

## Oral Transmission

## 9. Discussion of Homer's references to the geography of Troy.

Wace and Stubbings, A Companion to Homer 362-386.

3.41-19<sup>6</sup> xx-13b Dow, Sterling, "The Greeks in the Bronze Age" in Kirk p.160  
How could Troy stand a ten-year seige if it were so small that a swift runner, as D. L. Page points out, could cross it lengthwise in some 25 seconds? . . .

3.41-24' xx-14c Finley, M. I., The World of Odysseus. 38  
Without entering into technical archaeological analysis, we may point to the battle terrain. The Iliad is filled with details, for that is the stuff of heroic narrative. Basically they are so consistent that a serviceable map of the area can be drawn from the poet's specifications. That map and the region of Hissarlik fail to coincide, and the discrepancies are so crucial that it has been proved impossible to recreate essential scenes of the Iliad on the actual site.

3.41-36<sup>4</sup> xx-17a Bowra, C. M. Tradition and Design of the Iliad.

p. 159 And the Sixth City agrees in some respects with Homer's account of Troy and the Trojan War. . . . The landscape too agrees with Homer's account . . .

p. 160 All this is very circumstantial and would seem to point to the poet knowing his Troy, or at least knowing some correct account of it. But there are other passages which show that the poet either did not know the landscape, or else he exerted his poetical prerogative and altered it. He describes features which no longer exist, such as the hot and cold springs under the walls.

Carpenter, Rhys, Folk Tale, Fiction, Saga in Homeric Epics. 35

Let it be said at once that no informed reader has ever doubted the actuality of its geographic setting. The larger landmarks are those of a well-known sector of the northeastern Aegean. Its islands are expressly named - Sanothrace (which is called Thracian Samos), Lemnos, and Imbros, tiny Teneos and sizable Lesbos. The Greek ships are drawn on the shore of the Hellespont. Among near-by mainland towns are mentioned Abydos at the narrows, Arisbe, Chryse on the sea, Zela on the Propontis. We are dealing with an actual region accessible to any Greek. There cannot be any question of the whereabouts of the Trojan plain which forms the field of battle, since its situation and much of its local conformation appear with unambiguous immediacy from the language of the poem itself. From the text alone we may gather a fairly extensive picture of Trojan topography.