



## Magna Troy. Practice of Embalming.

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### Abstract

Two descriptions of the architectural constructions, the Chamber of Ylion and the Tabernacle of Hector, have been studied in the present paper. The both were extracted from the medieval Troy History by Guido de Columnis in the Latin and in the illuminated Russian versions. The comparative analysis of the medieval Russian illuminated handwritten History of Troy and of the Latin text of the *Historia destructionis Troiae* by Guido de Columnis, edited for the Medieval Academy of America by Nathaniel Edward Griffin, is the subject of my present work. In this paper I present the examination of the two fragments from the chapters XXI and XXII of the Troy History, the last passage contains the description of the funeral practice of the Hector body.

**Keywords:** medieval chronicles, medieval Latin, Guido de Columna, History of Troy, Russian Corpus of the illuminate World Chronicles.

An Italian Guido de Columnis has composed *Historia Destructionis Troiae* in Latin prose in 1287. The original Guido's work is not preserved. The great number handwritten copies are in libraries of the world. The prologue and epilogue of these manuscripts are the author Guido's testimony about his re-telling of the ancient story of Troy according to Dares and Dictys. Authors of the pre – Homeric annals Dictys Cretensis and Dares Phrygius were real participants of the Trojan War, and their accounts, originally in Greek, are preserved as manuscripts in Latin translation by Cornelius. Guido de Columnis translates the original works of Dares and of Dictys, as Cornelius work was very briefly. Guido informs about himself in Prologue and in Epilogue of *Historia Destructionis Troia: in presenten libellum per me iudicem Guidonem de Columpna de Messana transsumpta legentur, prout in duobus libris eorum inscriptum quasi una uocis consonantia inuentum est in Athenis*. The book was composed through three months from "September 15<sup>th</sup> to November 25<sup>th</sup> the first indict, under the *domini Mathei de Porta, venerabilis Salernitani acchiepiscopi, magne sciencie uiri*. Colophon: *Factum est autem presens opus anno dominice incarnationis millenio ducentesimo lxxxvii eiusdem prime indiccionis feliciter*.

N. E. Griffin has examined ninety-four dated manuscripts of the Guido's *Historia* in various libraries of England, France, Italy, Sicily, and America, and has used the earliest manuscript, of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fund Latin, number 5694, dated 1334, as the basis of a text. The scribe of this manuscript calls himself "Theodericus de Virginum Castello" (i.e. presumably Virginum Civitas, i.e. Parthenopolis, i.e. Naples).

Griffin's edition [1] is a result of the textual analysis of medieval manuscripts and of the prints, and of the English, German and Italian translations of the Guido's History. Russian version of the History is not researched by Western scientists, but Latin text is not compared with Russian one.

The Russian Troy History has great popularity and widespread ramifications, and exists in numerous handwritten copies as independent literary work or as a part of Chronicles, historical Miscellanies. The edition of the Troy History of 1709 "История о разорении Трои" was one of the first books printed in the time of Peter the Great. The Codex 358 of the State Historical Museum (Museum collection of manuscripts), is the illustrated compendium of the World Chronicle from the Book of Generation to the Fall of Troy, the first facsimile printed edition is made in Moscow in 2010 [2]. The Codex 358's folios 588-791 contain the first book of the vast redaction of the Troy History "Creation and Fall of Troy", and the folios 792-1002 contain the second book of this redaction; folios 1003-1038 contain the concise redaction "The Tale about the Creation and Capture of Troy and the Final Troy's Destruction, what happened in the time of King David". Some initial folios of Troy History of the Codex 358 were lost, and the folios from the non illuminated manuscript with simile text (collection of A. S Uvarov, N 525, State Historical Museum) were published in edition 2010.

The presence of the colorful miniatures illustrating each gloss of the History of the Russian Codex opens endless possibilities of the analysis. The iconography of heroes is very anciently, the elements of headgear and dresses, the poses and manners reminded the iconography of the Byzantine icons.

The Latin text of the History of Troy's Destruction [1] is divided on the thirty five chapters or *libers*, with prologue and epilogue. The first three chapters are the medieval Argonautic. A text of the illuminated Russian codex [2] has been divided into the glosses according to the pictures or, in other words, each gloss is illustrated by miniature. I divided Latin text in accordance with the Russian glosses, but punctuation of the Russian is made in conformity with the Latin version. The explanatory text to each miniature has been followed after the picture, before the next, between two miniatures previous and subsequent. I compare text of each gloss with the suitable Latin text.

In this paper I present the examination of the two fragments, the descriptions of the Chamber of Ylion and of the Tabernacle of Hector.

The passage "The Chamber in which Hector lays ill of his wounds" from Liber XXI (Latin folio 87r, Russian Folios 478 – 479) informs that chamber was made of alabaster and had twelve sazhen (passuum) in the longitude, the floor was constructed of crystal, and the walls was constituted from the precious stones. In the four-angles of the chamber were made the four columns of onyx with the decorative caps and bases from the onyx too. Four golden sculptures were instituted on the capitals of the columns by mathematical art and were imaged the dream.

The miniature from the illuminated Russian version of the Troy History (Fig. 1) gives the exact image of the Chamber of Ylion. The five-dimensional towers have involved the space of the four-dimensional chamber. The noble Trojan men in the right and the noble Trojan women in the left, the medicine before the lying Hector inside the chamber, are depicted in masterly fashion.



Figure 1. Aula Ylion.

The second fragment (Latin folio 89r, Russian Folios 499 – 502) from the Liber XXII “De sepulcro Hectoris et de Palamide in imperatorem Grecorum assumpto” contains the description of a gorgeous tabernacle, built by the masters near the ancient temple of Apollo at the Trojan city

gate named Timbrea. The four golden columns with decorative caps and bases are placed on the high pedestal and the golden vault was erected on the columns. The borders of the tabernacle were made of precious stones. From the top of the vault the golden sculpture, image of Hector, with the nude sword was instituted.



**Figure 2.** The Image of Hector above the Tabernacle.

The miniature (Fig. 2) shows the council of Priamus with artists about the construction of the tabernacle (in the middle, right), then the master shows to Priamus the prepared construction for the Hector burial (in the bottom).

This fragment contains the description of the embalming of Hector body. The masters have strengthened Hector corpse in the middle of the shrine in a sitting posture, dressed in a riza, with bare feet. The potter with the pure balsam and with other antiseptics was strengthened on the head of the Hector body. The liquid mixture passes through the forehead to the eyes and to the nostrils, and down to the buttocks.



Figure 3. The Sepulcher of Hector.

The other part of the embalming mixture came down to the chest, then to his hands and feet. There is other potter with balsam on his feet and the circulating balsam preserved soft tissue, hair, tooth, hands and feet. Four golden lampions were in the tabernacle, and all construction of the shrine was encircled by barrier of the eben tree.

The Russian text [2] and Latin text [1] are corresponded exactly, except the narration of the Latin text about the establishment by Priamus the sacerdotal collegium for the sanctuary's preservation.

The miniature (Fig. 3) is vary fantastic, on the background of the architectural scene the tabernacle with the sitting Hector body and with the image of the vivacious hero, and multitude Trojan people, citizen, with Priamus at the head are depicted.

Miniatures of the Russian Troy History open the space of Magna Troy. The reviewed episodes of the History give insight into the nature of the Trojan architecture, which utilized a mixture of stones to construct elaborate palace and burial chamber: alabaster, onyx, crystal as building stones, precious stones as ornamental elements. Golden sculptures, vaults, eben tree barrier testify to the high art of the masters. The practical art of the embalming of Hector body differs from the Herodotus testimony about the ancient Egyptian mummification, based on the dehydration of the body and drying of the soft tissues, and the balsamic substance was the mixture of the antiseptis. The method of the embalming of the Hector body was based on the circulation of the pure balsam through all members of the body. The desire of preservation the body as vivacious was the goal of embalming.

### References

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