

TRAPEZUS IN KOLCHIS

Part I: The Origin of the Tabula Peutingeriana under Julius Caesar

The Greek colony Trapezus is located in Pontic Asia Minor in the south-eastern angle of the Black Sea littoral, but the Tabula Peutingeriana locates it on the north-eastern coast. Alexander Podossinov has recently argued that this error should be traced to the naval campaign of Marcus Agrippa in 14 BCE. This deputy of Augustus wrote geographical notes on which the world map in the Porticus Vipsania in Rome was based. However, Agrippa should have been much more familiar with the geography of the Black Sea. Pliny credits him with substantial knowledge especially on the western and northern Euxine coastlines, which is incompatible with the flaws resulting in the poor coverage of the Black Sea on the Tabula: not even the two capital cities Pantikapaion and Phanagoreia are included, and even worse, the Maiotis appears as an inland lake with no access to the sea. At any rate, Agrippa must have been aware of the mapping project initiated by Julius Caesar, but concluded only between 30 and ca. 20 BCE. This new wealth of information was not yet available to Caesar himself and his staff, when planning the instant Parthian campaign in 44 BCE without being overly concerned with Black Sea geography. The final phase of Caesar's dictatorship might thus have formed the context for a first, rushed, and flawed, yet highly authoritative mapped itinerary of the whole known world that gradually developed into the Tabula Peutingeriana. Over the next five centuries, some parts of it were revised, while others (such as on the northern shore of the Black Sea) were not.

Keywords: Tabula Peutingeriana, Trapezus, Caesar, Agrippa, Black Sea, Roman activity in Pontus

The Tabula Peutingeriana locates *Trapezunta*, that is ancient Trapezus or modern Trabzon respectively, not on the south-eastern coast of the Black Sea in what is today north-eastern Turkey, but rather on the northern shoreline towards its eastern edge¹. Exploring the ramification of this cartographical

¹ The 12th-century copy (Codex Vindobonensis 324) of the Late Roman version (on which see below) is now most easily accessible online at <https://tp-online.ku.de>. Various facsimile editions are also open-access at <https://www.tabula-peutingeriana.de/index.html>. For Trapezus in its geographical context, see the map in Fig. 4 below or the one by Braund 1997/2000 in the *Barrington Atlas* (ed. Talbert 2000). This article is not concerned with the history of Trapezus as such, on which see Ruge 1937 and

distortion will not only provide us with some insights into the complex prehistory of the most illustrious map of all times, but also draw us into problems of east-Pontic geography and eventually bring to light a hitherto unnoticed case of mythogeography.



Fig. 1. *Tabula Peutingeriana, Segment X* / Ed. Weber
<https://www.tabula-peutingeriana.de/tabula.html?segm=9>.

The (Mis-) Location of Trapezus in the Tabula Peutingeriana

The location of Trapezus on the north-eastern edge of the Pontic coast is not the only surprise on the Tabula Peutingeriana. The same map depicts the city as surrounded by two long, unnamed rivers. If defined by the (wider) environment of Trapezus in eastern Pontos, one of these might be the Lykos-Iris (now Kelkit-Yeşilirmak, merging into the Black Sea east of Amisos, now Samsun) or Thermodon (formerly up to a hundred meter wide, now the Terme, with its mouth near Ordu) at a significant distance west of the Trapezus; the other might be the Akampsis-Apsaros river about as far to its east (more on this below). If, however, the two unnamed rivers on the Tabula should represent the largest two that merge into the eastern Euxine, then they might be the Rioni (the ancient Phasis) and the Kodori (for which no ancient name is preserved), although such a riverscape would relocate Trapezus to what is

Janssens 1967; also studies or commentaries on Xenophon's Anabasis (Waterford and Rood 2005), Strabo (Roller 2018), and Arrian's PPE (Belfiore 2009; cf. Silberman 1995; Liddle 2003; Brodersen 2022), besides scholarship on Ionian colonization in the Black Sea region (Ehrhardt 1988; Manoledakis 2022; Müller 2022).

now the province of Abchasia in northern Georgia. Alternatively, the omission of names was meant to avoid specific identifications, merely indicating the presence of multiple rivers in the environment². However, a further hint at an intended location of Trapezus relatively high up to the north may be seen in the adjacent mountain range. This is surrounded by various names, though nothing close to *Paryadres* or *Skydises*, the western and eastern Pontic mountains to the south of Trapezus, or to the *Moschike*, the so-called Lesser Caucasus, which adjoins the two aforesaid mountains further to the east (and which will be addressed further down in this chapter, again)³. However, the ethnics that the Tabula displays around the long, unnamed mountain range remain ambiguous and defy a firm attribution⁴.

The mislocation of Trapezus results in several further cartographical distortions. The city of Polemonion, today's Bolaman nearly 200 km west of Trabzon, figures on the same Tabula in the easternmost corner of the Black Sea. From there, a coastal road reaches Trapezus from the south-east rather than from the west. At the same time, the historical southern road that once connected Trapezus with Satala (the modern village of Sadak) in Armenia Minor appears directed straight to the east. Nearly the same is the case for the route leaving Trapezus via Apsaros (now Gonio) towards Sebastopolis⁵. The latter is the Roman successor to the formerly illustrious Milesian colony of Dioskurias, traditionally identified with Sukhumi in Abchasia, but earlier settlements with these names were likely situated further to the southeast⁶. This third road is depicted as leaving Trapezus in a north-east-east direction. On all other sides, the city appears isolated: the Black Sea borders its south; one

² Lykos-Iris: see Coşkun 2019a. P. 93–98. Thermodon: see Dan 2015. Akampsis-Apsaros: Dan 2019a. P. 98–102 and 2022. Phasis: Dan 2016; Coşkun 2019a. Kodori: Coşkun 2020b. P. 665–670.

³ Strab. *Geogr.* 12.3.18 (548C): τῆς δὲ Τραπεζοῦντος ὑπέρκεινται καὶ τῆς Φαρνακίας Τιβαρανοὶ τε καὶ Χαλδαῖοι καὶ Σάννοι, οὓς πρότερον ἐκάλουν Μάκρωνας, καὶ ἡ μικρὰ Ἀρμενία: καὶ οἱ Ἀππαῖται δὲ πῶς πλησιάζουσι τοῖς χωρίοις τούτοις οἱ πρότερον Κερκίται. διῆκει δὲ διὰ τούτων ὁ τε Σκυδιῆς ὄρος τραχύτατον συνάπτον τοῖς Μοσχικοῖς ὄρεσι τοῖς ὑπὲρ τῆς Κολχίδος, οὗ τὰ ἄκρα κατέχουσιν οἱ Ἑπτακομήται, καὶ ὁ Παρυάδρης ὁ μέχρι τῆς μικρᾶς Ἀρμενίας ἀπὸ τῶν κατὰ Σιδήνην καὶ Θεμισκυραν τόπων διατείνων καὶ ποιῶν τὸ ἑσθινὸν τοῦ Πόντου πλευρῶν. Cf. Coşkun 2021b. P. 306f. This mountain range shows up as *Paruerbes* in Segment XI of the Tabula, on which see Coşkun, in preparation 1.

⁴ On its eastern parts, the *Suani* are mentioned, on whom see n. 11 below.

⁵ Parallel to the land route on the Tabula ran the sea route, described by Arrian (PPE 1–11). Both itineraries analysed by Coşkun 2020b (Phasis to Sebastopolis) and 2022a (Apsaros to Phasis); cf. Belfiore 2009. P. 150–185.

⁶ On the earlier locations of Dioskurias-Aia (especially at Ochamchire) and Sebastopolis-Dioskurias (especially at Skurcha), see Coşkun 2020a and 2020b. In contrast, Schmitt 2022 tries to reinforce the traditional view of a single location of Dioskurias-Sebastopolis at Sukhumi: he argues convincingly that Sukhumi claimed to be the successor of Sebastopolis since the Middle-Byzantine period, but he does not engage with the mythogeographical indications, insisting on the Phasis as the only possible location for a potential city of Aia; he does not accept either the relocation of a settlement as a viable solution. The most complete survey of the archaeological evidence for coastal settlements in Kolchis is by Sens 2009; cf. the latest updates by Tsetskhladze 2018 and 2022: despite the progress, the material and epigraphic remains remain undecided.

of those unnamed rivers flows to its west and, after bending eastwards, also encircles Trapezus from the north⁷.

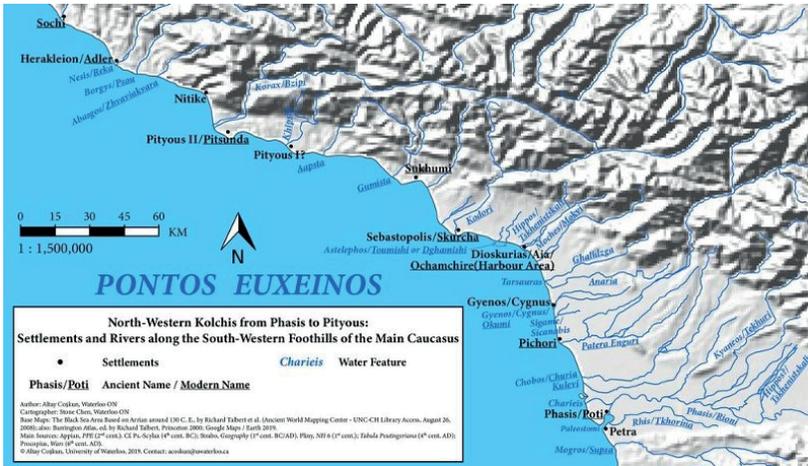


Fig. 2. North-Western Kolchis from Phasis to Pityous
(<http://www.altaycoskun.com/black-sea/>).

More Inaccuracies of the Tabula Peutingeriana and Reflections on Its Nature

Only few scholars have bothered to explain these severe inaccuracies. Konrad Miller, the pioneer of the study of Roman itineraries, offered a simple and pragmatic solution: the lack of space on the physical copy of the Tabula required flexibility⁸. There is, in fact, much to say in support of Miller's passing comment. As is well known, the Tabula has come down to us in the shape of a book scroll, measuring 33 cm in width and 672 cm in length. At least in theory, it could have been carried by a traveller. It is not two-dimensional as modern maps, but essentially consists of a multitude of linear, though intersecting, itineraries. The now-lost first segment must have covered

⁷ The first people named on the opposite bank are the *Parnaci* (sic).

⁸ Miller 1916. S. 332f.: "Die Darstellung auf der Ta(bula) ist dadurch merkwürdig, daß von *Polemonio* an die Straße umkehrt und sich bis Trapezunt nach links wendet, von Trapezunt an aber die Küste des Schwarzen Meeres ganz verläßt und scheinbar nach Osten weit ins Binnenland verläuft, während doch bis Sebastopolis alle Stationen an der Meeresküste liegen. Diese schwere Verzeichnung ist dem Verfasser der Ta(bula) übel vermerkt worden, und man schloß daraus auf ein sehr niedriges Maß seiner geographischen Kenntnisse. Maßgebend war für den Verfasser eben einfach der vorhandene Raum, welcher an der Küste nicht ausreichte; vielleicht hat wenigstens in einer Vorlage die militärische Bedeutung dieser Strecke als Grenzschutzgebiet und der Anschluß derselben an einen Fluß (Phasis), ähnlich wie beim Rhein und der Donau, eine Rolle gespielt."

Lusitania, Mauretania, and the major part of the British island, of which only the south-east edge (excluding Londinium) has been preserved on the first extant segment (counted as II). At the opposite end, segment XII concludes with the east-Indian coast. The Tabula hence depicts the main routes from West to East, or at least makes most itineraries appear as directed this way⁹.

Distortions or ‘adjustments’ as in the environs of Trapezus were therefore inescapable: space had to be made for the place names and distances in areas that were more densely travelled or of relatively high interest to the Romans. The overall representation of the Black Sea may illustrate this principle: The flattening of its south-northern extension reduces the whole western coast to the 32 miles from *Odessos* (now Varna) to *Bysinopoli(s)* (Bizone, now Kavarna); in contrast, the effectively deepest recess of the coast in-between *Ancialis* (Anchialos, now Pomorie) and *Mesambria* (now Nessebar) appears close to the middle of the linear, horizontal extension from the Thracian Bosphorus.



Fig. 3. *Tabula Peutingeriana*, Segment VIII / Ed. Weber
 (<https://www.tabula-peutingeriana.de/tabula.html?segm=7>).

This important strait, together with Constantinople, the refoundation of Byzantium by Constantine I (330 CE), and its surrounding network of roads, at least accounts for part of the distortion. It is worthwhile mentioning that this late-imperial city appears just opposite the western end of the Sea of Azov (*Maiotis*), which was, to a large part, surrounded by the Bosporan kingdom: this is off by nearly half the length of the north-Anatolian coastline.

⁹ The best description and analysis of the Tabula is now by Talbert 2010. The most accessible facsimile is the online edition <https://www.tabula-peutingeriana.de>.

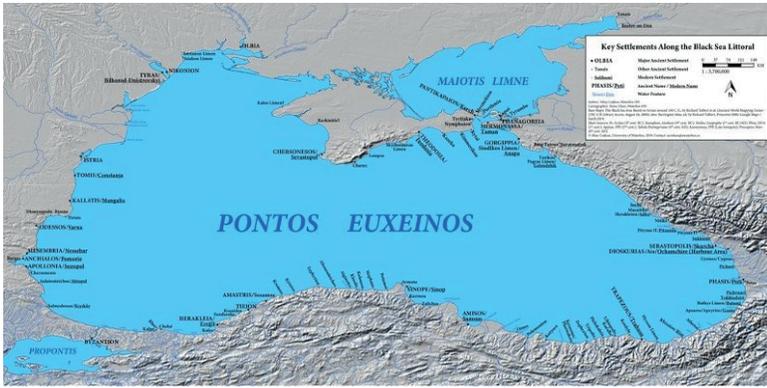


Fig. 4. Key Settlements along the Black Sea Littoral
 (<http://www.altaycoskun.com/black-sea-map-01-1>).

Many further oddities can be observed in the north-Pontic area of the *Tabula*. The outline of the road network ends with the nodal point of *Tomis* (Constanța) just south of the Delta of the Danube, which thus forms a counterpoint to Trapezus in the east. There is a random selection of cities named on the northern stretch that separates the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea. Most conspicuous is that the two foremost royal cities are omitted: Pantikapaion (Kerch on the eastern Crimea) and Phanagoreia (traditionally located on the western extension of the Taman Peninsula, but recently understood as being separated from it by the Kuban Bosphoros in antiquity)¹⁰. Instead of these two royal cities, the *Tabula* creates a town *Hermoca-Nimphi* on an artificial isthmus that connects the easternmost extensions of the Crimea (where we would expect Pantikapaion and nearby Nymphaion) with the westernmost extension of the Taman Peninsula (where Phanagoreia and Hermonassa were located)¹¹.

¹⁰ Schlotzhauer et al. 2017. For a detailed but traditional map of the Bosporan kingdom, see Braund 1996/2000.

¹¹ One may wonder if the *Tabula* still reflects some broken knowledge of Phanagoreia, if this is behind *Pharnacorium* (or *Phamacorium*) somewhere in the middle between the eastern coast of the Sea of Azov and the westernmost foothills of the Larger Caucasus. On the distorted Peutinger Map, it appears on the opposite side of the Bithynian river Lykos. Alternatively, this name may be pointing at Pharnakeia / Kerasus, which is located between Polemonion and Trapezus nearly on the opposite (Anatolian) coast (Segment X, Fig. 1); however, Pharnakeia rather seems to be behind the name *Carnasso*, 44 mp past Polemonion towards Trapezus. Moreover, a duplication of some Bosporan names is also implied by the repetition of Hermonassa further east, the latter being followed by the *Sindeciae*, an ethnic reminding us of the *Sindoi* on the Taman peninsula (Strabo 11.2.10–12). We should not be worried that these names figure underneath the mountain range which is supposed to be the Greater Caucasus; the ethnic at its western end is *Caucasi*, whereas *Suani* appear at its eastern end (on whom see Coşkun, in preparation 1), neighbouring Trapezus.

course of the 4th century for the map's latest major revision. At least for the eastern Mediterranean, this period seems to work largely well, also in view of the majestic representation of Antioch on the Orontes (Segment X, Fig. 1 above), still the main residence of Constantius II, Julian, and Valens. Such a later date is further recommended by the relative insignificance of Nicomedia, where Diocletian and others had often resided prior to the foundation of Constantinople¹⁴. It is of course possible that other versions with later edits existed, but they are not reflected in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*. Nothing suggests that it was influenced in any way by the world map commissioned by Theodosius II 435 CE¹⁵. At all events, attempts at identifying a late Roman 'original' version are otiose, since the *Tabula* had been developed over a long time, with sporadic and inconsistent updates.

M. Agrippa and the Black Sea

Several scholars concede the strong influence that the (now-lost) geographical notes of M. Vipsanius Agrippa, the friend, deputy, and son-in-law of Augustus, must have exerted on both geography and cartography in Rome and its empire. His work formed the basis of the first map of the known world depicted in the *Porticus Vipsania* in Rome. The monument was commissioned by Augustus shortly after Agrippa's death in 12 BCE.¹⁶ Accordingly, many indications of high-imperial time layers in the *Tabula* are tangible. A good example is the predominance of the city of Rome (which lost its status effectively under the Severi emperors), in combination with the relative insignificance of Trier and Milan (*Mediolanum*), the two major residences of the

¹⁴ See Seek 1919 for later Roman imperial itineraries. Unconvincingly, Dilke 1985. P. 117 hypothetically thinks of a production date in the first half of the 5th century, since Theodosius II occasionally resided in Antioch; this would have coincided with the Theodosian world map project of 435 CE (see next note). However, the progress of Christianization speaks against a major overhaul in the 5th century, while minor adjustments cannot be excluded.

¹⁵ TP-Online (as note 1 above) suggests that the latest revision of the *Tabula* took place around the same year. Cf. Brodersen 1996. P. 156: 4th–5th centuries CE and see previous note. On Theodosius' now-lost map, see Talbert 2010. P. 138f., with reference to GLM (ed. Riese 1878. S. 19–20) and further scholarship in notes 19f.; add Brodersen 2011. esp. P. 65, 71, 87f., who identifies Solinus' spatial reorganization of Pliny's geography around 300 CE as a major influence on Theodosius' map.

¹⁶ Plin. NH 3.17: "Agrippam quidem in tanta viri diligentia praeterque in hoc opere cura, cum orbem terrarum orbi spectandum propositurus esset, errasse quis credat et cum eo Divum Augustum? is namque complexam eum porticum ex destinatione et commentariis M. Agrippae a sorore eius inchoatam peregit". Pliny's frequent excerpts of Agrippa's notes have been excerpted by Dilke 1985. P. 44–52. Brodersen 2004. P. 184f. points out that very little is known about it, except that it must have followed the common hodological principle (cf. Brodersen 1995/2003), whereas the scaled area map had not yet been invented in the Mediterranean world (Brodersen 2011 ascribes the innovative spatial conception of geographical accounts which later led to area maps to Solinus in the later 3rd century). Roller 2015. P. 166f. and 244f. (with bibliography) and Irby 2019b. P. 105 consider the Augustan map an 'inspiration' for the *Tabula*. However, Talbert 2010. P. 136f. is more skeptical, and Dilke 1985 (esp. p. 114, 170) does not even consider Agrippa among the sources of the *Tabula*.

emperors in the West since the later-3rd and through the 4th centuries. Ravenna only prevailed in the early-5th century. Trier is still given with its high-imperial name Augusta Treverorum – or rather a peculiar variation of this (Segment II: *Aug. Tresviro<rum>*), instead of its Later Roman standard form *Treveris*¹⁷. Add that Actium (or Nicopolis?) (Segment VII) appears as major nodal point, which could be another hint at an Augustan date¹⁸.

The seminal influence of Agrippa's notes on the Peutinger Map has recently been emphasized once more by Alexander Podossinov, who puts particular emphasis on the deputy emperor's presence in the Black Sea in 14 BCE. The aim of Agrippa's campaign was to establish Polemon I, then the king of Pontos, also in the Bosphorus, where queen Dynamis had so far rejected this suitor. The mere presence of Agrippa at Sinope with an imperial fleet compelled Dynamis to give in, and the conflict was resolved without further combat¹⁹. It is thus possible that this Pontic campaign informed the aforesaid geographical notes. But were these indeed the main root of what became the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, or at least its description of the Black Sea area?

Moreover, Podossinov brings to our attention that there was a broader geographical tradition for Trapezus being situated on the north-eastern shoreline of the Black Sea. For this, he adduces the fragmentary Dura Europos Map (ca. 230s CE) as well as the accounts of Jordanes (6th century CE) and the *Cosmographia* of Ravenna (around 700 CE). All three of these sources might indeed convey such an impression, although alternative interpretations are possible as well. The extant and readable part of the Dura Europos Map depicts the harbour cities from Odessa in the West at least to the Crimea in the north. Traditionally, the place names towards the end of the itinerary have been supplemented to read *Tra[pezus]* and *Art[axata]*, although this would require us to accept that those cities were represented on one and the same coastline. Richard Uhden suggested long ago that *Tra[pezus]* here denotes the 'Table Mountain' of Chersonesos and *Art[a]* the 'Straits' (in Latin). A re-examination of the map conducted by Konstantin Boshnakov in 2015 confirms that the final destination of the route was 'Bosporos'²⁰. The Dura Europos Map must therefore be excluded from the present discussion on 'Trapezus in Kolchis'.

¹⁷ Segments III–V. Through Greek influence, the Celtic name of the *Treveri* could be spelt as *Treviri* and – jokingly – be understood as *tres viri (capitales)*, that is the 'three men (in charge of execution)'. This pun is first attested in Cicero, *Epistulae ad familiares* 7.13.2: *Sed, ut ego quoque te aliquid admo-neam de vestris cautionibus, Treviros vites censeo: audio capitales esse; mallet auro, argento, aeri es-sent. Sed alias iocabimur*. Cf. Kramer 2012. The name may also have been used shortly after the founda-tion of the city around 16 BCE, one of the measures in response to the *clades Lolliana*. Cf. Heinen

¹⁸ Cf. Irby 2019a. P. 98f. on Actium.

¹⁹ Podossinov 2012. P. 205f. with Cass. Dio 54.24.4–6. On Agrippa's campaign, see also Josephus *AJ* 16.2.1f. (12–23); Orosius 6.21.28; Heinen 2011; most recently Coşkun and Stern 2021. P. 204–207.

²⁰ Uhden 1932; cf. Dilke 1985, 121. And Boshnakov 2017.



Fig. 6. Fragmentary Route Map from Dura Europos, photograph with enhanced colours by Arthur de Graauw (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dura-Europos_route_map#/media/File:Doura-EuroposMap.png).

As far as Jordanes' *Getica* are concerned, much depends on how to understand 'Pontic coast' (*Ponticum litus*) in his account²¹. The somewhat random selection of cities from Borysthènes to Myrmekion may indeed convey the impression that Trapezus is associated with this group of north-Pontic cities – but this is not a necessary assumption. Something similar can be said for the more detailed, yet also more heterogeneous and spurious list of the *Cosmographia*²². Much uncertainty thus remains. But even if we should grant that two literary sources reflect a similar, if not the same, tradition regarding the mislocation of Trapezus, what would be gained for our investigation of the *Tabula*? Since these accounts postdate the 4th-century recension of the *Tabula*, they may well derive from (whichever version of) it. But even if they had drawn on the Augustan world map or Agrippa's notes independently, this would not explain how the counterfactual tradition about Trapezus had come about in the first place.

²¹ Jordanes, *Getica* 31/32: "Haec, inquam, patria, id est Scythia, longe se tendens lateque aperiens, habet ab oriente Seres, in ipso sui principio litus Caspii maris commanentes; ab occidente Germanos et flumen Vistulae; ab arctu, id est septentrionali, circumdatur oceano, a meridiae Persida, Albania, Hiberia, Ponto atque extremo alveo Istri, qui dicitur Danubius ab oestea sua usque ad fontem. / in eo vero latere, qua **Ponticum litus** attingit, oppidis haut obscuris involvitur, Boristhenide, Olbia, Callipolida, Chersona, Theodosia, Careon, Myrmicion et **Trapezunta**, quas indomiti Scytharum nationes Grecis permiserunt condere, sibimet commercia prestaturos". Text drawn from thelatinlibrary.com.

²² *Cosm. Rav.* 4.3 (adapted from ed. Schnetz 1990. S. 45f.): "... sed ego secundum praefatum Livianum inferius dictas civitates Bosforanie patrie nominavi. in qua Bosforanie patria plurimas fuisse civitates legimus, ex quibus aliquantas designare volumus, id est Ermonassa, Eteobroton, Suppatos, Fritiores, Dina, Ichigin, Ermogan, Teaginem, Acra, Sanabatin, Asandi, Cita, Nimfa, Abritani, Machara, Tatirita, Aumon, Malorossa, Machare, Chimerion, Panthuas, Ratyra, Murmicon, Cabalo, Salonime, Boristenida, Olbiapolis, Capolis, Dori, Chersona, Theosiopolis, Careon, **Trapezus**".

Polemon I and Agrippa

The Pontic-Kolchian-Bosporan kingdom was first united under Mithradates VI Eupator early in the 1st century BCE. Pharnakes II (48/47 BCE) and Polemon I (14–9/8 BCE) briefly revived this unity²³. Podossinov suggests that this territorial agglomeration may explain the indistinguished location of Trapezus somewhere in Polemon's realm²⁴. But even if the Tabula's connection with Agrippa and the Augustan world map is accepted, such a broader context will not yet explain the counter-intuitive position of Trapezus so far up north or its isolation in the eastern-Euxine region. Moreover, I wonder if the close contact with Polemon should not have informed Agrippa better about the Pontic and the Bosporan kingdoms. The Roman deputy emperor was planning a naval campaign to the Crimea and could easily draw on the intelligence of his royal friend. In addition, detailed knowledge should have been readily available at Agrippa's base in Sinope. After all, this city had played a pre-eminent role in the Pontic colonial network after first Miletus and then Athens had lost their leadership in the 5th century BCE. The Sinopeans held on to their dominant position until or probably even beyond their conquest by Pharnakes I around 183 BCE²⁵.

On closer inspection, it becomes obvious that Agrippa's notes indeed condensed much detailed knowledge on the western and eastern Black Sea region. Pliny quotes it five times for his account of the area ranging from Byzantion to Pantikapaion (Pliny NH 4.77, 78, 81, 83, 91). Agrippa appears sufficiently well informed to discourage the assumption that he served as the main source for the according sections of the Tabula. Less clear is Agrippa's treatment of the south-eastern and north-eastern coastlines of the Black Sea. Pliny does not cite him in his immediate presentation of the settlements along the shore. However, he does reference Agrippa in chapters that discuss the major eastern territories and their overall extensions. From these passages emerges that Agrippa had also studied the geographical tradition of the Armenian and Caucasian regions in some detail. This is most obvious when the Augustan scholar details the distance from Byzantion to Phasis with 1,000 miles, which not only

²³ Mithradates VI: Ballesteros Pastor 1996; Heinen 2008; Payen 2020. P. 264–394; Coşkun 2021c. P. 2f. (for an updated bibliography). Pharnakes II: Coşkun 2019b (*pace* Ballesteros Pastor 2017). Polemon I: Cass. Dio 54.24.4–6 (with n. 19 above); also Strabo 7.2.18 on the king's control of Kolchis, probably acquired before 14 BCE.

²⁴ Podossinov 2012. P. 205f. He further supports his view with the *Divisio Orbis Terrarum* and *Demensuratio provinciarum*, sources from the Augustan period that name the territory south of the Sarmatians and Scythians *provincia Pontica*. But there are too many uncertainties in this equation, such as the ambiguous notion of Pontos. An additional problem is to accept the term *provincia* for a kingdom. I would thus discourage pressing this information.

²⁵ Athenian hegemony: Braund 2005; Coşkun 2019c. Sinopean hegemony: Barat 2006; Burcu Erciyas 2007; Hind 2012; Avram 2016. Sinope from Pharnakes I to Pharnakes II: Coşkun 2019b; 2021c; 2021e. See n. 38 below on further references for Milesian colonies.

implies knowledge of this settlement, but also of the (younger) tradition that regarded the river's mouth (rather than Dioskurias) as situated at the extreme end of the sea²⁶.

There is another remarkable omission that should further caution us against accepting Agrippa as the central authority of (the Euxine portion of) the Tabula. Soon after being accepted as the king of the Bosporans, Polemon I renamed Pantikapaion as Kaisareia and Phanagoreia as Agrippeia²⁷. For sure, Agrippa did not yet know about this when he returned to Rome, but he and Augustus would have been informed about this in due course. While it may have been too late to be considered in his geographical notes, Augustus would barely have failed to include this meaningful detail in the world map of the Porticus Vipsania.

No support for Agrippa can be gained from the abovementioned city of Polemonion. This refoundation of Kerasus has often been identified as initiated by Polemon I. But this is an unconvincing assumption. Strabo's silence regarding the royal residence definitely speaks against it, especially since the geographer was close to Polemon's (other) wife Pythodoris, who inherited the Pontic kingdom and is repeatedly mentioned (and praised) in the Geography. Polemonion must therefore be ascribed to Polemon II under the later Julio-Claudians. As a result, the city's name on the Tabula implies a later update²⁸.

A plausible context for such a revision would be the gradual appropriation of the eastern-Pontic area by the Romans through the imperial period. This may have been as early as under Nero, when Cn. Domitius Corbulo waged war against the Parthians and hence re-arranged central and eastern Anatolia. The Flavians built on these developments when establishing the eastern *limes*. Further changes are attested under Trajan and Hadrian, including the alloca-

²⁶ Pliny NH 6.3: *Mensuram Ponti a Bosporo ad Maeotium lacum quidam fecere [XIV] XXXVIII D, Eratosthenes C minorem, Agrippa a Calchadone ad Phasim [x], inde Bosporum Cimmerium CCCLX. nos intervalla generatim ponemus conperta in aevo nostro, quando etiam in ipso ore Cimmerico pugnatum est.* 'The dimension of the Black Sea from the Dardanelles to the Sea of Azov is given by some authorities as 1438.5 miles, but Eratosthenes makes it 100 miles less. Agrippa gives the distance from Calchedon to the river Rion as 1000 miles and from that river to the Straits of Kerch as 360 miles. We shall state the distances in sections as ascertained in our own time, inasmuch as there has been dispute even about the mouth of the Straits of Kerch.' Text and translation adapted from the Loeb ed. by Rackham 1942. P. 340f. For broader discussions of eastern Anatolia/Armenia and the Caucasian region involving Agrippa, see Pliny NH 6.37, 39. For Dioskurias in the 'recess', see Coşkun 2021a, with Strabo 11.2.16 (497–498C); also 1.2.10 (21C) and 1.2.40 (46C) on Homeric Aia 'in the recess of the Pontos'; and 1.2.40 (46–47C) = Mimnermos F 11 + 11a for Aia on the edge (*cheilos*) of the Ocean.

²⁷ The renaming of both cities is only attested on coinage, see MacDonald 2005. P. 59 and Heinen 2011 for discussion, with further references on p. 232.

²⁸ In fact, Podossinov does not explicitly argue with Polemonion, but still mentions it as a foundation of Polemon I in the context of his argument. But see Coşkun 2021a. P. 239f. with Strabo 12.3.16 and Vitale 2012. P. 151–154, *pace* Marek 1993. S. 52, 62; Sørensen 2016. P. 136.

tion of Roman cohorts in Apsaros, Phasis, and Sebastopolis, to which Arrian attests around 132 CE in his *Periplus Pontou Euxeinou*²⁹.

There is a good chance that Arrian's account formed the basis for the revision of the intermediate version of the Tabula, which contains much new detail on the eastern-Pontic and Kolchian areas. There is, in fact, a significant overlap of information³⁰. At any rate, the awkward location of Trapezus on the Tabula strongly supports the view that the original design viewed the city as a remote end point, whereas the political developments from Nero to Hadrian turned it into the node of the road network that extended further to Satala and Sebastopolis.

Earlier Roman Campaigns and the Eastern Black Sea Coast in the 1st Century BCE

From the late-Archaic to the late-Classical or early-Hellenistic periods onwards, one should expect Dioskurias to have held the most prominent role in the eastern-Euxine region. But heavy sedimentation along the entire coastline from Apsaros / Gonio to Dioskurias (?) / Ochamchire eclipsed several Greek and Kolchian settlements from the long-distance trade networks by the 4th or 3rd centuries BCE. It is uncertain how long Dioskurias could uphold its position of prominence and when Trapezus was indirectly affected by the loss of trade opportunities in the east. The dynamic rules of Mithradates VI, Polemon I, or Pythodoris did not bring about sufficient change to incentivize the construction (and maintenance) of harbours and long-distance roads in this region. Such a change was only triggered when the Roman-Parthian military conflicts affected the eastern-Anatolian and Kolchian territories more thoroughly in the later 1st century CE³¹.

At any rate, Dioskurias is still attested as the refuge of Mithradates VI in winter 65 BCE, albeit without indication of a significant chora or any other resources attached to it. Lucullus and Pompey campaigned in north-eastern Anatolia, the former turning south-east into Armenia in 69 BCE (and destroying Tigranokerta), the latter marching further north-east into Kolchis in 65 BCE (probably until Surion / Vani). None of the evidence for their campaigns reveals something about the condition of the coastal settlements in Kolchis,

²⁹ On Arrian's *periplus* and its context, see Belfiore 2009 and Coşkun 2020b; also Silberman 1995; Liddle 2003; Brodersen 2022. On the transformation of central and eastern Anatolia in the early-imperial period, see, e.g., Coşkun 2008; Marek 2010; Vitale 2012. On the road network in particular, French 2012 and 2014. The latest excavation report on Apsaros (Mamuladze and Kakhidze 2022) identifies a first construction period from the 2nd half of the 1st century to the 2nd half of the 2nd century CE, followed by a later period ranging from the 2nd half of the 2nd to the 2nd half of the 3rd century CE.

³⁰ See the references in n. 5 above.

³¹ On the developments of the early Empire, see the references in n. 30 above. On the geology of the area around Phasis, see especially Licheli 2016; further references are in n. 2 above.

unless one wants to read the silence as complementary signs of decline and abandonment. At least, we know that both Roman commanders established friendly relations with a son of Mithradates VI, who was then residing in Pantikapaion, Machares and Pharnakes II respectively. On balance, we may therefore expect more specific knowledge of Bosporan, Kolchian, and Pontic conditions in the entourage of Lucullus and Pompey than reflected on the *Tabula Peutingeriana*³². At the very least, they should have known the approximate location of Trapezus.



Fig. 7. Satellite image showing the effect of sedimentation up to 30 km offshore along the coast from Gonio to Ochamchire. Photograph (2007) by courtesy of the European Space Agency (ESA) (https://www.esa.int/ESA_Multimedia/Images/2007/05/Georgia).

The situation on the ground changed with the Pontic campaign of Pharnakes II (48/47 BCE). Especially on his desperate flight along the coast of Kolchis, he caused substantial destruction. Soon after him followed Mithradates VII, who had been sent to conquer the Bosphorus for Caesar, but may have died looting Kolchis (47/46 BCE). Both are attested to have pillaged the sanctuary of Leukothea, which should be sought on the south-western coast of Kolchis, either on Batumi's Green Cape or near Tsikhisdziri³³. He may have annihilated the few other remaining settlements along the coast. Caesar had defeated Pharnakes at Zela in the Lykos Valley in spring 47 BCE, but did not pursue him further to Sinope, since he had to rush back to Rome. Later on, he was preparing a major eastern campaign, scheduled to start in March 44 BCE,

³² For the friendship relations, see Ballesteros Pastor 1996. P. 234f.; 322; Tröster 2005; Coşkun 2016. Add Pompey's friendship with Kastor of Phanagoreia: Coşkun 2014. On Surion / Vani, see Coşkun 2021. P. 291, n. 15, with bibliography.

³³ The main source for Pharnakes and Mithradates VII is [Caes.] *Bell. Alex.* 35–78; see Coşkun 2019b, also 2019d; 2019e; 2021d; further Coşkun 2021b with Strabo 11.2.17 on the Leukotheion. Cf. Gelzer 1960; Gajdukevič 1971; Heinen 1994; Ballesteros Pastor 2017.

yet not executed due to his murder on the Ides of March. Although the focus of this planned undertaking was on the Parthians, there was speculation that his return might lead him around the northern shores of the Black Sea, to deal with the Dacians (who had remained a threat after the death of Burebista) and Asandros, who had killed Pharnakes II and replaced him in the Bosporos³⁴.

So, perhaps Caesar had begun acquiring some information on the Euxine coastlines, to be worked into a major compilation of itineraries throughout the eastern Mediterranean and even beyond. If this speculation should be true, then his search for the Black Sea area had only begun, and he would have left further specification for later. Such a context would yield a possible explanation for the Tabula's representation of the Black Sea map: poor information entering a soon-to-become authoritative account or depiction. It is of little bearing that the overall representation of the urban development and road network of Asia Minor reflects the progress made especially from Pompey over Augustus, Nero, and the Flavians to Trajan and Hadrian³⁵. Whenever a major revision of the map was undertaken in later generations, the Bosporan, Kolchian, and eastern-Pontic remained of so little interest that the investment into a complete overhaul of the design was shun.

Caesar's Commissioners, Agrippa's Notes, and Augustus' World Map

These admittedly very hypothetical thoughts might quickly be discarded as wild speculation, but they seem to have some further merits. Caesar's general interest in geography, topography, and itineraries is easily documented in his Gaulish War. More importantly, a late Roman excerpt with the title *Cronica Iulii Caesaris* specifies that Greek scholars worked on or were chosen to compile information on the whole world known in 44 BCE. The text is somewhat opaque, but spells out the names and assignments of four geographers, besides the many years they worked on them: 'to Nikodemos the (part of the) east, to Didymos the west, to Theodotos the north, to Polykleitos the south.' From a Roman perspective, the 'northern' part is likely to have included Asia Minor and the Black Sea region. Theudotos is said to have worked on this for 28 years and eight months and completed his work in the tenth consulship of Augustus (24 BCE)³⁶.

³⁴ Suet. Div. Jul. 44.3, with Freber 1993. P. 167–175; Coşkun 2019d. P. 294 and 2019e for further context.

³⁵ See the references in n. 30 above.

³⁶ GLM ed. Riese 1878. P. 21–23: "Iulio Caesare et Marco Antoni[n]o consulibus omnis orbis peragratus est per sapientissimos et electos viros quattuor: Nicodemo orientis, Didymo occidentalis, Theudoto septentrionalis, Polyclito meridiani. A consulibus supra scriptis usque in consulatum Augusti III et Crassi annis XXI mensibus quinque diebus novem oriens dimensa est. Et a consulibus supra scriptis usque in consulatum Augusti VII et Agrippae III annis XXVI mensibus III diebus XVII occidui pars dimensa est. A consulibus supra scriptis usque in consulatum Augusti X annis XXVIII mensibus VIII septemtrionalis pars dimensa est. A consulibus supra scriptis usque in consulatum Saturnini et Cinnae

Although the numbers do not add up (does our source count in the time the scholars had dedicated to their research prior to their appointment by Caesar?), both the duration and the year of publication would yield a date prior to the campaign of Agrippa. It would be unlikely that Agrippa did not use it for his strategic planning, and unfeasible that Augustus continued funding the work of his adoptive father for decades, without drawing on it for his prestigious project of displaying a world map in Rome soon after 12 BCE. In fact, we should assume that this research yielded the backbone of the map in the Porticus Vipsania. We can go even another step further: since Pliny names Agrippa's work as the main source of this map, we should assume that he drew substantially on the results of those four Greek scholars, unless he had even supervised their work. It is remarkable that Pliny names Agrippa several times, but never any one of those four men.

Conclusions on the Tabula Peutingeriana and Outlook on the Mislocation of Trapezus

We should now be confident to surmise that the well-researched notes of (though not necessarily by) Agrippa and the substantiated world map commissioned by Augustus avoided the gross mistakes on Black Sea geography known from the Tabula Peutingeriana. At the same time, Caesar or his staff remain a plausible source for the first version of a major Roman road map that would gradually develop to or at least feed into the much later Tabula. The latter suggestion remains hypothetical, but an attractive choice, if we embrace 24 BCE as a *terminus ante quem* for the design of the Black Sea coast as represented on the same Tabula.

None of these arguments have in fact explained what caused the mislocation of Trapezus and the omission of so many other settlements on the eastern Black Sea coast in the first place. We have, so far, only shown that Agrippa is very unlikely to bear responsibility for this error. The solution of this problem requires another investigation. This will lead us into the wide field of mythogeography, which depicts Trapezus as part of an extended Kolchis or virtual Argonautic landscape³⁷.

annis XXXII mense I diebus XX meridiana pars dimensa est³⁷. The subsequent paragraphs number for each part the seas, islands, mountains, provinces, cities, rivers, and peoples. Riese chose the title *Cosmographia Iulii Caesaris*, although this is not supported by the mss. Cf. Dilke 1985. P. 40; Irby 2019b. P. 104f.

³⁷ Coşkun, in preparation 1, drawing especially on a tradition that locates Trapezus in Kolchis and that reveals an astounding blindspot in-between Trapezus and Phasis: Strabo 11.2.14–19; 12.3.12–17; and Xenophon, *Anabasis* 4.8.22–24. On the mythical tradition of Phrixos and the Argonauts, see Keyßner 1941; Gantz 1993; Bruneau 1994; Dräger 2001; Lovatt 2021; Coşkun, in preparation 5. On Argonautic land- and riverscapes in the context of Greek colonization and changing hegemonies, see Coşkun 2020a; in preparation 2, 3, 4. I shall consider the interrelation of myth, colonial politics, ethnic constructs, geography, and/or toponomy systematically (Dougherty 1993; Braund 1998; 2019; 2021;

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ТРАПЕЗУНТ В КОЛХИДЕ

Часть I. Возникновение Певтингеровой карты при Юлии Цезаре

Греческая колония Трапезунт расположена в понтийской Малой Азии в юго-восточной оконечности черноморского побережья, но Певтингерова карта локализует его на северо-восточном побережье. Александр Подосинов недавно доказал, что эта ошибка восходит к морской кампании Марка Агриппы в 14 г. до н.э. Этот сподвижник Августа написал географические заметки, на которых была основана карта в Портике Випсания в Риме. Но с географией Черного моря Агриппа, вероятно, был знаком гораздо лучше. Плиний приписывает ему серьезные знания Понта Эвксинского, особенно его западного и северного побережья, что не сочетается с пробелами в картине Черного моря на Певтингеровой карте, куда не попали даже два таких крупных города, как Пантикапей и Фанагория, а хуже всего то, что Меотида предстает внутренним озером, не имеющим выхода в море. Во всяком случае, Агриппа, вероятно, знал о карте, создание которой началось при Юлии Цезаре, но которая была завершена только между 30 и 20 г. до н.э. Эта новая информация еще не была доступна ни самому Цезарю, ни его штабу, когда он составлял план внезапной Парфянской кампании в 44 г. до н.э., не вполне ознакомившись с географией Черного моря. Таким образом, последняя фаза диктатуры Цезаря могла бы образовать контекст первого, беспорядочного, с белыми пятнами, но всё равно в высшей степени надежного итинерария, нанесенного на карту всего известного тогда мира, которая постепенно превратилась в Певтингерову карту. На протяжении последующих пяти веков одни ее части подвергались пересмотру, а другие (вроде северного побережья Черного моря) нет.

Ключевые слова: Певтингерова карта, Трапезунт, Цезарь, Агриппа, Черное море, деятельность римлян на Понте

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