***Femme Fatale*: Penthesilea and the Last Stand of Chivalry  
Hand-out with Latin Texts and Translations**

1. **Troy: a Tale that Deserves to be Retold**

Licet cotidie uetera recentibus obruant, nonnulla tamen iam dudum uetera precesserunt que sic sui magnitudine uiuaci sunt digna memoria ut nec ea cecis morsibus uetustas abolere preualeat nec exacti temporis antiqua curricula sopita taciturnitate concludant.  
Guido, *Historia Destructionis Troiae* f. 1r.

Although the happenings of old are covered daily by recent happenings, yet certain deeds of old have stood out for a long time already, which are so worthy of our remembrance, due to the greatness of their longevity, that neither old age with its invisible bites is strong enough to destroy them nor do the old courses of time gone by hold them in sleeping silence.

1. **Licentious Women and Violent Knights**

**A:** Et si forte nullus solicitator earum appareat, ipsum ipse, dum incedunt, uel dum uagantur sepius in fenestris, uel dum resident in plateis, furtiuis aspectibus clandestine sibi querunt. Nulla spes ergo est reuera tam fallax quam ea que in mulieribus residet et procedit ab eis.  
Guido, *Historia* f. 84r.

And if by chance no seducer of theirs appears, they themselves secretly seek one for their own with hidden glances, while they stroll about, or while they more often walk past the windows, or while they reside in the court-yards. Therefore no hope is in truth so deceitful as that hope which resides in women and comes from them.

**B:** Helenus: “Abstineatis ergo ab hiis quorum finis est dolor et execucio mortis amare, ne proinde teipsum doleas truncum et Heccubam, carissimam consortem tuam, excidio traditam et omnes tuos gladio seuiente truncatos, cum hec omnia sint futura reuera si Paris Greciam cum exercitu presumat adire”.  
Guido, *Historia* f. 33v.

Helenus: “So abstain from these things, whose end is sorrow and the result that of bitter death, so that you then do not have to mourn that you yourself are cut to pieces and Hecuba, your dearest consort, brought to her destruction and all your people cut down by the raging sword, since all these things will come to pass if Paris ventures to go to Greece with an army”.

**Vs.**  
Troilus: “O viri nobiles et nimium animosi, ad quid turbamini circa plurima ad uocem vnius pusillanimis sacerdotis? Nonne est timere proprium sacerdotum bella, uitare aggressus, quos sola pusillanimitas facit amare delicias et in sola uescendi ciborum et potus saturitate tumescere?”

Guido, *Historia* f. 33v.

Troilus: “O noble and very spirited men, why are you disturbed about so many things because of the voice of one fainthearted priest? Is it not fitting for priests to fear warfare, to avoid aggression, since faintheartedness alone has made sure that they love luxury and swell up in the sole enjoyment of consuming food and drink?”

1. **Penthesilea: a Woman like no Other**

**A:** Et dum ad Pirrum propinquius accessisset ita quod Pirrus liquide poterat intelligere uerba eius, Penthesilea mortem Hectoris in uerbis suis sibi multum inproperat proditorie ab eius patre commissam, “ad cuius uindictam non solum mulieres habiles ad pugnandum uerum totus mundus deberet assurgere, et nos quas mulieres asserunt esse, - Greci subito sencient letaliter ictus nostros.”  
Guido, *Historia* f. 104r (my italics).

And when she had come nearer to Pyrrhus so that Pyrrhus could clearly understand her words, Penthesilea reproached him greatly in her own words for the death of Hector, which was treacherously brought about by his father, “for whose vengeance not only skilful women but truly the whole world ought to arise to fight, and we who they say are women, – soon the Greeks will take notice of our deadly blows”.

**B:** Huius autem prouincie erat tunc regina quedam uirgo nobilis et nimium bellicosa Penthesilea nomine, que Hectorem sibi nimium astrinxerat in amicum propter sue strennuitatis nimiam probitatem. Sed audito quod Greci contra regem Priamum in magno exercitu ueniebant, ipsa in auxilio regis Priami cum mille puellis in multa strennuitate pugnantibus apud Troyam ob amorem Hectoris se contulit pugnaturam.   
Guido, *Historia* f. 103r.

At that time the queen of this province [Amazonia, a land in the East] was a certain noble and very warlike maiden, Penthesilea by name, who was much bound in friendship to Hector because of the great worth of his chivalry. And, after she had heard that the Greeks had come with a great army against king Priam, she herself came to Troy to king Priam’s aid with one thousand maidens, who fought with great chivalry, to fight because of her love for Hector.

**C:** quae postquam interemptum Hectorem cognovit, perculsa morte eius regredì domum cupiens ad postremum multo auro atque argento ab Alexandro inlecta ibidem opperiri decreverat.  
Dictys, *Ephemeris Belli Troiani* IV.2.5-9.

who, after she had learned that Hector had been slain, disheartened by his death and desirous to return home, had on the spot decided to stay, since she had been seduced in the end by Alexander with much gold and silver.

**D:** Achilles dum persensit Hectorem ante pectus scuti sui subsidium non habere, accepta quadam lancea ualde forti, non aduertente Hectore, in ipsum irruit et letaliter uulnerauit in ventre sic quod eum mortuum deiecit ab equo.  
Guido, *Historia* f. 88r.

When Achilles noticed that Hector did not have before his chest the protection of his shield, he picked up a certain very fierce lance, and, while Hector did not notice, he made an attack upon him and wounded him fatally in the stomach so that he threw him from his horse, dead.

**E:** Tunc superuenit Achilles, qui postquam uidit Troilum habentem caput inerme et omni defensionis auxilio destitutum, in eum irruit furibundus, et nudato ense ictus ictibus cumulando caput eius crudeliter amputauit, caput ipsum proiciendo inter pedes equorum. Corpus autem eius suis manibus interceptum ad caudam equi sui firmiter alligauit, et per totum exercitum inuerecunde post equum suum crudeliter ipsum traxit.  
Guido, *Historia* f. 99v.

Then Achilles arrived, who, after he had seen that Troilus’ head was unprotected and destitute from all help of defence, made an attack on him, furious, and, after he had unsheathed his sword, heaping blow upon blow, he cruelly hacked off his head, throwing the head itself between the feet of the horses. Yet his body, which he had intercepted with his own hands, he bound firmly to the tale of his horse, and he dragged it shamelessly and cruelly behind his horse through the whole army.

**F:** Pirrus uero in sue animositatis furore cum toto trunco quem gestabat in corpore, non considerans quid sibi inde contingeret, Penthesileam aggreditur, cum tunc Penthesilea casside sua careret, ex uiribus contra eam insurgencium tota quassata. Penthesilea autem cum uidit Pirrum contra se uelociter uenientem, prius credidit illum percutere. Sed Pirrus in percuciendo eam uelocius peruenit, et in uirtute brachiorum suorum cum ense suo sic grauiter eam percussit inter humerum et pennam scuti quod per uiolenciam ictus sui sibi brachium amputauit et ab eius humeri naturali iunctura disiunxit. Penthesilea itaque mortua preceps peruenit in terram. Et Pirrus in sue uindicte satisfaccionem totum corpus eius per frustra truncauit.   
Guido, *Historia* f. 104v-105r.

Then Pyrrhus in fury of his own animosity attacked Penthesilea, carrying the whole shaft within his body, not considering what might then befall him, while Penthesilea at that point did not have her helmet, because it had been completely shattered by the strength of those who had risen up against her. Yet Penthesilea, while she saw Pyrrhus coming quickly towards her, believed that she could strike him first. But Pyrrhus came more quickly to her in order to pierce her, and with the strength of his arms he hit her so gravely with his sword between the shoulder and the strap of her shield that through the violence of his blow he amputated her arm and severed it from the natural binding of her shoulder. In such a way Penthesilea fell headlong to the earth, dead. And Pyrrhus cut her whole body into pieces in satisfaction for his revenge.

1. **A Message of Hope**

Hic Achilleides creuit, et Laumedontam fratrem suum Thesallie coronauit in regem, seipso postposito, ad quem regnum ipsum racionabiliter pertinebat, et nichilominus ipsius sui fratris amore uoluit et mandauit quod omnes Troiani qui capti erant in Grecia libertate plenaria potirentur.   
Guido, *Historia* f. 126v.

This Achilleides grew up, and he crowned his own brother Laomedon king of Thessaly, disregarding himself, to whom this kingdom reasonably belonged, and nonetheless out of love for his own brother he wanted and ordered that all the Trojans, who were held captive in Greece, received complete freedom.