

# HOMER IN THE ESCORIAL

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## HOMER IN THE ESCORIAL

Casey Dué and Mary Ebbott

The frescoes painted by Pellegrino Tibaldi and Bartolomé Carducho on the vaulted ceiling of the Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial swirl with activity. Colors, figures, decorative elements, the gleam of the gilding—all these elements together give the impressions of many things happening at once (Fig. 1). Numerous human figures gesture and point as they are depicted in and around several different visual narratives. Panels portraying personifications of the seven traditional liberal arts progress along the ceiling, joined at either end by depictions of Philosophy and Theology. Connected scenes radiating to either side illustrate examples of each of them with scenes of Classical or Biblical figures and stories.<sup>1</sup> Between the sections illustrating the liberal arts of Rhetoric and Dialectic (two of the three that made up the Classical *trivium*), four poets are portrayed: Homer, Virgil, Pindar, and Horace—one Greek and one Latin poet on each side of the room, representing epic poetry on one side and lyric poetry on the other. These Classical authors, along with the many others depicted (including Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Cicero, Quintilian, Demosthenes, Livy, and Pliny the Elder), evoke a Renaissance ideal of Classical erudition and seem to ask the humans below to join them in that learning. In his portrait (Fig. 2) Homer is depicted, as is traditional, as blind, yet with his left hand and foot he reaches down from his seat toward those who look up at him. The gaze of Virgil is directed at Homer, communicating Virgil's own poetic debt to Homer and also sending our attention back to him. Although the poets are not thematically or spatially central to any of the liberal arts (indeed, it is difficult to say whether they are meant to belong to rhetoric or to dialectic, or both or neither), their presence on the ceiling signals that they have their place in this library and in its larger celebration of learning.

Homer is found not just in the frescoes at the library of the Escorial, of course. The library owns two of the six oldest complete manuscripts of Homer's *Iliad* still extant. These two eleventh-century Byzantine manuscripts, Escorial Y.I.1 (294) and Escorial Ω.I.12 (513), also demonstrate a rich conception of classical learning in their copious scholarly comments on the poetry. These comments, referred to as *scholia*, appear on nearly every page of each manuscript, often to the point of filling all available space around the lines of poetry. The presence and quantity of the scholia suggest that the creators and subsequent owners of these manuscripts wanted exegesis in addition to the poetry itself. Homer in these manuscripts, therefore, is emblematic not only of epic poetry, but also of a long history of scholarship on the poems, a scholarship that has its own history and its own textual transmission. Because some of the comments quote

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<sup>1</sup> Portuondo 2010 and Stratton-Pruitt 2007 provide two recent attempts at analyzing the “program” of the library’s iconography, relying heavily on the description and explanation given by the second librarian at the Escorial, José de Sigüenza. Both Portuondo and Stratton-Pruitt mention the picture of Homer only in passing.

other versions of the poetic lines as they are cited by scholars from as far back as the third century BCE, the scholia also provide evidence for the composition and textual transmission of the epic that has otherwise been lost.

These manuscripts thus offer their own swirl of activity as the scholia in each of them interact with the poetic text, pointing both to it and in other directions, to other versions and differing interpretations. The two manuscripts together provide an intriguing glimpse into the scholarly world of the eleventh century, when the manuscripts were created, as well as much further back in time in the scholarly tradition. And they propel us into the future as well, to the time when these codices were acquired for Philip II's royal library, and then to our own moment in the history of Homeric scholarship. As a pair they complement one another: their commentary overlaps to a certain extent, but each is its own unique compilation. The Homer Multitext ([www.homermultitext.org](http://www.homermultitext.org)) will eventually offer a complete digital edition of each manuscript individually, thereby enabling anyone who wishes to discover afresh what each contains and what together and individually they can tell us about the Homeric *Iliad*, the history of the scholarship on it, and new directions modern scholarship can take. In this essay on the historical background of the two manuscripts, we will explore what is known, or what has been argued, about how and why these two manuscripts came to reside in the library of the Escorial.

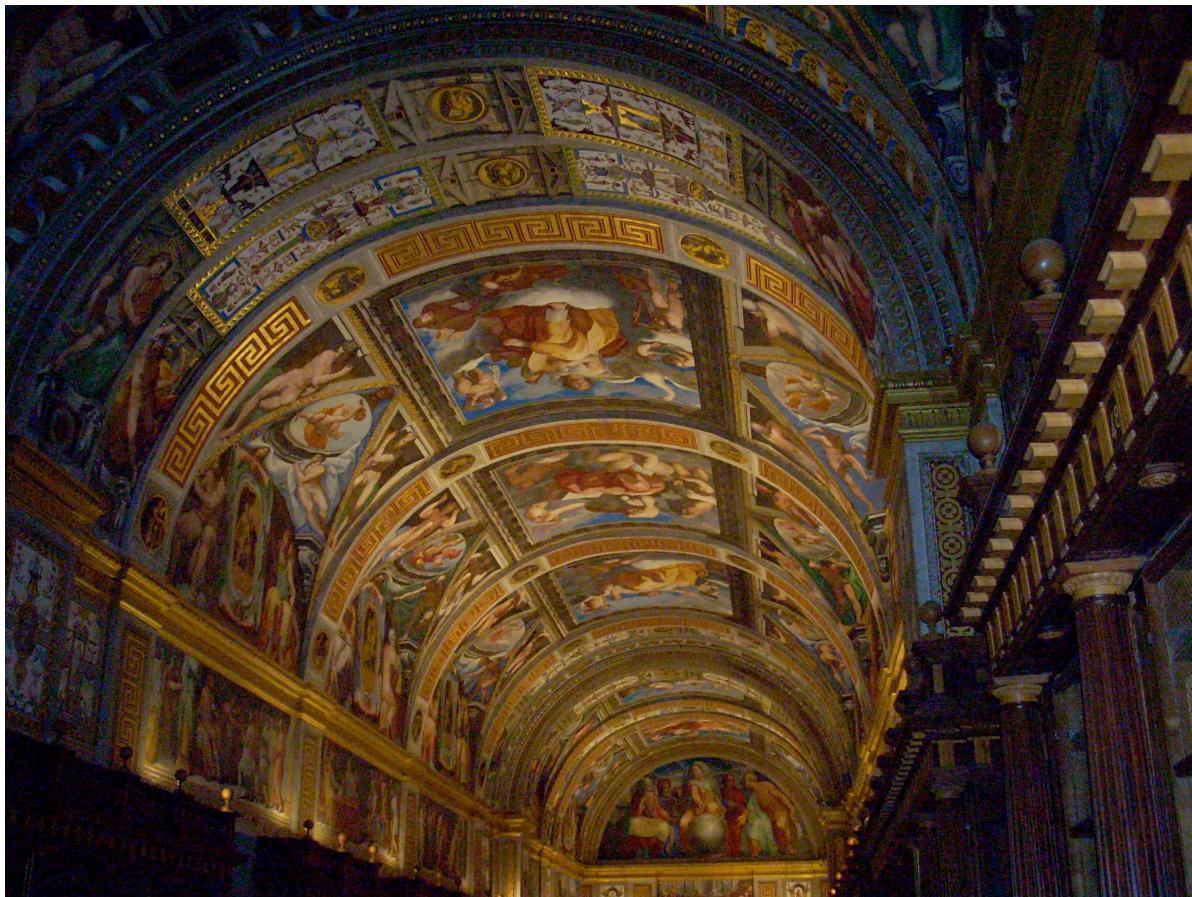


Figure 1: the main room of the library at the Escorial (photo by Mary Ebbott, 2010).



Figure 2: Virgil and Homer, detail from the frescoes of the library at the Escorial (photo by Mary Ebbott, 2010).

### Establishing a Royal Library in the Sixteenth Century

Philip wanted a library. In his plans for El Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Philip II of Spain housed many different functions in one building: it included a basilica, a palace, a monastery, a mausoleum, a college, and a library. Its construction began in 1562 and was completed in 1586, with interior work continuing into the 1590's.<sup>2</sup> The complex seems to bring together and connect, both spatially and conceptually, everything Philip could want into one location.<sup>3</sup> The main room of the library itself joins the college (the depiction of Philosophy is located over the door leading to the college) and the monastery (accessed through the door below the depiction of Theology).

The library was designed by the Spanish architect and mathematician Juan de Herrera, and the personal library of Philip himself formed the initial core of the

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<sup>2</sup> Portuondo 2010: 1106.

<sup>3</sup> Kamen (1997: 186) says that "The Escorial was in great measure Philip's creation, a projection of his ideas."

collection.<sup>4</sup> In 1556 Felipe de la Torre, in his *Institution of a Christian King* (which was dedicated to Philip), had written “how necessary it is for kings to read books, and for men to advise them of the truth.”<sup>5</sup> Philip evidently agreed. He wrote to his ambassador in Paris Don Francés de Alava in 1568 that a collection of manuscripts at the Escorial was “one of the most important things that I wanted to leave there.”<sup>6</sup> Philip’s secretary likewise wrote to the ambassador, “His Majesty wishes to build up a library notable for manuscripts and other rare books, and wishes to spend 50,000 ducats on it and to search for the best that there is in Christendom.”<sup>7</sup> Philip intended for his library at the Escorial to be much more than a personal collection. He wanted it to surpass in both size and importance the great collections of Europe that he had visited during his time abroad as a young man.<sup>8</sup>

For Philip, collecting of many kinds seems to have had both personal and political benefits. A parallel collection he made during his lifetime, also from all over Europe but especially from all parts of Spain, and housed in the Escorial is his collection of nearly 7,500 relics. Guy Lazure has argued that this collection had not only religious, devotional purposes, but also fulfilled royal aims by legitimizing Philip’s monarchy and by attempting to create a national Catholic identity.<sup>9</sup> Collections of relics, books, and works of art were symbols of power for royalty at this time,<sup>10</sup> and in all of Philip’s collections, including his library, the drive was to make the collection as comprehensive and as impressive as possible.

To achieve the extensive and grand collection that would be his royal library, Philip began to direct his agents and ambassadors abroad, most notably Francés de Álava in France and Diego Guzmán de Silva in Venice, to acquire as many volumes as

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<sup>4</sup> For more on Herrera (who had a very close relationship with Philip) and the design and conception of the Escorial see Zerner 1993. A great deal has been written about the Escorial complex and Philip’s ambitions for it. For this historical sketch we have relied primarily on the accounts by Charles Graux 1880 and Henry Kamen 2010. (See also Kamen’s 1997 biography of Philip himself.) Other recent treatments in English include Parker 1998, Mulcahy 2004, Stratton-Pruitt 2007, and Portuondo 2010. See also the important article by Taylor 1967.

<sup>5</sup> See Kamen 2010: 204.

<sup>6</sup> See Kamen 2010: 105. The letter, King to Álava, 17 Dec. 1568, is no. 143 in Rodríguez and Rodríguez 1991.

<sup>7</sup> Rodríguez and Rodríguez 1991: no. 132. The translation is Kamen’s (2010: 105).

<sup>8</sup> See Kamen 2010: 13–14 and 103.

<sup>9</sup> Lazure 2007. Kamen 1997: 190 similarly asserts, “Collecting was more than a personal hobby. It was also an attempt to give dignity to the monarchy, by furnishing his palaces.”

<sup>10</sup> Kaufmann 1995: 167–183 examines the role of collecting by royalty and nobility during the sixteenth century, noting that “collecting became a field for social distinction” (170). Kamen 1997: 188, “Expanding on the material already to be found in the palaces, Philip from the 1560s built up collections in every known branch of the arts.” Kamen also connects the collections of books and of relics, 1997: 188–189.

possible and to search out entire collections for sale.<sup>11</sup> According to Kamen, Philip's library "was perhaps the most ambitious of his projects, since he planned to collect volumes from all parts of the empire. No other monarch of the time, not even the pope, had so ambitious a plan."<sup>12</sup> It was Philip's ambassador in Venice, Guzmán de Silva, who acquired Escorialensis Y.I.1 and Escorialensis Ω.I.12 in 1572.<sup>13</sup> Why were these Byzantine manuscripts, already some 500 years old at that point in time, available for purchase in Venice? In the previous century, as the Byzantine Empire declined in power and before Constantinople was eventually conquered by Mehmet II's Ottoman army in 1453, manuscripts were evidently moved out of the Byzantine capital.<sup>14</sup> Venice, a mercantile and naval power that even fought on the side of Constantinople against the Ottomans, provided a prominent landing place for these manuscripts. We have only tantalizing bits of information about where Guzmán de Silva found these manuscripts.<sup>15</sup> Escorialensis Y.I.1 was purchased by Guzmán de Silva from a bookseller named Gaspar. Escorialensis Ω.I.12 previously belonged to a Venetian named Nicolás Barelli, who sold them to Guzmán de Silva (for the King) in 1572 along with twenty-one other manuscripts.

Were these two manuscripts of the *Iliad* of interest to Philip himself as works of scholarship, or for whose study were they intended, if anyone's? Philip was tutored in Latin and Greek by Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella and could read, speak, and write Latin well, but he did not have the same facility with Greek. In 1547 Philip's secretary Gonzolo Pérez dedicated to him a Castilian translation of the *Iliad* so that he might "see in his own tongue what many famous princes have read in Greek."<sup>16</sup> It was not in fact common for Spanish elite at this time to know Latin and Greek. But as we have been observing, the symbolism of the library was very important for Philip's imperial ambitions. Suzanne Stratton-Pruitt has argued that the library of the Escorial recalls libraries founded by Roman emperors, such as Trajan, that were built adjacent to temples and under the care of priests, and the Escorial's recreation of that connection

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<sup>11</sup> Ambassadors, including de Álava, were also charged with collecting relics, Lazure 2007: 75.

<sup>12</sup> Kamen 2010: 103.

<sup>13</sup> On the acquisition of Escorialensis Y.I.1 and Escorialensis Ω.I.12 see Revilla 1936: 65–68 and de Andrés 1965: 178, 1967: 134, and 1971.

<sup>14</sup> Blackwell and Dué 2009: 2–4. Staikos 2007: 449 notes, "Between the early fifteenth century and 1453 more than a thousand manuscripts had been exported to Italy, mostly from Constantinople: not only contemporary copies, but many written in antiquity, too. Those manuscripts were taken out of the country either by a certain number of scholars who left the capital to seek their fortune in Italian centers of learning, or by Italian agents and students who bought manuscripts in Constantinople."

<sup>15</sup> The story of the acquisition is recounted in Graux 1880: 119–126. See also de Andrés 1971.

<sup>16</sup> The quote comes from A. G. Palencia, *Gonzalo Pérez*, vols I-II. Madrid, 1946, I, 108. See Kamen 2010: 101–102.

situates it in an imperial tradition.<sup>17</sup> Philip's own relatives, the Habsburgs, had founded imperial libraries in Austria, libraries which he himself had visited.<sup>18</sup> There were, moreover, some "Spanish Hellenists," philologists and collectors of manuscripts who encouraged the King to create a royal library.<sup>19</sup> In particular, the scholar and first librarian of the Escorial, Benito Arias Montano, promoted the philological study of the Bible as well as philology in general.<sup>20</sup> So there were several possible interested readers of such manuscripts, even if they did not ultimately use them.

Philip's sweeping method of collecting books and manuscripts for his library means that chance certainly played a role in how these two old and learned manuscripts of the *Iliad* ended up at the Escorial. The king deliberately sought to acquire entire collections of manuscripts at once, and so duplication was almost inevitable. But the prestige of Homeric poetry was probably also a major factor in why Philip would acquire multiple manuscripts of the *Iliad*. From our earliest references to Homer in antiquity to the time of Philip himself, the figure of Homer was held up as the first and greatest of all poets, even when Western Europeans were incapable of reading the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in their original Greek. It is worth examining in brief the long path taken by these poems from their earliest incarnations as orally composed poetry to the canonical poems revered by those of Philip's day.

### Homer in the Renaissance

In antiquity Homer was often referred to as simply "the poet," without further qualification or specification, the inspiration of all subsequent poets.<sup>21</sup> The performance of Homeric poetry was a central feature of one of the most important religious festivals of the ancient world, the Panathenaia in honor of Athena in Athens, and the interpretation of Homeric poetry was one of the principal occupations of ancient scholars and philosophers. As Robert Browning has noted with reference to the Ptolemaic library of Alexandria: "the impressive textual, grammatical, metrical, and lexicographic studies of the great Alexandrian scholars laid the foundation on which all European literary and philological studies have been built."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Stratton-Pruitt 2007: 390–394.

<sup>18</sup> On the Habsburgs as founders of libraries see Stratton-Pruitt 2007: 390.

<sup>19</sup> For more on the Spanish Renaissance see Graux 1880: 1–29.

<sup>20</sup> Portuondo 2010: 1135. Arias Montano was the editor of another one of Philip's commissioned prestige projects, the Antwerp Polyglot Bible, which published the Old Testament in Hebrew, Latin, Greek, and Aramaic and the New Testament in Greek, Latin, and Syriac. Montano himself prepared the three-volume apparatus, Shalev 2003: 58–59.

<sup>21</sup> See Harmon 1923. The following account has been adapted from Dué 2005.

<sup>22</sup> Browning 1992: 134.

Homer was transmitted from antiquity to the Middle Ages and beyond not only through the work of literary scholars and philosophers, but also through the epics' place in education. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were the centerpieces of Greek education from Classical times through the Byzantine Empire.<sup>23</sup> Allegorical interpretation of Homeric poetry was an important tool for reading the texts in the Christian Byzantine culture. But even beyond allegory, Homer was cited as an authority alongside scripture in both secular and Christian rhetoric.<sup>24</sup> As Christianity gained ascendancy in late antiquity, pagan scholars had attempted to establish the Homeric texts as a kind of authoritative scripture akin to the Christian texts. Such early influential figures as Augustine disapproved of most of pagan literature, but some early Christian scholars saw Homer as a kind of visionary who had anticipated Christianity, and claimed that Homer had read Moses and the prophets.<sup>25</sup> Byzantine Greeks came to see Homeric poetry and Christianity as two important and interlocking sides of their heritage, and for this reason no attempt was made to replace the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as the central school texts in the Greek East.<sup>26</sup>

But while Homer's centrality remained constant in the Greek culture of the Byzantine Empire in the East, the Greek language and Greek literature along with it slowly disappeared in the Latin West. Augustine in the fourth century CE barely knew Greek, and eventually the Greek texts could not be read at all in Western Europe. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* would not be translated into Latin or English until the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Instead, Latin epics like Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Virgil's *Aeneid*, in which the Trojan hero Aeneas narrates the fall of Troy in extensive flashbacks while on his journey to found Rome, were read and revered. A short verse summary of the Trojan War known as the *Ilias Latina* was also well-known. Two Latin prose accounts of the Trojan War, both of which were translations of Greek originals, likewise became important transmitters of the Trojan War myths. These texts, known as the *Journal of the Trojan War* by Dictys of Crete (*Ephemeris bellum Troianum*) and the *History of the Destruction of Troy* by Dares the Phrygian (*Daretis Phrygii de excidio Troiae historia*), are the products of an era in the Greek world known as the Second Sophistic. These accounts not only directly contradict Homer in many places, but they also include narratives that are not featured in the Homeric tradition. Yet the dry, chronicle like style of these narratives, together with the absence of any divine intervention or causality, made Dictys and Dares appear more factual and historical to the readers of late antiquity and the Middle Ages. The account attributed to Dares was particularly influential because of its Trojan perspective. (One of Rome's central myths was that their founding hero, Aeneas, was a Trojan. Later, the Goths, Franks, and English would all claim descent from Trojan

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<sup>23</sup> Browning 1992: 146.

<sup>24</sup> Browning 1992.

<sup>25</sup> Lamberton 1986: 242.

<sup>26</sup> Browning 1992.

heroes.) And so while the name of Homer remained attached to the legend of Troy as its premier poet, Virgil's *Aeneid* and the vastly divergent prose accounts attributed to Dares and Dictys became the primary means of transmitting the story of Troy after the disappearance of the Greek language in Western Europe.

Thus, in the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance, the tale of Troy is a very different one from that of the Homeric *Iliad*. The literature inspired by the tales of Troy at this time all depart dramatically from the plot of the *Iliad*, and reveal a fundamental disconnect between the Latin and Greek worlds at this time. But although the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were no longer known in Europe, the name of Homer lived on, indelibly associated with poetry and the genre of epic. It was understood that Homer was Virgil's teacher, so to speak, just as Virgil's gaze toward Homer in the frescoes on the ceiling of the Escorial conveys. As a result, Homer was imagined, as he was in antiquity, as the primordial poet, the first in a long chain of inspired artists. Even more than that, Homer became a sage and prophetic visionary, capable of concealing fundamental truths beneath the surface of his poetry. Because the texts of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were lost to Western Europe, the Homer of the Middle Ages was that which could be gleaned through Plato, as transmitted by the writings of Neoplatonic philosophers and scholars. The scholars of the Middle Ages of course did not read Plato in the original Greek either. Instead they read the commentaries of previous scholars and the meager amount of Plato that was translated into Latin. The understanding of poetry, especially Homeric epic, that was transmitted through the Middle Ages was that poetry had many levels of meaning and required explication. The poet was a philosopher and a sage who cloaked wisdom and truth beneath a poetic veneer.

This is the Homer of Dante, who, as Robert Lamberton has pointed out, composed his *Divine Comedy* only a generation before the recovery of Greek in Europe and the first translations of Homer into Latin.<sup>27</sup> Virgil is Dante's guide through hell and purgatory in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, leaving him only as Dante ascends to heaven in the *Paradiso*, where, as a pagan, Virgil cannot go. For Dante, Homer is the "poeta sovrano" ("the sovereign poet," in canto 4 of the *Inferno*), even though Dante cannot have known the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* (and in fact he often departs from them when narrating the myths of the various Greek heroes). Dante sets himself up as the inheritor of the poetic craft from Virgil, who in turn inherited it from Homer. (See especially the narrator's words to Virgil in canto 2 of the *Inferno*, "you are my teacher, my master, and my guide," in the translation of Pinsky.) In keeping with the Neoplatonic and Christian allegorical readings of Homer and Virgil that were standard in late antiquity and the Middle Ages, Dante's work is full of complex allegory and layers of meaning that go far beyond the surface narrative. The *Divine Comedy* is set up as the journey of a man who has strayed from the correct path into woods populated by savage beasts. Virgil saves this man (who is generally equated with Dante himself) by showing him the way out.

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<sup>27</sup> Lamberton 1986: 283.

The way is difficult and requires a descent, like those of Odysseus and Aeneas, through the underworld before enlightenment can be achieved.

The dramatic date of Dante's *Divine Comedy* is 1300, and it was composed some years after that. Within a few years of this composition Italy would be the focal point for a renewed interest in Greek and Greek literature and the movement now known as the Renaissance. The fourteenth century Italian humanists Petrarch and Boccaccio were two early scholars interested in the recovery of the Greek language and the Homeric poems. Petrarch obtained Greek manuscripts of the poems from Byzantium and commissioned a word-by-word Latin translation made by Leo Pilatus. This work was followed by the translations into Latin by P. C. Decembrio and Lorenzo Valla in the fifteenth century. In 1488, the first Greek printed edition of the *Iliad* was published in Milan. Within about a century of this edition, the Homeric texts were beginning to regain their privileged place in the history of European literature, and would have a profound impact on visual and musical traditions as well.

Thus when the Escorial was conceived and built, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were known in several languages. Works of art inspired by these two epics were also beginning to appear with more frequency. The poems of the Epic Cycle (by way of Ovid and Virgil) and Virgil's *Aeneid* likewise continued to be significant literary influences throughout the Renaissance and beyond. The works of Raphael (1483–1520) and Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) are good illustrations of this trend. Raphael painted a *Young Man Rescuing an Old* (detail of the *Fire in the Borgo*), thought to be inspired by the story of Aeneas and Anchises. Also attributed to Raphael are designs (now lost) for tapestries and ceramics, including a *Judgment of Paris* and an *Abduction of Helen*. Rubens worked approximately a century later. Drawing on Greek epic traditions, he painted his *Judgment of Paris*, *Odysseus and Nausicaa*, *Marriage of Peleus and Thetis*, and *Polyphemus*, and indebted to Virgil's *Aeneid* are his *Dido and Aeneas* and *Death of Dido*. In addition to these paintings Rubens produced eight oil sketches for tapestry cartoons of the life of Achilles. The eight episodes spanned the full range of known ancient literary sources for Achilles' life, and included *Achilles Dipped in the Styx*, *The Education of Achilles*, *Achilles in Scyros*, *The Anger of Achilles*, *Thetis Receiving the Armor of Achilles from Hephaestus*, *The Death of Hector*, *Briseis Returned to Achilles*, and *The Death of Achilles*.

Philip's reign therefore corresponded with a particular moment in the reception of Homeric poetry, in which European poets, artists, and scholars were rediscovering the texts of poems themselves, either in the original Greek or in translation. This poetry, which had always been highly revered even when very few in Western Europe could read it, would now go on to inspire much of the art, music, and literature of the Renaissance.<sup>28</sup> It is therefore no accident that Philip acquired many copies of the *Iliad* for his library, and we know that he owned at least one copy of the *Iliad* that he could read. Pérez's Castilian translation of the *Iliad* was among the forty or so volumes that

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<sup>28</sup> Dué 2005.

comprised Philip's personal collection in his suite at the Escorial, which he bequeathed upon his death to the library.<sup>29</sup>

### Homer in the “Digital Renaissance”

Just as Homer was rediscovered in the Renaissance to become influential once again on arts of all kinds, we are now living in a period in which digital technologies allow for another period of rediscovery, a “digital renaissance.” The digital images of these manuscripts produced and published by the Homer Multitext (<http://www.homermultitext.org>) provide unprecedented access to their contents. This new access to the primary sources for Homeric poetry and for the rich collection of ancient and Medieval commentary in the scholia will, we argue, change the way the composition and textual transmission of the Homeric poems are conceived of and presented. Then Homer might once again have a far-reaching influence, this time on practices of textual criticism of all kinds of texts.

This digital renaissance of these two manuscripts also fulfills what was perhaps an original ideal for the library of the Escorial. Philip seems to have had a desire that the books in the library of the Escorial be read and used by anyone who wished to consult them. As Henry Kamen has related, Philip wrote to Francés de Álava in 1567:

On the matter of books, I have given orders for a sizeable quantity of them to be collected here... because I am fully in agreement with you, that this is one of the principal memorials that can be bequeathed here, both for the monks as well as for the public benefit of all men of letters who may wish to come and read them.<sup>30</sup>

Such a conception for the purpose of the library was by no means universally shared, and in fact such consultation on the part of interested readers does not seem to have occurred, at least not during the King's lifetime.<sup>31</sup> The library's remote and fortress-like location was certainly a factor in why this did not come to pass, but whatever the reasons, the lack of access to the collection was decried soon after its establishment. The Jesuit Father Juan de Mariana wrote shortly after Philip's death, “¿Qué provecho podemos sacar de libros que están, pos decirlo así, cautivos y sujetos?”<sup>32</sup> A collection of books can only gain prestige, after all, when others know how valuable they are.

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<sup>29</sup> Kamen 2010: 110.

<sup>30</sup> See Kamen 2010: 109. The letter is Rodríguez and Rodríguez 1991: no. 51.

<sup>31</sup> Kamen 2010: 109.

<sup>32</sup> Mariana 1854 (vol. 2): 553. Graux (1880:355) translates (into Latin) as “Quid e majestate constrictis et captivis libris emolumenti!” Kamen (2010:109) translates as: “What is the use of books that are, so to speak, captive and prisoner?”

Eventually, the collection was opened to scholars for their examination. Writing nearly three centuries later, in 1880, Charles Graux testifies that it is now possible to conduct research to one's heart's content in the Escorial. Graux then concludes his work on the sources of the Escorial manuscripts by quoting a book about the library written by Juan Bautista Cardona and dedicated to Philip in 1587: "*Libros undique conquiris et comparas, non ut eos quasi sepelias more multorum, sed ut sint usui omnibus studiosis*" ("May you collect and acquire books from everywhere, not, in the way of others, as if to bury them, but in order that they may be of use to all interested people"). We are grateful that José Luis del Valle Merino, the director of the library at the time of our photography in 2010, has seen fit to share two of the library's most precious manuscripts with us and indeed, by way of their publication through the Homer Multitext, with all interested people, no matter where they are in the world and no matter how inaccessible the Escorial itself may be to them.

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