The Forgotten Homerist: Reassessing William Ewart Gladstone's Role in the Victorian Reception of Homer (1872-1884)

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Abstract

This thesis uses William Gladstone's Homeric research to reassess the relationship between nineteenth-century Britain and the ancient past. Gladstone (1809-1898), who served as Prime Minister four times during the Victorian period, has often been dismissed as a scholar of Homer: too enthusiastic, too much of a dilettante, too ready to cast aside evidence. But, through a careful examination of unstudied archival evidence, it is possible to build a very different picture.

During the 1870s, Gladstone embarks on a Homeric campaign which changes his contemporaries' understanding of time and history. By carefully exploiting recent archaeological discoveries – particularly in the case of Schliemann's discovery of Troy – Gladstone works to bring both Homer and Troy out of the world of myth and into that of history. As this thesis will demonstrate, for many Victorians, Gladstone, not Schliemann, brought Homer's Troy to light, in the ruins of Hissarlik.

Working behind the scenes, over the course of many years, Gladstone revolutionises his contemporaries' understanding of the study of Homer. He pioneers the study of what he calls 'Homerology': a new approach to the poems. Gladstone's Homerology sees the epics as vital sources for the scientific investigation of the ancient past. Gladstone presents Victorian Britain with a new model of time and history, where myth becomes a historical reality. Consequently, for Gladstone, it is the Homerist who, above all, has the right to write about the ancient past of man. Through a series of case studies - which have been unnoticed or unrecognised by previous scholarship, this thesis demonstrates that Gladstone's Homer shaped many key Victorian discourses about the earliest history of mankind: from archaeology to evolution. In so doing, it makes the case for a granular, archive-driven methodology for classical reception, one which is equipped to capture the nuances, complications, and complexities of relationships with the ancient past.

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Preface
The Library and the Labyrinth

One late Sunday evening, I opened the gate of Saint Deiniol's Library, in the small town of Hawarden, Wales. A figure stood tall in the darkness: the statue of William Gladstone, Victorian politician, and patron of the Library. Under his stern gaze, I made my way to the Library's building.

Unexpected news awaits me: I am invited to spend my evening in the library. I am here to study a little-known aspect of William Gladstone's life. Queen Victoria's serial Prime Minister had a life-long record of publications on Homer and his Poems. Gladstone's political career, his strong religious beliefs, and his interest in emerging disciplines such as archaeology, have caused him to be underestimated as a Homeric commentator by critics, for well over a hundred years. A re-evaluation of Gladstone's Homeric studies is long overdue. Where better to begin than late at night, in Gladstone's own library?

Saint Deiniol's Library houses 32,000 volumes William Gladstone donated in the 1890s from his personal collection. It is engulfing. Piles of volumes rise from floor to ceiling. The lights are pleasantly dim, and the smell of old ink and leather permeates the room. Time feels frozen: a shuffling sound, just out of sight, might almost be Gladstone himself, caressing the ornate spines, searching for a reading, or readjusting the order of his precious books. The volumes range from history, politics, religion, and archaeology to natural sciences, geography, and literature from across the world, both ancient and modern. In a corner recess, a rich selection of texts on magic, spiritualism, and mesmerism is lurking – unorthodox readings for a Prime Minister. Gladstone's interest in Homer above all other ancient authors is clear to see from the library's shelves. But there is also something odd about Gladstone's Homeric collection. Homer's Poems were central to Victorian art, literature, and theatre. But Gladstone's Homeric collection does not resemble the rest of the library – it is not the miscellany of works which one would expect from a voracious reader, or a passionate collector swayed by contemporary trends. Quite the opposite: the range and specialisation of Gladstone's Homeric books suggest

decades of patient and methodical research. Behind the public façade of the Prime Minister, a Homeric scholar beckons.

The archives of Saint Deiniol's Library bring the Homeric scholar into even sharper focus. The collections are extraordinary, and almost entirely unstudied. Like any precious treasure, Gladstone's Homeric papers are stored behind an armoured door inside a vault. They are a vast and miscellaneous collection of prints and manuscripts, which have defied any attempt to bring order to them for well over a century. There are pamphlets, newspaper clippings, short notes, letters, and drafts, spanning five decades. The collection surpasses even the astonishing collection of texts in Gladstone's library.

For decades, scholarship on Gladstone ignored the archival traces of his Homeric scholarship – and a considerable number of his publications on Homer. This has begun to shift, with a number of recent studies. However, the full scale and impact of Gladstone's role in Victorian Homeric discourse are still insufficiently appreciated or understood. Over almost 50 years of research, Gladstone published five books and over twenty articles on Homer. Yet, out of this vast and variegated production, modern scholarship – with a few significant exceptions, such as Bebbington (2004) – has focused on two of Gladstone's early works: *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* and *Juventus Mundi: the Gods and Men of the Heroic Age*, published respectively in 1858 and 1869. Gladstone's works from the 1870s onwards remain, to a large extent unexplored, and their significance underplayed. Scholars have tended to dismiss much of Gladstone's output as reiterations or expansions of the author's earlier work. In consequence, the articles on Homer Gladstone wrote for the Victorian press remain substantially unstudied. And no comprehensive study of Gladstone's unpublished papers on Homer exists. Of the manuscript collections, only Gladstone's diaries have been systematically published by Matthew and Foot (1968-1994).

The collections of Saint Deiniol's Library turn out to be merely the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Gladstone's Homeric studies. Archives across Europe hold parts of Gladstone's forgotten Homeric papers. There are unpublished manuscripts: letters, drafts, and notes. Traces can be found in the proceedings of London learned societies, and Victorian newspaper articles.

But the more material that comes to light, the more the information it provides becomes scattered and confused. The picture becomes cloudier, rather than clearer. Gladstone's first biographers had good reasons to be wary of his papers, and to see them as a dangerous labyrinth. The scale and multiplicity of Gladstone's archive has defeated

attempts to narrate it, for well over a hundred years. To trace the contours of this labyrinth, it is necessary to work with sources which interact and intersect with one another, allowing the shape of the archive to shape the narrative of it.

One decade of Gladstone's Homeric studies soon emerged, as the most promising case study, to demonstrate how different Gladstone's research (and its impact) looks, when reconstructed from archival sources, rather than from existing scholarly accounts. Modern scholarship has tended to dismiss Gladstone's Homeric studies in the 1870s. However, this decade represents a period of crucial importance for Gladstone's Homeric work – and, indeed, for the broader understanding of Homer, both in the nineteenth-century and today. In the 1870s, Gladstone positions himself at the heart of Victorian cultural discourse and becomes, for many, an authority in the field of Homeric studies. Throughout the decade, Gladstone guides and transforms the contemporary discourse on Homer.

First, this thesis will track Gladstone's intellectual activities, in and out of his study, to establish how he conducts his research. Gladstone's Homeric publications turn out to be only a small part of the picture, when it comes to his influence on discourse. On the one hand, Gladstone reads and drafts; on the other, he contacts and meets a dizzyingly wide range of people to discuss Homer. He writes to and debates with university professors, museum curators, archaeologists, editors, and fellow politicians. He takes part in learned society meetings; he joins and hosts intellectual parties; he visits, contributes to, and sets up museum exhibitions. Gladstone aims to shape the Victorian discourse on Homer.

Then, by studying Gladstone's style and modality of research – his modus operandi – this thesis will reassess his role in Victorian Homeric discourse, shifting our perspective on him from a prolific author to an agent of change. Gladstone situates himself at the centre of a network of crucial interpersonal relationships and prompts conversations on Homer in and out of the academic world. In particular, Gladstone stage-manages encounters which bring together Victorian personalities with very different interests and enable the circulation of knowledge and ideas. In this environment, disciplines meet, and boundaries are tested.

Gladstone's Homeric research is, at its heart, a series of conversations. His encounters with figures such as Charles Darwin and Heinrich Schliemann irreversibly change his approach to the study of Homer. Gladstone promotes an interdisciplinary model of Homeric research, aiming to move the subject away from a purely literary and

philological model. Between history and literature, art, and science, present and past, Gladstone Christens a new field: Homerology.

Gladstone's Homerology plays a key part in Victorian cultural debates. It is a restless, endlessly innovative way of looking at the ancient world. This thesis will investigate the revolutionary results Gladstone produces, the new methodologies he adopts, and the new tools for research he introduces. Gladstone aims to convince – and to engage – the broadest possible range of readers, from students to scholars, from experts to amateurs who do not know ancient Greek. His work – from new translations to a dictionary and an exhibition – aims to transform the study of Homer. The traces of Gladstone's Homeric studies of the 1870s surround us today. The *OED* reminds us that Gladstone's term for the field of Homeric research is still in use: Homerology. Many more traces are woven through the fabric of contemporary classical scholarship.

Gladstone's library, and the labyrinth of his papers, both point towards a new approach to Gladstone's Homeric research – and to the study of classical reception more broadly: one which makes space for twists and turns, unlikely meetings, and the complexities of the archive. If we follow Gladstone in his journey to build Homerology, not only do we uncover his crucial contribution to the reception of the ancient world during the Victorian period, but we see him transforming the ways in which Victorian Britain encountered both the past and the present.

Introduction
Re-assessing Gladstone's Homeric scholarship of the 1870s

This thesis investigates and reassesses the Victorians' relationship with the ancient past during the 1870s, using Gladstone's Homeric scholarship. It uncovers the intellectual life of Gladstone, and his complex interests, from archaeology to antiquarianism, from history to natural sciences, and from philology to linguistics. An embodiment of the intellectual elite of nineteenth-century Britain, Gladstone's life and worldview were defined by the study of the ancient world. For him, ancient texts were guides to the present day – and through Homer, Gladstone set out to reshape Victorian culture.

In the past decades, increasing attention has been paid to Gladstone's influence on Victorian cultural discourses, outside the field of politics.[1] David Bebbington pioneered this re-evaluation of Gladstone's intellectual legacy, with his 2004 study, *The Mind of Gladstone: Religion, Homer, and Politics*. Bebbington uses his book to set the parameters for future studies on Gladstone's intellectual interests and their impact over the Victorian age. Bebbington's archive-driven narrative radically changes the conversation about Gladstone's Homeric research. Contrary to a scholarly consensus which, following Lloyd-Jones (1989), side-lined Gladstone's Homeric studies as extensive but inconsequential, Bebbington shows how these studies developed and reverberated in the culture of his time. Importantly, Bebbington also uncovered consistent progression in Gladstone's research. Scholars like Agatha Ramm identified an evolution in Gladstone's Homeric studies but did not explore the matter further.[2] Bebbington focuses on the ways in which Gladstone's theories developed between the 1840s and the 1860s, in relation to the author's political and religious convictions.[3] This thesis, however, focuses on the 1870s, to reassess Gladstone's influence over different Victorian cultural discourses. To

[1] See e.g. Ronald Quinault and Roger Swift 2012 for a reassessment of the complexity of Gladstone's personality and intellectual interests together with the many-sided nature of his career. Here, the authors dedicate space for the re-evaluation of Gladstone's Homeric investigation.
[2] Ramm 1989: 1-29.
[3] See Jenkyns 1980: 192-226; Turner 1981: 135-170; 234-244; Schreuder 1898: 51-84; Gange 2009: 190-206; Gange David and Bryant-Davies 2013: 39-70 for Gladstone's Homeric research as a means to carry on the author's political and religious agenda.

this aim, it expands Bebbington's archive-driven approach to consider together with Gladstone's unpublished papers, Victorian newspapers, and periodicals. It aims to demonstrate that the full complexities of a culture's relationship with the past – and the ways in which key individuals shaped that relationship – can only be understood using granular, archival evidence as a means to re-read, re-assess, re-contextualise major publications – books and volumes.

In investigating Gladstone's Homeric scholarship, it is important to dispel the idea that the study of the poet is of mere, antiquarian interest to him, a pastime to fill the leisure hours between his political commitments. There is an undeniable correlation between the intensification of his Homeric studies and publications and his periods out of government, but this does not justify the dismissal of his Homeric activity as recreational. Rather than working on Homer to forget his political commitments, Gladstone is doing so in order to pursue them in different forms and through different instruments. A strong political component pervades Gladstone's Homeric research, as Bebbington (2004) observes. Gladstone views Homer as the creator of a political model with exemplary value, particularly when used comparatively, in relation to present-day events and systems. Homer is also, for Gladstone, a key text when it comes to understanding the history of religion. Gladstone shows a particular predilection for doctrinal religious disputes. His theological theories shape his vision of the history of humanity and, consequently, his approach to Homeric studies. The theological component is perhaps the most eccentric, and the most distinctive, element in Gladstone's work on Homer.[4]

But Gladstone's Homeric interests are not limited to politics and religion. He pays particular attention to the most recent discoveries made by contemporary archaeology and keeps up with the latest news from excavations. First, he shows interest in Egyptian archaeology, and his diaries report that he works extensively on François Lenormant and the decipherment of hieroglyphs. He is also fascinated by the Assyrian world, and he follows attentively the advancement of Biblical archaeology. He attends the first reading of the Epic of Gilgamesh by George Smith at the Society for Biblical Archaeology (1872). He follows Luigi Cesnola's endeavours in Cyprus. He plays a crucial role in the interpretation and reception of the discoveries of Heinrich Schliemann, in the Troad and in Greece.

[4] Bebbington 2004:149-154.

Finally, Gladstone plunges into the debates surrounding Charles Darwin's theory of evolution – bearing, as always, his Homer. For Gladstone, talking about Homer is a way to talk about the most urgent questions of the day. It is means to engage with the world, not to withdraw from it. As Turner (1981) reminds us, during the nineteenth-century, professed reverence for the ancient past coexisted with systematic appropriation and transformation of antiquity, to suit the needs of the present. Gladstone's Homeric studies are perhaps the most significant example of this widespread cultural phenomenon. Gladstone reads, translates, and rewrites Homer to fit specifically Victorian preoccupations, from Darwinism to religion to politics.

Gladstone and his Critics

The most infamous aspect of Gladstone's Homeric research is, as Bebbington (2004) puts it: 'the statesman's apparent obsession with Homer's account of the divinities of Olympus.'[5] The core of Gladstone's early Homeric research between the 1850s and 1860s is the study of the ancient Poet's Olympian pantheon. The remainder of his work features this aspect heavily, as Gladstone reflects, alters, and modifies his Homer studies throughout his life.

Commentators of Gladstone, both contemporaries and Victorians, have focused on Gladstone's religious interests in Homer's pantheon, arguing that the statesman turned to Homer with a view to apologetic for Christian Orthodoxy. This undeniable theological aspect has conditioned research on Gladstone's Homer and evaluating his impact on Victorian culture. As the accepted equation is that Gladstone's Homeric research equates to a religious enterprise, for Gladstone's critics, the key to reading the author's Homeric enterprise is religion even more than politics - the other area Gladstone heavily reworks in his Homeric studies.

Via detailed archival research, Bebbington most recently and exhaustively has demonstrated that Gladstone saw the investigation of the Homeric deities as a supplement and complement to his religious work, and most of his contemporaries criticized him for that. I agree with Bebbington, especially for the first decades of studies culminating in the colossal *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* (1858); the apologetic reason is the most important for Gladstone's engagement with Homer. Gladstone, as Bebbington states,

[5] See Bebbington 2004:149-154 for how Homeric research reflects the change in the political orientations and ideals of the author.

intended to defend true religion by enlisting the Greek gods on his side.[6] However, as Bebbington (2004) also reminds us, it is essential to highlight that although the desire to use Homer as a vehicle for political purposes was not the chief objective of Gladstone's Homeric enterprise, it was still a significant and integral part of his whole Homeric studies.

Looking at the contents of the *Studies on Homer* confirms that religion and politics are central reflections in Gladstone's Homeric research. It turns out that Gladstone dedicated the third volume to a detailed analysis and elaborated interpretation of the Olympian religion and a quarter of a volume to the politics of the Homeric age.

From selected examples taken from the 1858 work, it becomes clear that Gladstone is, first and foremost, a restless politician and a fervent religious thinker, and he uses Homer to pursue his political and religious agenda. For example, Gladstone sees Homer's politics and political system as a precursor to a constitutional monarchy. He presents an equation where Agamemnon forecasts the monarch Queen Victorian and the assembly of princes in the Parliament.[7] But, above all, Gladstone is obsessed with retracing the idea of the trinity in the Epics. According to the author, because Homer contains traces of the Christian revelation from God to men, Apollo represents the redeemer, Zeus God, and Athena the Holy Spirit. And again, the Triptych of Zeus, Hades, and Poseidon, according to Gladstone, hints at the concept of the Holy Trinity.[8] Overall, I agree that the author, who is conditioned by solid convictions and preoccupations that are both religious and political, submits arguments that sound extreme and untenable to modern and Victorian readers alike.

Gladstone's study of the Homeric pantheon has been labelled as a snobbish hobby of a bored politician or the lucubration of a psyched religious thinker, and most of his Victorian commentators, including Lumineers of Homeric studies, sarcastically dismiss the author's views – especially on the religious theme. As Bebbington (2004) presents a detailed account of the various criticisms Gladstone's Homeric work accumulates through the years, I will signal only some of the most eminent Victorian voices that dismissed Gladstone's Homeric research. George Cornewall Lewis, classicist and politician, refused Gladstone's theological reading of Homer as 'fundamentally wrong.' Britain's leading

[6] See Bebbington 2004: 154-155. The scholar also puts into focus and corrects the misinterpretation in circulation regarding Gladstone's Homeric enterprise. As Bebbignton clarifies Gladstone holds no theory of double or parallel revelation.
[7] Bebbington 2004: 146-154.
[8] Bebbington 2004:159-162.

Hellenist, Benjamin Jowett, spoke of Gladstone's Homeric views as 'mere nonsense'. Alfred Tennyson, the great British Poet, argued with Gladstone about Homer and dismissed the latter's views as 'hobby-horsical'. Even John Morley admitted that his hero's ideas in this area were 'commonly judged fantastic'. Jane Ellen Harrison, an early twentieth-century classicist, thought Gladstone had 'gone dotty over the Logos and Divine Wisdom.' Finally, Lord Acton, in a letter to his wife, laments a dreadful hour spent at Hawarden listening to Gladstone's latest Homeric theories.[9]

Gladstone's Homeric fixation soon became scholars' and satyrs' polemic target. From the 1850s, Victorian humourists mischievously parodied Gladstone's obsession with the poet and the Homeric age. Parodic vignettes began to spread, closely followed by responses in the burlesque theatre.[10] These mockeries, which are primarily political in flavour, will accompany the author throughout his career and.[11] Gladstone's love for the Ancient poet and the defence of the importance of Classical studies the author tirelessly advocated led his adversaries to accuse him of being a pompous, conservative Christian royalist. A neat example of these attacks is the cartoons related to the Irish question that present Gladstone as a warrior from the *Iliad*. Given all these elements, to fully appreciate the complexity of the author's Homeric research and its reception, it is crucial to examine it from political and religious perspectives.

All this considered, I propose a change in perspective. I suggest going back to Gladstone's archive to his correspondence and papers, his collection of books and newspaper clippings, and systematically intersecting them. Following the disconnected and slippery paper trail, I can enter private living rooms and conversations to encounter old and new interlocutors who are not strictly Homeric scholars by profession but are not less interested and vocal about the Epics. In my research, they find a place back in the Victorian discourse on Homer. Amid these interlocutors and in this social informal dimension, I argue, Gladstone plays a crucial role in his Homeric narrative. Here, his blemishes and extremisms are part of the Victorian discourse on Homer, and his eccentricities, which today sound obsolete and conservative, were then the catalyst of the

[9] See Bebbington 2004:142-143 and Bebbington and Swift 2000: 58-59: Historians have tended to echo these judgements and to have assumed that Gladstone's treatment of the poet was an idiosyncratic foible.' The authors remind us that there are exceptions like Sir Philip Magnus, who locates Gladstone's preoccupation with Olympian religion within Christian apologetics, and Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones. J. L. Myres, Agatha Ramm, Colin Matthew and Frank Turner offer other sympathetic readings of Gladstone's Homeric enterprise.

[10] See e.g. Hall and Macintosh 2005; Hall 1999: 336-66; Bryant-Davies 2018a: 47-124; Bryant-Davies 2018b: 540-557 for precious insights on these topics.

[11] See e.g. *The Punch*'s famous cartoons of Gladstone.

contemporary discussion. I aim to demonstrate the transformative power of Gladstone's Homeric enterprise in the 1870s.

I focus my research on the definition – and intensification – of Gladstone's archaeological interests and unedited archival documents that allow me to shed new light on texts and activities carried out by the author during the 1870s. Using archaeological remains to prove the dating and existence of Homeric civilization, Gladstone pursued another leading objective of his Homeric enterprise, defined by Bebbington as the desire to vindicate the poet. Bebbington (2004) focuses his studies on this aspect of Gladstone's Homeric campaign, starting from the author's rebuttal of Karl Lachmann's theories and his battle on ancient history with George Grote.[12] I propose to continue this investigation, focusing on a later period in Gladstone's Homeric research and the author's archaeological interest.

In my thesis, I will briefly reference when crucial political and religious discourses come into play and influence Gladstone's Homeric enterprise. A detailed examination of the connections of the Homeric research of the 1870s with Gladstone's ampler and the most-known activities of politicians and religious thinkers is the natural next step and will be the focus of my future studies of Gladstone's Homeric enterprise. My research also opens space for further investigations into another direction I find particularly stimulating, demonstrating the wider influence on Victorian culture in its broader sense of Gladstone's interest in and popularisation of Homeric archaeology, in particular through manifestations that are typical of the Victorian age, such as staged performances and material culture.[13]

Homer in the 1870s

Gladstone's Homeric studies are transformed, in the 1870s, due to the author encountering some of the most recent discoveries of Victorian archaeology. Through gathering and re-interpreting episodes of Gladstone's life and Homeric studies I argue it will be possible to reassess the scope and significance of Gladstone's Homeric activities of the 1870s, reintroducing complexity to Gladstone's Homeric interventions.

Gladstone's Homeric narrative finds its way into a dizzying range of Victorian cultural spaces: from epistolary exchanges to museum exhibitions, from the meeting of

[12] Bebbington 2004:149-154; Bebbington 1998: 157–198.
[13] See e.g. Baker 2019 who studies Schliemann's exhibition of his Trojan discoveries in detail, focusing on the show's repercussions on material culture, imagery, and jewellery reproductions.

London learned societies to university classrooms, Gladstone promotes and refashions Victorian conversations on Homer. The 1870s mark, in fact, an echoing Homeric campaign, in terms of its impact on different Victorian discourses. Gladstone aims to reshape the study of the Epics, breaking free from a textual approach, sanctioning the birth of a new science he terms Homerology.

Only by illustrating the ways in which Gladstone operates, for a prolonged period of time, on multiple levels and through varied means, is it possible to reveal the ways in which he reshapes Victorian Homeric discourse. Gladstone's greatest Homeric achievement is his role in the discovery of Troy (Chapters 1-4). Strengthened by Schliemann's discoveries, Gladstone challenges the dominant view in Britain which dismissed Homer as a legend and sought to locate the heroic age within historical time, and locate Troy on the hill of Hissarlik, in modern Turkey. Gladstone reached new readers with his Homeric studies – newspaper readers, museum goers and even scientists.[14] He used Homer to intervene – albeit he is not always successful, nor fully entitled – in the most important debates of the day, from archaeology to the theory of evolution (Chapter 5-6). While his work attracted strident criticism, his Homeric studies gained increasing visibility. The author's unedited papers and some periodical articles of the late 1870s and early 1880s show a shift in the reception of Gladstone's Homeric work as some Victorian readers – specialists and not – acknowledged Gladstone's authoritative voice in the Homeric field and the transformative power of his work (Chapter 7).

Gladstone's Homeric studies challenge and reshape his contemporaries' understanding of history and time. Gladstone envisages Homerology as a wide-ranging field of investigation: Homer could be the guide to any investigation of the remote past – political, religious, ethnographical, historical, or scientific. Thus, Gladstone uses his Homeric research to attempt to reset the terms of Victorian discourses on the past, and even dares intervening in the debate on evolution (Chapter 6). Contrary to what is generally believed, Gladstone is not dismissive of scientific thought.[15] Rather, when he

[14] See Gange 2009: 190-192 for significant exception. The author demonstrates that Gladstone's major contribution to the popularisation of Schliemann's Trojan discoveries is his Christianised mediation that leads to the birth of a new popular genre: Universal Epic.

[15] See Turner 2017: 19 ff.: 'It is significant that Gladstone opposed in one way or the other the thought of Darwin.' See Morley 1911: 209 for Gladstone's lack of interest in the scientific movement. See Bebbington 2004: 234-241 for a reassessment of Gladstone's scientific interests: 'It is usually supposed that Gladstone took little interest in natural sciences […] Gladstone was no scientist himself. Yet he followed scientific thinking with close attention, especially when it had a bearing on his own special concerns.'

attempts to engage with Darwin's theories, for him the Homeric Poems become an arena to open a dialogue between science and faith.

This thesis is, in other words, interested in the power of neglected details: it argues for an archival-driven approach to classical reception, one which sheds new light on the circulation of ideas, the ways in which the ancient world is understood, and the construction of the historical consciousness of an age.

Gladstone and Schliemann

Gladstone's first biographers, such as Herbert Woodfield Paul[16] and John Morley[17], faced the monumental task of retelling the story of the four-time Prime Minister to an audience who had lived under Gladstone's governments, at a time when Gladstone's politics, far from being a faded memory, still had concrete consequences over everyday life. As Morley himself remarks: 'I am well aware that to try to write Mr. Gladstone's life at all- the life of a man who held an imposing place in many high national transactions, whose character and career may be regarded in such various lights, whose interests were so manifold, and whose years bridged so long a span of time- is a stroke of temerity. To try and write his life today, is to push temerity still further. The ashes of controversy […] are still hot.'[18] Gladstone, in other words, intimidated and overwhelmed his biographers, from the very beginning.

These early biographers had met Gladstone personally and admired him and his political acts.[19] The stature of Gladstone as a politician and his biographers' personal involvement fostered a general restriction of their focus on Gladstone's life as a statesman. Both Paul and Morley acknowledged this. Paul emphasises: 'Mr Gladstone's theological tenets and ecclesiastical leanings have been indicated with severe brevity. This is mainly a record of his political doings, which include his political sayings'. Then, Morley, a few years later, also clearly states: 'Some may think in this connection, that I have made the preponderance of politics excessive in the story of a genius of signal versatility to whom politics were only one interest among many […]. The detailed history of Mr. Gladstone as theologian and churchman will not be found in these pages and

[16] See Paul, H.W. (1901) *Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, Nelson & Sons: London, Edinburgh, Dublin, and New York.
[17] See Morley, J. (1911) *Life of Gladstone,* Macmillan and Co, London & New York.
[18] Morley 1911: 1.
[19] See Paul 1901: vi; Morley 1911: 4.

nobody is more sensible than their writer of the gap.'[20] Gladstone's earlier biographers committed to present posterity with the story of Gladstone, the politician. Gladstone's other interests inevitably were left unexplored: his religious commitment and writings, his long-lasting study of the Homeric epics, together with his involvement with Schliemann and the discovery of Troy.

In the early twentieth century, Gladstone's papers were not yet systematically catalogued, and his biographers encountered difficulty in accessing and gathering comprehensive documentation. Paul notes that his reconstruction of Gladstone's life is based only on the resources open to the public at the time, combined with facts within his own recollection or knowledge.

Morley on the other hand, has access to more specialist material. When Morley provides a general account of the sources he employed for Gladstone's biography, he lists Gladstone's correspondence, as comprising both letters preserved by the statesman's family at Hawarden and those provided by Gladstone's correspondents, journals and papers, limited-access documents in need of the King's consent, and the Gladstone diaries - 40 volumes written in double columns.[21]

What is striking in Morley's account of his sources is his insistence on the vastness of the material he had to inspect before he could start writing. 'Besides that, vast accumulation (of the papers collected at Hawarden),' Morley enumerates 'several thousands of other pieces from the legion of Mr. Gladstone's correspondents. Between two or three hundred thousand written papers of one sort or another must have passed under my view.'[22] And at the closing of his preface, Morley concludes – almost admitting defeat in front of the overwhelming abundance of Gladstone's papers – with a confession: 'I have not reproduced the full text of letters in the proportion customary in English biography. The existing mass of his letters is enormous.'[23]

No wonder, in consequence, that many key aspects of Gladstone's life and his Homeric studies have not been fully understood by the existing scholarship. When it comes to Gladstone's relationship with Heinrich Schliemann, even the most sensitive recent studies have revealed only part of the picture.

The surviving Gladstone-Schliemann correspondence spans approximately ten years, from 1874-1884 and consists mainly of brief letters and invitations. During that

[20] Morley 1911: 2.
[21] Morley 1911: vi.
[22] Morley 1911: vi; Paul 1901: v-vi.
[23] Morley 1911: 5.

decade, Gladstone holds the office of Prime Minister twice.[24] Given the mass of parliamentary material available for that particular decade, and the arguably scattered evidence of Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship, it is easy to understand how Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport ended up lost, swallowed in the whirlpool of Gladstone's papers and publications.

Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport has become, however, a recurrent preoccupation in more recent scholarship which investigates the development of archaeology in nineteenth-century Britain in general and has prompted a number of more focused studies of Gladstone's and Schliemann's work.

This shift in scholarly interest can be traced back to the 1990s[25] and the studies of John Vaio, a classicist with a particular interest in the history of classical scholarship in the nineteenth-century. In two articles following respectively, the International Conference on Heinrich Schliemann at Werner, in December 1989, and, the International Conference on Heinrich Schliemann at Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin in December 1990, Vaio reconstructed a detailed account of the salient points of Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship, arguing that Gladstone was Schliemann's main supporter in Britain in the years following the first excavations at Hissarlik.[26] As Vaio himself acknowledges, *The Gladstone Diaries with Cabinet Minutes and Prime-Ministerial Correspondence*, edited by Matthew and Foot, constituted an indispensable framework for his argument. Vaio regards the *Gladstone Diaries* as the 'central documentary source for the political, social, cultural history of Europe in the 19th century'[27] that revealed 'the chronology and context of Gladstone's relationship with Schliemann.'[28] Vaio expanded on the information contained in Gladstone's diaries, drawing on a limited number of articles from the main Victorian periodicals and unpublished letters from Gladstone's papers.[29]

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[24] Gladstone was Prime Minister four times: first in 1868-1874; then, in 1880-1880; again in 1886; and, finally, between 1892-1894.
[25] See Fitton (1991) 'Heinrich Schliemann and the British Museum, British Museum' *Occasional Papers*: 83; Easton, D. F. (1994) 'Priam's Gold: The Full Story', *Anatolian Studies* (44): 221-243.
[26] See Vaio, John (1990) 'Gladstone and the Early Reception of Schliemann in England' (ed.) Calder, W. M. III and Cobet, J. *Heinrich Schliemann nach hundert Jahren*, Frankfurt/Main: 415-430; Vaio, John (1992) 'Schliemann and Gladstone: New Light from Unpublished Documents' (ed.) Hermann, J. *Heinrich Schliemann: Grundlagen und Ergebnisse moderner Archaeologie 100 Jahre nach Schliemanns Tod*, Berlin: 73-76.
[27] Vaio 1992: 73.
[28] Vaio 1992: 73.
[29] Vaio 1992: 73.

In particular, Vaio focused on the origin of Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport. Via an excerpt from Gladstone's unpublished correspondence, Vaio shows that it is Charles Newton, the archaeologist in charge of Roman and Greek antiquities at the British Museum, who brings Schliemann and his discoveries to the attention of Gladstone, by directly involving the politician in the secret (and unsuccessful) negotiations for the selling of Schliemann's Trojan collection to the British Museum in 1873.

Vaio sees Gladstone and Schliemann as a duo of enthusiastic amateurs, who join forces against institutionalized scholarship and appear to be beating professionals and specialists at their own game.[30] Not only did Gladstone recognise in Schliemann a kindred spirit, a Homeric true believer,[31] but also, Gladstone finds in Schliemann an ally in his quest to establish the value of the Homeric epics as historical sources. To paraphrase Vaio, Schliemann's discoveries, as they apparently prove the historical reality of Homeric Troy, provide Gladstone with a 'formidable weapon' against the 'ultra-scepticism' of contemporary Homeric scholarship.[32] According to Vaio, Gladstone enthusiastically embraces Schliemann's claims and starts a campaign to ensure the British public's appreciation of Schliemann and his discoveries. Gladstone soon becomes Schliemann's greatest spokesman, as far as the people of Britain and the English-speaking world were concerned.[33] Vaio attributes Gladstone's success in popularising Schliemann and his findings to his stature as a public figure, both as a politician and an amateur Homerist. After all, Gladstone was not an obscure intellectual known only to professional circles, but one of the leading statesmen of Europe.[34]

No matter how compelling, Vaio's reconstruction of Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport is neither sufficiently comprehensive nor sufficiently nuanced. As the aim of his study is to prove that Gladstone is the chief architect of Schliemann's fame in Britain, Vaio expands only on the relevant events reported in Gladstone's diaries. His research stops at 1877 with Gladstone and Schliemann's joint publication, *Mycenae: A Narrative of Researches and Discoveries at Mycenæ and Tiryns.* According to Vaio, Gladstone's preface to Schliemann's account of the archaeological discoveries at Mycenae is a decisive example of Gladstone's unceasing and energetic support of the German, in the

[30] Vaio 1990: 422.
[31] Vaio 1990: 418.
[32] Vaio 1990: 416-417.
[33] Vaio 1992: 73.
[34] Vaio 1990: 421-422.

early years of his archaeological career. Vaio thus leaves the final years of Gladstone's relationship with Schliemann unexplored[35] and omits the exhibition of Schliemann's Trojan Collection at the South Kensington Museum in London and Gladstone's involvement in it. In his reconstruction, Vaio also dismisses Gladstone's open disagreements with Schliemann's Homeric theories. As his research aims to establish Gladstone's fundamental contribution to Schliemann's archaeological career, Vaio minimizes the politician's rejection of the dating proposed by Schliemann for Homer and the Trojan War and dismisses Gladstone's reservations about Schliemann's interpretations of both the Homeric Poems and many of his finds. In so doing, Vaio pushes forward a dangerously limited model for Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship.

A harmonious and linear collaboration between two enthusiasts, united against established scholarship, hardly accommodates the full picture: most notably, it does not make space, as we will see, for Gladstone's rebuttals and public criticism of Schliemann's Homeric theories. Nevertheless, Vaio's studies on Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship remain a foundational contribution as they illuminate Gladstone's forgotten role as the chief architect of Schliemann's fame in the English-speaking world, at least for the first decade of the German's archaeological career. Vaio skilfully brings together Gladstone's scattered, but consistent interventions in favour of Schliemann, proving that he truly is the most 'eminent and knowledgeable intermediary between Schliemann and the British Public' during the 1870s. Vaio's research resets the terms of the discussion of Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship, anointing Gladstone as Schliemann's 'prophet'.[36]

Vaio's model of Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship has, to date, not been the subject of a sustained critique. Rather, it continues to be used as the basis for new studies in a wide range of fields, from broad overviews of the nineteenth-century and specialised works on Gladstone and Schliemann, to classical reception studies and the history of scholarship. Vaio's model is rooted in contemporary scholarship. Scholars have taken Vaio's model of Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport and have kept building on it. In the process, it has been subjected to a progressive simplification, and the already minimised elements of disagreement between Gladstone and Schliemann have often completely disappeared. In the resulting, simplified model, Gladstone's attitude towards

[35] Vaio 1990: 425-428.
[36] Vaio 1990: 415.

Schliemann turns into enthusiastic and uncritical support, and Gladstone's true motivations become lost under the general image of an amateur battling the scholarly establishment. This has turned into a recurrent trope in contemporary scholarship – the one significant exception is David Bebbington's 2004 study of Gladstone's Homeric interests.

Susan Allen's *Finding the Walls of Troy* (1999) and Richard Shannon's *Gladstone: Heroic Minister 1865-1898* (1999) provide two clear examples both of the long-term and far-reaching influence of Vaio's model over scholarship as well as of the simplification process this model has undergone. Allen re-tells the story of the archaeologist Frank Calvert, focusing on the twists and turns of his turbulent relationship with Heinrich Schliemann in their common quest for Troy. In explaining the reasons behind Schliemann's success in marginalizing Calvert's contributions to the identification of the Homeric site, Allen mentions Schliemann's shameless talent for networking. In particular, she draws attention to Gladstone's involvement in Schliemann's success in Britain and at this point, Vaio's influence becomes evident.[37] First, Allen highlights Newton's role as an intermediary between those 'two men so bent on proving the historicity of Homer.'[38] Then, she remarks that Gladstone intervened in favour of the German explorer often, lauding Schliemann's work in front of the British public, without mentioning any significant disagreement between the two.

However, Allen does not simply re-employ Vaio's model of Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport. She uncovers some overlooked developments in Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship, giving new significance to Vaio's model as a result. Firstly, Allen reveals that Gladstone intervened to facilitate Schliemann's negotiations with the Turkish government more than once.[39] Then, Allen mentions Gladstone's involvement in the exhibition of Schliemann's Trojan collection at the South Kensington Museum, explaining that it was Gladstone who recommended the South Kensington Museum as an appropriate venue for Schliemann's finds, after the British Museum refused for the second time to exhibit Schliemann's collection.[40] Overall, Allen's *Finding the Walls of Troy* provides a balanced and revelatory account of Schliemann's accomplishments. However, when she recounts Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship, she re-employs

[37] Allen 1999: 178.
[38] Allen 1999: 178.
[39] Allen 1999: 178-179.
[40] Allen 1999: 178-179; Easton 1994: 221-243.

the main conclusions of Vaio's study, arguing for the significance of Gladstone's enthusiastic collaboration in Schliemann's development as an archaeologist.

A simplified version of Vaio's model reverberates across Gladstone's biographies as well. An example of this reverberation is *Gladstone: Heroic Minister 1865-1898,* published in 1999, by Richard Shannon**.** In this biography, Shannon discusses Gladstone's relationship with Schliemann, summarising Vaio's major points. According to Shannon, because Gladstone was convinced, he had found in Schliemann's discoveries the decisive evidence justifying his faith in the historicity of Homer's epics, he set out to make himself Schliemann's 'prophet in England.'[41] As with Allen before him, Shannon disregards the contrasts and conflicts between Gladstone and Schliemann, and adds an extra sheen of passivity to Vaio's account of Gladstone's devout attitude towards Schliemann. When Shannon addresses the end of Gladstone and Schliemann's collaboration – an aspect which is not accounted for in Vaio's model – he argues that it was Schliemann who broke off the relationship with Gladstone. Overall, Shannon commits to a simplified version of Vaio's model and builds further on it.

The recent scholarship dealing with the history of disciplinary formation relies on and develops Vaio's model of Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport can be found in. The works of David Gange and Susanne Duesterberg reveal the influence of Vaio's studies over recent scholarship. Even when authors work on previously unconsidered material, like Gange and Duesterberg, they continue to take up and build on Vaio's research to show, in their own different ways, the concrete impact of Gladstone and Schliemann's collaboration on the British public in the second half of the nineteenth-century. Gange, a historian particularly interested in the development of Egyptology and archaeology and their religious implications, investigates the impact of Gladstone and Schliemann's collaboration on the popular reception of archaeological discoveries in Victorian Britain.[42] As Gange shows, Gladstone and Schliemann's collaboration fostered the development of a new form of epic poetry, 'Universal Epic'. This genre was founded on the blending of the two distinct traditions, Homer, and the Bible. According to Gange, Gladstone attempts to rehabilitate pre-Christian literatures by arguing that they contained traces of the primaeval revelation from God to man – and he succeeded in this thanks to the announcement of the discovery of Troy.[43] To Victorian readers, Schliemann's

[41] Shannon 1999: 133, 549, 645.
[42] Gange 2009: 190-192.
[43] Gange 2009: 190.

excavations seemed 'to complete the revolution that Gladstone's *Studies of Homer* (1858) had prefigured.' Paraphrasing Vaio, Gange recognises Gladstone and Schliemann as 'a potent double act both as protagonists and deuteragonists.'[44] On the one hand, Gladstone's Christianised mediation boosted the German archaeologist's popularity with the Victorian public, pushing the German's success in Britain further; on the other, Schliemann's discoveries caused the positive turnaround in the reception of Gladstone's Homeric syncretism in Britain.[45] Even when Gange recognises that Gladstone and Schliemann had independent aims – he addresses how Gladstone's own Homeric agenda benefited from a collaboration with Schliemann and *vice versa* – he still follows Vaio's original model of a linear and harmonious rapport. Consequently, Gange contributes to anchoring Vaio's reading in the most recent studies of the history of scholarship.

Duesterberg in her *Popular Receptions of Archaeology: Fictional and Factual Texts in 19th and Early 20th Century Britain*, Duesterberg develops Vaio's model of the rapport of Gladstone and Schliemann further. In her work, she shows how Gladstone played a crucial role in Schliemann's successful appearance in front of the Victorian public, by reconstructing the early phases of the British popular reception of Schliemann. According to Duesterberg, of the many influential Victorians that Schliemann won over – Murray, Smith, Mahaffy, Sayce are but a few of the names[46] – the one person who determined Schliemann's popularity most of all in Britain was William Gladstone.[47] Duesterberg shows that in the eyes of Victorian readers, Gladstone functioned not only as Schliemann's prophet and herald, but also as someone who could legitimise Schliemann's archaeological theories. Gladstone's proximity (both physical and intellectual) to Schliemann was evident, whether during a meeting of one of London's learned societies, or on the pages of a Victorian periodical. Gladstone was always there to back Schliemann up.[48] In particular, Duesterberg argues that by involving Gladstone, Schliemann was able to return some of his publications to the public eye. In the case of *Mycenae*, Schliemann had the prefatory remarks for this work written by Gladstone, and the book turned out a best seller.[49] Finally, Duesterberg draws attention to the impact of the exhibition of Schliemann's Trojan collection at the South Kensington Museum in London (1877 – 1881) on the Victorian public and, even if briefly, she mentions Gladstone's

[44] Gange 2009: 201.
[45] Gange 2009: 201.
[46] Duesterberg 2016: 294-298.
[47] Duesterberg 2016: 302.
[48] Duesterberg 2016: 299.
[49] Duesterberg 2016: 301.

involvement.[50] Duesterberg gathers a new array of evidence, fascinating in itself, but compromised by the fact that she employs it in support of a simplistic and partial model.

In this contemporary scholarly discourse, there is, however, one significant exception: David Bebbington. In his 2004 monograph titled *The Mind of Gladstone: Homer, Religion and Politics*, Bebbington briefly touches upon Gladstone's involvement with Schliemann, drawing a sharp and compelling picture of their rapport.[51] Bebbington, like Vaio, recognises that Gladstone actively and unceasingly supported Schliemann. In fact, Bebbington argues, for Gladstone, substantiating Schliemann's discoveries was part of a higher apologetic task.[52] For the British politician, demonstrating the historical validity of the Homeric Poems meant confirming the authority of the Bible against the sceptical approach of the higher criticism which, through philological analysis, threatened to undermine the authority and stability of both the Homer and the Bible. Bebbington stresses a fundamental element, here: Gladstone's criticism of Schliemann's claims. In this way, he reaches conclusions that depart from Vaio's model (and consequently from the mainstream scholarly picture). Bebbington remarks that an insurmountable divergence of opinion marked Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship, regarding the dating of the Homeric age and the antiquity of the Poems, at the very beginning of Gladstone's campaign in support of Schliemann. Bebbington comments: 'Schliemann wished to demonstrate his ability to penetrate the distant past, but Gladstone would not question Homer's capacity for accurate rapportage of the Trojan war.'[53] Where Vaio dismisses the difference of opinion between Gladstone and Schliemann, Bebbington delineates a dispute between the two, one that will find a solution in 1876, when Schliemann eventually accepted Gladstone's dating.[54] Bebbington, who aims to show how Gladstone's Homeric studies are deeply intertwined with his religious theories, does not enter into the details of Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship. Nonetheless, his brief overview opens the possibility for new investigations.

Overall, the current scholarly tendency is to retell the very same story about Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport. When Schliemann claimed to have discovered Troy, apparently proving Homer right, Gladstone was happy to become the German's 'prophet' to the British public. The two amateurs joined forces to oppose the scholarly

[50] Duesterberg 2016: 312-318.
[51] Bebbington 2004: 202-203.
[52] Bebbington 2004: 202.
[53] Bebbington 2004: 203.
[54] Bebbington 2004: 203.

establishment, proving to the world the reality of Troy.

To demonstrate the cultural significance of Gladstone's Homeric scholarship of the 1870s, this thesis will show that, with his Homeric research, he resets the terms of the Victorian discourse on the discovery of Troy. To achieve this aim, it will be necessary to build a new model of Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport, one that grants Gladstone's autonomous aims and agency. Gladstone's archive – and the archives of contemporary periodicals – will be excavated, in search of episodes which the scholarship has yet to recount. New evidence will allow a new narrative to be constructed, and well-known events to be reinterpreted, appearing in a new light. Although laudatory, Gladstone's support of Schliemann is far from being unconditional and uncritical. On numerous occasions, the Prime Minister firmly distances himself from Schliemann's Homeric claims, joining the scepticism of his contemporaries.

By incorporating tensions and refusals in Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship, this new model prompts a general reassessment of the contemporary scholarly picture of the nineteenth-century debate surrounding the discovery of Troy. By making space for Gladstone's selective endorsement of Schliemann's claims, it is possible to uncover deeper Victorian preoccupations and anxieties surrounding the resurfacing of Troy: how disconcerting it could be for the Victorians to face the ruins of a remote civilisation, long thought lost, and to confront disquieting questions regarding the distant past of man.

Excavating Gladstone's role in the Victorian Trojan War a roadmap

During the second half of the nineteenth century, readers and scholars of Homer in Britain came to grips with an event as unsettling as it was sensational: an eccentric German explorer claims to have uncovered the remains of Homer's lost city of Troy.

The narrative of the discovery of Troy by Heinrich Schliemann is a known tale in the scholarly tradition. With my thesis, I aim to demonstrate that the tale told so far is incomplete, and it hides unedited details that can make an old story new. During my numerous archival stays, I traced the Victorian debate around the extraordinary archaeological discoveries unfolding in the pages of Victorian newspapers and correspondence and the spaces of London societies and private Salotti. I will show that in the choir of authoritative voices the archaeological discoveries raised, one stood out

because it guided and redirected the discourse.

A ghost that I thought I saw across the papers showed the unexpected face of William Gladstone. The famous statesman of the Victorian Age showed his face as the forgotten scholar of Homer. The documents I excavated from Gladstone's archives showed that to many Victorians, the true discoverer of Homer's Troy was Gladstone, the forgotten Homerist, and not in Schliemann, the eccentric archaeologist.

The same sources - Victorian newspaper and private correspondence - speak of contrasting reactions. The readers are as intrigued as they are sceptical of the extraordinary tale of treasures, heroes, and gods that are the protagonists of the boastful claims of Schliemann. It turns out that over the years and in the Victorian context I have examined in my research, Schliemann's discoveries, and their relations to the poems of Homer need authority to prove their authenticity and value. Here, Gladstone, with his scholarly eccentricities, gives his crucial contribution. Step by step, I follow Gladstone while he builds and diffuses a new Homeric narrative, which forces his sceptic contemporaries to consider the possibility that Homer's Troy has resurfaced in Turkey.

My thesis retraces the early years of a vexed debate that once again aspires to conquer the Homeric city. The dispute is so heated that it deserves to be re-baptised the Victorian Trojan War. Two champions with different plans for the sieged city stand out in the fray. I will show that one is Schliemann, who aims to perpetuate Troy's legend. Gladstone is the other champion and wants to draw Troy out of myth into history. I plan to rewrite the rapport between the two champions patiently. The thesis, which comprises seven chapters, uncovers and reassesses little-known archival details to retrace the different stages of the early years of the Victorian War for Troy.

Chapter 1 investigates the premises of the Victorian Trojan War and follows the first manoeuvres of its champions between 1872 and 1873. Schliemann announces to the world with articles and letters the discovery of the ruins of a city he – and him alone – claims to be the lost city of Troy. In these years, Gladstone began exploring the discoveries of archaeology of the Mediterranean. His interest in archaeology is strictly bound to his Homeric investigations. As it turns out, for him, the archaeological findings became a means to study and date the Poems.

Gladstone's archives of private correspondence and diaries reveal a dynamic and multi-faceted character who deals with museum curators, travellers, and archaeologists, visits collections soon-to-be auctioned, presides over a Parliamentary controversy on funding an archaeological expedition, and counsels the British Museum on the acquisition

of a new collection. I bring to light, connect, and reinterpret four episodes that between 1872 and 1873 witness Gladstone get his hands on the most startling archaeological artefacts: Luigi Cesnola's Cypriote antiquities, Heinrich Schliemann's Trojan treasure, and the most recent advancements in Assyriology.

Gladstone gets closer to the contemporary archaeological world, as his letters exchange with Lubbock show and with the experts of the British Museum, particularly with Charles Thomas Newton, with whom he is regularly in contact. These exchanges and the specialistic readings that Gladstone's library at Hawarden still preserves confer to the author a growing and up-to-date knowledge of the advancement and methodologies of the archaeological discipline. The evidence shows that Gladstone arrives at his encounter with Schliemann and his discoveries with a clear plan: exploiting archaeological findings to back up his Homeric narrative.

Chapter 2 focuses on the first stage of what I re-baptised the Victorian Trojan War during 1874. My observation point over the battlefield is that of the Victorian Periodicals - *The Athenaeum, The Academy, The Times, The Examiner, The Saturday Review, The Quarterly Review* and *The Contemporary Review, inter alia*. I also use Gladstone's correspondence and diaries. The intertwined sources show that Schliemann's publication of *Trojanische Alterthümer* and *Atlas* (1874) is the casus belli. The reaction of the British readers is heated. Scholars and experts like Max Müller, Charles Thomas Newton, and S. Alexander Murray join the fray. If the archaeological artefacts spark great interest, Schliemann's claims regarding his finds meet with scorn. When the battle gets thicker under incitements by the Press, Gladstone joins in. I argue that the Victorian conflict begins in earnest only when Gladstone, publishing 'Homer's Place in History' (1874), attempts to shape public opinion regarding the Homeric nature of Schliemann's findings.

The Victorian Trojan War escalated in 1875. The episodes I research in Chapter 3 to study this moment are the publication of Schliemann's *Troy and Its Remains* and the German archaeologist's visit to London in the summer of 1875. The publication of an edited English version of Schliemann's 1874 *Trojanische Alterthümer* raises a newer and stronger reaction among British readers. The Victorian newspapers report the ferocious attack of a critic who is sceptical when not openly hostile to Schliemann's claims. Gladstone, who hangs back, is caught in the crossfire regarding some of Schliemann's more bizarre conclusions (about living Homeric Toads).

Gladstone secured his opportunity to recoup losses when, in the summer of 1875, Schliemann made his debut in London. Gladstone stage-manages this debut through

carefully orchestrated interventions, reshaping private and public conversations on the Trojan discoveries. In this way, the British readers encounter and understand Schliemann's findings mainly through the lens of Gladstone and his Homeric theories. To make my case, I use three episodes where Gladstone is a direct or indirect interpreter of the value of the discoveries of the eccentric archaeologist: 1. Footnotes in Schliemann's *Troy and Its Remains* (1875) 2. Gladstone's intervention at Schliemann's presentation at the Society of Antiquaries in June 1875 3. the Homeric breakfast the author organises at his house.

Chapter 4 uncovers the phase of the Victorian Trojan War that ran in 1876. I argue that this phase centres around Gladstone's publication of the third book on Homer and the Homeric age entitled *Homeric Synchronism: An Inquiry into the Time and Space of Homer* (1876) and its early reception. I part from the current scholarship on Gladstone that considers the book a repetitive and superfluous work, and instead, I argue for a re-evaluation of the importance of this publication for three main reasons. First, the book witnesses a shift in Gladstone's approach to the study of the Epics, vindicating the discipline of the epistemological status of science; to this vindication, archaeology becomes a crucial component of the author's methodology. Gladstone baptises the new science with the neologism "Homerology." Second, with this book, Gladstone bends Schliemann to his reading of the Homeric world - for example, the archaeologist accepts Gladstone's dating of the Trojan War. Finally, I argue that Gladstone's publication also forces Victorian Britain to look back at the discovery of Troy through different eyes. To this aim, I explore, in particular, Victorian newspapers and private exchanges.

Between 1877 and 1881, the Victorian Trojan War saw its two champions move independently, each pursuing their goals on converging trajectories (Chapter 5). Schliemann continues excavating sites linked to the Trojan cycle and reaches the treasure of Mycenae. Less linear is the tactic of Gladstone, who moves on several fronts. I sift Gladstone's unpublished and published papers and focus on work traditionally considered minor. In these years, Gladstone published his Homeric dictionary (1876) and his propaedeutic for studying Homer poems (1878). The point of convergence between the two is his exhibition of Schliemann's Trojan finds at the South Kensington Museum (1877-1881).

These episodes that are only apparently disconnected in my narrative become three coherent attempts to reshape the Victorian reception of Homer by Gladstone. I uncovered the guiding principle behind Gladstone's Homeric campaign from the Homeric

dictionary. Examining the Primer, I show the practical application of previously theorised principles. Finally, I read the exhibition as a case study to demonstrate the consequences of Gladstone's Homeric narrative for the Victorian understanding of the ancient past.

In 1877, Gladstone stepped away from the Victorian Trojan War to intervene in an unexpected terrain in the scientific field. Chapter 6 focuses on Gladstone's article for the Nineteenth Century entitled 'Colour Sense' (1877). This is the author's early attempt to contribute to another enormous and vexed debate of his time, the discourse over evolution. I show that Gladstone closely follows the most recent development of Victorian science and engages with the contemporary scientific community – correspondence, readings, and participation in the encounters of London societies – e.g., metaphysical society – witness Gladstone's scientific interests. The author, a devoted religious thinker through his Homeric research, seeks a compromise between science and faith. 'Colour Sense' provokes a wide-ranging and extreme reaction from classical scholars and scientists alike. I retrace the echo of the contemporaries' responses to Gladstone's publication both among Gladstone's letters where the correspondence with the German ophthalmologist Hugo Magnus and the father of modern science Charles Darwin stands out, and the pages of the Victorian periodicals - including specialist magazines and non. Overall, this chapter adds another dimension to the significance of Gladstone's work on Homer during the 1870s by showing the impact of Gladstone's Homeric scholarship in a field not connected with the humanities.

In chapter 7, we witness the final duel between the champions of the Trojan War. The two too-dissonant approaches to the Homeric world eventually divide the Homerist and the archaeologist. Through the archives, I retrace the final moments of Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship. The breakdown of their connection can be traced through Schliemann's visit to London in 1877, Gladstone's Preface to *Mycenae* (1878) and the last epistolary exchange between the two. In my thesis, by retelling this episode, I give space to a revealing detail I excavated from Gladstone's archives. The last duel is fought over a Homeric word. The lexical interpretation reveals how radically different the two champions' vision of the world of Homer is. Schliemann wants to write a new chapter of the legend of Troy, and Gladstone aims to write a page of history.

1

Treasures, Copper, and Ruins: Gladstone on the Trail of Homeric Civilisation

INTRODUCTION

This is a story about the excavation of the ancient past and about the excavation of the true shape of Gladstone's Homeric scholarship. And it is one where – in both halves of the narrative – tiny details change everything.

In the early 1870s, Gladstone becomes fascinated – obsessed, even – with a number of recent archaeological discoveries. A series of encounters between him and the material remains of the ancient past changes Gladstone profoundly, reshaping his approach to the study of Homer, and accelerating his interest in new directions of research. But this transformation is far from being a purely personal one. Gladstone sets out to change not just the scope of his own Homeric studies, but of Homeric studies in Britain, more broadly.

Gladstone becomes progressively more interested in proving the historic character of the Homeric Poems, by exploiting the most recent discoveries made by Victorian archaeology. To Gladstone, archaeological finds are a means to an end: a way to anchor the world of Homer in the time and space of history, and build a new approach to the Homeric Poems that breaks free from purely philological study. Gladstone's Homeric research challenges and alters the Victorians' understanding of the ancient past, in general, and the Homeric Age, in particular.

Gladstone's research is as deeply revolutionary as it has been consistently underestimated and misread. As I note in my preface, recent scholarship has taken little interest in Gladstone's Homeric studies after the publication of *Juventus Mundi* (1869). It is possible to surmise that three major factors lead to this general scholarly lack of interest. First, between 1869 and 1874, Gladstone holds his first mandate as Prime Minister. Most biographers focus on Gladstone's political activities, dismissing or side-

lining his endeavours as a scholar, more broadly, and expert in Homer, in particular.[55] Second, in 1869, Gladstone publishes *Juventus Mundi,* his second book on Homeric themes. This publication draws the attention of those scholars interested in Gladstone's Homeric research and casts a shadow over the research activities the author pursues in this field in the subsequent years.[56] The third and final factor is Gladstone's modality of research, his methods for intervention in key debates. After *Juventus Mundi* (1869), the author opts for slender publications – brief volumes and newspaper articles, and public interventions at the meetings of learned societies. Both modalities allow Gladstone to engage with and advance individual aspects of his Homeric research. This approach is the opposite of the encyclopaedic style of his earlier publications. As a result, on the surface, Gladstone's output can appear to be fragmentary and disconnected. However, Gladstone's Homeric activities during this period are far from negligible. Instead, they reveal Gladstone's new Homeric agenda and allow us to reveal a very different story about the author's research and its impact over the contemporary cultural discourse.

The narrative of my thesis follows Gladstone's footsteps in chronological order. To do justice to his ambitious project, each chapter highlights a crucial element of Gladstone's Homeric activities of the 1870s. In this first chapter, I investigate the initial phase, between 1869-1873, which reveals Gladstone's encounter with the materiality of the Homeric age.

I select four episodes from Gladstone's unpublished papers, between 1872 and 1873, to show how the author interweaves two, urgent Victorian discourses: the Homeric Question and the problem of the periodisation of prehistory. With his Homeric research,

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[55] See e.g. Paul 1901: 135; Magnus 1954: 220; Partridge 2003: 152 for Gladstone's Homeric activities during his first Mandate as Prime Minister where if mentioned, the politician's Homeric efforts are usually dismissed in a few lines about *Juventus Mundi* (1869).

[56] To study the evolution in Gladstone's theories on Homer, scholars mainly refer to Gladstone's major publications in general and to *Studies on Homer* (1858) and *Juventus Mundi* (1869) in particular. See e.g. Lloyd-Jones 1982: 114-115 '*Studies on Homer* in spite of all the subsequent modifications of his views contain the essential results of his Homeric studies and remain the fundamental text for their appreciation;' Ramm 1989:1-29: 'Gladstone write three full versions of his ideas: *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* […]; *Juventus Mundi the Gods and Men of the Homeric Age* revising this and reducing it to one volume […] and *Landmarks in Homeric Studies* revising *Juventus* and reducing it to 160 pages […]. These successive revisions show the intellectual development and the constant reshaping of thought to accommodate material characteristic of the pragmatic Gladstone;' Significant exception being, Bebbington (2004):142-143. The scholar makes the objective of his research uncovering the modifications of Gladstone's Homeric thought. Although Bebbington primarily focuses on *Studies on Homer* and *Juventus Mundi* he investigates other publications. 'The present chapter examines the earlier phase of Gladstone's Homeric project, down to including *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* of 1858, exploring the reasons for the engagement with the poet. The next chapter, covering the 1860s down to 1890s, analyses the later shift in the stateman's views.'

Gladstone aims at resetting the terms of both discourses, to transformative effect. Via his Homeric research, he challenges how history was made and the way his contemporaries looked at the ancient past.

I. Gladstone and the historicity of the Homeric Poems

When Gladstone attempts to prove the historicity of the Poems of Homer, he engages with a complex aspect of one of the most complex scholarly debates of the nineteenth-century, the Homeric Question. By the Homeric Question, I mean a series of intricate and multifaceted discussions that evolves and unravels in many different directions simultaneously. Gladstone, of course, operates in the aftermath of the revolutionary debate provoked by Wolf's *Prolegomena* (1795). A full discussion of the British Homeric question and its development in the second half of the nineteenth-century lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet it is important to stress that Gladstone's research draws from the developments of the debate and responds to it. Just the simple fact that Gladstone begins his scholarly endeavours with a rebuttal of the theories of Karl Lachmann, one of the most prominent exponents of Wolf's school of textual criticism, confirms Gladstone's engagement with the philological subtleties of the contemporary Homeric debate.[57]

Moreover, Gladstone's diaries, papers, and readings register numerous ways in which the author strives to keep up to date with the most recent developments in this discourse. But Gladstone is by no means satisfied with keeping up with the work of other scholars. Again and again, it is possible to trace him intervening in the contemporary debate, with the aim of reshaping the terms and modes of the study of the Homeric Poems. Specifically, Gladstone is experimenting with archaeology, aiming to develop a new methodology which allows him to break free from a purely philological approach to the Poems. In so doing, he openly challenges the German philological school which makes textual reconstruction its distinguishing aim of research.[58]

[57] Gladstone 1847: 381–417.

[58] Gladstone aligns himself with Wood's and Blackwood's defence of a substantial reliability of the Homeric epics as historical sources. This position opposes the approach of the German philologists, who restrict the aims of philology to textual reconstruction, radicalized on sceptic positions see e.g. Codino 1965: 36. Jenkyns 1980: 192-226; Turner 1981: 135-170; 234-244; For the Homeric question see Nagy 1992:17–60; Fowler 2004: 220-232; Graziosi and Haubold 2005:15-34; West 2011: 383–93; Dué and Marks 2020: 585–589 For Homer and the Victorians.

II. Gladstone and the periodisation of prehistory

Through his Homeric research, Gladstone intervenes in one of the most contested questions of the age, that of the periodisation of prehistory. To fully appreciate the scope of Gladstone's operation, we need to take a step back and reflect on the idea of prehistory in the nineteenth-century. For the Victorians, prehistory as a concept was new, and still a work-in-progress. It indicated a segment of time, of indeterminate limit, difficult to date and delineate. This, however, did not stop scholars from attempting to delineate it. From the 1850s onwards, a number of scholars attempted periodisation(s) of prehistory but struggled with limited resources and unclear evidence. Let us bear in mind that discoveries of prehistoric human fossils belong to the very beginning of the nineteenth-century, while any system of dating them securely (such as Carbon-14 dating) lay far into the future.[59] Therefore, it does not come as a surprise to see this debate frequently become a (rather confused) brawl. For example, when it comes to establishing a chronology, it is not uncommon for Victorian scholars to rely on the chronology of the Bible – a chronology which compresses the prehistoric ages into a short and crowded timeline. When Gladstone dates Homer to prehistory, he aims to contribute to – and to shape – a vital ongoing debate. Gladstone, in his research, is presenting the Homeric epics as a guide to any investigation – in any field – into the remote past of man.[60]

III. Gladstone and Victorian Archaeology

When Gladstone exploits the most recent discoveries of Victorian archaeology for his Homeric investigation, he has a double objective in mind. As I mentioned beforehand, Gladstone aims at changing the approach to the study of the Homeric Poems, breaking free from a purely philological perspective. To support and justify his new modality of research, he puts archaeology to work. In the process, he validates and valorises archaeology as a central and authoritative mode of understanding the distant past. So, with his Homeric research, Gladstone also contributes to the advancement and proliferation of archaeological research. As we shall see, the (sometimes accidental, sometimes incidental) ripple effects of Gladstone's Homeric project are, in many ways, its most substantial legacy.

[59] Carbon-14 dating developed between 1945-1955.
[60] See Daniel 1963: Ciardi 2013:53-56; Pettitt, Paul, and Mark White 2014: 35–48; Pearce 2019: 229-250.

In the nineteenth-century, archaeology is very different from the science we know today. Still on its way to formation, archaeology has yet to reach an autonomous epistemological status. A heavy legacy constricts it between antiquarianism, cabinets of curiosity, and treasure hunting – these visions of presenting the past are (even if outdated) still endemic throughout the nineteenth-century. This has a detrimental effect on the authority of archaeology as a science. Nevertheless, a growing group of experts – historians, antiquarians, museum curators, explorers, and archaeologists – acknowledge the importance of archaeology to the historical and scientific investigation into the antiquity of man. When Gladstone incorporates archaeological discoveries into his discussion of the Poems of Homer, he operates in an evolving debate and works to advance and promote the archaeological discourse.[61]

In this operation, Gladstone encounters several difficulties. As we will see, the author deals with artefacts that are highly problematic. Archaeology yields material remains that are undated, fragmentary, geographically scattered and potentially one-of-a-kind. So, Gladstone builds his new narrative of the pre-history of the Mediterranean, at the heart of which he places Homer, on challenging foundations, using evidence which is often missing an interpretative framework or key contextual details.

As I will show, the archaeological remains Gladstone encounters are not simply historical mysteries, challenging to interpret. They form the material for sensational (and sensationalist) discourses: in this period, archaeological discoveries ripple through Europe and fuel both old and new debates. Biblical archaeology provides perhaps the most emblematic example of this phenomenon.[62] On the one hand, the discovery in the Middle East of ancient people and places mentioned in the Bible seems to corroborate the

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[61] See Levine, P. 1986. *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England 1838-1886.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Murray, T. 2014. *From Antiquarian to Archaeologist: The History and Philosophy of Archaeology.* Barnsley: Pen and Sword; Murray, T., and C. Evans. 2008. *Histories of Archaeology: A Reader in the History of Archaeology.* Oxford: Oxford University Press; Schnapp, A., L. von Falkenhausen, T. Murray, and P. M. Miller, eds. 2013. *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives*. Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute. Duesterberg, S. 2015; *Popular Receptions of Archaeology: Fictional and Factual Texts in 19th and Early 20th Century Britain (History in Popular Cultures): Fictional and Factual Texts in 19th and Early 20th Century Britain.* Bielefeld: Transcript.

[62] See Goldhill 2015:70: **'**The challenge of the authority and historical truth of the Bible mounted by nineteenth-century critical scholarship prompted archaeologists to seek material evidence of the truth of scripture. As biblical criticisms challenged what should be thought to be real in the scripture (as opposed to the mythical, legendary, and false), archaeological science claimed to uncover the real, which proved the truth of scripture […]. As geology had turned the physical nature of the earth into evidence that challenged the Bible's chronology and its authority, biblical geography and biblical archaeology set out to rediscover the truth of the Bible in the physical soil of the Holy Land.' Michael Ledger-Lomas 2013; Cline 2009; Wallace 2004:153-178.

historical value of the narrative of the Old Testament. On the other, new discoveries stretch beyond repair the time of prehistory, delivering a lethal blow to the chronology presented in the Bible – the Ussher-Lightfoot chronology which comprises 6000 years of history. The situation becomes further complicated when we consider that in the very same years, the Biblical chronology is receiving another fatal blow from the natural sciences. The latest advancements in geology and evolutionary theories bring forward a temporal revolution.

Ultimately, discussing the earliest history of mankind means, for many in Victorian Britain, to be discussing the Bible.[63] It is a vexed, controversial discourse, and it is one where Gladstone's Homeric research thrives.[64] Gladstone's work reflects and responds to the ongoing cultural discourse, as much as it refuels and redirects it. In this context, Gladstone using Homer attempts to reset the terms of the ongoing discussion on the antiquity of man.

IV. Methodology

This narrative will be based on both private and public documents – private papers and newspaper articles – and will combine sources known from the currently published scholarship with documents I have uncovered from Gladstone's archives. Through a close reading of this evidence, I hope to make space for unconventional protagonists,

[63] See Gange, D. and M. Ledger-Lomas. 2013. *Cities of God: The Bible and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Bryant-Davies, R. 2018 *Troy, Carthage, and the Victorians: The Drama of Ruins in the Nineteenth Century Imagination* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[64] See Goldhill 2011 :165: 'Understanding evolution – of the race, of society, of species, of the person – is understanding how the past makes the present inevitable, and thus explains the present afresh. The threat of geology, the archetypical trendy Victorian science, is that it undoes previous knowledge of what the past is.' See e.g. Cairdi 2013:53-85 and Ciardi 2016: 45-55. The Bible has been considered the book of religious and natural truths for centuries. In time and only after the accumulation of undeniable data due to the advancement of natural sciences, naturalists break free from the subordination of natural history to sacred history and begin to imagine chronologies longer than the Biblical one and alternative accounts of the origin of our planet. This conquest is slow and difficult, characterized by power plays, stalemates, and heated discussions. The dilation of time, for example, did not immediately coincide with the acceptance of evolution theories. Still, at the end of the 18th century in France, George Cuvier (1769-1832), the father of comparative anatomy and palaeontology*, wanted the history of the* Earth alternating normal phases and sudden catastrophes. Following each catastrophe that caused spices, excretions followed new divine creations. A few decades later, the discussion took a very different turn in Britain. Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830-33) started a debate that will change our understanding of time and the Earth's history, posing the basis for evolution theories. Lyell argues that continuous and uniform natural processes still active today shaped the Earth. His theory openly challenges Cuvier's catastrophism. Such revolutionary ideas unsettled many Victorians who reluctantly were forced to come to terms with the concept of deep time and the delineation of natural history very different from the comforting Biblical version.

unexpected dialogues, and unusual places. Using Gladstone as a guide, I hope to track and document the dynamics of knowledge formation in the Victorian age.

In the chapter, I retrace the author's activities to demonstrate that he carries out his Homeric research in a new way. I plan to dispel the image of an isolated scholar – the archetypal denizen of an ivory tower – to introduce a dynamic character who interacts with museum curators, travellers, and archaeologists, visits collections soon-to-be auctioned, presides over a Parliamentary controversy on funding an archaeological expedition, and counsels the British Museum on the acquisition of a new collection. Along the way, Gladstone gets his hands on some of the most startling archaeological artefacts of the age: Luigi Cesnola's Cypriote antiquities, Heinrich Schliemann's Trojan treasure, and the most recent discoveries in Assyriology pass under Gladstone's examination. Gradually, his attention becomes focused on the Troad and the treasures of the hill of Hissarlik.

Schliemann's discoveries at Troy baffled the Victorians and were (for many) highly resistant to interpretation. But, in Gladstone's papers, it is possible to see the ways in which he embraces the charm of a new challenge and begins to work hand in hand with experts in the field to solve the mystery of the Trojan remains and the civilisation they belonged to. Gladstone believes that he can prove Homer's Troy has resurfaced in the Turkish plain. I divide the chapter into two parts: the first explores Gladstone's initial interest in the archaeological discoveries; the second investigates his encounters with the Trojan treasure.

PART 1

I. Copper Diggers

61 Great Russell Street, London. A forest of statues in marble, stone, and terracotta fill the exhibition room with priests and priestess, kings and queens, slaves, and warriors of a distant past. From the walls, puzzling inscriptions challenge the reader with their Phoenician characters. In the dim light, delicate fragments of glass dazzle with their opalescent reflections. On the variegated terracotta vases piled in the cases scattered across the room, animals, monsters, heroes, and gods chase after one another. Bodyless heads of different sizes with rich hairstyles and crowns stare at the passer-by. Tarnished implements in metal and stone speak of the daily life of an ancient people. In an imposing

and disquieting materiality, age by age, the civilisation of Cyprus unravels in an exhibition room in London.

This is the spectacle that welcomes Gladstone, then Prime Minister, in his visit to the Cypriote Collection of Luigi Palma di Cesnola in the late afternoon of November 15, 1872.[65]

Scholars have, up until now, paid little or no attention to Gladstone's interest in the Cypriote antiquities, particularly in relation to the author's Homeric studies.[66]While the scope of this thesis does not permit me to discuss exhaustively Gladstone's studies on Cyprus and its history, one specific, transformative moment is the focus of this argument. In 1872, the encounter with the materiality of the Cypriote antiquities pushes Gladstone's Homeric research towards a new direction. This is revealed through Gladstone's unedited correspondence, in particular, an epistolary exchange that – to my knowledge – the scholarship on Gladstone does not mention. On November 22, 1872, Gladstone writes to John Lubbock to invite him to visit Cesnola's collection of Cypriote antiquities, temporarily housed in London.[67]

Lubbock – a central figure for this thesis – was a politician and businessman who was also a pioneering scientist and archaeologist. His interests were almost as diverse as Gladstone's own; unsurprisingly, while they differed on many points, Lubbock and Gladstone became close correspondents.

Gladstone writes:

'Dear Sir Lubbock, I hope you will go to see Gen. de Cesnola's collection of Cypriote remains at 61 Great Russel Street. I have often pleaded for the recognition of the copper age, which is the age described in Homer; & the difficulty is want of adequate remains. I have been obliged to allow that, though there were very remarkable remains in copper, I could not point to them in quantity. At Gen. de Cesnola's house yesterday I had the pleasure of seeing a copper knife and small axe (as well as the pain of breaking the knife point in trying if it was flexible): & of his numerous weapons & implements in Gt Russel St. the General told me that one third are copper.' [68]

[65] See BM ME Corr. 909 S. Birch to C.T. Newton, January 12, 1871: 'Dear Newton, by this post I send you photographs of the principal objects of General Cesnola collection in Cyprus. […] this collection consists of 190 statues, 600 stone heads, 110 terra cottas, 119 votive offerings, 50 bas-reliefs, 29 Phoenician inscriptions, 54 glass vases, 72 terracotta and [olive] vases, 20 stone lamps: Total 1277 objects.' BM ME Corr. 928 Samuel Birch to Luigi Palma di Cesnola November 20, 1872: 'Mr Gladstone seemed much pleased and interested in the collection from Cyprus.'

[66] See e.g. Bebbington 2004: 204-207 the scholar focuses mainly on Gladstone's study of the Egyptian, Assyrian and Babylonian antiquities.

[67] Add MS 44436 f. 56 W.E. Gladstone to John Lubbock, November 22, 1872.

[68] Add MS 44436 f. 56 W.E. Gladstone to John Lubbock, November 22, 1872.

On this occasion, Gladstone shares his impressions of the archaeological remains and confesses to having handled the delicate artefacts clumsily, inadvertently breaking an ancient copper knife.[69]

Despite the tone of the letter, this episode should not be dismissed as a curious anecdote. At the time, no real protocol for handling artefacts was in place and accidents, like this one, were unfortunately common occurrences.[70] This letter captures a rare image of Gladstone carrying out his Homeric investigation. Gladstone's Homeric studies comprise a variety of research activities, and, in this particular case, exploring an archaeological collection is a crucial part of the advancement of his Homeric studies. In the letter, Gladstone himself reveals that his interest in Homer brought him to Cesnola's collection as he writes: 'I have often pleaded for the recognition of the copper age, which is the age described in Homer; & the difficulty is want of adequate remains.' Then, he continues 'of his numerous weapons & implements in Gt. Russell St. the General told me that one third are copper.'[71] Gladstone engages with Cesnola's collection with a clear objective in mind: collecting new evidence to corroborate his Homeric theory. This pattern is one which will repeat, again and again, over the course of Gladstone's engagements with archaeology: whatever the new discovery may be, Gladstone goes in with a plan to put it to work to advance his own agenda, and his own arguments regarding the Homeric Poems.

Gladstone's views on Homer have not remained static during this period. To see this, we need to take a step back and briefly examine some of the claims Gladstone puts forward in *Juventus Mundi* (1869). In 1869, Gladstone states:

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[69] See Gladstone Diaries vol. VIII: 240; Add MS 44436 f. 56 W.E. Gladstone to J. Lubbock, November 22, 1872: 'Dear Sir Lubbock, I hope you will go to see Gen. de Cesnola's collection of Cypriote remains at 61 Great Russel Street. I have often pleaded for the recognition of the copper age, which is the age described in Homer; & the difficulty is want of adequate remains. I have been obliged to allow that, though there were very remarkable remains in copper, I could not point to them in quantity. At Gen. de Cesnola's house yesterday I had the pleasure of seeing a copper knife and small axe (as well as the pain of breaking the knife point in trying if it was flexible): & of his numerous weapons & implements in Gt Russel St. the General told me that one third are copper.'

[70] See Duesterberg 2015: 317 for the British Museum unwrapping Egyptian mummies for the entertainment of its visitors. For Schliemann getting away with breaking and reassembling a skull while excavating at Troy see Schliemann 1874: 210: 'In the ashes of the same house, which has evidently been burnt, I also found, at a depth of 13 meters (42½ feet), a tolerably well preserved skeleton of a woman, of which I think I have collected nearly all the bones; the skull especially is in a good state of preservation, but has unfortunately been broken in our excavations; however, I can easily put it together again; the mouth is somewhat protruding, and shows good but astonishingly small teeth.'

[71] Add MS 44436 f. 56 W.E. Gladstone to J. Lubbock, November 22, 1872.

It cannot be too strongly affirmed, that the song of Homer is historic song. Indeed, he has probably told us more about the world and its inhabitants at his own epoch, than any historian that ever lived.[72]

According to Gladstone, the poems of Homer afford us insights into historical value. The assertive tones of Gladstone's statement mark exaggerated rhetoric and are no conclusive proof. The issue is hotly debated and far from being resolved. In 1869, Gladstone built his defence mainly on the text of the epics. He sifted through the Poems in search of textual details proving that Homer captured a segment of history. In so doing, he demonstrated a deep command of the text of Homer. But Gladstone had a problem. Basing an argument on the historicity of the Homeric Poems solely on the internal evidence of the Poems themselves was obviously a limited and problematic approach.[73] No chronology in the modern sense could be found in Homer: the only clear chronological systems displayed in the Poems are the heroic genealogies – a complicated tangle at best. In *Juventus Mundi,* Gladstone explained:

His [Homer's] only chronology is found in genealogies, given by him in considerable numbers and in singular correspondence with one another. But this knowledge, if authentic, stands as an island separated from us by a sea of unknown breadth, we have as yet no mode of establishing a clear relation of time between it and the historic era.[74]

Even if the events narrated in the Poems provided a coherent chronology, a solid link with the wider history of the world was still missing. In this regard, Gladstone remarked regretfully how the modern topography of the Troad seemingly offered few elements to support of the historical character of the Poems of Homer, briefly commenting: 'It must be fully admitted that although the Troad may afford some physical indication favourable to the historical character of the Poems, yet the proof of that character chiefly, nay almost wholly, rests upon internal evidence.' [75]

In 1872, Gladstone's letter to Lubbock confirms explicitly why in *Juventus Mundi* Gladstone decided to rely on the text alone: the material evidence at his disposal in 1869 was scanty and problematic. The 'want of adequate remains' was keenly felt by Gladstone, who understood the revolutionary potential contemporary archaeology could have on the study of Homer. In 1896, he wrote: 'The evidence of fact, whether in

[72] Gladstone 1869: 7.
[73] Gladstone 1869: 10.
[74] Gladstone 1869: 3.
[75] Gladstone 1869: 10.

geography and topography, in language or in archaeology, stands upon its own ground, and Homer, like every other author, must yield, if a conflict arises, to its more cogent authority.'[76] So when, in 1872, Gladstone encountered Cesnola's collection, he was ready to welcome the long-awaited archaeological data: he has been anticipating this moment for years. Cesnola's copper findings seem to confirm Gladstone's intuition of 1869: material evidence dating to the age of Homer exists.

Gladstone's letter to Lubbock sheds new light on the conclusions Gladstone reaches in 1869. Scholars who depict *Juventus Mundi* as, in many ways, a definitive summary of Gladstone's theories on the historicity of the Poems of Homer are, arguably, mistaken. For Gladstone, these arguments were clearly working hypotheses, which he develops in the following years thanks to the advancement of archaeology.

For Gladstone, long before he heard of Schliemann's discoveries, archaeological finds were the evidence on which he planned to build a new demonstration of the historicity of the Homeric Poems. This is the fundamental step forward into a new line of investigation that allows Gladstone to break free from a purely philological approach to the epics.

Cesnola's antiquities prompt Gladstone to begin a journey in search of ancient copper in the Mediterranean. Starting from his correspondence with Lubbock, the politician becomes increasingly interested – if not obsessed - in the emergence of consistent quantities of copper finds in archaeological excavations.[77]

It is Lubbock himself who provides Gladstone with new sources of copper. On November 23, 1872, Lubbock thanks Gladstone for the invitation and, in turn, calls his correspondent's attention to the copper weapons found in the Troad by the still-relatively-unknown Heinrich Schliemann. Lubbock, who had recently travelled across Turkey, had the opportunity to visit the site of Schliemann's excavations. Lubbock writes: 'Have you seen any account of Dr Schliemann's excavations at Novum Ilium, he also has found a good many copper weapons.'[78]

Lubbock's note provides Gladstone with confirmation of the timeliness and cogency of his line of investigation: growing evidence of copper seems to be appearing in the Mediterranean. Moreover, Lubbock points Gladstone towards the Troad. In 1869,

[76] Gladstone 1869: 28.
[77] Add MS 44441 f. 60 H.C. Rawlinson to W.E. Gladstone, November 23, 1872; Add MS 44436 f. 121 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone, December 12, 1872; Add MS 44436 f. 129 R.F. Smith to W.E. Gladstone, December 13, 1872; Add MS 44436 f. 151 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone, December 19, 1872.
[78] Add MS 44436 f. 58 J. Lubbock to W.E. Gladstone, November 23, 1872.

Gladstone admitted that 'the Troad may afford some physical indications favourable to the historic character of the Poems,'[79] but he did not push his argument further. In 1872, Gladstone is finally able to access material evidence of the world of Homer.

Today, Gladstone's claim that age of Homer dates to the age of copper is obsolete. But, in the early 1870s, in absence of established chronologies Gladstone offered a plausible hypothesis. Gladstone had long argued that the Heroic age, as presented by Homer, represented an early stage of human civilisation. Gladstone presented the nucleus of this theory in *Studies on Homer* (1858),[80] and defended a revised formulation in *Juventus Mundi* (1869). In 1869, Gladstone proposed to apply to the Poems of Homer the most recent archaeological theories, which established the age of a prehistoric people based on the metals that people employed for making utensils and implements. According to Gladstone, the Homeric Age coincided with the age of copper.[81]

> Archaeological inquiry is now teaching us to investigate and to mark off the periods of human progress, among other methods, by the materials employed from age to age for making utensils and implements. And the Poems of Homer have this among their many peculiarities; they exhibit to us, with as much clearness perhaps as any archaeological investigation, one of the metallic ages. It is moreover the first and oldest of the metallic ages, the age of copper, which precedes the general knowledge of the art of fusing metals; which (as far as general rules can be laid down) immediately follows the age of stone, and which in its turn is probably often followed by the [age of bronze, when the combination of copper with tin has come within the resources of human art.[82]

Gladstone's interest in copper antiquities and his addition of an age of man between the Stone Age and the Bronze Age is not simply the obsession of an eclectic dilettante. If we briefly reconstruct the discourse in which Gladstone was operating, we realise that Gladstone is not an isolated voice, but rather a participant in a wider debate – still in the making. From the second half of the nineteenth-century onwards, a revolutionary discourse regarding the age of man rattles the world.

The traditional understanding of time, based on the Biblical chronology that comprises 6000 years of history, is challenged by the advancement of natural sciences. Lyell's application of uniformitarianism to the geological record and the consequent

[79] Gladstone 1869: 10.
[80] Gladstone 1858 vol. III: 499.
[81] Gladstone 1869: 533.
[82] Gladstone 1869: 533.

demonstration of deep time;[83] the discovery of human fossils, including human remains predating *Homo Sapiens* in the Neander valley (Germany) in 1856 and the discovery of human-made tools associated with the bones of extinct animals in the Somme in 1859;[84] the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* in 1859[85] are but the most famous scientific discoveries that demolished Lightfoot-Ussher's chronology. Pettitt and White (2014) write: 'From the 1850s onwards a growing acceptance among the scientific community that human antiquity was much older than the 6000 or so years suggested from Ussher's reading of the book of Genesis can be observed'.[86] Ultimately, when in the Victorian age chronology is discussed, the validity of the sacred Scripture as testimony for the history of mankind is at stake.

This debate has, of course, much broader reverberations, which are beyond the scope of this thesis. But, in the wake of this disruption to established ideas of time, scholars tried to accommodate the temporal revolution through the development of new categories that could provide a new periodisation of history. Between 1816 and 1836, Christian Jürgensen Thomsen developed the Three Age System.[87] According to the Three Age System, the antiquity of a prehistoric people is assigned using 'technological stages as chronological periods.'[88] Prehistory is divided into periods – the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age. Throughout the nineteenth-century there were multiple attempts to modify this division, and many tried to resist it. Pettitt and White (2014) write:

> The three-age system was a radically new concept at the time, and one should not underestimate the controversies that surrounded these initial formulations of prehistoric periodization that form the common underpinning of prehistoric studies in the modern world; its reception was by no means straightforward, and controversy raged among scientific circles across Europe from the 1830s to the 1880s.[89]

John Lubbock, Gladstone's correspondent in this chapter, is largely responsible for the adoption in England of the Three Age System.[90] In his wildly popular book, *Prehistoric Times* (1865), Lubbock successfully proposed dividing the Stone Age into Palaeolithic

[83] Lyell, C. 1830-1833. *Principles of Geology.* London: John Murray; Ciardi 2013: 75.
[84] Pettitt and White 2014: 36; Ciardi 2013: 96.
[85] Darwin, C. 1859. *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*. London: John Murray.
[86] Pettitt and White 2014: 36.
[87] Pearce 2019: 230.
[88] Pearce 2019: 230.
[89] See Pettitt and White 2014: 36 and Pearce 2019: 230: 'Indeed, it (Three Age System) was still a matter for debate as late as the 1870s in England (Rowley-Conwy 2007, pp. 243–285) and in Germany (Lindenschmidt 1876; cf. Mestorf 1878).'
[90] Daniel 1952: 79; Pettitt and White 2014: 36.

and Neolithic. Thus, when Gladstone discusses with Lubbock the Copper Age, not only does he engage in a fiercely-argued and controversial discourse, but he is facing arguably the most prominent authority in the field in England. Daniel (1963) acknowledges the role played by Gladstone in the diffusion of the idea of prehistory in England, but little research has been conducted on the impact of Gladstone's work on the birth of prehistory in Victorian England.[91] The evidence, however, is clear: Gladstone aims to put Homer at the heart of one of the most vibrant debates of his century.

There is one final observation that allows us to fully appreciate how innovative and provocative Gladstone's introduction of Homer into Victorian debates on prehistory is. Gladstone's signature issue here, as we have seen, is the existence of a so-called Copper Age. Pearce (2019), who traces the history of the concept of a Copper Age, shows that there was a long and vexed debate regarding the existence of a Copper Age between the Neolithic and Bronze Ages.[92] Gladstone picks a problematic aspect of the discourse, in order to intervene and present his personal solution: Homer. To Gladstone, the study of the Homeric epics should prompt a reassessment of the idea of time. His study of the text of the Poems, along with new archaeological discoveries, prompt him to search for a new chronology of prehistory – at the heart of which he positions the age of Homer.

Gladstone's Homeric studies, once re-contextualised, prompt us to reassess our understanding of a key Victorian debate, adding aspects of the discourse that hitherto lie unexplored and showing us how specialised Victorian discourses cannot be examined in isolation from one another, or treated as hermetic artefacts.[93]

The turn of the 1870s is a crucial period for the political career of Gladstone, who holds the mandate of Prime Minister between 1869 and 1874, as leader of the Liberal Party. In particular, the year 1872 is one of substantial achievements for Gladstone's first administration, as the Ballot Act introduces the secret ballot for all parliamentary and municipal elections.[94] After *Juventus Mundi* (1869), our author seems to take a break from his Homeric research. Gladstone's third book on Homer and his epic comes out in 1876. In the meantime, he publishes only a few specialised articles on miscellaneous

[91] See Daniel 1963: 13: 'To the best of my knowledge Daniel Wilson was not making a mistake and 1851 was the first time that prehistory was introduced into the English language. The Oxford 'English Dictionary records the stages by which the word came into respectable and general usage. Sir Edward Tylor was using it in his Primitive Culture in 1871; seven years later Mr. Gladstone is using it, and finally, it becomes a respectable word—*The Times* mentions prehistory in 1888 and *Nature* follows suit in 1902.'
[92] Pearce 2019: 229-231.
[93] Daniel 1963: 61; Moorehead 1994: 69-73; Baker 2019: 157-162.
[94] "Ballot Act." https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ballot-Act .

themes. This should not lead – or rather mislead – to think Gladstone freezes his Homeric research in correspondence with his political campaign. [95]

Looking at his publications alone, it is easy to make a straightforward mistake: to believe that Gladstone's activities can be compartmentalised, and that his life can be divided into 'political' and 'Homeric' sections. But, with a broader pool of sources, a much broader and more interesting picture emerges. When we look at Gladstone's diaries and papers the strict division collapses. The fact that Gladstone is not vocal about his Homeric research should not lead us to believe that he has side-lined it. To the contrary, Gladstone is actively engaged in Homeric studies and receptive to new discoveries, throughout his political career.

His choice of correspondent confirms Gladstone's commitment to the Homeric cause. He writes to Lubbock to exchange notes with the leading expert in the study of prehistory in England. Gladstone's choice becomes even more telling when we look more closely at Lubbock. As we should expect from Darwin's pupil, Lubbock's expertise goes well beyond a single specialisation, as Pettitt and White (2014) show.

> In Britain, Lubbock sat at the hub of two powerful scientific cliques—the famous X Club and the Evans – Lubbock network—both of which sought to change and increase the influence of British science. As the common link in these scientific chains, Lubbock was uniquely placed to influence successfully both archaeology and wider science. [96]

Of the numerous contemporary figures whom Lubbock collaborated with – and this list has no pretence of exhaustiveness – noteworthy are scientists such as Joseph Hooker (botanist), Herbert Spencer (philosopher and journalist), William Spottiswoode (mathematician), George Busk (British naval surgeon, zoologist and palaeontologist), John Tyndall (physicist), Edward Frankland (chemist), Thomas Hirst (mathematician) and 'Darwin's Bulldog', Thomas Huxley.[97] On the other hand, through the Evans–Lubbock network, Gladstone joins Victorian archaeologists of the stature of Augustus Lane-Fox (later Pitt Rivers, "father of British Archaeology"), Augustus Wollaston Franks

[95] See Ramm 1986:1-29: 'Yet, work on Homer satisfied a need in Gladstone to "fill up time" after an abrupt relaxation of parliamentary or ministerial tension. […] when he returned to Homer in 1846-7, he was temporarily without a seat in the Commons […] and the outcome was his first article on a Homeric subject. When he returned again in 1855 it was his first spell as Chancellor of the Exchequer and the *Studies* resulted. In July 1867 when a great struggle with Disraeli […] has ended, he returned yet again to Homer and wrote *Juventus*.'

[96] Pettitt and White 2014: 37.

[97] Pettitt and White 2014: 37-38.

(Keeper of British and Medieval Antiquities at the British Museum), and William Boyd Dawkins (geologist, palaeontologist and archaeologist).[98] Lubbock is also involved with the Metaphysical Society, another cultural hub which London's most prominent intellectuals gravitated to, and of which was the first President.[99] I agree with Pettitt and White (2014) that 'there were few nooks or crannies where Lubbock and his colleagues did not hold some influence.'[100]

The fact that Lubbock engages so closely with the most prominent scientists of his age allows us to locate Gladstone in an unexpected network. This confirms a crucial point about the importance of epistolary exchanges as instrument for diffusion and circulation of ideas and knowledge – and the importance of paying attention to those exchanges, in order to understand how knowledge circulates, in the nineteenth-century. Private papers often facilitate candid and unguarded dialogue – and, for historians, represent tangible proof of encounters between people and discourses that we do not always expect to see interacting.[101]

I close this first section by introducing two well-known characters as minor players. When Gladstone first engages with them and their discoveries, both Luigi Palma di Cesnola and Heinrich Schliemann are arguably liminal figures – interesting, for Gladstone, primarily as copper diggers. A close examination of their interactions with Gladstone should prompt us to reassess the role of archaeology in Gladstone's Homeric studies. Archaeological remains are, for Gladstone, a means to an end, in his investigation of Homer. This is fundamental, and points towards one of the overarching themes of this thesis. Here, Gladstone is the established authority these budding archaeologists seek out to validate their discoveries, not *vice versa*. On the political level as well, the support of the Prime Minister is crucial for anyone striving for attention, in these crowded and contested debates.

Luigi Palma di Cesnola, the American Consul at Cyprus (1865-1875), was responsible for numerous excavations on the island from Larnaca to Kourion.[102] In 1872, Cesnola was one of many archaeologists passing through the British capital trying to sell their collections to the British Museum. Only in the following years did Cesnola attain recognition for his archaeological efforts and was elected first director of the

[98] Pettitt and White 2014: 38.
[99] Clark 2014: 66-67.
[100] Pettitt and White 2014: 38.
[101] When working with personalities of Gladstone's stature, it is essential to remember that the correspondents' appreciation may be affected by the deferential homage due to an influential politician.
[102] See e.g. Çelik 2021: 265-296; Kiely 2010: 236.

Metropolitan Museum in New York.[103] From Gladstone's diaries we learn that Cesnola invites the Prime Minister to visit a selection of the Cypriote findings stored at the archaeologist's house at Finchley Road on November 21, 1872,[104] possibly in an attempt to impress the Prime Minister. As Newton explains to Cesnola in their correspondence, the British Museum depended financially on the decisions of the British Parliament, especially for large-scale acquisitions. On this occasion, Gladstone's public role facilitates his Homeric research.[105] His encounter with the materiality of the age of copper, via Cesnola's collection, prompts the beginning of a new investigation, freed from a purely philological approach. Gladstone himself confirms the central role that Cesnola's antiquities play in his Homeric studies. When illustrating the contribution of archaeology to the Homeric investigation, he mentions the Cypriote discoveries as first in terms of importance.[106]

Finally, inevitably, Heinrich Schliemann. Once again, brief, neglected items of correspondence allow us to reconstruct – and understand in a new light – Gladstone's relationship with Schliemann and with his discoveries. Vaio, who investigates the relationship between Schliemann and Gladstone dates Gladstone's encounter with Schliemann's discoveries to 1873, when Charles Newton contacts Gladstone to involve him in negotiations for the acquisition of Schliemann's antiquities.[107] However, this is far from being the full picture. Gladstone encounters Schliemann's discoveries when Schliemann is a liminal figure, struggling to build a name for himself as a respectable archaeologist.

For the entire duration of the excavations at Hissarlik (from 1870 to 1873), Schliemann sent reports of his discoveries to newspapers all over Europe.[108] Soon, he was able to capture the curiosity of the British Press. The evolution of Schliemann's reputation can be seen from his evolving treatment in the Victorian press. Early in June 1870, Schliemann appears a nameless 'savant' in a column in the Archaeology of the

[103] See Ulbrich and Kiely 2012: 320 for Cesnola's failed attempts to sell his collection to the British Museum.
[104] Gladstone Diaries vol. VIII: 240.
[105] Gladstone's interest in Cyprus is not limited to its yielding of ancient metals and the author continues to follow the development of the excavations on the island, by Cesnola and others. See e.g. note 11 and Add MS 44517 f. 18 Max Ohnefalsch-Richter (1893) *Kypros, the Bible and Homer. Oriental Civilization, Art, and Religion in Ancient Times*. Gladstone's letter figures in the opening pages of the publication.
[106] Konstantina Zanou forthcoming *Soldiers of Fortune: Two Brothers and the Adventures of Antiquities from the Ottoman Mediterranean to Gilded Age New York on Censola's Brothers* investigates rapport-rivalry between Cesnola senior and Schliemann as well as Luigi's relationship with Gladstone.
[107] Vaio 1990: 415-430; Vaio 1992: 73-76.
[108] See Duesterberg 2015: 21-213;283 note3; 246-248; Allen 1999: 161-184.

Month section of the *Illustrated London News*.[109] A year later, in the Literary Gossip section of *The Athenaeum*, on June 3, 1871, Schliemann figures as the new ally of Frank Calvert, 'the local champion, who is excavating the Troad in search of Homer's Troy.[110] By November 1872,[111] the Press writes: 'Dr Schliemann is an archaeologist entertaining some eccentric views, but deserving the utmost credit for the zeal which has led him to spent time and fortune in searching for the ruins of ancient Troy'.[112] If Schliemann has successfully generated discussion of his discoveries, his claims are still lacking in authority. John Lubbock vouches for Schliemann's discoveries when he presents the findings to Gladstone.

As the correspondence with Lubbock confirms, the politician becomes interested in the archaeological novelties from the Troad as a means to an end, once again: inasmuch as Schliemann's finds have the potential to be the material data to demonstrate Gladstone's Homeric theory about the age of copper. Gladstone has yet to take an active interest in defining the geographical location of Homer's Troy. In this light, we should understand the progressive coming together of Gladstone and Schliemann. The politician is neither credulous nor enthusiastic in reaction to Schliemann's discoveries. The author is not a confused amateur, attracted to the novelties and fashions of his time, but someone in search of answers. The current scholarly narrative of Gladstone's Homeric quest is, in other words, radically different from the story told by the sources.

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[109] See *Illustrated London News* June 4, 1870: 'A German savant while exploring the plain of Troy near the village of Cyplax is stated to have discovered the remains of the Place of King Priam which correspond with the description given by Homer in the *Iliad.*'

[110] See *The Athenaeum* June 3, 1871: 688-689: 'The Trojan war still rages. Mr Murray's Handbook has now adopted Mr. Tozen's views, but the local champion, Mr Calvert, is preparing a work in defence of Hissarlik or New Ilion, and against Bunarbashi. Mr Calvert has now obtained an allay in the person of Mr Schliemann who is going to excavate this summer at Hissarlik and hopes to bring the walls of the Homeric Troy to light;' see also *The Academy* December 1871: 532.

[111] In 1872 the British periodicals show growing interest in the German excavator. See e.g. *The Academy* February 1872: 67 for a brief account of Schliemann's biography. See also *The Academy* June 1872: 238-239, the author informs readers that Schliemann's theories are criticized at the Philological Congress at Leipzig; *The Athenaeum* December 7, 1872: 737-738: 'This might be called the decade of excavations, and it would be strange if the site of Troy, or the spot which is believed to be such, were not explored. Dr Schliemann began to dig there about a year ago, and his results promise to be considerable.'

[112] *The Academy* November 1872: 407-408.

II. Tales of the Deluge

On December 3, 1872, Gladstone made a striking intervention at the Society of Biblical Archaeology.[113] Here, he engages with the most recent developments in Assyriology and, in a pattern that is now becoming familiar, uses insights from a developing discipline to corroborate his Homeric research, positioning Homer as the centre and point of reference for another Victorian discussion of ancient history.

Not by chance did Gladstone join the meeting of the Society of Biblical Archaeology on December 3, 1872. Henry C. Rawlinson, who was famous for his work on the decipherment of cuneiform scripts,[114] invited the Prime Minister and vouched for the importance of the meeting's paper to him. Once again, Gladstone was able to make use of high-profile allies, and an extensive network, in order to further his Homeric studies.

In the meeting on December 3, 1872, George Smith, who is the assistant at the Department of Oriental Antiquities of the British Museum reads and comments on some of the Museum's cuneiform tablets, today known as the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Smith announces to his astonished audience that the tablets attest a new account of the Deluge.[115] Smith explains: 'A short time back, I discovered among the Assyrian tablets in the British Museum, an account of the Flood' and goes on: 'On reviewing the evidence, it is apparent that the events of the Flood narrated in the Bible and the inscription are the same, and occur in the same order'.[116] To some of the attendees, the appearance of alternate traditions reporting the events of the Sacred Scriptures represented a serious threat to the authority of the Bible. As Bebbington (2004) explains, to some Victorians, 'it was alarming that the Sacred Scripture stories had equivalents in Middle Eastern mythology: perhaps the Bible itself was a myth?'[117] Gladstone, on the contrary, welcomed Smith's conclusions and stood to remind the meeting that beliefs and religious narratives often circulated widely, in multiple parallel versions, in the ancient world. It

[113] See Legge 1915: 26. The aims of the Society of Biblical Archaeology were also historical. As the founder Samuel Birch, Keeper of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum and Gladstone's close correspondent, explained in his inauguration speech, the activities of the Society were intended to be attractive to all who were interested in the early history of mankind.
[114] "Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson." https://www.britannica.com/biography/Henry-Creswicke-Rawlinson.
[115] See Add MS 44441 f. 60 H.C.R. to W.E. Gladstone, November 23, 1872: 'I venture to enclose a card for the Meeting of the Biblical Archaeology Soc- on Dec 3-, and having worked over the tablet myself can assure for that the subject us very curious, the inscriptions being undoubtedly the native version of the legend which Berosus translated into Greek and which Josephus and Eusebius assimilated with the Biblical story of the deluge.' See also Hoberman 1983: 41-42.
[116] Pritchard 1983: 161.
[117] Bebbington 2004: 207.

was, of course – inevitably – all about Homer. According to Gladstone, Homer was the example *par excellence* of such a phenomenon. The facts that pieces of the very same beliefs could be traced in other civilisations was, for Gladstone, exciting news.[118] Gladstone, in other words, is putting forward Homer as the starting point for Smith's Assyrian studies. He makes Homer the protagonist of another fundamental discourse raised by the emergence of new archaeological discoveries. In an article for the *Spectator,* a few days later, Gladstone comments on his intervention and reiterates his point.

> What I said was that every effort to re-examine the question raised that day must begin with me with Homer. The Homeric Poems are in my opinion firmly based, as a record of races, religion arts and manners, in a rather remote antiquity & thus they form a natural point of connection with all prior studies: and the agency of the people known to us through Greece as Phoenicians connects Greece itself with that Assyrian plain which had yielded the record under discussion, and which was either the earliest seat, or one of the two earliest seats, of civilisation.[119]

According to Gladstone, the Poems of Homer, because of their antiquity, should be taken as the starting point of any investigation into any aspect of the remote antiquity of mankind.

In 1858, Gladstone first spoke of the role the study of Homer could play in the investigation of the distant past. Gladstone argued that Homer's Poems, because of their antiquity, could be seen as evidence complementary to the Sacred Scriptures.[120] To Gladstone the Bible is the book of religious truth and Homer the book of the ancient history of man. However, in 1858 Gladstone relied, for this argument, on textual evidence taken mainly from the Poems themselves. In 1872, thanks to recent archaeological discoveries, he was able to change – and broaden – his evidence base substantially. Gladstone was, in other words, changing the methodology of his Homeric research.

This episode reveals another means by which Gladstone pursues his Homeric project: by engaging with the meetings of London's learned societies. The societies offer

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[118] *The Spectator* December 7, 1872: 1542.

[119] Add MS 44542 ff. 52-53 December 7, 1872; *The Spectator* December 14, 1872: 1586.

[120] See Gladstone 1858 vol. I: 8: 'The Mosaic books, and the other historical books of the Old Testament, are not intended to present, and do not present, a picture of human society, or of our nature drawn at large. Their aim is to exhibit it in one master-relation, and to do this with effect, they do it, to a great extent, exclusively. The Homeric materials for exhibiting that relation are different in kind as well as in degree: but as they paint, and paint to the very life, the whole range of our nature, and the entire circle of human action and experience, at an epoch much more nearly analogous to the patriarchal time than to any later age, the Poems of Homer may be viewed, in the philosophy of human nature, as the complement of the earliest portion of the Sacred Records.'

spaces that are both alternative and complementary to contemporary universities. By tracing the spaces Gladstone frequents, the conversations Gladstone carries out and people he encounters, it is possible, slowly, uncover the dynamics through which ideas circulated and knowledge was formed during this period.

Gladstone's Homeric intervention at the Society of Biblical Archaeology does not go unnoticed. The British press actively follows Gladstone's Homeric endeavours. In the public imagination, in the 1870s, Gladstone plays a prominent and controversial role as a scholar of Homer. In 1872, *The Spectator* puts Gladstone's Homeric speech at the Society for Biblical Archaeology under the spotlight in an article entitled 'Mr Gladstone's passion for Homer.'[121] Commenting on Gladstone's Homeric zeal, the author notes:

> There is something of more than personal interest about such avowals as Mr. Gladstone made on Tuesday night after the reading of Mr George Smith's paper on the Chaldean of the Deluge, concerning his love for Homer. "Every day," he said, "must begin with my old friend Homer, – the friend of my youth, the friend of my middle age, and of my old age, from whom I hope never to be parted as long as I have any faculties or any breath in my body."[122]

Gladstone was not pleased by the article. The Prime Minister did not appreciate being depicted as an enthusiast dedicating too much time and energy to Homer, neglecting his political commitments as a result.[123] Gladstone addressed a letter directly to the editor of the periodical to clear up any misunderstanding, or as he puts it:

> But as to my beginning every day with Homer, as such a phrase conveys to the world a very untrue impression of the demands of present office, I think it right to mention that, so far as my memory serves me, I have not read Homer for fifty lines or for a quarter an hour consecutively during the last four years, and any dealings of mine with Homeric subjects have been confined to a number of days which could be readily be counted on the fingers.[124]

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[121] *The Spectator* December 7, 1872: 1542-1549.
[122] *The Spectator* December 7, 1872: 1542.
[123] The publication of *Juventus Mundi* in 1869 caused an uproar among the Victorian press. It is the timing of the publication together with the contents of the volume that stirs the turmoil. In 1869, Gladstone has just been elected Prime Minister for the first time. As a result, both the scholarship and the conduct of its author become subject of conflicting criticisms. Some periodicals commend Gladstone's literary effort. See *Examiner* August 7, 1869: 500 that for example, presents the politician as a role model who 'puts to the blush the lotus-eating laziness of the present age by showing that recreation consists not in rest, but only in a change of occupations.' Not all readers, however, appreciate Gladstone's Homeric endeavours. See in particular, the article for the *Illustrated London News*, July 17, 1869: 71 that suggests that the Prime Minister in publishing his Homeric studies had taken away time and commitment from the matters of State.
[124] Add MS 44542 ff. 52-53 December 7, 1872.

Bebbington is correct in surmising that Gladstone was 'exaggerating the degree of his abstinence.'[125] However, Gladstone's intended message is nothing if not clear: his political commitments, being as demanding as they are, have the highest priority. However, he does not deny that Homer has an important place in his life. Gladstone's rebuttal drew more attention to the matter than his initial speech had.[126] *Punch,* on December 14, 1872, seized the opportunity to satirise the politician. For the occasion *Punch* sketched 'My old friend Homer', the image that will go down in history as possibly the most iconic representation of Gladstone's Homeric interest.[127] The fact that Gladstone pursues his Homeric research during his Prime Ministerial mandate was known to the public. Where the Prime Minister ended, and where the scholar began – if such a distinction was in fact possible – remained an open question.

III. Homer in Parliament

The question is are excavations undertaken for the purpose of illustrating the *Iliad* a proper object for the expenditure of public money? [128]
The Times, March 26, 1873

In this section of the chapter, I will show how Gladstone was dragged into the search for the lost city of Troy – and found that distinctions between his role as a Homeric scholar and as a Prime Minister were harder than ever to maintain. The compartmentalisation of Gladstone's interests was always, it will be seen, an illusion.

In March 1873, Lord Stanhope, the president of the Society of Antiquaries, presented to Gladstone's administration a request to fund a scientific expedition to explore the Troad in search of Troy. We need to sift through the Victorian newspapers to illustrate how Schliemann moves from being a liminal figure to a subject of parliamentary debate. By 1873, Schliemann, who made his first appearance on the pages of British newspapers as a nameless 'German savant'[129] by feeding the press reports of his archaeological discoveries from Hissarlik, has ignited the Victorians' imagination. Stone

[125] See Bebbington 2004: 144. We agree with Bebbington Gladstone was indeed 'exaggerating the degree of his abstinence.'
[126] See Add MS 44542 f. 68 January 9, 73. When *Examiner* contacts Gladstone to comment further on the matter, Gladstone briefly replies on January 9, 1873, aiming at ending the matter there.
[127] *Punch Magazine* December 14, 1872.
[128] See *The Times* March 26: 1873. It publishes Robert Lowe's letter to Henry Stanhope.
[129] *Illustrated London News* June 4, 1870.

by stone, Schliemann brings British readers reports of the Palace of Priam,[130] the Cyclopean walls,[131] the Trojan houses.[132] News of the bones[133] and treasures[134] of the people of ancient Troy fascinated specialist and non-specialist alike.

The watershed came with John Lubbock's paper at the Society of Antiquaries on March 6, 1873. Lubbock, who had recently toured the major archaeological sites of the Troad, commented on Schliemann's excavations.[135] In lieu of the abundance of remains Schliemann excavated, Lubbock focused on two, final contenders from the list of archaeological sites eligible to the title of Homeric Troy. According to Lubbock, the choice lay between Hissarlik, Schliemann's site, and Bunarbashi, the site identified by the French in 1786.[136] *The Times* reports: 'He [Sir John Lubbock] considered, from other investigations which he made, that the balance of authority as to the true site seems now pretty evenly divided between Bunarbashi and Hissarlik'.[137] In discussing the topographical features of the plain of Troy, Lubbock refers to Gladstone and his Homeric scholarship.[138] Gladstone, who is absent at the meeting, argued for the impossibility of a full correspondence between the ancient Homeric descriptions and the form of the contemporary Turkish plain. *The Times* reported: 'For his own part, he [Sir John Lubbock] felt compelled to observe with Mr Gladstone that the description of Homer cannot accurately be fitted to the natural feature of the plain as they now are, or even as we can probably suppose them to have been some 3,000 years ago.'[139] This detail tells us about the weight of Gladstone's Homeric studies in contemporary discourse.[140]

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[130] *Illustrated London News* June 4, 1870.
[131] *The Athenaeum* June 3, 1871: 688-689.
[132] See *The Athenaeum* December 7, 1872: 737-738: 'This might be called the decade of excavations, and it would be strange if the site of Troy, or the spot which is believed to be such, were not explored. Dr Schliemann began to dig there about a year ago, and his results promise to be considerable. In September last he came on what appeared to be the original surface of the ground. At about forty-five feet below the present level, there were found the ruins of a house which had been burnt, together with the skeleton of a woman, and her ornaments of gold, the bones of a child, and a vast number of tiles'.
[133] *The Athenaeum* December 7, 1872: 737-738.
[134] *The Academy* September, 1873: 326-327: 'A letter from Dr Schliemann in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* (August 5) describes the discovery in the course of his excavations of a treasure which, whether that of Priam, as he of course hastens to conclude or not appears to be of great value and interest; the Shields and vessels of different sizes made of wrought, unalloyed copper silver vases a flask and cups of pure gold ornamented gold fillets and pendants bracelets and a large number of gold earrings buttons and other trifles. The silver and copper vessels are in some cases joined together as if welded by fusions-when Troy was burnt.'
[135] March 6, 1873, Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries: 467.
[136] Allen 1999: 41-42.
[137] *The Times* March 8, 1873: 5.
[138] Gladstone Diaries vol. VIII: 296-297.
[139] *The Times* March 8, 1873: 5.
[140] *The Times* March 8, 1873: 5.

Gladstone's scholarship is a reference point in the debate surrounding the identification of the site of Troy. Lubbock's talk moves the assembly of the Society of Antiquaries to the point that the participants vote in favour of presenting an official request to Robert Lowe, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to finance an expedition to explore the Troad and solve once and for all the question of the location of Homer's Troy.[141]

Lord Stanhope, in his role of President of the Society, took up the task of persuade Gladstone's administration. Establishing the location of Homer's Troy was of paramount importance. *The Times* followed the developments of the affair closely, publishing the correspondence between Stanhope and Lowe.[142] Gladstone soon became involved on several levels. He was indirectly called in during the Society's meeting due to his expertise in the Homeric field. Lubbock had already flagged Schliemann's discoveries to the Prime Minister in their private letters of November 1872. Then, he was implicated in Stanhope's petition, in his role as Prime Minister. Finally, Lord Stanhope contacted Gladstone privately in the hope of securing the Prime Minister's support. Gladstone replied on March 10, 1873:

> Nothing w. suit my book so well as great explorations in the Troad. But I doubt whether Lowe is prepared for them, & I doubt also whether we could fairly ask or at least expect the H. of C. to include the Troad within the objects of the State subvention. I hope to see the day when private munificence & spirit will do more in these matters than they have yet affected.[143]

Gladstone's answer shows the interaction – arguably, the collision – of his main interests: Homer and politics. Unsurprisingly, Gladstone voices interest in the exploration of the Troad. As a scholar of Homer, the investigation is particularly dear to him. This statement anticipates Gladstone's future engagement with Schliemann's antiquities. However, his ministerial mandate and its responsibility leads the Prime Minister to delegate the initiative to private investors.

Gladstone warns Lord Stanhope of Lowe's reticence. The Chancellor eventually turns Stanhope's proposal down. The search for Troy hardly seems, to him, value for public money and the Chancellor is against employing taxpayers' money to satisfy the literary curiosity of the British intellectual elite. *The Times* reports Lowe's answer:

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[141] *The Times* March 8, 1873: 5. See Goldhill 2002 for Lowe's view on Classics: 195-213.
[142] *The Times* March 26, 1873: 11; *The Times* March 27, 1873: 9; *The Times* March 28, 1873: 8.
[143] Add MS 44542 f. 97 W.E. Gladstone to H. Stanhope March 10, 1873.

The question then is are excavations undertaken for the purpose of illustrating the Iliad a proper object for the expenditure of public money? I am very sorry to say that in my judgement they are not. It is a new head of expense. It has no practical object but aims to satisfy the curiosity of those who believe that the narrative of Homer was a true history and not the creation of a poet's imagination.[144]

Punch was prompted to a satiric cartoon entitled 'Despicable Sceptics.' [145] Gladstone and Lowe were depicted as Victorian ladies sipping tea with disapproving gestures. Once again, Gladstone with his Homeric activities was centre of attention.

PART 2

In the second part of this chapter, the story of Gladstone's encounter with Schliemann's Trojan antiquities comes into focus in a new light, thanks to details from Gladstone's papers.

In 1873, when Gladstone's administration is entering a downward spiral, Schliemann announces to the world the discovery of gold and silver: remnants, he claims, of the riches of the mythical king of Troy, Priam whose tragic fate Homer narrates.[146] Needless to say, there is a reaction: press coverage is everywhere, and Schliemann and his treasure become the talk of Britain. At the heart of this conversation sits Gladstone. Some of Britain's most distinguished scholars soon take a close interest in Schliemann's findings and, Gladstone begins to play an active role in this debate – asking for clarifications, proposing hypothesis, and raising issues.

Unedited, previously unstudied archival documents reveal that Gladstone joins several conversations about the Trojan antiquities. Such private dialogues as these usually leave but scattered traces in the archive: difficult to trace, and easy to miss. But, thanks to the scale and exceptional state of preservation of Gladstone's papers, it is possible to reconstruct, from his private letters, an outline of the initial, forgotten discussion between London specialists on Schliemann's controversial discoveries. When these conversations are brought to light, it becomes clear that the current scholarly picture of Schliemann's initial reception in Britain is partial and presents a misleading story that silences a substantial portion of the ongoing discussion. By focusing closely on granular details

[144] *The Times* March 26, 1873: 11.
[145] See Bryant-Davies 2018 on vignettes about Gladstone and Homer.
[146] *The Times* May 2, 1874; *The Athenaeum* May 9, 1874; *The Academy* February 14, 1874; *The Times* November 30, 1874.

from the archival evidence, this chapter's methodology grants access to a whole new level of the Victorian cultural discourse on the Trojan discoveries: one which complements the public discussion unfolding on the pages of British newspapers, and which demonstrate how profoundly the unearthing of the ruins of Troy captures the Victorian imagination.

It will become increasingly clear that Gladstone's response to Schliemann's claims – and discoveries – is informed by this wider scholarly discourse. Thus, Gladstone engages with the archaeological discoveries from the Troad not as a passionate dilettante, but as a scholar with an informed opinion.

Based on this, the current scholarly narrative – which sees Gladstone rushing in to support Schliemann – needs to be reassessed. This narrative is irreconcilable with the sources – sources which attest that Gladstone critically questions the inconsistencies of Schliemann's archaeological reports. I do not deny Gladstone's interest in Schliemann, but while Gladstone engages with Schliemann's narrative, he is not swayed by it.

To reassess Gladstone's attitude towards Schliemann and his discoveries, I propose to re-contextualised it in the wider archaeological discourse of the time. Many nineteenth-century archaeologists, like Schliemann, were driven, at least in part, by the hope of economic reward. Schliemann, like many before him, attempted to make a name for himself through his discoveries, and hoped either to profit from his discoveries, or at least to recoup the cost of the excavations' expenses. Schliemann, in the early 1870s, was as a treasure hunter willing to manipulate facts to his advantage: someone who is as charismatic as he is problematic. Victorian archaeology had, of course, no scientific method for reliably dating its finds, in comparison to the modern discipline. However, the fact that the Victorians did not possess the instruments to date many discoveries accurately does not mean they did not attempt to develop methods to overcome this difficulty. As we will see, Gladstone and his correspondents all asked the same question: how to date Schliemann's discoveries? Their alleged Homeric nature was relegated to second place.

Curators from London's museums suggested comparing Schliemann's findings with other antiquities belonging to other ancient civilisations which had already investigated and classified. This was an attempt to locate Schliemann's discoveries within existing scholarly frameworks. However, the survey did not yield the expected answer, as it turned out that many of Schliemann's antiquities were one of a kind. One key element which Gladstone and his contemporaries observed was that there was no indisputable trace of writing among the antiquities Schliemann claimed to be Homeric. For this reason,

they agreed that his discoveries should be considered prehistoric. Gladstone's investigation into prehistory is, in other words, fully in line with the contemporary state of the art. It must be added that Gladstone and his correspondents do not always have direct access to the antiquities, often conducting their studies through descriptions contained in private papers, reports, photographs, and illustrations. The private epistolary exchange is, in this period, a key instrument for the formation and transmission of knowledge.

I. Counselling for the British Museum: the secret negotiations for the Treasure of Priam

On August 18, 1873, the Prime Minister – and, as of 11 August, Chancellor of the Exchequer – William Gladstone, while busy browsing his correspondence, stumbled upon a most unexpected letter. What could be mistaken for an ordinary report from the archaeological excavations in the Troad contained instead the most incredible news. The alleged "Priam's Treasure" was for sale, and the British Museum was interested in buying it.[147] Sealed in its envelope, the report on the Trojan treasure had been shelved over Gladstone's cramped writing table for days.

In 1873, when Britain's press devoted obsessive coverage to Schliemann's discoveries, Gladstone had little spare time for the archaeological sensation, due to his political duties. Only the direct intervention of Charles Newton changed the situation. The Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum involves the politician in negotiations for the buying the Trojan antiquities – including the alleged Treasure of Priam – for the Museum.

Newton contacts Gladstone after an extensive correspondence with Schliemann. Lesley Fitton, in *Heinrich Schliemann and the British Museum* (1991) presents the details of Newton and Schliemann's correspondence. Their intermittent dialogue begins in October 1872 and features Schliemann's attempts to attract Newton's interest in his excavations in the Troad.[148] Throughout the exchange, Gladstone features here and there – a seemingly marginal figure.[149] However, thanks to Gladstone's papers, it is now

[147] Vaio 1992: 74.
[148] Fitton 1991: 4-5.
[149] See Fitton 1991: 13: 'C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann, August 20, 1873; Fitton 1991: 14-17: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton, September 4, 1873'; Fitton 1991:18: 'C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann, October 21, 1873'; Fitton 1991: 19-21: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton, November 6, 1873'; Fitton 1991: 24: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton, December 27, 1873'; Fitton 1991: 25: 'Schliemann to C.T. Newton, January 4,

possible to fill in the gaps and complete the framework, rewriting the role of the politician and positioning him at the heart of the discussion.

Schliemann finally gets Newton's full attention on July 26, 1873, by offering his Trojan collection for sale to the British Museum.[150] In the letter that opens the secretive negotiations, Schliemann pitches his antiquities. He presents a detailed description of the alleged Treasure of Priam and stresses the acclaim his collection has met with in Athens. Flocks of curious visitors lined up in front of Schliemann's house to view the alleged Treasure. The Trojan collection, even when presented in a domestic setting, shows its potential as a popular attraction.[151]

Schliemann's timing could not have been better, since the person responsible for authorising payment for the acquisition would have been Gladstone – someone Schliemann knew to be both an authority on Homer, and also a trusted correspondent of Newton. Newton, indeed, immediately involves Gladstone in the negotiations. It was not the first time Newton and Gladstone had collaborated on the acquisition of an archaeological collection. Earlier in April 1873, the two secured Castellani's Etruscan Collection for the British Museum.[152] At the time, Newton captured Gladstone's interest by mentioning a Homeric scene on an Etruscan sarcophagus. Now that he has a much stronger hook at hand, he attempts to reel in the Prime Minister. On August 5, 1873, disregarding Schliemann's request for confidentiality, Newton forwards Schliemann's letter to Gladstone. A brief note from Newton, and labelled Private, accompanies Schliemann's letter.[153] The note, preserved among Gladstone's correspondence at the British Library, has so far been neglected by the scholarship. Newton's evaluation of Schliemann's findings is, overall, positive. According to him, the Trojan antiquities are of the utmost archaeological importance.[154]

Newton writes:

1874'; Fitton 1991: 39: 'Schliemann to R.S. Poole, August 30, 1876'; Fitton 1991: 45: 'C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann, October 18, 1877.'

[150] See Fitton 1991: 9: 'C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann, July 26, 1873.'

[151] See Fitton 1991: 9: 'C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann, July 26, 1873: I inform you quite confidentially of my willingness to sell to you my collection, for its importation and particularly the importation of Priam's treasure, which for the last weeks has attached to my house large crowds of curious, has made me here the paramount favourite.'

[152] Add MS 44438 f. 170 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone, April 9, 1873; Add MS 44438 f. 209 April 17, 1873; Add MS 44438 f. 276 May 16, 1873.

[153] Add MS 44439 f. 259 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone, August 5, 1873.

[154] Add MS 44439 f. 259 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone, August 5, 1873: 'I shall endeavour to get to Athens after October when I shall be better able to judge what these antiquities are like; It seems to me making due allowance for the enthusiasm of their discoverer, his achievements are among the most remarkable exploits Archaeological research in our time.'

I take the earliest opportunity of sending you the enclosed letter from Dr. Schliemann who, as you are probably aware, has been for several years excavating on the site of Ilium Novum. He assumes that the remains he has found are those of the Homeric Troy. This theory is of course open to many objections, but the fact is undisputable that […] he came upon very earlier antiquities and on the great treasure of gold and silver which he describes.[155]

Newton remains sceptical of the German's enthusiastic conclusions regarding the Homeric nature of his finds. Later in the letter, he explains to Gladstone that he needs to examine the finds in person before he could endorse any definitive claim in regard to their nature. So, rather than acting as Schliemann's herald or prophet, or being the person to introduce Gladstone to Schliemann's work – as Vaio (1980) argues and can be disproved, by showing that Lubbock in 1872 had already presented Schliemann's discoveries to Gladstone – Newton attempts to engage Gladstone in a discussion regarding the merits of unpublished, newly discovered archaeological material. An autographed note by Gladstone, on Newton's letter, attests Gladstone's first reaction to the news. Gladstone scribbles: 'Very best thanks' and 'this will be examined as soon as circ-s permit with the greatest interest.'[156] Newton's letter successfully caught Gladstone's attention.

A few days later, on August 18, 1873, the Prime Minister reaches out to Newton. His response can be found in the politician's Letter Books.[157] The brief note preserves Gladstone's first, explicit impression of the Trojan antiquities. When contextualised in the wider framework of Gladstone's archaeological interests, this letter acquires new connotations. Rather than swooning at Schliemann's conclusions, as the current scholarship believes, the politician offers some very detailed observations and raises some specific issues.[158] Schliemann's discoveries had awoken a scholarly curiosity in the politician. Gladstone writes to Newton about Schliemann's letter:

It surpasses my expectations and is of intense interest. In part to me personally, as I have long contended that Homer describes strictly a copper age. And the objects of copper describe by the Dr. are probable the best means of identification for the other objects. [159]

[155] Add MS 44439 f. 259 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone, August 5, 1873.
[156] Add MS 44439 f. 259 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone, August 5, 1873.
[157] Vaio 1992: 73-74.
[158] See Introduction of this thesis section entitled 'Gladstone and Schliemann.'
[159] Vaio 1992: 73-74.

Amongst the remarkable archaeological discoveries presented in Schliemann's letter, Gladstone is most interested in the humble copper utensils found at the alleged Homeric level of Troy. Gladstone saw in these apparently unimpressive artefacts an opportunity he had long been looking for. As Lubbock anticipated in November 1872,[160] Schliemann's copper finds seemed to corroborate some of Gladstone's old Homeric theories. According to Gladstone, the copper finds had the potential to prove the best means to identify 'Homeric' layers of the site, and other 'Homeric' antiquities found alongside them.

In the previous section, we saw Gladstone engaging with some of the most recent archaeological theories in order to support his argument that the age of Homer was the age of copper. Thanks to Newton, Gladstone is now able to act on Lubbock's suggestion and to begin his systematic investigation into Schliemann's discoveries. Access to archaeological reports, such as the one Newton provides to Gladstone, was extremely significant: notwithstanding technological innovations, travel and transportation were obviously still challenging – and someone like Gladstone was not in a position to undertake extensive, impromptu travel to the proposed site of Troy. Gladstone would, indeed, never visit Schliemann's excavations in the Troad, notwithstanding repeated invitations on the archaeologist's part.[161] Archaeological research was often an intensely private, epistolatory discourse, which advanced out of public view, through personal exchanges and reports.

Thanks to Newton, Gladstone was now at the receiving end of a stream of updates on Schliemann's work, coming directly from the source. Gladstone, in his letter, continues:

> I would recommend that Dr. Schliemann be urged if he has not already done it, to give the most minute and exact description of the whole super incumbent and circumjacent material, for upon this much depends as to the identification with the Troic period. Again, the question of the inscriptions is very important. Greek letters in the thesaurus I should incline to look upon as strong indications of a date later that that of the Troica. [162]

This was what Gladstone had been looking for, for years. The Trojan antiquities, if proven Homeric, could offer that piece of external, extra-textual evidence that Gladstone was missing: the evidence he needed to support his argument about the historical

[160] Add MS 44436 f. 58 J. Lubbock to W.E. Gladstone, November 23, 1872.
[161] See e.g. Add MS 44450 f. 25 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone, May 8, 1876.
[162] See Vaio 1992: 74: 'W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton August 18, 1873.'

character of the Poems of Homer. Schliemann's antiquities could justify his long-standing claims regarding the historical value of the Homeric Poems. The Trojan discoveries had the potential to revolutionise Victorian Homeric discourse, attesting to the historical existence of Homeric Troy – and also proving Gladstone's theories right.

However, they also raised many questions and, at the time, appeared to yield a range of contradictory conclusions. The metallic composition of some of the finds seemed to confirm to Gladstone that the finds belonged to the Homeric (or, for him, the copper) age, but the presence of inscriptions contradicted it. Gladstone was convinced that his copper age was pre-literate: evidence of writing would force the antiquities to be post-dated. Thus, when Gladstone asked for the 'most minute and exact description of the whole super-incumbent and circumjacent material,'[163] he was not driven by simple curiosity. A precise account of the stratigraphic disposition of the material remains was needed to establish the periodisation of the site and the Homeric nature of the findings. Gladstone, in other words, is immediately engaging critically with the antiquities, addressing apparent inconsistencies and demanding clarifications.

In his letter, Gladstone refers twice the importance of the discovery of non-Greek works of art on the site. In particular, he mentions the significance of the possible presence of Phoenician artefacts.[164] In *Juventus Mundi* (1869), Gladstone had theorised that the Phoenician influence was strong in the Poems of Homer.[165] According to the politician, the Phoenicians played a fundamental role in shaping early Greek culture.[166] Phoenician merchants and navigators were responsible for the collisions between Hebraic and Greek traditions at the time of Homer. Finding material that proved there was a Phoenician presence at the site would confirm, for Gladstone, that Schliemann's finds were Homeric – as well as corroborating another of Gladstone's claims.

As the politician submitted his observations and questions to Newton, one underlying interest emerged from Gladstone's letter. If it could be proven that Schliemann had found the historical site of Troy, what date would the Trojan antiquities discovered by Schliemann yield – if any could be securely ascribed to them? This was a question – and a puzzle – which would come to define the reception of Schliemann's work. Gladstone, in other words, immediately spotted some of the major issues raised by

[163] See Vaio 1992: 74: 'W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton August 18, 1873.'
[164] See Vaio 1992:74: 'W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton August 18, 1873: 'But if these which he describes from the thesaurus of treasury are really works of the early Phoenician or Sidonia art, they are of an interest and value not easily described.'
[165] Gladstone 1869: 134.
[166] Gladstone 1869: 204.

Schliemann's Trojan finds, anticipating many of the most problematic aspects of their interpretation, ones which would soon dominate British Homeric discourse.

Following Gladstone's positive response, on August 20, 1873, Newton informed Schliemann of Gladstone's interest in his finds and instructed the archaeologist to put a price on his collection and send additional material in support of his claims. Schliemann was asked to provide photographs of the major archaeological finds, to submit to Gladstone's expert evaluation. However, Newton suggested to Schliemann that, if he really wanted to sell his collection to the British Museum, he should endeavour to send it to England, as standard practice dictated.[167] Newton wrote:

> If you want the British Museum to buy your collection, by far the best plan would be to send it to England at once. I have no doubt it would excite great public interest here, but it would be much more difficult to interest the public in the matter only from description. You are probably aware that the Government has just given £26,000 for the Castellani Collection which would make it difficult for me to obtain from them more money at present, but perhaps if the antiquities were seen here a public subscription could be raised to purchase them.[168]

Schliemann, on his part, welcomed with enthusiasm the news of Gladstone's involvement. Ecstatic, he writes to Newton on September 4, 1873: 'I was sure H. Exc. Mr Gladstone would be much interested in the Trojan antiquities for he is not only a great admirer of Homer to one of the best scholars of the present day.'[169] But Schliemann ignores Newton's suggestions. He sets the price of the collection at £50.000, almost double the price Newton mentioned negotiating for the Castellani collection, and also refuses to ship his collection to Britain. Instead, Schliemann sends 217 photographs accompanied by a long description.[170] In his letter, the German archaeologist apologises for the poor quality of the photographs, explaining that he has sent the best shots to his editor for publication, and asks again for secrecy: 'I send you these photographs quite confidentially taking from you the solemn promise that you will not allow any one of these being copied and that except to H. E. Mr Gladstone you will not mention to anyone that I offered you my collection.'[171] Newton disregards Schliemann's request for confidentiality once again. This episode reveals the ways in which antiquities and

[167] See Fitton 1991: 13: 'C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann, August 20, 1873.'
[168] See Fitton 1991: 13: 'C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann, August 20, 1873.'
[169] See Fitton 1991: 14-17: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton, September 4, 1873.'
[170] See Fitton 1991: 14-17: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton, September 4, 1873.'
[171] See Fitton 1991: 14-17: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton, September 4, 1873.'

knowledge about them could circulate, in the late nineteenth-century: through secret negotiations, drawing in archaeologists, curators, and politicians across Europe.

While Newton and Gladstone were busy negotiating for the Trojan antiquities, the British press kept the public discussion of Schliemann's discoveries going. A new wave of articles followed the announcement of the discovery of the so-called 'Priam's treasure', and problematic questions began to be raised regarding the authenticity of the finds and the events surrounding their discovery.[172] In London, 'Priam's treasure' was soon a treasured source of gossip. This can be glimpsed in Gladstone's private papers: Stephen Glynne, Gladstone's brother-in-law, forwarded to the Prime Minister on September 10, 1873, a message by Joseph Burtt, assistant keeper at the Public Record Office and distinguished archaeologist, who was secretary of the Royal Archaeological Institute in 1862.[173] Burtt contacted Glynne to ask if he could bring Schliemann's discoveries to Gladstone's attention. Burtt was hoping to persuade Gladstone to acquire the antiquities. Burtt's letter lets us glimpse the heady excitement which reports of Schliemann's finds created, for many. Burtt writes: 'You will see that the enclosed speaks of one of the most wonderful discoveries of modern times. No less than the treasure of the ill-fated King of Troy of which a large portion seems to be still preserved.'[174] Burtt speaks of his conversations on the archaeological remains, with a member of the Council, 'Mr Greaves' and 'Mr Franks',[175] the Keeper of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography at the British Museum.

> Mr Franks has told Mr Greaves that he has seen a man who has seen the objects which the German Dr had found, and they are of the highest possible interest- but not in Mr Franks' line. Mr Greaves thought that Mr Gladstone would take as much interest in the discovery as any one and we agreed that it was highly desirable to bring the matter to his notice. Will you kindly permit me to ask you take an opportunity of doing so. [176]

[172] See as e.g. *The Academy* August 15, 1873; September 1, 1873; October 15, 1873.
[173] See Add MS 44440 f. 20 J. Burtt to S. R. Glynne, September 10, 1873; Unfortunately, the attachment is not included in the papers- the letter suggests it might have been returned to the sender, common practice at the time. "Joseph Burtt" https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4145 .
[174] Add MS 44440 f. 20 J. Burtt to S.R. Glynne, September 10, 1873.
[175] Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826 - 1897) curator and collector is the British Museum's first Keeper of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography between 1866-1896. See Caygill, M. and J. Cherry eds. 1997. *A. W. Franks, Nineteenth-Century Collecting and the British Museum.* London: BMP for further biographical details.
[176] Add MS 44440 f. 20 J. Burtt to S. R. Glynne, September 10, 1873.

Burtt's interlocutors have diverging takes on Schliemann's discoveries. If Franks is introduced as quite a sceptic, Greaves appears fascinated by the ancient remains. Burtt, for his part, strongly believes that the Trojan discoveries could benefit the British people and hopes that Gladstone can be persuaded to acquire the remains.[177] Schliemann's discoveries raise strong, contrasting responses. But one point is consistently clear: Gladstone was expected to show an interest in the Trojan antiquities and play a role in their acquisition.

Burtt's letter preserves traces of Gladstone's autographed annotations. Unfortunately, today, the scribbling is hardly decipherable, but from the readable extracts it is clear that Gladstone was preoccupied not with the details of any acquisition, but with the verification of the dates of Schliemann's finds. This little note, along with Gladstone's letter to Newton on August 18, 1873,[178] confirms that Gladstone is actively investigating Schliemann's discoveries.

On September 4, 1873, Newton receives Schliemann's response, along with the 217 photos addressed to Gladstone.[179] However, he does not immediately send it off to the politician. Instead, once again ignoring Schliemann's request for confidentiality, he involves the British Museum's most prominent experts in a discussion of the photographs. When, on October 9, 1873, he finally sends Schliemann's missive to Gladstone, Newton informs the politician that he has consulted Augustus Wollaston Franks, Keeper of English Medieval Antiquities, Samuel Birch, Egyptologist and Keeper of the Department of Oriental Antiquities, George Smith, Assyriologist and cuneiform tablet repairer for the British Museum, and John Evans, author of *Ancient Stone Implements, Weapons, and Ornaments of Great Britain* (1872).[180] The archaeologist writes:

> I send herewith a packet of photographs which as you will see by the enclosed letter, are sent by Mr Schliemann expressly for your inspection. I should have sent them sooner, but I wished first to study the very remarkable antiquities they represent and to take the opinion of others more familiar with prehistoric remains than I am. I have shown the photographs to my colleagues here Mr Franks, Dr Birch & Mr Smith and also to Mr John Evans with us considered one of the best authorities on prehistoric antiquities.[181]

[177] Add MS 44440 f. 20 J. Burtt to S. R. Glynne, September 10, 1873.
[178] See Vaio 1992: 74: 'W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton August 18, 1873.'
[179] See Fitton 1991: 14-17: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton September 4, 1873.'
[180] Add MS 44440 f. 176 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone October 9, 1873.
[181] Add MS 44440 f. 176 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone October 9, 1873.

Newton not only provides Gladstone with Schliemann's newest material, but he also briefs in the Prime Minister about the most recent observations regarding Schliemann's antiquities. First, he presents the conclusions that he has reached with his colleagues. Then, he discloses his personal assessment of the antiquities. Thanks to Newton's mediation, when Gladstone consults Schliemann's photographs, he has at his disposal a range of invaluable interpretive tools to critically engage with the discoveries.

Newton and the British Museum experts commented upon some of the issues raised by Gladstone in his letter of August 18, 1873.[182] As Gladstone had anticipated, the major problem presented by the Trojan objects was the construction of a coherent periodisation. According to Newton's report, the rough craftsmanship of many of the artifacts pointed to their deep antiquity. The few imperfect attempts to represent animal life, as shown in the photographs, resembled (according to Newton) antiquities from Rhodes and Cyprus, but were assumed to pre-date them. Newton wrote that 'the few representations of human or animal forms in Schliemann's antiquities and especially the rude face which he supposes to be that of the owl-weapon faced Athena […] have a certain analogy with a few antiquities from Rhodes and Cyprus which have always been classed among Graeco-Phoenician remain,' but which have been 'ascribed to an earlier period.'[183]

Newton then comments upon the alleged treasure of Priam. He and his colleagues at the British Museum believed that, from the photographs, it was possible to trace a marked resemblance of Schliemann's antiquities with other European bronze ornaments. However, Newton and the other specialists agreed with Gladstone's hypothesis that the more sophisticated objects were likely to have been imported. Gladstone's perspective on Schliemann's antiquities aligns, here, with that of contemporary experts.[184]

Finally, in parallel with Gladstone, the focus of Newton and his colleagues shifts to the presence (or rather, the absence) of writing. The specialists of the British Museum conclude that the alleged inscriptions discovered by Schliemann could not be identified as belonging to any known writing system.[185] Émile-Louise Burnouf's suggestion that the

[182] See Vaio 1992: 74: 'W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton August 18, 1873.'
[183] Add MS 44440 f. 176 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone October 9, 1873.
[184] See Add MS 44440 f. 176 C. T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone October 9, 1873: '4) the ornaments in gold in the so-called Treasure of Priam are as was pointed out to me by John Evans not unlike certain ornaments & chiefly in bronze, found at Hallstatt in upper Austria in tombs some of which are thought to be of as early a date as 900 BC […];' and again '8) the quarter part of the gold ornaments seems to have been made in the rudest manner by connecting bits of bold leaf with wire chains, but the gold cup with two spouts […] PL 203 seems the work of a superior artist as if it came from some foreign source.'
[185] Add MS 44440 f. 176 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone October 9, 1873.

Trojan characters could be Chinese ideographs was dismissed.[186] Newton writes that 'the marks which Dr Schliemann believe to be inscriptions' could not 'be recognised as written character,' though it could not be ruled out that in the future 'they may prove to be such'.[187]

From this conclusion, Newton goes back to the first question about the periodisation of the findings. He believes that Schliemann's Trojan antiquities could be assigned to a pre-Hellenic period, and writes to Gladstone accordingly:

> From the forgoing data I should be disposed to assign the antiquities discovered by Dr Schliemann to an earlier period that the earliest Greek or Graeco-Phoenician antiquities which we know of. If the term pre-Hellenic be admissible in this construction chronology, I would ascribe them to the Pre-Hellenic age. [188]

Contrary to Gladstone, Newton believes that several centuries separate the composition of Homer's Poems and the destruction of the city of Troy. Consequently, the Poems were highly unlikely to contain accurate topographical information, which might reveal the city's location.

Newton closes the letter by suggesting to Gladstone that Schliemann's finds were not worthy of the prohibitive tag price proposed by the German archaeologist.[189] Gladstone engages with, and judges Schliemann's finds through a private, epistolary conversation, involving some of the country's most distinguished scholars.

On October 13, 1873, Gladstone welcomes Newton to his residence at Hawarden, to discuss Schliemann's photographs and findings.[190] In his diary, Gladstone leaves behind no explicit comments about that evening conversation. Newton, on the other hand, captures Gladstone's impressions of the Trojan antiquities when on October 21, 1873, he reports the results of the joint examination to Schliemann.[191] Newton writes:

> Mr Gladstone was very much interested both with the photographs and with your letter and begged me to convey to you his thanks for the opportunity that you had given him of anticipating what will be published in your book. He has as you know devoted many years to Homer and continues his research in the intervals of official work. He is much interested in your statement that the analysis of your bronze objects yields only

[186] See Fitton 1991: 18: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton September 20, 1873'; See Fitton 1991: 19-21: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton November 6, 1873.'
[187] Add MS 44440 f. 176 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone October 9, 1873.
[188] Add MS 44440 f. 176 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone October 9, 1873.
[189] Add MS 44440 f. 176 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone October 9, 1873.
[190] See Gladstone Diaries vol. VIII: 400 October 13, 1873: 'Evening with Mr Newton on the Schliemann Discoveries & Photographs: also, on University Reforms.'
[191] Fitton 1991: 18-19: C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann October 21, 1873.

pure copper, no tin. He thinks that in the Homeric age the secret of combining these two materials as so to form tin was as yet unknown.[192]

Gladstone's major concern, once again, was the metallic composition of the Trojan objects. Of course, without the objects themselves to hand, and only low-quality photographs to work with, the scope of his analysis was necessarily limited. As Newton noted, the absence of tin in Schliemann's finds would have corroborated Gladstone's Homeric theory, according to which the Homeric age had yet to gain advanced metallurgic knowledge. Once again, it is clear that Gladstone is interested in Schliemann's discoveries not so much on their own terms, but because the facts Schliemann reports could be exploited to back up Gladstone's own Homeric theories.[193]

Another letter from Gladstone to Newton, on November 20, 1873, confirms this picture.[194] While speaking of his vibrant interest in Schliemann's discoveries, Gladstone's evaluation is terse and analytic. He doubles down on his conviction that the art of mixing metals was unknown in the Homeric age and justifies the presence of advance metallurgy on the site as due to importation from the East. This explanation is confirmed by Newton and his colleagues at the British Museum. Gladstone approaches Schliemann's discoveries through the specialised discussion he joins thanks to Newton.[195]

Newton visited Athens in December 1873. Fitton (1994) notes that he dined with Schliemann on Christmas Eve.[196] It is on December 28, 1873, that Newton informs Gladstone of his decision to terminate the negotiations for the acquisition of the Trojan collection. As he explains, on several occasions, Schliemann reiterated that he had no intention of lowering the price of the collection, leaving Newton no choice but to refuse the deal.[197]

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[192] See Fitton 1991: 18-19: 'C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann October 21, 1873.'
[193] Add MS 44441 f. 65 Newton to Gladstone November 19, 1873; Add MS 44441 f. 76 H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton November 6, 1873.
[194] See Add MS 44441 f. 76 W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton: 'I have read Dr Schliemann's letter with great interest & I shall await his book with yet more lively anticipation.'
[195] See Add MS 44441 f. 76 W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton: '1. It would not follow from the discovery of objects of mixed metals on the site of Troy that Troy itself possessed the Art of mixing them. It might still remain a high probability that they were supplied by importation from the East'.
[196] Fitton 1994: 22.
[197] See Add MS 44441 f. 238 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1873: 'With regard to Schliemann's wish to sell. I have had two conversations with him. In the first he told me that he could not abate anything of his original price to 50,000 for the whole. I then said that it was useless to discuss the matter any further. Few days ago, he asked me whether we would buy the metope with Helios the inscriptions could be affected as a tripling cost.'

Newton's encounter with the Trojan antiquities confirms his – and his colleagues from the British Museum– first impression of Schliemann's photographs.[198] He confirms to Gladstone that the artefacts seem to belong to a pre-Hellenic period. He reiterates his conviction that some objects resemble artefacts from Cyprus, Rhodes, and Italy, with one significant exception being the so-called Treasure of Priam. Newton confesses to Gladstone that those precious objects resemble nothing he has ever encountered before.[199] Lastly, Newton supports the genuineness of the finds and the legitimacy of Schliemann's account of his discoveries.[200]

Once again, Gladstone has access to privileged information, long before Newton makes his observations public. In fact, even though Newton's comments about Schliemann's collection are much awaited in England, Newton will only speak publicly about it in February 1874, at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries only later in February 1874.[201]

Gladstone's response to Newton comes with the new year. On January 6, 1874, the Prime Minister replies to Newton.[202] He expresses his support for Newton's decision to abandon the negotiations for Schliemann's collection. Gladstone explains why the archaeological discoveries are so relevant to his own Homeric studies.

The correspondences which Gladstone sees between the artefacts unearthed by Schliemann and the Homeric text seem to corroborate his interpretation of the Poems –

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[198] See Add MS 44441 f. 238 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1873: 'I have spent a few days here in order to examine carefully Dr Schliemann's antiquities the opinion which I formed on first seeing the photographed is unchanged. I think that *prima facie* the period to which these antiquities may most probably be assigned is the Pre-Hellenic period. The copper weapons resemble those found in Cyprus the forms and fabric d some of the vases remind me of Cypriote pottery on the one hand and of earliest Italian (that found inside the lava near Alba) on the other. Some of the small objects in bone and stone seem very similar to certain antiquities from Rhodes.'

[199] See Add MS 44441 f. 238 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1873: 'With regard to the gold ornaments […] found by Schliemann they remind me of nothing I have ever seen. I have no doubt of the genuineness of the whole collection nor do I see any grounds for discrediting his account of the discovery of the treasure, but the Greek professors have and some of the German archaeologists have done their best to disparage Schliemann's discoveries, some insinuating that he fabricated the gold objects others that he bought them somewhere in Asia prior and that their provenance is false, others that they are of the Byzantine period.'

[200] See Add MS 44441 f. 238 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1873: 'I have no doubt of the genuineness of the whole collection nor do I see any grounds for discrediting his account of the discovery of the treasure, but the Greek professors have and some of the German archaeologists have done their best to disparage Schliemann's discoveries, some insinuating that he fabricated the gold objects others that he bought them somewhere in Asia prior and that their provenance is false, others that they are of the Byzantine period.'

[201] *The Academy* February 14, 1874: 173; *The British Architect* February 20, 1874: 120.

[202] See Add MS 44543 f. 45 W.E. Gladstone to C. T. Newton, January 6, 1874: 'Your judgment on the objects produced by Dr Schliemann is highly satisfying and of g[rea]t weight. I do not however suppose that we sh[oul]d be justified in entertaining any proposal about them even at a moderate price until they shall have been fully fairly tested by European opinion.'

and to support his wish to use them as historical sources. He lists a few compelling examples: the presence of copper would prove Gladstone's understanding of the Age of Homer as the Age of Copper; the discovery of silver talents corroborates Gladstone's claims regarding the use of precious metal as currency in the Heroic age; the golden headdress corresponds (Gladstone argues) to the description of Andromache's jewels in the *Iliad*. The absence of writing and statues confirm, respectively, Gladstone's belief that the age presented in the Homeric Poems is one that has yet to master the art of writing and his understanding of the Homeric description of Troy as a city without statues – the only exception being the statue of Athena. All these elements seem – to Gladstone – to reinforce and justify his understanding of the Homeric age. Unsurprisingly, on this basis, Gladstone is inclined to accept Schliemann's claim that Hissarlik is the site of Homer's Troy. At last, Gladstone endorses the authenticity of Schliemann's discoveries. As he explains to Newton, a forger could hardly have come up with so particular a miscellany of artefacts:

To me, they carry in their combination, evidence of authenticity for their correspondence with the Homeric text wh. are in some degrees peculiar to myself. Reflecting on them as well as I can I find them in respects such as I sh[oul]d have desired them, to sustain my own interpretation e.g., as to the copper, the talents, […] the gold headdresses & on the other hand the absence of writing and the absence of statues.[203]

Gladstone continues:

As to the copper, I have had pretty nearly to myself hitherto, the doctrine of a copper age & I doubt very much whether any forger c[oul]d or w[oul]d, at his will, have put together this particular combination of objects.[204]

This letter, hidden in Gladstone's Ministerial correspondence, escaped Vaio's account of the correspondence between Schliemann, Newton, and Gladstone. It gives a clear-cut insight into Gladstone's interest in Schliemann's finds, showing the impact of the archaeological discoveries on his Homeric theories. Indeed, the failure of negotiations for the purchase of the Trojan collection does not signal the end of Gladstone's involvement with Schliemann and his antiquities. On the contrary, it marks the beginning of a new phase where Gladstone enters into direct contact with Schliemann.

[203] Add MS 44543 f. 45 W.E. Gladstone to C. T. Newton, January 6, 1874.
[204] Add MS 44543 f. 45 W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton, January 6, 1874.

On December 28, 1873, Schliemann writes to Gladstone, sending a copy of *Ithaka, der Peloponnes und Troja* (1869). As the archaeologist explains, the book is a token of his 'profound admiration' for Gladstone 'both as a scholar and as a statesman.'[205] Schliemann, however, does not restrict his message solely to formal pleasantries. In presenting his findings, he states that his archaeological discoveries have demonstrated that Gladstone's opinion 'expressed in his celebrated "Homeric Studies" that the Trojans spoke Greek has become an indisputable fact.'[206] In other words, Schliemann introduces his archaeological enterprise as the natural continuation and demonstration of Gladstone's own Homeric theories. These carefully crafted, flattering lines betray Schliemann's intentions. He was hoping to enlist Gladstone's support for his excavations – and use Gladstone's reputation to bolster his own.

On January 9, 1874, Gladstone replies. Notwithstanding his political commitments he has read the Preface of *Ithaka* 'with extraordinary interest.'[207] He continues:

> The facts that you appear to have established are of the highest significance to primitive history, and I may take even a selfish pleasure in them when I contemplate their bearing on my own interpretations of the Homeric text. I hope that during the course of this year you may be in back to visit London, and that I be favoured with some opportunity of making your acquaintance.[208]

While Gladstone recognises the importance of Schliemann's archaeological endeavours, especially in relation to their contribution to prehistory, he does not commit himself to support any of the German's claims. Particularly, when he states that he can see the relevance of the discoveries for his theories, he does not enter any specifics. Overall, the letter is supportive in a carefully vague way. The politician is as interested as he is cautious about committing himself. Gladstone's response is in line with his conversations with Newton.[209] The Prime Minister shares Newton's reservations. For now, Schliemann's discoveries are marked by many unresolved questions – their implications, particularly for Gladstone's own Homeric theories, are far from clear. Months pass before Gladstone makes any public comment on Schliemann's discoveries, in his article 'Homer's Place in History' in the *Contemporary Review* of June 1874.[210]

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[205] Add MS 44441 f. 243 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1873.
[206] Add MS 44441 f. 243 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1873.
[207] 21402 BOX 69 NO. 9 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann January 9, 1874.
[208] 21402 BOX 69 NO. 9 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann January 9, 1874.
[209] Add MS 44441 f. 238 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1873.
[210] *Contemporary Review* December 1873: 329-344, *Contemporary Review* December 1873: 841- 855.

Nevertheless, Gladstone seizes the opportunity to establish a connection with Schliemann. The German, for his part, is more than happy to exploit Gladstone's reputation (Homeric and non) to strengthen his own position, especially when criticised in the press. The attacks were, at this point, coming thick and fast. In one debate, with Max Müller, on the origin of the Trojan people, Müller argued that the Trojans were barbarians or at least non-Hellenic, opposing Schliemann's theories regarding the Greekness of the Trojans. In his response to Müller's critiques, Schliemann wrote: 'Mr Gladstone proves in his celebrated work *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age*, beyond any doubt that the Trojans were Pelasgian, and, as such, they must have spoken Greek or a kindred dialect.'[211] Strengthened by his private correspondence with the politician, the German archaeologist exploits Gladstone's authority in the Homeric field. This episode foreshadows to the significance which Gladstone's intervention will have, in shaping the reception of Schliemann's discoveries in Britain.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored several aspects of the Victorian discourse on Homer through the intersection of different sources. The breadth and complexity of this discourse have been apparent throughout. In the nineteenth century, Homer was the subject of specialist treaties, articles in periodicals, meetings of London learned societies, letters of important Statesmen, and debates in Parliament.

Victorian Homeric discourse is also notable for its permeable boundaries. Ideas circulate and contaminate one another, and knowledge advances through unexpected collisions and interactions. Gladstone, as we have seen, represents an interesting starting point for exploring this landscape – and for understanding the complexity of the role of Homer in Victorian culture. Gladstone's incredibly well-preserved archives show that the author is part of a comprehensive series of interlocking intellectual and political networks, which position him at the centre of contemporary events, time and again. Other Victorian figures, especially those orbiting around major institutions such as the British Museum or involved with Parliament, may boast notable webs of connections. What strikes Gladstone's contacts is the width well beyond the British border, the multifaceted

[211] *The Academy* February 14, 1874.

interest he entertains with his correspondents, and the colourful mix of interlocutors from politicians to poets to explore museum curators, scholars, and naturalists.

Willingly or unwillingly, Gladstone is at the heart of the cultural transformation of his age. Contrarily to the public image, he hardly tries to promote himself; in practice, he seems to refuse to adopt a rigid role systematically. His archive shows Gladstone is the man between worlds: the politician and the scholar, the academic and the dilettante. He takes advantage of his ambivalence and acts in grey areas. In so doing, he welcomes and exploits the opportunity to rewrite the past and the present.

2

The Archaeologist and the Scholar: A New History of the Discovery of Troy

INTRODUCTION

The reception of Homer, during the second half of the nineteenth-century, was shaped more profoundly by the discovery of Troy. The story of that discovery, and its reception in Britain, is one which needs to be reassessed – starting with its protagonist. For many in Britain, it was William Gladstone, and not Heinrich Schliemann, who revealed Homer's Troy to them, in the ruins of Hissarlik. Deploying every bit of his Homeric knowledge, combining philology and archaeology, Gladstone embarks on a quest to prove that Schliemann's discoveries and Homer's text illuminate one another – and that the ruins of Hissarlik are indeed the vestiges of Homer's Troy.

The task Gladstone undertakes requires political as scholarly skills. In order to convincingly claim that Troy has been discovered, Gladstone needs to establish Schliemann's credibility as an archaeologist as well as demonstrate the Homeric nature of the Trojan remains.

Gladstone's intervention in – and gradual transformation of –one of the most crowded and acrimonious debates of the age – that I will from now on refer to as – the Victorian Trojan War will be traced, over the following three chapters. While he continues to work on specialist publications, such as *Homeric Synchronism* (1876), Gladstone relies on convincing (and engaging) the broadest audience possible. He writes to newspapers; he speaks meetings of London's learned societies; he exercises his authority in and out of the Homeric field to promote Schliemann and his discoveries both privately and publicly. All the while, he must juggle his commitment to Schliemann's discoveries with his wish to shape them to fit his own Homeric theories. Gradually, over the course of five years, Gladstone builds and diffuses a new Homeric narrative, one which forces his contemporaries to consider the possibility that Homer's Troy has resurfaced among the ruins on the hill of Hissarlik. Ultimately, Gladstone transformed his contemporaries' understanding of the ancient past.

Excavating Gladstone's role in the Victorian Trojan War, and its impact, will be a gradual process. This chapter will focus on the opening manoeuvres of the debate. While Schliemann's *Trojanische Alterthümer* and *Atlas* (1874) is the *casus belli*, the conflict does not begin in earnest until Gladstone enters the field with 'Homer's Place in History' (1874). In the following chapter, Gladstone's involvement in the reception of Schliemann's discoveries will be reassessed, in the aftermath of the publication of *Troy and Its Remains* (1875), the English edition of the archaeologist's 1874 work. Then, the impact of Gladstone's ultimate offensive in the war will be re-evaluated, through an exploration of the contemporary reception of *Homeric Synchronism* (1876), Gladstone's third book on Homer and the Homeric age.

In the aftermath of the publication of Schliemann's *Trojanische Alterthümer* and *Atlas* (1874) – the German edition of Schliemann's account of his excavations at Hissarlik (modern Turkey) and a collection of photographs of his archaeological discoveries – Gladstone acts as a focal point and a catalyst for the work's reception. His Homeric research reflects, reshapes, and intensifies contemporary interest in the Trojan antiquities. The intimate conversations and private correspondence which characterised the debate in 1873 move into public discussions in the pages of the Victorian periodicals. *The Athenaeum, The Academy, The Times, The Examiner, The Saturday Review, The Quarterly Review* and *The Contemporary Review* all feature Schliemann's work prominently, and scholars including Max Müller, Charles Thomas Newton, and S. Alexander Murray discuss the Trojan finds. Sensation – this being a story about Schliemann – is never far away.[212]

This chapter focuses tightly on nineteenth-century periodicals, and the discussions which they shaped and facilitated. Much of the Victorian Trojan War was fought out within their pages – a space which was Gladstone's natural habitat.

Schliemann's claims, regarding his Trojan finds, did not initially meet with widespread acceptance. Gladstone, however, was in a position to turn the tide – not just because of his unparalleled network of connections, but also because he was untethered, institutionally: in a position to take risks, and thus move conversations forward in ways which others could not. Here, Gladstone moves from attempting to shape private opinion, to attempting to shape public opinion, regarding Schliemann's discoveries, and the reality of Homeric Troy. Gladstone and Schliemann both have their own agendas: both attempt

[212] *The Academy* February 14, 1874; *The Times* November 30, 1874; and *The Times* November 30, 1874, for the scandal of the looting of the hill of Hissarlik by Schliemann's workforce.

to put the other to work, and to mould the wider discourse around their own priorities. This underlying tension, which marked the relationship between Gladstone and Schliemann, can be seen unfolding in microcosm, with regard to one of Schliemann's strangest finds, the case of owl-headed Athena.

Owl-headed Athena and Victorian Scepticism

The immediate reception of *Trojanische Alterthümer* and *Atlas* (1874) in Britain is complex, contrasting, and multifaceted. Studies such as that of Traill (1995) dispose of the matter by stressing that the archaeologist and his early work were warmly welcomed in Britain, notwithstanding some objections and critical remarks.[213] Traill (1995) writes:

> While scholarly opinion was divided as to the significance of Schliemann's discoveries, most published reactions were remarkably favourable, particularly in Britain. Almost all the reviewers, including the most critical, paid tribute to the great service Schliemann had done by conducting these massive excavations. Moreover, the main battle of Troy was won. Thought the supporters of Bunarbashi continued to fight a rear-guard action, from this point on most scholars agreed with Schliemann that Hissarlik was the site of Troy. But there were inevitable reservations and criticisms.[214]

In fact, in 1874, the Victorian Trojan War had only just begun. The matter was settled only years later, after many complex and interconnected debates, thanks to the augmentation of the archaeological evidence (due to other excavations such as those at Mycenae), thanks to the interventions of numerous forgotten players – and thanks, above all, to Gladstone.

In this chapter, I reassess the reactions of Gladstone and his contemporaries to Schliemann's claims in 1874, in light of the debates which followed the publication of *Trojanische Alterthümer* and *Atlas* (1874), to illustrate that Schliemann's credibility as an archaeologist and the interpretation of his discoveries were very much still under scrutiny.

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[213] Traill 1995: 126-127; See Allen 1999:172-179; Bryant-Davis 2018: 103 the author delves into some aspects of the initial reception of Schliemann's discoveries, stating, 'Treasure of Priam was exhibited in London from 1877' 'after this public sensation that the general acceptance of Hissarlik as the site of Troy was confirmed;' See also Duesterberg 2015:210-226 and Wallace 2004: 101-128 who examines unwanted consequences of Schliemann's discoveries 'What Schliemann could not have foreseen was the way in which his supposedly objective, back-to-basic excavation indirectly encouraged the pseudo-scientific accounts of racial origins and purity that increasingly became an industry in the early twentieth-century;' Gange and Ledger-Lomas ed. 2013: 39-70.

[214] Trail 1995 126-127.

This is a debate which is built on – and turns on – contested interpretations of seemingly-small details. One such detail forms my starting point, here: the case of statuettes of 'owl-headed' Athena, which reveals both the context in which Gladstone operates, and the problematic position Schliemann occupies. Eminent Victorian scholars, like Charles Thomas Newton of the British Museum, the Oxford Professor Max Müller, and the archaeologist Alexander Stuart Murray either reject Schliemann's claims regarding Homer's Troy or express open lack of interest in the ever-vexed question of the reality of Troy.[215] In the face of such widespread scepticism from established voices of academic authority, it falls to Gladstone to become the person who steps in to interpret and validate Schliemann's finds, that Homer's Troy lies in the ruins of Hissarlik.

In *Trojanische Alterthümer* (1874), Schliemann presents an alternative reading of Athena's epithet *glaukopis* as indicating an 'owl-headed' deity. Schliemann's claim is only partly a philological matter. When Schliemann asserts that statuettes from Hissarlik depict Athena *glaukopis* as a goddess with the head of an owl, he is building his defence of Hissarlik as the historical site of Homeric Troy. In a circular argument, Schliemann argues that because he has excavated in the deepest stratum of his site considerable numbers of idols representing Athena *glaukopis,* the burnt remains he unearthed on the mound of Hissarlik are the vestiges of Troy.[216] Simultaneously, Schliemann also claims that because the statuettes he excavated at Hissarlik on the Trojan stratum represent a female figure with an owl-head, they can be positively identified as representations of Athena *glaukopis*. Thus, Schliemann argues that the common rendering of Athena's Homeric epithet *glaukopis* as 'bright-eyed' must be changed into 'owl-headed'.[217] Needless to say, this argument is greeted with the fiercest criticism.

At the beginning of 1874, Müller examines Schliemann's reading of the Hissarlik idols and their implication for the Homeric nature of the Trojan finds, in an article for January 1874, in *The Academy*.[218] The Oxford professor declares, unsurprisingly, that Schliemann has failed to convince his readers:

> If it be asked, why the treasures found in that place should be ascribed to Priamos, Dr. Schliemann's chief argument is, that he finds everywhere images […] of an owl-headed deity; […] and this can be no other but

[215] *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 39-41; *The Academy* January 17, 1874: 77; *The Academy* February 14, 1874: 173.
[216] Schliemann 1875: 113.
[217] Schliemann 1875: 37, 54.
[218] *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 41.

the Athene of Ilion, the patron-goddess of Troy; […] This argument will hardly carry conviction. [219]

In the same article, Müller remarks that if the archaeologist had been satisfied with presenting his discoveries without speculations 'he would have earned but gratitude.' [220] However, 'as he [Dr. Schliemann] has […] assigned this treasure to Priamos and Hekabe, thus drawing these mythic personages and the Trojan war into the domain of authenticated history, it could not be otherwise but that he roused at once both opposition and incredulity.'[221] Schliemann, in other words, had overstepped his boundaries. Müller's objection is soon followed by those of other eminent Victorians. Alexander Stuart Murray, from the British Museum, also comments on the Hissarlik idols on the pages of *The Academy* on January 17, 1874.[222] In a dismissive evaluation, Murray asserts that the Hissarlik idols are rude attempts to produce human figures and not representations of animal hybrids. Then, he reminds his readers that statuettes similar to those of Schliemann were in widespread circulation in the Mediterranean, and although commonly assigned to 'primitive' times, could equally be considered works of a later period.[223] In other words, the idols were far from being proof of the existence of a cult of Athena *glaukopis* at Troy and offered no indication of the antiquity of Schliemann's findings.

As if Schliemann did not have enough to contend with, Charles Newton joined the fray, on February 14, 1874, with another article for *The Academy*. For Newton, Schliemann's idols appeared to show attempts to model a face – but it was impossible to tell whether that face was human or owlish. Contrary to Murray, Newton believed that Trojan artefacts he examined were 'Prehellenic.'[224] He wrote:

While fully recognising the authenticity of Dr. Schliemann's narrative and genuineness of his antiquities, I

[219] See *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 41: 'If it be asked, which the treasures found in that place should be ascribed to Priamos, Dr. Schliemann's chief argument is, that he finds everywhere images […] of an owl-headed deity; […] and this can be no other but the Athene of Ilion, the patron-goddess of Troy; […] This argument will hardly carry conviction.' According to Müller other are the deities worshipped on the site and he adds 'Those who dig in the ruins of Troy will never find there, remnants of the life which the mythology of the Greeks and the poetry of Homer transferred to that spot, but remnants of the pre-Hellenic and half-Asiatic culture […].'
[220] *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 40.
[221] *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 40.
[222] *The Academy* January 17, 1874: 77.
[223] See *The Academy* January 17, 1874: 77: 'As to the owl-headed figures which Dr. Schliemann identifies as *Glaukopis Athene* and relies on to prove his site, it apparently deflects everyone else to find anything in them but excessively rude attempts to produce a human figure.' Murray adds: 'Such figures in clay and even in marble are not rarely found in the Greek islands, and though usually assigned to very primitive times many equally well be rude work of a late period.'
[224] See *The Academy* February 14, 1874: 173: 'The conception of the human form as an organic whole, a conception which we meet with at the very dawn of Greek art, nowhere appears.'

am not prepared at present to accept his assumption that he has found the site of Homeric Troy.' He continues 'I prefer to leave the question an open one, whether Dr. Schliemann has found the site of Homeric Troy or not.[225]

Schliemann's owls received anything but a rapturous reception in Britain. Far from being acknowledged as definitive evidence of the archaeologist's claims, his finds – as soon as they were subjected to close, critical examination – raised more questions than they answered: about the origin, the dating, and the practices of Schliemann's alleged Trojan civilisation.

Gladstone shared his contemporaries' reservations in regard to Schliemann's thesis regarding Athena *glaukopis*. Despite Schliemann's best efforts to enlist him as a supporter, Gladstone refused: first, he dodged the question, then he built his own arguments for the Homeric nature of the Trojan antiquities, which differs drastically from those of Schliemann.

Gladstone learned about the "owls" in question on December 28, 1873, during his first epistolary exchange with Schliemann. The archaeologist presented his discoveries as supportive of – almost subordinate to – Gladstone's theories, arguing that the presence of large numbers of idols of "Athena" at Hissarlik proved Gladstone's claim that the people of Troy spoke a Greek dialect. He writes:

Your Exc.y's opinion expressed in his celebrated "Homeric Studies" that the Trojans spoke Greek has become an indisputable fact by my excavations, for the hundreds of idols that I have found in the depths of Troy of […] the Ilian Minerva, the Homeric *thea glaukopis Athenè*, show all the characteristics of a woman and an owl's head.[226]

Gladstone, in his reply, simply avoided commenting on Schliemann's interpretation of Athena's epithet.[227] So Schliemann brought up the issue again – and then again – in his subsequent letters, aiming to enlist Gladstone's support in the ongoing debate. First, in October 1874, Schliemann writes to Gladstone, claiming to have definitively proven that Athena was originally an owl-headed goddess. He claims to have found material evidence that another Hera, whose Homeric epithet is '*boopis'*, was represented with an animal

[225] *The Academy* February 14, 1874: 173.
[226] Add MS 44441 f. 243 H. Schliemann to W. E. Gladstone December 28, 1873.
[227] 21402 BOX 69 NO. 9 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann January 9, 1874.

head, in this case, that of a cow.[228] Despite Schliemann's efforts, Gladstone remains firm in his refusal of the archaeologist's reading of the Homeric epithets. Gladstone first publicly voiced his reservations about Schliemann's interpretations of the Homeric goddess and their epithets in an interview in *The Quarterly Review* of 1874.[229] At this point, Schliemann was struggling to counter the criticisms which were being levelled at him. So, in December 1874, he tried once more to secure Gladstone's endorsement. The archaeologist wrote:

> After long study, I think I have now found the origin of Hera's cow-face and I therefore write today a long article, on the subject to *The Academy*. Please, therefore, for heaven's sake delay your further remarks on the two epithets until you have read my article, I feel perfectly sure you will approve of it and by the answer you will give to it you will solve one important mythological and philological problem.[230]

Schliemann's desperate attempt to silence Gladstone, at least ('for heaven's sake') temporarily, reveals the weight of Gladstone's intervention in this discussion. Gladstone's opinion, Schliemann seems to think, could tip the scales in favour of or against the archaeologist.

Persuading Gladstone to keep quiet was, predictably, easier said than done. In *Homeric Synchronism: An Inquiry into the Time and Place of Homer* (1876), he criticises Schliemann's reading once again. According to Gladstone, clear parallels exist between the ancient Greek religious system and the Ancient Egyptian one. There was, for him, no reason for the Homeric Athena, whom Gladstone believed to be connected to the Egyptian goddess Neith,[231] to be represented with the head of an owl, because the Egyptian deity had no connection with owls.[232] In 1877, a year after the publication of

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[228] Add MS 44444 f. 336 H. Schliemann to W. E. Gladstone October 25, 1874.
[229] *The Quarterly Review* April 1874: 526-566; 557.
[230] Add MS 44445 f. 268 H. Schliemann to W. E. Gladstone December 24, 1874.
[231] Gladstone 1876: 248. For future investigations, it could be interesting to follow a line of inquiry focused on these animal goddesses, their relationship with Egypt and the implications of the concept of the Un-Greek. The endless debate about the ethnicity and language of the Trojans (Müller said they were barbarians) is profoundly shaped by the ongoing crisis with the Ottoman Empire. This is a fundamental example of how central real-world preoccupations were in the discourse on the discovery of Troy.
[232] See Gladstone 1876: 248: 'In the opinion of Dr. Schliemann the Homeric epithets βοῶπις and γλαυκῶπις respectively mean ox-eyed and owl-eyed, and are the Hellenic or Homeric modifications, or survivals, of older mythologies, supposed to have represented Herè and Athenè, to whom these epithets severally belong, the one as an ox or with the ox-head, the other as an owl or with the owl's head. If we are to regard Athenè as representing the Neith of Egypt, the chief special note of that goddess, on which we can establish a connection with the Homeric conception, is found in the original signification of the name. This is said to be, 'I came from myself.' Such a name exhibits not an identity but a very suggestive resemblance with the reference in the Iliad, where Zeus is made to declare that he was her sole parent (Il. V. 880). But I have not learned that there is any special relation between the Neith of Egypt and the owl.'

Homeric Synchronism, Gladstone rejected once more Schliemann's reading of 'glaukopis' at the meeting of the Society of Antiquaries at Burlington House in March 1877.[233]

The case of owl-headed Athena shows us that substantial and stubborn differences divided Gladstone and Schliemann from the very beginning of their relationship. Gladstone, far from being easily influenced, carefully kept his distance from those theories which did not support his own work. He may be dealing with Schliemann's discoveries, but Gladstone is pursuing his own Homeric agenda. Existing scholarship has, however, been inclined to underplay the difference in opinion which separates the two. It is, in other words, necessary to write a new narrative of Victorian discourse(s) on the discovery of Troy, one which makes space for complexities, for refusal, and for contrasting agendas with regard to the Trojan antiquities.

Call for Rigour: Gladstone defends the existence of Homer's Troy

As discussed above, in 1874, the Victorian Trojan War starts to take concrete form. Eminent scholars join the fray, newspapers carry passionately-argued articles, and critical reviews supplant the enthusiastic notices which welcomed Schliemann's discoveries in 1872-3. Gladstone and his contemporaries were as intrigued as they were puzzled by Schliemann's finds. In this climate of scepticism, Gladstone undertakes a series of increasingly public interventions. The effects of those interventions, as I will show, are striking. For many, Gladstone's words, rather than Schliemann's claims, become the best guide to understanding and interpreting the Trojan finds. Gladstone gives sense and meaning to Schliemann's problematic discoveries. Gladstone strategically exploits a range of different discursive spaces, both public and private, to join – and to reshape – the ongoing Homeric conversation. Gladstone is able to push Homer to the extreme because he is solidly grounded in such discourses. His interventions are so successful that, for many in Victorian Britain, the man who revealed Homeric Troy in the ruins of Hissarlik was Gladstone, rather than Schliemann.

[233] See *The Times,* March 23, 1877: 10: 'Gladstone is willing to recognise similarities between the representations of the Egyptian cow-goddess Isis and Homeric Hera. He is, after all, advocating the existence of parallelisms between the religious systems of Egyptian animal worship and the anthropomorphism of Ancient Greece.'

I. Preliminary manoeuvres

On January 22, 1874, Gladstone calls for the dissolution of Parliament, bringing down the curtain on his first term as Prime Minister. With the end of his public role came the liberty of focusing on his Homeric research, and the opportunity to openly engage in the public debate on the discovery of Troy, without fearing accusations of neglecting his public office for private interests.[234] Beginning in January 1874, Gladstone launched a new campaign of Homeric research, one which would reshape Victorian understanding of the Homeric age.[235]

First, Gladstone studied. His diaries show a meaningful increase in his Homeric activities, as well as a shift in his interests. The archaeological discoveries start to occupy a great deal of his research time, alongside his ongoing (and constant) attention to the texts of the Poems. His philological interests are soon crystalised in a new project, which he titles *Thesaurus Homerikos*. In a letter to Ignaz von Döllinger, a German theologian and historian, Gladstone claims that for the time being, he has no interest in pursuing his political career further and that, instead, he will devote himself to completing and publishing an index which would make the contents of the Homeric Poems easily accessible. To Gladstone, the most recent German examples of Homeric thesauri were not satisfactory:

> I have not recorded any vow on the subject of return to office; but I think it very unlikely that any adequate cause should arise to bring me back to my recent position. I have already recommenced my former labours. The main immediate purpose I have before me is to prepare and publish a work which is to be termed 'Thesauros Homerikos; an Index or Account of things noted from the text of the Iliad and the Odyssey.' I know of no book—certainly Friedrich's Realien is not one—which gives a full and easily accessible account of the contents of the Poems: and such a work I am convinced will be of great value: of much more probably, than my speculations upon them.[236]

Gladstone's diaries reveal that alongside the new philological enterprise, the ex-Prime Minister had begun pursuing a different Homeric interest. Scattered annotations confirm that Gladstone was concurrently immersed in studying the most recent archaeological

[234] *Illustrated London News* July 17, 1869: 71.
[235] See Gladstone Diaries, vol. VIII: 438: 'January 9,1874' when Gladstone inaugurates a new session of Homeric studies which with the publication of his translation of the passage of the *Iliad* which describes the Shield of Achilles.
[236] Diaries vol. VIII: 485, April 21, 1874.

developments, investigating the discoveries in the Troad, and Cyprus as well as advancements in the deciphering of ancient Egyptian monuments.[237] In particular, Gladstone focused on Schliemann: he read with interest the archaeologist's publications, and the reviews he received in the British press.[238] Gladstone's epistolary exchanges with Newton and Schliemann confirm this ongoing interest.[239]

Archaeology was, increasingly, a fundamental part of Gladstone's Homeric studies. This change can be glimpsed, on a small scale, in Gladstone's translation of a famous passage of the *Iliad*, from Book XVIII, about the shield of Achilles.[240]

Gladstone's interest in contemporary archaeology, particularly with regard to metallic artefacts, shapes the way he reads the text of the epics. The archaeological conversations Gladstone shared with Lubbock and Newton – explored in the previous chapter – change the research questions he investigates.[241] When engaging with the shield of Achilles, Gladstone focuses on the different metals it is made of. This is an awkward moment for Gladstone: he has argued, consistently, that the Homeric age is one during which complex metallurgic operations such as the manufacture of bronze had not been mastered, yet.[242] The presence of bronze in Homer is, in consequence, highly problematic. Gladstone attempts to resolve the impasse:

> The materials used in the composition of the Shield deserve notice. The metal cast into the furnace are copper, tin, gold, and silver; and in one passage we find what may be reference to as […] bronze, resulting from a mixture of tin and copper; but it is a question whether the mixed metal yielding the dark colour is intended, or the dark colour only. In general, to say the least, the workmanship of the Shield is employed upon the several metals, single and un-combined; and it probable that the poet meant, by their free intermixture, to aim at the effect of colour.[243]

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[237] See Gladstone Diaries, vol. VIII: 488, 2 May 1874: 'Ch. 812 A.M. Worked on the Place of Homer in Hist & Chronol […] Read F. Lenormant—Lauth, Homer u. Ægypten; Gladstone Diaries: 489, May 4, 1874: 'Worked on *Thes. Hom*. and on Homer in History. Lenormant Hist. & Premières Civilisations.'

[238] Gladstone Diaries, vol. VIII: 437, January 7, 1874; Gladstone Diaries, vol. VIII: 473, March 9, 1874-March 10, 1874; Gladstone Diaries, vol. VIII: 485, April 21, 1874; Gladstone Diaries, vol. VIII: 487, April 24, 1874.

[239] See Fitton 1994: 25-25: 'H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton January 30, 1874.' There Schliemann contacts Newton to get his article published.

[240] *Contemporary Review* December 1873: 329-344.

[241] Add MS 44436 f. 56 W.E. Gladstone to J. Lubbock, November 22, 1872; Add MS 44436 f.58 J. Lubbock to W.E. Gladstone, November 23, 1872; Vaio 1992: 73-74: C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 18, 1873.

[242] Gladstone 1869: 533.

[243] *Contemporary Review* December 1873:332.

This brief passage is Gladstone's first, somewhat tentative attempt to apply his new approach to the study of the Poems of Homer. However unsatisfactory his conclusions may be, the combination of textual analysis with recent archaeological discoveries marks a genuine departure for Gladstone: the beginning of his new intellectual project which, in 1876, culminates with the birth of 'Homerology'.

In March 1874, Gladstone joins the Victorian Trojan war, releasing an interview to *The Quarterly Review*. Between February and March of 1874, Gladstone's correspondence reveals that two journals, *The Academy* and *The Quarterly Review,* were competing to lure him into the debate. First to solicit Gladstone was the editor of *The Academy,* Charles Appleton. On February 15, 1874, Appleton contacted Gladstone, asking for an article on Schliemann's Trojan antiquities.[244] Appleton offered to prioritise the publication in *The Academy*'s very next number and stressed that Gladstone's contribution would feature alongside those of other eminent scholars – namely, Charles Newton and Max Müller.[245] This letter reveals the esteem Gladstone enjoyed as a scholar of Homer: his opinion on Schliemann's finds was to be read alongside the contributions of some of the most distinguished scholars in the field.

Gladstone turned down the invitation. But, as we will see, Appleton was not discouraged. He would soon make a second attempt to engage Gladstone in the controversy.[246]

Roughly a month later, on March 11, 1874, William Smith, editor of *The Quarterly Review* successfully secured Gladstone's opinion on the Trojan antiquities. Gladstone is interviewed about Schliemann's book on the excavation at Hissarlik, *Trojanische Alterthümer* (1874). Smith, like Appleton, values Gladstone's scholarly opinion, on Schliemann's finds, 'as I have no one so competent to express an opinion upon everything relating to Troy as you are.'[247]

Not only does Gladstone answer Smith's questions, but he also shares part of the Trojan material in his possession – namely part of the correspondence he had with

[244] See *The Academy* February 14, 1874: 'The editor of the Academy presents his compliments to Mr Gladstone and will be very glad to publish any comments, suggestions he may have to make regarding the controversy about Dr Schliemann's discoveries. Mr Newton sent the last number of the Academy containing his own report & a letter fr- Dr Schliemann to Mr Gladstone. The article of Prof Max Müller is in the number 21 and 10 for insertion in next number.'
[245] Add MS 44442 f. 250 C.E.C.B. Appleton to W.E. Gladstone February 15, 1874.
[246] Add MS 44443 f. 155 C.E.C.B. Appleton to W.E. Gladstone April 18, 1874.
[247] Add MS 44443 f. 92 W. Smith to W.E. Gladstone March 11, 1874; Add MS 44443 f. 159 W. Smith to W.E. Gladstone April 20, 1874.

Newton and Schliemann.[248] Gladstone wrote to Schliemann on June 5, 1874, commenting on his interview with Smith, and explaining his change of heart:

I had a good deal of communication with the editor of the Quarterly Review on the preparation of his article and had the pleasure of directing his attention to the most interesting [aspects] of autobiography in your earlier work. For my own heart I have look at your 'Alterthümer' mainly with reference to that one question which I feel myself least incompetent to answer, namely here for your 'objects and the tale they tell are in correspondence with the Homeric text. The result you will find in Page 3-8 included article it is to me highly satisfactory.[249]

The letter marks a turning point in Gladstone's research: he knows, now, how he wants to put Schliemann's discoveries to work. Gladstone explains that he is looking for correspondences between Schliemann's Trojan findings and the Homeric text.
Gladstone's interview, published in *The Quarterly Review* of April 1874,[250] prompts Appleton, the editor of *The Academy,* to take up his pursuit of Gladstone again. On April 18, 1874, Appleton asks Gladstone to comment upon remarks made by François Lenormant, the French Assyriologist and numismatist, on Schliemann's discoveries. Appleton writes:

We would again remind you that if you have any contribution to made to the controversy about the Homeric Troy which has been going on in the columns of the Academy and more particularly in respect of some points raised in Monsieur François Lenormant's last letter, we shall be very glad to have it this week or next, as the controversy shows signs of wearing itself out. In a controversy like this it is very important to get all that competent persons have to say brought together in a portable form.[251]

Appleton has a very ambitious project in mind: gathering together all the most relevant interventions by contemporary experts on Schliemann's discoveries. For him, Gladstone is the missing piece of this project. For the second time, Gladstone refuses. The letter, however, confirms that Gladstone, due to his Homeric expertise, was widely expected to play his part in the controversy.

At the end of April 1874, Gladstone completes his preliminary manoeuvres by voicing his interest in Schliemann's discoveries to an audience of experts. An article in

[248] Add MS 44443 f. 117 W. Smith to W.E. Gladstone March 30, 1874.
[249] 21403 BOX 69 N. 26 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann June 5, 1874.
[250] *Quarterly Review* April 1874: 526-66.
[251] Add MS 44443 f. 155 C.E.C.B. Appleton to W.E. Gladstone April 18, 1874.

The Times, from May 2, 1874, reveals the occasion chosen by Gladstone: Charles Newton's presentation of the results of his examination of Schliemann's Trojan collection at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries on April 30, 1874.[252] Gladstone was not able to attend the event in person – but he still managed to dominate the conversation. He arranged, in advance, for his question to be read out at the meeting.[253] It was, unsurprisingly, a request for clarification on the chemical composition of the metallic objects found at Troy. Evidence of advanced metallurgy in the alleged Homeric strata at Hissarlik would have jeopardised (for Gladstone) the Homeric claims of the site. According to Gladstone, the Heroic Age was strictly the age of copper.[254] Gladstone's intervention, together with the responses it received, were widely reported – to the reader, Gladstone's presence at the meeting was very real,[255] alongside eminent scholars involved in the British discussion of Schliemann's finds, such as Max Müller.[256] Once again, it is clear how anticipated Gladstone's intervention in this debate was. Christopher Knight Watson, the Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, invited Gladstone to the meeting on April 27, 1874,[257] attempting – along with so many others – to engage Gladstone in the discourse surrounding Schliemann's finds.

II. Homer's Place in History

Gladstone officially joined the Victorian Trojan war via an article in the *Contemporary Review* of June 1874.[258] He acts as a catalyst for the Victorian discourse on the discovery of Troy. His Homeric research reshapes and escalates the debate. To demonstrate the impact of Gladstone's work it is first necessary to take a step back and retrace the key points of the discourse surrounding Troy in 1874. This will not be a comprehensive survey – but rather one sufficient to show the subsequent impact of Gladstone and his

[252] *The Times* May 2, 1874: 5.
[253] Gladstone Diaries, vol. VIII: 488: on April 29,1874 Gladstone sends to C. Knight Watson; see *The Times* May 2, 1874:5 for transcription of the letter.
[254] Add Ms 44542 ff. 156-157 W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton August 18, 1873.
[255] *The Times* May 2, 1874; *The Athenaeum* May 9, 1874.
[256] *The Times* May 2, 1874: 5.
[257] See Add MS 44443 f. 175 C. K. Watson, to W.E. Gladstone April 27, 1874: 'On Thursday next the society of Antiquaries propose to exhibit the Schliemann Photographs on which Mr Charles Newton will make some remarks- Mr Newton expresses to me his wish that you should be present on the occasion and accordingly I send you a card of Invitation. I am sure the society will feel it a great honour to have you present especially if you would favour them with some remarks on the subject.'
[258] The article is divided into two parts published in the same issue. Part I is 'Homer's Place in History' *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 1-22; Part II is entitled 'The Place of Homer in History and in Egyptian Chronology' *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 175-200.

work. Many of the theories which Gladstone advances have, of course, long since been disproved – and some, to twenty-first century eyes, can seem downright bizarre. That, however, did not stop those theories mattering – or having substantial ripple effects, in nineteenth-century discourse, because they addressed issues crucial for the time. Ultimately, by briefly examining Gladstone's writing in the *Contemporary Review*, this chapter aims to reassess the nature and significance of Gladstone's interventions, in moving forward the puzzles around which the Victorian discussion about Homer's Troy revolves.

III. Reticence, doubt, and refusal: Victorian reactions to the discovery of Troy

The periodicals of 1874 allow us to glimpse the range of reactions to Schliemann's discovery of Troy: the debate in which Gladstone intervenes. Newton's article for *The Academy* on February 14, 1874, delineates the diversity of responses to Schliemann's discoveries. Newton acknowledges that the Trojan antiquities challenging to interpret: their authenticity is challenged,[259] their Homeric nature is questioned, their origin is debated,[260] and their dating is contested.[261] While the debate is wide-ranging and often chaotic, it revolves around two key questions: A. Are the ruins of Hissarlik Homer's Troy, and are Schliemann's finds Homeric? B. How old are the alleged Homeric remains? These are the questions Gladstone focuses on, in his contribution to the *Contemporary Review* of June 1874.

[259] See *The Academy* February 14, 1874: 'Lastly, some few persons have received Dr. Schliemann's narrative with scornful incredulity and have insinuated that the gold and silver ornaments were fabricated at Athens, or that they were purchased by Dr. Schliemann in some other part of Asia Minor and associated with the antiquities from Ilium Novum. In other words, they consider his story of the finding of a treasure as altogether apocryphal.'

[260] Müller also questions the origin of people of Hissarlik. Calling the Trojans 'barbarous,' 'non-Hellenic' puts the Oxford professor in open contrast to Schliemann – who adopts the Gladstone's theory– and defends a Greek origin for the Trojans.

[261] See *The Academy* February 14, 1874: '[other scholars] still allow that there is a prima face case for considering the Schliemann antiquities as prehistoric, and consequently antecedent to the earliest Greek antiquities as yet discovered.' Newton continues: 'Thirdly, there are archaeologists, who, while admitting the truth of Dr. Schliemann's narrative and the genuineness of his antiquities, have maintained that they have no pretensions to the remote antiquity which he claims for them, and that they are probably the work of some barbarous race in Asia Minor, in comparatively recent and even Christian times.'

IV. Digging for Troy

The reality of Homeric Troy was denied and fiercely resisted. For Max Müller, Schliemann fails to persuade his reader that he has indeed unearthed Homer's Troy. In his review of Schliemann's *Trojanische Alterthümer* (1874) published in *The Academy,* on January 10, 1874, he argues that if Schliemann had presented his discoveries to the world 'without saying anything about it, he would have earned nothing but gratitude.'[262] However, as he had attributed his finds to Homeric heroes, drawing 'these mythic personages and Trojan war into the domain of authenticated history it could be otherwise but roused at once both opposition and incredulity.'[263] Many scholars, while interested in the archaeological discoveries, and ready to acknowledge the worth of Schliemann's antiquities, were not willing to accept the contamination of history and legend. At the end of his article, Müller reiterates:

> The locality of the war might have some amount of reality but that is perfectly compatible with the mythological character of the war itself and the ruins of an old fortress as laid bare by Dr Schliemann would fully justify the ancient poets in transferring their version of the old struggle or the conquest of Helen to that very spot. But if this be so (…) The diggings at Troy will no more yield the treasure once possessed by the Homeric heroes than the armour of Uther Pendragon will ever be brought to light from the ruins of Tintagel, or the imperial crown of Federico Barbarossa from the caves of Kyffhauser. [264]

Even those scholars convinced of the reality of Homer's Troy could not agree as to where the city was located. This debate had been running, acrimoniously and with little sign of consensus, for many decades. Hissarlik, Schliemann's site, was competing for the title of Homer's Troy with many adversaries. The most relevant contenders were the sites of Bunarbashi and Gergis.[265] Gladstone, however, had never been fully convinced by the identification of Homeric Troy with the site of Burnarbashi.[266]

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[262] *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 9.
[263] *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 9.
[264] *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 9.
[265] See Cook 1973: 91-145; Allen 1999: 72-84; Wallace 2004:102-113; Ciardi 2011: 61; Gange and Bryant-Davis 2018: 49-54; Bryant 2018: 67-96; Perhaps the most iconic debate regarding the topography of the Troad features Schliemann against Stillman, eager defendant of the Bunarbashi site see *The Academy* February 21, 1874: 203-204; *Cornhill*, June 1874:642-61.
[266] See *The Times* June 26, 1875: 9: 'I have never been able fully to embrace the opinion current until quite recently that Bunarbashi was the site of Troy; for it was quite impossible to reconcile the natural features of the place with the distance from the sea and to bring together the natural features of the place with the described features of the Poems.'

V. Dating the Trojan remains

To understand the challenge that dating Schliemann's finds represents, it is important to remember that reliable, scientific dating methods were either in their infancy, or entirely unknown, at the time. In consequence, the same question arose, again and again: how to date the Trojan remains?

Several alternative approaches were under active consideration. The presence or absence of writing, as Gladstone had anticipated in his exchange with Newton in 1873, could be taken as a factor to determine the date of an artefact, or a site. In this respect, however, Schliemann's evidence is highly problematic.[267] Müller, confirming Gladstone's intuition, writes: 'Unfortunately the inscriptions found by Dr Schliemann which might have been expected to fix once and of all the date of his treasure are most disappointing.'[268]

Testing and evaluating the metallic composition of Schliemann's ancient artefacts was the second approach used to evaluate Troy's antiquity. As Gladstone anticipated, traces of advanced metallurgy could help to establish the age of the finds.[269] However, the tests which Schliemann carried out were unsatisfactory. Even when the antiquities were subject to a new series of tests, their composition remained unclear.[270]

The third method used to establish dating was a comparative one and was perhaps the most widely used approach in this period. Müller, Murray, and Newton all compare Schliemann's finds to antiquities from other ancient civilisations, in European collections. Here, while some artefacts from the Trojan collection had (or appeared to have) similarities with other objects, others remained challenging to classify.[271]

With evidence to back up his proposed chronology proving elusive, Schliemann failed to convince many readers of it. Müller accepted that the artefacts belonged to a generic prehistoric period.[272] Newton, on the other hand, through a careful comparison of the artefacts from Hissarlik and other objects from diverse prehistoric collections, concluded that Schliemann's finds belonged to a pre-Hellenic period, and established 600

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[267] Vaio 1992:74: W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton August 18, 1873.
[268] See *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 41. See *the Academy* January 10, 1874: 41; *The Academy* January 17, 1874: 77 for Max Müller's attempts to decipher the inscriptions. Other scholars tried to decipher the alleged inscriptions. See *The Academy* February 7, 1874: 152: 'Professor Haug maintains that the inscription corresponds to a Phoenician dialect'.
[269] See Vaio 1992:74: 'W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton August 18, 1873.'
[270] Add MS 44443 f. 224 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone May 7, 1874.
[271] *The Academy* January 10, 1874: 39-41; *The Academy* January 17, 1874: 77; *The Academy* February 14, 1874: 173.
[272] *The Academy* January 10, 1874.

BC as the *terminus ante quem* for the Trojan antiquities.[273] Schliemann's claims find no direct, unequivocal supporter.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the issue of dating the Trojan remains is driven by a deeper question, with complex roots in nineteenth-century discourse. It is the problem of the antiquity of man. Here, as elsewhere, Victorians have to leave behind the reassuring boundaries of a known and limited chronology, such as the Biblical one, and face a constantly expanding and frightfully empty timeline.

The Victorians' encounter with Troy takes place within this burning debate on time.[274] With Schliemann's discoveries facing intense questioning and cautious responses from some of the most distinguished scholars in Britain, Gladstone stages his intervention. He argues for the Homeric nature of the Hissarlik remains, advocating the validity of Homer as a guide for investigating the ancient history of mankind, hitherto thought lost.

VI. Gladstone's plea for the historical reality of Homer's Troy

Gladstone published an article, divided into two parts, in the *Contemporary Review* of June 1874. In the first part, he presented the latest developments of his own Homeric theories regarding the chronology of Homer, or to use Gladstone's words 'the present design is to effect something towards linking the Homeric Poems with the general history of the world'.[275]

Gladstone starts with his premises. The first principle of his Homeric investigation is the historical character of the Poems. According to Gladstone, the Epics contain a 'record of manners and characters, feelings and tastes, race and countries, principles and institutions.' But the Poems are also historical in a second sense. Gladstone believes that a solid nucleus of facts lies behind Homer's account of the Trojan War. He argues that contemporary archaeology has provided new compelling evidence for the historicity of the Poems. Gladstone contends that his theories 'have derived, and that very recently, most powerful confirmations from the progress of Archaeology'.[276] Gladstone mentions

[273] *The Academy* February 14, 1874*; The Times* May 2, 1874; *Athenaeum* May 9, 1874.
[274] See Daniel 1968; Ciardi 2013:45-54; See Murray 2014: 67-79; Duesterberg 2015: 63-86; Ciardi 2016; 53_104; Butler 2016 for deep time and consequences over Victorian culture.
[275] The article is divided in two parts published in the same issue. Part I is 'Homer's Place in History' *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 1-22; Part II is entitled 'The Place of Homer in History and in Egyptian Chronology' *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 175-200.
[276] W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann, June 5, 1874; *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 1-8.

two case-studies, in particular: Cesnola's campaign at Cyprus and Schliemann's discoveries at Hissarlik in the Troad.[277]

Gladstone agrees with the scholarly consensus that a prehistoric city existed on the small hill of Hissarlik in the Troad. This prehistoric city bears signs of looting and damage from a powerful conflagration. However, he does not simply repeat a widely-held opinion, arguing instead that 'a real objective Troy is thus, for the first time, with some marked notes of probability, presented to our view'.[278]

According to Gladstone, the text of the Homeric Poems and the relics uncovered at Hissarlik share many important points of similarity:[279]

> I will briefly furnish in form of theses, a comparison, in a number of leading points of usages and manners, between the testimony of the Poems and what we have thus far every reason to believe to be the testimony rendered by the excavations of this intelligent, enterprising and indefatigable explorer. I confine myself altogether to a rapid notice of the relation between these excavations and the Homer text I appears to me to be, as far as it goes, one of undeniable and even somewhat close correspondence. But neither will the correspondence determine the chronological question nor the failure to establishes it impede such determination.[280]

In a performance of his own academic *auctoritas*, Gladstone illustrates the correspondence between the archaeological finds and the details of the Homeric text. According to Gladstone, 'the excavations and the Poems thus far greatly fortify one another.'[281] Even though Gladstone acknowledges that his analysis is far from comprehensive, he still offers a few pertinent parallels: from the characteristics of the prehistoric architecture uncovered by Schliemann to the mastery of metals, the great abundance of copper and minimal traces of bronze, Schliemann's relics seem to fit into Gladstone's Homeric world. For Gladstone, perhaps the most significant resemblance between an object and a Homeric description emerges from the discovery of two gold headdresses. To his eyes, they reflect, with almost eerie closeness, the headpiece

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[277] Gladstone personally inspected in the autumn of 1872, before the artefacts were moved to America, General Cesnola's invaluable prehistoric collection from Cyprus and its implements and utensil in un-combined copper with cutting purposes.
[278] *Contemporary Review* June 1874:7.
[279] See *Contemporary Review* June 1874:7: 'There may have been a real Troy, and a real sack and conflagration of Troy, and yet not one of the characters, or of the other incidents of the tale, may ever have existed. But in the other and higher sense in which, taught always by the text itself, I have ever contended that the Poems are historical, these researches have apparently provided us with some, and perhaps with sufficient means of carrying question to a final issue.'
[280] *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 7.
[281] *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 7.

Andromache wears in the *Iliad*. Gladstone, however, also dwells on the problematic aspects of Schliemann's finds, for his own theories - namely the alleged presence of traces of writing, and the dimensions of the city. Overall, Schliemann's discoveries substantiate the historicity of the Homeric Poems and go a great way towards identifying a physical site for the Trojan War. But, for Gladstone, they do not allow that war to be dated precisely. Gladstone writes: 'I admit, indeed, that in no view of the case do the discoveries of Dr Schliemann avail or assist towards the design of fixing for the Trojan war a place in Chronology.'[282]

But Gladstone believes that, using other evidence, this question can also be answered. The second part of 'Homer's Place in History' focuses on constructing a new chronology for Homer and the events of the Trojan war. Gladstone believes that that temporal parallels can be established between the episodes narrated in the Homeric Poems and historical events recorded by Egyptian sources. By exploiting the most recent discoveries in Egyptology, Gladstone writes Homer into the corpus of established historiography. This is, to say the least, an ambitious plan is ambitious. Gladstone was not just attempting to reconstruct points of contact between Egypt and the Homeric world, but also arguing for indirect connections with the history of the Jewish people, and other ancient cultures of the Mediterranean.

> Without at all impairing the force of these admissions, I wish […] to offer various presumptions, which combinedly carry us some way on the road to proof, of a distinct relation of time between the Homeric Poems, and other incidents of human history, which are extraneous to them, but are already in the main reduced into chronological order and succession- namely, part of the series of Egyptian Dynasties. If this relation shall be established, it indirectly embraces a further relation to the Chronology of the Hebrew Records. The whole taken together may soon come to supply the rudiments of a corpus of regular history, likely, as I trust, to be much enlarged, and advanced towards perfect order and perspicuity, form Assyrian and other sources, some of them Easter, other lying on the ceinture of the Mediterranean Sea. [283]

Drawing on some of the most recent archaeological discoveries, Gladstone locates Homer and the events he narrates within time and space. The Heroic age becomes part of the measurable, narratable past of humanity. Gladstone is building a new narrative of the ancient Mediterranean, at the heart of which – thanks to contemporary archaeology – he

[282] *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 4.
[283] *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 4.

places Homer. In other words, Gladstone is moulding Schliemann's discoveries and advances in Egyptology, into fundamental components of his own Homeric narrative.[284]

The Victorian Trojan War

Gladstone's appearance in the *Contemporary Review* of June 1874[285] provoked a lively reaction from readers. Replies arrived in public, through the pages of Victorian periodicals and in private, via correspondence. 'Homer's place in History' signals the beginning of a long process, through which Gladstone aims at moving the contemporary debate towards those aspects of Schliemann's discoveries which he is most interested in, and which are most useful for his own theories. He soon finds that his audience is wary of his ambitious claims. But Gladstone is not unduly perturbed by this. For him, the long and hard-fought journey towards the recovery of Homeric civilisation is just beginning.

In this case, Gladstone's private correspondence proves to be as revealing as ever. Gladstone forwarded his latest articles for the *Contemporary Review* to archaeologists, museum curators, and scholars. From June 1874, the responses began to come in. In private, many reacted positively to his claims – welcoming his research even when they disagreed with the details of many of his theories. When examining the private responses to so prominent a political figure, one must always proceed with great caution because well-behaved formulae of convenience to obsequious flattery could undermine the sincerity of the praise. In this regard, I bring three examples of responses from Gladstone's correspondence.

On June 5, 1874, Samuel Birch, a renowned Egyptologist at the British Museum, warmly welcomed Gladstone's articles. In a brief note, Birch scribbles: 'Allow me to thank you for your *Homer's Place in History* which the publishers have forwarded to me. I shall read it over with great care and have no doubt of deriving instructions from it on many interesting points respecting the greatest of poets.'[286] On the surface, there is nothing remarkable here: the note reads like an ordinary acknowledgement. But its offhand details are, almost by accident, genuinely revealing. I seem to detect in Birch's

[284] *The Academy* February 14, 1874; *The Times,* May 2, 1874: 5.
[285] *Contemporary Review* December 1873: 329-344, *Contemporary Review* December 1873: 841- 855.
[286] Add MS 44443 f. 268 S. Birch to W.E. Gladstone June 5, 1874.

letter a note of respect due to an esteemed colleague.[287] Additional confirmation of the importance of Gladstone's contribution comes from another Egyptologist, Ernst Christian Louis de Bunsen. On July 2, 1874, De Bunsen contacts Gladstone to commend his last Homeric endeavour, and to support the new chronology which Gladstone proposed.[288] With De Bunsen's letter, Gladstone gains the approval of yet another established specialist. A few years before, De Bunsen, with the assistance of Samuel Birch, completed the monumental work *Egypt's Place in Universal History* (1848-1867), in which he reconstructed an Egyptian chronology, and explored the connections between the languages and the religions of ancient peoples. So, when, in July 1874, De Bunsen writes to Gladstone and confirms his claims, he also confirms that the politician is addressing urgent and fiercely-debated issues.

William Smith, the editor of the *Quarterly Review* offers another supporting voice, in respect to Gladstone's contribution to contemporary scholarship. On June 5, 1874, Smith remarks that Gladstone's intervention 'has struck open an entirely new vein in investigating Homer's place in History'.[289]

Not all of Gladstone's correspondents, however, were so generous, or so well-disposed towards him. Both Newton and Schliemann, for different reasons, distanced themselves from specific aspects of Gladstone's work. No matter how closely Gladstone and Newton corresponded between 1873 and 1874, each had different takes on Schliemann's discoveries. Newton was not interested in the vexed question of the existence of Troy and in his letter to Gladstone in February 1874, he wrote: 'You will think that I have inclined too much to the sceptical view,' nevertheless, 'I have thought it better to express myself positively only on matters where I have a practical knowledge as an archaeologist.'[290] So, it does not come as a surprise to Gladstone when Newton first avoids commenting on his article, then keeps his comments as brief as possible, carefully avoiding engaging with Gladstone's identification of Hissarlik as Homer's Troy. Instead, Newton takes issue with Gladstone's choice to rely heavily on Lenormant's work. According to Newton, Lenormant, together with his fellow French archaeologists, was

[287] The epistolary exchanges between Gladstone and Birch prompt me to suggest that courtesy does not exclude Genuine interest genuine interest and esteem on the part of Birch for Gladstone's Homeric work see note 419 and note 497.
[288] Add MS 44444 f. 5 E.C.L. de Bunsen to W.E. Gladstone July 2, 1874.
[289] Add MS 44443 f. 280 W. Smith to W.E. Gladstone June 5, 1874.
[290] Add MS 44442 f. 245 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone February 14, 1874.

liable to 'the great temptation' that turns 'possibilities into probabilities and probabilities into certainties'.[291]

Later, Newton introduces even stronger accusations the French scholar. While commenting on the recent Oriental Congress in London, he refers to Lenormant, and his alleged habit of helping himself 'largely to other people's labours without ever citing them'.[292] Notwithstanding Newton's criticisms, Gladstone, imperturbable, continues to draw on Lenormant's research. Newton's letters to Gladstone reveal Gladstone's involvement in the development of contemporary archaeological discourse. Newton reports news from the main international archaeological meetings to Gladstone, e.g., he mentions the seventh session of the archaeological Congress held at Stockholm (1874)[293] and the Second International Congress of Orientalists held London,[294] in September 1874; as well as discussing the newest attempt to decipher the Etruscan language.[295] Newton devotes particular attention to the evolution of the contemporary discussion surrounding Schliemann and his discoveries. For example, Newton who is well aware of Gladstone's interest in ancient metallurgy in relation to his Homeric studies, forwards to Gladstone a copy of the chemical analysis of the Cypriote copper instruments, presented at the Stockholm Archaeological Congress;[296] he then discredits Comnos' attacks against Schliemann in the *Athenaeum*[297] and notifies Gladstone of Frank Calvert's excavations on the Dardanelles.[298] Finally, he advises Gladstone on the emergence of new theories regarding Schliemann and his discoveries that, as Newton explains, are worth studying for the expertise shown by their author, even if they differ substantially from Gladstone's own claims.[299] Archaeology, once again, is clearly at the heart of Gladstone's Homeric project.

On June 5, 1874,[300] Schliemann responded to Gladstone's article. His long letter offers a clear example of fundamental disagreement between him and Gladstone. Most pertinently, he categorically refuses to change his dating of the Trojan War and of the

[291] Add MS 44444 f. 213 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 19, 1874.
[292] MS 44444 f 252 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone September 24, 1874.
[293] Add MS 44444 f 196 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 12 ,1874.
[294] Add MS 44444 f. 213 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 19, 1874.
[295] Add MS 44444 f. 213 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 19, 1874; MS 44444 f 252 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone September 24, 1874.
[296] Add MS 44444 f 196 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 12, 1874.
[297]Add MS 44444 f 196 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 12, 1874.
[298]Add MS 44444 f 196 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 12, 1874; Add MS 44444 f. 213 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 19, 1874.
[299] Add MS 44445 f. 239 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone December 17, 1874.
[300] Add MS 44444 f. 14 H. Schliemann June 5, 1874.

composition of the Homeric Poems, after reading Gladstone's own incompatible chronology. Schliemann's annotations of Gladstone's article insists that Gladstone's chronology was not confirmed by the discoveries at Hissarlik, which instead belonged to a far remoter antiquity.[301] Thus, while Schliemann profusely thanks Gladstone for his letter, he does not give way. He writes: 'I have had very great pleasure in receiving your kind and very flattering letter of the 5th inst. with your Homer's Place in History which I have read with very great interest.' [302] Schliemann states:

> Regarding the age of Troy (…) I have long since come to the conclusion it must have been destroyed nearly 2000 years before Christ and the catastrophe must have remained in fresh memory with the world, it must have been sung by numerous rhapsodes, till probably 1100 years after the war it was sung by Homer whose Poems have come down to us.

In a final attempt to accommodate Gladstone, the archaeologist remarks that mentions of the Trojan people in the Egyptian documents are consistent with the existence of an older city underneath Homeric Troy. Schliemann adds:

> This is not at all contradicted by the fact that you see Trojans in Egyptian texts and basically for Troy was rebuilt and you find on the ancient city the superposed ruins of two prehistoric cities before you come to the remnants of a Greek colony.[303]

However, Schliemann specifies that if Homer ever visited the site of Troy, he would not have seen anything worth seeing, as the city would have been covered by 20 feet of 'rubbish'.[304] For now, the dispute remained unresolved.[305]

Overall, Gladstone's correspondence confirms that his intervention was seen as informed, original, and independent.

Moving from Gladstone's private correspondence to the contemporary periodicals, we see – in the summer of 1874 – that Gladstone's intervention has drawn an equally considerable reaction. Widespread scepticism welcomes his latest Homeric theories. Nevertheless, the antagonistic criticisms do not dishearten Gladstone. After all, the critics

[301] Bebbington 2004: 202.
[302] Add MS 44444 f. 14 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone June 5, 1874.
[303] Add MS 44444 f. 14 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone June 5, 1874.
[304] Add MS 44444 f. 14 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone June 5, 1874.
[305] See *The Times* June 26, 1875: 9: 'I am bound to confess that I do not think it will be possible to thrust back the period of the existence of Troy to an antiquity so remote as that suggested by Dr. Schliemann.'

to attack the author have to focus on targets that are crucial to the theories of Gladstone and around which he wants to provoke discussion.

On June 2, 1874, *The Echo* welcomed with enthusiasm Gladstone's publication in the *Contemporary Review*. According to the journal, Gladstone had accomplished the impossible: dating, securely, the Poems of Homer:

> The subject of [Gladstone's] article is to show that scholars may now do what at the time of the publication of "the Homeric Studies" and *Juventus Mundi* was impossible- assign to the Homeric Poems a period contemporaneous with certain well-known Egyptian periods. Of course, the new data are the researches of General Cesnola and, in particular, the excavation of Dr. Schliemann. Mr. Gladstone ingeniously works out twelve points of correspondence between the text and the Poems and the results of the excavations. If we are not mistaken the chapters on the relationship of Egyptian and Homeric scholarship will be regarded valuable contribution to the literature of the subject and will add to his fame as a Homeric Scholar.[306]

The Echo praises Gladstone for connecting two important branches of research, Egyptology, and Homeric studies. By doing so, Gladstone opens a new chapter in scholarship, and confirms his own scholarly authority along the way.

However, Gladstone's reception is not always so kind. He is also accused of dilettantism, in particular, by the *Examiner* on June 6, 1874.[307] Reprimanding Gladstone for his approach to Schliemann's claims and discoveries, the *Examiner* accuses Gladstone of treating archaeological discoveries in an amateurish manner, declaring that his attempt to locate Homer within established chronologies was a resounding failure:

> In archaeology as well as in politics the gods do not tolerate amateurs. In both departments, speculations apt to precede mastery of the facts, and that order of events is not favourable to sound conclusions. Whoever wishes to be profoundly impressed with the difference between amateurs and specialists should read Mr Gladstone's 'Homer's Place in History' and compare it with 'Homer's Troy & Dr Schliemann's'. It is no disparagement to the late Premier's powerful intellect to say that his endeavour towards the linking the Homeric Poems with the general history of the world contains little that strikes one as being at once new and true; it is simply to remind him that he is human.[308]

The author contrasts Gladstone's intervention to an article published in the June 1874 number of the *Cornhill*, that the *Wellesley Index* attributes to William J. Stillman. In the *Cornhill*, Stillman roundly criticises Schliemann, calling into question his (lack of)

[306] GG 1635 18 *The Echo,* June 2, 1874.
[307] *Examiner,* June 6, 874: 603.
[308] *Examiner,* June 6, 874: 603.

preparation and the (in)adequacy of his archaeological research. The author of the *Examiner* agrees with Stillman's exposé of Schliemann's tendency to over-assume and under-prove,[309] praising the *Cornhill'*s author who, unlike Schliemann and Gladstone, does not presume to assign a date to the Trojan War, nor to attribute historical accuracy to Homer.[310] The article concedes that Gladstone's contribution, taken on its own, will be read with interest and commends the politician's choice of occupation.[311]

The *Examiner* not only accuses Gladstone of amateurism but also dismisses his Homeric studies as a pastime between one political mandate and another – oozing biting sarcasm.

Later in August 1874, the *Evening Standard* comments on Gladstone's Homeric enterprise. The article endorses Gladstone's main conclusions, regarding the existence of Homeric Troy and the historicity of the war, but it criticises the grounds of Gladstone's argument.[312] The author congratulates Gladstone for having autonomously reached the very same conclusions Schliemann developed. For the author of the article, both Gladstone and Schliemann were working towards the same goal:

> The evidence for the reality of ancient Troy and the historical character of the Trojan war has recently considerably enlarged and strengthen by two independent writers, Dr Schliemann, and Mr Gladstone. These writers by singular coincidence, wrought unknown to each other to the same conclusions, though from different starting points, and with different tools, like two miners that have met last after boring in the same direction in ignorance of each other's operations. [313]

According to the *Evening Standard*, the different approaches and sources deployed by the two authors augmented the evidence in favour of the historicity of Troy. In particular, the newspaper is swayed by Schliemann's defence of Hissarlik as the site of Homeric Troy. In the writer's opinion, 'it is impossible not to accept as conclusive the facts and reasoning of Dr Schliemann as to the identity of the site he has discovered with that of ancient Troy'.[314] The newspaper then comments on Gladstone's contribution to the cause:

> This discovery (of Troy) is cordially welcomed by Mr Gladstone as an unexpected and irresistible chain of independent evidence in favour of his own theory of the historical truthfulness of the greater portion of the

[309] Stillman on his part echoes Müller's remarks in *The Academy* of January 10, 1874:9.
[310] *Examiner,* June 6, 874: 603.
[311] *Examiner,* June 6, 874: 603.
[312] GG 1636 31 *Evening Standard* August 24, 1874.
[313] GG 1636 31 *Evening Standard* August 24, 1874.
[314] GG 1636 31 *Evening Standard* August 24, 1874.

Iliad which he endeavours to support partly by internal data and partly by evidential data derived from Egyptian Chronology.[315]

The article underlines the politician's instrumental use of Schliemann's discoveries to reinforce his own theories regarding Homer as a reliable historical source. The article agrees with Gladstone on the deep antiquity of the Trojan War (before 1300 BC), and on the date of composition of the Homeric Poems (close to the war they narrate), appreciating 'the confirmatory force of his inference coming from the remotest Egyptian records.' The article stresses the strengths of the politician's work: 'the finely wrought and subtle chains of evidence forged by the ingenuity and erudition of Mr Gladstone, which have succeeded beyond any reasonable cavil in raising uncertain conjecture through the many phases of possibility and probability to the high rank of a settled discovery, placed beyond all doubt by many covering lines of undersigned coincidence and corroboration.' Then, the article bluntly illustrates Gladstone's faults: his arguments grounded 'partly on fallacies in reasoning and partly on error in point of fact, and partly on unwarranted assumptions.'[316] According to the *Evening Standard*, Gladstone's 'unmeasured' and 'unalloyed' faith in Homer leads him to claim the events and characters of the Poems as historical, once divine intervention has been expunged. In a fallacious line of reasoning, Gladstone feels entitled to claim the same historicity for other aspects of Greek myth, such as the voyages of the *Argo*, and the expedition of the Seven against Thebes: [317]

We part company with Mr. Gladstone, when, without any positive test of trustworthy evidence, he endeavours to eliminate historical fact from poetical fiction in the form in which they have been fused in the Homeric Poems. Probability is not a test of truth and Mr. Gladstone seems to forget that no such thing exists as plausible fiction when he assumes that the only alternative to fact is extravagant and incredible fiction. [318]

Gladstone's collection of newspaper cuttings on his Homeric work, preserved in the archives of the Gladstone Library (Hawarden), shows that the politician is well aware of the contrasting receptions which his work receives. Positive and negative, enthusiastic, and sceptical – all articles were carefully folded, filed, and annotated.

[315] GG 1636 31 *Evening Standard* August 24, 1874.
[316] GG 1636 31 *Evening Standard* August 24, 1874.
[317] GG 1636 31 *Evening Standard* August 24, 1874.
[318] GG 1636 31 *Evening Standard* August 24, 1874.

Overall, Gladstone's intervention in the *Contemporary Review* of June 1874 is received in highly engaged ways, by the British periodicals. So far, Gladstone was not convincing many readers. But he was succeeding in shaping the discourse and turning it in his direction. Therefore, the responses, including the less flattering ones, resume and expand the discussion where Gladstone left it, maximising – I argue – the impact of Gladstone's contribution as a result.

CONCLUSION

Gladstone recognises the potential of Schliemann's finds and actively intervenes in his favour, taking upon himself the task of vouching for the value of his Trojan discoveries in London. However, Gladstone carefully, strategically nuanced his support of Schliemann, in order to broadcast his own Homeric narrative. Gladstone deployed contemporary archaeological discoveries to pursue his own Homeric goals, manipulating and redirecting the reception of the Trojan finds, to refashion the contemporary discourse on Homer towards the directions and themes which he cares about the most.

Gladstone's intervention in the *Contemporary Review* elicited – as it was intended to – a wide range of responses, both private and public. By provoking a reaction, by almost soliciting criticism, Gladstone focused the attention of his contemporaries on those issues which he deemed important. Thus, when talking about Schliemann's findings, he was also (and, arguably, principally) talking about his own. The Victorian Trojan War was just beginning.

3

A London Debut (or, The Toads of Troy)

The story of Schliemann's debut in London, in 1875, is well known – perhaps too well known for its own good. This chapter tells the story from a new angle, using unedited archival material - and in so doing, it reveals Gladstone's crucial role in stage-managing Schliemann's appearance in London.

Two major events escalate the Victorian Trojan War, in 1875: the publication of Schliemann's *Troy and Its Remains* and the archaeologist's visit to London in the summer of 1875. On both occasions, Schliemann struggles: his writing is mocked, his conclusions are hooted at, and his claims are dismissed. But, on both occasions, Gladstone intervenes to shape his contemporaries' reception of Schliemann and his discoveries. On first reading, the sources do not suggest that Gladstone derives much benefit from these interventions: he is, rather, caught in the crossfire regarding some of Schliemann's more bizarre conclusions. (Some toads, in particular, prove troublesome.) But, through some deft footwork, Gladstone positions himself right where he wants to be right at the centre of attention.

Time and again, British audiences, ostensibly interested in Schliemann, turn out to be more interested in Gladstone.[319] Schliemann's discoveries are encountered and understood mainly through the lens of Gladstone, and his Homeric theories. Gladstone becomes Schliemann's interpreter – not on a linguistic level, but on the level of culture, politics, and power. In subsequent accounts of Schliemann's career, Gladstone's interpretative role disappears, or is marginalized – but the sources I gathered return importance to Gladstone's role. This is, in other words, a story about different ways of looking: how scholars of classical reception need to be alert to the ways in which past readers saw the world through very different eyes – and made very different decisions about who 'mattered' in a discourse.

[319] Gladstone's correspondents, his respondents on the pages of Victorian periodicals, newspaper readers, and London society goers. It is challenging to define the precise identity of these audiences.

This new picture will emerge gradually, one detail at a time, from details of Gladstone's papers and contemporary periodicals. First, this chapter will consider Gladstone's role in Schliemann's *Troy and Its Remains* (1875). William Smith, the editor of the English-language edition, added an apparatus of notes to Schliemann's text. Smith draws on Gladstone's Homeric work both to problematise and to amend Schliemann's theses: Gladstone becomes, for many, the authority by whom Schliemann's discoveries are interpreted and judged. Turning, then, to the reception of *Troy and Its Remains* (1875), it is possible to see how the discourse crystalizes around the themes which Gladstone explored in his article in the *Contemporary Review* in June 1874. In 1875, reviewers openly – if, sometimes, sarcastically – acknowledge Gladstone as a reference point for the investigation of Schliemann's claims. The discourse surrounding the discovery of Troy is one which marked by complexity and resistance – elements which need to be more fully emphasized by current narratives of it. After the publication of *Troy and Its Remains*, Schliemann's discoveries are still (perhaps even more so than before) in need of validation and interpretation.

In the summer of 1875, Schliemann makes his debut in London. Gladstone, through a series of carefully planned interventions, stage-manages this debut, reshaping private and public conversations on the Trojan discoveries. This can be demonstrated by focusing on two key moments: Schliemann's presentation at the Society of Antiquaries in June 1875, and the Homeric breakfast which Gladstone organises at his house the day after the meeting.[320] Here, we see some of the iconic moments, in the Victorian discourse on Homer – and Gladstone pulling the strings.

Troy and Its Remains

When Schliemann's *Trojanische Alterthümer* was published in English, as *Troy and Its Remains* (1875), the editor, Phillip Smith, made a number of additions to the text. The work contained an account of Schliemann's excavations between October 1871 and June 1873,[321] combining maps and illustrations of the archaeological finds with a discursive narrative. Smith added a preface and an extensive apparatus of notes. Gladstone's work on Schliemann's discoveries filling several chunky footnotes. In the preface, Smith refers readers to Gladstone's articles about the relationship between Homer and Egyptian

[320] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 46-47.
[321] Allen 1999: 172, 328: note 73; *Spectator* March 13, 1875: 345.

chronology.[322] Then, in chapter XXIII, Smith endorses Gladstone's interpretation of a piece of the Trojan treasure, over Schliemann's own views.[323]

In the first footnote, Smith lists Gladstone's articles for the *Contemporary Review* of June 1874,[324] alongside Lenormant's letter to *The Academy* of March 1874,[325] as refence texts for the question of the contacts between Egypt and the Homeric world.[326] In chapter XXIII of *Troy and its Remains,*[327] Smith favours Gladstone's interpretation of a golden diadem, one of the greatest treasures of the collection form Hissarlik, over Schliemann's own:

> The diadem discovered by Dr Schliemann can scarcely have been the κρήδεμνον of Homer, which was a large veil or mantilla, such, for instance, as the sea-goddess Ino gives to Ulysses, to buoy him up from the water (*Od*. v. 346). The diadem would rather seem to be, as Mr. Gladstone has suggested, the πλεκτὴ ἀναδέσμη, which Andromache casts from her head in her moaning for Hector, where the order of the words implies that it was worn over the κρήδεμνον *Il.* XXII 469-471.[328]

Gladstone's solution, according to Smith, is more faithful to the Homeric text. The footnote confirms the effectiveness of Gladstone's new Homeric campaign, set in motion with 'Homer's Place in History' (1874). Smith uses Gladstone's theories to engage critically with Schliemann's claims, using Gladstone's work to guide readers through two central questions: the relationship between the artefacts and Homer's text, and the chronology of the site. By illustrating, via examples from the Homeric text, the (alleged) parallels between archaeological artefacts and Homeric descriptions, Gladstone secures for himself a fundamental role in this discourse: the person who can judge the Homeric nature of Schliemann's finds.[329]

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[322] Schliemann 1875: xvi.
[323] Schliemann 1875: xvi, 335.
[324] *Contemporary Review* June 1874:
[325] *The Academy* March 21, 1874; *The Academy* March 28, 1874.
[326] Schliemann 1875: xvi.
[327] Schliemann 1875: 335.
[328] Schliemann 1875: 335.
[329] This second footnote has yet more to reveal. This passage allows to trace a connection between Philip Smith and William Gladstone. The note on Gladstone's interpretation of Andromache's headdress is almost a literal quotation from the *Quarterly Review*'s article of April 1874 by William Smith, the famous Victorian lexicographer, and elder brother of Phillip Smith. Smith junior's commentary turns out to be less impartial than we expected, and the presence of Gladstone is far from accidental. Looking at the editor's career, we learn that Philip Smith is a frequent contributor to the *Quarterly Review* when the newspaper is edited by his elder brother. This suggests to us that Smith jr. would have followed closely the publications in the *Review* and that he could have accessed privileged material on the Trojan discoveries in general and Gladstone's views in their regard through his older brother. In the previous section, we established that William Smith, in his role as editor of the *Quarterly Review,* had extensively been in contact with

I. The Victorian reception of *Troy and Its Remains*

Troy and Its Remains (1875) injects new energy into the debate surrounding the discovery of Troy. The English-language edition reaches a wide readership in Britain. With greater accessibility comes harsher criticism. Through a survey of the responses to Schliemann's book, it is possible to see how the discussion comes to focus around two major issues: the Homeric nature of Schliemann's findings and their chronology. These are also the two core issues identified by Gladstone in his article for the *Contemporary Review* in 1874.[330]

Troy and Its Remains, while publicising Schliemann's archaeological endeavours, harms its author's credibility as an archaeologist, and imperils the significance of his discoveries. This can be seen through an encounter with one of Schliemann's more regrettable case-studies: a pair of unfortunate toads. By pushing his claims too far, Schliemann compromises his archaeological work. In this context, Gladstone's intervention turns out to be crucial, in supporting Schliemann and his discoveries within an increasingly critical discourse.

The one feature of *Troy and Its Remains* which meets with universal approval in the British press is Smith's editorial work, rather than Schliemann's own text.[331] *The Times* of March 31, 1875, argues that, with his editorial interventions, Smith has made Schliemann's book accessible to the English-speaking public:

> We take leave of this volume with a high sense of what it owes to the editorship of Mr. Philip Smith, both for the additions which are from his own pen and for the thoroughness with which he has performed his task of rendering Dr Schliemann's results easily accessible to English readers.[332]

Gladstone regarding Schliemann's discoveries. For his article of April 1874, Smith senior secures an interview with the retired politician to discuss the Trojan findings and also gets to work on the exclusive material Gladstone generously shares with him. Moreover, Gladstone's papers also show that their correspondence does not interrupt with the publication of Gladstone's interview in the *Quarterly*. Later on, in Summer 1874, Gladstone pays homage to Smith with a copy of his intervention for the *Contemporary Review* of June 1874, where he discusses the points of contacts between Egypt and Homer. All these scattered details beg the question of the weight of Gladstone's scholarly opinion on Philip Smith's editorial enterprise.

[330] *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 1-22; *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 175-200.

[331] Already on March 20, 1875, the *Spectator* congratulates Smith jr.'s work. The reviewer praises the editor for the valuable notes, the accurate translation, and the improved format of the publication. See *Spectator* March 20, 1875: 376: 'We congratulate Dr. Schliemann on having met with a most able editor who has enriched the work with notes most apposite to the arguments. A comparison of several passages with the original has satisfied us of the faithfulness of the translation and a careful scrutiny has detected very little in the way of errata. Those who have seen the photographic plates of the original Atlas will not fail to appreciate the illustrations of the present work.'

[332] *The Times* March 31, 1875: 7.

On May 1, 1875, *The Academy* suggests that Smith succeeded in turning a bulky and hard-to-follow text into an enjoyable and stimulating piece of writing.[333] By praising Philip Smith's editorial interventions, reviewers declare the new English edition to be a considerable improvement from the first edition, in term of presentation and format.[334] However, that is where the universal praise ends. There is, after all, only so much an editor can do – especially when working with such raw material. While many reviewers are intrigued by Schliemann's discoveries at Hissarlik, the author's interpretations of his finds are fiercely attacked. Readers are intrigued by the ancient remains, but deeply sceptical of Schliemann's conclusions.

All critics noted the ever-increasing public curiosity in Schliemann's discoveries. His excavations in the Troad are compared to those at Nineveh, Babylon and Korshabad.[335] The *Athenaeum*, on March 6, 1875, admits: 'Probably few antiquarian researches of recent date have attracted so much attention as Dr Schliemann's since he announced that, on the hill of Hissarlik, he had found the Troy of Priam'[336]. *The Spectator*, a week later, welcomes Schliemann's discovery in similar terms: 'About a quarter of a century ago, Mr. Layard startled and gratified the world by the account of Nineveh, and of the discoveries he had made on the site of Babylon. Equally startling and equally gratifying is Dr. Schliemann's description of his researches at old Troy and its, so to speak, Trojan results.'[337] In a second article, the *Spectator* comments on the significance of Schliemann's archaeological endeavours: 'What Botta and Layard did for Korshabad and Nineveh, our author (Dr Schliemann) has done for the cities which rose in succession on the mound of Hissarlik'.[338]

Schliemann's book was, undeniably, a sensation. But contemporary newspapers and periodicals show that it was even more controversial than it was popular. Schliemann's work was carefully, unsparingly dissected. First, the writing: many newspapers condemn Schliemann's choice to recount his discoveries in memoir form. A diary was seen as a

[333] See *The Academy* May 1, 1875: 'In the place of Schliemann's enormous confused and cumbrous Atlas of photographs we have here interspersed with the text and in a number of plates at the end engravings […] of views and every object of importance found in excavations. An appendix giving the results of the most recent investigations in the matter of the inscribed whorls and other objects found by Schliemann, an introduction on the vital questions to the site of Troy and numerous foot notes testify to the editorial care with which a once very tiresome book has now became agreeable and most interesting reading'.
[334] *Athenaeum* March 6, 1875; *Spectator* March 20, 1875: 376; *The Academy* May 1, 1875.
[335] See *The Athenaeum* July 3, 1875: 6 and *Notes and Queries* July 3, 1875: 20 for examples of Murray's advertisement campaign.
[336] *Athenaeum* March 6, 1875.
[337] *Spectator* March 13, 1875: 345.
[338] *Spectator* March 20, 1875: 376.

problematic format, for an archaeological report: it was difficult to follow, it presented hypotheses before they could be corroborated – and those hypotheses often shifted, were contradicted, or disappeared entirely, within a few pages. Even *The Spectator*'s reviewer, who is willing to give Schliemann the benefit of the doubt, admits that Schliemann's tendency to contradict himself poses an obstacle to the reader:

> This plan of recording discoveries from day to day, invaluable as it is for preserving an accurate account of the relative position of the various object discovered, presents great difficulties to those who would trace a continuous narrative of the excavation and their results. […] Still to master the subject we must submit to traverse patiently the series of papers for the theories suggested by one day's treasure trove are often rudely dispelled by the researches of the tomorrow.[339]

In 1873, had Gladstone asked Newton to request that Schliemann present a clearer report of the various layers of finds unearthed during his excavations at Hissarlik.[340] Gladstone had identified a crucial issue with Schliemann's account of his discoveries, one which later become pivotal to the contemporary discourse.

Schliemann was attacked from every conceivable angle. His scholarship was questioned. The validity of his reasoning was called into question. This aligned critics with the first responses to *Trojanische Alterthümer* in 1874, where Müller complained about the confusing format of Schliemann's archaeological reports, and Stillman questioned the author's (in)competence as an archaeologist.

Not all critics were as forgiving as the *Spectator*'s writer. On March 13, 1875, the *John Bull* published its review of Schliemann's work. It was not positive. Schliemann was criticised for frequently taking poetic licence, presenting conjecture as fact, and constantly changing his mind: 'In the first hot glow of his enthusiasm, the author, from time to time, recorded not only what he discovered but what fancies he had discovered, jotting down crude theories.'[341]

Even supportive reviewers, such as that in *Notes and Queries* of February 27, 1875, while open to the possibility that Schliemann had discovered Homer's Troy, had to admit that the author had a tendency to contradict himself along the way.

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[339] *Spectator* March 13, 1875: 345.
[340] See Vaio 1992:74: 'W.E. Gladstone to C.T. Newton August 18, 1873.'
[341] *John Bull* March 13, 1875: 180.

With a nature so enthusiastic it may be that Dr Schliemann's conclusions are now and then open to discussion, indeed he often modifies some and dismisses others as he records experience in the diary of his labours and their results.[342]

In his own diaries, Gladstone notes reading Schliemann's book only later in 1875.[343] In his characteristic terse style, he remarks: 'the material is valuable but chaotic'.[344] His comment was very much in line with the criticism of his contemporaries.

The many contradictions in Schliemann's narrative, which *Notes and Queries* attributes to Schliemann's overwhelming enthusiasm, becomes the starting point for a sustained critique, for other, less benign reviewers. For many, the contradictions are due to Schliemann's lack of archaeological training and, indeed, education in general. For *John Bull*, no matter how competent the German is in his command of the Homeric text, his reasoning lacks logic.

Dr Schliemann pushes his argument too far, though his carful and repeated study of the Homeric Poems has in that respect well qualified him for his task, yet his fragmentary and desultory education prevents him from availing himself to the full of his advantages. He seems incapable of weighing evidence and his ideas of logic are simply ludicrous.[345]

To justify such harsh conclusion, the reviewer gives a few examples of Schliemann's reasoning. 'Owl-headed' Athena, unsurprisingly, makes an appearance. 'The worthy doctor has got, so to speak, owl on the brain, and finds representation of the owl headed goddess which often have no existence but in his own imagination'.[346]

The *Athenaeum*, of March 6, 1875, goes further, declaring Schliemann's entire enterprise to be baseless – without the proper scholarly foundations:

Now we are bound to say,- and let us be understood as speaking with the outmost respect for Dr Schliemann- that not only, as we have suggested, is his conviction that he has found Troy at Hissarlik largely due to the fact that he went to that place with a foregone conclusion that the Troy of Homer stood there, but also that the Doctor, however energetic as an explorer, was hardly fully equipped as an antiquary for the task he undertook.[347]

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[342] *Notes and Queries* February 27, 1875: 179.
[343] See Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 69 September 25, 1875: 'Read Schliemann's Troy'.
[344] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 78 November 5, 1875.
[345] *John Bull* March 13, 1875: 180.
[346] *John Bull* March 13, 1875: 180.
[347] *Athenaeum* March 6, 1875: 330.

The best that can be said of Schliemann's book, for many, is that it is 'confusing'.[348]

II. An Embarrassment of Toads

One particular episode, from *Troy and Its Remains* (1875), was seized upon to illustrate Schliemann's ineptitude: the mystery of the Homeric toads. Among the ruins of what Schliemann identified as the Homeric strata of Troy, the author announced the most incredible find. Living animals still dwelt in the ruins. Scrupulously, Schliemann noted the quantity and nature of his discoveries: a snake and two toads.[349] Given the size of the snake, Schliemann speculates that it might have found its way to the Homeric strata through the ruins above. The toads, however – large toads – cannot, for Schliemann, be explained so easily. Considering their dimensions, Schliemann could not believe that they had squeezed down through the debris. At this point, his imagination kicks in, his awareness of a toad's average life expectancy checks out, and Schliemann concludes that he has found living creatures from the time of Hector and Andromache, contemporaries of the city of Priam.[350] For thousands of years, the two amphibians had infested the ruins of Troy.[351]

> I cannot conclude the description of the lowest stratum without mentioning that among the huge blocks of stone, at a depth of 12 to 16 meters (39 ½ to 52½ feet), I found two toads; and at a depth 39 ½ feet a small but very poisonous snake, with a scutiform head. The snake may have found his way down form above; this is an impossibility in the case of the large toads- they must have spent 3000 years in the depths. It is very interesting to find in the ruins of Troy living creatures from the time of Hector and Andromache, even though the creatures are but toads.[352]

Notwithstanding his editor's best efforts,[353] Schliemann's assertion was greeted with hilarity. The *Spectator*, on March 13, 1875, suggested that the reptile Schliemann had found could have been a relative of the two creatures sent to devour Laocoon and his sons. Not without amusement, the review retorts:

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[348] *Athenaeum* March 6, 1875: 330.
[349] *Athenaeum* March 6, 1875: 330; *Spectator* March 13, 1875: 345.
[350] *Athenaeum* March 6, 1875: 330.
[351] See Schliemann 1875: 143: 'Live toads coeval with Troy'.
[352] Schliemann 1875: 157.
[353] See Schliemann 1875: 157: 'note *: We believe that naturalists are note agreed that such appearances of toads imprisoned for long periods are deceptive. Into what depths cannot a tadpole (whether literal or metaphorical) wriggle himself down?'.

The warmth of imagination displayed in the following passage may be due to that fond remembrance of the Homeric Frog-Surely the little snake has equal claims to antiquity. May he not have been a poor relation of the mighty serpents charged to wreak vengeance on the impious Laocoon. We wonder the toads did not greet the worthy doctor on his descent into the lower regions as their tuneful kinsmen in Aristophanes salute Dionysus.[354]

The *Athenaeum*, of March 5, 1875, involves Gladstone in the matter of the Homeric frogs. The reviewer presents him as a gullible enthusiast, ready to pay a hefty sum of money to buy the creatures:

It is very interesting to find in the ruins of Troy living creatures from the time of Hector and Andromache… We think so too; in fact, we have no doubt whatever that Mr. Gladstone would give a good sum for a living toad that had seen Hector and Andromache or been a contemporary of theirs in the city of Priam.[355]

For the majority of Britain's critics, Schliemann had failed to demonstrate the Homeric nature of his finds as well, or to present his readers with a convincing chronology of his discoveries. As the *Athenaeum* on March 6, 1875, put it:

Archaeology however is indebted to Dr Schliemann for the zeal with which he expanded a large portion of his private fortune, for his energy and patience and for the fortitude with which he encountered temporary disappointments and overcame numerous difficulties. […] it is beyond question that he was rewarded by a large measure of success the acquisition of many objects of interest and of some considerable value and importance. Nevertheless, we cannot associate these relics with the Troy of Homer, because to say nothing of other obstacles, the remains do not, either in respect to their chronological suggestions or their aesthetic character, consort with the period in which Homer's Troy must have existed if it existed at all.[356]

The article concludes that Schliemann's readers should 'wholly reject his claims to have unearthed the city of Priam and his race'.[357]

John Bull, of March 13, 1875, comes to a similar conclusion. Schliemann's contribution to archaeology is unquestionable. But there was insufficient evidence to support his claims to have discovered the city of Priam.

[354] *Spectator* March 13, 1875: 345.
[355] *Athenaeum* March 5, 1875.
[356] *Athenaeum* March 6, 1875: 330.
[357] *Athenaeum* March 6, 1875: 330.

We own that Dr Schliemann does not succeed in making us quite as sure as he is himself that he has recovered the treasure of Priam and laid bare the actual city in defence of which Hector fell. But be this as it may it is no small contribution to archaeology to have explored the undoubted remains of four cities whose successive layers of ruins still marked by fires that have passed over them in turn are piled to the height of fifty feet above the summit of a hill of such traditional celebrity as that of Hissarlik.[358]

Schliemann himself is seen as a generous enthusiast with a great fortune and an obsession: finding the city sung of by Homer. But reviewers agreed that he lacked basic training as an archaeologist, his argumentative style was poor and, in most cases, logically faulty. He had found a priceless treasure which he had no competence to interpret. On the contrary, his insistence on presenting untenable theories risked depriving his discoveries of their value. British readers, in the late nineteenth-century, had witnessed the discovery of many ancient civilisations, once thought lost. They were a tough crowd to please.

Schliemann needed more than a makeover of his report to turn the situation to his favour. He needs a scholarly authority to back up his claims. He needed Gladstone.

According to the press, an intellectual 'battle' of *epic* proportions was now under way. *John Bull,* using Tozer's words from his *Researches in the Highlands of Turkey* (1869), wrote: 'The plain of Troy has been a battlefield, not only to heroes, but of scholars and geographers, and the works which have been written on the subject for a literature to themselves'. A few weeks later, on March 31, 1875, *The Times* deployed the same imagery: the debate over Schliemann's discoveries represented 'a new war of Troy destined probably to last at least as long as that in which Hector and Achilles strove.'[359] *Troy and Its Remains* sparked off an ever-increasing interest in the results of the excavations at Hissarlik – not because its findings met with universal approval but rather, because they did not.

The Victorian Trojan war was not an isolated discourse, but one which interacted with – shaping and being shaped by – many of the most significant debates of the time. This was picked up on by the *Fortnightly Review* of April 1875, noting that recent scientific advancements had radically impacted and transformed the way readers perceived the heroic age, driving a search for more definitive answers:

[358] *John Bull* March 13, 1875: 180.
[359] *The Times* March 31, 1875.

We can no longer see the heroic age as the writers of the literary period in Greece beheld it, a golden distance in the history of their race […] We yet discern the Homeric epoch more closely and minutely. Science helps our vision with her instruments: we can compare that early civilisation, those manners, and ways, with corresponding stages in the life of our own and of other stocks. With comparative mythology and comparative philology to aid us, with the assistance of that new science of which Mr Tylor is the most popular exponent, we should see more distinctly that the scholars of Wolf's or of Bentley's time, and we ought to be approaching some more definite conclusions.[360]

The *Athenaeum*, of March 6, 1875, hopes that scientific advancements will soon lead to a precise dating of the remains at Hissarlik:

On this last point, however, we are bound to state our belief that daily growing knowledge of what are called pre-historic relics will soon of before any long period has elapsed enable us to indicate with an approach to certainty the year of work such as those exhumed at Hissarlik.[361]

Since 1873, when Newton forwarded to Gladstone Schliemann's most recent report from the Troad, Gladstone has been looking for ways to confirm the Homeric nature of the findings and to establish a coherent chronology. Once again, he demonstrates a remarkable intuition – well ahead of almost all other commentators – for the key questions driving the Victorian Trojan war.

Gladstone does not intervene directly in the discussion regarding Schliemann's new publication. Nonetheless, in a now-familiar pattern,[362] critics work to engage him in the debate. In the *Fortnightly Review* of April 1875, Gladstone is presented as an extremist. His desire to prove Homer's historical value exceeds the conclusions which can be substantiated using the new archaeological data:

There are two conclusions in the Homeric controversy which would content most lovers of Homer, though they would not satisfy Mr Gladstone's belief in Homer as a chronicler of real events. Lovers of Homer would like to feel sure of two things. First, that the Iliad and Odyssey reflect, with some colour of imagination dwelling on times beginning to pass away, a curious early stage of human society. Actual history, they do not expect. […] As far as history goes, they are content to believe that Homer contains memories of great national movements of great pre-historic empires and battles as shadowy as Arthur's last battle in the west. Till Dr. Schliemann proves that it is Priam's treasure he has lighted on, till French Egyptologists can find Sarpedon's name, or Laomedon's among the Dardanai said to be spoken of in

[360] *Fortnightly Review* April 1875: 575.
[361] *Athenaeum* March 6, 1875.
[362] Both in 1873 and in 1874.

Egyptian inscriptions, this slight measure of historic truth satisfies them. […] Secondly, they wish to be able to believe that the Iliad and the Odyssey are the work of one or at most two great minds, in much the same sense as the Idyls of the King are the work of Mr Tennyson. They are not very careful about the exact century in which this poet, or these two poets lived; they are not anxious to deny that the epics have suffered nearly as much from restoration as a work of Titian does, which falls into the hands of his modern countrymen.[363]

This Gladstone is at odd with the image of the scholar which we glimpse in *Troy and its Remains*. Which is the real Gladstone? The blind supporter of the extravagant claims of the eccentric German explorer, or the cautious Homerist who opposes the eccentricities of Schliemann? Gladstone's intervention during Schliemann's visit in London during the summer 1875 may provide an answer to this question.

Gladstone, stage-manager

On the occasion of Schliemann's visit to London, the ex-Prime Minister, temporarily relieved from political commitments, dives into the fray. Gladstone joins parties, attends the meetings of learned societies, and organises intellectual gatherings to debate Homer and the latest archaeological discoveries. Standing at Schliemann's side, Gladstone centres and consolidate his own narrative of the discovery of Troy. Gladstone stage-manages Schliemann's debut in Victorian society, presenting his discoveries as reliable sources. Central to this project was Gladstone's speech at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries in June 1875. Vaio comments on this meeting, acknowledging Gladstone's prominent role,[364] but stresses the importance of the meeting for the wrong reasons. When this episode is contextualised in light of the sceptical responses to Schliemann's latest publication, it is possible to see Gladstone's role shifting, from secondary character to protagonist.

On June 10, 1875, having just arrived in Britain, Schliemann writes to Gladstone to arrange a meeting.[365] The archaeologist is eager to discuss their shared interests:

[363] *Fortnightly Review* April 1875: 576.
[364] Vaio 1990: 415-430.
[365] Upon his arrival in London, Schliemann reaches out to his major contacts in the capital. See Add MS 44447 f. 210 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone June 10, 1875, and Fitton 1994: 33: 'C.T. Newton to H. Schliemann June 11, 1875.'

Having come with Mrs Schliemann for a few days to London, I hasten to beg your excellency to grant us an audience, for nothing could interest us here more than half an hour's conversation with Y. Ex.cy on Homer and the Homeric Age.[366]

Gladstone's response on June 12, 1875, is equally eager:

I shall be very happy either to call on you, or to receive your here, on Tuesday at eleven. A little later I shall hope to propose an announcement for a meeting, which we may offer more freely to subjects in which we have so deep a common interest. Among the persons in London whom it could be interesting for you to know are Mr Newton of British Museum, Dr Smith of the Quarterly Review, Sir John Lubbock MP, also a metallurgist of high repute, Dr Percy of the Houses of Parliament. Saturday you will speak of this matter with Mr Murray, and I shall be happy to give aid.[367]

Gladstone's list of must-meet people in London guides Schliemann towards making the best of his stay in the capital. This is far from being a random selection of prominent people interested in Homer. Rather, Gladstone is guiding Schliemann towards people who are playing a central role in the discourse surrounding the discovery of Troy, people with a genuine interest in the German's discoveries. Newton is, of course, one of Gladstone's key contacts. Lubbock, the archaeologist, and expert in prehistory, first brought Schliemann and his discoveries to the attention of Gladstone and the Society of Antiquaries.[368] Finally, there is John Percy, a metallurgist at Woolwich Arsenal. Why a metallurgist? Percy could, of course, be the scientist to resolve Schliemann's inconclusive and contradictory analysis of his metallic finds. Gladstone is actively positioning himself as the mediator between Schliemann and British scholarship. Schliemann follows meticulously Gladstone's directions.[369]

Gladstone's contacts soon begin to bear fruit, for Schliemann. Newton assists Schliemann in engaging with the presidents of some of London's most prestigious learned societies, as well as a number of the Trustees of the British Museum, such as Reginald Stuart Poole. Later, Poole will play a role in Schliemann's failed attempt to obtain a new *Firman* from the Turkish Government to resume excavations at Hissarlik.[370] Gladstone, it

[366] Add MS 44447 f. 210 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone June 10, 1875.
[367] See Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 43 June 12, 1875, 'Wrote to Dr Schliemann;' 21906 BOX 70 NO. 180 W. E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann June 12, 1875.
[368] See Chapter I.
[369] Add MS 44447 f. 223 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone June 13, 1875.
[370] Fitton 1994: 33.

is clear, has good reasons for establishing relationships between Schliemann and the people on his list.

I. The Society of Antiquaries

Gladstone's aims become clear when we examine proceedings at the meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, on June 24, 1875. Schliemann is scheduled to present his excavations at Hissarlik. Both Schliemann and Earl Stanhope, the president of the society, write to invite Gladstone to attend. To ensure that Gladstone would accept, Schliemann insists on the presence of Professor Max Müller and John Lubbock. On June 13, 1875, Schliemann writes to Gladstone:

> Earl Stanhope kindly promised to appoint for Thursday, 24th of June, a last session of the Society of London Antiquaries and to permit me to speak there on my excavations and discoveries. His lordship promised […] to solicit the honour of your presence; I hope Y. Exc. will graciously accept. H. L. will also have written to Sir John Lubbock and to Professor Max Müller to solicit their presence.[371]

In light of the sceptical responses *Troy and Its Remains* (1875), Schliemann is depending on Gladstone's authority to validate and support his claims. The archaeologist is not the only one who is eager to secure Gladstone's presence. Stanhope is so interested in hearing Gladstone's views on Schliemann's discoveries that he proposes an informal dinner with the archaeologist before the evening meeting:[372]

> Dr Schliemann the great Trojan discoverer is in London for only a short time, & has promised to expound his discoveries in an address to the Society of Antiquaries on Thursday the 24th. It would be a very great pleasure to the Society in addition to receive you that evening as a Visitor. I would propose to dine with me first[373]

Gladstone's diaries confirm that the politician had dinner with Stanhope and then joined the Society's meeting. Subsequently, he jotted down in his diary, with typical terseness,

[371] Add MS 44447 f. 223 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone June 13, 1875.
[372] Add MS 44317 f. 215 P.H. Stanhope to W.E. Gladstone January 7, 1875.
[373] Add MS 44317 f. 217 P.H. Stanhope to W.E. Gladstone June 14, 1875.

that he 'had to Speak'.[374] A (much) fuller account of that evening can be found in *The Times* of June 26, 1875.[375]

On June 24, Burlington House was packed with eminent attendees, including Charles Newton, John Lubbock, and John Evans, as well as the classical scholar Frederick Paley and the historian Leonhard Schmitz; the painters Frederic Leighton and George Richmond; George Rolleston, physician and zoologist, a friend and protégé of T.H. Huxley; politicians and military men such as Mountstuart Elphinstone, Grant Duff, Alexander Beresford Hope, Arthur John Edward Russell, John Heron-Maxwell and Admiral Thomas Spratt.[376] The Trojan story had captured London's imagination.

But the story, that evening, was as much Gladstone's as it was Schliemann's. *The Times*, in its report of the meeting, puts Gladstone's name ahead of Schliemann's. This is no mere matter of etiquette: in the article, Schliemann's remarks occupy one column, when Gladstone's occupy two. Moreover, Schliemann's speech is summarised, and Gladstone's is reported in full. The article implies that Stanhope and the assembly are intrigued by Schliemann's discoveries and warmly welcome the archaeologist's presentation, but what they are truly waiting for is Gladstone's speech.

The murmuring crowd, tense with anticipation, waits for Gladstone to rise and address the assembly. When he finally does and says that he has uncovered undeniable correspondences between the Homeric Poems and the archaeological remains Schliemann presented that evening, the assembly erupts with cheers. This – for *The Times* at least – is the moment Schliemann's finds truly become 'Trojan': the moment Homer's Troy comes into focus in the ruins of Hissarlik.

On his own, Schliemann has failed to prove the Homeric nature of his finds, endangering both his reputation and the worth of his discoveries. So, when Gladstone intervenes, he saves both Schliemann's reputation, but most importantly Homer's Troy.

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[374] See Gladstone Diaries Vol. IX: 46 June 24, 1875: 'Dined with Ld Stanhope: then to the Soc. of Antiquaries where Dr Schliemann lectured 11/4 hours. I had to speak.'

[375] See *The Times* June 26, 1875: 9; *The British Architect* July 2, 1875; *The Academy* July 3, 1875; *The Athenaeum* July 3, 1875. The evening meeting attracts the attention of several Victorian newspapers. As the reports do not radically differ from one another, I analyse in details *The Times*' article as it is both the source temporally closer to the event and the most extensive report in terms of details and information.

[376] See *The Times* June 26, 1875: 9: 'A meeting of the Society of Antiquaries was held at Burlington-house on Thursday evening at 8.30, Earl Stanhope in the chair. His lordship has previously received Gladstone and the Trojan discoverer, Dr Schliemann, and a small party at dinner. Dr. Schliemann read a paper entitled 'The discovery of Homeric Troy'. There was a full meeting of the Fellows and among these present were Mr. Gladstone, the Duke of Argyll, Mr. Grant Duff, M.P., Lord Talbolt de Malahide, Mr. Beresford Hope, M.P., Mr Paley, Lord Arthur Russell, Mr M.C. Newton, D.C.L., Admiral Spratt, Mr. Friedrick Leighton, R.A., Mr George Richmond, R.A., Sir John Lubbock, M.P., the earl of Rosebery, Dr. L. Schmitz, Sir John Heron Maxwell, Dr. Dasent, Dr Acland, Professor Rolleston, Mr Penrose, Mr John Evans, & co.'

Gladstone, however, has an agenda of his own. (He always has an agenda of his own.) Rather than simply intervening to support the archaeologist, he engages critically with Schliemann's claims. He stages-manages Schliemann's debut, presenting himself as an interpreter, someone who can make the Trojan discoveries matter, and make sense, to Victorian audiences.

In his speech, Gladstone argued for the impossibility of any complete overlap between the Homeric Troy and the archaeological Troy. He rejected Burnarbashi as a suitable candidate for the title of Homeric Troy and accepted Hissarlik on the basis of what he saw as undeniable correspondences between Schliemann's discoveries and the Homeric text.[377] However, he rejected Schliemann's dating, both for the Homeric strata of the site, and for the composition of the Poems, re-stating in person what he had published in 1874 in the *Contemporary Review*.[378] Vaio interprets Gladstone's critical evaluation of Schliemann's claims as a smart move to strengthen his support of the archaeologist, to dispel any suspicion of undue partisanship. This analysis fits Vaio's model, where Gladstone joins force with Schliemann to face, united, established scholarship:

> The substance of Gladstone's remarks was very much in line with the views expressed in his article of the previous year, essentially in agreement with Schliemann's principal theses. But Gladstone did take issue with the latter particularly on the date of the Trojan War […] This critical distancing would only enhance the seriousness with which Gladstone's commendation was taken.[379]

However, Gladstone plays a very personal game in supporting Schliemann. In his opening remarks the politician clearly stated his intentions:

> I cannot for a moment decline to answer the appeal which you, my Lord, have been good enough to make to me, especially introduced as it was by a commendation which I am far from deserving, and also for another reason which I will proceed to state. I own I am not ill pleased to say a few words before this assembly, not because you will derive any great benefit for what I have to say on the subject of this paper, but because it enables me to give some vent to my opinion and feeling with regard to the claims of Dr Schliemann.[380]

[377] *The Times* June 26, 1875: 9.
[378] *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 1-22; *Contemporary Review* June 1874: 175-200.
[379] Vaio 1990: 425.
[380] *The Times*: June 26, 1875: 9.

Gladstone exploits the evening to present, to an exceptional audience, his perspective on Schliemann's discoveries. Gladstone makes his narrative of Schliemann's discoveries the focus of the evening – something which is warmly welcomed by the audience. In fact, *The Times* reports: 'Mr Gladstone resumed his seat amid loud and prolonged applause, and a cordial vote of thanks to Dr. Schliemann having been carried with enthusiasm the meeting closed'. [381]

In the following weeks, Gladstone receives several notes and observations by post, regarding Schliemann's discoveries and his own Homeric theories. On June 26, Sir R. Collier contacts Gladstone to discuss references to iron in the Poems of Homer. According to Collier, while Homer does occasionally refer to iron at the time of the siege of Troy,[382] this does not invalidate Gladstone's or Schliemann's conclusions. Any iron which might once have been present in Troy, would, Collier believed, long since have degraded and disappeared. For Gladstone, the presence or absence of a specific metal would radically change the dating of the archaeological site and, by extension, of the Heroic age. In July 1875, Hodder Westropp, an archaeologist famous for introducing the term Mesolithic in 1872, advised Gladstone on Schliemann's problematic timeline:

As Dr Schliemann's discoveries occupy much of the attention of archaeologists at the present day, and as some of his stories lead to many erroneous data, I take the liberty, which I hope you will excuse, of writing to you […], as Homer and his age has engaged much of your attention.[383]

Westropp believed that the Homeric Poems could not have been composed earlier than the 6th century BC, and that the culture and civilisation of Troy, as described by Homer could not date back to the 12th century. In a second letter dated July 25, 1875, Westropp clarified his position:

I regret I have not clearly explained my impression with regards to the cross in the Hissarlik pottery. In a few words my view is this. The Greek archaic cross is derived from the punch mark on Greek coins of the 7th and 8th centuries, it could not consequently be adapted as an ornamental device on the pottery of Athens or one that of Hissarlik earlier than the 7th century. My impression is that the pottery of Hissarlik bearing these crosses cannot be older than that date.[384]

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[381] *The Times*: June 26, 1875: 9.
[382] Add MS 44447 f. 250 R. Collier to W.E. Gladstone June 26, 1875.
[383] Add MS 44447 f. 308 Hodder Michael Westropp to Gladstone July 20, 1875.
[384] Add MS 44447 f. 316 H.M. Westropp to W.E. Gladstone

These letters and the topics they address, namely the archaeological value of the finds, the metallic composition of the discoveries and the dating of the Homeric age, show that Gladstone was at the heart of the private discussion regarding the discovery of Troy. Slowly but consistently, Gladstone was influencing and reshaping the contemporary debate towards those aspects which were most relevant to his own Homeric research.

II. Homeric Breakfast: Making Culture

Gladstone's Homeric enterprise is so successful in great part because it is so deeply diversified. Gladstone's Homer thrives on dinners, parties, and gatherings, as much as academic conversations, epistolary exchanges, and readings. By re-inscribing the social element of Gladstone's Homeric research, we can show the full complexity of dynamism of the Victorian discourse on Homer: it is, above all, a stubbornly irreducible one, and only an equally irreducible author can guide us through it and reveal to us the complexity of what Homer 'meant' in Victorian Britain. No matter the role he chooses to play, Gladstone's voice is authoritative and transformative.

When we re-inscribe Gladstone's active role, we see that existing studies on Gladstone's role in the discovery of Troy fail to recognise his determinedly independent agency, and his separate agenda, in great part because methodologically speaking, such research is limited in its use of the primary sources. This limitation inevitably leads to incomplete, reductive, and misleading conclusions.

Two elements of the existing scholarly narrative need to be reassessed: the evidence shows that Schliemann owes his reputation, in great part, to Gladstone's strategic interventions; secondly, that Gladstone shapes the contemporary reception of Schliemann's discoveries, mediating between the archaeologist and the British public.

This process often takes place out of public view, in ways which leave few traces in the archives. But, despite that, it can be reconstructed. We already know that, on June 24, 1875, Gladstone joins Earl Stanhope, president of Society of Antiquaries, and Schliemann for dinner, and that, afterwards he speaks at the society's meeting. But Gladstone's evening does not end there. Directly after the meeting, Gladstone brings Schliemann to a private party, where he introduces the archaeologist to a number of people:

Dined with Ld Stanhope: then to the Soc. of Antiquaries where Dr Schliemann lectured 11/4 hours. I had to speak. Then took Dr S. to Lansdown [sic] House & introduced him to many.[385]

To stage (and direct) Schliemann's London debut, Gladstone chooses a party held at the house of Henry Petty Fitzmaurice, 5th Marquess of Lansdowne. Gladstone takes advantage of his personal contacts to pave the way for Schliemann's success in London.

The following morning, on 25 June, Gladstone organises a Homeric breakfast for Schliemann. In the Gladstone manuscript collection of the British Library, there is an elliptical memorandum,[386] on which Gladstone scribbles a partial date, a time, and a list of names. It is transcribed below, with the occupation of each individual added in brackets.

Dr Schliemann [archaeologist]
Sir Lubbock [naturalist and archaeologist]
Mr Newton [archaeologist]
Lord Crowford [Politician- Absent]
Mr Knowles [Editor of the 'Nineteenth Century']
A.S. Murray [archaeologist and assistant keeper at the British Museum]
[…][387]
Mr Palgrave [scholar]
Mr Hayward [scholar]
Mr Murray [editor]
Lord Stanhope [President of the Society of Antiquaries][388]

This interaction between Gladstone and Schliemann was previously unknown. Even the date of the memorandum was unclear. But, thanks to Gladstone's diaries and correspondence, it has been possible to establish that it was written on June 25, 1875. In Gladstone's diaries, under June 25, 1875, he writes: '(10 am) Breakfast: ten of us a Schliemann party: we had a long Homeric discussion.'[389]

Gladstone gathers scholars, museum keepers, editors, literary men, politicians, and archaeologists to discuss Homer.[390] Some names on the list are familiar: C.T. Newton, J.

[385] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 46.
[386] Add MS 44785 f. 48.
[387] Indecipherable in the MS.
[388] Add MS 44785 f. 48.
[389] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 46-47.
[390] Add MS 44785 ff. 45, 46, 47. Of the eleven names on the list, ten show up for the Homeric Breakfast organized by Gladstone. Together with the note, the manuscript collection preserves three letters related to

Lubbock, A. S. Murray, J. Murray. We also find James Knowles, founder of Metaphysical Society and editor of the *Nineteenth Century*; Francis Palgrave and Abraham Hayward, two well-connected scholars. Gladstone gathers some of Victorian London's most distinguished intellectuals around Schliemann.

Homeric discourse, in Victorian Britain, had an important private dimension, made of informal gatherings and conversations – but one which has left very few archival traces. It is in this space, that is both social and informal, where culture is made, and where Gladstone shows his true colours.

Gladstone's Homeric breakfast was likely to have been a central part of his plan to ensure Schliemann's success of the discovery of Troy in London. Gladstone offers him a private stage to exhibit the results of his excavations, and the opportunity to expand his connections. Gladstone is providing Schliemann with the means to succeed in Victorian London. The status of Gladstone's own theories – which drew increasingly heavily on Schliemann's discoveries –would, of course, gain from an increase in Schliemann's prestige and credibility. And, of course, given the reception of *Troy and Its Remains*, both the archaeologist and his discoveries were in need of validation from an external authority. Gladstone carries this out, but on his own terms.

Cross-referencing Gladstone's memorandum and the coverage of the Society of Antiquaries meeting, it turns out that several of the invitees at Gladstone's Homeric breakfast were also guests at Schliemann's speech the previous night. Gladstone's breakfast-guests are likely to have continued in an informal setting the discussions of the night before.

Over the course of a few days, Gladstone has praised Schliemann's work, acknowledged in his own terms the worth of the Trojan remains, and introduced the archaeologist to some of London's finest politicians, scholars, and editors.[391] Overall, Gladstone achieves two major objectives. First, Gladstone strengthens his research by legitimising his source. Second, he establishes himself as the most important point of contact between Schliemann and his problematic discoveries, and wider British Homeric discourse.

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it- one by Newton and two by Alexander William Crowford. The letters contain the answers to Gladstone's invitation. Missing from Gladstone's roll call are authoritative voices in the field of Homeric studies such as Sayce, Arnold, Müller.

[391] See Allen (1999): 178 the author records that it is thanks to Gladstone that Schliemann meets his future trusted collaborator Rudolf Virchow:

Gladstone reshapes the conversation around Schliemann's discoveries to advance his own Homeric views, openly denying those aspects of Schliemann's claims which do not agree with his agenda. For his part, Schliemann plays along, repeatedly seeking out Gladstone's support. From Schliemann's perspective, the visibility gained from being associated with Gladstone is sufficient incentive. As the responses to *Troy and Its Remains* (1875) show, Gladstone's support, no matter how critical, is crucial to Schliemann's success in London.

From the pages of periodicals to the meetings of learned societies, to private gatherings, it is clear that – at the time – Gladstone was not seen as a secondary character to Schliemann. Within Victorian discourse, it is clear that he, not Schliemann, was viewed as the protagonist.

4

The Birth of Homerology: Homer as History

INTRODUCTION

In 1876, Gladstone published *Homeric Synchronism: An Inquiry into the Time and Space of Homer*, his third book on Homer and the Homeric age. This chapter uncovers the ways in which Gladstone used this book to bend Schliemann to his will – and persuade him to back many of his own theories, regarding the Homeric world.

Homeric Synchronism has, almost universally, been dismissed by existing scholarship on Gladstone as a repetitive and superfluous work. But this story needs nuance: the book is Gladstone's manifesto for a new approach to the Epics, which he baptises 'Homerology.'

Starting from Gladstone's diaries and unpublished papers, this chapter will demonstrate that *Homeric Synchronism* address critical elements of the contemporary discourse on the discovery of Troy. Then, it will turn to Gladstone's instrumental use of the Trojan discoveries, showing how his research shapes the Victorian reception of Schliemann's finds. Finally, it will investigate the contemporary reception of *Homeric Synchronism*, both public and private, through newspapers, periodicals, and Gladstone's correspondence, in order to uncover a complex new phase of the Victorian Trojan war, characterized by stalemates, power plays and unresolved questions.

While this chapter is about the significance of *Homeric Synchronism* and the process by which Gladstone reshaped Schliemann's theories regarding Troy, it is also a chapter about boundaries, and how hard they are to maintain. It is an account of how Gladstone served as a catalyst and an accelerant for Homeric discourse in this period, precisely because he was able to transcend or ignore many of the boundaries which marked Victorian debates. By engaging both with specialists, and Victorian readers, Gladstone was able to shape, in profound ways, the debates over the discovery of Troy. This, then, is a chapter about what finally made Victorian Britain acknowledge the reality of the discovery of Troy.

Homeric Synchronism (1876)

Scholarly judgments have not been kind to *Homeric Synchronism*. It is a work which is in urgent need of a fresh, more nuanced appraisal. Between 1875 and early 1876, the scholarly consensus has Gladstone preoccupied by religious disputes and family matters: Homer, where he figured at all, was firmly in the background.[392] This premise creates an artificial discontinuity in Gladstone's Homeric studies. *Homeric Synchronism* is also often seen as a revised version of Gladstone's *Contemporary Review* articles of June 1874. This reductive interpretation draws attention away from arguably a significant change in Gladstone's Homeric views. Here the author claims scientific status for the study of Homer. I suggest reading *Homeric Synchronism* in light of the author's most recent Homeric battles, alongside Gladstone's diaries and unpublished papers. In that case, it is possible to build a new interpretative model that gives pace back to the author's historical and archaeological studies alongside the widely studied and always predominant aspects of the author's interests - religion and politics.

Gladstone's involvement in the Victorian Trojan war has frequently been dismissed by scholars.[393] In *Gladstone* (1995), Roy Jenkins dismisses Gladstone's Homeric studies, between Easter 1874 and the end of 1876, as no more than a casual pastime:

> Over the summer and autumn of 1875, he was unusually free of any sustained intellectual task, although there was always work to progress on one or other of his eccentric Homeric monographs, the threat of idleness was kept at a far distance.[394]

Jenkins adds that during 'much of that year's recess his effort was more physical than mental.' Gladstone was occupied, Jenkins argues, in reorganizing his library, 'getting thousands of the Carlton House Terrace books' into 'an orderly amalgamation' with his collection at Hawarden.[395]

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[392] See John Morley 1912; J. Jagger 1998; Paul 1901; Lloyd-Jones 1982: 115-16; John Myres 1958: 117; Ramm 1989: 1-29; Vaio.

[393] There is one significant exception. Richard Jenkyns (1981) stresses the importance of Gladstone's activities in relation to Schliemann's discoveries. In an open provocation, the scholar suggests that the Prime Minister might have withdrawn from leadership because of Schliemann's discoveries. Unfortunately, Jenkyns does not elaborate the input further and he does not refer to *Homeric Synchronism* (1876) explicitly.

[394] Jenkins 1995: 392-393.

[395] Jenkins 1995: 392-393.

Jenkins is not alone in this dismissal. *Homeric Synchronism* (1876) is, if mentioned at all by scholars of Gladstone, only mentioned for the sake of completeness. Its wider implications for Gladstone's intellectual project in general, and regarding the discovery of Troy in particular, are overlooked.[396] John Myres (1958) reduces the book to a 'pendant to *Juventus Mundi*'[397] as does Agatha Ramm (1989). Ramm presents *Homeric Synchronism* as a development of themes the author outlined in *Juventus Mundi* (1869) and mentioned in the *Studies on Homer* (1858):[398]

> Gladstone wrote three full versions of his ideas: *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* in three volumes, Oxford, 1858; *Juventus Mundi. The Gods and Men of the Homeric Age*, revising this and reducing it to one volume, London, Macmillan, 1869; and *Landmarks in Homeric Study*, revising the *Juventus* and reducing it to 160 pages, London, Macmillan, 1890. These successive revisions show the intellectual development and the constant reshaping of thought to accommodate new material, characteristic of the pragmatic Gladstone. In addition, in *Homeric Synchronism* (London: Macmillan, 1876), he discussed specifically The Time and Place of Homer, (the book's subtitle) which he had already touched on in the introduction to the *Juventus* and alluded to in the *Studies*.[399]

Vaio, who is seen by many scholars as the point of reference for Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship, presents Gladstone's book as a reworking of earlier articles:

> In the meantime, Gladstone brought out *Homeric Synchronism*, published early in 1876, in large part a reworking of the articles that had appeared in the *Contemporary Review* of June and July 1874. The relevant section of those and its importance for Schliemann have been discussed above. Here we pause only to note that the restatement of Gladstone's powerful advocacy in book form could only enhance the reputation of the already famous discoverer of Troy.[400]

Bebbington (2004) who in general gives the most extensive account of Gladstone's later Homer production, treats *Homeric Synchronism* rather hastily, abandoning his usual care for details.[401] Aiming to illustrate the development of Gladstone's Homeric theories,

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[396] See Morley 1912 and later on Jagger 1998 both overlook Gladstone's Homeric production between 1875 and 1876. See Paul (1901) who takes leave from *Homeric Synchronism* in a few lines and also Lloyd-Jones 1982: 115-16 who lists *Homeric Synchronism* among Gladstone's publications and briefly outlines Gladstone's rapport with Schliemann.
[397] John Myres 1958: 117.
[398] See Llyod-Jones 1982: 115 who writes: 'In 1876 the apparent confirmation of his belief in the reality of Homer's world by the sensational discoveries of Schliemann, together with new information about Egypt, led him to publish his *Homeric Synchronism: An Enquiry into the Time and Place of Homer'*.
[399] Ramm 1989: 1-29.
[400] Vaio 1990: 425.
[401] Bebbington 2004:

following Schliemann's discoveries and advancements in Egyptology, Bebbington mixes up observations on Gladstone's articles for the *Contemporary Review* in 1874 and on *Homeric Synchronism* (1876), commenting: 'Gladstone believed that the historicity of Homer has been established by the spade'.[402] Bebbington concludes his presentation of Gladstone's Homeric research by quoting a negative review of *Homeric Synchronism* by Max Müller.[403]

Bebbington's verdict has proved to be an influential one. Studies of Gladstone's Homeric project, following Bebbington's 2004 work, mainly refer to the politician's early publications in the construction of their claims, namely *Studies on Homer* (1858), *Juventus Mundi* (1869) and the *Contemporary Review* article of June 1874, relegating *Homeric Synchronism* (1876) to a footnote.[404]

Bebbington also argues – and this argument has likewise found a foothold in contemporary scholarly – that, in *Homeric Synchronism*, Gladstone exploits his Homeric research to promote a religious agenda:

> By showing that Homer was 'the true mirror of an age,' Gladstone hoped to set out the evidence that would reveal similarities with the messianic tradition. It was a prerequisite for the higher apologetic task to demonstrate that the Homeric world was real.[405]

Bebbington 2004, in the wake of the previous school of studies on Gladstone's Homeric research captained by Turner 1981, impeccably places Gladstone's works within a religious framework and shows how the author aims, in a characteristically Victorian move, to save Homer to save the Bible.[406] Gladstone sifts through the Poems of Homer in order to uncover traces of the primeval revelation of the Christian God to man.[407]

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[402] See Bebbington 2004: 204 for Max Müller's dismissal of Gladstone's theories as fanciful.
[403] See Bebbington 2004: 204: 'The statesman was over-bold in his use of Egyptian evidence, and the reason is clear. He was carried away by his eagerness to reinforce the case that the *Iliad* and its author could be anchored in real history.'
[404] Allen 1999:178; Gange Ledger-lomas 2013: 60; Duesterberg 2015:297-304.
[405] Bebbington 2004: 202.
[406] Turner 1981: 159-170; 236-244.
[407] See Bebbington 2004: 154: 'The final reason for Gladstone's engagement with the poet, however, was also the most important. […] He was intending to defend true religion by enlisting the Greek gods on its side.' See also Turner 1981: 159-170; Jenkyns 1980: 201, 204: 'To Gladstone the study of Homer was not only a passion but a duty, indeed a double duty: to education and to religion.' A few pages later, the scholar continues: 'That Homer had been the Bible of the Greeks was a Victorian cliché. Where Gladstone was unusual was in his desire that the poet should become the Bible of the English too; he urged his countrymen not to underestimate Homer's moral value and rebuked them for their 'somewhat narrow jealousies concerning the function of Holy Scripture.'

This Christian interpretation of Gladstone's Homeric enterprise has influenced recent studies, such as David Gange's (2009). Gange argues that Gladstone's major contribution to the popularisation of Schliemann's archaeological discoveries is his 'Christianized mediation'. For Gange, the birth of Universal Epic, an eclectic poetic tradition which fuses pagan mythology and the Bible, bears testimony to Gladstone's influence on the popular reception of Schliemann's discoveries.[408] Current scholarship, in sum, tends to side-line *Homeric Synchronism* (1876), dismissing it as a secondary and repetitive work. Against the undeniably apologetic purpose of Gladstone's Homeric studies, from my point of view, the effort to prove Homer's historicity through archaeological evidence produces a further side-effect. Expanding his archaeological knowledge allows him to claim the scientific status of Homeric studies and establish himself as an authority for Schliemann and some of Gladstone's Victorian readers.

I. Preparing *Homeric Synchronism*: Gladstone's *modus operandi*

Through Gladstone's diaries and unpublished papers, it is possible to reconstruct Gladstone's approach to his Homeric studies, and the aims of his research. He bases his investigation on a combination of the latest scholarship, and conversations with his contemporaries. He aims to address the two central questions of the contemporary discourse on Homer: is Hissarlik Homer's Troy, and what is the date of the Trojan war?

Between the end of 1875 and the beginning of 1876, Gladstone's diaries register his pursuit of Homer.[409] Gladstone devours treatises on ancient history and archaeology,[410] as well as on research on Homeric Hymns and the Odyssean *nekyia*.[411]

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[408] Gange 2009: 190-206.

[409] See e.g. Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 64: September 4, 1875 'Corrected proofs of my Article on Italian Church; Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 77: October 28, 1875, on November 12, 1875, the author reprints with a preface 'Ritual and Ritualism' and 'Is the Church of England worth preserving?' as 'The Church of England and Ritualism.'

[410] See Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 63: August 30, 1875; Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 63: August 30, 1875; Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 69: September 25, 1875; Gladstone Diaries vol. l IX: 76: October 26, 1875.

[411] On August 21, 1875, Gladstone wrote: 'Resumed Homer—in a small way: & wrote on Hymn to Delian Apollo'. A chapter on the authorship of the Delian Apollo is one of the novelties Gladstone introduces in Homeric Synchronism as a means to demonstrate his long-lasting conviction that Homer, the composer of the Iliad and the Odyssey, was a real historical personage and a Greek of Achaean or European origin who dwelled before the Dorian invasion of the Peloponnese. Following the study of the Hymn, the diaries register a Phoenician parenthesis. Gladstone's fascination with the Phoenicians is everlasting: the seafaring people play a central role in the politician's Homeric theories as the major point of contact between Homer and the rest of the world. See Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 73: October 12, 1875; Vol. IX: 73: October 13, 1875, mid-October 1875, when Gladstone notes he is researching the *nekyia* or *katabasis* to Hades, the famous passage in Odyssey XI. Under October 12 and 13, 1875 entries, Gladstone writes that he has been reading 'Nitzsch on Nekuia'. Together with the Hymn, Gladstone's study of the Homeric underworld is

From August 1875, Gladstone reads Hodder M. Westropp's *Prehistoric Phases* (1872), George Rawlinson's *A Manual of Ancient History* (1869),[412] John Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times* (1865),[413] and George Grote's *A History of Greece*.[414] These are relatively recent publications by prominent authors with whom Gladstone has pre-existing connections.[415] Gladstone also strengthens his command of Egyptian history by studying works such as François Lenormant's treaties on Chaldean and Akkadian, *Les Sciences Occultes en Asie*,[416] and Foster Barham Zincke's *Egypt of the Pharaohs and of the Khedivé* (1871).[417] The annotations suggest that Gladstone has picked up Charles Newton's suggestion to expand his research beyond Lenormant's treaties.[418] Gladstone's correspondence reveals that he also pursues his investigation into the history of ancient Egypt through different means. Gladstone seeks out Samuel Birch, of the British Museum, on account of his expertise as an Egyptologist. Gladstone submits a draft of *Homeric Synchronism* to Birch, for comments and corrections.[419]

Gladstone's Homeric endeavours catches the interest of the Press when The *Pall Mall Gazette* of March 20, 1876, writes:

> Students of Homer must be glad to find that Theology has not claimed Mr Gladstone wholly for her own, but that he can still find time and inclination for Homeric studies demanding such laborious industry as those of which the present volume [*Homeric Synchronism*] is the fruit.[420]

In order to address the reality of Homer's Troy, Gladstone first turns to the question of the site of the city. This is a new field for Gladstone. First, he attempts to master the latest scholarship on the location of Troy. Only then does he turn to Schliemann's *Troy and Its Remains* (1875). Informed by the contemporary scholarship,

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another specialist feature of *Homeric Synchronism* picked up by Victorian reviews. In this instance, however, the opinions are conflicting.

[412] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 63: August 30, 1875.

[413] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 69: September 25, 1875.

[414] Gladstone Diaries vol. l IX: 76: October 26, 1875; see G. Grote, *A History of Greece*, 12 v. (1846–56); Homer is discussed in vol. I part 1.

[415] Only exception in the list being Grote who dies in 1871, but with whom Gladstone amply discussed Homer. See Bebbington 1998: 157-198.

[416] Between August 5, and August 12, 1875, Gladstone finishes *Les sciences occultes en Asie. La magie chez les Chaldéens*, in 2 vols. (1874–5) see Vol IX: 58-59.

[417] Lenormant, F. 1875. *Les sciences occultes en Asie. La magie chez les Chaldéens*.

[418] Add MS 44444 f. 213 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone August 19, 1874.

[419] See GD vol. IX:79-80 November 10, 1875.Add MS 444449 f. 5 S. Birch, to W.E. Gladstone January 4, 1876.

[420] GG 1640 7 *Pall Mall Gazette* March 20, 1876: 12.

Gladstone critically engages with Schliemann's research. Once again, the scholarly narrative that envisages Gladstone swayed by the narrative of the archaeologist does not correspond with the picture the sources hand down. Gladstone reads Georgios Nikolaides, *Topographie et Plan Stratégique de l'*Iliade (1867),[421] and informs himself on Jean Baptiste Le Chevalier, the French explorer who defended the idea that Homeric Troy lay at Bunarbashi, 'favourite but not uncontested'[422] rival to Hissarlik.[423] Then, on September 24th, Gladstone begins Otto Keller's *Die Entdeckung Ilions zu Hissarlik*,[424] before turning to the works by Gustav von Eckenbrecher[425] and by Carlisle on the plain of Troy.[426] Only then, on September 25, 1875, does Gladstone turn to Schliemann's *Troy and Its Remains*, which he finds 'valuable but chaotic.'[427] Gladstone shares his contemporaries' reservations, regarding Schliemann's work,[428] and sees in his discoveries precious evidence lacking a solid interpretative framework. That framework, Gladstone set out to provide.

Gladstone aimed to establish two things. Firstly, that Hissarlik, Schliemann's site, corresponded most fully with Troy as described by Homer. Secondly, through comparing Schliemann's finds with the Homeric Poems, Gladstone hopes to establish that they are Homeric in nature. For this second task, Gladstone works closely with Charles T. Newton the archaeologist in charge of the Greek and Roman Department of the British Museum.[429] Starting from November 1875, Newton and Gladstone meet and correspond frequently.[430] Newton had extensively studied the remains, but had expressed scepticism about the identification of Homeric Troy with Schliemann's site.[431] For Gladstone, Newton was the ideal interlocutor to test the validity of his theories.

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[421] Vol IX: 67-68: September 21, 1875; Vol IX: 68: September 22, 1875.
[422] Gladstone 1876: 22.
[423] Duesterberg 2015: 101-102:
[424] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 68: September 24, 1875.
[425] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 69: September 25, 1875.
[426] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 69: September 27, 1875.
[427] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 78: November 5, 1875.
[428] Gladstone 1876: 43.
[429] See Gladstone Diaries vol. IX:79-80 November 10, 1875.On November 10, 1875, Gladstone meets up with the two directors of British Museum. In respect to the meeting, the politician notes in his diary that their conversation focused on the topic of the Homeric question.
[430] See Gladstone Diaries vol. IX:79-80 November 10, 1875, see Add MS 444448 f. 181 The Editors of the diaries point us towards a letter from Charles Thomas Newton to understand better the nature of the discussion. The note discussion on Homeric Art on November 10, 1875. Gladstone and Newton will exchange letter on the topic, but the letter should be that of November 30, 1875, Add MS 444448 f.355.
[431] Add MS 44448 f. 355 December 30, 1875, C. T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone; Add MS 444449 f. 49 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone January 13, 1876.

For Gladstone, Homer lived in an archaic period when metallurgy was not advanced enough to manufacture complex metallic artefacts.[432] According to Gladstone, the relatively unsophisticated metallic objects uncovered at Hissarlik were thus Homeric in nature. Newton, instead, was persuaded that Homer, at least in part, used as inspiration objects he was acquainted with:

> The theory which I have always held to, (though of course there is no certainty in such theories) is that Homer saw such specimens of metallurgy as these and begged possible finer specimens and that like a true poet he conceived such a composition as the shield of Achilles only of his imagination working on realities such as the imperfect art of his day could supply. But it is to me much more difficult to suppose that a poet could describe the works in metal which Homer describes if he had never seen anything better than what we have from Hissarlik. In a word the sight of the Hissarlik remains did not remind me at all of Homeric Art as I had conceived it.'[433]

Newton admits that after having read Gladstone's work he had to re-read the salient passages where Homer spoke of art, consulting *Die antiken Schriftquellen zur Geschichte der bildenden Künste bei den Griechen* (1868) of the archaeologist and ancient historian Johannes Overbeck.[434] On January 13, 1876, Newton admits that: 'The point in which I am at issue with you is not a very formidable one… If you will accept the remains of Graeco-Phoenician metallurgy which I have mentioned as the kind of rude representations which Homer may have seen, there is no material difference in our views'.[435] Newton's tone, together with his willingness to compromise, suggests that he is reasoning with a peer, whose contribution to the field is appreciated.[436]

Unfortunately, Gladstone's papers at the British Library do not preserve Gladstone's answer to Newton. But it can be found in *Homeric Synchronism*. Gladstone wants to demonstrate that Homer's Troy belongs to an earlier period than that supposed

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[432] See *Contemporary Review* December 1873: 329, where a good formulation of Gladstone's argument on art in Homer is contained in the preface to the politician's translation of the Shield of Achilles (1873).The employment of a Divine personage as the artificer of the Shield seems to show that the design went far beyond anything the eyes of his (the Poet's) countrymen had been wont to view, and was in effect conceived in the mind of the Poet, not founded as a whole upon experience, and not representative of, but very much more advance than, the Art of the period in which he (Homer) lived.

[433] Add MS 44448 f. 355 C. T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone December 30, 1875.

[434] Overbeck, J. 1868. *Die antiken Schriftquellen zur Geschichte der bildenden Künste bei den Griechen*. Leipzig.

[435] Add MS 444449 f. 49 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone January 13, 1876.

[436] See Jenkins 1995: 392-393. This suggests that Gladstone's esteem at least among some of his contemporaries can be re-evaluated. When examining the private responses to so prominent a political figure, one must always proceed with great caution because well-behaved formulae of convenience to obsequious flattery could undermine the sincerity of the praise. Moreover, for many Gladstone remained was simply eccentric and especially because of his views on theology.

by Newton. Gladstone writes: 'Antiquity handed down shields elaborately adorned that might have suggested the Shield of Achilles.'[437] He suggests inverting the relationship between the object and the description. According to Gladstone, it is more probable that the surviving works were copies of Homer's marvellous description: 'If there was a relation between the poet and the artist, I cannot but believe that the artist was indebted to the poet rather than the poet to the artist'.[438]

Gladstone, committed to making the case for Homer as a valuable historical source, wants to date him as closely to the Trojan War as possible in time to the Trojan war, an event that Gladstone allocates to the turn of the 13th century BC. Given that the artefacts which Newton offered, as comparators to Homer's description of the Shield of Achilles, only date from the 9th or 8th centuries BC, Gladstone has good reason to resist accepting Newton's view. Doing so would require him to change his dates for Homer and, perhaps, the Trojan War. Once again, however, he is focused on one of the major questions around which the Victorian discussion on the discovery of Troy revolves, the dating of the Trojan remains.

II. Homerology: the advent of a new science

With *Homeric Synchronism* (1876), Gladstone redefines the aim, scope, methodology, and epistemological status of the study of Homer's Poems. Gladstone's new approach is characteristically historical in its aims. Thanks to advancements in contemporary archaeology Gladstone believes he can anchor in recorded history the events and protagonists of the Poems of Homer. In so doing, Gladstone challenges one widespread contemporary reading of Homer, which dismisses the Trojan War as a legend. With *Homeric Synchronism,* Gladstone aims to bring Homer out of myth and into history.

What, then, is his new approach? By its nature, it had to encompass a variety of disciplines and methodologies, given that Homer discussed the 'manners and characters, feelings and tastes, races and countries, principles and institutions of an ancient civilisation'.[439] At the same time, for Gladstone, it had to be distinguished from the study of Classical Greek literature. Gladstone was setting clear disciplinary boundaries, just as, in the second half of the nineteenth-century, many disciplines struggled to redefine their

[437] Gladstone 1876: 60.
[438] Gladstone 1876: 61.
[439] Gladstone 1876 a: 9.

epistemological status, clashing with, and contaminating one another. Gladstone, here, exemplified the fluidity of the ways in which knowledge was produced and categorised, in the second half of the nineteenth-century.

Homeric Synchronism (1876) is the maturation of a project Gladstone initiated in 1873. Archaeology has now yielded the external evidence that Gladstone has long been seeking to strengthen and complete his argument in favour of the historicity of the Homeric Poems. Back in 1858, when Gladstone first advanced his defence of the historicity of the Poems of Homer, there was only so far, he could go, by relying solely on proofs internal to the text. But now, the evidence to hand was very different:

> It appears that data of considerable importance, which had gradually been gathering, have recently been much enlarged; that missing links, now recovered, enable us to frame something like, at the least, the *disjecta membra* of a chain of evidence; and that the time has therefore come to expand and add to the suggestions which in former publications I ventured to submit.[440]

Homeric Synchronism marks the birth of a new science, 'Homerology'. Gladstone introduces the neologism with its epistemological implications in these terms:

> I know not that there is authority for the word [Homerology] I have just presumed to use but when I consider how diversified is the study of the Poems and how it branches into almost every department of living and permanent human interests, I seem to see it has a claim of right as well as convenience, to a special and integral designation; were it only for the purpose of preventing it from being confounded with the general study (important as it is) of Classical or of the Grecian writers. It is in my view an organic whole; a manifold and diversified portion of the great scientific inquiry now in progress, into the early history of civilized man.[441]

By anchoring the Homeric epics to a physical space and a defined temporal frame, Gladstone aims to transform Homer from 'Myth' into 'History.' Through the application of his Homerology, Gladstone validates the Homeric claims of Schliemann's remains, and dates both the fall of Troy and the composition of the Homeric Poems. He constructs a new narrative of the ancient past, with Homer at its heart. Gladstone, in other words, claims to have done what Schliemann could not: prove that Homeric Troy truly lay in the ruins of Hissarlik.

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[440] Gladstone 1876: 11.
[441] Gladstone 1876:9.

Gladstone wanted to tame time: he wanted to use Homer to stabilize the distant past, which was shaking the foundations of Victorian knowledge and culture, disrupting the balance of authority between science and faith. In the midst of this temporal revolution, Gladstone uses Homer to solve the puzzle of mankind's prehistory.

III. Finding Homer in Hissarlik

Gladstone does not make discoveries: he manipulates them. Since 1874, he had shown himself to have a virtuosic skill in shape the reception of Schliemann's discoveries around his own scholarly agenda. Schliemann on his own failed to convince the British public that he had unearthed Homer's Troy. Gladstone took up the task of rescuing the archaeologist's reputation, and to demonstrating the worth of his discoveries. By 1876, with *Homeric Synchronism*, Gladstone has clearly delimitated the role of Schliemann's findings in his investigation. On the one hand, the Trojan artefacts are indispensable evidence which allows Gladstone to situate Homer's Troy in a physical location. On the other, the remains do not help in linking the people and events narrated by Homer to recorded history:

> There are probable grounds of an historical character for believing that the main action of the Iliad took place and that Homer lived between certain chronological limits which may now approximatively be pointed out to the satisfaction of reasonable minds.[442]

In his book, Gladstone guides his reader through what he believes is the correct interpretation of Schliemann's archaeological discoveries, and their application to the study of the Homeric Poems. In his narrative of the destruction, loss, and recovery of Homeric Troy, Schliemann's antiquities play a limited role. Gladstone argues that correspondences between the landscape and the Poems, on the one hand, and correspondences between descriptions in the Poems and the artefacts excavated by Schliemann, on the other, build a strong case for the identification of the city of the *Iliad* with the fourth burnt stratum of ruins unearthed on the hill of Hissarlik.[443] According to Gladstone, this is Schliemann's major contribution and the reason why the archaeologist deserves everlasting acknowledgement:

[442] Gladstone 1876: 15.
[443] Gladstone 1876: 29.

It is difficult to suppose that the mythological theory, always woefully void of tangible substance, can long survive the discoveries of the explorer.[444]

Schliemann has produced the data. Gladstone takes it upon himself to validate and interpret it. He makes the case for Hissarlik as Homer's Troy, against those who believed in the historical reality of the city of Troy but located it in other portions of the plain.

Gladstone believes that he is writing the final chapter of the history of the debate over the site of Troy: 'I believe that the controversy has now come near to its end.'[445] After a survey of the last century's scholarly debates, Gladstone argues that it would be mistaken to look for a perfect correspondence between the topography of the present-day Troad and the descriptions of the Homeric Poems. To demonstrate his position, Gladstone aligns himself with Gustav von Eckembrecher's work, side-lining Schliemann's arguments. Gladstone writes: 'it appears to me that the discoveries of Dr Schliemann and the arguments of Gustav von Eckembrecher[446] have established with all reasonable certainty the claim of Hissarlik to be the site of Troy which the poet has before his mental vision'.[447] Schliemann. has failed to convince again. Gladstone is carefully processing and mediating Schliemann's claims, guiding his readers. Ultimately, there are only a few instances where Schliemann's observations are not superseded by Gladstone's own additions. There is, at once, both very much and very little Schliemann in *Homeric Synchronism*:

I have only sought to show, with the help of the evidence now before us, in the important matter of locality, that there exists an original site, mainly and in a marked way corresponding with the picture drawn in the Poems.

Gladstone adds a clarification:

To establish this proposition is one great step, not indeed sufficient to establish, but indispensable towards establishing, the place of Homer in the order of realities, and in the chain of known historical events.[448]

[444] Gladstone 1876: 20.
[445] Gladstone 1876: 23-24.
[446] See Allen 1999: 290: note 6 Gustav Von Eckembrecher visits the Troad 1840-1841 and refuses le Chevalier's thesis. Von Eckembrecher (1845): 1-49.
[447] Gladstone 1876: 23-24.
[448] Gladstone 1876: 31.

For Gladstone, the chief merit of Schliemann's finds is that they show an incredible resemblance with many descriptions in the Homeric Poems. Because of this resemblance, contrary to what Schliemann suggests, Homer must have lived close in time to the events he narrates. Gladstone is using Schliemann's material against Schliemann. He employs the Trojan artefacts to prove the opposite of what Schliemann argued for. As we will see, his intervention is very effective. Schliemann, admitting defeat, adopts Gladstone's new chronology. Once again, this complicates the current scholarly model, which depicts Gladstone as an uncritical supporter of Schliemann's claims. *Homeric Synchronism* (1876) is Gladstone's guidebook to the correct use of Schliemann's discoveries.

Gladstone's most significant contribution to the Victorian discourse on Homer lies in his manipulation of the contemporary reception of archaeological discoveries in general, and of Schliemann's, in particular. We can see the ways in which Gladstone pushes his own interpretations forward, through focusing on one specific case-study, the golden diadem which formed part of the so-called "Priam's Treasure." For Gladstone, the Homeric text and the archaeological discoveries elucidate one another.[449] In *Iliad* XXII 468-472 Andromache mourns the death of Hector. In despair, she throws away her headdress:

IL.22.467 ἤριπε δ' ἐξοπίσω, ἀπὸ δὲ ψυχὴν ἐκάπυσσε.
IL.22.468 τῆλε δ' ἀπὸ κρατὸς χέε δέσματα σιγαλόεντα,
IL.22.469 ἄμπυκα κεκρύφαλόν τε ἰδὲ πλεκτὴν ἀναδέσμην
IL.22.470 κρήδεμνόν θ', ὅ ῥά οἱ δῶκε χρυσῆ Ἀφροδίτη
IL.22.471 ἥματι τῷ ὅτε μιν κορυθαίολος ἠγάγεθ' Ἕκτωρ
IL.22.472 ἐκ δόμου Ἠετίωνος ἐπεὶ πόρε μυρία ἕδνα

[449] Gladstone faces two major difficulties in undertaking the task of showing the similarities between the archaeological remain and the Epic text, namely the small dimension of the city – to use Schliemann's effective imagery, Troy is not bigger than Trafalgar Square (see Gladstone 1876: 36-39) – and the sophisticated level of art presented by the Poems (see Gladstone 1876: 55.-58). Gladstone articulates his demonstration by categories of objects and materials. First, he starts with architectural features and the distinctive Posedonian or Cyclopean walls of the city (see Gladstone 1876a: 42-44), then he moves to implements in various materials, i.e. stone, copper (see Gladstone 1876a: 44-48), pottery (See Gladstone 1876a: 69-70). He pays particular attention to the metallic artefacts, iron, and bronze, as well as precious metals, gold, silver, and electron (See Gladstone 1876a :48-58). Then he moves on the presence of writing (See Gladstone 1876a 63-65) and the absence of Statues (See Gladstone 1876a: 65-69). Finally, he lists some minor points – i.e. ivory, absence of painting, no traces of the harness of horses and chariots, traces of Assyrian Art (see Gladstone 1876a: 70-71).

The poem describes a headdress composed of four different pieces, two textile and two metal. Gladstone argues that two elements are easily identifiable with the two fabric pieces, namely the *kredemnon* (veil) and *chechruphalon* (textile network that conceals the hair, probably near the nape of the neck). The *ampux*, he explains, is a frontlet or a headband. The problem arises with *anadesmè*. The word appears to be referring to a chain to bind around the temple, but this would overlap with the *ampux*.[450] Before Schliemann's discoveries, no matter how unsatisfactory the explanation was, there were no grounds to offer a different solution. Now, the archaeological discoveries solve – for Gladstone – the textual mystery. Looking at the diadem found by Schliemann, Gladstone identifies a headband as well as a second row of pendant chains that is meant to drop onto the forehead and down the sides of the face.[451] So, the ornament allows us to solve a long-unsatisfactory translation, showing the potential of employing material evidence in the study of the text: 'It is not too much to say that this discovery enables us to construe a passage in the *Iliad* which in one part has only been rendered conjecturally'.[452] Gladstone's message is clear. Archaeology can provide solutions to philological problems. Gladstone's new methodology allows him to break free from a purely philological approach to Homer, as he has been trying to do for years.

For reviewers of Gladstone's work, his interpretation of the diadem is perhaps *Homeric Synchronism*'s strongest argument.[453] The *Spectator* of March 11, 1876, agrees that 'the headdress of Andromache in particular presents coincidences which can scarcely be accidental.'[454] Once again, for many Victorians, it is Gladstone and not Schliemann who has found Homer in the ruins of Hissarlik. Gladstone concludes:

> Upon the whole there appears to arise from this comparison strong probable evidence of a nearly corresponding and contemporaneous condition of arts and manners, between the descriptions of the Poems, and the disclosures of the Hill. The variations, such as they are, tell both ways. At the same time, it - must be borne in mind, that the excavations of Hissarlik are not yet concluded, and that further results may modify materially the bearings of the case.[455]

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[450] Gladstone 1876: 50-51.
[451] Gladstone 1876: 50-51.
[452] Gladstone 1876: 49.
[453] See GG1640 3 *Spectator* March 11, 1876, and GG 1640 7 *Pall Mall Gazette* March 20, 1876: 'But the piece of evidence which is most curiously explanatory of a passage in the Iliad is that afforded by the discovery of the gold headdresses among the remains.
[454] GG1640 3 *Spectator* March 11, 1876.
[455] Gladstone 1876: 71.

Revolutionising the study of Homer

The contemporary reception of *Homeric Synchronism* (1876) has never been the subject of systematic study. However, when contemporary reactions to the volume are examined closely, it is possible to trace is a significant shift in the reception of Gladstone as an authoritative voice in the field of Homeric inquiry, and an emerging consensus that Gladstone's intervention has had a profound impact on the contemporary discourse on Homer.

Homeric Synchronism is a provocation. Gladstone was pushing his contemporaries to engage the one question he most cared about: the historicity of the Poems. By collecting new evidence and building a new interpretative framework to locate Homer and the Trojan War in time and space, he challenged his contemporaries to meet him on his chosen ground. In the already lively debate around Homer and the discovery of Troy, Gladstone's book worked as an accelerant.

Whatever else could be said about Gladstone's book – and much would be said – the press agreed on one thing: he knew how to get people talking. For the *Leeds Mercury*, on March 8, 1876:

> It is probable that Mr Gladstone's conclusions will excite much controversy among scholars, and we are not to be understood as yielding to all of them an unreserved assent. But it would be impossible for the most determined sceptic to read these pages without being deeply impressed with the zeal and ingenuity which are manifest throughout, and without catching for the moment something of the illustrious writer's cherished belief in the historical personality of Homer.[456]

That conversation, as the *Academy* noted on March 18, 1876, was likely to involve a particularly wide audience:

> Another work by Mr. Gladstone will be eagerly read and eagerly criticised not by scholars only but all who have a care and an interest in literature. Both subject and author alike claim a wider circle of readers than falls to the lot of the ordinary students… Nor can we fail to derive new suggestions and new insight into to the old epic of Greece from one who knows and loves it so well whether to be the school of criticism to which we belong or whatever leader in the great Homeric controversy we might follow.[457]

[456] GG 1636 34 *The Leeds Mercury* March 8, 1876.
[457] GG 1640 5 *The Academy* March 18, 1876.

Gladstone, in other words, knew how to position Homer at the heart of Victorian discourse. For the *Scotsman* on March 14, 1876:

It would be a great mistake to suppose that it is wholly or even chiefly occupied with chronological questions and calculations. It is replete with the fruits of varied learning and extensive research, and readers who care nothing about dates will find the Homeric text illuminated and illustrated by the light which in these pages is reflected upon it from a thousand curious and unexpected quarters.[458]

Turning to the details of Gladstone's argument, a number of reviewers warmly welcomed his conclusions. The *Literary Churchman* of April 22, 1876, offers a complex, vivid contemporary picture of Gladstone as a scholar of Homer. For the reviewer, Homer is one of Gladstone's priorities and research on the poet is a permanent preoccupation for him:

The subject of the Homeric Poems is one which Mr. Gladstone has for many years past made his own. He has repeatedly returned to it, as opportunity offered; we learned from himself, that he had never ceased to make it the object of keen interest and study; and now he comes forward with a fresh and important body of evidence, gradually collected, strongly corroborating the conclusion he has already expressed, adding fresh ones to them. [459]

In closing, the article states:

It would be a kind of impertinence to say that this treatise is learned and able. We know that that its author could put nothing forth that did not deserve the name of both; and on this particular subject, on which he has so few peers in England, we are well assured beforehand of somewhat worth of serious consideration. The conclusions enunciated here will no doubt be canvassed.[460]

The review confirms Gladstone's stature as a scholar of Homer and signals a significant change in the contemporary reception of Gladstone's Homeric work. The *Literary Churchman* is not alone in acknowledging the novelty and significance of Gladstone's research. For example, the *Spectator* of March 11, 1876, suggests that 'To many readers, the argument as to the *time* of Homer, which is here drawn from Egyptian and Phoenician records, will be new.'[461] *Homeric Synchronism*, in other words, cannot simply be dismissed as a reiteration of past theses.

[458] GG 1636 35 *Scotsman* March 14, 1876.
[459] GG 1640 11 *The Literary Churchman* April 22, 1876: 167-169.
[460] GG 1640 11 *The Literary Churchman* April 22, 1876: 167-169.
[461] GG 1640 3 *Spectator* March 11, 1876: 341-342.

As many reviews of *Homeric Synchronism* note, Gladstone's Homeric scholarship cannot always be separated from his wider public identity, and agenda. For the *John Bull* of March 18, 1876:

> This volume […] is a characteristic example both of the merits and the defects of the ex-Premier. We find in it the scholarly zeal, the ingenuity, and the eloquence which wins the admiration of those most opposed to it; but we also find in it that readiness to make sweeping deductions from narrow premises, that headstrong and impetuous adoption of the view of the moment, and that unwillingness to believe that any "reasonable mind" can differ from him, which intensify his literary no less than his political convictions.[462]

For Gladstone's contemporaries, it was always a mistake to look at one aspect of his character, or his agenda, in isolation. Instead, it was important to adopt a perspective with space for multiple aspects to coexist and interact.

Homeric Synchronism catalyses the contemporary discussion regarding the reality of Troy. This can be demonstrated through focusing on one theme in particular: reactions to Gladstone's demonstration of the Homeric nature of the Hissarlik finds. For the *Spectator*, on March 11, 1876:

> The discoveries of Dr. Schliemann occupy, of course, an important position in the book. Of these discoveries, it is not too much to say that they have permanently altered the conditions of the Homeric controversy. The conversion of partisans who have committed themselves to sceptical views is indeed more than we can expect. Some years must probably elapse before the results will be manifest, but it may be safely predicted that in another generation no one will be found to defend the wild hypothesis that the *Iliad* is romance, written at some time during the sixth century before our era, or to believe that Helen represents the Dawn and Paris the Night. In the detailed examination of Dr. Schliemann's researches, the first question that presents itself is that of the site. Is Hissarlik the ancient Troy? Gladstone entertains a strong conviction that it is, and the topographical argument by which he supports his opinion seems to us of a cogent character. Equally convincing is his identification of the articles discovered with those described in the Homeric Poems. The head-dress of Andromache, in particular, presents coincidences which can scarcely be accidental.[463]

What emerges here, for nineteenth-century readers, is the potential of Schliemann's archaeological discoveries in the hands of a scholar with Gladstone's command of the text of the Homeric Poems. According to the *Spectator*, once interpreted and framed by

[462] GG 1640 4 *John Bull* March 18, 1876.
[463] GG 1640 3 *Spectator* March 11, 1876: 341-342.

Gladstone, the discoveries in the Troad yield world-changing (and convincing) results. The *Times*, of March 3, 1876, agrees:

Mr. Gladstone has divided his present treatise into two parts. In the first he discusses chiefly the locality of Troy and the age and dwelling-place of Homer. In the second he endeavours to determine the age of the Trojan War. For the first he summons to his assistance the discoveries, or the reputed discoveries, of Dr. Schliemann. These he tests and examines by a minute comparison with the Homeric text – a process which under Mr. Gladstone's ingenious handling; is made confirmatory of both text and comments. [464]

The *Pall Mall Gazette* of March 20, 1876, agrees – and, once again, the reviewer falls for Gladstone's reading of Schliemann's artefacts:

The piece of evidence which is the most curiously explanatory of a passage in the Iliad is afforded by the discovery of the "gold headdresses" among the remains. […] In point of precise rendering, nothing is now left to desire; and there seems to be strong ground for supposing that Homer's eye was conversant with this particular form of headdress. [465]

For Victorian readers willing to accept the historicity of the Poems of Homer, it is Gladstone, with his command over the text of the epics, and not Schliemann, who has demonstrated the Homeric nature of the Hissarlik finds. Gladstone, for many, is the true discoverer of Homer's Troy.

Needless to say, not all Victorian readers are convinced by Gladstone's arguments. For the *Academy* of March 18, 1876, Gladstone's claims simply do not rest on solid ground:

In the first part, he deals with the discoveries of Dr. Schliemann at Hissarlik, which he identifies with the site of Troy; and then endeavours to show that the layer of ruins which was found does not belong to a remote and prehistoric past, but that of a generation that immediately preceded Homer. The proofs however upon which he relies seem to me of too vague and general a character to be likely to convince many persons.[466]

Likewise, the *Athenaeum*, while acknowledging the interest attached to Gladstone's research, dismissed it as inconclusive:

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[464] *The Times* of March 3, 1876.
[465] GG 1640 7 *Pall Mall Gazette* March 20, 1876.
[466] GG 1640 5 *The Academy* March 18, 1876

This part will be read with interest though we cannot think his reasoning sufficiently rigorous to warrant positive assertion that there is a strong probable evidence of a nearly corresponding and contemporaneous condition of art and manners between the descriptions of the poems and the discoveries on the hill.[467]

The Victorian Trojan war is, in other words, still in full swing. Gladstone successfully stirs up debate, because he is willing and able to present provocative and radical arguments. He is in a position to take risks which scholars such as Charles Newton of the British Museum could not, when it comes to the questions which most animate contemporary Homeric discourse. Exploiting the controversy and interest stirred up by Schliemann's discoveries, Gladstone presents his contemporaries with his narrative of Homer's Troy, focusing the discourse on himself.

Schliemann, when he opened *Homeric Synchronism*, found himself outmanoeuvred. Part of the correspondence between Gladstone and Schliemann on *Homeric Synchronism* is known to the scholarship: Bebbington (2004) mentions Schliemann's docile acceptance of Gladstone's theories, and remarks that it was out of character for the exuberant archaeologist.[468] However, he does not consider the wider implications of Schliemann's agreement with Gladstone, nor the reasons which may have lain behind it. Gladstone's unpublished correspondence points us towards possible answers to both questions.

On May 8, 1876, Schliemann writes to Gladstone from Hissarlik, thanking him for having sent a copy of *Homeric Synchronism* and congratulating him on his latest Homeric endeavour. The Schliemanns – the letter is signed by Sophia as well as by her husband – call Gladstone's work: 'the masterpiece of the greatest scholar of all ages, [which] will forever remain classic and will for ever be considered as the past of all that has been written or may still be written on Homer'.[469] Schliemann claims that the book has transformed his thinking. He now accepts Gladstone's chronology, bending to the politician's scholarly authority:

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[467] *Athenaeum* April 22, 1876: 560.

[468] Bebbington 2004: 203. See Vaio 1990: 425 In the meantime, Gladstone brought out Homeric Synchronism published early in 1876 in large part a reworking of the articles that had appeared in the Contemporary Review of June and July 1874. The relevant section of those and its importance for Schliemann have been discussed above. Here we pause only to note that the restatement of Gladstone's powerful advocacy in book form could only enhance the reputation of the already famous discoverer of Troy.' See Vaio 1990: 425.Vaio also dismisses Gladstone's open disagreements with on the dating of Homer and the Troika and he fails to recount Gladstone's reservations about Schliemann's interpretation of the origins of the Homeric epithets.

[469] Add MS 44450 f. 25 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone May 8, 1876.

I am really at a loss to say what awakes me more: the ingenuity of your researches or the great results you obtained by them. The arguments you put forward in this volume cannot be contradicted, your conclusions cannot be shaken and the chronology of the Homeric Poems and the Trojan war, items which the monuments at Hissarlik seemed to indicate an interval of more than 2000 years, is now proven to be separated by a very short period.[470]

This private expression of agreement, concerning the chronology of Homer and the Trojan War, is restated in public at the very end of 1876. On December 28, 1876, Schliemann writes to Gladstone announcing the publication of his article in the *Times* where he officially adopts to the politician's dating:

I recommend to you in particular manner my last article which I shall send in today and by which you will see that we are now agreeing regarding the chronology of the siege of Troy.[471]

Schliemann accepts, adopts, and promotes Gladstone's theories. In other words, the roles have been reversed. This brief epistolary exchange debunks the current scholarly model of Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship and once again shows us the necessity of returning space and autonomy to Gladstone's voice. If we sift through and reinterpret pieces of evidence which have been dismissed by modern scholarship as unusual and curious, we have the opportunity to build a new image of Gladstone as a scholar of Homer, and his relationship with Schliemann.

In December 1876, Schliemann attempts to put his relationship with Gladstone to work. He writes to Gladstone, lamenting the innumerable difficulties he has encountered in dealing with the Turkish Government. He is in desperate need of a new *Firman* to pursue his excavations in the Troad, and his relations with Constantinople have deteriorated. His personal Odyssey has reached a rough point:

Odusseos has not suffered as much in the 10 years of Trojan war as I have in Constantinople during these four months. I have now come here only for two days to give instructions for building some frame barracks and magazines, shall return tomorrow night to Athens in order to secure all the implements and machineries into Troy and then I hope to be able to recommence the excavations by the 26th or 27th May.[472]

[470] Add MS 44450 f. 25 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone May 8, 1876.
[471] Add MS 44452 f. 283 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1876.
[472] Add MS 44450 f. 25 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone May 8, 1876.

Gladstone ignored the letter. Months later, on July 2, 1876, Schliemann, increasingly desperate, tried again. With the excuse of thanking the politician again for his latest book on Homer, Schliemann appeals to Gladstone for help in his quest to obtain a *Firman*. He asks for a letter of recommendation to the British Ambassador at Constantinople, in order to solve the political impasse. Schliemann – in a dramatic turn of phrase, even by his standards – prays for Gladstone's intervention, in the name of Homer:

In order to put an end to the endless vexations of the hated governor of Dardanelles I require a line of warm recommendation from you for Sir Elliot the British ambassador in Constantinople. In the name of Homer pray send it me at once. I am, with profound respect, your Excellency's most faithfully, Schliemann.[473]

Gladstone – adopting, perhaps not unhappily, the role of a *deus ex machina* – finally agrees to help.[474] Schliemann's later letters reveal that his intervention was decisive.[475]

Having settled the *Firman* affair, Schliemann attempts to lure Gladstone to the site of Troy. He promises comfort – three rooms will be set aside for the politician – and suggests the most fruitful time for a visit would be the end of July, when, he foresees, he will have completed the exhumation of the Palace of Priam and a considerable portion of the city walls. Schliemann appeals to Gladstone as a scholar, insisting that the politician's visit to Troy would be the greatest service Gladstone could offer to the scientific world, not to mention to Schliemann's own fame:

I was hastened to remind you of your promise of paying a visit to Troy and beg you will write me at once fixing the epoch and, if possible, the date of your arrival at Hissarlik. I will keep a barrack with three rooms in readiness for you. In the name of divine Homer and in the name of science in general I beg you to come at all events, for your visit is a necessity and the greatest service you could possibly render to the scientific world. I know that you are overwhelmed with the most important occupations and that you have to make a great sacrifice in visiting Troy. But by the intense sensation your visit will provide throughout the world and by the immense applause it will even, you will see, how fully that sacrifice is appreciated. Besides all the other goods your visit to that sanctuary of eternal glory will produce, it cannot fail to increase everywhere, and particularly in your own country, the taste for Homer and the Homeric studies. By the end

[473] 3234 Schliemann, H. to Gladstone, W.E., 1876, July 2, Athens (Greece) 35 236 (Schliemann archive, Athens).
[474] 21404 Gladstone, W.E. to Schliemann, H., July 8 [1876] [London], BOX 69 No. 301 (Schliemann archive, Athens).
[475] See Gladstone Diaries vol. XI: July 8, 1876. I would like to spend a few words to point out and correct an oversight in the catalogue of Schliemann's paper at the American School of Classical Studies Athens. Gladstone's reply to Schliemann is classified under 1874, however, the postal stamp clearly states '1876'. My claim is also confirmed on the information gathered from the Gladstone diaries. Under July 9, 1876, the diarist notes: 'Wrote to […] Sir H. Elliot—Dr Schliemann.'

of July, I shall have whole of Priam's palace and shall have brought to light a good portion of the great walls. That time might therefore be the most propitious for your visit. [476]

Homeric Synchronism (1876) is Gladstone's manifesto for a new approach to the study of Homer. With his Homerology, Gladstone reshapes the study of Homeric epic, and his contemporaries' understanding of history. Thanks to recent archaeological discoveries, Gladstone is able to anchor Homer and Homer's Troy securely in space and time – in a manner which convinces many of his contemporaries and, indeed, Schliemann himself. He forces Victorian Britain to face the possibility that Homer's Troy has indeed resurfaced on the hill of Hissarlik.

[476] Add MS 44450 f. 25 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone May 8, 1876.

5
Homer Disclosed

The reality of Troy, and of the Heroic age, was an idea which Gladstone had dedicated much of his life to. Schliemann's discoveries seemed to have brought it within his grasp: finally, Troy was moving from the world of myth to that of history. In 1876, Gladstone's Homeric project appeared to be proceeding well: his interventions on the discovery of Troy had moved the British discourse, and Schliemann himself had deferred to Gladstone, on the matter of chronology. But the advance of Homerology was about to hit some substantial barriers: as Gladstone would soon discover, holding onto his earlier success, and his central place in British Homeric discourse, was going to be a challenge. His plans were beginning to fail him. It was hardly surprising, given that the next phase of his Homeric campaign had the most ambitious agenda yet: between 1876 and 1881, Gladstone tried to use Homer to change his readers' relationship with the ancient past.

A straightforward declaration of intent, on Gladstone's part, would of course simplify the task enormously. This, however, is not to be found in the sources. Instead, it is necessary to sift Gladstone's unpublished and published papers to demonstrate that he is systematically working to change the Victorian reception of Homer. This chapter will focus on three parts of this project: Gladstone's Homeric dictionary (1876), his propaedeutic to the study of the poems (1878) and the exhibition of Schliemann's Trojan finds at the South Kensington Museum (1877-1881). The Homeric dictionary will be used to uncover the guiding principle behind Gladstone's Homeric campaign, the Primer as a clear example of its practical application, and finally, the exhibition as a case-study to demonstrate the consequences of Gladstone's Homeric narrative for the Victorian understanding of the ancient past.

Thesauros Homerikos: a new Homeric Dictionary

thesaurus (n.)
1823, "treasury, storehouse," from Latin *thesaurus* "treasury, a hoard, a treasure, something laid up," figuratively "repository, collection," from Greek *thesauros* "a treasure, treasury, storehouse, chest," related to *tithenai* "to put, to place." The meaning "encyclopaedia filled with information" is from 1840, but existed earlier as *thesaurarie* (1590s), used as a title by early dictionary compilers, on the notion of *thesaurus verborum* "a treasury of words." Meaning "collection of words arranged according to sense" is first attested 1852 in Roget's title. *Thesaurer* is attested in Middle English for "treasurer" and *thesaur* "treasure" was in use 15c.-16c.[477]

Between March and July 1876, Gladstone returns once again to the text of Homer. He resumes his battle to convince Victorian Britain that the Homeric text needed to be studied. For this, he adopts an unexpected tactic. Instead of a passionate article, Gladstone publishes extracts of his dictionary of the Homeric epics, entitled *Thesauros Homerikos*.

Gladstone's dictionary is problematic, on a number of levels. The author abandons the project without concluding his work. Consequently, the *Thesauros* has not attracted the attention of critics, Victorian or contemporary. To my knowledge, there is no systematic study of Gladstone's *Thesauros*, nor a complete investigation of composition process of the work – one significant exception being Bebbington who mentions it in *The Mind of Gladstone* (2004).

Gladstone's Homeric dictionary is his first step towards putting into practice the new approach to the study of the Poems he theorised in *Homeric Synchronism* (1876), and an attempt at making the detailed study of Homer's text accessible for non-Greek readers. Troubled though it is, Gladstone's *Thesauros* opens a window on Victorian Homeric discourse in the aftermath of the discovery of Troy.

I. The Treasure of Homer

The discovery of the so-called Treasure of Priam baffles Victorian Britain, and Gladstone, at least in part, is responsible for the turmoil the finds cause. Gladstone's validation of

[477] https://www.etymonline.com/word/thesaurus

Schliemann's discoveries prompts many Victorians to see Homeric spoils in the artefacts Schliemann brought to light. However, a new Homeric treasure soon attracts Gladstone's attention. This time, he is hunting not for gold and silver, but rather for immaterial spoils: the winged words of Homer. He is compiling a Homeric dictionary, which he calls *Thesauros*.

Like any treasure worth the name, Gladstone's Homeric *Thesauros* is cursed. Specifically, it is doomed to incompleteness. In 1879, after ten years of intermittent reworking, Gladstone abandons his dictionary, at least as an editorial project. Why Gladstone left his work unfinished is open to debate. Bebbington (2004) suggests that it is due to Gladstone's political commitments.[478] This is a plausible explanation. Gladstone's last mention of the *Thesauros* in his diaries encourages this conclusion. On February 17, 1879, he writes: 'Worked a little on *Thes. Hom*. Much on arranging papers and books and on selecting and packing for London. I hope to work a little on *Thesauros* there, as I am not under the same honourable obligation to go into the front on the subject now coming up as that which lay upon me in the Eastern matter. We shall see'.[479] Gladstone had been deeply involved in the Eastern Question and in a matter of months he would run for office again, securing his second Prime Ministerial mandate (1880-1885). The political justification thus fits both facts and timeline. Less convincing is Bebbington's suggestion that the publication of a similar work on the contents of the epics by Eduard Buchholz, a German classicist, contributed to Gladstone's failure to complete his own project.[480] Not only does Gladstone know of Buchholz's work, but he uses the German's research to complete his own. In 1876, Gladstone writes: 'In my intermittent labour, I have repeatedly (though not in the present article) profited by it, and I shall hope to profit more as it proceeds.'[481] The scholarly rivalry, if so we want to call it, between Gladstone and Buchholz, is not an impediment but rather a propellent to Gladstone's enterprise; whereas Gladstone's political commitments are a reasonable explanation for, first, side-lining and, then, abandoning a project as time-consuming as the compilation of a dictionary.

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[478] Bebbington 2004: 201-202.
[479] Gladstone Dairies vol. IX: 391 February 17, 1879.
[480] Bebbington 2004: 201-202.
[481] See *Contemporary Review*, December 1875: 632-649; See MS 44762 ff. 45 for the 1874's draft Preface to Gladstone's *Thesauros*. The author declares he is composing an alternative to Buchholz's *Die Homerischen Realien* (1871 -1885) 'A much more complete and comprehensive work is now in of publication "Die Homerischen Realien" von Dr E Buckholtz the learned author, who justly adverts in his preface to the inconsistency of his predecessors, has complete 1/3 part of his design. The method of his whole production is synthetical and comprehensive, but the bulk of the work promises to be great, and the form is still that of a continuous text which would not I think suit the convenience of any English readers.'

Before abandoning his project, Gladstone publishes a few sample entries of his *Thesauros Homerikos*. This is an unprecedented case in Gladstone's Homeric enterprise: never again will he attempt to compile a Homeric reference-work, and never again will he step away from a partially-published project. The Homeric *Thesauros* is, indeed, uniquely problematic. Trapped in an evanescent dimension, at the same time published and unpublished, Gladstone's cursed *Thesauros* becomes a 'phantom' work.

To date, scholarly discussion of – and, indeed, knowledge of – Gladstone's Homeric dictionary has been superficial. Very little of it was published: Gladstone sent only five specimen entries off to press. The items appear in three articles in the *Contemporary Review,* entitled 'Homerology'. First comes 'Apollo' in March 1876; then, in April 1876, 'Horse' and 'Chariot' follow; finally, in July 1876, 'Athena' and 'Aeiolos'.[482] Each entry follows a similar pattern: the transliterated Homeric word; a definition of the word in question; ordered lists of epithets, adjectives, uses, peculiarities and *loci* of the said word. Gladstone keeps his comments to a minimum, his most noticeable intervention perhaps being the introduction to 'Apollo.' There, the author presents the aims and scope of his work.[483] The *Contemporary Review* articles help us to understand the structure, method, and rationale behind Gladstone's *Thesauros*, but they are too limited to allow us to assess the range of his editorial project. No posthumous publication of Gladstone's *Thesauros* exists – neither Victorian nor modern. Thus, the greater part of the *Thesauros* only exists in its manuscript, unpolished form, scattered across different archives. I have traced portions of the *Thesauros* in the British Library, Gladstone's Library (Hawarden), and the Bodleian Library. The manuscript entries contain references, uses, epithets, appellatives, adjectives of Homeric words.[484]

No attempt has previously been made to reconstruct the composition process of the *Thesauros*.[485] This is mainly because Gladstone's research is irregular, discontinuous,

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[482] See *Contemporary Review* Vol. 27 December 1875: 3-6: *Contemporary Review* March 1876: 632-649; *Contemporary Review* April 1876: 803-820; *Contemporary Review* Vol. 28 June 1876: 5-6: *Contemporary Review* July 1876: 282-309.

[483] Introduction to 'Apollo' Differs from MS Add 44762 ff. 45.

[484] In the British Library MSS collection and at the Gladstone's Library MSS collection.

[485] See Add MS f 169 A.S. Stuart Murray to W.E. Gladstone March 6, 1876; Add MS 44449 f 161 T.H. Huxley to W.E. Gladstone March 3, 1876. Gladstone's preparation for the *Thesauros* is not strictly linguistic. Thanks to Gladstone's papers we gain insight as to the process of composition of the dictionary. We discover that while Gladstone is compiling his research, he avails himself of the opinion of experts not strictly from the field of classics. This is the case of the preparation of the entry 'Horse.' He writes to Alexander S. Murray, Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities at British Museum to learn more of the history of the horse in antiquity, among ancient civilizations others than the Greeks. Perhaps more surprisingly, he writes to Henry T. Huxley, the controversial naturalist, to access a copy of his studies on the evolution of the Horse. Characteristic feature of Gladstone's Homeric research is its intrinsic

and unfinished. Over the course of a number of years, between 1867 and 1879, he leaves behind traces, scattered across his diaries, correspondence, and papers. Gladstone records his progress with the *Thesauros* in his diaries. However, he fails to note which entry he is working on. A recurring annotation in the diaries is 'worked on Thes. Hom.' followed by no further specific information. Thus, from the diaries, we can only access a rough timeline of the construction of the *Thesauros*. Among Gladstone's papers, there are drafts of *Thesauros* entries, showing extensive revisions, and signs of successive reworking. However, these drafts are mostly undated.[486] In consequence, it is challenging to fit them into the timeline presented by the diaries. These disconnected segments are the only foundation we have to investigate the composition of the *Thesauros*.[487] Clearly, there is space for further investigation.

II. Developing Homerology

Gladstone's 'phantom' dictionary is as intriguing as it is challenging. Its inconsistency explains the lack of interest scholars have hitherto expressed in it. The one significant exception is David Bebbington's research. In *The Mind of Gladstone* (2004), Bebbington argues that the *Thesauros*, along with Gladstone's whole Homeric *corpus*, works to consolidate Gladstone's theological positions. Bebbington writes: 'Even the *Thesaurus* was designed to help vindicate the idea of an early revelation. By showing that Homer was the true mirror of an age Gladstone hopes to test out the evidence that would reveal similarities with the messianic tradition. It was a prerequisite for that higher apologetic task to demonstrate that the Homeric world was real.'[488]

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interdisciplinarity. Gladstone strong of a solid knowledge of the text starts a dialogue between disciplines that brings astonishing results.

[486] See MS Add 44762 ff. 45 The 1874's draft of Preface is significant exception. As the manuscript is dated, I can cross-reference it to Gladstone's papers and diaries.

[487] It is unanimously accepted that Gladstone decides to embark on the *Thesaurus* enterprise in the late 1870s. The editors of Gladstone's diaries Matthew and Foot believe Gladstone begins designing his *Thesauros* in July 1867, when he is busy revising *Studies on Homer* in view of a second edition – work he soon abandons in favour of *Juventus Mundi* (1869), second work on Homer and the Heroic age see Gladstone Dairies vol. VI: 535 July 11, 1867 'Ruminated on proceeding about Homer.' In line with Matthew and Foot, Bebbington (2004) contend that Gladstone starts the *Thesauros,* around the times he begins his second book on Homer *Juventus Mundi*. In his defence, Bebbington digs out a letter from Gladstone's correspondence dating November 9, 1876. Here, the Homerist writes to Lord John Acton about a 'Register of the more significant facts of Homer.' Bebbington 2004: 201 see nota 153 GP 44093, f. 63. Established the initial phase of composition Bebbington mentions Gladstone drafting a preface in 1874 and the publication of the *Contemporary Reviews* articles. To my knowledge, Bebbington is the closest effort that has been made towards a comprehensive history of the reworkings of the *Thesauros*.

[488] See Bebbington 2004: 201-202, the scholar uses unpublished 1874's Preface in support of his claim.

The new Homeric enterprise attracts the attention of the Victorian periodicals. On February 10, 1876. *The Times* quoting *The Guardian* writes:

> We are authorised to say that there is no foundation whatever for any of the various intimations that have appeared in the public prints, that Mr Gladstone is engaged upon a Theological work. We understand that the few brief intervals of leisure Mr Gladstone can command are given to the slow preparation of a work which purposes to call "Thesauros Homerikos," and which will aim at setting forth, in a form convenient for reference, the vast stores of fact (in a large construction of the words), or what the Germans call the "realism" of the Poems.'[489]

To understand how the *Thesauros* fits within Gladstone's Homeric campaign, I suggest reading the introduction Gladstone's adds to the first entries published in the *Contemporary Review*, where the author there declares he plans to change the way his contemporaries approach Homer. He wants Victorian readers to look at the Poems not just as poetic masterpieces, but as historical testimony:[490]

> The title given to this paper is intended to signify that the Homeric Poems are not to be regarded simply as one of the great Poetic marvels of the world, but likewise as an independent and principal department of primitive or archaic study. Like the archaeological and monumental remains of Egypt, they exhibit the character, life, and manners if a branch of our race at the earliest dawn of history; and of that branch, which beyond any other except the Hebrew, has contributed to find and fashion the existing civilization and to make us what we are.[491]

According to Gladstone, the *Thesauros* acts as a continuation of the research he began in *Homeric Synchronism* (1876). There the author showed the ways in which Schliemann's discoveries reshaped the Victorian discourse on Homer: studying Homer was no longer a question solely of literary criticism but of historical inquiry. With the *Thesauros*, Gladstone builds an instrument to assist his readers in drawing out the historical knowledge Homer offers.

The *Thesauros* was to have been Gladstone's instrument for detaching the text of Homer from existing scholarly commentaries and presenting the words of the poet to his readers directly. In the draft Preface to the *Thesauros* (1874), Gladstone writes that 'the mass of information contained in the Poems' is such as it will 'astonish those who have

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[489] *The Times* February 10, 1876.
[490] 'Exegi monumentum aere perennius' Horace, *Odi*, III, 30, 6.
[491] *Contemporary Review*, December 1875: 632.

not for themselves undergone the labour of acquiring it.'[492] In 1876, after the revolution brought about by the archaeological discoveries, Gladstone pushes his argument further. The past of Homer is a living thing, that enriches and influences the Victorian present. For Gladstone, Homer makes the Victorians who we are. The endgame of Gladstone's project is to construct a resource which reflects as much on Victorian culture and identity as it does on the Poems of Homer.

Gladstone intends his *Thesauros* to be read by a non-specialist, non-Greek readers. He explains: 'All studies of this kind have an interest extending far beyond the limited circle of those readers who can engage in them at first hand, and work freely at the sources'.[493] Since the beginning of his Homeric enterprise, Gladstone has paid attention to diffuse the study of the Poems to students at different stages of their studies.[494] But only after his collaboration with Schliemann does Gladstone truly understand the importance of engaging a non-specialist readership.

As Gladstone explains in 'Apollo' (1876), the object of his work is 'to assist carrying the knowledge of Homer and the fruit of that knowledge beyond a circle so limited, is the object of a work I hope in time to publish.'[495] Gladstone aims to demolish the primary obstacle for non-specialist readers of Homer: knowledge of ancient Greek. His *Thesauros* would offer access to Homer's text.

Despite the author's best efforts, Gladstone's *Thesauros* attracts little interest from Victorian readers. This is due to the timing, contents, and mode of publication. Gladstone sends the sample entries to press just a few months after the appearance of *Homeric Synchronism*. Readers and critics were too distracted by the conversations around this volume to pay much attention to the proposed *Thesauros*. The shocking archaeological novelties of *Homeric Synchronism* overshadow the philological subtleties of the *Thesauros*.

III. Gladstone's *Thesauros* to Fill a Gap in Scholarship

The *Thesauros* is a performance of – and proof of – Gladstone's status as a scholar, and not a *dilettante*, in Victorian Britain. To compile his entries, Gladstone is obliged to go through the Homeric Poems multiple times, scanning the text manually. In 1876, a few

[492] MS 44762 ff. 45.
[493] *Contemporary Review,* December 1875: 632.
[494] See e.g. Gladstone 1858: vol. i: 9-18.
[495] *Contemporary Review,* December 1875: 632.

months before the publication of the *Thesauros*' entries, Gladstone, with a touch of pride, writes in his diary that he has finished reading Homer for the tenth time.[496] Gladstone cuts and pastes his copies of the Poems, to trace the recurrences and usages of key Homeric words. The 'mutilated editions' are in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. By publishing excerpts from the *Thesauros,* Gladstone is performing his competence as a Homeric scholar.[497]

The author sees his work as filling a gap in contemporary Homeric scholarship. In 'Apollo' (1876), Gladstone writes that neither his 'own countrymen' nor 'the indefatigable scholars of Germany' have so far paid attention 'to the range, variety, interest, importance, and, above all, self-consistency' of the Poems. Gladstone stresses how obsolete the one English-language example of a Homeric Index, from 1780, is.[498] As for the Germans panorama, Gladstone proceeds in chronological order. Starting from the seventeenth century, he lists the works of Feith, Terpstra, and Damm.[499] These milestones, he explains, are inadequate for nineteenth-century Homeric studies, albeit 'very creditable to the century and period which produced them.' Gladstone claims to be no less disappointed by modern works, including the scholarship of Karl F. Nägelsbach; comprehensive treaties, like Johann B. Friedreich's *Die Realien in der Iliade und Odyssee*; and work in progress, such as Buchholz' *Die Homerischen Realien*. Gladstone declares these works unsuitable for the British reader.[500]

Finally, Gladstone addresses the question of the unity of the Homeric Poems. He writes: 'The exhibition of the real contents of the Poems in their largeness and in their coherence will be found to throw copious light upon the question whether that diversity of

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[496] Bebbington 2004: 232.

[497] See Add MS f 169 A.S. Stuart Murray to W.E. Gladstone March 6, 1876; Add MS 44449 f 161 T.H. Huxley to W.E. Gladstone March 3, 1876.Add MS f 169 A.S. Stuart Murray to W.E. Gladstone March 6, 1876; Add MS 44449 f 161 T.H. Huxley to W.E. Gladstone March 3, 1876. Gladstone's preparation for the *Thesauros* is not strictly linguistic. Thanks to Gladstone's papers we gain insight as to the process of composition of the dictionary. We discover that while Gladstone is compiling his research, he avails himself of the opinion of experts not strictly from the field of classics. This is the case of the preparation of the entry 'Horse.' He writes to Samuel Birch, Egyptologist of the British Museum to learn more of the history of the horse in antiquity, among ancient civilizations others than the Greeks. Perhaps more surprisingly, he writes to Henry T. Huxley, the controversial naturalist, to access a copy of his studies on the evolution of the Horse. Characteristic feature of Gladstone's Homeric research is its intrinsic interdisciplinarity. Gladstone strong of a solid knowledge of the text starts a dialogue between disciplines that brings astonishing results.

[498] The preface is hard to decipher. The Oxford University Calendar (1817): 72 '1780 *Index Vocabulorum in Homeri Iliade atque Odyssea*. 8 vols. 10s.'

[499] MS 44762 ff. 45 Christian Tobias Damm (1699-1778) *Novum lexicon graecum etymologicum et reale, cui pro basi substratae sunt concordantiae et elucidationes Homericae et Pindaricae cum indice uniuersali alphabetico*; Everard Feith (1726) *Antiquitatum Homericarum*; Jacobus Terpstra (1831) *Antiquitas Homerica*.

[500] MS 44762 ff. 45.

authorship, date, or place is reasonably or unreasonably supposed.' In his *Thesauros*, he resumes an old battle, and experiments with a different tactic. Although he never completed his *Thesauros,* he intended to use it to change the flow of the contemporary discourse on Homer. I propose to read the *Thesauros* as Gladstone's early, unfulfilled attempt to give access to Homer and his theories on Homer to a public of non-specialists. This is the key puzzle, for this stage of his Homeric research.

Though the *Thesauros* remained unfinished, Gladstone's ambitions remained as strong as ever. He incorporated his research for the *Thesauros* into other publications, such as 'Colour Sense,' 'Epithet of Movements,' and 'Slicing of Hector'. The cursed thesaurus lived on, in new forms.

Homer (1878): Propaedeutic to the Study of the Homeric Poems

In 1878, Gladstone published his fourth book on the epics, *Homer*. It was a slim, cheaply-priced volume through which the author aimed to promote the new direction in Homeric studies he signalled with *Homeric Synchronism* (1876).

Bebbington gives a brief history of the later reception of *Homer* (1878), after Gladstone's death, illustrating that – unlike *Homeric Synchronism* (1876)– the volume meets with success. The twentieth century scholar, Jane Harrison, who dismisses the author's theory regarding the Homeric pantheon, praises the little volume by Gladstone. In a letter she admits she was surprised to find *Homer* (1878) together with *Juventus Mundi* (1869) 'extraordinarily good', though she wished the author 'had not gone dotty over the Logos and the Divine Wisdom.' [501]

However, there is no systematic study of the contemporary reception of Gladstone's book. *Homer* achieves a wide private circulation, as can be seen from Gladstone's unpublished papers.[502] In the press, *Homer*'s reception divides between positive reviews and critical remarks, giving a surprising level of visibility to an

[501] See Bebbington 2004: 205 note 183: Jane Harrsion to Gilbert Murray 26 August,1904, in Jessie Stewart 1959 *Jane Halen Harrison, a Portrait from Letters*: 66; the scholar cites a letter by Jane Harrison, a leading early twentieth-century classicist, who in 1904 expresses her appreciation for Gladstone's *Homer* (1878). Bebbington quotes Harrison who was surprised to find *Homer* (1878) together with *Juventus Mundi* (1869) 'extraordinarily good', though she wished the author 'had not gone dotty over the Logos and the Divine Wisdom.' But the afterlife of the *Homer* is full of surprises, the slender booklet, together with Gladstone's other major works on Homer, travels across national borders to become subject of Maria Tibaldi della Chiesa's studies. The Italian classicist publishes in 1921 her research on Gladstone's work on Homer under the Italian title *Omero e Gladstone*.

[502] GG 1454 65.

apparently slender work.[503] Picking up the same overarching agenda as his *Thesauros*, Gladstone is attempting to bring Victorians who do not know ancient Greek – students, and beginners – over to his side in the Victorian Trojan war.

In 1877 and 1879, Gladstone works on *Homer* and also writes a preface for Schliemann's *Mycenae* (1878). The *Preface* is important because it gives us the key to read Gladstone's *Homer*. Gladstone realises, as he writes, that the discourse on Homer strengthened by the novelle archaeological discoveries is no longer reserved for a close circle of experts. Instead, Homer can and should be read and argued about by a growing number of non Greek-readers. In his *Preface* (1878), Gladstone writes:

I believe that the interest, excited by Dr Schliemann's discoveries, has been by no means confined to classical scholars. I shall therefore endeavour to be as little technical as possible and to write, so far as may be, for a circle wider than that of the persons among us who are acquainted with the Great tongue.[504]

Homer represents Gladstone's manifesto for Homerology, in its most direct and accessible form. Once again, Gladstone reiterates that the study of the Homeric Poems can no longer be seen as a solely philological one, nor can the epics be seen solely as literary sources. The Poems allow us to unlock knowledge about the cosmology, ethics, polity, art, religion, geography, literature of the heroic age – almost everything, in other words, apart from philosophy.[505] This makes the Poems unique, and impossible to appreciate appropriately through textual analysis:

The Poems of Homer do not constitute merely a great item of the splendid literature of Greece; but they have a separate position, to which none other can approach.

Gladstone argues:

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[503] *The Saturday Review* July 20, 1878: 84; GG 1636 38 *The Literary Churchman* August 10, 1878: 315-316; GG 1636 42 *The Leading Journal of Australia* September 1878; GG 1634 15 *Church Review* September 14, 1878; GG 1636 41 *Daily post* September 17, 1878; GG 1633 13; *The University Magazine* 1878-1880; September 1878: 377; (Mahaffy, J.P.) *Macmillan's Magazine* September, 1878: 405; GG 1633 13 *The Penn Monthly* October 1878: 804- 806; GG 1636 44; *London Quarterly Review* October 1878: 230; *London Quarterly Review* October 1878: 234; GG 1636 43 *Spectator* December 28, 1878; GG 1636 44 *The Church Times* January 31, 1879; *The Examiner* April 26, 1879: 546.

[504] Gladstone's Preface to Schliemann's *Mycenae a Narrative of Research* (1878): vi.

[505] Gladstone 1878: 152-153: 'But if Homer can thus be exhibited as the father of Greek letters in most of their branches, there is one great exception, which belongs to a later development. That exception was the philosophy of Greece'.

The study of him [Homer] is not a mere matter of literary criticism but is a full study of life in every one of its departments. To rescue this circle of studies from inadequate conceptions and to lay the ground for a true idea of them, I have proposed to term them Homerology. Of this Homerology I shall now endeavour to present some of the first elements in their simplest form. [506]

Gladstone sees in *Homer* (1876) his instrument amplifying his Homerology. This does not go unnoticed by the press: reviews note that this is a publication which aims to address a readership of diverse ages and interests. According to one review, its average reader was a 16-year-old student.[507]

In 1857, Gladstone gave a lecture at Oxford University entitled 'On the Place of Homer in Classical Education.' In the speech, incorporated in his first major Homeric publication *Studies on Homer* (1858), he defended the necessity of studying Homer at all levels of education, from school to university.[508] With *Homer* (1878), Gladstone puts his plan into action, aiming to form a new generation of scholars of Homer.

Reviews on Gladstone's new Homeric book started populating the pages of Victorian periodicals. Some welcome and prise the author and his work. [509] For one, the *Spectator*, on December 28, 1878, commends Gladstone for *Homer* and acknowledges him a solid command of the Poems.

That this little volume [Gladstone's Primer] is full of interest and value, that there is compressed within its hundred and fifty pages a truly marvellous account of Homeric lore, all our readers will easily believe. No scholar in Europe-not even among that pure Teutonic race whose patience of intellectual labour so far surpasses our own- has studied Homer so profoundly as has Mr. Gladstone, and no one certainly has brought to the task of analysis and comparison a more acute intelligence or more vivid imagination. So far then as the authorship- by which we want here the writer's thorough mastery of his subject- is concerned we have the full satisfaction of what may be taken as the definition of a "primer," a book written by a complete scholar for the instruction of beginners. [510]

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[506] Gladstone 1878: 5.
[507] GG 1636 43 *Spectator* December 28, 1878.
[508] See Bebbington 2004: 147-148; Turner 1981:161 ff; Jenkyns1980: 201ff.
[509] See GG 1636 44 *The Church Times* January 31, 1879 the review notes that: 'Mr. J R Green's series of Literature Primers' includes 'two fresh instalments, of which one, that on Homer, by the Right Hon. W.E. Gladstone, appeals to a larger public than most of its companions'. The article concludes by saying that Gladstone's little volume 'is highly readable in itself, even for those who are not making a special study of the subject.'. *London Quarterly Review* October 1878: 230 reflects on the rising cost of education, noting that a one-shilling primer such as Gladstone's made the latest scholarship accessible to a growing proportion of readers: 'the general value of the Primers' lies in the fact that 'they are perhaps the most effective and practical protest which have ever been made against class education.'
[510] GG 1636 43 *Spectator* December 28, 1878.

Gladstone, however, is not just interested in engaging beginners with the study of Homer. He is interested in engaging them with his own Homerology. Many reviewers recognized that *Homer* (1878) carried Gladstone's colours: indeed, the book, for many, provided an effective overview of Gladstone's own Homeric theories, more than a broad-based introduction to the study of the Poems. On December 28, 1878, the *Spectator* wrote:

> […] whether this little book, admirable as it is in itself, is suited to the instruction of beginners we very much doubt. It is indeed the quintessence of the Homeric learning which was first given to the world in the Homer of twenty years ago, which was worked up and refined into the *Juventus Mundi,* and in the *Homeric Synchronism*, those who know these books- and to know them in any adequate way means to know a good deal about Homer- will read with the greatest pleasure this summary of their teaching, and delight in the fullness of knowledge and the mastery of expression which it displays.[511]

Gladstone's *Homer* is an introduction to Gladstone's Homer.[512] *Macmillan's Magazine* notes that the volume contains no general history of Homeric studies, a desirable element in a work for beginners:[513]

> Mr. Gladstone prefers to tell the reader about Homer himself and gives us little of what has been said about Homer. This, no doubt, suits his own taste; but I am not sure that at the present moment a Primer on the Homeric controversy would not have been more useful and far more needful. Mr. Gladstone is so professedly the advocate of particular views, that the task of reviewing the long conflict of opinion since Wolf's book must be disagreeable to him.[514]

The *University Magazine* remarks that: 'It sometimes seems almost like getting out of a book what one has put into it, to read Homer by the electric light of Gladstonian Illumination.'[515] In *Homer* (1878), Gladstone imposes on his readers his very own Homeric narrative.

'Trojan Exhibition': Homer's Heroes Land in London

In 1877, Gladstone found himself at the centre of one of the strangest and most

[511] GG 1636 43 *Spectator* December 28, 1878.
[512] See *Examiner* April 26, 1879: 546 according to the newspaper the *Primer* (1878) is a useful *resumé* of Gladstone's contribution in the field of Homeric studies.
[513] *Macmillan's Magazine* September 1878: 405.
[514] *Macmillan's Magazine* September 1878: 405.
[515] *The University Magazine* September 1878: 377.

remarkable exhibitions of the nineteenth-century: the exhibition of Heinrich Schliemann's Trojan collection at London's South Kensington Museum. The exhibition forced Victorian Britain to confront time and history in new ways: to come to terms with the idea of the ancient past of mankind, both as deep antiquity and as demystified reality. This was not a journey which many enjoyed making – and the critical reviews the exhibition attracted reveal this. Just how strange and problematic this exhibition was can only be fully understood, if carefully contextualized within wider Victorian cultural and scientific discourses. The Trojan exhibition brought into focus, for a wider public, a radical (and emerging) dissonance in Victorian conceptions of the ancient past, which has emerged at several previous points in this thesis: between word and matter, the literary and the material, the idealised conception of and, expectations on, the ancient past, with the physical reality of the archaeological finds.

Gladstone has not tended to figure prominently in narratives of the exhibition. However, if we examine the contemporary evidence closely, his presence behind the scenes comes into focus: collaborating with Schliemann in manipulating visitors' expectations (and perceptions) of the Trojan exhibition. Turning to the popular reception of the exhibition, and developing Susanne Duesterberg's recent study,[516] this chapter will argue that the underlying reason for the public's dissatisfaction with Schliemann's collection can be traced to the Victorian struggle to accept the 'antiquity of man'.[517] Gladstone had spent years attempting to make the heroic age real: to bring Homer's heroes out of myth and into history. What he had not foreseen was how unwelcome that would be, for many in Victorian Britain. Homer's world became tangible, in Schliemann's exhibition – and many people hated it. At the South Kensington Museum, both Gladstone and Schliemann realised the limits of their power to persuade.

[516] Duesterberg 2015: 305-318.

[517] See Daniel 1963: 61; In 2019, Abigail Baker published a monograph on Schliemann's exhibition. The scholar is particularly interested in the history of the collection and the narrative behind the exhibition. As per the reception of the collection in London, Baker focuses on the repercussion the exhibition had on material culture, both in terms of imagery and jewellery reproductions. I am interested in the repercussions the exhibition had over the Victorian public understanding of the historic reality of Troy. In 2020, the British Museum organised a temporary exhibition entitled *Troy: Myth or Reality*. A room was dedicated to Schliemann's excavations, but Gladstone's role in the exhibition in particular and in the discovery of Troy in general has been once again silenced. This prompts a new investigation pf Gladstone's involvement in the Victorian exhibition.

I. Uncovering Gladstone's forgotten role in the exhibition of the Trojan collection at South Kensington Museum

Schliemann brought his Trojan collection to London, at the end of 1877. Newspaper reports claimed that Schliemann, touched by the warm welcome he had received in Britain, decided (so he said) to honour the 'intelligent British people',[518] by shipping his Trojan findings, including the so-called 'Priam's treasure', to London.[519] Schliemann's reception was nothing short of ecstatic. Clubs and learned societies all over London presented the archaeologist with prizes and honorary memberships.[520]

From Schliemann's correspondence we glimpse a different story. On August 30, 1876, the archaeologist writes to Reginald S. Poole, Keeper of the Coins and Medals Department at British Museum explaining that he planned to bring the Trojan collection to London, to show gratitude to the British people in general, but to indulge Gladstone, in particular:

> To show my gratitude to London for the kindness reception and particularly to please Mr. Gladstone, I have promised to the latter to expose my whole Trojan collection for one year in the British Museum.[521]

Gladstone begins to emerge from the shadows. Another Schliemann letter, of August 30, 1877, confirms that he played a pivotal role in the exhibition. Schliemann reveals that he has promised Gladstone that he will exhibit the Trojan artefacts in London, in exchange for Gladstone's Preface to his latest publication Mycenae.[522] The archaeologist writes to John Murray on August 30, 1877:

> Write at once to [Gladstone] begging him warmly to write us a preface however short; remanding him that to show my gratitude to him I bring the whole Trojan collection to London. [523]

Despite leaving few traces in the archives, it is clear that Gladstone plays an active role in the exhibition of the Trojan collection in England and one could start thinking that the man who wanted Homer's Troy in London was Gladstone.

To reinstate Gladstone as a protagonist in the Trojan exhibition, it is first

[518] *The Times,* August 16, 1877: 3.
[519] *The Times,* December 20, 1877: 6.
[520] Among those, it is worth mentioning the Society of Antiquaries and the British Association of Archaeology.
[521] Fitton 1999: 39-40 H. Schliemann to R.S. Poole August 30, 1876
[522] Allen 1999: 181 see footnote 158.
[523] Traill 1995: 176.

necessary to take a step back and briefly contextualise the exhibition in the wider story of Schliemann's collection. The true story of why Schliemann brought his finds to London is (as is almost always the case with Schliemann) not quite so high-minded as it first appears. The London exhibition is, in fact, but one part of the tormented Odyssey which is Schliemann's ongoing effort to land his collection a permanent location (and land himself a giant payday). As noted in the previous chapters, Schliemann has been trying to sell his Trojan collection since 1873, the final year of his first excavation at Hissarlik. Fleeing a lawsuit from the Turkish government, he contacted institutions from all over Europe (in Greece, Italy, and France, amongst others) and beyond. He went so far as to promise his collection to the United States, in exchange for political asylum.[524] Schliemann's papers reveal his failed negotiations for the sale of the Trojan antiquities to the British Museum, involving Charles T. Newton, and Gladstone, then Prime Minister.[525] But, even for Gladstone, this had been too great a Homeric gamble: in part because of the poor quality of the photographs sent by Schliemann of his finds, but mostly because of the gigantic price-tag.[526] Gladstone, however, never truly abandoned the idea of bringing the Trojan remains to London.[527]

Gladstone and Schliemann's private letters reveal that it was Gladstone who helped Schliemann find a venue for his exhibition. When the British Museum rejected him (twice), Gladstone advised Schliemann to contact the South Kensington Museum. On July 8, 1876, Gladstone wrote: 'I think the South Kensington Museum more likely. '[528] On August 30, 1876, Schliemann contacted Reginald S. Poole, Keeper of the Coins and Medals Department at the British Museum, inquiring about the South Kensington Museum as a potential alternative venue:

> If there is no room in your museum [British Museum] for the remaining collection, where may I then best put it up? Mr. Gladstone suggested for this case the South Kensington Museum. Is the latter appropriate for it? are there sufficient glass cupboards and tables or must I procure them? And above all are there well adapted and well lighted saloons, and can I put up there the collection without cost? And will it be perfectly safe there?[529]

Scholars have tended to consider this as the sum of Gladstone and Schliemann's

[524] Allen 1999: 176-177.
[525] Fitton 1999: 9-11: H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton July 26, 1873.
[526] Fitton 1999: 14-17: H. Schliemann to C.T. Newton September 4, 1873.
[527] See Greenfield 1997: 228 ff today Schliemann's Collection is at the Pushkin Museum of Moscow.
[528] 21404 BOX 69 No. 301 W.E. Gladstone to Schliemann July 8, 1876.
[529] Fitton 1999: 39-40: H. Schliemann to R.S. Poole August 30, 1876.

collaboration on the exhibition.[530] However, contemporary press reports reveal a much more complex story. On January 25, 1878, a month after the opening of the exhibition, *The British Architect* reported on a meeting of the Archaeological Association, during which the participants discussed the Trojan antiquities at the South Kensington Museum, and the labelling of the findings. Who was putting names to Schliemann's finds, and linking the material objects to mythical figures? It turned out to be Gladstone:

> The names given to the various articles by Mr Gladstone, and others, were passed in review with approval, and attention was drawn to the importance of comparing objects of foreign archaeology with English examples.[531]

As the article reveals, Gladstone was the man behind the curtain: the silent authority guaranteeing the exhibition its fundamental theoretical backbone.[532] Indeed, Gladstone, in his *Homeric Synchronism* (1876), had philologically justified the association of mythical personages to archaeological finds. 'Excavations and Poems,' as he put it, 'greatly fortify one another.'[533]

In Britain, for years, Gladstone had both established and guaranteed Schliemann's reputation. Without Gladstone's safe-conduct, the reception of Schliemann and his discoveries in Britain may well have been very different.

Gladstone may have made the South Kensington exhibition possible, but Schliemann made it a sensation. Within a week from the exhibition's opening, the South Kensington Museum had almost doubled its number of visitors.[534] On the 28th of December 1877, 4000 of Schliemann's Trojan finds were exhibited to the public, with no entrance fee. Schliemann had planned his show with all the virtuosity of P.T. Barnum. Before the grand opening of the exhibition, anticipatory articles and advertisements were to be found across the British press. Article followed article, from the moment *The Times*[535] announced Schliemann's shipping of his Trojan finds to London on August 16, 1877. The last traces of Troy, known to most of the public only through newspapers and

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[530] Easton 1994: 231.
[531] *British Architect*, January 25, 1878: 47.
[532] Add MS 44450 f. 25 H. Schliemann to W. E. Gladstone, May 8, 1876.
[533] *Contemporary Review*, June 1874: 4.
[534] See *The Times*, December 27, 1877: 9: 'Dr Schliemann's collection formed the principal attraction yesterday at the South Kensington Museum [...] 14,355 visitors to South Kensington in one week, compared with an average of 8886 on the same week in previous years.'
[535] *The Times* August 16, 1877: 3.

books, and, for a few, through Schliemann's speeches, would finally be within reach.[536]

Schliemann made sure that this would always be a story about him. He was careful to mention to the press that he would be personally arranging the layout of the exhibition. Schliemann knew that his presence would draw the crowds. By 1877 he was no longer the unknown excavator of the early eighteen-seventies, 'Mr Scliemann', whose name was either bypassed or misspelled in the British press.[537] Schliemann had become a celebrity: Dr Schliemann the self-made, self-propelled excavator of the treasures of Troy and Mycenae. The London public was thrilled by news of his personal involvement. On the 1st of December, almost one month before the inauguration of the exhibition, *The Academy* welcomed him and his Trojan collection.

Dr Schliemann has brought the whole of his Hissarlik collection to London, and it is at present engaged in arranging it for exhibition in the South Kensington Museum.[538]

Schliemann had finally brought Troy to London – and he had a very specific story to tell with his finds (or, as he would put it, the true story). *The Daily News* of 10th December commented on Schliemann's work-in-progress:

Already the collection has a symmetrical appearance, and promises […] to enable the spectator to turn over at his ease page after page of the history of man, as written in the mound of windy Troy.[539]

The exhibition was, in other words, intended to form a unified, linear narrative: just as Gladstone had been attempting to do for years, Schliemann wanted his visitors to read a broader history of mankind into his narrative of the Trojan artefacts. Schliemann, on one hand, promised clarity and structure for his visitors' education, but, on the other, guaranteed glamour and beauty for public entertainment. *The Times* of December 20, 1877, announced the completion of the display. A mesmerising 'spectacle' was ready to be disclosed to the public.

This morning the green baize screen across the south court of the South Kensington Museum, behind which Dr Schliemann, well seconded by […] the Museum staff, has been for some weeks past arranging for public exhibition his Trojan antiquities, will be removed, and all visitors will be welcomed to the spectacle […] he

[536] Duesterberg 2015: 316.
[537] *The Times* March 8, 1873: 5.
[538] *The Academy* December 1, 1877: 519.
[539] *Daily News* December 10, 1877; See also Duesterberg 2015: 315.

has been preparing.[540]

The London of Gladstone and his contemporaries offered Schliemann a stage – complete with green baize curtain – to re-enact the heroic age in all its splendour. An expert theatre director, he manoeuvred behind the screens, rehearsing and perfecting the staging of his finds. The objects were surrounded by plans, sketches, and photographs of the plain of Troy.[541] The two central cases of the south court were reserved for the so-called 'Priam's Treasure'. Since the announcement of the discovery of the treasure in 1873, Schliemann had drip-fed the public a steady stream of tantalizing information about it.[542] He distributed detailed descriptions of the treasure, coated with tall tales surrounding the circumstances of its excavation. Schliemann claimed to have 'risked his life' – for the sake of science, naturally – to secure the treasure from the 'Levantine greed' of his workmen.[543] Then, he circulated photographs of the precious objects. In particular, Schliemann sent off to the press a portrait of his beautiful, young, Greek, wife wearing gold ornaments from Troy[544]. What better way of advertising a royal treasure than circulating the portrait of a modern, Greek woman wearing Andromache's precious diadem? Once again, Barnum could not have managed it better. By December 1877, the public was fairly quivering in anticipation of the opening of the exhibition. When arranging the exhibition took longer than expected, Schliemann came up with a new strategy: he organized private previews. Naturally, Gladstone was one of the first visitors. As early as the 6th of December 1877, he was invited to inspect the collection.[545] Earlier in November, Schliemann had personally invited him, writing: 'I am very ambitious to be your Cicerone when you honour the collection with your visit.'[546]Schliemann created a

[540] *The Times*, December 20, 1877: 6.
[541] Probably from Schliemann's *Atlas Trojanischer Altertümer* 1874 (album of photographs, drawings, and plans).
[542] See *The Academy* September 1873: 326-327: 'A letter from Dr Schliemann in the Allgemeine Zeitung (Aug 5) describes the discovery in the course of his excavations of a treasure which, whether that of Priam, as he of course hastens to conclude or not appears to be of great value and interest; the Shields and vessels of different sizes made of wrought, unalloyed copper silver vases a flask and cups of pure gold ornamented gold fillets and pendants bracelets and a large number of gold earrings buttons and other trifles. The silver and copper vessels are in some cases joined together as if welded by fusions-when Troy was burnt;' *Trojanische Alterthümer* and *Atlas* (1874); *Troy and Its Remains* (1875); Here follow a Selected list of articles of Victorian newspaper commenting on Priam's Treasure: *The Times* April 3, 1874: 7 description of Trojan treasure; *The Academy*, January 10, 1874: 39-40 see Max Müller description of Treasure; *The Academy* February 14, 1874 see Newton's comment on Trojan Treasure; *Examiner* March 14, 1874: 265; *Saturday Review* March 21, 1874.
[543] See e.g. *The Academy* October 1873: 387-388.
[544] *Leisure Hour* July 7, 1877: 425.
[545] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 273.
[546] Add MS 44455 f. 288 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone November 27, 1877.

sensational event and captivated the curiosity of the Victorian public. But – just as Gladstone found with his Homeric works – the exhibition's eventual reception did not turn out to be the one Schliemann had hoped for.

II. The Reception of the Trojan Collection: the Victorians and the reality of the Heroic Age

On the 29th of December 1877, the *Manchester Times*, among others, enthusiastically heralded the opening of the exhibition of Schliemann's findings:

> An exhibition of extraordinary interest was open to the public yesterday, at the South Kensington Museum. We refer to Dr Schliemann's collection of antiquities from Troy, the arrangement of which in one of the courts has just been completed by the learned and enthusiastic explorer.[547]

Britain was transfixed. Numerous reviews offered punctiliously detailed accounts, glass case by glass case, of the Trojan artefacts, and accompanied the descriptions with engravings of the most interesting or beautiful objects on display.[548] These reviews were driven by curiosity about the artefacts, and carefully avoided engaging with the unsettling questions the exhibition provoked. *The Times* of December 17, 1877, published one example of this type of response. By clearly stating its descriptive intentions, the article explicitly sidestepped the most controversial question, the dating and historicity of the finds:

> On the much-vexed question of the antiquity and historical value of these remains we do not intend to enter; we wish simply to give an idea of the number and variety of the objects to be seen […].[549]

The exhibition's initial ecstatic reception was soon balanced out by dissatisfied reviews. The press and the public ultimately found the finds on display disappointing, with the only exception being 'Priam's Treasure.' Once Schliemann's captivating narrative of their discovery had been stripped away, the artefacts were left to the judgment of visitors and critics, and inevitably questions arose. If Schliemann had in fact discovered Homeric Troy, when did the events corresponding to the remains discovered at Hissarlik take

[547] Duesterberg 2015: 315.
[548] *Illustrated London News*, March 24, 1877: 281.
[549] *The Times*, December 17, 1877: 10.

place? What kind of people inhabited Troy and used the implements and tools found there? For more than three years, from the end of December 1877 to the end of 1880, the Trojan antiquities were on public view in London, imposing their disturbing, tangible presence on the visitors, and opening deeper and more unsettling questions than the ones they answered. Gladstone and Schliemann had hoped that the exhibition would solve a grand historical problem. Instead, it created several more.

Susanne Duesterberg (2015) highlights several reasons behind the widespread dissatisfaction. First, the exhibition lacked the 'entertaining character'[550] of Schliemann's archaeological narrative, well known to the Victorian public from the accounts and letters he sent to British periodicals throughout the 1870s. The finds themselves, detached from the evocative descriptions and adventurous narrations of their discoverer, lost a great deal of their appeal. Secondly, Duesterberg underlines the demanding taste of the Victorian public: this was a tougher crowd than the visitors who besieged Schliemann's house in Athens when he first exhibited 'Priam's treasure.'[551] Most were frequent museum-goers, used to the monumentality of the Egyptian and Assyrian collections available at the British Museum.[552] The ancient but quotidian tools and implements which Schliemann had carefully arranged, did not – despite his best efforts – succeed in capturing the public imagination. Schliemann had three charred, ancient skulls at South Kensington. The British Museum, by contrast, staged a mummy unwrapping during the Egyptian exhibition.[553] Even 'Priam's treasure' was dismissed as uncouth. A particularly sharp critique came from Alexander S. Murray, an archaeologist who worked in the British Museum's Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities under Charles T. Newton. Murray wrote in *The Academy*:

> The collection of antiquities from Hissarlik on view at South Kensington Museum is not as large as we expected; […] a considerable number of objects do not vary in any essential particular from their neighbours […]. Everything is very simple in its material, form, and workmanship […]. The chief attraction will be the case containing the treasure, as it is called, from Priam's palace […]. They are essentially mean in respect of workmanship, and far from imposing in material. The whole thing is disappointing to the last degree.[554]

[550] Duesterberg 2015: 316.
[551] Easton 1994: 226.
[552] *The Academy* December 22, 1877: 581; Duesterberg 2015: 317.
[553] Duesterberg 2015: 317.
[554] *The Academy* December 22, 1877: 581.

Only five percent of Schliemann's collection was ultimately exhibited in London.[555] The homogeneity of the finds and the (for some critics) mediocrity of the material and craftsmanship clashed with the spectacle promised by Schliemann. Without mincing words, Murray declared the exhibition 'a failure of a show.'[556] Schliemann had promised an historical reconstruction of the heroic age. But, for Murray, this was nowhere to be found: only a few objects corresponded to the 'Homeric' standards of craftsmanship he read into the Poems. This 'Troy' was unrecognizable.

Murray's article points to another element of the exhibition's reception, overlooked by Duesterberg: the question of time. The question of the chronology of the heroic age – long focused on by Gladstone – recurs again and again. Sarcastically, Murray dates Schliemann's Trojan finds to the invented 'age of clay'. The copper or bronze objects which were on display attracted only contempt: while Gladstone saw them as key to bringing the Homeric Poems into recorded history, for Murray, they were 'mean' and 'far from imposing'.[557] In Murray's account, the objects remained stubbornly unknowable: far from conjuring a lost heroic age, they resisted all conventional attempts to date them. Murray refers to the failure of the other principal Victorian dating technique, the comparative approach. This method was used on the Trojan finds by Newton of the British Museum. It relied on establishing the antiquity of an artefact by painstakingly comparing it to similar specimens taken from other excavation sites. Due to the lack of similar objects in the Museum's collection, Newton drew a blank: as discussed above, he concluded that the Trojan antiquities dated from before 600 BC, but how long before that he could not say with any certainty.[558]

Why did the dating of Schliemann's finds – or rather, Victorian scholarship's inability to date them with certainty – create such unease? As Gladstone had realized, when he first heard about Schliemann's discoveries, the Trojan finds formed part of – and amplified – a severe cultural shock, in nineteenth-century Britain. Victorians were forced to come to terms with a strange new timeline, unpredictably long and frightfully empty. So, when Schliemann announced the discovery of Troy, and when subsequently Newton confirmed the great antiquity of Schliemann's finds, an initial wave of euphoria swept across Britain. A missing piece of the history of mankind had come back to light. Yet, for

[555] *The Times* December 20, 1877: 6.
[556] *The Academy* December 22, 1877: 294.
[557] Gladstone, by contrast, was fascinated by the copper objects: he is particularly interested in the chemical analysis of Schliemann's finds, in order to test his hypothesis of a Homeric age as an age of copper. See Chapter I.
[558] *The Academy* February 14, 1874: 173.

many, this piece stubbornly refused to be fitted in to a wider puzzle. None of the chronologies which Gladstone or Schliemann had developed found general support, within contemporary discourse. The exhibition's failure to locate convincingly the Trojan finds within history was reason behind the general disappointment in it.

A brief article, entitled 'The Heroic Age in The Schliemann Collection' published at least twice in 1878,[559] hints at a second underlying reason for the disappointment. Schliemann's grandiose narrative of his finds invited a strongly mystified, shared connection to the Homeric Poems. Homeric heroes were often portrayed, in the Victorian cultural imagination, as exemplary both in wealth and in morality: an ancient noble race and a prime example of lay moral conduct[560]. But this glorious image faded, for many viewers, once confronted with the material remains of the Trojan collection. Imaginary Troy faced off against material Troy – and heroic dreams against the charred skulls of the South Kensington exhibition:

> The other skull, found, […] in the Trojan stratum, is so extraordinary *animal in character*, with its narrow receding forehead, projecting jaws, and powerful teeth (the latter almost entirely perfect) that if we are to take this as any typical specimen of the men who were engaged in the conflict about Troy, and who were the authors of much of the work exhibited here, we must come to the conclusion that, in spite of the glamour thrown around them by Homer, they were, if physiological character means anything, a set of ruffians very low in the scale of existence. Certain Homeric critics have already drawn this deduction, mainly from the peculiarly barbaric acts of Achilles and the matter-of course manner in which they are regarded, besides the general style of the hand-to-hand combat of the sides in the Iliad.[561]

The glory of the heroic age, far from being confirmed by Schliemann's finds, was, for many viewers, resoundingly dispelled. There was nothing poetic or glamorous about these remains: instead, they triggered a familiar Victorian discourse of the 'other' which emphasized their savage, barbarous and violent nature. Many viewers were shocked by the realisation that the heroes of the dawn of Western civilisation might have been vicious brutes. The shock of confronting the Trojan skulls may well have been exacerbated by the unsettling presence of another skull in the Victorian cultural imagination: the Neanderthal skull. Since its discovery in 1857, descriptions of the skull as animalistic and, thus,

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[559] *The Times,* January 08, 1878: 10; *The Leisure Hour*, March 2,1978: 144.
[560] See Gange 2009: 57: 'Many of those unlikely insertions of Homer into a biblical context would be dedicated to Gladstone, including Old's *New Readings* and the *Homeric Birthday Book*, a leather-bound, gold-leafed, presentation volume that featured a short Homeric 'verse' as 'guidance and encouragement' for each day in imitation of scriptural diaries popular at the time'.
[561] *The Times,* January 08, 1878: 10; *The Leisure Hour*, March 2,1978: 144.

representative of a brute species at the dawn of civilisation had been circulating in British periodicals.[562] From *The Times* of 28th August, 1880 we learn that while Schliemann's exhibition was open to the public, the Neanderthal skull was exhibited in London and discussed during a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

> Dr Schaafhausen of Bonn, exhibited the Neanderthal skull which was found in 1857 and which he submitted was not the skull of an idiot, but of man of the lowest development.[563]

Thanks to the diffusion of Darwin's theories of evolution, the hypothesis of man's descent was becoming day by day a concrete reality. The public came to South Kensington in search of heroes – and left with their heroes stripped away.

Gladstone, in many ways, made Schliemann's exhibition possible: building Schliemann's credibility in Britain, and providing the theoretical backbone of the exhibition's narrative, by popularizing a theoretical framework which linked mythical characters with historical artefacts and events. Strengthened by Gladstone's support, Schliemann lured an incredible number of visitors by promising a marvellous and effortless window into the history of mankind. His finds promised to let visitors follow in the footsteps of heroes, and step back into the dawn of Western civilization: to step into the world of Gladstone's Homerology.

But many visitors left the exhibition regretting their visits, and their encounters with the materiality of Troy. The Trojan collection forced the Victorian visitors to come to terms with the reality of prehistory: both as a surprisingly modest age, and also as a fundamentally unknown and unknowable one, still lost (despite Gladstone's best efforts) in the mists of an undefined and deep antiquity. Gladstone and Schliemann welcomed Homer into historical reality – a welcome, which was not always echoed, in wider Victorian discourse. Schliemann fostered an idealized vision of the heroic age but presented quite a different one: an everyday world of quotidian implements and 'ruffian' skulls, behind which the Darwinian ape smirked.

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[562] *The Times,* May 3, 1864: 15; June 11, 1864; August 19, 1878:10; September 8, 1886.
[563] *The Times,* August 28, 1880: 12.

6

The Evolution of Homer

INTRODUCTION

Homer, for Gladstone, was an excellent way to make people uncomfortable: a rock thrown into a discourse, designed to create ripples and shift perspectives. Not all of Gladstone's Homeric interventions were successful in setting the terms of Victorian discourses. But all of them were successful in shaking things up.

In 1877, Gladstone stepped away from the Victorian Trojan War. With an article entitled 'Colour Sense' (1877), he intervened in an even more fractious and consequential debate over the theory of evolution.[564] Contrary to what is generally believed, the fact that Gladstone is a religious thinker does not impede him to follow the most recent development of Victorian science closely and engage with the contemporary scientific community.[565] Gladstone does not ignore the results yielded by science, but rather, through his Homeric research, seeks a compromise between the of science and faith. 'Colour Sense' provokes a wide-ranging and extremely strong reaction from classical

[564] For a selected bibliography on Gladstone and his theory of colours, see, e.g. Bebbington, David. 2004. *The Mind of Gladstone: Religion, Homer, and Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Bellmer, Elizabeth Henry. 1999. 'The Statesman and the Ophthalmologist: Gladstone and Magnus on the Evolution of Human Colour Vision, One Small Episode of the Nineteenth-Century Darwinian Debate'. *Annals of Science*, 56: 25–45; Bradley, Mark. 2009. *Colour and Meaning in Ancient Rome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Hickerson, Nancy Parrot. 1983.' Gladstone's Ethnolinguistics: The Language of Experience in the Nineteenth Century. *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 39, 1: 26-41; Platnauer, Maurice' Greek Colour-Perception'. *The Classical Quarterly*, 15 (3/4): 153–62. Sampson, Geoffrey. 2013' Gladstone as a linguist'. Journal of Literary Semantics, 42(1): 1 – 29; Sampson points at Deutscher, Guy. 2011. *Through the language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages*. London: Arrow Books for a misunderstanding of Gladstone's colour theory.

[565] See Bebbington 2004: 234-235: 'It is usually supposed that Gladstone took little interest in natural sciences […] a reviewer of Gladstone's edition of Butler commented in 1896 that 'the tendency – or rather the settled attitude – of scientific opinion is simply invisible to him.' But on occasion, the statesman repudiated such charges. When, as early as 1871, Herbert Spencer, the theorist of the social sciences, referred to him as holding 'the anti-scientific view,' Gladstone successfully demanded that he should withdraw the passage. In reality, the statesman had never shared the prejudice against scientific endeavour that had prevailed, for example, among the Tractarians;' See also Turner 2012: 19 ff. Gladstone is unaffected by Darwin's speculations or modern thought: 'It is significant that Gladstone opposed in one way or the other the thought of Darwin;' For Gladstone's scientific interests and debate with Thomas Huxley on *Genesis*, see Gould, S. Jay. 1991. *Bully for Brontosaurus: Reflections in Natural History*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company; Bebbington, D. 2004: 216-256; Hajdenko-Marshall, C. 2012. 'Believing after Darwin: The Debates of the Metaphysical Society (1869–1880)' in *Cahiers Victoriens et Édouardiens*: 69-83; Joshi, S.T. 2020. *Huxley and Gladstone on Genesis*. Seattle: Sarnath Press.

scholars and scientists alike. Gladstone's attempt to put ancient texts to work in modern scientific debates caused a sensation.

Overall, this chapter adds another dimension to the significance of Gladstone's work on Homer during the 1870s by showing the impact of Gladstone's Homeric scholarship in a field not connected with the humanities. When seen through the lens of Gladstone's Homer, the Victorian discourse on evolution starts to look radically different.

Gladstone's Studies on Colour

'Colour Sense' (1877) is the summation of two decades of research. Gladstone begins his investigation on Homer's colours in *Studies on Homer* (1858),[566] briefly re-elaborates it in *Juventus Mundi* (1869)[567] and, after considerable reworking, reformulates it for the *Nineteenth Century* in October 1877.[568] Put simply, Gladstone's core postulation is this: the Homeric world had a very different sense of colour – and a very different capacity to perceive colour – than the nineteenth-century.

Through these years of gestation, Gladstone become progressively more involved in the fractious debate occasioned by the advent of evolutionary theories. As Gladstone's papers register, he reads extensively on the matter, converses about it with his correspondents, and joins in discussions at London's learned societies. His research on colour in the Homeric world reflects his evolving interest in this scientific discussion, and it is fashioned around it.[569] Gladstone aims at turning the Homeric Poems into an arena, one which, he hopes, allows dialogue between science and faith.

I. *Studies on Homer* (1858)

In 1858, Gladstone presents the first formulation of his theory of colour in Homer in the third volume of his *Studies of Homer: Aidos*.[570] The choice of topic is not casual: Homer's language of colour was widely seen as a problematic and unresolved aspect of

[566] Gladstone 1858 vol. III: 457-499.
[567] Gladstone 1869: 539-541.
[568] *The Nineteenth Century* October 1877: 366-388; See also Gladstone 1878: 149-150. '12. Sense of Beauty; Number; Colour'
[569] See Turner 2012: 19 ff. according to the author Gladstone is unaffected by Darwin's speculations or modern thought: 'It is significant that Gladstone opposed in one way or the other the thought of Darwin.'
[570] Gladstone 1858 vol. III: 457-499.

the study of the Poems. Gladstone aims to find a solution. His solution is striking, to say the least.

In this specific instance, he lays out for his reader a history of the human perception of colour from antiquity to contemporary times. According to the author, the Poems of Homer reveal an early and hitherto unrecognised phase in the development of human colour perception, one which could help modern scientists understand the phenomenon more fully. Gladstone, in other words, is positioning the text of Homer as a means to resolve a discourse which is both not strictly literary and also highly relevant to the Victorian present. Gladstone argues that his own contemporaries, from a very young age, are distinguish with ease between hues and tones of colour. Homer, however, seems to be at best imprecise – if not contradictory – in his understanding of colours. Gladstone argues that the human sense of colour must have developed over time:

> But the facility with which we discriminate colour in all its marked forms is probably the result of traditional aptitude, since we seem to find as we go far backward in human history that the faculty is less and less mature.[571]

Gladstone elaborates:

> We are to learn that the perceptions so easy and familiar to us are the results of a slow traditionary growth in knowledge and in the training of the human organ which commenced long before we took a place in the succession of mankind.[572]

The principle guiding Gladstone's theory is that a maturation in colour perception goes hand in hand with the development and augmentation of colour vocabulary. In other words, Gladstone believes the colour-language of a people reflects the colour-perception of that people. Gladstone thus proposes to use a history of the language of colour to reconstruct the history of the development of the human sense of colour.

Gladstone is conscious of two technical difficulties, holding back the full development of his theory. Firstly, and most importantly, he, by his own admission, does not possess the technical expertise to tackle the scientific aspect of his investigation.[573] In

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[571] Gladstone 1858 vol. III: 457.
[572] Gladstone 1858 vol. III: 495-496.
[573] Gladstone 1858, vol. III: 455. See Meyres 1958: 97: 'Gladstone's report in trigonometry, optics, and hydrostatics were not on a level with his classical performances but creditable enough that this name appeared in the first class of the non-classical school.'

the following years, his papers reveal that Gladstone works hard to expands his knowledge of the latest scientific research on colour-perception, and collaborates with a German ophthalmologist, Hugo Magnus. Secondly, Gladstone acknowledges that much is lost in translation: ancient Greek terms for colours are often not easily translated into English. These limitations force Gladstone to centre his study on data from the text of the Homeric Poems:

> I am conscious, that the subject, which is now before us, in reality deserves a scientific investigation, which I am not capable of affording to it: and, also, that we are, as yet, far from being able to render the language of the ancients for colours into our own with the confidence which we can fell in almost other department of interpretation. My endeavours will be limited, firstly, to a collection of '*realien'*, or facts of the poems in the case of Colour: and, secondly, to pointing out what appears to be the basis of the ideas and perceptions of Homer respecting it, and the relation of that basis to the ideas of the later Greeks.[574]

This granular study of Homer's language of colour leads Gladstone to conclude that Homer did not perceive colours in the prismatic sense. By prismatic colour, Gladstone means each of the colours into which white light is split by a prism. Conventionally regarded as seven in number they are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Through a close textual analysis of Homer's terms for colours, Gladstone attempts to demonstrate that the prismatic interpretation is incompatible with Homer's colour terminology: 'Now assuming for the moment that adjectives of colour, in the prismatic sense of the word, are found in Homer, still it remarkable how rarely they are found, comparisons with whiteness and blackness.'[575] Gladstone's linguistic analysis shows that Homer used a limited number of colours, not covering the entire prismatic scale. Gladstone identifies eight words which indicate colours in the Poems: *leukòs* (white), *melas* (black), *xanthos* (yellow), *éruthros* (red), *porphureos* (violet), *kuaneos* (indigo), *phoenix* (fluctuates between red, yellow, and violet), *polios* (grey).[576] Out of these eight, only four map onto colours in the prismatic sense: *éruthros*, *xanthos*, *porphureos*, *kuaneos*.[577] Gladstone notices 'the vast predominance in Homer of the two simple opposites, white and black'.[578] He estimates that there are almost 170 instances of words

[574] Gladstone 1858, vol. III: 455-456.
[575] Gladstone 1858, vol. III: 477.
[576] Gladstone 1858, vol. III: 459.
[577] See Gladstone 1858, vol. III: 476 where Gladstone lists 13 less precise, linguistic designators of colour. These latter rather than indicate a colour appear to describe other properties: reflection of light on a surface, an emotion, the freshness of an object.
[578] Gladstone 1858, vol. III: 476-477.

for black and roughly 100 of words for white. This frequency is significantly higher than the uses of other terms for colours, such as red or violet. '*Porphureous'* appears 23 times, '*eruthros'* and '*eruthainos'* only 13.[579]

According to Gladstone, Homer's Poems debunk the idea of a blind Homer, while simultaneously revealing that the Poet does not perceive colours as prismatic: 'With wine-coloured oxen, smutty thunderbolts, violet-coloured sheep, and many more, it is surely conclusive against taking them for descriptions of prismatic colours or their compounds.'[580]

'We must then seek for the basis of Homer's system with respect to colour in something outside our own,'[581] Gladstone writes. He argues that unlike Victorian readers, Homer did not seem to perceive colours as refracted light in the prismatic system. Gladstone believed that Homer – and by extension the people of the heroic age – sensed colour in a *quantitative* way, as a difference in light and darkness. The major exception was red, the only tint Homer appeared to perceive in a prismatic sense.[582] In other words, according to Gladstone, the majority of colour expressions in Homer can be seen as a difference between light and darkness, dullness and brightness:

> I conclude that the organ of colour and its impression were but partially developed among Greeks of the Heroic age. Homer seems to have had firstly some rude conceptions of colour derived from the elements; secondly and principally a system in lieu of colour found upon light and upon darkness it opposite or negative. […] As a general position I should say that the Homeric colours are really the modes and forms of light and its opposite of rather negative darkness.[583]

By building this theory, Gladstone argues a constant development and improvement of the human colour-sense. Notwithstanding his initial disclaimer, regarding his lack of scientific knowledge, we are left with the strong suspicion that there is a careful and calculated choice of plan in play in this chapter on colours. His references to an initial immaturity of human colour-perception, the vague formulation of slow but constant development, the results of which are transmissible from a generation to the following, evoke distinctive Lamarckian flavours. In this sense, Gladstone's reflection fits naturally

[579] Gladstone 1858, vol. III: 476-477.
[580] Gladstone 1858 vol. III: 487.
[581] Gladstone 1858 vol. III: 487.
[582] Bellmer 1999: 27.
[583] Gladstone 1858 vol. III: 488.

in the preludes to the debate on evolution that will soon dominate Victorian discourse. *Studies on Homer* comes out in April 1858, a year before Charles Darwin publishes *The Origin of The Species*, and a few months before Alfred Russel Wallace's lecture at the Linnean Society 'On the Tendency of Varieties to Depart Indefinitely from the Original Type'.

'Colour Sense'

Between 1859, when Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published, and 1877, when 'Colour Sense' appeared in the *Nineteenth Century*, Gladstone had been immersing himself in contemporary scientific discourse: he read 53 books on scientific matters, including publications on evolutionary theory.[584] Along the way, he had been revising his theory of colour-perception. When it emerges in its final form, it is substantially different from its initial shape, and has clearly been heavily influenced by contemporary scientific thought. Gladstone's unpublished papers and his readings reveal I individuate two major factors which contributed to the reshaping of his theory of colour in Homer: Gladstone's involvement with the Metaphysical Society, where he engaged with scholars including Thomas H. Huxley, colleague as well as the author's acquaintance with the German ophthalmologist, Hugo Magnus. Gladstone's engagement with the contemporary scientific community profoundly impacted his thought.

I. The Metaphysical Society

Gladstone was one of the founding members of the Metaphysical Society. It is here that he immerses himself in scientific and religious debates, forming his understanding of evolutionary theory. He follows the proceedings of the society, from its foundation in 1869. While he never presents a paper, he partakes in the society's life in other ways: he attends numerous meetings, and even chairs some.

In 1860, at the infamous Oxford 'Evolution Debate'. Thomas Henry Huxley and Samuel Wilberforce crossed swords, and Wilberforce is said to have asked Huxley the infamous question of whether the naturalist was descended from apes on his grandfather's or grandmother's side. That was the moment of rupture: the evolutionary debate

[584] Bellmer 1999: 28-29.

multiplied into a myriad of sub-discussions. In 1869, the year of the foundation of the Metaphysical Society, marked the publication of the seventh edition of Thomas H. Huxley's essay 'The Physical Basis of Life', the fifth re-edition of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, and Francis Galton's *Hereditary Genius.*[585] Darwin was working diligently on his *Descent of Man*. London was in ferment. The climate was increasingly tense, and reconciliation between opposing views seemed impossible.

John Knowles understood the urgency and complexity of the contemporary theological debate, and created a space where the most problematic assumptions could be discussed and defended, following the customs and the liberty of an ordinary scientific society:[586] the Metaphysical Society. Gladstone was a committed observer of its Metaphysical Society's activities. However, in 1877 Knowles founded a periodical to diffuse the spirit of the society: the *Nineteenth Century*. The society itself began to languish.[587] Gladstone was one of the major contributors to Knowles's new periodical. Knowles reserved special treatment for Gladstone, even allowing to him exceed the number of pages for his contribution. It can be safely argued that 'Colour Sense' (1877) is Gladstone's attempt to join and reshape the contemporary scientific discussion though his Homeric research.

II. Gladstone and the Ophthalmologist

The second factor which prompts Gladstone's reformulation of his colour theory is his acquaintance with the research of the German ophthalmologist, Hugo Magnus. Bellmer (1999) studies the collaboration between the politician and the ophthalmologist, focusing on the scientific theories of both authors and their reception, as illustrating of 'the scholarship, argumentation, and limited scientific knowledge' of the Victorian age, 'as applied to human evolution.'[588] However, there is, in Gladstone's case, something more interesting, and more ambitious, going on beneath the surface. Gladstone is attempting to use his Homeric research to reset the terms of the discussion on evolution.

Magnus contacts Gladstone first, sending him a copy of his own work on colour perception, entitled *Historical Development of Colour Senses*, in May 1877.[589] The ophthalmologist draws from Gladstone's research in *Studies on Homer* (1858), both to

[585] Brown 1947 vol. I: 35-36.
[586] Marshall, Lightman, England 2019: 1-8.
[587] Marshall, Lightman, England 2019: 274-276.
[588] Bellmer 1999: 25-45.
[589] Bellmer 1999: 29.

complete his own study and to strengthen his own conclusions. This alone demonstrates something of the scale of the reception of Gladstone's Homeric work, in terms of reach of circulation, and impact on contemporary discourse. Gladstone is a recognised authority for scholars all over Europe in the field of Homeric research.

For Gladstone, as he records in his diary, Magnus' work is 'most interesting.'[590] This was just what he had been looking for: the means to strengthen the scientific component his research was lacking in 1858.[591] Magnus' treatise shares Gladstone's principles and methodology. Moreover, Magnus shares Gladstone's premise that developments in the colour-vocabulary of a people can be mapped onto the improvement of said people in distinguishing colour, and consequently the development of their eyes. Like Gladstone, Magnus is convinced that the textual study of ancient sources offers evidence of a scientific phenomenon otherwise almost impossible to trace.[592]

Magnus appears to confirm Gladstone's theory of colour. The previous chapters have discussed the ways in which Gladstone in the 1870s changes his approach to the study of Homer, breaking free from a purely philological approach. Gladstone's engagement with optics is another example of his application of this new methodology. Just as in the relationship between Gladstone and Schliemann, however, this story is not simple.

Gladstone does not simply adopt someone else's theory for his own work. Instead, he engages carefully and critically with it, editing it, elaborating on, supporting some elements, and leaving others behind. Gladstone's use of Magnus is, once again, highly instrumental.

According to Magnus, the Old Testament reveals that in the beginning, mankind could only distinguish dark from light. After being subjected to light, the retinas of ancient people began to separate the brightest colour, red, from white.[593] According to Magnus, the Poems of Homer attest an early phase of the development of the human retina, in which it distinguishes red from yellow and orange. Moving through history, continuous exposure to light leads the retina to discover green, as later Greek texts

[590] Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 221.
[591] Gladstone 1858, vol. III: 455.
[592] See Bellmer 1999: 29: Two are the reference points of Magnus' linguistic studies, Gladstone's *Studies on Homer* (1858), and *Zur Entwickelungsgeschichte der Menschheit* (1871) by Lazarus Geiger, a German philologist.
[593] Gladstone 1877: 367.

register. Finally, humankind learned how to recognise between the dullest colours: blue and violet.[594]

Magnus builds his theory on a combination of philology and optics. Inspired by Magnus' research, Gladstone begins an intense period of work on Homeric colour-perception. He systematically explores the epics in search of new and accurate data. He consults a theologian and journalist, Abraham Benisch.[595] Over the course of an a few months of intense research, Gladstone revises his theories and sends 'Colour Sense' (1877) to the press.

III. Gladstone's revised colour theory

Gladstone's formulation of his colour theory in 'Colour Sense' (1877) is a development of his Homerology, the new model for the study of Homer which Gladstone introduces in *Homeric Synchronism* (1876). Gladstone combines careful textual study with details from contemporary scientific discourses. In the very same article, he seeks to support his own Homeric theories more strongly, as well as engaging with – and attempting to reset the terms of – the Victorian discourse on evolution.

The first element which makes **'**Colour Sense' (1877) stands out is Gladstone's use of the text of Homer. Gladstone carefully sifts through 5,131 lines of the *Iliad* (Book XV – Book XXIV) and 4,924 lines of the *Odyssey* (Book XVII- Book XXIV) in search of colour terms, and manually tabulates them. Gladstone aims to 'examine in exact detail the statistics of colour, so to speak, taken from some sufficiently extended portions of the Poems.' [596] 'Colour Sense' is tangible proof of Gladstone's deep command of the Homeric text: a continuation of the granular study of the epics Gladstone began with his Homeric *Thesauros.* 'Colour Sense' (1877) is a new form of Gladstone's cursed *Thesauros*.

This close reading leads Gladstone to refine his past conclusions. Only five terms from the original list of 1858 are now seen as proper colour indicators – namely *xanthos*, *eruthros*, *porphureos*, *kuaneos* and *phoenix*. Among these, Gladstone believes that Homer and his contemporaries distinguished as colours *eruthros* (red), *kallipareos* (rosy), and

[594] Gladstone 1877: 367.
[595] Add MS 44454 f. 94 May 5, 1877.
[596] Gladstone 1877: 381-382.

xanthos (auburn).[597] However, his new statistical study, and the revised list of colour indicators, allow Gladstone to confirm that Homer is consistent in his imprecise use of colours. This realisation has wider implications that go beyond the specific objective of building a colour theory for Homer. Gladstone believes he has found a new way to demonstrate the unity of authorship of the Homeric Poems, from textual evidence. He writes: 'Let us deviate for a few moments from the subject of colour to consider the bearing of these facts upon the question whether the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were produced by the same or different minds.'[598] Gladstone explains the proportion of light-phrases and colour-phrases is nearly identical between the samples of both texts. In the *Odyssey* he finds 31 colour-phrases against 103 light-phrases, which correspond to nearly a third of the total. In the *Iliad* there are 58 colour-phrases to 150 light-phrases which is slightly over one-third of the total. Gladstone concludes: 'It seems to me manifest that unity in the expression of light and colour raises presumption in favour of the unity of authorship.'[599] Even by Gladstone's standards, it would be too ambitious to pretend that the ever-vexed question of the authorship of the Poems had been settled by means of a single set of correspondences. Complexity and fecundity are distinguishing marks of Gladstone's Homeric research. Gladstone develops his studies on multiple levels and carries out different lines of enquiry simultaneously.

For Gladstone, now more than ever before, Homer's use of colour-descriptors raises questions 'with respect to the general structure of the human organs and to the laws of hereditary growth.'[600] Via linguistic analysis Gladstone, believes that he can elucidate a stage of the development of the human eye. Gladstone argues that Homer's retina is not defective but only partially developed. This underdevelopment leads the poet to perceive colour in a 'quantitative scale with white and black or light and dark for its opposite extremities instead of the qualitative scale open by the diversities of colour.'[601] On this basis, Gladstone argues that Homer could not have been colour-blind: this proposition is generally welcomed by readers.[602] Those aspects of Gladstone's research which sound most eccentric to the modern reader were often seen as relevant and cogent by his contemporaries.

'Colour Sense' (1877) offers a second example of Gladstone's manipulation of

[597] Gladstone 1877: 385.
[598] Gladstone 1877: 385.
[599] Gladstone 1877: 386.
[600] Gladstone 1877: 366.
[601] Gladstone 1877: 366-367.
[602] Gladstone 1877: 366- 367.

contemporary scientific findings: his instrumental use of Hugo Magnus' research on the history of the development of human sight. Gladstone's deep knowledge of the Poems allows him to critically engage with Magnus' work, expanding the ophthalmologist's research, when possible, as well as amending his conclusions when necessary. As Bellmer (1999) points out, Gladstone draws on three aspects from Magnus: 'the inherent tendency of the eye to improve gradually in a given direction, its increase in sensitivity resulting from constant stimulation by light, and the passing on of the newly acquired improved state by inheritance.' [603]

According to Gladstone the various stages of the historical development of the human capacity to perceive colours go from absolute incapacity to differentiate anything but light and darkness, to the individuation of blue and violet. Gladstone agrees with Magnus that the human retina differentiates colours from one another by their re-frangibility of light: the brighter the colour the easiest for the eye to distinguish it. Gladstone also agrees that the human eye progressively perceives a different and increasing number of colours, because susceptibility to colours is hereditary and grows from one generation to the next.[604]

Gladstone departs from Magnus' conclusions when it comes to the stage of development the German ophthalmologist assigns to Homer. Gladstone rejects Magnus' hypothesis that Homer could perceive yellow, orange and red. Gladstone repeats his refusal twice in 'Colour Sense' (1877). First, he writes: 'I think the estimate of it given by Magnus is liberal rather than the reverse.'[605] Gladstone amends Magnus' conclusion regarding Homer, assigning him to an earlier phase of the development of the human retina than the one suggested by Magnus:

> Prolonged examination moves me rather to reduce than to extend former estimates. I find that the more we treat as a general rule what is his words of colour as a quantitative expression of light or its opposite the nearer do we come to the establishment of harmony and coherence in his […] terminology.[606]

There is another yet another element that sets Gladstone apart from Magnus. Gladstone engages closely with the Darwinian formulation of the process of evolution:

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[603] Bellmer 1999: 32.
[604] Gladstone 1877: 369 see also Bellmer 1999: 29-30.
[605] Bellmer 1999: 34.
[606] Gladstone 1877: 371.

If without the aids of lengthened history, of wide survey of the earth and man, of long hereditary development of the organs, he has achieved his presents results, what would he have accomplished had he been possessed of the vast and varied apparatus of all kinds which we enjoy! And what have the natural selection and the survival of the fittest, with their free play through three thousand years, done for us, who at an immeasurable distance are limping after him, amidst the laughter, sometimes fear, of the immortal gods?[607]

Magnus' approach– as Bellmer explains – does not refer to Darwin's evolutionary theory.[608] When Magnus applies a distinctively Lamarckian model, Gladstone evokes the idea of the survival of the fittest, characteristic of the Darwinian approach to evolution. Gladstone, in 'Colour Sense' (1877) presents his own personal answer to the urgent question of evolution. Once again, Gladstone is working to make Homer relevant to the Victorian present. I argue 'Colour Sense' (1877) is a continuation of the work Gladstone initiated with *Homeric Synchronism* (1876): a clear example of Gladstone's mixed approach to the study of the epics. This time, Gladstone does not engage with the most recent results of archaeology, but with the natural sciences. Gladstone positions Homer at the heart of a scientific revolution that shook Victorian culture to its foundations.

'Colour Sense' (1877) is proof of Gladstone's lively interest in the progress of modern science. Gladstone, who we know is invested in the defence religion, does not oppose the progress of Victorian science, and instead displays an attitude of lively curiosity towards contemporary scientific discourse.

'Colour Sense' (1877) is Gladstone's first structured attempt to tackle scientific issues publicly. Studying the stages of the development of Gladstone's colour theory, we can trace a changing in Gladstone's approach. From the 1860s through the 1870s, Gladstone became more and more involved in contemporary scientific discourses. He studied evolutionary theories and thrived in the debates they raised. He engages with them in the field he knows and commands best: the study of the Homeric Poems.[609]

Gladstone's article, however eclectic, is a compelling example of the one way with which nineteenth-century intellectuals dealt with a scientific revolution, caused by

[607] Gladstone 1877: 371-372.
[608] Bellmer 1999: 42.
[609] By intervening in the great debate of evolutionism, Gladstone seems to underestimate the consequences of these theories, especially concerning the relationship between faith and science. In these years, there were the first signs of a clash that would explode from the 1980s onwards, climaxing in the conflict between Gladstone and Thomas H. Huxley, the so-called hound of Darwin. They confront each other on the compatibility of the *Genesis* account of the creation with modern scientific theories, but the underlying theme is the discussion on the relationship between science and religion and the possibility of their coexistence. See e.g. Gould 1991: 165ff.

the diffusion of Darwin's evolutionary theory. It illustrates the role antiquity and Homer, in particular, played in the formation and development of this debate. Gladstone resorts to Homerology to tackle the issues raised by contemporary scientific advancements. His provocation does not pass unnoticed. Gladstone's article soon provokes a rowdy debate.

The Reception of 'Colour Sense'

Gladstone's article for the *Nineteenth Century* causes an uproar, both in Britain and across the world. Discussions ripple through Europe, from Britain to Germany and Belgium, to France and finally to America.[610] However, it is in Britain that Gladstone's work both causes the most turmoil and has the most significant impact. His interlocutors are not only eminent classical scholars and distinguished theologians, but also established scientists, including Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, the fathers of evolution.

When Gladstone's article comes out in October 1877, it immediately attracts reviews from many of the periodicals which have been following Gladstone's Homeric work through the years, including *The Examiner*, *The Academy*, *The Spectator*, *The Times* and *The Daily News,*[611] along with specialist, scientific publications such as *Nature.*[612] Bellmer (1999) argues that the overall response to Gladstone's article is negative.[613] However, the sources, correspondence and periodicals, reveal a far more complex and nuanced picture. Gladstone's research provokes a growing intellectual ferment, rather than a simple rejection. His argument infiltrates Victorian discourse: private conversations, discussions of learned societies, open debates on the pages of the periodicals, and major scientific publications. Indeed, Gladstone opens up possibilities for original research in a range of fields. Gladstone positions Homer at the heart of the

[610] GG 1641 10 *Daheim* April 20, 1878: 464-467; GG 1641 11 *Daheim* April 27, 1878: 478-81; GG 1641 12 *Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung* March 3, 1878: 913-15; GG 1641 17 *L'Athenaeum Belge* January 6, 1878; GG 1641 14 *Feuilleton de la Republique Francoise* March 12, 1878; *Scientific American* February 23, 1878: 118: 'A correspondent of *The Times of India* calls attention to the remarkable confirmation to be fund in the perceptive powers of the lower caste natives of the theory started by Mr. Gladstone in his recent article on the Colour Sense of Homer'.

[611] *The Spectator* October 6, 1877: 1244; *Examiner* October 6, 1877: 1260 'Colour Sense and Colour Non-Sense'; GG 1641 7 *The Spectator* October 13, 1877: 1270; *The Academy* October 13, 1877: 363; See GG 1641 9 *The Architect* November 3, 1877: 239-40 and GG 1641 8 *The Architect* November 24, 1877: 278-279 for 'Homer as Colourist' by W.W. Llyod.

[612] See GG 1641 19 *Nature* October 24, 1878, and see GG 1641 20 *Nature* October 31, 1878: 700-704 for William Pole's article.

[613] See Bellmer 1999: 37-38: 'The response came not only from major reviewers, but also (especially in Britain) from individuals, small discussion clubs, and local learned societies; very little of it was positive; in fact, almost all of it was negative.'

Victorian scientific debate, forcing contemporary readers to engage with the epics in unexpected ways.

William Pole, writing in *Nature* (1878), publishes an article entitled 'Colour Blindness in Relation to the Homeric Expressions of Colour.'[614] Pole is a colour-blind scholar who centres his studies on this. In 1878, Pole building on Gladstone's research, argues that the details Gladstone has extrapolated from Homer's colour vocabulary and its application indicate that the poet was colour blind. The *Nature* article, in turn, attracts a stream of responses, all of which bring Gladstone's Homeric research further into the spotlight. In a ripple effect, Gladstone's article awakes a renewed interest in the investigation of colour blindness in antiquity. *The Times* of November 5, 1878, spells out for its reader the implications of Pole's work: 'It will be interesting to see how Dr Pole works out the details of his hypothesis; if it is found to stand the test, he will have added a powerful weapon to the battery of Homeric criticism'.[615] Other scientists were, however, less inclined to welcome Gladstone's article.[616] In *Tropical Nature And Other Essays*, Alfred Russel Wallace, the naturalist who independently from Darwin conceived the theory of evolution through natural selection, rejected the hypothesis of colour-blindness. *The Academy* on July 27, 1878, noted that Wallace dedicates a chapter of his work, titled 'On the Colour Sense,' to debunks Gladstone's theories.[617]

Perhaps the most influential criticism of Gladstone's theory of colour was made by Grant Allen. Allen dedicated the last four chapters of his *The Colour-sense: Its Origin and Development*, published in 1879, to demolishing Gladstone's theory of colours. Allen frames colour perception as an evolutionary perspective, which sees humans deriving their taste for bright colours from their frugivorous ancestors, who in turn acquainted it by the exercise of their sense of vision upon bright coloured food.[618] Allen's criticism attracts the attention of many Victorian periodicals.[619] The *Academy* on January 26, 1878,

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[614] GG 1641 19, 20.
[615] *The Times* November 5, 1878: 3.
[616] See *The Spectator* October 6, 1877: 1244: 'The whole subjects needs more study with especial relation to the possibility of races as well as families may inherit colour-blindness;' Against imperfect colour perception in antiquity see GG 1641 21 *Daily News* February 15, 1879: 'It is rather an awful thing to think that, say four thousand years ago, our ancestors, our Aryan ancestors, were incapable of distinguishing between red, blue, green, and yellow.' See GG 1641 8 *The Architect* November 24, 1877: 278-279; December 1, 1877: 292-94; *The Times* November 5, 1878, for articles against a colour-blind Homer.
[617] *The Academy* July 27, 1878: 91-92
[618] *Examiner* March 15, 1879: 338.
[619] See *The Academy* September 7, 1878: 239: '[Grant Allen's] work which is based on the evolutionist hypothesis, endeavours to trace the causes and reactions of the colour sense in insects, fishes, reptiles, birds and mammals, and also contains advance criticism of the historical development theory put forward by Dr Magnus and Mr Gladstone.'; *The Academy*, January 26, 1878: 76-77; *Examiner* February 1, 1879: 153; GG

writes: ‘we would call special attention to Mr. Grant Allen’s objection, from the evolutionist’s point of view, to the theory of a gradual development of the colour sense in man, recently unfolded by Mr. Gladstone leaning on Mr. Magnus.’[620] *The Daily News* on February 15, 1879, is particularly appreciative of Allen’s refutation of colour blindness in antiquity. The article goes: ‘Was the whole human race once colour blind? This is an opinion which may be inferred from certain speculations of Mr Gladstone, an opinion which Mr Grant Allen has combated in an interesting volume on *Colour Sense: Its Origin and Development*.’[621] The *Saturday Review* of March 15, 1879, details the ways in which Allen refutes of Gladstone and Magnus’s theory on physical, historical, and philological grounds. The last approach is the most interesting for our investigation.

Grant Allen applies Gladstone’s statistical approach to the study of colour terms in the epics to contemporary poets (Algernon Swinburne and Alfred Tennyson) and shows that the linguistic evidence collected could be used to argue against a colour sense in the present time. The *Examiner* on February 1, 1878, concludes that Allen has defeated Gladstone with his own weapons.[622] The *Saturday Review*, however, laments that Allen ‘has called attention to the use of colour-words by other poets but does not inform us whether he has examined Shakespeare or Dante.’[623]

Gladstone’s work stirs up a renewed interest in the study of colour vocabulary, which that goes beyond antiquity, encouraging further philological investigations. The statistical analysis of colour-vocabulary is a methodology that, as the *Saturday Review* shows, produces stimulating results. Gladstone’s Homeric research enriches and expands the Victorian scholarly discourse.

The philological aspect of Allen’s argument catches Alfred Russel Wallace’s attention. The naturalist reviews Allen’s book for the issue of April 3, 1879, of *Nature.* Later on, in August 1879, *The Academy* welcomes a new publication concerning the historical development of the colour sense by Anton Marty’s *Geschichtlichen Entwickelung des Farbensinnes* (1879). *The Academy* contextualizes Marty’s work in a

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1641 21 *Daily News* February 15, 1879; *Examiner* March 15, 1879: 338ff.; *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* March 15, 1879: 337 ff.; *The Athenaeum;* May 31, 1879: 698.

[620] *The Academy*, Jan 26, 1878: 76-77

[621] See GG 1641 21 *The Daily News* February 15, 1879, the article illustrates Allen’s victory over Gladstone using Homeric imagery: ‘Perhaps, like Odysseus in the boxing match with Irus, he has been in doubt as to whether he should hit as hard as he can and destroy Mr Gladstone’s theory altogether or whether he should tap it gently and subdue it for the moment.’[621]

[622] *Examiner* March 15, 1879: 338-39.

[623] *The Saturday Review* March 15, 1879: 337 ff.

scholarly debate initiated by none other than Gladstone, who is seen as leading a popular current of thought that denies Homer's blindness, at home and abroad:

A great deal has been written of the late years on the subject of the supposed historical development of the capacity for distinguishing colours, and it appears to be considered as an axiom by many who do not believe in the traditional story of the blindness of Homer that he knew neither blue nor green, and that his notions of colour in general were extremely vague and did not extend beyond a broad distinction between bright and dark colours. Mr. Gladstone, who was the first to start this hypothesis as early as 1858, was enabled to publish it more recently in a more elaborate form, as he had found numerous followers especially in Germany, among whom Geiger tried to point out traces of a similar defect of sight in the Rigveda and the Zendavests, and Magnus to prove, on physiological grounds, that the sensibility of the retina had undergone a gradual development within the last few thousand years.[624]

This discussion keeps raging. In the early 1880s, *Colour Sense* is still the object of heated debate among Victorian intellectuals. Gladstone's article has led to major interventions from experts in fields from physiology[625] to psychology[626] to comparative anatomy.[627] His work has a long term and significant impact on discourse.[628] The Royal Society of Edinburgh convened on January 7, 1878, for Professor Blackie's paper entitled 'On Gladstone's Theory of Colour Sense in Homer.'[629] A heated discussion followed, which saw classical scholars battling to defend or demolish Gladstone's position.[630] In the autumn of 1881, the debate had still not died down. *The Times* reported on Montagu

[624] *The Academy* August 16, 1879: 127.
[625] See *Examiner* October 6, 1877: 1260 'Mr Gladstone […] is positively foggy when he comes to consider the physiological bearing of his facts. He seems to know nothing of what recent physiology.' Also see *The Academy*, October 13, 1877: 363: 'Mr. Gladstone's paper in *Nineteenth Century* on the development of the colour-sense as illustrated by the phraseology of Homer is an ingenious attempt to show that in the poet's mind the sense of light (and darkness) prevailed over and stifled, so to speak, the sense of colour. The writer fails, however, to indicate quite clearly what he conceives Homer's colour sense to have been, and his account of the relations of the two sensibilities reads oddly under the light of recent physiology;' and see GG 1641 8 *The Architect* November 24, 1877: 278-279; December 1, 1877: 292-94: 'Encouraged by what we cannot but conceive to be this very spurious physiology, Mr Gladstone returns to illustrate his argument with industry most enviable.'
[626] See *Examiner* March 15, 1879: 338 for review of Grant Allen's *The Colour Sense Its Origin and Development (*1879); *The Athenaeum* May 31, 1879: 698.
[627] See *The Macmillan's Magazine* December 1879: 134: The review approaches the problem from comparative anatomy's point of view. 'If, therefore the colour sense of Homer and his contemporaries had been limited to an imperfect perception of one or two hues the spectrum their retina would have been inferior in anatomical development to the retina of the monkeys, which as every student of science knows, is impossible, since the macula could not have been lost and subsequently regained by man in so very brief a period.'
[628] See GG 1641 23 On February 7, 1882. Gladstone's crucial role in propelling the discussion on colours emerges from the paper title 'On the Colour Sense and the Colour Names' that William Axon, librarian (antiquary, and journalist for the Manchester Guardian) presented at Manchester's Literary and Philosophical Society in February 1882.
[629] Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh Vol. IX 1887-1878 no. 101: 4B January 7, 1878.
[630] GG 1641 26.

Lubbock's paper on colour sense: 'a favourite theory, recently countenanced by the name of Gladstone, that the sense for colours is of comparatively recent development.' Nevertheless, 'the exact researches of Dr Lubbock' did not support Gladstone's theory, even if the speaker 'seems to think it ought to be true.'[631]

Gladstone, once again, had hit a nerve. His Homeric research functioned as a catalyst, propelling contemporary debates forward.

The Homerist and the Father of Evolution

Gladstone's correspondence with Charles Darwin enables us to reassess the impact of Gladstone's research on colour. At the beginning of October 1877, after reading the latest number of the *Nineteenth Century*, Darwin writes to Gladstone in regard to his 'Colour Sense'.[632] He offers to share with Gladstone additional material on the development of colour perception and offers his own insight on the matter.[633] On October 2, 1877, Darwin writes:

> I have just seen your article on Dr Magnus' view; & as you are interested in the subject, you may like to hear that this view has been well circulated under a natural history point of view in a German journal, *Kosmos*; & that Dr Magnus has answered the criticism in a succeeding number. In one of these numbers, I have given some facts tending to show that very young children have great difficulty in distinguishing colours; or as I suspect, of attaching the right names to them, but why this should be so, I know not. If you would like to see these numbers, & would inform me by a post card, I should have great pleasure in sending them;[634]

Darwin calls Gladstone's attention to the study of colour perception in children. His research shows that children find differentiating colours to be a difficult task. Darwin believes this to be due to a struggle to associate hues to their names. With this observation subtly Darwin suggests that the issue at stake behind the difficulty of differentiating colours is linguistic, and not physical. Darwin addresses one major issue at the core of Gladstone's article, where colour vocabulary is considered to be a reliable indicator of

[631] *The Times* September 8, 1881: 10.
[632] See Bellmer 1999 notes 57: 'see Add MSS 44455, fol. 305 H. Lloyd to W. E. Gladstone, December 7, 1877,' and see note 58: 'G.J. Mivart to W. E. Gladstone December 8, 1878, Add MSS 44458, fol. 202.' George Jackson Mivart, Roman Catholic anatomist and zoologist, who defended evolution while attacking natural selection as its chief mechanism; he refuted Darwin's views on human origins; See also GG 1641 7 *The Spectator* October 13, 1877: 1270.
[633] Add MSS 44455 f. 120 C. Darwin to W. E. Gladstone October 2, 1877.
[634] Add MS 44455 f. 120 C. Darwin to W.E. Gladstone, October 2, 1877.

colour perception.[635] Before long, other Victorian intellectuals also question Gladstone's assumption that language reflects the fullness of sensory perception. *The Spectator* on October 6, 1877, questions Gladstone's conclusions:

> Is it not more probable that Homer's indistinctness in the use of colour-words arose from indifference to scientific accuracy-he probably was, be it remembered, blind- rather than absence of perception?[636]

Darwin sends Gladstone a second letter, on October 25, 1877, and together with the promised material he suggests another relevant dataset for his study of colour-sense. Darwin confesses his interest in learning more about the languages of colour among modern indigenous people. In regard to specific colour terms, Darwin writes 'I should expect that they have not, and this would be remarkable for the Indians of Chile and Tierra del Fuego have names for every slight promontory and hill, even to a remarkable degree.[637] Darwin expects that many indigenous communities will have more fully developed vocabularies for landscape, compared to colour. Darwin introduces a second element to his previous analysis of the colour issue as a vocabulary-based one. A precise vocabulary seems to arise from a concrete interest. The communities who have detailed knowledge of their lands also have a detailed vocabulary for the landscape. This observation anticipates an issue which will occupy a central position in the later discussion of Gladstone's article. On November 24, 1877, roughly a month after Darwin's letter, *The Architect* raises an objection similar to Darwin's: 'It is another question,' the journal remarks, 'how far Homer, and the Greeks he addressed, may have been interested in distinctions of colours for their own sake, what were their preferences, and how far these were so strong as to prompt to the careful definition of them in language'.[638]

Browne, in *Charles Darwin: The Power of Place* (2002), argues that Darwin does not engage with the thorny issues of explaining to Gladstone the consequences of evolution and natural selection for his argument. However, following Bellmer (1999), it is possible to push the reading of Darwin's intention further.[639] Darwin is opening a space for scholarly exchange, and through his examples, he is kindly suggesting an alternative

[635] Bellmer 1999: 34.
[636] *The Spectator* October 6, 1877: 1244.
[637] Add MSS 44455, 210 C. Darwin to W. E. Gladstone October 25, 1877.
[638] GG 1641 8 *The Architect* November 24, 1877: 278-279.
[639] I agree with Bellmer 1999: 25-45 who argues that Darwin left it to the *Kosmos'* reviewer, Ernst Krause, to acquaint Gladstone with arguments on problematics raising from evolution and natural selection.

explanation for Gladstone's equation of colour vocabulary and colour perception. Darwin's observations, on modern-day indigenous communities, are intended to be transferable to Gladstone's studies on Homer. But Darwin suggests colour naming is matter of word association and not of colour perception, and that the accuracy of colour vocabulary develops around a focal interest. Darwin leaves to Ernst Krause's article in *Kosmos* the task of acquainting Gladstone with the broader questions raised by evolution and natural selection in regard to the development of colour sense. Krause reprimands Gladstone for having undertaken a scientific argument without the relevant competence and knowledge to engage with it correctly. According to Krause, Gladstone knows 'not a thing about the physics of the matter and is still not sure, in the Goethe *vs*. Newton debate, which of them is right.'[640] The German is not alone in his indignation. Many British reviewers share Krause's concern. A review in *The Examiner* of October 1877, entitled 'Colour sense and Colour non-sense' offers one key example.[641] The periodical does not question Gladstone's competence as a Homerist. It praises Gladstone's linguistic analysis. According to the article, the author allows the reader to see through Homer's eye.[642] But this time, the Homerist has overstepped his boundaries:

> The topic is plainly one which demands knowledge both of history and physiology. […] Mr. Gladstone is not, so far as we are aware, fully accredited as a physiologist. He has evidently been attracted to the subject through his historical studies. This fact at once indicates the merits and limitation of the article.[643]

The reviewer writes: 'It seems plain that Mr. Gladstone has befogged himself by attending only to the physical side of light and colour and neglecting the physiological.'[644] The question at stake is thus epistemological in nature. Gladstone as a Homerist has no authority in the scientific field. His linguistic evidence cannot form the basis of an explanation of a scientific phenomenon.

'Colour Sense' (1877), and the reaction the article provokes, reveals the process that led to the redefinition of disciplinary boundaries in late nineteenth-century Britain. It is during these years that more and more Victorian intellectuals start questioning the

[640] Bellmer 1999: 378.
[641] *Examiner* October 6, 1877: 1260.
[642] See *Examiner* October 6, 1877: 1260: 'It need hardly be said that in analysing Homer's colour-phraseology Mr. Gladstone shows all his wonted penetration and ingenuity. Some of his inferences may seem a little fanciful, but overall succeeds to a large extent in presenting a consistent and vivid image of many tinted Nature as she appeared to Homer. We might also almost say that Mr. Gladstone enables us to look into Homer's eye and perceive the retinal image which the picturesque outer world their projects.'
[643] *Examiner* October 6, 1877: 1260.
[644] *Examiner* October 6, 1877: 1260.

legitimacy of permeability between disciplines. When Gladstone “invades” the scientific field with his philological discourse, it opens an opportunity for the natural sciences to continue to establish their autonomy. Beyond the specific debates, Gladstone’s Homeric research raises pivotal epistemological questions which allow us to reassess our understanding of the nineteenth-century relationship between evolution and Homer.

As constitutive part of Gladstone Homerology, ‘Colour Sense’ (1877) demonstrates how far Gladstone is willing to push his Homeric investigations, in order to anchor Homer to reality. Gladstone embraces the most unexpected possibilities his century offers and, by exploiting Victorian science, he attempts to fix Homer in a specific stage of human evolution.

‘Colour Sense’ (1877) is a compelling example of the transformative power of Gladstone’s Homeric research. Gladstone pushes the boundaries of his Homeric investigation, expanding the reach of his research beyond literary and humanistic studies. His Homer becomes a lens to glimpse other realities through. By changing the role of Homer, he forces his opponents to meet him in a newly defined field.

7

The Last Conversation

Gladstone emerges from the 1870s as one of the most authoritative voices in Homeric studies, someone capable of redirecting the flow of the contemporary discourse on Homer. From universities to learned societies and periodicals, the Victorians acknowledge Gladstone's *auctoritas* as a scholar of Homer.

This picture is, as has been discussed above, very different from the one presented in the current scholarship on Gladstone's Homeric studies. For Bebbington (2004): 'Gladstone's Homeric studies have not fared well with commentators, either past or present.'[645] This confirms the need for a re-evaluation of Gladstone's Homeric works following the 1860s, with *Studies on Homer* (1858) and *Juventus Mundi* (1869).

The close of the 1870s marks the final part of Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship. The breakdown of their connection can be traced through Schliemann's visit to London in 1877, Gladstone's Preface to *Mycenae* (1878) and the last epistolary exchange between the Homerist and the archaeologist. At first, Gladstone critically welcomes and builds on the fruits of Schliemann's newest archaeological campaign. Gladstone builds a Homeric narrative with which he hopes to challenge and transform his contemporaries' understanding of the ancient past.

But many differences, as always, divide Gladstone and Schliemann – and this time, they will prove more difficult to ignore. Using Gladstone's private, unpublished correspondence, this chapter will propose a new explanation for the breakdown of the rapport between the Homerist and the archaeologist. Gladstone and Schliemann's last conversation is recorded in unpublished letters and reveals that – what else – an unresolvable Homeric difference causes the two to part ways. As Gladstone and Schliemann's correspondence shows, Homer simply (complexly) mattered, in the nineteenth-century: a dispute over Homer could end a decade of friendship.

[645] Bebbington 2004: 142.

Gladstone and the Mycenaean antiquities

I. Gladstone and Schliemann's visit to London

In 1877, Schliemann visits London, bearing treasures from Mycenae. Once again, the archaeologist aims to actively involve Gladstone in his activities in Britain, seeking his support to promote and validate his new discoveries. Gladstone, as always, stands back from Schliemann's flattery, endorsing only what corroborates his own Homeric theories.

The archival sources I gathered and intertwined - letters and articles from Victorian periodicals - dating to 1877 reveal firstly that for Schliemann, fame does not come without criticism. The archaeologist's eccentric declarations land him at the centre of controversies. Secondly, Gladstone is once again actively involved in Schliemann's visit, establishing his credibility, and contributing to the success of his archaeological discoveries.

For Gladstone, 1877 turns out to be a crucial year – one where, thanks to Schliemann's newest discoveries, he is able to fill in many of the gaps in his studies, and his public profile as a scholar of Homer. He is, once again, the forgotten protagonist of one of the most remarkable archaeological stories of the nineteenth-century – fashioning the contemporary understanding of the ancient past.

When Schliemann announces the results of his excavations in Mycenae, he does so with even more bombast and bravado than he did, when announcing his discoveries at Troy. He does not limit himself to announcing the discovery of extraordinary antiquities, but, instead, claims to have unearthed the remains of Agamemnon, and his grave goods. Writing from Leipzig, an anonymous German correspondent for *The Times*, on December 4, 1876, publishes extracts from Schliemann's letters from Mycenae. On November 24, 1876, the archaeologist wrote: 'I have now the firmest conviction that these are the tombs which, as Pausanias, writes, belong, according to the accredited tradition, to Atreus, Agamemnon, Cassandra, Eurymedon, &c.'[646]

The claim is as loud as it is rushed. Schliemann's evidence is nowhere near as solid as he claims, and a new *querelle* spreads across the British press. The *Examiner*, of December 23, 1876, reprimands *The Times* for excessive sympathy towards Schliemann's controversial claims, and warns readers against his faulty reasoning. According to the *Examiner,* 'Dr Schliemann' has recently dug up some 'very extraordinary relics.'[647] For this, the archaeologist deserves commendation. However, the periodical questions the

[646] *The Times* December 7, 1876: 8.
[647] *Examiner* December 23, 1876: 1436.

solidity of Schliemann's interpretations of his finds. Those results which Schliemann, followed by *The Times*, presented as conclusive are in fact highly questionable. The worth, the dating, and the relevance of these discoveries are uncertain:

What their [Schliemann's relics] precise value may be, what age they may belong to, and what precise importance attaches itself to the locality at which they have been dug up, are all questions that yet remain to be discussed and determined. The *Times*, however, in a perfect outburst of fresh faith, sings a paean which would be extravagant even from an auctioneer putting up a collection of antiques.[648]

According to the *Examiner*, the archaeologist's arguments in support of the historical reality of the legendary city of Mycenae are inconclusive. Schliemann can '*hardly* claim to have discovered Mycenae,'[649] let alone the remains of Agamemnon:

There is an old tradition, it is true, to the effect that a certain city called Mycenae once stood on a particular site. Dr. Schliemann has dug on what he believes to be this site and has turned up a lot of relics. This is however somewhat scant evidence upon which to accept Mycenae as a historical fact and to reconstruct ancient history.[650]

The *Examiner* focuses on the consequences of adopting the faulty reasoning initiated by Schliemann and perpetuated by *The Times*:

With a writer who seriously tell us that the bones of Agamemnon have been discovered and their bulk argues the truth of the Homeric tradition it is idle to argue.'[651]

Hardly another periodical, the *Examiner* concludes, 'could have compressed into one column a larger amount of assumption, ignorance, credulity, bunkum than the *Times* has given us in its article on Dr Schliemann.'[652]

Schliemann's approach to promoting and defending his discoveries has, once again, turned out to be counterproductive. He needs an authoritative voice in the field of Homeric studies to take his side and restore his credibility. To this end, Schliemann appeals, once again, to Gladstone, writing to him on December 28, 1876:[653]

[648] *Examiner* December 23, 1876: 1436.
[649] *Examiner* December 23, 1876: 1436.
[650] *Examiner* December 23, 1876: 1436.
[651] *Examiner* December 23, 1876: 1436.
[652] *Examiner* December 23, 1876: 1436.
[653] Add MS 44452 f.283 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1876.

I am sure you have read with interest my articles in the Times abt. my discoveries in Mycenae and recommend to you in a particular manner my last article which I shall send in today and by which you will see that we now agree regarding the chronology of the siege of Troy. The immense treasures of Mycenae further prove beyond any doubt that you were perfectly right in maintaining in your celebrated Homeric Synchronism that Homer was an Athenian, because only a poet born and educated in such a civilisation as the treasures show could write the Iliad and the Odyssey. I am writing my work on Mycenae in English will contain more than 2000 photographic tables and a mutual friend John Murray undertaken to publish. You shall get the first copy that is ready. I have still to thank you most cordially for your powerful recommendation to Sir Henry Elliot which has had the desired effect the Grand Vizi(e)r having given to the Governor general at the Dardanelles the strictest orders not only not to throw obstacles into my way but to render me every assistance and to give me every possible facility. Thus, thanks to you I can now continue the excavation in Ilium as soon as the Troad is safe.[654]

Schliemann starts by pledging his fealty to Gladstone's Homeric theories, as illustrated in *Homeric Synchronism* (1876). Then, he presents the results of his new excavations as confirming Gladstone's Homeric theories. Schliemann seeks in Gladstone's growing authority as a Homeric scholar the validation he has personally failed to provide to his most recent archaeological discoveries. By presenting his discovery as a demonstration of Gladstone's claims, he is attempting to appropriate Gladstone's credibility. By providing Gladstone with access to the material, Schliemann hopes to lure him into intervening in support of his discoveries. The letter does not just testify to Schliemann's intellectual debt to Gladstone, it also confirms his political debt. Gladstone's intervention in Constantinople had recently helped Schliemann obtain a new permit to excavate in the Troad.

Gladstone, notwithstanding his increasing political commitments, responded warmly to Schliemann, on January 8, 1877:

I congratulate you very cordially on your great labours and successes at Mycenae. I am not unfortunately in a condition to form any independent impressions, much less conclusions, about them: for during the last six months all literature, at least all literary labour, has been forbidden me by the great Eastern Question in its various departments which have absorbed all the time. I could rescue from the burdensome routine of involuntary correspondence and occupation that clings to my lip like the thirst of Nessus to the body of Heracles. But I am greatly pleased that you, having adopted a belief, now become to me from long observation a part of myself, in the Achaianism of Homer, you will perceive that I cannot but be predisposed favourably to the conclusion that you open a distinct source of evidence to that effect.

[654] Add MS 44452 f.283 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone December 28, 1876.

Interesting as it was to obtain Trojan remains at Troy, it will be still greatly more curious to identify the relics of Troy in the excavations of Mycenae. I need not say that I shall look forward with great interest to your book though I do not gather distinctly from your letter what was the likely time to have the pleasure of seeing you personally.[655]

Gladstone voices genuine interest in the new archaeological discoveries. And no matter how pressing his political commitments are, Gladstone always finds time and space for Homer. He has identified the key point of the recent excavations and addresses it: his interest lies in identifying Homeric remains from Troy at Mycenae. Once again, Gladstone's reaction to the mesmerising treasures of Mycenae is not that of the enthusiastic dilettante but that of the careful Homerist. When Gladstone writes 'interesting as it was to obtain Trojan remains at Troy, it will be still greatly more curious to identify the relics of Troy in the excavations of Mycenae',[656] he is making a pointed suggestion. Trojan remains at Mycenae would offer a compelling piece of evidence for the historical existence of the civilisation Homer describes in his Poems, and for the historicity of the Trojan War. In a pattern which, by now, is familiar, Gladstone is not bewitched by Schliemann's narrative and only supports those aspects of the archaeologist's discoveries which reinforce his own Homeric theories and his own methodology.

During his visit to London in 1877, Schliemann exploits Gladstone's credibility to strengthen his own position, throughout his time in the city. On March 22, 1877, Schliemann is due to deliver a paper to the Society of Antiquaries on his latest discoveries. Given the raging controversy, it is vital for Schliemann's career that he makes a positive impression on the learned society. So, the archaeologist devises a plan, in which Gladstone has a crucial part to play.

Schliemann pressures Gladstone to attend the Society of Antiquaries meeting. Schliemann knows what is likely to sway Gladstone: he promises that he will arrange for Gladstone to examine over 200 brand new photographs of the Mycenaean remains.[657] By offering access to precious unpublished material, the archaeologist hopes to pique Gladstone's Homeric curiosity. The meeting itself – with Gladstone in attendance – turned out to be a sensation.[658]

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[655] 23136 BOX 73 NO. 15 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann January 8, 1877.
[656] 23136 BOX 73 NO. 15 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann January 8, 1877.
[657] 23136 BOX 73 NO. 15 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann January 8, 1877.
[658] See e.g. The *Times* March 23, 1877: 10 and *The Academy* March 31, 1877: 279.

The Times offers perhaps the most comprehensive account of the meeting, reporting in detail on Gladstone's intervention. Predictably, Gladstone turned the occasion to his own advantage, and spoke about his own interpretation of Schliemann's newest finds, and their significance. Unfortunately for Schliemann, Gladstone's vision did not align with his own. For Gladstone, the significance of the finds from Mycenae rests in comparisons which may be drawn between them, and the objects found at Troy.[659] What Gladstone leaves unspoken is as revealing as what he says: he does not address the question of the identity of the remains found in the alleged royal tombs at Mycenae. For Schliemann, this is fundamental. For Gladstone, it is incidental. The contagious enthusiasm of the archaeologist does not sway the politician. Gladstone cautiously distanced himself from the archaeologist's views: for Gladstone, the Mycenaean discoveries raised more questions than they answered, and left Gladstone sceptical of Schliemann's conclusions, as he admitted later in 1878. After all, little about the finds, for Gladstone, seemed to correspond to any descriptions in the Homeric Poems.[660]

That Gladstone's main interest lies in confirming the Homeric nature of Schliemann's finds, we know from his letter of January 8, 1877.[661] How he proceeds in his investigations we learn from *The Times* on March 23, 1877.[662] Gladstone focuses on identifying those characteristics that could mirror the descriptions of the Homeric Poems. For the identification and interpretation of the remains of Mycenae Gladstone applies the same methodology he applied to *Troy and Its Remains* (1875), and as he illustrated in 1876 in *Homeric Synchronism*.

As the *Times* reports, at the Society of Antiquaries, Gladstone went straight to the point.[663] The discovery of Homeric Troy established a baseline for comparison, when seeking to identify other remains from the same age. For Gladstone, archaeological remains thus acquire unique importance to the extent that they become fundamental for the studies of the Homeric Poems:

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[659] *The Academy* March 31, 1877: 279: 'Mr Gladstone made few remarks, comparing the objects found at Troy with those at Mycenae, and considered that the latter were link between the art of Homeric times and that of Classical Greece. Though he was not inclined to adopt the theory of the owl-faced Athena he thought there was more to be said in favour of the cow-face Hera and show that there was a connection between that divinity and the Egyptian Isis who is sometimes represented under the form of a cow.'
[660] Gladstone 1878b: v.
[661] 23136 BOX 73 NO. 15 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann January 8, 1877.
[662] *The Times* March 23, 1877: 10.
[663] *The Times* March 23, 1877: 10.

They had means when [Schliemann] he came back from Ilium of verifying more or less almost everything he had seen in the way of weapons, utensils, &c., by comparing them with the Poems of Homer. It was the standard of an age in which they could carry these remains. He [Gladstone] was still very strongly of opinion, as he was hopefully impressed at first with the belief that a very remarkable correspondence would be found to exist between them. Now, thanks to splendid munificence, unwearied perseverance, and discernment, they seemed to have arraigned to a great accession to the antiquarian wealth of the world. [664]

For Gladstone, however, Schliemann's finds at Mycenae appear to belong to a different era: with the exception of a few objects, he dates them as post-Homeric.

Gladstone's agenda is now clearly diverging from Schliemann's – and their relationship is likewise, under the surface, becoming increasingly strained. In theory, Schliemann agrees with the majority of Gladstone's claims, but in practice, he does not adopt the methodology behind Gladstone's approach to the study of Homer. Schliemann is driven by enthusiasm. This approach may lead to happy intuitions, but it lacks rigour in ways which had recently become all too obvious. This fatally weakens Schliemann's conclusions and invites attacks from sceptical critics. The raw archaeological material requires a theoretical framework. This is what Gladstone was prepared to offer to offer.

Gladstone's speech at the Society of Antiquaries in March 1877 was but the first of several Homeric interventions which he made between March and June 1877, during Schliemann's visit to London.[665] Gladstone immersed himself in the informal discourses surrounding Schliemann, attending the meetings of learned societies, attending Homeric banquets, and watching the German archaeologist closely in his public appearances. Behind these appearances lies the same agenda: discussing Homer on his own terms and spread his own theories further. While Schliemann enjoys the spotlight, Gladstone fashions the discourse.

The newspapers' reports of the time show that while Gladstone's public interventions are intended to present to the British public his perspective on the discoveries at Mycenae, and their significance for the study of the Homeric Poems, Schliemann in most cases refers to the scholarly authority of the politician to reinforce his own claims. When Gladstone is not personally present at events, Schliemann's approach operation becomes evident: when alone, Schliemann brings up his esteemed friend and his 'immortal contribution to the study of Homer' at every opportunity. The archaeologist

[664] *The Times* March 23, 1877: 10.
[665] See *The Times* May 1, 1877, for a report on meeting at the Royal Institute of British Architects. See *The Times* June 9, 1877, for Mrs Schliemann's speech at Royal Archaeological Institute.

pursued Gladstone and constantly invokes his authority to validate and reinforce his claims.

In April 1877, Schliemann delivers a paper at the British Archaeological Association.[666] Gladstone cannot attend, due to a sudden indisposition.[667] The politician has a message delivered to excuse his absence, expressing his deepest regrets. On April 12, 1877, *The Times* prints an extensive report of the event, which was crowded with eminent scholars, archaeologists and politicians, including Samuel Birch, Keeper of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum; Frederic Ouvry, President of the Royal Society of Antiquaries; Charles Barry, President of the Royal Institute of British Architects.[668] Schliemann discusses points of comparison between his remains of Hissarlik and Mycenae in a presentation entitled 'Troy and Its Analogies with Mycenae.'[669] Throughout his paper, Schliemann refers to Gladstone's Homeric theories, speaking of the absent politician as his 'venerated friend'.[670] Schliemann repeats Gladstone's central arguments in favour of the identification of Hissarlik as the Homeric Troy. The question of the surprisingly small dimension of the acropolis of Ilios found, Schliemann argued, a compelling justification in Gladstone's explanation. According to Gladstone, ancient cities were generally very small, and the majority of the population lived in the surrounding villages. This argument, not incidentally, also helps Schliemann to justify the scale of the acropolis of Mycenae. Schliemann builds his own arguments on a foundation of Gladstone's theories. In this way, Gladstone's Homeric views gain ever-increasing visibility, thanks to Schliemann's mediation.

A further example – of the many which could be cited – of this process at work comes towards the end of April 1877, Schliemann is invited to a banquet by the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers, at Ironmongers Hall, London.[671] At the request of his hosts, Schliemann sketches a brief history of ancient iron-production, insisting that no such metal was found either at Homeric Troy or at Homeric Mycenae. This contention, it is worth remembering, far from being established fact, was still being hotly debated. At the time, insufficient testing of the finds had taken place, for any definitive results to be

[666] *The Times* April 12, 1877: 8.
[667] See Gladstone's diaries vol. IX: 210 April 11, 1877: 'A seizure of diarrhoea, apparently due to the atmosphere (there was a thunderstorm) prevented me from going to the Schliemann's meeting.'
[668] The *Times* April 12, 1877: 8.
[669] The *Times* April 12, 1877: 8.
[670] The *Times* April 12, 1877: 8.
[671] *The Times* April 28, 1877: 12.

established. For this reason, Schliemann concludes his toast by directing his hosts to Gladstone's expertise in the archaeology of metals.[672]

To understand the significance of Schliemann's remark regarding Gladstone's expertise, we need to take a step back. Gladstone had, of course, been focused on the presence or absence of certain metals in his studies of the Homeric Poems since 1858. According to Gladstone, metallurgical knowledge has the potential to represent the very first proof of the historicity of the Homeric age from outside the texts themselves. By identifying which stage of metallurgical knowledge Homer belongs to, it might be possible to anchor the Heroic age within prehistory. Gladstone, as has been discussed above, argues that Homer's world is the age of copper. Gladstone's metallic obsession runs through his correspondence with Schliemann. Thus, Schliemann's referral to Gladstone's expertise in the archaeology of metals is hardly surprising.

Gladstone's interest in metallurgy has not died down since he and Schliemann began their correspondence. He is still searching for new external evidence - or 'links' as he calls them in *Homeric Synchronism* (1876) – to bring Homer out of legend and into history. As part of this quest, he draws on insights from scientific and technical disciplines, such as metallurgy, which had not previously been applied to the study of Homer. Gladstone's interest in metallurgy, and his interest in the contribution it could make to his Homerology, can be seen in his correspondence with John Percy, the British metallurgist Schliemann contacts for analysis of his new metallic finds from Mycenae.

On May 4, 1877, Percy updated Gladstone on his analysis of Schliemann's finds. He enclosed an unexpected present with his letter. A small, oxidised fragment of Mycenaean metal lies sealed in the envelope. Gladstone, who will never visit the excavation at Mycenae, jealously preserved that piece of the Homeric world. (Today, the fragment is safely stored among Gladstone's letters at the British Library.)[673]

Gladstone was far from being a mouthpiece for Schliemann's views. By giving sense and meaning to Schliemann's finds, Gladstone diffuses his Homeric theories, centring them within discourse, and giving a scholarly patina to Schliemann's the controversial finds. Schliemann promotes Gladstone's Homeric theories, not vice versa.

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[672] *The Times* April 28, 1877: 12.
[673] Add MS 44454 ff. 90, 92 J. Percy to W.E. Gladstone May 4, 1877.

II. Gladstone's Preface to *Mycenae* (1878)

Gladstone's Preface to Schliemann's *Mycenae* (1878) has been extensively commented upon, but perhaps not fully understood, by existing scholarship. Scholars have rightly emphasised Gladstone's reluctance to take up the task. Schliemann has to solicit the politician on multiple occasions, and through different channels, for him to agree. Schliemann asks John Murray and Phillip Smith, editor and translator of *Troy and Its Remains* (1878), to write to Gladstone on his behalf.[674] Schliemann promises to exhibit his Trojan collection in London, and even – as Traill (1995) notes – has a box of Trojan antiquities delivered to Gladstone to thank him for his Preface.

Duesterberg (2015) argues that Schliemann hopes to exploit Gladstone's visibility both as a famous public figure and a Homerist, to renew the interest of readers in his discovery of Mycenae. Duesterberg explains that the archaeologist endangered the success of his new publication, since – by rushing reports to the press as his excavations were ongoing – the novelty of his finds was no longer a selling-point. However, Duesenberg's explanation uncovers only part of the problem. It is true that Schliemann wants visibility, but what he really needs is scholarly validation. With Gladstone's support, he could hope for both.

Gladstone had, initially, been sceptical of Schliemann's eccentric claims regarding the results of his most recent excavations. But his private correspondence reveals a conversation on the Mycenaean antiquities which changes his mind. On April 2, 1877, Charles Newton of the British Museum writes to Gladstone. Newton explains that he has recently visited Schliemann's site at Mycenae and studied the newly-discovered finds. Newton believes that the Mycenaean antiquities are products of the heroic age: 'The antiquities from these tombs are what we have a right a priori to expect as the product of the heroic age.'[675]

This, for Gladstone, changes everything. It prompts the politician to fully engage with the new discoveries, with the aim of establishing whether there were compelling similarities between Schliemann's newest findings and the text of Homer. From the letter Gladstone addressed to Schliemann on January 8, 1877,[676] it was already clear that Gladstone intended to compare the remains of Troy and Mycenae. Now, thanks to

[674] Traill 1995: 176.
[675] Add MS 44454 f. 8 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone April 2, 1877.
[676] 23136 BOX 73 NO. 15 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann January 8, 1877.

Newton's letter, this becomes a key objective of Gladstone's Preface to Schliemann's *Mycenae.*[677]

Newton recognises the great archaeological value of the finds from Mycenae. Moreover, Newton suggests, the Mycenaean artefacts might plausibly shed light upon the Trojan remains from Hissarlik.[678] Newton sees no archaeological argument to disprove the assertion that 'the race who made the Hissarlik antiquities were Trojan and the race whose tombs at Mycenae have just been discovered were Greeks who fought at Troy'.[679] He has not yet the means nor the time to establish a full chronology, but he defends Schliemann and the value of his discoveries.[680] Newton accepts the historicity of the heroic age, crediting Gladstone's long-standing plea to the historical value of Homer. Secondly, he confirms the validity of Gladstone's approach. Newton favours a comparative approach to investigating the new discoveries, in particular. Finally, Newton – like Gladstone— is unsure of the dating of the finds.[681]

Gladstone keeps track of Newton's research on the Mycenaean discoveries, hoping to stay up to date on further developments. The British archaeologist gives a lecture at the Royal Archaeological Institute, on May 4, 1877. Gladstone is not able to attend the meeting, however, his diaries note that he read Newton's report.[682] In it, Newton returns to the issue of dating of the Mycenaean antiquities.[683] The *Times* of May 5, 1877, in its report on the Society's meeting, writes: 'Mr Newton thought we might venture to ascribe to the antiquities discovered by Dr Schliemann to a date at least as early as 800 BC. How much earlier than this they might be Mr Newton did not venture to say.'[684]

Thanks to Newton's research, Gladstone's perspective on the Mycenaean finds shifts. This, together with the persevering insistence of Schliemann, slowly convinces Gladstone that the time is right for a new Homeric intervention: to establish the Homeric nature of the Mycenaean finds.

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[677] Gladstone 1878b: v.
[678] Add MS 44454 f. 8 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone April 2, 1877.
[679] Add MS 44454 f. 8 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone April 2, 1877.
[680] Add MS 44454 f. 8 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone April 2, 1877.
[681] See Gladstone's Diaries vol. IX: 249-256 between September 10, 1877, and October 10, 1877, reads Schliemann's book and works on the Preface to *Mycenae* – work he initiated on September 20, 1877, see Gladstone's Diaries vol. IX: 251.
[682] See Gladstone's Diaries vol. IX:251 September 20, 1877, for Newton's Report on Mycenae.
[683] The *Times* May 5, 1877: 12.
[684] *The Times* May 5, 1877: 12.

Gladstone's Preface to Schliemann's *Mycenae* (1878) presents readers with Gladstone's own narrative of Homeric Mycenae, unearthed among Schliemann's ruins – manipulating and reshaping his readers' understanding of the ancient past. Gladstone's private correspondence reveals that Gladstone agrees to write Schliemann's preface under strict conditions. Gladstone writes to Murray on September 18, 1877, listing his requests.[685] First, Gladstone asks that: 'Dr Schliemann should kindly omit from the book anything in the nature of laudatory reference to me and simply quote me as he would any other person'. Then, he requests to be 'free to converse any of the points raised for argument in the work'; and, finally, to work with Phillip Smith and Charles Newton. Gladstone writes: 'Mr Newton if possible is to meet me at your house, that I may prop up my weakness a little like lame Hephaistus leaning on his golden hand maid.'[686] Just as he has done for many years, Gladstone builds his research on the conversations he shares with his contemporaries.

The second condition Gladstone imposes is more than a simple vindication of intellectual freedom. It reveals the author's intentions – especially if read in light of the interventions Gladstone has carried out throughout Schliemann's stay in London. Once again, Gladstone turns the tables and secures an opportunity to push his interpretation of the new archaeological discoveries into the foreground, presenting to British readers his own vision Homeric Mycenae.

Gladstone applies to the discoveries of Mycenae the same methodology he introduced in *Homeric Synchronism* (1876) for establishing the Homeric nature of the remains of Hissarlik. His initial scepticism is muted by a close study of Schliemann's forthcoming publication,[687] and his conversation with Newton.[688] Gladstone searches the remains for points of comparison with the Homeric Poems:

> The due establishment of the points of contact between the text and the remains from Mycenae is without question one of the essential aims, to which comment on this requires to be addressed.[689]

Gladstone's plan is ambitious but successful. He appropriates the remains of Mycenae as new, external proof of the historicity of the Homeric age:

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[685] See Gladstone Diaries vol. IX: 251 to date the letter that in Schliemann's archive bears no clear dating.
[686] 23139 1877 BOX 75 NO. 1198 W E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann.
[687] Gladstone's Diaries vol. IX: 249-256.
[688] Add MS 44454 f. 8 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone April 2, 1877.
[689] Gladstone 1878b: v.

I find, upon perusing the volume of Dr. Schliemann that the items of evidence, which connect his discovery generally with the Homeric Poems, are more numerous, than I had surmised from the brief outline, with which he favoured us upon his visit to England in the spring.[690]

One important change in his methodology differentiates Gladstone's approach in *Homeric Synchronism (1876)* from the Preface (1878). Unlike Schliemann's first discoveries, the Mycenaean antiquities have an archaeological point of reference. The new remains can and should be compared to the ones from Hissarlik:

We cannot compare the text with these remains alone, we are also bound to avail ourselves of such light can be had from Hissarlik whatever its effect upon our prepossession or our arguments.[691]

Gladstone not only finds parallels but also believes that he has resolved a major incongruence between the reality of the remains and the descriptions in the epics. In particular, he focuses on the difference in opulence between the remains of Troy and the vestiges of Mycenae.[692] The two Homeric, cities according to Homer, appear to share the same level of wealth, but the archaeological record appears to reveal that Mycenae was significantly wealthier than Troy. Gladstone solves the discrepancy through the Homeric text, noting that Homer mentions the cost of the war on several occasions; Troy's treasures would have been drastically depleted by ten years of war. Words and objects are, once again, seen as enlightening one another. What Homer says finds solid form in Schliemann's discoveries.

Gladstone's Preface fosters learned conversations and aims to advance knowledge of the ancient past.[693] It channels Schliemann's sometimes-reckless energy into a more structured and well-grounded approach to the interpretation of the finds from Mycenae.

In the Preface, we see the completion of process which began in 1858, with *Studies of Homer*: Gladstone's recognition of the importance of external evidence to the text which he knows so deeply. In 1869 with *Juventus Mundi,* Gladstone begins to circle closer to archaeology. However, it is at the beginning of the 1870s where his investigation starts to approach its goal, thanks to the new discoveries of Victorian archaeology, by De

[690] Gladstone 1878b: vi.
[691] Gladstone 1878b: xv.
[692] Gladstone 1878b: xv.
[693] *Examiner* December 23, 1876: 1436.

Cesnola, Schliemann and others. This methodology is put on a stronger footing in *Homeric Synchronism*, through the introduction of a new, compelling instrument for the study of the Homeric Poems: the archaeological finds of Schliemann and the most recent discoveries of Egyptology. Finally, with the Preface to *Mycenae*, still more evidence is added to the picture so that even sceptical archaeologists, among them Newton, are forced to admit the reality of the 'Homeric age'. Gladstone who is not blinded by the exuberant enthusiasm of Schliemann, or limited by the blunt scepticism of Newton, pushes forward an archaeologically-driven narrative that allows space for myth to become a solid reality.

Gladstone's contribution, by Schliemann's own admission, turns *Mycenae* (1878) into a best-seller, translated into multiple languages, including German and French.[694] On April 10, 1878,[695] Schliemann writes to Gladstone to thank him for his invaluable contribution.

> My Mycenae has been everywhere well received it has probably had a larger sale than my archaeological work ever published. […] my New York publishers wrote me: "your Mycenae has met with the most flattering reception both by the press and the public, and it is, and bids fair to remain the leading publication of the year." But for all this, I am entirely indebted to your wonderful Preface, which is universally considered as master view of the greatest scholar of all ages.[696]

Schliemann is not the only one impressed by Gladstone's scholarship. On October 20, 1877, Newton writes to him to congratulate him. According to Newton, Gladstone succeeded 'for the first time' in providing Schliemann's book with 'a sufficient basis for further discussion'.[697] Gladstone succeeds in providing a solid theoretical formulation which brings Schliemann's discoveries into the scholarly conversation. Here lies Gladstone's most important contribution to the contemporary discourse, and his fundamental role in the Victorian reception of Homer. Gladstone is the catalyst.

The Final Homeric Question

Gladstone and Schliemann's rapport gradually begins to break down. Multiple elements contribute to their progressive estrangement. After finishing his Preface, Gladstone makes

[694] Add MS 44455 f. 295 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone December 3, 1877.
[695] Add MS 44456 f. 210 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone April 10, 1878.
[696] Add MS 44456 f. 210 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone April 10, 1878.
[697] Add MS 44455 f. 202 C.T. Newton to W.E. Gladstone October 20, 1877.

no further use of Schliemann's discoveries. From the end of the 1870s, he undertakes a different course of research, for which Schliemann's further excavations have little relevance. Gladstone refuses to commit to other collaborations with Schliemann, despite the archaeologist's best efforts. Their papers preserve several examples of Schliemann's attempts to secure Gladstone's support for new archaeological discoveries.[698] On December 9, 1880, Schliemann writes:[699]

> My dear Mr Gladstone, from my publishers Harper and bros of NY you will have read a copy of the American edition of my new work Ilios which is dedicated to you and which I recommend to your past-time for collecting it being the offering of two years my hard labour. Nothing can give me greater pleasure than your satisfaction with it.[700]

As Schliemann notes, the American edition of *Ilios* (1880) is dedicated to Gladstone, and his conclusions feature many times in the book – further confirmation that Schliemann exploits Gladstone's work to validate his own claims, and that in so doing he further popularises Gladstone's Homeric research. Gladstone, however appreciative of the gesture, excuses from further commitments, pleading the weight of his political commitments.[701] In 1880, Gladstone has just entered his second mandate as Prime Minister.

Gladstone starts distancing himself from Schliemann's archaeological work, years before Schliemann loses his interest in Gladstone's Homeric work. Schliemann has no further role to play Gladstone's intellectual project. This does not imply, on Gladstone's part, a lack of friendship and esteem. On the contrary, Gladstone offers Schliemann his political support. When, in 1881, the archaeologist seeks Gladstone's help to resume his excavations at Hissarlik, Gladstone writes Schliemann a letter of recommendation to Lord

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[698] See Add MS 44483 f. 316 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone October 30, 1883: 'I have written and edited a new large work (both in English and in German) under the title Troja which Mr Murray is bringing out on the 10th Nov., and of which I requested him to send you an early copy. In the name of science, I beg you to read this work attentively, for by my excavation of last year I have brought to light all what remain of the Homeric Ilios and with the assistance of two experienced architects I have made very important discoveries which cannot but interest you in the highest degree. I shall be delighted to hear that you have read *Troja* and been pleased with it. At all counts this is my last book on Troy, for my work there is terminated forever.'

[699] Add MS 44467 f. 122 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone December 9, 1880; see Add MS 44471 f. 198 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone September 9, 1881, for a similar remark.

[700] Add MS 44467 f. 122 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone December 9, 1880; see also Add MS 44471 f. 198 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone September 9, 1881, for a similar remark.

[701] See Gladstone's autograph annotation on back of Add MS 44467 f. 122 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone December 9, 1880.

Dufferin, the British ambassador at Constantinople. This helps Schliemann secure a *Firman*.[702]

In 1884, Gladstone's dialogue with Schliemann reaches an abrupt end. Scholars have suggested a range of explanations, chiefly political. Schreuder (1987) and Trail (1995) argue for a violent reaction to the Sudan disaster, and the massacre at Khartoum, in particular, on Schliemann's part.[703] Matthew and Foot, instead, blame it on a quarrel related to Home Rule.[704] Bebbington (2004) blames Schliemann's sympathy with Bismarck.[705] While many of these factors may well have played a part, the correspondence tells us that their final disagreement revolves around Homer. Gladstone confronts the archaeologist about the rendering of the Homeric word 'kuanos': Schliemann believes *kuanos* to be blue glass, Gladstone insists that it is bronze.

In a circular tale, the relationship between Gladstone and Schliemann ends where it began: with metallurgy and Homer. Over a decade of correspondence, perhaps the most recurrent question Gladstone had for Schliemann was regarding the presence of bronze among his findings. On June 6, 1884, when he writes to Schliemann, Gladstone is once again eager to know whether the large deposit of metal found at Orchomenos has been subjected to testing, to ascertain its metallic composition. In this context, Gladstone opens the discussion of Homeric *kuanos*:

> I am very anxious to learn from you whether these nails or any of them were tested to ascertain their material, and yet more anxious to know whether a like process has been applied to the fragments, and the fused or molten pieces. It is surely very difficult to believe that the walls were lined with sheets of bronze. A great metallurgist assured me, I think, that this was hardly possible […]. And hence is it possible that sheets of bronze which tends so much to dullness of colour could have been compared by Homer to rays of the Sun or Moon? That the nails might have been of bronze is much more intelligible but the sheets of wall-plating to which Homer refers would in all likelihood have been in copper, though he speaks of an armour in *kuanos* which is very likely to have been bronze.[706]

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[702] Add MS 44471 f. 198 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone September 9, 1881; Add MS 44471 f. 237 H. Schliemann to W. E. Gladstone September 15, 1881.
[703] See Shannon 1999:133, 549, 645: it seems that Schliemann affixed to his lavatory the autograph photo of the ex-close friend. See also Schreuder 1987: 54-55 and Traill 1995: 244 for Schliemann ceremoniously ripping Gladstone's photograph and throwing it into the toilet (see H. Lloyd-Jones Blood for the Ghosts (London, 1982): 110-26), to which we can add Flinders Petrie's story that when Schliemann visited his dig in Egypt, Schliemann said "it was a shame & disgrace to Englishmen that they have not hung Gladstone long ago", to which Flinders Petrie adds "Bravo!": M. Drower Flinders Petrie: a Life in Archaeology see Madison 1995: 138.
[704] Gladstone Diaries vol. VIII: 400 October 13, 1873.
[705] Bebbington 2004: 203.
[706] 30126 BOX 94 No. 288 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann June 6, 1884.

Schliemann's initial response, on June 16, 1884, was to deflect the question. He confesses to Gladstone that the finds in question cannot be tested in the way Gladstone had hoped: the artefacts are either missing, sold, or dispersed across museums. Schliemann himself had only carried out a basic analysis while the artefacts had been in his possession. On the question of Homeric *kuanos*, he suspended judgement, simply remarking that the Homeric material could be steel. In closing, Schliemann informed Gladstone that he would be visiting London in the summer. [707]

Gladstone and Schliemann met in July 1884, during the archaeologist's visit to London. During their reunion, the two did not engage with the question of the Homeric *kuanos*.[708] Only later, on August 21, 1884, did Schliemann resume the discussion. His letter to Gladstone adopted such a different tone from their previous correspondence,[709] that Bebbington (2004) believed he was 'hectoring rather than fawning.'[710] Schliemann states, categorically, that 'by *kuanos* the poet can mean nothing else than the thousands of cut pieces of blue glass'. He informs Gladstone that Professor Wolfgang Helbing of the Imperial Archaeological Institute has confirmed his hypothesis. Then, he claims that his excavations at Tiryns have provided conclusive evidence on the matter: 'the great palace of the legendary kings of Tiryns which I excavated this spring has furnished the most ample and undoubted evidence that his hypothesis is perfectly proven'. Schliemann concludes his letter by claiming, confidently, that his theory – not Gladstone's – will be universally adopted when his work on Tiryns is published.[711] This is, clearly, a marked shift in Schliemann's attitude towards Gladstone.[712] Gladstone is not swayed by Schliemann's certainty: he points out that difficulties involved in Schliemann's reading of *kuanos* as glass. First, the fact that Agamemnon's breastplate is made of the very same material. In his letter of August 26, 1884, Gladstone quotes as an example *Iliad* XI, verse 24.[713] After this altercation, the two stop corresponding. Agamemnon's glass breastplate was the last straw: there was no answer from Schliemann to Gladstone's letter.[714]

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[707] Add MS 44486 f. 262 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone June 16, 1884.
[708] 30127 BOX 95 No. 341 W.E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann London (England, UK) July 12, 1884; Add MS 44487 f.180 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone August 21, 1884.
[709] Add MS 44487 f.180 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone August 21, 1884.
[710] Bebbington 2004: 203.
[711] Add MS 44487 f. 180 H. Schliemann to W.E. Gladstone August 21, 1884.
[712] Bebbington 2004: 203.
[713] 30128 BOX 95 No. 431 W. E. Gladstone to H. Schliemann August 26, 1884.
[714] See Gladstone Diaries v. XII: 356 January 4, 1891: 'also 6.30 P.M. Wrote to Madame Schliemann.' Gladstone writes to Sophie Schliemann after the death of her husband.

Gladstone and Schliemann's relationship breaks down not simply because of divergent readings, but due to a radical difference in their methodologies. Schliemann is so obsessed with bringing the myth to life, that he is willing to side-line the Homeric Poems, forcing the text to adhere to his archaeological discoveries. Gladstone, by contrast, wants to bring myth into the realms of history. Thus, he refuses to bend Homer's words to accommodate Schliemann's finds. Over the course of the 1870s, Gladstone developed a methodology which granted the object a story and the story an object. The profound methodological differences between Gladstone and Schliemann exasperates their disagreement, leading their relationship to an inevitable breakdown.

During Schliemann's visit to the British capital in 1877, and through his Preface to *Mycenae* (1878) Gladstone once again reshapes the British public's understanding of the ancient past. His interpretations of the Mycenaean finds build the foundations for a wide-ranging conversation around the new discoveries. For much of the 1870s, Schliemann owes his reputation and credibility in Britain to Gladstone. His repeated appeals to Gladstone's authority have the effect of broadcast the Homerist's theories, widening the reach of Gladstone's scholarship. By the end of the 1870s, Gladstone had built himself a solid reputation as a Homeric scholar: he was seen as an authoritative voice in the Homeric field both within and outside academic circles. Gladstone's Homeric research had a transformative power, in shaping Victorian discourse, and nineteenth-century Britain's relationship with the ancient world.

Conclusion

In the 1870s, Gladstone's pivotal role in shaping the contemporary reception of Homer, and the study of ancient history more broadly, was widely acknowledged. Via his Homeric studies, Gladstone revolutionises the Victorian understanding of the ancient past. Years of Homeric studies, combined with the fruits of recent archaeological excavations, turned Gladstone from an eclectic connoisseur of Homer into the esteemed father of Homerology. Gladstone strengthens his position both by pursuing new lines of research, and by seizing every opportunity to promote his research and debate his critics. As a result, he is able to gain a remarkable level of visibility for his Homeric theories.

In 1878, Gladstone's theories were critiqued by William Duguid Geddes, professor of Greek at the University of Aberdeen. The debate between Gladstone and the eminent Scottish scholar soon attracted the attention of the press.[715] While space does not permit a full discussion of the controversy,[716] one element is striking: the universal acceptance of the authority of Gladstone's voice. The newspapers present Gladstone as the leading voice in the study of the Homeric question among leading Victorian academics[717] and Geddes addresses Gladstone as a respected peer.[718]

It is through these moments – and through scholars such as Geddes, who often strongly disagreed with Gladstone – that we can glimpse the full scope of Gladstone's impact on the Homeric field. Geddes commends his adversary's scholarship, and his life-long commitment to the study of Homer:

> Although I have thus ventured to differ from Mr. Gladstone, it would be both unjust and uncourteous to do otherwise than acknowledge the great services he has rendered to Homeric scholarship, the felicity and fruitfulness of many of his remarks and observations and the immense impulse, which he has given to Homerology in our country. I make bold to say, that he has done more for the study of Homer in a generation, than all Oxford and Cambridge together have done for a century before him, and that the

[715] *The Athenaeum*, August 31, 1878: 263; Mahaffy, J. P. for *Macmillan's Magazine* September 1878: 405; *Examiner* September 28, 1878: 1237; [*The North American Review*; July 1, 1878: 511].
[716] Geddes, professor of Classics at the University of Aberdeen, sees two hands/authors at work in the Poems, and divides the Poems into an older and a later narrative. Gladstone defends the single paternity of the Poems and their coherence.
[717] See e.g. Mahaffy, J. P. for *Macmillan's Magazine* September 1878: 405.
[718] GG 1636 39: *The Aberdeen Journal* October 31, 1878.

publication of his work on Homer has been the signal, or the occasion, if not the cause of a long and brilliant succession of Homeric works, now, issuing from the English University.[719]

According to Geddes, Gladstone has reshaped Homeric studies for an entire generation of studies. As Geddes notes, Gladstone's influence does not lie in a single publication, but in his restlessness: Gladstone keeps redirecting the contemporary discourse with each of his interventions. Geddes reveals Gladstone's authority within the Homeric arena. Gladstone does not simply enrich the discourse, he shapes it – and he is often its catalyst.

In the 1870s, Gladstone reshapes the study of Homer through his work on Schliemann's discoveries. He steps up to defend the Homeric nature of Schliemann's controversial finds. Not only does he give Schliemann's discoveries his seal of approval, but he interprets them in such a way as to place them at the centre of British classical discourse. Rather than offering the right solution, Gladstone should take the credit for promoting a dialogue between archaeology and philology, thus propelling the contemporary discourse on Homer forward. Gladstone, alongside Schliemann, is responsible for a new Homeric revival. The *London Quarterly* of October 1878 tells us:

There has been a great Homeric revival in another direction. If the ingenious youth has given up reading Pope, his father and sister, and even his mother have heard of Schliemann and have probably read some of Mr. Gladstone's many contributions to his favourite subject.[720]

The debate between Gladstone and Geddes, however, does not just reverberate across the contemporary press, but also in university classrooms. Geddes uses a lecture to his Senior Greek class at the University of Aberdeen to debunk Gladstone's argument.[721] This is no minor detail, as it reveals another cultural space that Gladstone successfully invades with his Homeric studies.

Geddes is not alone in his decision to engage with aspects of Gladstone's scholarship in the University classroom. The last question of the Michaelmas Honours examination at Oxford University in 1877 invites the students to engage with Gladstone's Homeric theories on Homeric geography:

[719] GG 1636 39: *The Aberdeen Journal* October 31, 1878.
[720] *London Quarterly* October 1878: 234.
[721] GG 1636 39 *The Aberdeen Journal,* October 31, 1878.

18. What are the difficulties connected with the geography of Ithaca and its adjoining islands, and what consideration had Mr. Gladstone suggested which tend to remove these difficulties?[722]

This question presupposes that Gladstone's research was deemed suitable for study in the Victorian University alongside the Homeric scholarship of more conventional authors.[723] So, roughly a year before Geddes decides to discuss Gladstone's Homeric theories during one of his lectures, our Homerist's studies were subject of examination at Oxford University. It should, in consequence, be unsurprising to find, in Gladstone's diary, a note revealing that Gladstone agrees to deliver a lecture on Homer at Oxford, on July 5, 1879.[724] *The Times* reports that the venue was packed for the event. [725] Gladstone has successfully elevated himself from an eccentric, liminal figure to a pivotal protagonist of the academic debate around Homer. Gladstone is actively reshaping the reception of the ancient world in Victorian Britain.

In 1883, the *Pall Mall Gazette* publishes the results of a most curious survey which dispel any doubts about Gladstone's contemporary reputation as a Homeric scholarly authority. The newspaper asks its readers to vote for the members of an ideal Academy. Gladstone comes thirteenth in the poll, due to his Homeric studies – and not his political expertise.[726] It is vital that scholarship makes space for Gladstone's role as Homeric scholar as a prominent and autonomous aspect of the author's complex character, alongside Gladstone the statesman and Gladstone the religious thinker.

In February 1876, Gladstone accepts nomination to an Honorary Professorship in Ancient History at the Royal Academy.[727] Francis Grant, President of the Royal Academy, writes to Gladstone offering the position on February 11, 1876: 'Though you have not written a history of Greece it is the opinion of the members that your intimate knowledge of Greek literature and also of Greek art fully qualify you for the appointment.'[728] For Grant and the electors, it is clear that Gladstone's Homeric studies

[722] GG 1634 14.
[723] See GG 1634 14: A booklet dating 1877 reveals the questions of the Greek examination of the Michaelmas term 1877 for senior Freshmen at Oxford University.
[724] See Bebbington 2004: 147-148. In the past, as his diaries attest, Gladstone has given speeches at Universities across Great Britain. Perhaps Gladstone's most notorious speech in defence of classical education in English *Curricula* is *The Place of Homer in Classical Education* of 1857 as it becomes an integral part of *Studies on Homer* a year later in 1858.
[725] *The Times*, July 7, 1879.
[726] GG 1635 35 *Pall Mall Gazette* November 25, 1883.
[727] Add MS f.130 F. Grant to W.E. Gladstone February 11, 1876; Add MS 44449 f.132 F. Grant to W.E. Gladstone February 16, 1876.
[728] Add MS f.130 Francis Grant to W.E. Gladstone February 11, 1876

were a pivotal contribution to the field. Gladstone's campaign to make the epics history had taken him to some of the highest reaches of Victorian scholarship.

At the Royal Academy, Gladstone was elected to a professorship previously held by George Grote, the banker who authored arguably the century's most influential history of Greece. Bebbington (2004) reminds us that Grote, as a republican, 'pioneered the rehabilitation of Athenian democracy as the see-bed of intellectual freedom.'[729] He and Gladstone could hardly have been more different – and were fierce rivals. Bebbington (2004) notes: 'it was natural for Gladstone, the robust champion of monarchy, to try to turn the tables on Grote. He [Gladstone] opened his account of political practice in *Studies on Homer* by issuing a protest against Grote's denigration of the institutions of the heroic age. […] Gladstone's analysis is conditioned by the imperative to refute Grote.'[730] The Royal Academy's nomination confirms the scholarly authority Gladstone has acquired with his Homeric studies – and serves as a useful reminder of the importance of non-academics in the shaping and advancement of specialist discourses during the Victorian age.

The scholarly model which dismisses Gladstone's Homeric research of the 1870s as ineffective is clearly in need of re-evaluation. Through a series of little-known episodes, this thesis has revealed the ways in which Gladstone influences and reshapes his country's reception of Homer. Gladstone uses his Homeric studies to challenge and change his contemporaries' understanding of the ancient past.

Far from being diffuse and disconnected, Gladstone's Homeric output of the 1870s is the fruit of a carefully designed plan. Over the course of a decade, Gladstone carries out a Homeric campaign of epic proportions, aimed at proving that Homer and the Homeric age belong to history, not myth. According to Gladstone, the Homeric age is, in all respects, a segment of prehistory; the Poems of Homer are guides to the investigation of the ancient past.

By re-evaluating the cultural significance of Gladstone's Homeric studies in the 1870s, this thesis aims to engage productively with a number of fields. Firstly, it expands and amends the scholarship on Gladstone's Homeric research, pursuing and nuancing the conversations Bebbington's studies initiated in 2004. The historical turn Gladstone emphasises in his research, gives autonomy to his Homeric investigation. His can no

[729] Bebbington 2004: 150.

[730] See Bebbington 2004: 150 for further information about Gladstone and Grote's Homeric dispute see Turner 1981: 213-244; Bebbington 2004: 149-154; Bebbington 1998:157-176; Quinault, Swift, Windscheffel 2012: 21-24.

longer be seen as subordinate to his political or religious agenda, but rather acquires independent aims.

Turning to the history of classics, this thesis demonstrates the important ways in which non-academic voices could shape academic disciplines, during the nineteenth-century. The Victorian discourse on Homer often thrives and develops outside universities. Thanks to the work of figures such as Gladstone, who stubbornly refuse to submit to disciplinary boundaries, we can see the development of the field from a new perspective. Gladstone's refusal to fit in is also what makes many of his interventions so influential: he is a man between worlds, and takes advantage of his ambivalence, oscillating between the politician and the scholar, the academic and the dilettante, the religious intellectual and the scientific thinker. Because of his fluidity, he is able to be uniquely receptive to new ideas, to make those ideas his own, then to introduce them into the discourse, recalibrated for maximum effect.

Gladstone pushes Homer in ways which few other scholars have and uses the Poems in unprecedented ways. He hopes to use Homer to reset the terms of numerous ongoing Victorian debates, not necessarily related to the humanities, including the discourses of archaeology and the debates surrounding the theory of evolution. Gladstone is, arguably, the ultimate humanist of the Victorian age. He reads, interprets, and reshapes his world through his understanding of Homer.

This suggests a wider need to re-examine the role of disciplinary permeability in the formation of knowledge, in Victorian Britain. Focusing on long-neglected archival evidence, widely dismissed as insignificant, a very different picture of Gladstone's Homeric studies has emerged. Granular archival detail has the potential to reveal how the Victorians knew things, how they interacted, and how they formed groups. Following Gladstone, it is possible to uncover how individual networks grew up, how people interacted in unexpected spaces, and how ideas came to be shared and changed.
In many of these cases, epistolary exchange is the primary means of knowledge transmission and knowledge formation.

These relaxed conversations and encounters are, often, no less significant than any specialist treatise. As Gladstone's papers show, these conversations inform and guide the more visible discourse: they emerge in articles, publications, speeches at learned societies, and into monographs. Through Gladstone's archives, it has been possible to retrace some of the internal dynamics of Victorian learned discussions, the missing links between private, informal conversations and formal publications.

Gladstone's private papers – the labyrinth with which this thesis began - reflect the fluidity which characterises the nineteenth-century cultural panorama. We witness people mingling, and discourses intertwining. Unexpected dialogues spring and fruitful exchanges are promoted. Gladstone's research partakes in and reflects this phenomenon, offering a unique starting point for its investigation.

This thesis has pursued an 'epistolary' approach to the history of archaeology.[731] Here, a letter is not only a medium of scientific communication, network building, and socialisation. It is also a means to immerse ourselves in the characters, spaces, and dynamics of a particular age. Letters work as an invitation to identify and to question the preconceptions and biases that too often shape our modern understating of Victorian culture.

This thesis invites us to look critically at the ways in which we form our understanding of a culture's relationship with the past. A granular command of the archival sources – particularly those which may have been neglected, or little studied, by other scholars – is a valuable way to access and understand the historical consciousness of an age. In reconstructing the history of an individual's relationship with Homer, it has been possible to reveal how one individual, working often behind the scenes, often in ways which have left only the faintest traces, can transform Victorian Britain's relationship with the past.

This exercise in 'epistolary archaeology' has sought to rewrite the history of the discovery of Troy and its reception in Britain, to demonstrate that, in the eyes of many Victorians, it was Gladstone not Schliemann who revealed Homer's Troy in the ruins of Hissarlik.

To change the ways in which Victorian Britain studied Homer, Gladstone first engineers a new methodology which breaks free from a purely philological approach, welcoming the contribution of other disciplines, particularly archaeology and the natural sciences. Then, Gladstone attempts to sharpen the tools available to researchers – and his own target audience. He attempts to construct a new dictionary of the contents of the Poems, writes an introduction to the study of the epics, and is instrumental in bringing Schliemann's Trojan antiquities to London for the public to visit free of charge between 1877 and 1881. Gladstone proves to his contemporaries that Homeric research is – and deserves to be – more than an exercise in literary criticism and aesthetic taste. It is part of

[731] Ideas developed in collaboration with my placement supervisor Dr Thomas Kiely, A.G. Leventis curator of the Greek and Roman Department of the British Museum.

an urgent investigation into the remote past of mankind. With his new science, Gladstone presents to the Victorians a new way of looking at the past, and in so doing, addresses a question which underlines Victorian cultural discourse, and which shakes the balance between faith and science: who has the right to write the ancient past of mankind? For Gladstone, the answer is the Homerologist.

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[732] https://www.gladstoneslibrary.org/reading-rooms/the-collections/archives/glynne-gladstone-archive
[733] https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/index.php/archives/heinrich-schliemann-finding-aid/

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