

Troilus and Criseyde
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Ancient and Medieval World Literature
ENGL 3335

Manuscripts and date

- Probably composed in the middle of the 1380s, near the time that **Chaucer** was beginning *The Canterbury Tales*
- **Rhyme royal** – seven-line stanza with ababbcc rhyme scheme
- Sixteen MSS, several fragments, three early printed editions (Caxton)
 - Four best MSS: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College (CCCC), MS 61 (c. 1400-1425); New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 817 (c. 1403-1413); Cambridge, St. Johns College, MS L.1 (late 15c-early16c); London, BL, Harley 2280 (first half 15c)

Sources and analogues

- Homer's *Iliad* – Chriseis and Briseis and the argument between Achilles and Agamemnon
- Benoit de Sainte Maure, *Roman de Troie* (12c)
- Boccaccio, *Il Filostrato* (the love-struck) – basic story of Troilus and Criseyde (c. 1335-40)
- Shakespeare uses Chaucer to write *Troilus and Cressida* (c. 1602)

Multiple classical references

- Homer, *Iliad*
- Aeschylus, *Seven against Thebes*
- Statius, *Thebaid*
- Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, *Antigone*
- Ovid, *Metamorphoses*
- Dares Phrygius– supposed historical source on Troy, mentioned by Homer and attributed to him
- Dictys Cretensis – supposed eyewitness source and friend of Idomeneus

And, of course, Boethius

- Multiple references to fate, fortune, predestination, providence, whether in respect to Christian God or classical deities
- Explicit parallels in Troilus's speech in Book IV