](#)

[7] See also Helgerson 1976: esp Ch.5. [\[back to text\]](#)

[8] See Adams 1919: 337, and Clark 1931: 63. Bevington in Shakespeare 1998 [1601-1602]: 396, using Shakespeare 1953 [1601-1602]: 462-463, argues that Heywood's is the later play, but does not suggest he drew on *Troia Britanica*. [\[back to text\]](#)

[9] See also Holaday 1946: 434-435, 439. He argues that while the influence of *Troia Britanica* is clear in *The Golden Age*, subsequent plays in the series are far less reliant on the poem. [\[back to text\]](#)

[10] By contrast, Bevington in Shakespeare 1998 [1601-1602]: 396 argues for similarity between Shakespeare's and Heywood's Thersites. [\[back to text\]](#)

[11] See Shakespeare 1953 [1601-1602]: 463, and Smith 1991: 59, who suggests that the Greeks and Trojans are depicted differently. Shalvi 1965: 284 argues that Shakespeare treats them similarly. [\[back to text\]](#)

[12] Charnes 1989: 413 points to the paradox that Shakespeare's characters are 'notoriously "known" ', and do not really know who they are: this leads to anxious attempts to establish 'their own and each others' identities'. [\[back to text\]](#)

[13] Tatlock 1915: 718n. points out Heywood's use of 'properer man' in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* 4.6, and notes that Paris urges Helen to compare him to Menelaus in *Heroides* XVI. Paris' and Helen's exchange here echoes Cantos IX and X of Heywood's *Troia Britanica*, in which he had translated Ovid's *Heroides* XVI and XVII. **[back to text]**

[14] The 1632 edition attributes these words to Troilus, the previous speaker, but Hector's response clearly suggests Paris: 'Th'art fitter for young Oenons company / Then for a bench of souldiers' (Heywood 1632: B2'). **[back to text]**

[15] The episode is noted by Dawson (Shakespeare 2003 [1601-1602]: 54. **[back to text]**

[16] James 1997: 104 argues that because Achilles' desires for Polyxena and for Patroclus spring from different literary sources, they 'are rival and paralyze him'. Presson 1953: 21-28 outlines how these various sources, including Caxton, Lydgate and George Chapman's translation of the *Iliad*, account for Achilles' withdrawal from battle. **[back to text]**

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