

The Trojan legend became hot property during the Anglo-Scots Wars of Independence. During the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the English traced their ancestry to Brutus and the Trojans and used this origin myth to bolster their claims to lordship and ownership of Scotland; while in a game of political one-upmanship, and in order to prove Scotlands independence and sovereignty, Scottish historians instead traced their nations origins to a Greek prince, Gaythelos, and his Egyptian wife, Scota. Despite the wealth of scholarship on the Trojan legend in English and European literature, very little has been done on Scotlands literary response to the same legend, even though a mere glance at the canonical material of late medieval Scotland indicates that it remained equally current north of the Border, a gap which this book fills. Through a detailed analysis of a range of Older Scots texts from c. 1375 to c. 1513, notably The Scottish Troy Book, Henrysons Testament of Cresseid, and Douglas Eneados, it provides the first comprehensive assessment of the Scottish response to the Trojan legend. It considers the way in which Scottish texts interact with English counterparts, such as Geoffrey of Monmouths Historia, Chaucers Troilus, Lydges Troy Book, and Caxtons Eneydos, and demonstrates how despite - or perhaps because of - its use in the Anglo-Scots Wars of Independence, the Trojan legend was for the most part neither neglected nor pejoratively treated in Older Scots literature. Rather, the Matter of Troy and related Matter of Greece were used not just as an origin myth, but also as a metaphor for Anglo-Scots political relations, guide to good governance, and locus through which poets might explore broader issues of literary tradition, authority, and the nature of poetic truth. Emily Wingfield is a lecturer in English at the University of Birmingham.

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