

LONGUS AND THE TOPOGRAPHY OF LESBOS¹

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Although criticism of *Daphnis and Chloe* has quite properly emphasized its distance from realism,² many precise details concerning the island of Lesbos can be recognized in the work, sufficient to persuade some scholars that Longus was familiar with, and perhaps a native of, the island.³

An important detail in discussions of Longus' knowledge of the island is the statement at the beginning of the story (1.1.2) that the country estate where the bulk of the story is set is located 200 stades from Mytilene. Because the farm is on the sea-coast, and in Mytilenean territory but easily accessible from Methymna, it is natural to place the farm on the east coast of the island, north of Mytilene; it is there, for example, that Büchner (2113) locates the story. See Fig. 1.⁴

¹A version of this paper was presented to the American Philological Association, New York, December 28, 1976; it is based on a stay in Lesbos in July and August of that year.

Citations from Longus are from Dalmeida's Budé edition (Paris 1960²), and of Strabo from H. L. Jones' Loeb edition, *The Geography of Strabo* 6 (Cambridge and London 1929, reprinted 1960) 138–49; other editions have not yet reached Book 13, and none of the Lesbos section (13.2) is on the Vatican palimpsest.

The following works are cited by author's name only: Hans-Günter Buchholz, *Methymna* (Mainz 1976); K. Büchner, *RE* 12.2 (1925), s.v. Lesbos, 2107–2133; F. Hiller von Gaertringen, "Neuer Forschungen zur Geschichte und Epigraphie von Lesbos," *Gött Nachr., Phil-Hist Kl., Fachgruppe 1*, n.f. 1 (1934–36) 107–19; Yiannes Kontes, "Ta kata Daphnin kai Chloën tou Longou kai hē Lesbos," *Aiolika Grammata* 2 (1972) 217–23; Richard Koldewey, *Die Antike Baureste der Insel Lesbos* (Berlin 1890); S. A. Naber, "Adnotationes Criticae ad Longi Pastoralia," *Mnemosyne* n.s. 5 (1877) 199–220; Naval Intelligence Division (Great Britain), *Geographical Handbook Series* 18, *Greece*, vol. 3, *Regional Geography* (London 1945); Otto Schönberger, ed., *Longos, Hirtengeschichte von Daphnis und Chloe* (Berlin 1960).

²E.g., B. P. Reardon, *Courants littéraires des IIe et IIIe siècles après J.-C.* (Paris 1971) 201, "un monde des plus irréels."

³E.g., B. E. Perry, *The Ancient Romances* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967) 351.

⁴The following maps were employed to produce the sketch-maps and for much information in this article: Kiepert's large-scale map in Koldewey (Tafel 30), and the land-use map (Tafel 31); Buchholz, Abb. 5, 6, 7 (pp. 36, 37, 41); *Nomos Lesbou, Klimax 1:150,000*, epimeleia Ap. Salbara-N. Sebastou, edkosis Th. Sitsanē (Mytilene, n.d.); Ethnikē Statistikē Hypēresia tēs Hellados, *Nomoi*: 32, *Nomos Lesbou, Klimax 1:200.000* (Athens 1963).

An editor of Menander's *Dyskolos* has illustrated his text with a photograph of the cave of Pan at Phyle.⁵ Yet, although Lesbos is no more inaccessible than an Attic country deme, no edition of Longus has been illustrated by photographs of north-east Lesbos, nor has there been very much agreement about the location of the story, although such features as a long sandy beach (1.1.2) and a moon-shaped harbour located on a headland (2.25.2) should be identifiable.

Part of the reason for such lack of agreement has been the unwillingness of some scholars to accept the idea of precise distances in a work of imaginative fiction. Kontes, for example, argues that (217)

Ένας λογοτέχνης δὲν κάνει βέβαια γεωγραφία ἢ τοπογραφία, γιὰ νὰ ἀπαιτοῦμε ἀκρίβεια ἀπὸ τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς ποὺ δίνει, καὶ ποὺ μπορεῖ νὰ εἶναι ὀλότελα φανταστικοί.

And Hiller (118) is scornful, "nicht nur Romanschreiber springen mit Zahlen leichtfertig um."

But it can be argued that it was normal to supply accurate figures of this type in the ancient novels. Xenophon of Ephesus, for example, gives distances around Ephesus that have been shown to be accurate (Xen. Eph., *Ephes.* 1.2.2, 1.6.1);⁶ Apuleius' total of six miles from the theatre at Corinth to Cenchreae (*Met.* 10.35.3) also appears precise.⁷ Such precision is one of the methods whereby "the novelists set about giving the impression that their subject is drawn from the real world."⁸ A similar process can be frequently observed in modern works.⁹ The reluctance of Kontes and Hiller to accept Longus' figures on general literary grounds seems unjustified.

A more serious objection, which probably underlies Hiller's and Kontes' more general arguments, has been the conviction that the figures in *Daphnis and Chloe* are impossible when compared to actual distances on the island. To deal with this objection requires, first of all, a definition of the stade in modern terms. Strabo, whose account of Lesbos plays a very important part in the evaluation of Longus, provides the equation 8 stades

⁵J. Bingen, ed., *Menander: Dyskolos* (Leiden 1964²), frontispiece.

⁶G. Dalmeida, ed., *Xénophon d'Ephèse: Les Ephésiaques* (Paris 1962²) 11–12.

⁷*Der Kleine Pauly* 3 (Stuttgart 1969) 1299, s.v. "miliarium" cites the equation 1 mp = 1481.5 m as "richtig." 6 miles is thus roughly 9 km. Measurement on maps, e.g., *Hesperia* 43 (1974), plate 117, produces about 10 km for the distance as the crow flies. P. Veyne, "Apulée à Cenchrées," *RPh* ser. 3, 39 (1965) 246, note 1, gives similar figures.

⁸E. L. Bowie, "The Novels and the Real World," *Erotica Antiqua: Acta of the International Conference on the Ancient Novel* (Bangor, Wales 1977) 72.

⁹E.g., John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (Boston 1969) 66; E. Gaskell, *Cranford*, ed. E. P. Wilson (London 1972) 1.

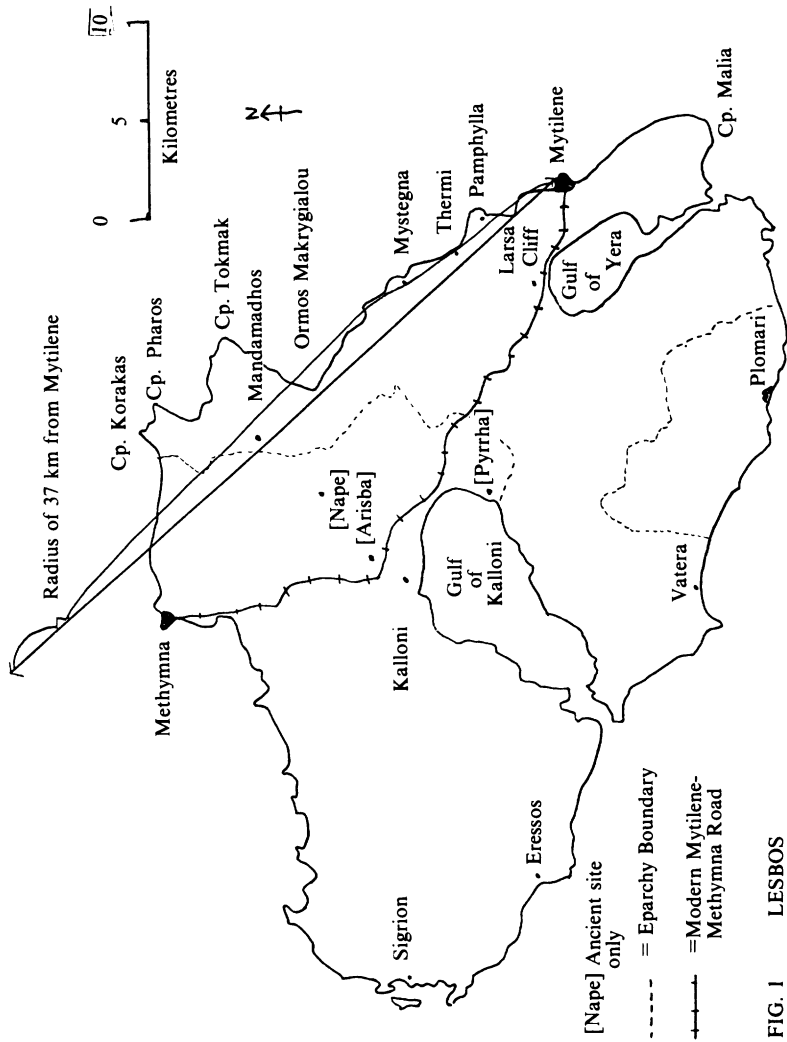


FIG. 1 LESBOS

= 1 (Roman) mile [= 1.48 km (see note 7)], “if one reckons as most people do” (7.7.4 [322]). A stade is thus the equivalent of 186 m; there are 5.38 stades to the kilometre. Other definitions of the stade range from 150 to 200 m, but the only other definition widely used in the Roman period, the “*stadium olympicum*,” is only minimally different from Strabo’s: 8 1/3 st. to the Roman mile, or 1 st. = 179 m.¹⁰

Hiller (118) argued that a distance 200 st. north of Mytilene would end up in the sea. If one draws a circle with a radius of 200 st. (37 km) on the map, it does indeed pass far north of any position on the east coast (see Fig. 1). But we must ask if Longus would in fact have given a distance “as the crow flies.” Usually when ancient authors cite distances on land, what is meant is an actual travelling distance by normal roads. When Thucydides, for example, gives the distance of 120 st. from Athens to Dekeleia (7.19.2), that figure can be shown to be accurate in terms of “the main route via Oropos . . . , not of the isolated traveller, much less of the crow’s flight.”¹¹ To calculate a distance as the crow flies requires high-level geometrical skills, and provides a figure that would not mean very much to an ancient reader. If we consider actual road distances, however, we find that the large village of Mandamadhos is stated to be 36 km from Mytilene in modern maps and guide books (see Fig. 1). Clearly there are communities within a range of 35–40 km from Mytilene, especially around the bay called Ormos Makrygiadou (see also Fig. 2), consistent with Longus’ account of a farm 200 st. from Mytilene, and we must reject Hiller’s claim that 200 st. is an impossible figure.

Much of the criticism of Longus’ statements of distance depends on Naber (201). His argument is a complex one: in addition to the distance of 200 st. from Mytilene to the estate, Longus also supplies the figure of 30 st. for the distance from the Methymneans’ first landing in Mytilenean territory to the estate (2.13.2), and of 100 st. from Methymna to the point where the Methymneans met and negotiated with the Mytilenean army (3.2.2). Arguing that this meeting must have taken place in Methymnean territory, Naber added the three distances to produce a total of 330 st. from Mytilene to Methymna. He contrasted this with a total of 270 st. for the same distance in Strabo (13.2.2 [616–17]), and concluded that Longus conceived of Lesbos as larger than it really is.

Although Naber’s argument has carried much weight, it can be criticized on several grounds.

¹⁰ *RE* 3A.2 (1929) 1931–1936, s.v. “Stadion” (Lehmann-Haupt).

¹¹ A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes and K. J. Dover, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* 4 (Oxford 1970) *ad loc.*, 395.

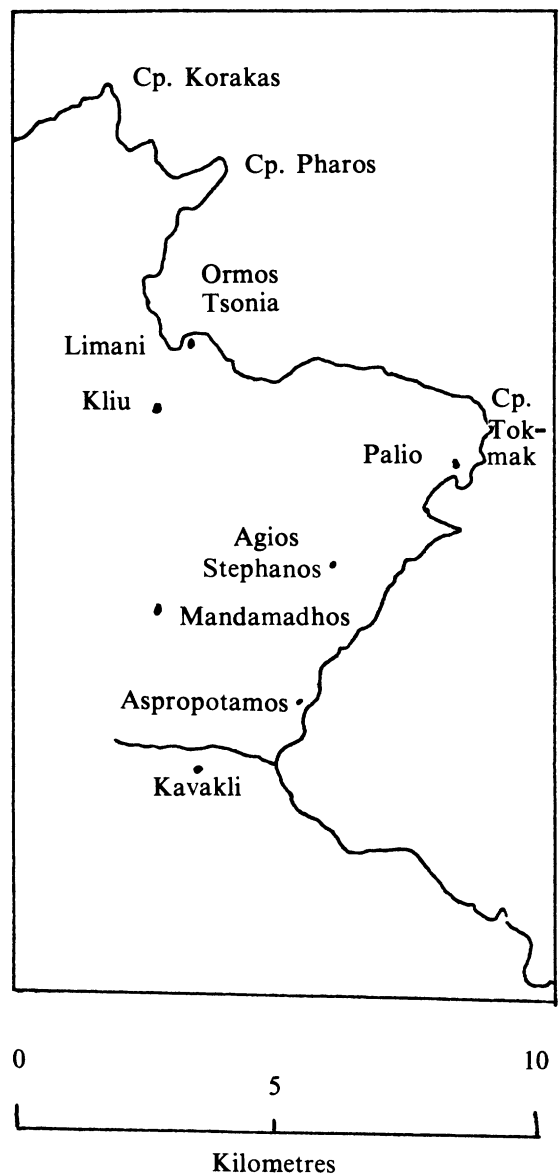


FIG. 2
NORTH-EAST LESBOS

First, it should be stressed, it is Naber who provides the total of 300 st., not Longus. Naber makes two assumptions in order to arrive at the figure. The first, that the meeting took place in Methymnean territory, is plausible enough, although it would have been stronger had Naber cited parallels from Greek diplomatic practice. The second, unstated, assumption is that the meeting took place in an area close to the estate where Daphnis and Chloe lived, and hence that the Mytilenean army, when invading Methymna, proceeded via the north-east corner of the island. Such evidence as there is suggests that that would be an implausible route. Longus tells us that the invasion was by the most direct land route, to take the Methymneans by surprise (3.2.1). The modern road runs diagonally across the island, skirting the Gulfs of Yera and Kalloni (Fig. 1). The ancient route probably had a very similar course; Strabo speaks of the Larisaeon Rocks 50 st. from Mytilene on the road to Methymna (9.5.19 [440]), which can be identified with the crags called Larsa that overhang the modern road near the head of the Gulf of Yera.¹² In Methymna, there is evidence of a road running south from the city towards Kalloni.¹³ On a road comparable to the modern highway, a location 100 st. (18.6 km) from Methymna would be in the fertile plain around modern Kalloni, land originally belonging to Arisba but annexed by Methymna (Strabo 13.1.21 [590]). In such a fertile district, Longus' statement that the Mytilenean general did not ravage the fields would have some point; but 100 st. from Methymna on a route towards the north-east would be in the rough mountain country of Mt. Lepetymnos, where there would be little to ravage.¹⁴

Second, Naber's discredit of Longus' figures depends on his unsupported belief in the accuracy of Strabo's; his uncritical acceptance of Strabo's figures is continued by Dalmeyda, who speaks of Strabo "dont le témoignage se trouve exacte" (xiii), and Schönberger (1) cites the total of 270 st. "nach Strabon und in Wirklichkeit," without supplying any hard geographical evidence. A number of factors in fact suggest that Strabo's total should be questioned.

¹²Koldewey 41, quoting Lolling: "zudem ist offenbar vom *Landwege* durch das Innere des Insel, der gewöhnlichsten und bequemsten Strasse nach Methymna, die Rede, die doch gewiss über Larsa, Kalloni usw. geführt hat" (my italics).

¹³Buchholz, "Plan von Methymna" (insert in back cover), and 58–59.

¹⁴For the fertility around Kalloni, see Koldewey, Tafel 31, and Naval Intelligence 512. The road to the south of Lepetymnos is called a "very difficult road," S. Rossiter, *The Blue Guides: Greece* (London 1967) 663; it was still that way in 1976. The area is defined in Koldewey, Tafel 31, as "ungebauter und ganz steriles Boden."

First, as far as one can judge by modern roads, a figure of 330 st. rather than 270 corresponds better to actual distances. The figure cited for the journey from Mytilene to Methymna via Mandamadhos is 62 km, or 332.9 st.¹⁵

Second, it is quite clear that Strabo is giving a distance *by ship*: the distance is cited in a description of the island in which its *περίμετρος* is given as 1100 st. (13.2.2 [616]); in the case of other islands (e.g., Chios, 14.1.35 [645]) the comparable figure is called a *περίπλους παρὰ γῆν φερομένω*. The cape of Malia is defined as “the southernmost point for those keeping the island on their right,” obviously while sailing by it. There is no reason to expect that the sailing distance between two points on an island should correspond with any accuracy to the distance between the same two points on land. It is difficult to check the accuracy of Strabo’s figure without knowing how close his ship went to shore, but there is much to suggest it may be inaccurate, and probably too small:

- A. The island has a total circumference of 1100 stades; individual distances are supplied with respect to the three points Sigrion, Methymna and Malia: Sigrion-Methymna, 210 st.; Methymna-Malia, 340 st., Malia-Sigrion, 560 st. Three reference points suggest that Lesbos is viewed as a triangle, not inappropriately (see Fig. 1); but it is impossible to construct a triangle with these dimensions, since the long side is 10 st. longer than the sum of the other two sides. There is the same “error” of 10 st. in Strabo’s total of 1100 st., 10 st. less than the sum of the three distances supplied.
- B. Comparison with Pliny (*HN* 5.39.140) shows that Strabo’s figures are smaller: Pliny cites two figures for the *circuitus* of Lesbos, that of Isidorus, 168 miles = 1344 st. and that of the *ueteres*, 195 miles = 1560 st., both larger than Strabo’s total.
- C. The actual coastline of the island, including the great indentations of the Gulfs of Kalloni and Yera, is 370 km (1991 st.). The area of the island is 1630 km²;¹⁶ if the island were viewed as a circle, its circumference (a common meaning for *περίμετρος*) would be 286 km (1540 st.).

¹⁵Rossiter, *loc. cit.*; the Salbara-Sebastou map (above, note 4).

¹⁶Hellenic Republic, National Statistical Service, *Statistical Yearbook of Greece* (Athens 1975) 2.

- D. It is possible to estimate distances by careful measurement on an accurate, scaled map. I have attempted to measure the shortest possible sailing routes along the coasts on Koldewey's Tafel 31. These measurements suggest the following distances: Sigrion-Methymna, 50 km (269 st.); Methymna-Malia, 70 km (377 st.); Malia-Sigrion, 90 km (484 st.). The total of 210 km. (1123 st.) is close to Strabo's 1100, but there is a noticeable difference between the total for the Methymna-Malia segment, where Strabo gives 340, and the estimate on the map is 377.
- E. Certain of Strabo's land measurements are quite wrong. *Eressos* is placed by Strabo 28 stades (5.2 km) from Sigrion; both cities are firmly located, and well over 10 km apart.¹⁷ *Pyrrha* is defined by three distances (80 st. Mytilene-Pyrrha, 70 st. Mytilene-Malia, 100 st. Malia-Pyrrha) which would place it inland, on the Gulf of Yera, and not ἐν τῷ ἐσπερίῳ πλευρῷ of the island as Strabo claimed. This location would be far from the archaeological site on the Gulf of Kalloni usually identified with Pyrrha.¹⁸ *Aigeiros* is located as follows

ἐν δὲ τῷ μεταξὺ Μιτυλήνης καὶ τῆς Μηθύμνης κατὰ κώμην
τῆς Μηθυμναίας καλουμένην Ἀγχειρον στενωπότη ἐστὶν ἡ
νῆσος ὑπέρβασιν ἔχουσα εἰς τὸν Πυρραίων Εὐριπον σταδίων
ἑξκοσιν.

Nowhere is the distance between the east coast and the Gulf of Kalloni (the natural identification for the Euripus of the Pyrrhaeans)¹⁹ anywhere near 20 st. (3.7 km). Even if *hyperbasis* could be used to mean the shortest distance in a straight line,²⁰ the minimum crossing is about 11 km; actual distances would be considerably longer, as there is no obvious pass over Mt. Tauros from the east coast north of the valley of Thermi.²¹ The only crossing on the island that is something like 3.7 km is that from the east coast to the Gulf of Yera; but this crossing is at its narrowest 1 or 2 km south of Mytilene,

¹⁷Koldewey 22 (Eressos); 37–38 (Sigrion).

¹⁸Koldewey 29–30.

¹⁹Koldewey, Tafel 30; Büchner 2117.

²⁰Jones (above, note 1) translates it as "a passage over hills" for the distance from Pyrrha to Mytilene, 13.2.4 (618), p. 145. It is Strabo's term for the Alpine passes, 4.6.12 (209).

²¹Koldewey 34, "die wahre Entfernung zwischen der Küste bei Kavakli und dem nächstem Punkt der jetzigen Küstenlinie der pyrrhäischen Golfs beträgt in der Luftlinie wenigstens dreimal so viel." (3 times 20 st. = 60 st. = 11.16 km). See also Naval Intelligence 508.

an absurd location for Aigeiros, allegedly in Methymnean territory, between Mytilene and Methymna, and once independent enough to strike coins. Aigeiros is usually placed in the north-east, at Mystegna or Kavakli (see Figs. 1, 2).²²

- F. Strabo's account of Lesbos is distorted by his locating it with reference to two points on the mainland, the promontories of Lectum and Canae, which he viewed as both lying on the meridian passing through Byzantium and Alexandria (13.1.6 [584]). In fact Lectum is almost a full degree west of Canae.²³ Thus Strabo describes Sigrion, rather than Methymna, as the island's northern tip, and Malia, rather than the headland near modern Plomari, as its southern tip (see Fig. 1). It is possible to construct a plan which represents Strabo's concept of the island (Fig. 3);²⁴ a comparison with the geographical realities shows how distorted it is. In connection with the important distance from Mytilene to Methymna, one is struck by the absence of the north-eastern headlands (ancient Argennon, modern Capes Korakas, Pharos, Tokmak), which do indeed occur in Ptolemy's account (Fig. 4). It is hard to see how an account of the sea-distance from Methymna to Mytilene that ignored the complications of rounding these capes would not have been underestimated.

Strabo's figures do not, therefore, provide sufficient ground to discredit Longus.

Kontes (218) criticized the figure 200 st. because it would go far beyond the boundaries of Mytilenean territory, and proposed the reading of a few MSS, 20 st. In a semi-popular article in which bibliographical data are not provided,²⁵ the statement is naturally unsupported. One must assume that it is based on the location of the border by Koldewey (34) close to Thermi; but this was based on Strabo's statement about Aigeiros, which we have already seen is inaccurate. Modern political geography makes the border between the eparchies of Mytilene and Methymna run along the Tauros

²²*IG* XII, Supp., 68, 22; Buchholz 150, note 454 (Kavakli); Koldewey 43 (Mystegna).

²³Lecton = Baba Barun, 26° 04' E; Bademli = Canae 26° 50' E; United States Office of Geography, *Gazeteer no. 46, Turkey* (Washington 1960) 64, 65; cf. *Türkiye Atlası / Atlas of Turkey*, Publications of the Faculty of Letters, University of Istanbul, 903 (Istanbul 1961), maps 1a, 1e.

²⁴The following additional data of Strabo's contribute to the plan: Lecton and Canae on the same meridian (13.1.6 [584]); Sigrion opposite the coast from Lecton to Assos (13.2.1 [616]); Methymna 60 st. from the same coast (*ibid.*).

²⁵I have been unable to obtain his more scholarly *Lesbiako Polyptycho* (Athens 1973), cited, for example, by Buchholz 254.

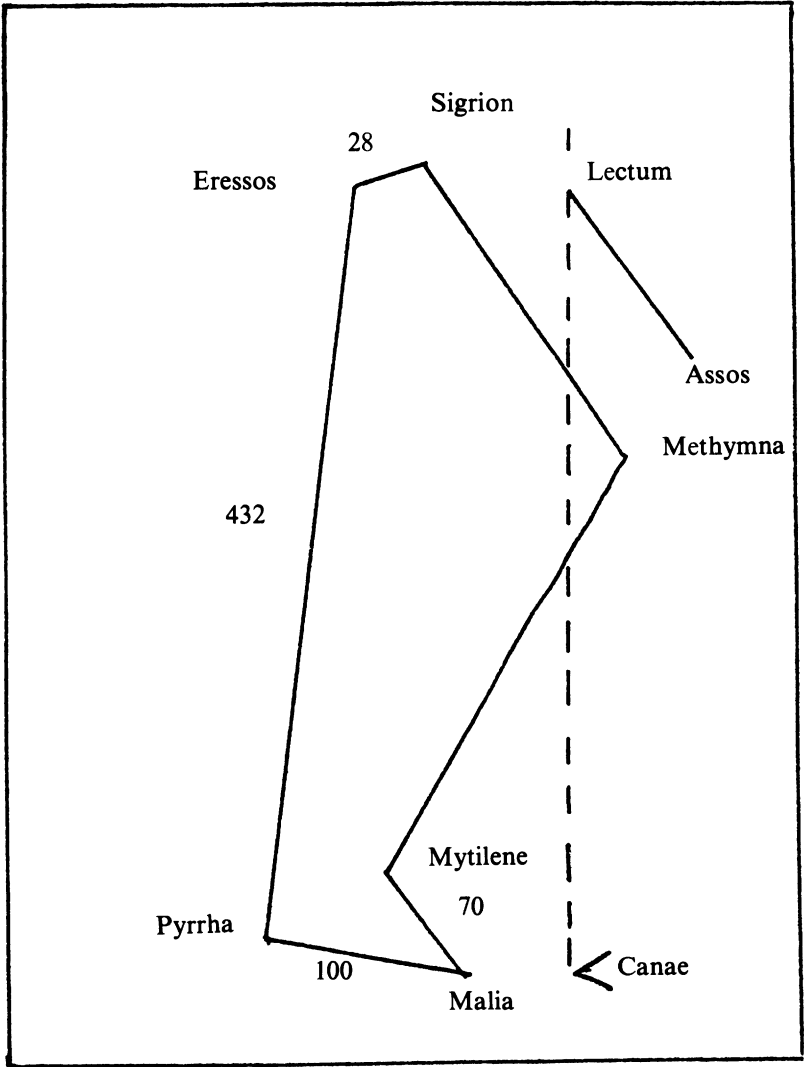


FIG. 3
Strabo's conception of Lesbos. The broken line represents the meridian of Alexandria.

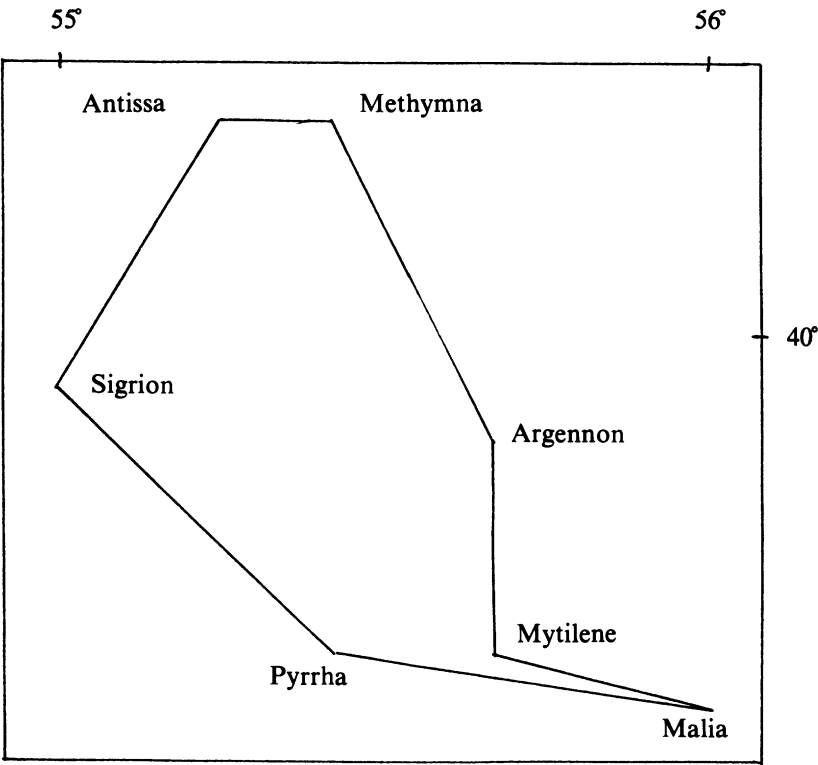


FIG. 4
LESBOS ON PTOLEMY'S CO-ORDINATES

watershed, placing all the communities in Fig. 2 in the eparchy of Mytilene. The north-east corner of the island and all the east coast are easily accessible by land and sea from Mytilene; from Methymna, access to the north-east by land involves a high-level traverse across the slopes of Mt. Lepetymnos, and by sea a coast with only one harbour to the west of Cp. Korakas (Skala Sykamineas) and with the need to round that cape, far from easy in the teeth of prevailing northerly winds. Strabo's problematical text concerning Aigeiros seems insufficient evidence to reject the kind of geographical logic that would place all of the east coast under the control of Mytilene. In addition, Kontes' suggestion of 20 stades is implausible in the context of other details in the story. It is incredible that a naval raid by ten Methymnean warships (2.19.3–2.21.1) to a point 3.7 km from Mytilene should not have encountered an immediate military response; from the medieval castle located on the "island" where the ancient city was centred (Strabo 13.2.2 *fin.*) one can see along the coast at least to Pamphylla (7 km north). The implication of Longus 4.33.2–3, that it was a full day's journey to the city from the estate, is absurd if the distance was only 20 stades.

There are, then, no longer any compelling reasons to question Longus' figures, and it remains to show how admirably they fit the geography of north-eastern Lesbos.

200 stades, as has been stated, bring us to the communities around the "Όρμος Μακρυγιαλοῦ. Its very name (μακρὸς γιαιλός, "long beach") recalls an important detail in Longus (1.1.2),²⁶ καὶ ἡ θάλασσα προσέκλυζεν ἡϊόνι ἐκτεταμένῃ ψάμμου μαλθακῆς. There is indeed a fine sandy beach associated with the community of Aspropotamos (Fig. 2) but extending all around the bay. Long sandy beaches are easily identifiable features, but none of the other substantial beaches on Lesbos, at Eressos, Vatera, Plomaron and Methymna (see Fig. 1) is in any way appropriate for Longus' setting.

In the neighbourhood of this long beach there should be found, on Longus' account (1.1.2): ὄρη θηροτρόφα, πεδία πυροφόρα, γήλοφοι κλημάτων, νομαὶ ποιμνίων. This certainly corresponds to geographical reality. ὄρη θηροτρόφα are represented by the hills of the Tauros range to the west and north of the valley of Aspropotamos. Tourist material available on the island advertises the hunting around Mandamadhos, and several "No Hunting" signs on the road from Aspropotamos to Mandamadhos suggest that farmers do suffer from the effects of hunting,

²⁶Although the manuscript tradition of this passage is somewhat confused, sand is clearly mentioned in the important *Laurentianus*; the reading ψυχαγωγία in certain *Vaticani* is an unnecessary conjecture. See Dalmeida xlv-lv for the textual tradition of Longus.

much as in Longus 2.12–13. *πεδία πυροφόρα*: the plural is significant, and demonstrates the size of the estate; there are plains of varying sizes associated with Aspropotamos, Agios Stephanos and Palios (Fig. 2). Personal observation supports the maps (Buchholz, Abb. 7; Koldewey, Tafel 31) in reporting grain-crops in the Aspropotamos valley. *γήλοφοι κλημάτων*: as in antiquity, the bulk of the wine produced in Lesbos is from around Methymna and Eressos, but wine is also produced in the valley of Kliu and elsewhere,²⁷ although most of the district's slopes are given over to olives; Lesbian olives are as renowned today as the island's wine was in antiquity. *νομαὶ ποιμνίων*: goats can graze almost anywhere; I have observed them in the village of Aspropotamos, actually on the beach, like the one who ate the Methymneans' withy hawser.

Once a location in the north-eastern section of the island is accepted, other details provided by Longus can be shown to be appropriate to the area. It is, for example, obvious that close to the farm was a substantial forest (Preface 1.1; 2.20.3; 3.16–17; 4.14). Large stands of wood are rare things on Greek islands, but one of the glories of Lesbos is its *δάσος πεύκων*, a great pine-forest on the high plateau of the eastern part of the island, green and well-watered, with its northernmost arm stretching to the west of Mandamadhos.²⁸ There are references to Daphnis swimming in rivers, even in high summer (1.23, 3.24.2); the only river now deep enough to swim in during the summer is that at Aspropotamos, which was flowing in August, 1976, when other rivers (for example the Euergoulas, which empties into the Gulf of Yera, and the Tsiknias, which empties into the Gulf of Kalloni) were dry.²⁹

It is stated that the Methymnean youths chose to sail along the Mytilenean *παραθαλασσία* (2.12.2) because it is *εὐλίμενος*. The *skalai* on the north-east coast are frequent and safe against many winds.³⁰ Other sections of coast (e.g., from Methymna to Sigrion, or the south coast around Plomari) are less well supplied with harbours.

The Methymneans' movements do appear to fit the topography of the north-eastern headland quite well. They made their first landing in Mytilenean territory (2.12) in a place where they fished, hunted, and acquired provisions from the people in the fields. The first possible location where there are both harbours and fields is in the valleys around the Ormos

²⁷Naval Intelligence 512, Koldewey, Tafel 31; Buchholz, Abb. 7, p. 41.

²⁸Bürchner 2116; Buchholz, Abb. 7.

²⁹One should recognize, however, that the rivers may have been larger in antiquity, on the assumption that the woods were more extensive than at present.

³⁰Naval Intelligence 498.

Tsonia, between the headlands of Pharos-Korakas and Tokmak (Fig. 2).³¹ The Methymneans then sailed on 30 stades and anchored near the fields where Daphnis and Chloe lived, because the plain seemed suitable for hunting hares (2.13.2). As the starting point is not precisely defined, we cannot locate exactly the new landing, but a distance of 30 st. (5.6 km) from eastern locations on the Ormos Tsonia will take the travellers around Cape Tokmak well in the direction of Agios Stephanos (Fig. 2). Later, when the Methymneans sent a naval contingent to the fields of Daphnis and Chloe (2.20.3), they sailed homewards 10 stades to a mooring-place (2.25.2):

ἄκρας οὖν ἐπενβαινούσης τῷ πελάγει λαβόμενος ἐπεκτεινομένης
μηνοειδῶς, ἥς ἐντὸς θάλασσα γαληνότερον τῶν λιμένων δρμον
εἰργάζετο.

Again, the point of departure is not known precisely, but the harbour at *Palio* (Fig. 2) is at least one place that appears to fit the description, and to be no more than 10 stades (1.8 km) from a landing close to Agios Stephanos.³²

The wind that blew the Methymneans' boat out to sea (2.14.1) corresponds to actual weather conditions on the island, when the normal northerly winds of summer are replaced by a land wind from the west, not infrequently with squalls.³³

There are then a number of details in Longus' account that describe north-east Lesbos with some degree of detail and accuracy. To these can be added a number of details that have been discussed by other scholars as evidence of Longus' knowledge of the island as a whole: the account of Mytilene (1.1.1), the vines on the ground (2.1.4), and the name Nape (1.6.3) associated with a village on the western slopes of Mt. Tauros (Fig. 1).³⁴

Apart from discussions of distance, the other criticism of Longus' account of Lesbos has centred on the account of a heavy snowfall (3.3.1–2) in contrast with a long tradition about the mildness of the Lesbian climate.³⁵ We should recognize the exaggeration involved in Longus' picturesque "hard winter" but at the same time realize that the mountain

³¹The valleys of Kukmides and Kliu produce olives, wine and cereals (Buchholz, Abb. 7).

³²The northern inlet, marked *Anikto* by Kiepert in Koldewey, Tafel 30, is especially enclosed.

³³For winds on Mytilene see Büchner 2117, Naval Intelligence 497–98. I observed two such squalls in the summer of 1976, in a period of about one month.

³⁴K. Tümpel, "Lesbiaka," *Philologus* 48 (1889) 115; cf. Schönberger 2, "wichtig."

³⁵Dalmeida xiv.

pasture around Mandamadhos could be 100-200 m above sea level,³⁶ and subject to more severe weather than Mytilene town, in which the modern weather station is located. The exaggeration, if such it be,³⁷ is not so great as to invalidate the firm associations with north-east Lesbos suggested above.

Finally, a note of speculation. The single most important feature of the north-east of the island for contemporary Mytileneans is the church of the Taxiarch (St. Michael), with its famous black ikon, 1 km north of the village of Mandamadhos. One feature of the saint's festival is the sacrifice of animals in a ceremony that has seemed to observers to be a continuation of pagan ritual.³⁸ Longus' novel has as its penultimate chapter (4.39) an account of the lovers' adornment of the Cave of the Nymphs, and their establishment of altars to Eros the Shepherd and Pan Stratiôtês. Is it fanciful to see in the shrine of the soldier-saint Michael at Mandamadhos the continuation of a real cult of those gods located in the north-east of Lesbos around which Longus built his novel?³⁹

³⁶Mandamadhos is 140 m above sea-level. *Ethnikê Statistikê Hypêresia tês Hellados, Euretêrion Oikismôn tês Hellados* (Athens 1965) 104.

³⁷Where was Alcaeus when he stated (fr. 157 L-P) *πεπάγαισιν δ' ὑδάτων ῥόαι*?

³⁸Rossiter, *Blue Guide* (above, note 14) 633. A similar ceremony is described by the Lesbian novelist S. Myrivilis in *Ho Basilês Ho Arbanitês*, ed. M. Vitti (Athens 1972) 37-44; or ed. P. Lampsidês (Basel 1976) 114-37. Myrivilis was schoolteacher at Mandamadhos for the school year 1910-1911, and is presumably drawing on the Mandamadhos festival for his picture; cf. K. Patsês, *Megalê Enkyklopaideia tês Neohellênikês Logotechnias* 10 (Athens 1968), s.v. "Myribêlês," 401-02.

³⁹This view would fit in well with the religious approach to Longus typified by H. H. O. Chalk, "Eros and the Lesbian Pastorals of Longus," *JHS* 80 (1960) 32-51. References to the cult of the Taxiarch in Lesbos can be found in Lampsidês' edition of *Ho Basilês* cited above, 219-20.