

1

00:00:00,824 --> 00:00:10,833

This series presents information based in part on theory and conjecture.

2

00:00:10,833 --> 00:00:20,841

The producer's purpose is to suggest some possible explanations, but not necessarily the only ones to the mysteries we will examine.

3

00:00:21,842 --> 00:00:30,850

She was the most desirable woman in the world, the fabled Helen, wife to the Prince of Sparta.

4

00:00:30,850 --> 00:00:36,855

So beautiful was she that a rival prince stole her away to the Kingdom of Troy.

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00:00:36,855 --> 00:00:45,863

Thus Helen became the face that launched a thousand ships, each ship carrying a hundred Greek warriors bent on revenge.

6

00:00:46,864 --> 00:00:51,868

For ten years the ships were beached while the army laid siege to Troy.

7

00:00:51,868 --> 00:00:57,874

The great walls of the city could not be breached, but the Greeks found another way.

8

00:00:59,875 --> 00:01:04,880

Were Helen and the battle of Troy just the dreams of an ancient poet?

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00:01:04,880 --> 00:01:19,893

The place where Europe ends and Asia begins is as mysterious as its mountains are imposing.

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00:01:22,895 --> 00:01:29,901

Where they meet the sea, rich farmlands were for centuries protected by great stone battlements.

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00:01:30,902 --> 00:01:37,908

The ancient Greeks called this land Ionia. Modern men call it Turkey.

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00:01:37,908 --> 00:01:41,912

Relatively few Westerners traveled to Turkey these days.

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00:01:41,912 --> 00:01:47,917

Fewer still venture into the exotic countryside beyond the graceful minarets of Istanbul.

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00:01:47,917 --> 00:01:50,920

A long time ago things were different.

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00:01:50,920 --> 00:01:55,924

What we now call Turkey once seemed to be the great crossroads of the known world.

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00:01:55,924 --> 00:01:59,928

Adventurers from all over the Mediterranean sailed for her shores.

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00:01:59,928 --> 00:02:01,929

What were they looking for?

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00:02:03,931 --> 00:02:10,937

Ten centuries before Christ the Greeks were just beginning to probe the strained sea coasts that lay to the east.

19

00:02:13,940 --> 00:02:20,946

The inhabitants of Ionia were said to be rich in precious metals and trade goods from even more distant lands.

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00:02:21,947 --> 00:02:27,952

Eventually the Greeks would establish colonies, new cities and a new civilization.

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00:02:30,954 --> 00:02:36,960

Even as the new cities prospered however mainland Greece was on the brink of collapse.

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00:02:36,960 --> 00:02:41,964

For a time the colonies represented the only real hope for the future.

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00:02:43,966 --> 00:02:47,969

The Greek settlers had brought with them their pantheon of gods.

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00:02:51,973 --> 00:02:58,979

Clearly the Greeks of this troubled period wanted to keep alive the glories of the past.

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00:03:01,981 --> 00:03:07,987

With their gods came mortal heroes somehow bridging the gulf between heaven and earth.

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00:03:07,987 --> 00:03:15,994

Of these heroes it was said each could do what two men could not do such as now live upon the earth.

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00:03:15,994 --> 00:03:21,999

No one helped preserve these illusions more than the great bard Homer.

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00:03:21,999 --> 00:03:29,005

Some scholars believe Homer traveled through the great cities of Ionia in the 8th century before Christ.

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00:03:32,008 --> 00:03:37,012

As he would pass through a city he would pause to recite a tale or hear one told.

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00:03:38,013 --> 00:03:44,018

Under graceful columns and a long busy thoroughfares storytellers would gather to recite verse.

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00:03:44,018 --> 00:03:49,022

Perhaps it was in this way that Homer first heard the story of Troy.

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00:03:52,025 --> 00:03:58,030

He may have visited the place where the great battle was supposed to have happened.

33

00:03:59,031 --> 00:04:06,037

Whether Troy's location was known to Homer or not he certainly drew inspiration for his retelling of the story from the countryside of his birth.

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00:04:06,037 --> 00:04:10,041

The result was Homer's epic poem The Iliad.

35

00:04:12,042 --> 00:04:19,048

The poem described the invasion of the Greeks but nowhere does it mention the gift horse filled with soldiers.

36

00:04:19,048 --> 00:04:27,055

The poem describes the invasion of the Greeks but nowhere does it mention the gift horse filled with soldiers.

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00:04:28,056 --> 00:04:37,064

By the 18th century most scholars had concluded that the fall of Troy described by Homer was pure fiction or related to something that happened somewhere else.

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00:04:37,064 --> 00:04:45,071

Many felt that Homer never lived at all, that the work ascribed to him was merely an anthology of

folktales told by many writers.

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00:04:45,071 --> 00:04:48,074

There were a few eccentrics however who believed otherwise.

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00:04:48,074 --> 00:04:53,078

The most remarkable of these was a self-made millionaire named Heinrich Schleeeman.

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00:04:54,079 --> 00:04:58,082

As a boy Schleeeman had taught himself to read The Iliad in Greek.

42

00:04:58,082 --> 00:05:03,087

His fascination with Homer's poem was to become a lifelong obsession.

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00:05:06,089 --> 00:05:12,095

By 1870 Schleeeman had made two fortunes in Russia and another in the California gold fields.

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00:05:12,095 --> 00:05:21,102

He arrived in Turkey determined to spend every penny of his great wealth if need be on realizing his dream, the discovery of ancient Troy.

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00:05:24,105 --> 00:05:32,112

When Schleeeman committed himself to an objective it was with an all-consuming passion uncommon in average men.

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00:05:32,112 --> 00:05:40,119

As Schleeeman began his search he looked over the plain that might once have played host to the armies of Hector and Achilles.

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00:05:43,122 --> 00:05:49,127

Schleeeman came armed with The Iliad and took up residence in the small village of Bunarbashi.

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00:05:50,128 --> 00:05:57,134

The few scholars who were prepared to even consider the possibility that Troy once existed generally placed it here.

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00:06:00,136 --> 00:06:06,142

So he began his survey of the Turkish countryside looking for landmarks mentioned by Homer.

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00:06:10,145 --> 00:06:15,149

Schleeeman had given himself a good layman's education in archeology.

51

00:06:16,150 --> 00:06:24,157

An examination of the area others thought likely revealed nothing to his eye that could possibly relate to Homer's Troy.

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00:06:27,160 --> 00:06:31,163

The springs which Homer described weren't of much help either.

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00:06:31,163 --> 00:06:36,168

Surely their course must have changed dozens of times in the 30 or more centuries since Troy.

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00:06:38,169 --> 00:06:43,174

Before giving up on Bunarbashi Schleeman decided on another test.

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00:06:45,175 --> 00:06:50,180

Homer had said precisely how long it took Achilles to chase Hector around the walls.

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00:06:50,180 --> 00:06:53,182

There was only one thing for Schleeman to do.

57

00:07:15,202 --> 00:07:20,206

Wrong. The time was wrong. Bunarbashi just didn't fit Homer's facts.

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00:07:20,206 --> 00:07:27,212

Schleeman's detractors had a field day. More convinced than ever that he was a fool or simply crazy.

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00:07:31,215 --> 00:07:37,221

Even Schleeman had to admit he'd picked a big haystack in which the search was not a good thing.

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00:07:37,221 --> 00:07:44,227

But a gross apprentice who had the brains and energy to make himself a multimillionaire doesn't quit easily.

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00:07:44,227 --> 00:07:48,230

He began to search again a short distance north of Bunarbashi.

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00:07:53,235 --> 00:07:58,239

There he would encounter his destiny on a hill called Hiscola.

63

00:07:58,239 --> 00:08:02,242

He would go to the north of the hill and search for his name.

64

00:08:02,242 --> 00:08:07,247

There he would encounter his destiny on a hill called Hiscola.

65

00:08:14,253 --> 00:08:21,259

The site was less than an hour's march from the sea. If well fortified, it could command the whole plain below.

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00:08:21,259 --> 00:08:26,263

Even an eye less astute than his couldn't miss the archaeological evidence.

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00:08:26,263 --> 00:08:31,268

Schleeman was convinced he had realized a 40-year-old dream.

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00:08:31,268 --> 00:08:38,274

In his journal he wrote, I have set foot on Trojan soil at last.

69

00:08:38,274 --> 00:08:44,279

He selected the highest mound on Hisselik and ordered his men to dig.

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00:08:45,280 --> 00:08:52,286

Homer had said the Temple of Athena stood on the highest ground in the city, ringed by walls built by the gods.

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00:08:56,289 --> 00:08:58,291

Still, the critics scoffed.

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00:08:58,291 --> 00:09:02,295

Although Schleeaman had taught himself to read and write 18 languages,

73

00:09:02,295 --> 00:09:06,298

the scholars of the day dismissed him as an unlawful man.

74

00:09:06,298 --> 00:09:10,302

He had said, I have set foot on Trojan soil at last.

75

00:09:10,302 --> 00:09:17,308

If he had written and write 18 languages, the scholars of the day dismissed him as an unlettered bore living in a fantasy world.

76

00:09:17,308 --> 00:09:23,313

Schleeman only worked harder, driving his men to dig deeper into the mound.

77

00:09:23,313 --> 00:09:28,317

Surely now he would find the proof to quiet those who laughed.

78

00:09:31,320 --> 00:09:33,322

Find it, he did.

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00:09:34,323 --> 00:09:42,329

Here, indisputably, with a remnants of a lost civilization, but were they the fabled walls of Troy?

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00:09:42,329 --> 00:09:47,334

Schleeman's trove of artifacts shook the academic world.

81

00:09:47,334 --> 00:09:51,337

What must the builders of this city have been like?

82

00:09:51,337 --> 00:09:55,341

What hands made these beautiful things?

83

00:09:55,341 --> 00:10:02,347

Clearly the ancient craftsmen used techniques more advanced than they did in the past.

84

00:10:02,347 --> 00:10:07,351

Why did they vanish after accomplishing so much?

85

00:10:10,354 --> 00:10:18,361

Schleeman discovered hundreds of spindle whirrs, just like the ones still favored by local residents for spinning wool yarn.

86

00:10:22,364 --> 00:10:29,370

Other implements were found, similar, if not identical, to those in everyday use by villagers.

87

00:10:29,370 --> 00:10:36,376

Schleeman might have been struck by how little some things change in 3,000 years.

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00:10:36,376 --> 00:10:41,381

But he would need more to prove his city was the Troy of Homer.

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00:10:41,381 --> 00:10:47,386

Heinrich Schleeeman's life had been one long love affair with the legend of Troy.

90

00:10:48,387 --> 00:10:54,392

It had taken 4 years to excavate the ruin he thought was Troy.

91

00:10:54,392 --> 00:11:02,399

Now, as he walked his ancient pavements, he believed he was following the path Homer had taken so long ago.

92

00:11:05,402 --> 00:11:12,408

Schleeeman seeing as through Homer's eyes, he found a new way to find the true story of Troy.

93

00:11:13,409 --> 00:11:21,416

Schleeeman seeing as through Homer's eyes, the skilled Trojan craftsmen at work in their stalls.

94

00:11:26,420 --> 00:11:33,426

Touching a dish that might have been set before Helen, the hostage princess who spawned 10 years of war.

95

00:11:33,426 --> 00:11:41,433

Admiring a lion's head carved in crystal, what great warrior might have carried it as a charm into battle?

96

00:11:43,435 --> 00:11:49,440

Schleeman could place on his own hand a ring made 30 centuries ago.

97

00:11:49,440 --> 00:11:56,446

Restore a brush whose bristles had turned to dust in the age of gods who walked with men.

98

00:11:57,447 --> 00:12:03,452

Still, Schleeman was not satisfied. He had in fact discovered 9 cities.

99

00:12:03,452 --> 00:12:09,457

He had no way of knowing for sure which one was the city of his dreams.

100

00:12:12,460 --> 00:12:17,464

Some early inhabitants imported bronze cast in ingots the shape of ox hides.

101

00:12:17,464 --> 00:12:23,470

There were ships anchors of chiseled stone and ships cook stoves of bronze.

102

00:12:23,470 --> 00:12:30,476

These Schleeaman found in the ruin he called Troy too, but was this Homer's Troy?

103

00:12:31,476 --> 00:12:35,480

The answer was obscured by evidence of a great catastrophe.

104

00:12:35,480 --> 00:12:42,486

Violence more terrible than war had seared the very masonry of the walls.

105

00:12:47,490 --> 00:12:53,496

Jewelry was fused into shapeless blobs of metal.

106

00:12:56,498 --> 00:13:02,503

The whole countryside must have been laid waste by the disaster.

107

00:13:06,507 --> 00:13:12,512

Those who survived lived in squalor. The floors of their huts built on compacted garbage.

108

00:13:17,517 --> 00:13:22,521

If nothing else, Schleeman had unearthed the monument to the tenacity of man.

109

00:13:22,521 --> 00:13:30,528

Fire and sword had raged. Again and again, a city of the living had been raised on a city of the dead.

110

00:13:31,529 --> 00:13:37,534

Schleeman numbered the ruins from one for the oldest to nine for the most recent.

111

00:13:37,534 --> 00:13:43,539

He assumed his objective was among the older ruins, possibly Troy too.

112

00:13:44,540 --> 00:13:50,545

Yet in Troy's six, he found massive walls that could have been the ones described by Homer.

113

00:13:52,547 --> 00:13:56,550

If they were the walls that hid Helen from the armies of her betrayed husband,

114

00:13:56,550 --> 00:14:03,557

it would be easy to see why the battle raged ten years.

115

00:14:05,558 --> 00:14:11,563

It all seemed to fit Homer's description. A city fashioned by the gods.

116

00:14:13,565 --> 00:14:19,570

Yet the design of houses in Troy's six was remarkably similar to those of the more ancient second city.

117

00:14:20,571 --> 00:14:27,577

A major difference among the various ruins seemed to be evidence of the increasing influence of outside cultures.

118

00:14:29,579 --> 00:14:35,584

By the time of Troy's six, newcomers from the north were introducing a completely new kind of pottery.

119

00:14:35,584 --> 00:14:39,588

The other arts were also affected by the immigrants.

120

00:14:39,588 --> 00:14:45,593

Alexander the Great was a latecomer to Troy, but among the first to build an altar to the old gods.

121

00:14:46,594 --> 00:14:53,600

From inscriptions, it is clear Alexander read Homer as fact.

122

00:14:56,603 --> 00:15:00,606

More years passed and the Romans became masters of the Ionian coast.

123

00:15:01,607 --> 00:15:05,610

The poet Virgil took up in Latin where Homer left off in Greek,

124

00:15:05,610 --> 00:15:08,613

embellishing the story and giving it new credibility.

125

00:15:08,613 --> 00:15:11,616

Rome made Troy a sacred city.

126

00:15:12,617 --> 00:15:15,619

Emperors came to worship and be entertained.

127

00:15:15,619 --> 00:15:19,623

Augustus even considered making Troy the capital of his empire.

128

00:15:19,623 --> 00:15:24,627

Through it all, minstrels kept alive Homer's poem of glory.

129

00:15:26,629 --> 00:15:30,632

This was the world Heinrich Schleeeman felt he had rediscovered,

130

00:15:30,632 --> 00:15:33,635

but was he seeing only what he wanted to see?

131

00:15:33,635 --> 00:15:38,639

So complete was Schleeeman's dedication to Homer's Troy's work.

132

00:15:38,639 --> 00:15:44,644

So complete was Schleeeman's dedication to Homer's Troy that he had taken a young Greek woman to be

his bride.

133

00:15:44,644 --> 00:15:48,648

He thought she had Helen's blood coursing through her veins.

134

00:15:48,648 --> 00:15:53,652

And in a way, all this effort had been intended to restore her heritage.

135

00:15:54,653 --> 00:15:57,656

The greatest prize he had not been able to give her.

136

00:15:58,657 --> 00:16:03,661

Yet as he was about to give up, Schleeman made his most fantastic discovery.

137

00:16:04,662 --> 00:16:07,664

The glint of metal had caught his eye.

138

00:16:09,666 --> 00:16:13,670

Schleeman ordered his wife to send the workers away.

139

00:16:17,673 --> 00:16:22,677

Sophia was confused, but she had come to trust her husband's uncanny instincts.

140

00:16:22,677 --> 00:16:25,680

She did as she was told.

141

00:16:38,691 --> 00:16:44,697

In four years, Schleeaman's men had moved 325,000 cubic yards of earth.

142

00:16:45,697 --> 00:16:51,703

Now, he was moving alone, deep into the excavation of the ancient second city.

143

00:16:52,704 --> 00:16:58,709

28 feet down was the lower level of the wall Schleeaman identified with Homer's palace of Troy.

144

00:17:03,713 --> 00:17:06,716

It was here he had seen the flash of treasure.

145

00:17:07,717 --> 00:17:10,719

Schleeman had chanced everything for his dream.

146

00:17:11,720 --> 00:17:15,724

Even with all he'd accomplished, scholars still considered him a fraud or a madman.

147

00:17:16,724 --> 00:17:19,727

Now, he knew they would have to believe him.

148

00:17:19,727 --> 00:17:23,731

The treasure of Troy was surely only inches from his grasp.

149

00:17:27,734 --> 00:17:29,736

Then, his fingers touched it.

150

00:17:29,736 --> 00:17:32,738

They were 31 large objects of beaten gold.

151

00:17:34,740 --> 00:17:38,744

Had this once adorned Helen, daughter of the gods?

152

00:17:49,753 --> 00:17:51,755

The workmanship was unmistakable.

153

00:17:51,755 --> 00:17:54,757

Surely this was all the proof the world would need.

154

00:18:00,763 --> 00:18:06,768

The hoard included 9,000 small pieces, rings, buttons and charms.

155

00:18:07,769 --> 00:18:09,771

It was wealth beyond imagining.

156

00:18:10,771 --> 00:18:15,776

More important, it seemed that a lifetime's quest had finally been realized.

157

00:18:22,782 --> 00:18:25,784

In spite of promises to share the treasure with the Turkish government,

158

00:18:25,784 --> 00:18:28,787

Schleeman smuggled most of it out of the country.

159

00:18:30,789 --> 00:18:34,792

He held onto it long enough to dress Sophia in splendor.

160

00:18:34,792 --> 00:18:42,799

Somehow, Schleeman knew he had fulfilled his destiny and hers by finding the lost treasure of Troy.

161

00:18:43,800 --> 00:18:47,804

The collection eventually found its way to the Berlin Museum.

162

00:18:49,805 --> 00:18:52,808

Schleeman would go on to other triumphs in archaeology.

163

00:18:53,809 --> 00:18:56,811

The Trojan treasure, however, would vanish.

164

00:19:00,815 --> 00:19:06,820

In the closing days of World War II, the Americans and the Russians marched on Berlin from opposing flanks.

165

00:19:09,823 --> 00:19:14,827

The museum fell under Russian control, but the treasure was already gone.

166

00:19:15,828 --> 00:19:22,834

Someone may have hidden it from the bombardment, then died without revealing the secret of its location.

167

00:19:23,835 --> 00:19:28,839

It's possible the Nazis stole it for their own use in the headlong flight from the advancing Allies.

168

00:19:30,841 --> 00:19:32,843

No one really knows.

169

00:19:34,844 --> 00:19:43,852

Happily perhaps, Schleeman didn't live to see the day that the prize he struggled so hard to win would vanish again without a trace.

170

00:19:45,854 --> 00:19:52,860

Little has changed in Turkey in the hundred years since Heinrich Schleeman came here to play out his dream of finding Troy.

171

00:19:53,861 --> 00:19:57,865

Caravans still follow trade routes that were ancient even in Homer's day.

172

00:20:00,867 --> 00:20:03,870

Old men still sit in the shade and tell stories.

173

00:20:05,871 --> 00:20:10,876

It is the custom here and was so long before Homer's time.

174

00:20:10,876 --> 00:20:16,881

Tragedy and disaster are also familiar in this fabled land.

175

00:20:20,885 --> 00:20:26,890

In 1976, an earthquake killed hundreds of people and left thousands homeless.

176

00:20:27,891 --> 00:20:31,894

There was no warning, just sudden and savage destruction.

177

00:20:31,894 --> 00:20:37,899

A day's then heartbroken people began to rebuild even as they mourned their dead.

178

00:20:39,901 --> 00:20:43,905

Modern archaeologists believe the same fate overtook ancient Troy.

179

00:20:44,905 --> 00:20:49,910

That around 1300 BC, a violent earthquake leveled the mighty city.

180

00:20:55,915 --> 00:21:00,919

Before the city could be rebuilt, barbarians attacked the city.

181

00:21:01,920 --> 00:21:04,923

They fled from the north and put the survivors to the sword.

182

00:21:05,924 --> 00:21:13,931

Perhaps we can be forgiven for preferring to believe that Troy met its end gloriously and for the sake of love.