

XIX.

SKEPSIS IN THE TROAD

by W. LEAF

I. THE SITE

THE site of Skepsis was for a long time the main unsolved problem of the topography of the Troad. For this Strabo, or rather our text of Strabo, was mainly to blame; for the data therein provided are in fact inconsistent and irreconcilable. We learn from him that Old Skepsis was some way down the αἰλῶν or upper valley of the Aisepos (§§ 44-55),¹ and that the later Skepsis was only 60 stades from it. Therefore both towns must have been in the Aisepos valley. This conclusion was accepted by H. Kiepert, and is embodied in his *Formæ Orbis Antiqui*. Yet we find that the territories of Skepsis and Kebren were separated by the Scamander (§ 33); so that Skepsis must have lain in the Scamander valley.

The earlier explorers of the Troad did not trouble much about texts, but allowed themselves to be guided by wholly fallacious resemblances of modern Turkish names; and finding on the slopes of Mt. Chigri, near Alexandria, a Turkish village called Üsküb, they at once decided that this was Skepsis, and that the neighbouring town of Ine—more properly Ezine—was the village of Ainea which, according to Strabo, lay near Skepsis. This site is separated from the Aisepos valley by nearly 50 miles, 500 stades—more than half the breadth of the Troad. It was left to L. Schmitz, in Smith's *Dictionary of Geography*, to combine the two in the naive statement that Skepsis lay "on the river Aesepus, 150 stadia to the S.E. of Alexandria Troas!"

Meanwhile an important site, about half-way between the

¹ All references to Strabo are to the §§ of XIII, i.

Aisepos valley and Mt. Chigri, was awaiting identification. The ruins of a very considerable Greek town were known to exist on the Kurshunlu-tepe near Bairamich. Leake (*Tour in Asia Minor*, 274) had taken them to be the remains of Kebren, while H. Kiepert (*F.O.A.*, IX, 3) gave the spot the name of Scamandri, a town which, if it existed at all, is too insignificant to have passed into history. Barker Webb, and Schliemann after him, took it to be Palaiskepsis, though it is a considerable distance from the Aisepos valley in which Palaiskepsis certainly lay; Skepsis itself they placed at Bairamich. It was the English architect Pullan who first identified the Kurshunlu-tepe with Skepsis, basing his theory on the very good ground that coins of Skepsis predominated among those offered for sale at Bairamich; I may add that this was equally true when Mr. Hasluck and I visited Bairamich in 1911. Calvert, having discovered Kebren elsewhere, agreed with Pullan, and Thacher Clarke took the same view. They were finally proved to be right by Judeich, who was fortunate enough to find on the Kurshunlu-tepe a fragment apparently of a proxeny decree by the town of Skepsis (Kiepert-Festschrift, 1898, 225 ff.).¹ The situation of Skepsis is therefore a known datum, and the text of Strabo must, if possible, be brought into harmony with the facts.

The Scamander valley consists of three divisions separated by defiles. The middle valley leads from the precipitous gorge of the Bally-dagh eastwards to the town of Bairamich. A little above this begins the narrow ravine which separates the middle valley from the upper, that in which stand to-day the villages of Kara-kiöi and Chirpilar. This defile is not steep or impassable like that of the Bally-dagh; the hills are of softer rock, and

¹The stone contains only pieces of a few lines, of which the restoration is uncertain; the significant part is as follows:—

αν καὶ ἐπὶ φυλὴν προσεγγ-
ραφῆναι ἣν ἂν θέλ[ηι καὶ εἰσαγ-
ωγῆν] εἰς Σκῆψιν καὶ [ἐξαγωγῆν
πάντ]ων ἐμ πολέμῳ [καὶ ἐν εἰρή-
νῃ ἀ]στυλεῖ καὶ [ἀσπονδεῖ καὶ π-
ρόσο]δον ἐπὶ βο[υλῆν.

As Judeich remarks, such honorific decrees were only set up by the town which granted them, so there can be no doubt that the inscription was at Skepsis. With this fragment was found another so imperfect that nothing can be made of it.

slope at an angle which permits the path to follow the river bed never very far from the water. At the point where the path leaves the defile and crosses by a bridge into the more open upper plain stands the steep conical hill of the Kurshunlu-tepe, rising to a height of 1070 feet, about 500 feet above the river. The position is undoubtedly the dominating point of the central Troad; not only does it completely command the roads to the east and south-east—to the dale of Avunia and over the shoulder of Ida to Edremid—but it also lies on the flank of the still more important road leading from Bairamich to the upper basin of the Granikos. The summit commands a wide view all around; whatever may have been the case with Old Skepsis, the new city was certainly *περίσκεπτος*, though it need hardly be added that Strabo's etymology (see § 42, translated below) has nothing in its favour except the hesitation with which he propounds it. It is, however, perhaps a shade less ridiculous than that given by Steph. Byz., *ἐκλήθη δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ σκῆψασθαι τὴν Πέαν ἀντὶ τοῦ παιδὸς λίθον τεκεῖν*.

With one exception this site fulfils all the conditions for the locality of Skepsis to be deduced from Strabo. In particular it is just the 120 stades from Kotylos which he names. Kotylos is a fixed point, for it is defined as the mountain from which flow the Scamander, the Granikos and the Aisepos; and Hajji-Öldüren, the orographic centre of the Troad, is just 120 stades from the Kurshunlu-tepe. Moreover, the site is separated from Kebren by the Scamander (§ 32), and it lies "between the territory of Aineias and Lyrnessos" (§ 53), for it is right on the road from the plain of the Scamander, the territory of Aineias, to the plain of Thebe (Edremid) where Strabo, following Demetrios, placed Lyrnessos.

There remains, however, the one important discrepancy which has been the root of all the trouble. Our text of Strabo says that Skepsis lay 60 stades from Old Skepsis. Now Old Skepsis can, from the data of §§ 44-45, be fixed within narrow limits to the neighbourhood of the village of Koyun-eli in Avunia (see *A.B.S.A.*, XXI, 16 ff.); and this village is not 60, but just about 260 stades from the Kurshunlu-tepe.

The testimony of even better MSS. than those on which we have to depend for Strabo is notoriously untrustworthy where

numerals are concerned ; in this case there can be little doubt that the original reading was *σταδίοισσξ* (260) instead of *σταδίοισξ*. Nothing is commoner than the dropping of a repeated letter ; and in this case the supposition puts an end to all trouble.

II. THE REMAINS

Kurshunlu-tepe is now bare and uninhabited, except for a poor Yuruk hamlet on the eastern side. Here and there a small ridge marks the presence of the foundations of a wall ; but nothing is left above ground, and the builders of Bairamich are now reduced to searching underground for squared stones. It was very different in the middle of the 18th century. At that time the ruins of Skepsis must have been as imposing as those of Assos. But the plain of Bairamich was for a long time under the rule of a semi-independent feudal family (*dere-beys*) called Hademzade. The chief in the latter part of the century was one Osman, a man who was seized with the spirit of progress, and set about making roads, bridges and mosques with destructive eagerness. His name is recorded in inscriptions in the forecourt of the mosque of Bairamich with the date of A.H. 1207 (A.D. 1792-1793) and on the bridge with the date 1210 (A.D. 1795-1796). Fortunately the English traveller Dr. E. D. Clarke arrived on the spot in 1801, just in time to record something of what Skepsis had been. The following are extracts from his account (*Travels*, ed. 4, III, 163-168, 185) :—

“The principal site of the antiquities upon Kushunlu (*sic*) Tepe is about half way up the side of the immense cone which bears this name ; but very remarkable ruins may be traced thence all the way to the summit. . . . The first that we noticed was an area, 92 yards long and 54 wide, covered with fragments of terra-cotta, and also with pieces of ancient glass. . . . On the north side, part of a wall remained by which the area had been originally enclosed, about 14 feet in height. The work seemed to be of the age of the Romans, from the baked tiles, four inches thick, and the cement used in its construction. On the western extremity of the area were considerable remains of baths, whose stuccoed walls and terra-cotta conduits were still entire in several places. An excavation had

been made by the Turks, on the south side, for the stones of the foundation, to the depth of 22 feet. By the appearance of the foundations, the walls, on this side at least, had been double, and admitted of a passage between them. Above this area, perhaps that of a temple, towards the north, were tombs. We entered an arched vault, 13 yards long and 5 wide, and saw near to it the remains of a bath, wanting only the roof. Here lay some columns 16 inches in diameter, among pieces of broken amphoræ, fragments of marble, granite, basalt, blue chalcedony and jasper. . . .

“We presently came to the cornice of a Doric temple, of such prodigious size that our artist, Mons. Preaux, said he had seen nothing like it in Athens. There were other Doric remains ; and the shaft of one Corinthian column, 22 inches in diameter. . . . Higher upon the hill we found the remains of another temple ; the area of this measured 140 yards long and 44 wide. Here the workmen had taken up about a hundred blocks of stone and marble ; every one of which measured 5 feet 11 inches in length, and 18 inches in thickness. We afterwards found one of the angular corners of this temple ; a bath, whose roof was yet entire, and another fragment of the Doric entablature before mentioned. . . .

“A spacious winding road, 16 yards in breadth, leads from the remains of these temples to the top of the Kushunlu. All the way up may be noticed the remains of former works ; but upon the summit there is a small oblong area, six yards in length, and two in breadth, exhibiting vestiges of the highest antiquity. The stones forming the enclosure are as rude as those of Tirynthus in Argolis ; and the whole is encircled by a grove of venerable oaks, covering the top of the cone. The entrance to this area is from the south ; upon the east and west, on the outside of the trees, are stones, ranged like what we, in England, call Druidical circles.”

The description makes one's mouth water ! But when Barker Webb visited the place a few years later, in 1819, the destruction seemed to him complete (*Topog. de la Troade*, p. 79). He, as we have seen, took the site to be Old Skepsis and placed Skepsis itself at the modern Bairamich ; in this he was followed by Schliemann, who, in 1881, still found “the ruin of the great

wall, which is 2·80 m. thick, and of the same kind of masonry as the walls of Assos," and on the summit "the foundations of a chamber 3 m. long by 1·80 m. broad, the walls being '60 m. thick; but outside of it are large rudely formed blocks. . . . The position of the blocks seems to indicate that the building had an oval form, and it may probably therefore have been a tower." (*Troja*, Eng. Trans., p. 271.) He also describes some other remains; but superficial excavation led to no result; and it seems unlikely that any addition to our knowledge of ancient Skepsis from remains in situ is to be hoped for. It is a serious loss. I may add that Mr. Hasluck and I searched in vain for the slightest trace of the small sanctuary on the summit seen by both Clarke and Schliemann. Nothing remains above ground, nothing either on the summit or, so far as we could see or hear, anywhere else.

A word may be added about the modern town of Bairamich. Whether or no this stands on an ancient site it is now impossible to say; it is full of ancient stones, but, as we have seen, until the contrary is proved it must be assumed that these have been brought hither from Kurshunlu-tepe. But I have elsewhere (*A.B.S.A.*, XVII, 273-274) shown reasons for thinking that the ancient Berytis or Birytis may have stood on the site; in any case it cannot have been far away. It is known only from coins with the legend BIPY, and from its appearance in the Attic tribute lists, where the *Βερύσιοι οἱ ὑπὸ τῇ Ἰδῇ* pay the modest sum of ten minæ; and from Stephanos, *Βέρυτις, Τρωϊκὴ πόλις* (cf. *Βήριθρος, πόλις Τρωϊκή*. Compare also Wroth in *B.M.C., Troas*, p. xlv.) But whether it be Berytis or no, it is the likeliest place where one can hope to learn something more of Skepsis.

III. HISTORY

Our chief direct authority for the history of Skepsis is in Strabo, XIII, i, §52. This is quoted from Demetrios, a learned antiquary and a native of the town, and may be regarded as first-hand authority for the local legend in the 2nd century B.C. Strabo follows it up with three sections of his own, which add nothing of importance for earlier days. Of these the first, §53, is devoted to an excursus on the wanderings of Aineias; Strabo

points out that the foundation legend as stated by Demetrios is inconsistent with the tradition prevalent in his day. It is noteworthy that he takes no notice of the official Roman version, and ignores Virgil, though the *Aeneid* was already published when he wrote. The next section, §54, contains the long and interesting account of the preservation of the library of Aristotle at Skepsis by Neleus, the legatee of Theophrastus, and its ultimate rescue, in a sadly decayed state, by the bibliophile Apellikon, the contemporary of Sulla. The story, the truth or at least the completeness of which is open to serious question, belongs rather to the history of the Aristotelian literature than to that of the town, and must be left out of sight here. The fourth section, §55, is devoted to a brief mention of the two most famous natives of Skepsis, Demetrios himself and the rhetorician and statesman Metrodoros, the intimate friend of Mithradates, and contributes nothing further to the history of the town. It will be enough therefore if we confine ourselves to §52, of which I give the following translation:—

"Old Skepsis (*Παλαιόσκηψις*) lies inland of Kebren in the highest district of Ida, near Polichna. It was once called Skepsis, possibly from the fact that it is visible all round (*εἴτ' ἄλλως εἴτ' ἀπὸ τοῦ περισέκεπτον εἶναι τὸν τόπον*), if we are justified in deriving from Greek words the names then used by barbarians. The inhabitants were later moved <two hundred and> sixty stades nearer the sea to the modern Skepsis by Skamandrios son of Hector and Askanios son of Aineias. These two families are said to have held the kingship of Skepsis for a long period. The constitution was afterwards turned into an oligarchy; then Milesians joined the community, and democratic government came about. The heirs of the blood royal (*οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους*) continued nevertheless to be called kings, and retained certain privileges. Then Antigonos incorporated the Skepsians with Alexandria; finally Lysimachos discharged them, and they returned to their old homes."

It must be confessed that this is a sadly meagre excerpt from the mass of information which Demetrios must have given, in his thirty volumes, about the history of the city of which he

was so proud. One would have given a good deal to have the local traditions of such a town more fully set out. But such details were beneath the ideals of history on the "colossal" scale at which Strabo aimed.

The foundation of Skepsis by the sons of Hector and Aineias is a legend which does not merely contradict the popular stories of the flight of Askanios with his father to the west, as Strabo himself points out in the next section; it is further weakened by the fact that in Stephanos we find the same two founders claimed by Arisbe on the Hellespont (*Ἀρίσβη πόλις τῆς Τρωάδος, Μιτυληναίων ἀποικία· ἧς οἰκιστὰὶ Σκαμάνδριος καὶ Ἀσκάνιος υἱὸς Αἰνείου*). It may however justify two conclusions: first, that Skepsis was not established till after the Trojan war, and secondly that it was formed of a combination of Trojans and Dardanians under the leadership of members of the royal houses of the two clans, which in Homer are always represented as distinct, though intimately allied. It is likely enough that the fall of Troy and the dispersal of fugitives in the surrounding country led to more than one of such joint settlements. There may well have been such a settlement at Old Skepsis in the sequestered dale of Avunia, twenty-five miles to the east of the later town, across the main ridge of Ida.

But when we hear that it was the sons of Hector and Aineias who led the inhabitants of this town westwards to the foundation of a new city on the Kurshunlu-tepe, we may suspect some confusion of dates and circumstances. As I have elsewhere suggested, it seems far more probable that such a westward shifting was due to the thrust of the Thracian invasion, Bithynians and others, which, at some period considerably later than the Trojan war, broke up the unity of the Phrygian nation, and scattered them in a way which made it proverbially impossible to define their boundaries (*A.B.S.A.*, XVII, 279 f.). "It appears that the inhabitants of Skepsis swarmed over the pass which is now called Hajji öldüren into the upper basin of the Scamander, and pushed down it till they had seized the hill of Kurshunlu-tepe, which effectually commands the Scamander valley at a point where it is narrowed to a defile by foot-hills from the north and south. Here they established a fortress which, after the fashion of emigrants, they called by the name of their old

home Skepsis. The situation was so strong that they not only held effectually the upper valley in their rear, but were enabled to rob Kebrene of all the northern portion of its territory in the middle basin, the river itself offering a certain obstacle to hostilities, and so establishing itself as a boundary between the two towns, though never effective in putting an end to the traditional enmity arising from the successful spoliation" (*A.B.S.A.*, XVII, 280).

But when we leave these regions of guess-work we might reasonably look for a little more explicit information from Strabo. He says that the ancient kingship of the two clans, Trojan and Dardanian, became an oligarchy, *εἰς ὀλιγαρχίαν μετέστησαν*. Does this mean that the town was Hellenized? And, in particular, did it become, like all its neighbours, an Æolian colony? Or did it remain Dardano-Trojan till the Milesians came? And one would have looked for some explanation of the circumstances which brought a Milesian colony to such an unlikely spot. The Milesian colonies followed regular lines, all of them, with hardly an exception, lying on the sea-coast, with a special view to the Euxine and north Ægean trade. A Milesian colony lying inland, with the Æolian Assos for its nearest port, is, I believe, absolutely unique. How is it to be accounted for? Of this Strabo has nothing to say.

Fortunately there is one small piece of evidence—it is only a single letter—which enables us to answer the first question definitely, and gives us a guide to the second.

The coinage of Skepsis begins in the 5th century with a series dated by Head (*H.N.*,² p. 548), "circ. B.C. 460-400." Of these a few have the legend ΣΚΑΨΙΟΝ, others have ΣΚΗΨΙΟΝ. This is, I believe, sufficient proof that Skepsis was at the beginning of the century Æolian, and in the course of it became Ionic. The vowel of the Æolian neighbour of Skepsis, Assos, never changed throughout its history, though we know from the Athenian tribute-lists that the Ionians called it Ἰησσοῖς or Ἰησσος. It must, therefore, have been in the course of the century that the Ionic newcomers got the upper hand and established their democracy.

But in the 5th century there was no question of Milesian colonization in the proper sense. In 500 B.C., Abydos,

Lampsakos, and other colonies along the Hellespont and Euxine had been sacked and burnt, and in 494 the metropolis itself shared the same fate. All Greece was horrified to hear that the great city had not only been taken, but destroyed, its inhabitants being deported by Darius to Ampe (Herod., VI, 20). The only colonization possible at that time was by fugitives; and there can be little doubt, I fancy, that such fugitives are meant by Strabo's expression *εἶτα Μιλήσιοι¹ συνεπολιτεύθησαν αὐτοῖς*. It may well be that colonists fleeing from the sack of Abydos and Lampsakos had already found a haven there, and invited the exiles from the mother city to join them at a spot so unlike a Milesian colony that the Persian power might overlook them or at least regard them as harmless—which in fact they were. After Mycale things were changed; and apparently the Ionian exiles managed to master the hospitable town and make it Ionian, just as the Colophonian exiles had once dealt with Smyrna.

In fact, they were very harmless. The citizens of Skepsis seem to have borne a character which combined the easy-going and rather sluggish character of the Æolians with the intellectual and philosophical interest of the Ionians; and the history of Skepsis is that of a somewhat sleepy University town, where the higher studies were cultivated in unbroken succession through some three hundred years or more, but which did not trouble itself with politics except when its repose was for a time disturbed by the occasional wars of neighbouring tyrants or condottieri.

The titular retention of the kingship with "certain rights," the nature of which we are not told, seems here to be neither Æolic nor Ionic in its origin; but it was known to both. The clearest instance is Ionic, at Ephesus; but there is a trace of it at the Æolic Kyme (see *Homer and History*, pp. 292-296). It will be seen that the Greeks of all sorts adopted at Skepsis the pre-Hellenic royal families just as in Ionia they had adopted Lykian dynasties.

The fact of the survival is attested by one of the three inscriptions which have survived the destruction of Skepsis. It

¹ The MSS. have *Μιλήσιους*, but there can be no doubt of the correctness of Gröskurd's emendation.

was discovered by Calvert at Kurshunlu-tepe, and was first published by Schliemann (*Troja*, 235); it was reprinted by Judeich in the *Kiepert-festschrift*, and has been again edited by Wilhelm (*Oesterr. Jahresh.*, III, 54). According to Wilhelm it is certainly not later than the 3rd century B.C., and may belong to the 4th. The psephisma which it records deals with the establishment of a festival in honour of Dionysos, and the necessary repairs to his temple. These do not add anything to the history of the town, but the list of officials is worth quoting: *ἐπρυτάνεον Σκαμάνδριος Ἡρακλείδου, Διονύσιος Βάκχου, Μιλήσιος Ἀνδρηράτου, Ἡρακλείδης Ἀπελλικῶντος · ἐπεστάται Λεύκιος Μιλησίου · ἐγραμμάτευσεν Σιμίας Σιμίον; ἐβασίλευε Μητροδόωρος Μίμαντος · Ἡρακλείδης Ἀβαντος εἶπεν, κ.τ.λ.* We notice at once the survival of the titular βασιλεύς. The old royal families would seem to have been completely Æolized, for the father of King Metrodoros bears the good old legendary name of Mimas; and Mimas was son of Aiolos (Diod., IV, 67). On the other hand, we see that the Dardan name Skamandrios was still in use, doubtless in the old families, while Milesios has become a proper name among the Ionian element.

Skepsis, like the neighbouring inland town of Kebren, was a member of the Delian league; it appears in the tribute-lists of 454-451 and 446-440. It paid the respectable sum of one talent, the same as its better known, and as one would have supposed far wealthier, neighbour Assos.

It was captured, like Gergis and Kebren, by Derkyllidas in his lightning raid on the Troad in 399. The Troad at that time had been governed, under Pharnabazos, by the satrapess Mania; she had just been murdered by her son-in-law Meidias, who had seized her treasure and made Skepsis, her chief fortress, his capital. Here he was awaiting with considerable anxiety the coming of Pharnabazos, who was expected on a visit of inquiry. Derkyllidas seized the opportunity to land on the west coast of the Troad; he received the submission of the coast towns, and marched inland against Skepsis, occupying Kebren on the way. Xenophon, who writes as though he was an eye-witness, gives the following account (*Hell.*, III, i, 20). After the capture of Kebren Meidias offered a conference if Derkyllidas would give hostages for his safety. This Derkyllidas did, and

the two met. Derkyllidas demanded the freedom and independence of the Greek towns, and at the same time advanced against Skepsis. Meidias, seeing himself helpless, did not resist the entry; and Derkyllidas, after sacrificing to Athene, expelled Meidias' garrison, and handed the town over to the citizens. According to Polyainos (II, 6) he had threatened at the conference to kill Meidias unless the gates were opened, and when this was done said, "I send you back safe, as I swore; but I am going to enter too with my army." The town was again occupied by the Athenian free-lance Charidemos in 360 or 359, in the course of a campaign which he evidently modelled on that of Derkyllidas (Demosthenes, *Aristocr.*, 23, 154). But it is noteworthy that we hear nothing of any tyrant of Skepsis, even in the first half of the 4th century when most of the Greek towns of the Troad fell under the dominion of individuals in the decay of the central power of Persia. Skepsis seems to have clung faithfully to its democracy.

Mr. J. A. R. Munro, on a passing visit to the Kurshunlu-tepe in 1899, had the good fortune to discover and copy two long inscriptions, which, so far as I know, complete, with Calvert's and Judeich's, the whole epigraphical remains of Skepsis. He published them in *J.H.S.*, XIX, 330.¹ The first is a copy of a letter sent by Antigonos to Skepsis—and presumably to the other Greek towns within his "sphere of influence"—giving a long account of the negotiations which led to the peace of 311 between himself, Lysimachos and Ptolemy, Cassander not being mentioned. "Writing to a Greek city Antigonos dwells exclusively on the freedom he has won for the Greeks, and the trouble and sacrifices which it has cost him. So evident is his anxiety to justify himself that it almost suggests that he had promised a great deal more than he found it possible or convenient to perform. His own guarantees for the maintenance of Greek autonomy are cautiously hypothetical, and as a matter of history his violation of it was a main pretext for the renewal of the war" (p. 337).

The second inscription is a corollary to the first; the town of Skepsis welcomes Antigonos as a benefactor and congratulates

him on the negotiations, dedicates a temenos, an altar and a statue to him, with yearly celebrations, votes him a golden crown of 100 staters, and decrees that the letter and treaties shall be inscribed on a stele, to be set up in the temple of Athene, the same in which Derkyllidas had sacrificed nearly 90 years before.

The best commentary on Antigonos' promises, so cordially received by those who were to benefit by them, is found in his actions. Within a very few years he had forcibly transplanted the inhabitants of all the free towns of Western Troas, including Skepsis, to his new city of Antigoneia. Here they remained till after the battle of Ipsos (301), when Lysimachos, succeeding to the territories of Antigonos, restored the Skepsians to their old home. The decision was plainly wise, and was justified by the result. The central plain could well support, and indeed needed, a considerable civic centre; though the close neighbourhood of two such, Skepsis and Kebren, in the past had led to continual fighting and had plainly been a public nuisance. The position of Skepsis on all the important lines of communication, as we have seen, marked it out for preference. The restored Skepsis continued to thrive, in its quiet way, as a centre of culture; and existed for many centuries. Pliny, however, mentions it only for its cattle breeding (*H.N.*, XI, 204). But the forests of Ida must always have constituted a main source of its wealth; and it is in reference to these that the constant type of its coinage is a pine tree.

The coinage, which is fairly abundant, continues to the reign of Maximinus (A.D. 235). In Imperial times the town like many others reverted to antiquarian memories, and the usual inscription is ΣΚΗΨΙΩΝ ΔΑΠΑΝΙΩΝ. No explanation, so far as I know, has ever been given of the favourite obverse type of the forepart of a winged horse (Pegasos?); this, especially in later times, often ends in a sort of horn, and has been interpreted as a rhyton in the form of a sea-horse (B.M.C., *Troas*, p. xxiv).

For the end of all I cannot do better than quote the words of the distinguished man to whom this volume is dedicated. In Christian times "Skepsis took the name of St. Cornelius the Centurion, who settled at Skepsis and converted the population and Demetrios the Prefect. (*Act. Sanct.*, Feb. 8.) His grave

¹ See also Dittenberger, *O.G.I.*, No. 6; Michel, *Rev. Ét. gr.*, XXXII, 380 ff.

was discovered in the beginning of the 5th century, when Silvanus was bishop of Troas. Apparently it was at this time that the church which gave name to the city was dedicated. Another church was erected to Demetrios. On the death of Silvanus, Athanasius (who was bishop of Skepsis at the Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431) succeeded him at Troas, and Philostorgius was made bishop of Skepsis. It would appear therefore that the bishopric of Troas was a more desirable dignity than that of Skepsis" (Ramsay, *H.G.A.M.*, 161-166, cf. *ibid.* 152-153).

THE INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

It remains to mention briefly the succession of thinkers, the stream of philosophy declining into "rhetoric," which distinguished Skepsis among the cities of the Troad. The line begins with Erastos and Koriskos, pupils of Plato. Little enough is known about them, nor do they seem to have contributed anything to original thought. But there is extant a letter of Plato addressed to them, a letter whose genuineness seems to be confirmed by the comparative insignificance of the recipients. It is couched in most affectionate terms, and contains an appeal to them to keep in touch with Hermias of Assos, the pupil of Aristotle, whose friendship will be of the greatest value to them. He is a philosopher, but also a man of the world, banker, politician, administrator; the philosophers of the study need such contact to help them to face the wicked world.

The son of Koriskos was Neleus, who continued the tradition. He was a pupil of Aristotle and afterwards of Theophrastos, with whom he was on such terms of intimacy as to be appointed executor of his will, and to be made legatee of the library of Aristotle, with consequences which have already been alluded to and need not be further discussed. The later part of the 3rd century seems to have been a period of stagnation in the intellectual life of Skepsis; for some half century we hear nothing of any distinguished citizen, only of the neglect from which the precious library suffered. But early in the 2nd century there arose a new and original scholar, Demetrios, a wealthy man and passionate student of geography, and particularly of his native land. He appears, from what Strabo quotes, to have

returned to the Academic school from the Peripatetic, and quotes Plato with veneration. It is to him, unfortunately only at second-hand, that we owe practically all that is known of the Troad in ancient days.

He handed on the tradition to Metrodoros, the famous rhetorician and statesman. Metrodoros was many years younger, but we have the explicit statement of Diogenes Laertius that he obtained his start in life from Demetrios, and it is quite possible that he may have done so. Metrodoros was the typical "rhetor" and is recorded by Cicero as having been a friend of L. Crassus, the orator. He became the confidential adviser of Mithradates Eupator in his struggle with the Romans, and died, apparently at an advanced age, about 70 B.C. (*A.B.S.A.*, XXII, 23).

With him the intellectual history of Skepsis comes to an end. But it had continued, with a gap of half a century from about 250 to 200 B.C., for well-nigh 300 years. No other town in the Troad can show any man of equal importance at all, with the exception of Assos, where Hermias was a passing meteor, and Lampsakos, when for a time Epicurus settled there and established a school of devoted pupils.

6 SUSSEX PLACE,
LONDON, N.W. 1.