



LAONIA: MAP OF THE MAINIOTE PENINSULA.

## LACONIA.

### II.—TOPOGRAPHY.

#### § I.—GYTHIUM AND THE NORTH-WEST COAST OF THE LACONIAN GULF.

I PROPOSE here to discuss briefly the topography of the triangular district which is bounded on the west by the range of Taygetus, on the east by the sea from the mouth of the Eurotas to the Bay of Skutari, and on the north by an imaginary line drawn from the mouth of the Eurotas due west to Taygetus.

#### GEOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

This district can well be discussed by itself, since geographically it is distinguished in a marked manner from those which adjoin it on the north and south, while on the west it is entirely cut off by the barrier of Taygetus. The Plain of Sparta to the north, though surrounded by mountains and hills, is itself almost flat ; the Gythium district is covered by spurs which run down from Taygetus and is watered by copious streams, which have here and there formed small but fertile plains, some inland, but the majority on the sea border. In the Plain of Sparta the streams drain into the Eurotas, in our district into the Laconian Gulf.

On the south the district is sharply divided from the Peninsula of Taenarum or Matapan by a barrier of hills running down from Taygetus into the sea, just south of the Bay of Skutari. At this point runs the only important pass in the southern part of Taygetus, which must have served in antiquity, as at the present day, as the chief road of communication with the cities of the east coast of the Messenian Gulf. The

Peninsula of Taenarum is distinguished from the Gythium district by its more mountainous character and the absence of fertile lowlands.

### GYTHIUM.

The modern town<sup>1</sup> is built along the foot of the hill of Kumaro 'Arbutus' (the ancient Larysium), partly on a shelf of land which projects into the sea, partly on the steep side of the hill itself, and partly on the southern edge of the plain which lies to the north of it, now called Palaeopolis, the site of the ancient city. Except for a few scattered houses and the mill on the seashore, there was, until the last few years, no extensive building on the ancient site. Now, however, there are several factories, the public buildings, and a number of small houses in the plain of Palaeopolis.

Gythium is connected with Sparta by a well-constructed road which enters the town from the north-west, following the course of the Gythium River, unlike the ancient road, which entered the Plain of Palaeopolis from the north.

Gythium possesses an inner and an outer harbour. The outer harbour is formed by the Island of Cranae, which is joined to the mainland by a mole; the inner harbour is formed by a mole running out due north from the shelf of land on which the main part of the town is built. The outer harbour has a depth of from eleven to twenty fathoms, the inner from one-and-a-half to two fathoms. Along the whole length of the town, 1200 metres, a mole has been constructed, which has driven the sea back in many places to a distance of thirty to forty metres, on which space numerous houses and the road have been constructed.

The simplest method of dealing with the topography of Gythium<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Population in 1889, 3686; in 1896, 4061.

<sup>2</sup> References to Gythium in ancient authors: Paus. iii. 21. 8 ff.; Strabo, vii. 5. 2; Thuc. i. 108, iv. 53; Xen. *Hell.* vi. 5. 32; Polyb. v. 19. 6; Scylax, 47. 6; Lycophron, 98; Pomponius Mela, ii. 3. 51; Liv. xxxiv. 29, xxxv. 27.

Bibliography: Leake, *Morea*, i. 244 ff.; Curtius, *Pelop.* ii. 268 ff.; Bursian, *Geog.* 144-145; Phillipson, *Pelop.* 216; Boblaye, *Recherches*, 86 ff.; Walpole, *Memoirs Relating to Turkey*, 57 ff.; Ross, *Wanderungen*, ii. 231-235, 238; Le Bas, *Voyage Arch. Itin.* 25, 26; Wyse, Sir T., *Travels*, i. 40 ff.; Stephanopoulos, *Voyages en Grèce*, chs. xxii.-xxv.; Patsourakos, J. *Πραγματεία περὶ τοῦ ἀρχαίου Γυθίου* (Athens, 1902); *Bull. de Corr. Hell.* xv. (1891), 654; *Rev. Arch.* 1845, 206-217; *Ath. Mitt.* i. 151-157; *Πρακτικά τῆς Ἑλλ. Ἀρχ. Ἐτ.* 1891, 27-35; *Ἐφ. Ἀρχ.* 1891, 55-64; 185-204.

Maps and Plans: British Admiralty Chart, *Plan of Gythium* (1902); Le Bas, *Voyage Arch.* Pl. 26; Curtius, *Pelop.* taf. xii.; *Πρακτικά*, loc. cit. (Theatre).

seems to be to take the account of Pausanias<sup>1</sup> in connexion with the existing remains, and then to describe other features of the site and neighbourhood.

A.—EXISTING REMAINS MENTIONED BY PAUSANIAS.

*The Agora.*<sup>2</sup>

‘In the Agora are statues of Apollo and Herakles, and near them is Dionysos.<sup>3</sup> On the other side is Apollo Karneios and the Temple of Ammon and a brazen statue of Asklepios and his temple, which has no roof, and the fountain of the god and the shrine of Demeter<sup>4</sup> and the statue of Poseidon, Upholder of Earth.’

It was therefore a large open space adorned with temples and public buildings. Several indications help to fix its position: firstly, south of the theatre and parallel with the foot of the Acropolis Hill are traces of a long marble building, now mostly covered up; beyond this, and near the Church of the Panagia, is a public well, which may mark the site of the sacred spring of Asklepios. This spring was, according to Pausanias, on the same side of the agora as the Temple of Apollo, and it was just at this spot that the inscription relating to this temple was found.<sup>5</sup> We thus have some indication of the position of one side of the agora. Secondly, between this line and the sea and parallel to both, Mr. Skias<sup>6</sup> found part of a marble epistyle and stylobate, together with a Corinthian capital, three metres below the surface. It was at this point that the Table of Liquid Measurements,<sup>7</sup> now at Athens, was found; this, like the similar table found *in situ* at Pompeii,<sup>8</sup> must certainly have stood in the agora. We thus have indications of the position of the east side of the agora, which must therefore have covered a large space south-east of the theatre, with its west side along the foot of the Acropolis Hill.

<sup>1</sup> iii. 21. 6–22. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 21. 8–9.

<sup>3</sup> For the cult of Dionysos at Gythium see *B.S.A.* x. pp. 181–182.

<sup>4</sup> For the cult of Demeter at Gythium see *ib.* pp. 180–181.

<sup>5</sup> C.-B. 4567; Le B.-F. No. 243.

<sup>6</sup> 'Εφ. 'Αρχ. l.c.

<sup>7</sup> 'Εφ. 'Αρχ. i. p. 378; Le B.-F. No. 241 b; Hultsch, *Metrologie*, pp. 537–539; *Rev. Arch.* 1872, p. 297; *ib.* 1903, p. 27.

<sup>8</sup> Mau, *Pompeii*, pp. 92–93 and 340.

*The Πύλαι Καστορίδες.*<sup>1</sup>

‘There too are what are called “the Gates of Castor.”’

The use of the word *πύλαι* in the plural to signify a pass, as in the case of Thermopylae and the *πύλαι τῆς Κιλικίας*, seems to point here to some narrow defile rather than the gate of the city. The ancient road from Sparta to Gythium entered the town from the north, as we gather from Pausanias.<sup>2</sup> At the point where the plain begins to open there is a narrow defile between the abrupt cliff and the sea, and here must have been the gate referred to by Pausanias. Pausanias, who speaks of only one gate, would naturally mention the Spartan gate as being the most important, and Castor was a typically Spartan deity. I would therefore place the ‘Gates of Castor’ just where the road from Trinasos enters the plain of Palaeopolis.

*The Ancient Acropolis.*

‘On the Acropolis is a temple and statue of Athena.’<sup>3</sup>

The hill on which this stood lies to the west of Palaeopolis, and rises to a height of about fifty metres. It is now covered with olives and narrow terraces sown with corn, which have been mainly constructed of ancient blocks and seats from the theatre. The temple of Athena was probably situated where are now the ruins of a small Christian shrine; several large ancient blocks of marble are still to be seen here. Athena is represented on the Imperial coins of Gythium.

*The Sanctuary of Zeus Kappotas.*

‘About three stades from Gythium is an unworked stone; they say that it was while seated on this that Orestes recovered from his madness. For this reason the stone was called Zeus Kappotas (the Deliverer) in the Dorian tongue.’<sup>4</sup>

Near the modern Gymnasium, at the side of the Sparta road, is an abrupt face of reddish stone some ten metres high, cut into the side of the hill of Kumaro and now called *Πελεκητό*. At a point about four metres above the level of the neighbouring road is the rock-cut inscription *Μοῖρα Διὸς Τεραστίω*.<sup>5</sup> It was cut by hammering with a round-pointed instrument, which made dot-like incisions.

<sup>1</sup> Paus. iii. 21. 9.

<sup>2</sup> iii. 21. 4 and 22. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. iii. 21. 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 22. 1.

<sup>5</sup> C.-B. 4563.

The distance from this spot to the centre of the ancient site agrees well with the 'about three stades' of Pausanias, and it may, I think, be regarded as certain that this inscription marks the site of the sanctuary of Zeus Kappotas. *Τεράστιος* must then be regarded as the official title of the god, *Καπώτας* as a local popular epithet. The spot as figured by Le Bas-Waddington shows a rocky platform at the foot of the cliff, which perhaps was the 'unwrought stone' mentioned by Pausanias.

*The Island of Cranæ.*

'The Island of Cranæ lies in front of Gythium.'<sup>1</sup>

The Island of Cranæ or Marathonisi lies at right angles to the southern extremity of the modern town, about a kilometre distant from the ancient site; it is now connected with the mainland by a mole. The surface is extremely rough, and there are no traces of ancient foundations. Two sarcophagi, of which one still remains on the island and the other has been removed to Athens, have been found here. A small cutting instrument of Melian obsidian, which I discovered, seems to show that the island was inhabited at an early date; as is also indicated by the Homeric story<sup>2</sup> that Paris and Helen fled hither from Sparta and took ship for Troy. There may well have been a small *skala* here at a very early date.

*The Migonium.*

'Over against the island (of Cranæ) is the temple of Aphrodite Migonitis on the mainland, and the whole of this place is called the Migonium. They say that Alexander (*i.e.* Paris) built this temple.'<sup>3</sup>

Opposite and to the north-west of Cranæ, lies a shelf of land forming an isosceles triangle, of which the east and west sides measure 500 metres, and the north side 180 metres. This space is bordered on the west by the abrupt slopes of Mount Kumaro, on the north by the sea. It is now entirely covered with buildings and forms the oldest portion of the modern town and contains the principal churches. Here, and here only, can the Migonium have been situated, since on no other site opposite Cranæ—that is between Palaeopolis and the modern village of Mavrovouni—could there have been found sufficient flat space to build a temple. Further, the Larysium (see below) is described by Pausanias as 'above the Migonium,'

<sup>1</sup> Paus. iii. 22. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Paus. *l.c.*; Hom. *Il.* iii. 445.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. iii. 22. 2.

and this triangular space is the only flat ground between the hill and the sea, for north and south of it the cliffs fall abruptly into the sea. It is possible that the Metropolitan Church of H. Georgios occupies the site of this temple of Aphrodite, since in digging the foundations of the houses adjoining it, some ancient foundations were discovered and a statuette, which was carried to Cythera, then under British government, and there sold.

With this triangular space of ground, which we have identified with the Migonium, may be connected the well-known rock-cut inscription *Μηδένα ἀποστρύθῃσθαι κ.τ.λ.*,<sup>1</sup> inscribed on the face of the cliff 330 metres to the north. The sea in antiquity must have washed the base of this cliff, but has now been driven back by the construction of the mole, the depth of water in front of which at this point, varies from four-and-a-half to six feet. The inscription is cut at the commencement of a path leading along the face of the cliff, above and parallel to the present road along the mole, by which it has now been replaced. It is reasonable to suppose that the ancient road from the town to the Migonium led along this rock-cut path on the face of the hill, and that here, at the entrance of the sacred precinct, which was regarded as beginning at this spot, this inscription was cut to warn the worshipper not to pollute the sacred inclosure. There can have been no thoroughfare in antiquity along the east face of Mount Kumaro, for the road to the Plain of Bardounia was elsewhere (see below, *Public Stairway*), and the modern road to Mavrovouni had to be blasted out of the face of the cliff.

### *The Larysium Hill.*

‘Above the Migonium is the hill called the Larysium, sacred to Dionysos.’<sup>2</sup>

The modern name of this hill is Kumaro; it rises immediately above the town to a height of 186 metres, and is crowned by the little church of H. Pantēs. The hill is very steep and rocky, and the only spot where any cultivation would be possible, is on a small plateau at the head of the ravine which runs down to the sea immediately opposite the island of Cranae. Here must have been situated the shrine of Dionysos mentioned by Pausanias.<sup>3</sup> Its position would be exactly ‘above the Migonium,’ as

<sup>1</sup> C.-B. 4564, *C.I.G.* 1469.

<sup>2</sup> Paus. iii. 22. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. *l.c.* says that grapes grew here; hence the necessity of finding a site where there would be sufficient soil for cultivation.

Pausanias describes it. There are traces of ancient quarries on the north-east slopes of the hill.

#### OTHER REMAINS ON THE ANCIENT SITE OF GYTHIUM.

##### *The Theatre.*

The theatre, which was cut out from the east slope of the Acropolis, has been fully dealt with by its excavator, Mr. A. Skias.<sup>1</sup>

##### *The Harbour and Existing Remains on the Sea-Shore.*

On the shore immediately east of the Acropolis and near the mill of Mulákos are extensive Roman remains, the most important being a long building now partly covered by the sea, and a fine mosaic. Here, as in many other parts of Greece, a considerable area of what was dry land in antiquity has now been covered by the sea; at the present day a number of various buildings can be seen extending under the sea, amongst them a thick wall of poros blocks, 1·00 m. by '30 m., which must mark the beginning of an ancient mole. It is said to curve round to the north-east and would have afforded the necessary protection from the east wind. Curtius<sup>2</sup> saw traces of the 'excavated harbour' mentioned by Strabo, in a marsh on the shore, but Mr. Skias has proved by trial-pits that there is not sufficient depth of earth down to the living rock for this to have been possible. Hence in antiquity there must have been an inner harbour entered from the north and protected by a breakwater and an outer port, as at the present day, under the shelter of Cranae.

Immediately east of the theatre Mr. Skias found the ruins of a colonnade, consisting of a stylobate twenty-one metres long, with two bases of Ionian columns and part of the epistyle. This was probably a colonnade in connexion with the theatre, as is the case at Athens and elsewhere.

##### *Roman Remains at Palaeopolis.*

The most important lies in the valley north of the Acropolis Hill, and consists of several brick vaults, decorated with fan-shaped moulding of stucco; it was perhaps a bath.

Remains of fortifications of the same period can be traced in several

<sup>1</sup> Πρακτικά, 1891, pp. 71 ff. and Plan, to which add *B.S.A.* x. p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> *Pelop.* ii. pp. 268 ff.; Strabo, vii. 5. 2.



places; by the Church of the Panagia are the remains of a considerable tower, still standing to the height of about four metres. A similar tower also stands on the south-west of the summit of the Acropolis Hill, together with some remains of walls. That so little remains *in situ* is due to the fact that the growth of the modern town has given rise to a great demand for building-material, and every available stone has been carried off.

### *Cemeteries.*

The most important burial ground of ancient Gythium seems to have extended along the valley which runs at right angles to the sea, from the south corner of the site, and through which the Gythium river flows. It was along this valley, where the Sparta road now runs, that the ancient way led to the plain of the Bardounia River, as I shall presently show (see below, *Public Stairway*). The construction of this new road has laid bare a number of tombs, both rock-cut and artificially built up, and numerous inscriptions have been found here. In one tomb on this road Professor Patsourakos found a terracotta of archaic type, with long hair and hands extended at the side, 0.8 m. in height. He has also found what seems to have been a private burial ground on the hill of St. Elias, just north of the site.

Near the shore to the north-west is an underground tomb of Roman brick.

### *'The Apella.'*

A short distance from the ancient site, north of the Sparta road and west of the Church of H. Triada, is an open space of semicircular form. The chord is formed by a flat rock about 3.00 m. high, artificially smoothed, with a square block cut out of the top of it in the centre, so as to form a kind of *bema*. The greater part of the arc of the semicircle is formed by the natural slope of the north side of the Acropolis Hill and a small spur which runs out from it. This, I think, may have been the ancient Apella or place of assembly: being situated just outside the town and in an open space near an important road, it is in a position such as would be naturally chosen for such a purpose.

### *The Aqueduct.*

The discovery of the ancient aqueduct is due entirely to the zeal of Professor Patsourakos of Gythium. The water was taken from the

Bardounia River at a point some sixteen kilometres north of the town, below the village of Strotza; the water-course was constructed partly by rock-cuttings and partly by building; in the latter case it has generally disappeared. At first for some kilometres it follows the course of the river at a higher level. At one point, some two kilometres from where it leaves the river bed, is a splendid piece of tunnelling, 1·00 m. high, ·77 m. broad, and 16·00 m. long. At the mouth of this tunnel is a rock-cut relief of Herakles leaning on his club in the attitude of the Farnese figure; unfortunately it is much damaged. The rock is a bluish marble; the figure is ·52 m. in height, the right hand, the elbow of which is bent, holds the club, which rests on the rock. The left hand apparently rests on the rock. The face is partly destroyed, but it was evidently bearded and turned slightly to the left; the muscles are insisted on, particularly those of the chest and thighs. The depth of relief varies from ·04 m. to ·03 m.

Leaving the Bardounia River the aqueduct turns to the south-east and passes the village of Koutoumoú, and in the last part of its course follows the line of the Sparta road along the hills to the left of it. At a point about two kilometres from Gythium, where it doubles round a ravine, there was until last year, a very finely preserved rock cutting, 3·75 m. high and ·63 m. broad, which has now unfortunately been quarried away. The aqueduct ends in a reservoir at the back of the Acropolis Hill. This consisted of three long vaulted chambers lined with cement, two of which are still tolerably well preserved; they each measured 33·70 m. in length, 6·40 m. in width, and in some places the walls, which are a metre thick, still stand to the height of 4·00 m. Subterranean channels are said to be traceable leading in different directions to the town. This reservoir is built of brick and is certainly of Roman date, but the aqueduct itself must go back to Greek times. A proof of this is to be found in the fact that it doubles round a gorge, where a Roman architect would certainly have constructed it on arches.

In connexion with the relief, the modern peasants tell a curious tale.

Herakles and another prince both fell in love with the daughter of the king of Gythium. As the price of her hand the king commanded each to fulfil a task in a given time. Herakles was to bring water down from Taygetus and his rival was to build the city of Gythium. The competitor who finished first was to wed the lady. Both finished at the same minute and demanded the princess's hand. The question therefore had to be

settled by a duel. Hearing of this the princess came upon the scene of the duel, and being unwilling to be the cause of the death of either of the benefactors of her father's city, slew herself between the combatants.' This tale seems to be a modern version of the story told by Pausanias,<sup>1</sup> that Gythium was founded by Herakles and Apollo after they had fought for the tripod and had become reconciled.

### *The Public Stairway.*

The road leading out of Gythium to the west has already been mentioned in connexion with the tombs which lined it on either side. It was the road leading into the rich plain of Bardounia, which must have supplied the town in antiquity, as it does at the present day. This road followed the line of the modern Sparta road for about a kilometre along the valley of the Gythium River, as far as the modern cemetery. At this point, where the Sparta road turns off to the north, the ancient road ascended a steep spur of the Larysium Hill. Here it can still be traced, though much destroyed by a modern mule-track. It was provided with a stairway for foot-passengers and a roadway for wheeled traffic, both cut in the solid rock. At a point half-way up the hill, fourteen steps are preserved, together with part of the roadway; the steps are 1·02 m. long, 54 m. broad, and 18 m. high; the roadway is 1·62 m. in width. At the top of this flight seven steps are carried over a slight depression on a large block. There are further traces of the ancient way higher up on the brow of the hill. It must have been a work of enormous labour and expense, which was no doubt compensated by the ease with which provisions could be brought into the town.

### *The Plain of Bardounia.*

The rich alluvial plain which extends from the foot of the Larysium Hill to the hills round Passava must have always been of considerable agricultural importance, and so naturally contains some traces of ancient buildings. The most important of these lies on the right of the road from Mavrovouni to Passava. Here on the north slope of a hillock, have been discovered two unfluted columns and a number of carefully hewn blocks, perhaps the remains of an ancient shrine. Further inland in the district now called Voéthi, are remains of Roman masonry in several places,

<sup>1</sup> iii. 21, 8.

marking, no doubt, the sites of villas of inhabitants of Gythium in the Roman epoch. The church of H. Ioannes at Voëthi is apparently built of ancient blocks, either found on the spot or brought from Gythium or Las. If the former is the case, we might perhaps identify the place with the ancient Hypsi mentioned by Pausanias,<sup>1</sup> where was a temple of Artemis Daphnaea. Pausanias describes the place as 'thirty stades inland (πρὸ-ελθόντι) from the hill of Knakadion (at Las), and in the territory of the Spartans.' I am inclined to think that Hypsi must have lain rather towards the slopes of Taygetus, possibly in the neighbourhood of Scamnaki, but I could hear of no ancient remains in that district.

*Note on a Head in the Museum of Gythium.*

This head, which was discovered built into a wall to the south of the theatre, is unfortunately seriously damaged, the mouth and lower part of the face having completely perished. The material is white coarse-grained marble; a piece on the right side was set on with a dowel; the scale is life-sized. A rolled fillet is passed round the head, and there are traces of attachments for a bronze wreath; the hair consists of short curls, under-cut with a drill. The forehead is high and the bar across it strongly marked and well modelled; the eyes are deep set, widely opened and ellipsoid in shape, a heavy bar of flesh overshadows them and descends as far as the outer corners on either side. Short whiskers descend to the level of the middle of the ears, which are well modelled. The head has nothing of the wistful and strained expression of the Scopaeic heads from Tegea, and approaches more nearly to the style of Lysippos, as represented in the copy of his portrait-statue of Agias discovered at Delphi. It is probably a work of the third century, and since it was found so near the site of the ancient agora it is an attractive theory that it may have belonged to one of the cultus-statues seen in the agora by Pausanias, possibly that of Apollo.<sup>2</sup>

The only other object in the Museum which calls for remark is a small statuette of very inferior workmanship, representing a draped and seated human figure with a ram's head. It was found at Kótrones, the ancient Teuthrone, and like the similar herm from Las (see below) doubtless represents Apollo Karneios.

THE SEA-COAST FROM GYTHIUM TO THE MOUTH OF THE EUROTAS.

The ancient road from Gythium to Sparta, as has already been remarked, followed the line of the sea-coast to Trinasus. The first point of interest along the sea-coast to the north-east of Gythium are the ruins

<sup>1</sup> iii. 24. 8; the name is used in the dative, "Τψοις, so that the form of the nominative may have been "Τψα or "Τψοι.

<sup>2</sup> Paus. iii. 21. 8.

of the mediaeval fort of Kaki Skala. Beyond this lies another broad valley in which are considerable ancient remains. At the foot of the rock of Kaki Skala is a large cave, and just beyond, a copious stream of brackish water flows into the sea. A little further to the east are the remains of a large building on the sea-shore, consisting of two walls at right angles to one another, one side being 22·00 m. long, the other 38·00 m., but broken or buried in the sand in part of its length; between these two walls lies part of a large unfluted column, 47 m. in diameter. The walls, which only just appear above the sand, are formed of a mixture of small stones, brick or tile, and mortar. Further to the east, also on the sea-shore, are more traces of Roman masonry. Above the shore is a long sandbank covered with low bushes of lentisk, out of which rise numerous remains of Roman masonry; the bank is obviously due to the fact that the sand has collected round these buildings. Among these remains the most remarkable is a structure containing two vaults, one higher than the other; it rises to the south to a height of nearly 3·00 m., on the north to about 3·50 m. Another long building lies close at hand. North of the sandbank the ground is extremely marshy and contains numerous remains of earlier construction. The ground-plan of one of these measures 23·00 m. in length and 14·00 m. in breadth, and stands to the height of 25 m.; it is constructed of large limestone blocks, most of them more than 1·00 m. by 50 m.; the limestone is full of small holes and fossil shells. North-west of this, at the foot of the spur which runs back from Kaki Skala, is another group of remains: here a terrace has been constructed, substantially built of small stones, mortar, and tiles. The rock rises steeply behind it. A few metres further north is a rectangular building of the same material, 16·00 m. by 11·00 m.; the walls are a metre thick with substantial buttresses on the west side. On the hill to the east of the valley in which these remains lie, are extensive ancient quarries.

Opposite to the last spur which runs down to the sea before the plain of the Eurotas is reached, lie three rocky islands which give its name to the ancient fortress of Trinasus.<sup>1</sup> This was first identified by Leake in a circuit of walls measuring about four hundred metres in circumference; as Pausanias describes it, it was a fort rather than a town, intended no doubt to control the 'Helots' who tilled the plain of Helos from which, as

<sup>1</sup> Paus., iii. 22. 3.

some have held, they took their name.<sup>1</sup> The fort of Kaki Skala further to the west probably served the same purpose at a later date.

East of Trinasus stretches the vast plain formed by the alluvial deposits of the Eurotas. At this point the ancient road to Sparta turned north to the inland site of Croceae.<sup>2</sup>

#### ÆGIAE.

The ancient Ægiae<sup>3</sup> was thirty stades from Gythium and to the right of the ancient Sparta-Gythium road;<sup>4</sup> it has long been identified with the existing remains between Koutoumou and Limni. The site is now known as Palaeochora, and lies about eight kilometres from Gythium. There are considerable traces of Roman, and slight traces of Hellenic masonry on the slopes below Koutoumou and amongst the vineyards in the plain. Here has recently been discovered a sarcophagus of white marble. It is worked on three sides; in front is an Eros holding a garland which hangs over the horns of a *bucranium* on either side and extends round to the ends, where it terminates on the horns of two more *bucrania*.

The River of Bardounia flows to the west of the site, and to the south is the marshy pool which gives the name of Limni to the district. The land all round is marshy and the peasants have recently attempted to drain it by cutting ditches, and have thus been able to reclaim part of the land for growing maize. The marshiness is probably due to the fact that the outlet to the south into the Bardounia River has become silted up; in antiquity there may well have been a small lake with a stream running through it; the marsh was probably the site of the Lake of Poseidon mentioned by Pausanias. Of the temple of Poseidon, which stood by it, no traces are to be seen, but in the Byzantine church of H. Demetrios, on the further bank of the river, are two fine Ionic columns with capitals, nearly three metres high, on which Byzantine capitals have been superimposed, while an ancient architrave has been incorporated in the screen. These and the ancient blocks of which the church is built, may well have come from the temple of Poseidon.

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, vii. 5. 4.      <sup>2</sup> Paus. iii. 21. 4; Curtius, *Pelop.* ii. 265.

<sup>3</sup> Hom. *Il.* ii. 583; Strabo, vii. 5. 3; Paus. iii. 21. 5; Ross, *Wanderungen*, ii. 229; Boblaye, *Recherches*, 85; Curtius, *Pelop.* ii. 276; Bursian, *Geogr.* ii. 229; Leake, *Pelop.* 170.

<sup>4</sup> Paus. *loc. cit.*

Pausanias and Strabo identify Aegiae with the Homeric Augeiae, and it is highly probable that there existed an early settlement which dominated the rich upper plain of the Bardounia River. Near at hand on the right side of the modern Gythium-Sparta road are mounds, apparently artificial, which are pointed out by the natives as the tombs of the ancient kings of the district. Aegiae can never have been a place of any importance, and was probably little more than a small agricultural town.

### THE SITE OF LAS.

The town of most importance in the neighbourhood of Gythium to the south was Las.<sup>1</sup> Pausanias speaks of two cities of the name, the ancient city then in ruins and the town of his own day in the plain near at hand. The former stood on the hill of Asia, and is said to have given the Dioscuri their epithet of Lapersae, 'Sackers of Las.' The distance given by Pausanias of thirty stades from Gythium, agrees well with the distance from Gythium to the Hill of Passava,<sup>2</sup> and here, incorporated in the east wall of the Frankish fort, are fifty-five metres of polygonal masonry rising to a height of about two-thirds of the mediaeval wall. They are of an entirely different character from the rest of the wall, many of the blocks being over a metre long and a metre high; in places mortar has been inserted. They were first noticed by Leake.<sup>3</sup> They are certainly to be identified with the remains of the Las spoken of in the Homeric poems, which was in ruins when Pausanias visited the site. It is just such a position as would be chosen for a 'Mycenaean' fortress-city, being situated on an almost impregnable rock, near the sea and with a good water-supply close at hand, and dominating the fertile plain now called Vathý. It also commands the road to the important pass further south through Taygetus, and would thus keep open the connexion with the east coast of the Messenian Gulf and the Messenian plain beyond. It is interesting to find, here as elsewhere, that an early fortress-site was reoccupied by the Franks

<sup>1</sup> Bibliography of Las: Hom. *Il.* ii. 585; Paus. iii. 24. 6; Strabo, vii. 5. 3; Lycophron, 93; Scylax, p. 17; Thuc. viii. 91; Steph. Byz. *sub. voc.*; Livy, xxxviii. 30; Curtius, *Pelop.* ii. 273 ff.; Boblaye, *Recherches*, 87 ff.; Leake, *Morea*, i. 255 ff., *Pelop.* 174; Bursian, *Geogr.* ii. 147.

<sup>2</sup> For a description of Passava see R. Traquair, *B.S.A.* xii. pp. 274, 275, and Plan, p. 263, Fig. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Loc. cit.*; Traquair, *B.S.A. loc. cit.*, seems to think that this masonry belongs to an earlier mediaeval castle.

under historical conditions which closely resemble those of the Homeric Age.

The site of the later foundation of Las has been a subject of much controversy: Pausanias<sup>1</sup> says that it lay between the hills of Ilium, Asia, and Knakadion, that it was not more than five stades from the river Smenos, and that its water supply came from the spring of Galako near which stood the Gymnasium. Now south of the hill of Passava is a little plain lying among three hills of which Passava is one. Here several statues have come to light, including a small bronze of Pan and the marble herm of a ram-headed deity which Dr. Schröder<sup>2</sup> has connected with the cult of Apollo Karneios. Here too at the foot of Passava Hill is a copious spring of water, and near it the remains of a large Hellenic building of fine poros blocks. These I would identify with the Spring of Galako and the Gymnasium, and the whole site with that of the newer foundation of Las. There are considerable remains of other Hellenic and Roman buildings in the neighbouring fields and vineyards, and in digging the foundation of a little khan some two hundred metres from the spring, the remains of a Doric building and an inscription were discovered.<sup>3</sup> The modern name of the district is Khosiari.

The distance of this site from the river of the Turkovrysi, also agrees well with the distance, 'about five stades,' which Pausanias gives from Las to the Smenos. The Turkovrysi (and not the Bardounia River further east) is certainly the ancient Smenos; it rises in Taygetus and reaches the plain of Vathý after passing through a wild glen under the precipitous north side of the hill of Passava. The description of the water of the Smenos as 'very sweet,' given by Pausanias, agrees exactly with the account of the water of the Turkovrysi given me by a peasant in the plain of Vathý.

On the sea-shore of the bay of Vathý are remains of Roman masonry, half buried in the sand, which mark the position of the ancient harbour.

The religious cults of Las, which are well illustrated by its imperial coinage,<sup>4</sup> are in the main those of Gythium. A noteworthy exception is

<sup>1</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ath. Mitt.* xxix. (1904), pp. 21-24; xxx. (1905), pp. 408, 409 (similar ram's head of Roman date from Zurich).

<sup>3</sup> *B.S.A.* x. p. 187, No. 18; Mr. A. M. Woodward, who visited the site in 1907, was shown amongst other small objects a fine bronze Corinthian pin-head.

<sup>4</sup> *B.M. Cat. Pelop.* Pl. 26; Leake, *Num. Hell.* p. 60; Mionnet, *Suppl.* pp. 234, 235.



the worship of Artemis Dictynna, whose temple, according to Pausanias,<sup>1</sup> stood on a headland to the right of the mouth of the Smenos. It must therefore be placed on the promontory which forms the west extremity of the Gulf of Vathý. The cult is interesting, since it gives a connexion with Crete, where on a headland in the north-west of the island facing towards Laconia, stood the most famous shrine of the goddess.

#### THE SEA-COAST FROM THE GULF OF VATHÝ TO THE BAY OF SKUTARI.

As has been remarked, the temple of Artemis Dictynna must have stood on the headland to the south-west of the Gulf of Vathý. Near this headland stands the village of Ageranos, and in front of its principal church lies a large Ionic column which may have once belonged to this temple. The name Ageranos almost certainly represents the ancient name *Araĩnos*, mentioned by Pausanias,<sup>2</sup> where was the tomb of Las, the mythical founder of the town that bears his name. It is therefore probable that this tomb stood on the same headland as the temple of Artemis, though probably somewhat to the west of it.

Further south-west lay, according to Pausanias,<sup>3</sup> the river Skyras. This is certainly to be identified with the Dhikova, which flows into the Bay of Giorganos, the next inlet south-west of Vathý. At its mouth Pausanias places a shrine of Zeus.<sup>4</sup> North of the river-mouth at a place called Kamares, are the ruins of a splendid group of Roman buildings. The ground-plan of about half the original structure can still be traced, and covers a large area. The front facing the sea has entirely perished, but the walls behind, still stand to a height of eight metres. There are some remains of another Roman building about two hundred metres inland, probably the villa of a wealthy Roman.

The Bay of Giorganos is bounded on the south-west by the promontory of Pagania, beyond which lies the deep Bay of Skutari.

<sup>1</sup> iii. 24. 9.

<sup>2</sup> iii. 24. 10.

<sup>3</sup> iii. 25. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Woodward sends me the following note: 'Close to the Roman building I found three Ionic capitals, of which two were smaller and poorer in style than the other; also marble blocks and a piece of Ionic cornice of fairly good style; they may have belonged to the shrine of Zeus.'

THE BAY OF SKUTARI PROBABLY THE SITE OF ASINE.

The site of Asine has been the subject of some discussion. That one of the numerous towns of that name was situated in the neighbourhood of Gythium, is clear from the ancient authorities; it is mentioned by Strabo,<sup>1</sup> and Polybius.<sup>2</sup> I think that Thucydides<sup>3</sup> is certainly referring to the Laconian Asine and not to the Messenian, where he mentions it in close connection with Helos, as having been attacked by the Athenians from Cythera; it must therefore have been a place of some importance at the time of the Peloponnesian War. It is not mentioned by Pausanias, and this fact has given rise to the theory, held by Curtius and others, that Asine was merely another name for Las, derived from the name of the neighbouring hill of Asia. This is, I think, impossible. Though the two places are clearly near one another, they were quite distinct, as is shown by the fact that Strabo<sup>4</sup> mentions them separately. The Laconian Asine lay on the sea-coast between Taenarum and Gythium;<sup>5</sup> it must also have occupied a strong defensive position, since it was unsuccessfully besieged by Philip of Macedon.<sup>6</sup> I have no hesitation in placing it at the modern Skutari. Firstly, the position is a strong one and near the sea; lastly there are distinct traces of Roman buildings near the sea and a number of ancient blocks and columns built into the modern village. The silence of Pausanias may be accounted for by the fact that he turned inland from the River Skyras to Pyrrhichus (Kavalos),<sup>7</sup> and thence doubled back to the shore of the Laconian Gulf at Teuthrone (Kotronais),<sup>8</sup> thus missing the Bay of Skutari.

THE GYTHIUM DISTRICT IN GREEK HISTORY.

Little has at present been discovered which throws any light on the history of the district in the Early Age of Greece. The only traces of the period are the polygonal masonry at Passava (Las) and the obsidian found at Cranæ; we have further the evidence of the Homeric *Catalogue of the Ships*, that there was an early settlement at Aegiae. There may have been some trade in the purple of the Laconian Gulf at an early date, and

<sup>1</sup> vii. 5. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Loc. cit.* and vii. 5. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *B.S.A.* x. p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> v. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Strabo, vii. 5. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Paus. iii. 25. 4.

<sup>3</sup> iv. 54.

<sup>6</sup> Polyb. v. 9.

in all probability the quarries of green porphyry were worked at a very early date, and the marble at Croceae<sup>1</sup> (Ali-Bey, near Levetsova) brought down the western bank of the Eurotas and shipped from a point on the coast at, or near, Gythium.

In the Classical Period we are on firmer ground. The growing power of Sparta found in the north-west corner of the Laconian Gulf its most natural outlet to the sea; the Gythium district thus acquires at once a military and a commercial importance. A small port may have existed at Gythium at an earlier date, but it was not until the late sixth and early fifth centuries that historical conditions encouraged the foundation of great sea-ports. When the growth of Spartan power necessitated a fleet, Gythium was naturally chosen as the naval station, since it is the nearest point on the Gulf which has any natural advantages, being protected on the south by Cranae and on the west by the Larysium. In the fifth century her enemies recognised that here lay the most vulnerable spot in the land empire of Sparta, for a power that had command of the sea. In 455 B.C. Gythium was attacked by the Athenians under Tolmides and the docks were burnt;<sup>2</sup> thirty years later the whole district was laid waste by Nicias, who had his base on Cythera.<sup>3</sup> In 370 B.C. Gythium must have been a well fortified town, for Epaminondas besieged it unsuccessfully,<sup>4</sup> and in 215 B.C. it was attacked by Philip V. of Macedon.<sup>5</sup> In 195 B.C. it fell before the Romans under T. Quintius Flamininus; it was at this time, as Livy<sup>6</sup> tells us, a strong and populous town, well provided with means of resistance.

In the second century B.C. the cities of Southern Laconia formed a confederacy independent of Sparta, with their headquarters at Taenarum; they obtained special privileges under Augustus and numbered twenty-four cities under the title of the Eleuthero-Laconian League. By the time of Pausanias their number had dwindled to eighteen, but the existing remains, which mainly go back to the Imperial Epoch, point to a high pitch of prosperity under the empire. The marble quarries of Croceae and the purple fisheries of the Laconian Gulf were doubtless a source of wealth. Inscriptions of the period are numerous, and the plenteous coinage of Gythium and Las under Severus and Caracalla indicate commercial prosperity in the early third century A.D.

<sup>1</sup> Paus. iii. 21. 4; Philippson, *Pelop.* 215 and 387.

<sup>2</sup> Thuc. i. 108.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* iv. 54.

<sup>4</sup> Xen. *Hell.* vi. 5. 32.

<sup>5</sup> Polyb. v. 19. 6.

<sup>6</sup> xxxiv. 29.

When the power of Rome waned and the centre of government was transferred to Constantinople, the control over south-western Laconia was relaxed and the inhabitants, as was natural in their isolated position, relapsed into barbarism. The centre of trade changed from Gythium to Monemvasia on the east coast of the peninsula of Malea; trade being now with the East rather than the West, this change saved the proverbially dangerous journey round Cape Malea.

EDWARD S. FORSTER.