

# CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY OF THE TROAD.

## ON THE SITE AND REMAINS OF LARISA.

By FRANK CALVERT, Hon. Corresponding Member of the Archaeological Institute.

THE Larisa which forms the subject of the present memoir was one of the ancient towns situated between Alexandria Troas and Cape Lectum, and according to Strabo was contiguous to Colōnæ and the Acheum<sup>1</sup> near Hamaxitus, and in sight of Ilium, from which place it was distant about 200 stadia. This author tells us that there were many places of the name of Larisa in the Troad, but that in his opinion the Larisa in question was not the Pelasgic settlement mentioned by Homer,<sup>2</sup> and in support of this view quotes the Iliad (ii. 840),

Ἴππόθοος δ' ἄγε φῦλα Πελασγῶν ἐγχεσιμῶρων,  
Τῶν, οἳ Λάρισσαν ἐριβόλακα ναιετάασκον.

Strabo further observes that, when Hippothous, the son of the Pelasgian Lethus, was killed by Ajax, he is described as having fallen Τῇλ' ἀπὸ Λαρίσσης. (Iliad xvii. 301.)

Strabo therefore assumes that the Larisa near Cyme, distant about 1000 stadia from Ilium, was more probably alluded to by the poet, the Larisa near Cape Lectum being too close, since Hippothous could not then be said consistently to have fallen far from home in the contest over the body of Patroclus.

The inhabitants of Larisa were transferred by Antigonus to Alexandria Troas at the same time with those of Colōnæ and other towns and strongholds of the Troad.<sup>3</sup>

In Pliny's time Larisa, like Colōnæ, had disappeared.<sup>4</sup>

Amongst modern writers, in Webb we find that Athenæus makes mention of the hot mineral springs near Larisa in the

<sup>1</sup> Ἦν δὲ τῷ Αἰαίῳ συνεχῆς ἢ τε Λάρισα καὶ Κολωναί, Strabo, Cas. 604.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo, 620. Strabo spells Larisa with one σ, Homer and other authors

with two.

<sup>3</sup> Strabo, Casaub. 440, 603, 604, 620.

<sup>4</sup> Pliny, l. 5, c. 32.

Troad, and Pococke in consequence places that town at Lidgia Hammam (Ilidgia<sup>5</sup>), or at the hot springs near Alexandria Troas ; and Walpole adopts the same opinion. Yet Athenæus mentions that these hot springs were near Tragesæ, or in the country near the Trojan Larisa (*περί Τραγᾶσας τὰς ἐν τῇ Τρωϊκῇ, Λαρίσσαι*), and not at Larisa itself. In fact, Strabo mentions that these Tragesæ salines, where the salt crystallised naturally in the season of the Etesian winds, were near Hamaxitus. Now Tragesæ was not at Lidgia Hammam, but at a place called Touzla, where these hot saline springs still exist, and continue to furnish abundant supplies of salt.

Thus far I agree entirely with Webb. He proceeds however to say that half-way between Touzla Chai (or the "salt river," into which these springs empty themselves) and Alexandria Troas, six hours distant apart, is the village of Nesrahkeni, which he is inclined to identify with the site of Larisa. No place of that name exists ; but, by reference to the map which accompanies his work, the village of Kiosse-deresi is evidently intended. This place is distant a mile and a half from the coast, and Webb observes in support of his hypothesis that Strabo's meaning appears to be that Larisa and Colōnæ were not on the sea when he mentions Chrysa in conjunction with them, describing it alone as situated on a rocky promontory overlooking the sea. Webb appears to have formed his conjecture on an erroneous interpretation of this passage, which does not apparently convey the meaning he would attach to it.<sup>6</sup>

In Xenophon we find it unequivocally stated that Larisa was not an inland town, but situated on the coast ; for in mentioning the death of Xenis, a Greek of Dardanus, who was appointed by Pharnazabus the satrap of the kingdom of Priam, he states that Xenis' widow Mania, succeeding him, raised a body of Greek mercenaries, and took the maritime towns of Larisa, Hamaxitus, and Colōnæ ;<sup>7</sup> and again in the first Peloponnesian war the admiral, Mindarus, on leaving Erësus for Abydos, in order to avoid the Athenians, steered along the Asian coast towards the Hellespont, and sailed by Lectos, Larisa, and Hamaxitus.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Mentioned in the memoir on Colonæ, Archæol. Journ. vol. xvii. p. 288.

<sup>6</sup> Osservazioni intorno, &c., l'Agro Trojano, pp. 70, 73.

<sup>7</sup> Xen.

<sup>8</sup> Thucydides, viii. 101: *παρὰ πλευσάντες Λέκτον καὶ Λάρισσαν καὶ Ἀμαξιτον.*

From the testimony of these ancient authorities I was fully convinced that the site of Larisa was to be found on the sea coast, and, with that idea, and from its known proximity to Colônæ, I sought for it along the shore, proceeding in a southerly direction from that ancient town. At the distance of about six miles from Colônæ and twenty-one from Ilium Novum (nearly the exact distance given by Strabo), I came accordingly upon an ancient site occupying the low hill called Liman tépéh (Harbour Mound). This hillock, situated a few hundred yards from the beach, and bearing about W.N.W. from Tenedos, is flat topped and partly artificial, and is comprised in the narrow belt of oolitic formation which fringes almost the entire length of the Hellespont, on the Asiatic side, as well as the Ægean Sea down to near Cape Lectum. This Liman tépéh was conjectured by Sir William Gell to be the site of the ancient Colônæ, an opinion in which Hobhouse concurred.<sup>9</sup>

Some foundations of buildings and the usual fragments of black glazed pottery are the only remains that mark the site of Larisa, whose proximity to the modern village of Kiossederesi has conduced, as in too many similar instances, to their annihilation. The town appears to have been but of small extent, occupying the summit of the hill, which measures about 320 paces by 350, extending from its base towards the north, as far as the bay or harbour from which the site takes its modern name, and in a south and south-easterly direction. The harbour is still used at the present day as a place for shipping the produce brought down from the interior.

The necropolis was most probably situated towards the north-east; for some peasants belonging to the neighbourhood informed me that several stone coffins had been dug up in that direction.

<sup>9</sup> Gell's *Topography of Troy*, p. 19; Hobhouse's *Travels*, p. 634.