

# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar



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TP VIII-X ed. Weber

(<https://www.tabula-peutingeriana.de/index.html>)



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A.C.: 'Trapezus in Kolchis, Part I: The Origin of the Tabula Peutingeriana under Julius Caesar', forthcoming in A. Podossinov (ed.), *The Black Sea Region in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages: Problems of Historical Geography*, Moscow 2023.



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# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar

A.C.: 'Trapezus in Kolchis. Part II: Mytho-Geography in the Tabula Peutingeriana', under review.

A.C.: 'Rome and Antioch on the Tabula Peutingeriana and New Suggestions to the Map's Origin', in preparation.

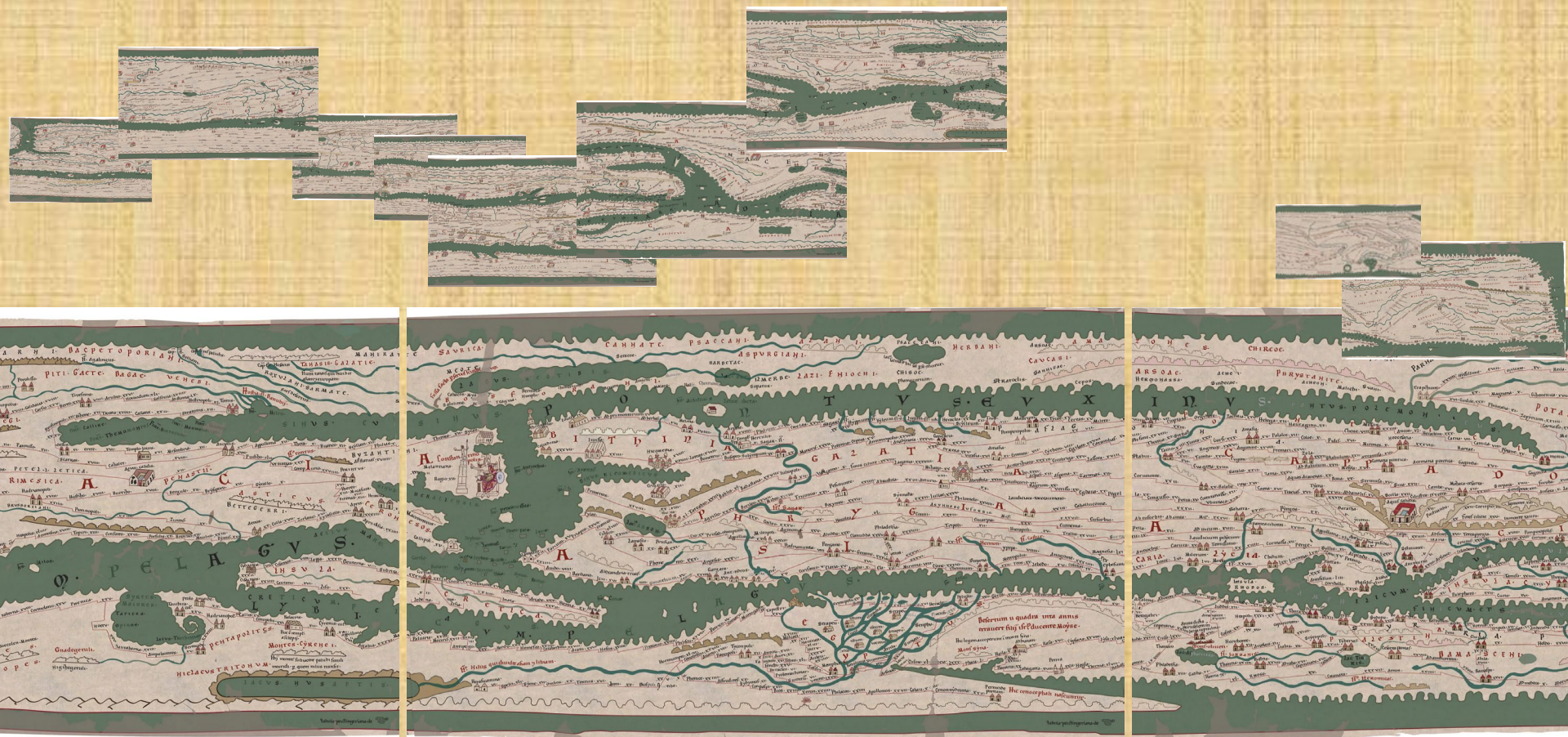


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- <https://en.unesco.org/memoryoftheworld/registry/201>
- <https://omnesviae.org/>
- <https://www.cambridge.org/us/talbert/talbertdatabase/prm.html> (Talbert)
- **TP Online**. Ed. by S. Diederich, M. **Rathmann**, and M. Schuol. Last Update in 2023. [https://tp-online.ku.de/index\\_en.php](https://tp-online.ku.de/index_en.php)



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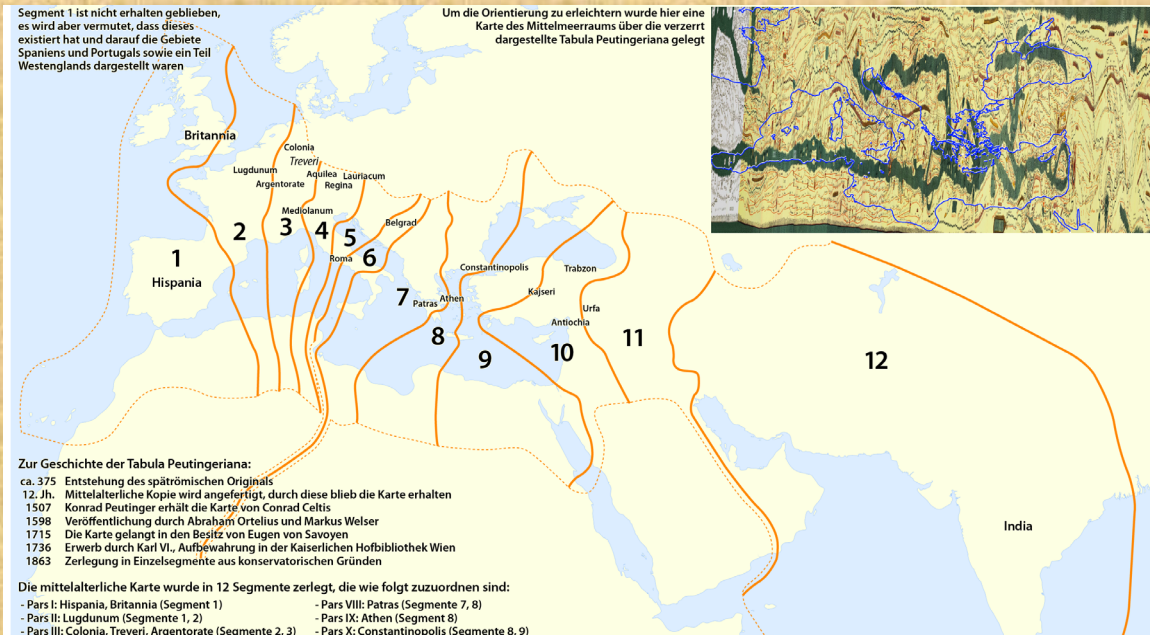


- Only extant map of the (known) world from antiquity
- Only manuscript: parchment produced around 1200 CE



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Source: Chumwa on Wikipedia  
 (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1d/Extends\_of\_the\_Tabula\_Peutingeria.png),  
 base map from Rathmann 2022, fig. 3.

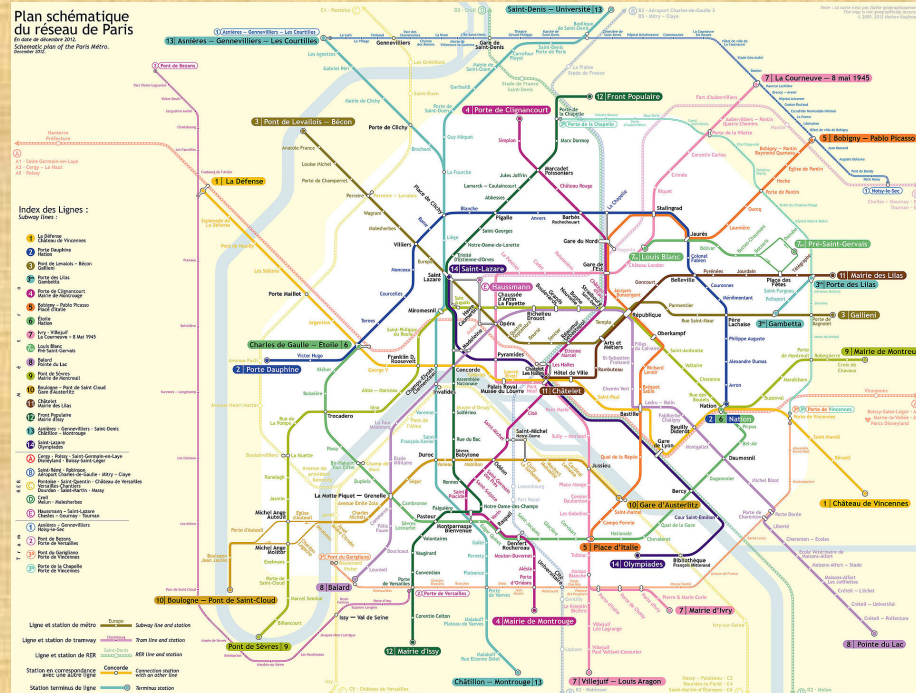


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(cf. Paris metro plan)

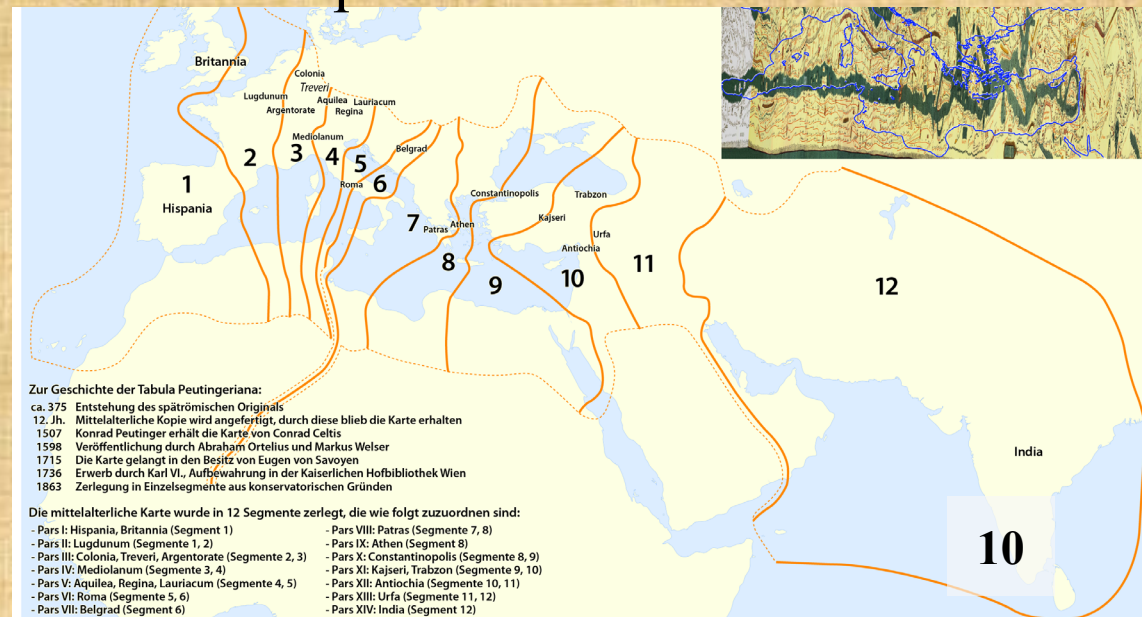




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[TP I: Ireland? Britain, Spain, Marocco]  
TP II: **with SE tip of Britain** in NW, Gaul



TP XII: East coast of India, **Taprobane** (Sri Lanka)

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  - 11 / 12 sheets of parchment
- [TP I: Ireland? Britain, Spain, Marocco]  
TP II: with SE tip of Britain in NW, Gaul  
TP V: **Rome**  
TP IX: Constantinople  
TP X: Antioch  
TP XII: East coast of India, Taprobane (Sri Lanka)





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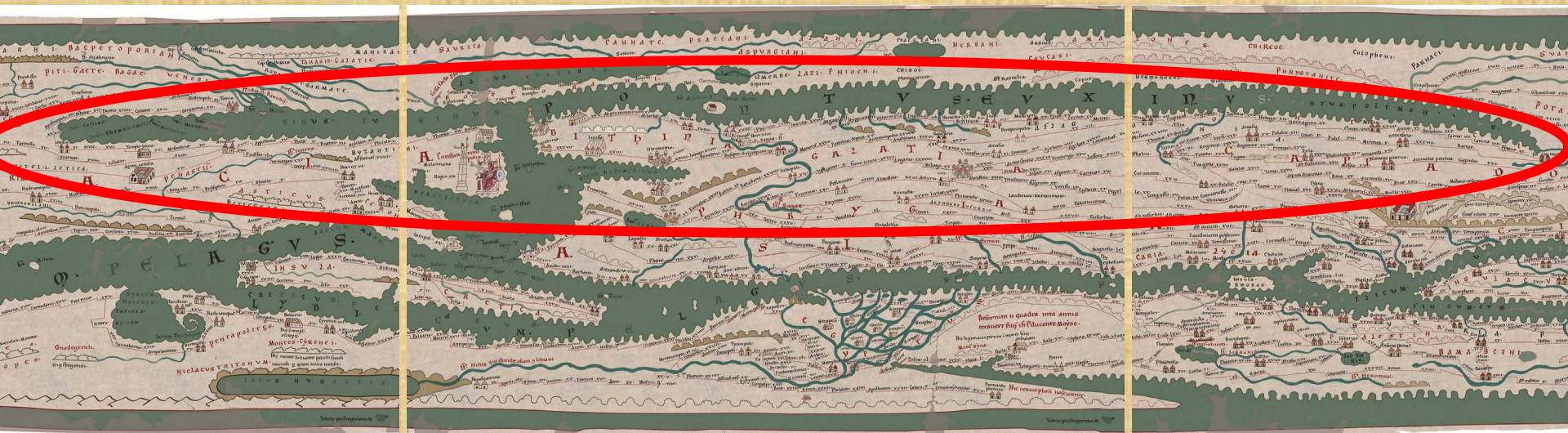


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- Hodological principle, not scaled map
- 11 / 12 sheets
- Was there something like an original map? When was it produced? By whom, for whom, with what purpose? When updated?
- Information drawn from **Black Sea** region

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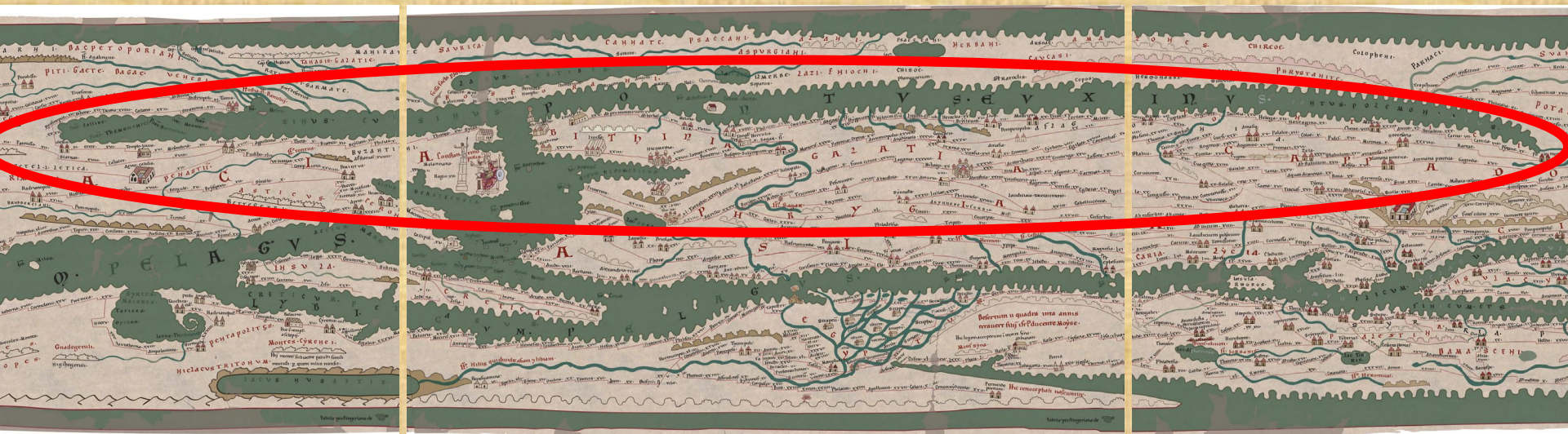


Podossinov, A. V. 2012: Bithynia, Paphlagonia and Pontus on the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, in G.R. Tsetschladze (ed.), *The Black Sea, Paphlagonia, Pontus and Phrygia in Antiquity. Aspects of Archaeology and Ancient History*, Oxford, 203–206.





# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar





# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar



Not: pragmatic choices to fit into compressed format





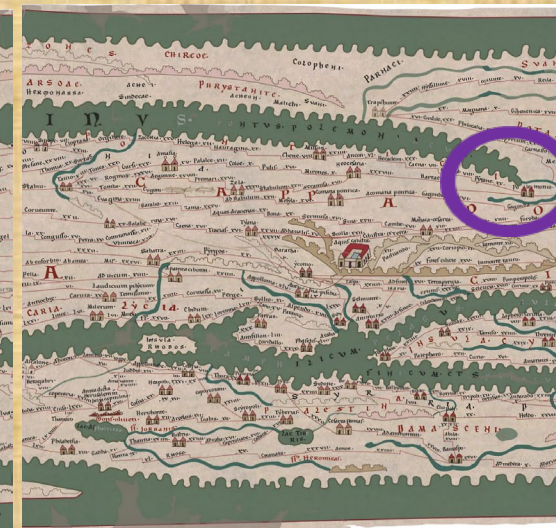
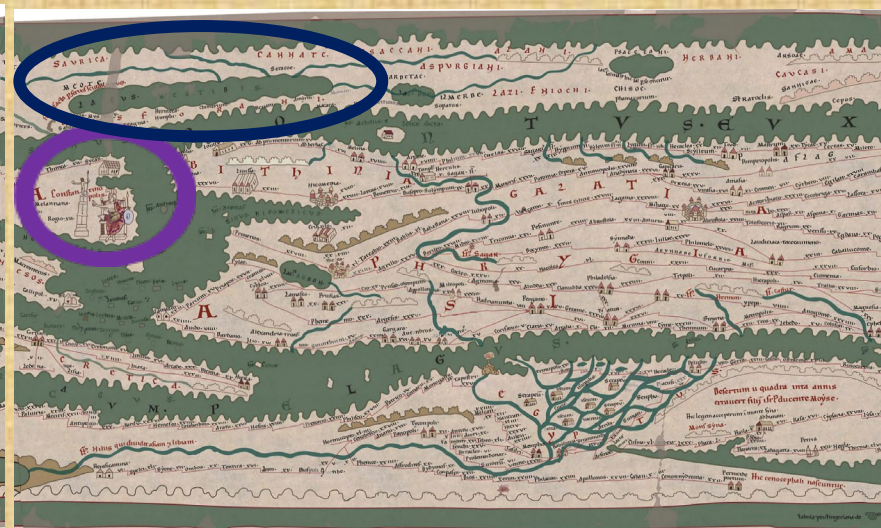
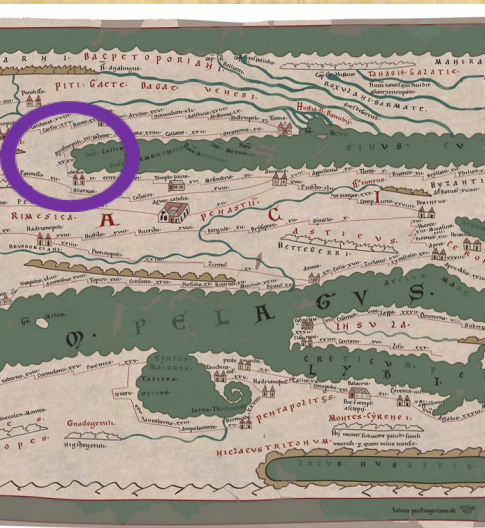
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**Not:** pragmatic choices to fit into compressed format

**But:** errors, whether due to tradition or ignorance

**Example:** Maiotis (Sea of Azov) closed south, open north





# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar

1) What Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

2) Conflicting Time Layers in the Tabula Peutingeriana

3) Agrippa's Notes & Augustus' Mappa Mundi

4) Distortions of the Black Sea Coast on the Tabula Peutingeriana

a) The Kimmerian Bosphorus

b) Trapezus and the Eastern Corner

5) Roman Cartography under Caesar and Augustus



# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar

## 1) What Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

- **travel map** (for administrative or private use)
- Not widely used (just one ms., no other references)
- Some parts accurate & useful, others not at all
- Not a scaled map, but hodological
- Visualization of compiled itineraries
- Kai Brodersen: 'Routendiagramm'
- Michael Rathmann: chorographical map



# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar

## 1) What Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

- travel map (for administrative or private use)
- **representation of Roman imperial ideology (Talbert)**



# Templum Augusti in SE India (TP XII)



But Augustus  
theme inconsistent  
(Actium?)

Less Important than  
Alexander (TP XII)?





# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar

## 1) What Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

- travel map (for administrative or private use)
- representation of Roman imperial ideology
- geographical scholarship
- art



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## 1) What Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

- travel map (for administrative or private use)
- representation of Roman imperial ideology
- geographical scholarship
- art
- perhaps all of it and none of it – depending on time / version



# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar

1) What Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

2) **Conflicting Time Layers in the Tabula Peutingeriana**

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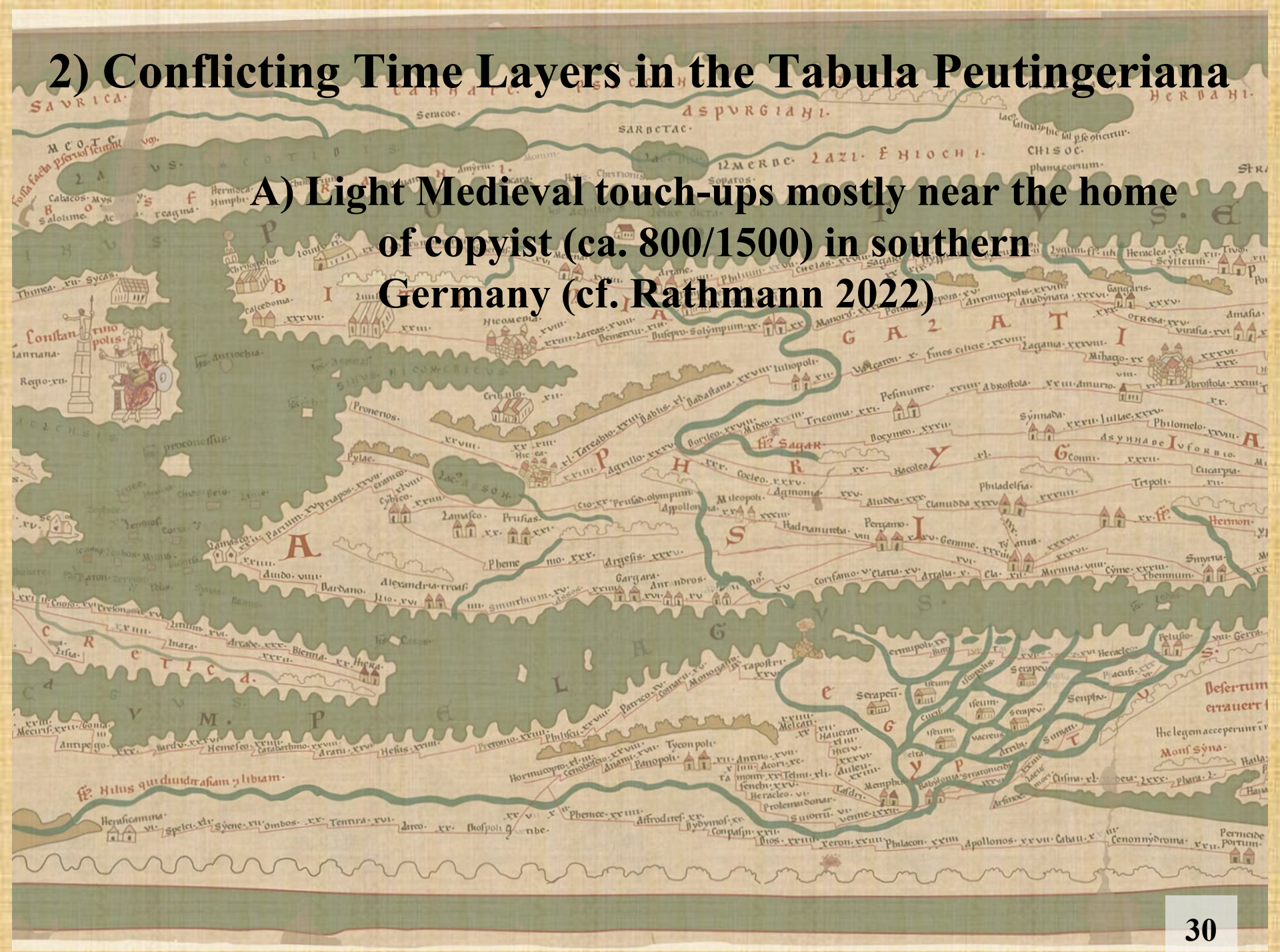
b) Trapezus and the Eastern Corner

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## 2) Conflicting Time Layers in the Tabula Peutingeriana

A) Light Medieval touch-ups mostly near the home of copyist (ca. 800/1500) in southern Germany (cf. Rathmann 2022)





## 2) Conflicting Time Layers in the Tabula Peutingeriana

A) Light Medieval touch-ups

B) Late Antiquity

- Constantinople, 325/330 BCE (and Antioch)

- Mid-4<sup>th</sup> c.: Castorius? (Miller)

- 430s: under Theodosius II (Franz Christoph von Scheyb 1753, Weber, Salway; cf. Rathmann):

composed by a certain Aemilius Probus, quoted by

Dicuil, *Liber de mensura orbis terrae* 5.4 =

Anthologia Latina 724 = ed. Riese 1878, pp. 19f.





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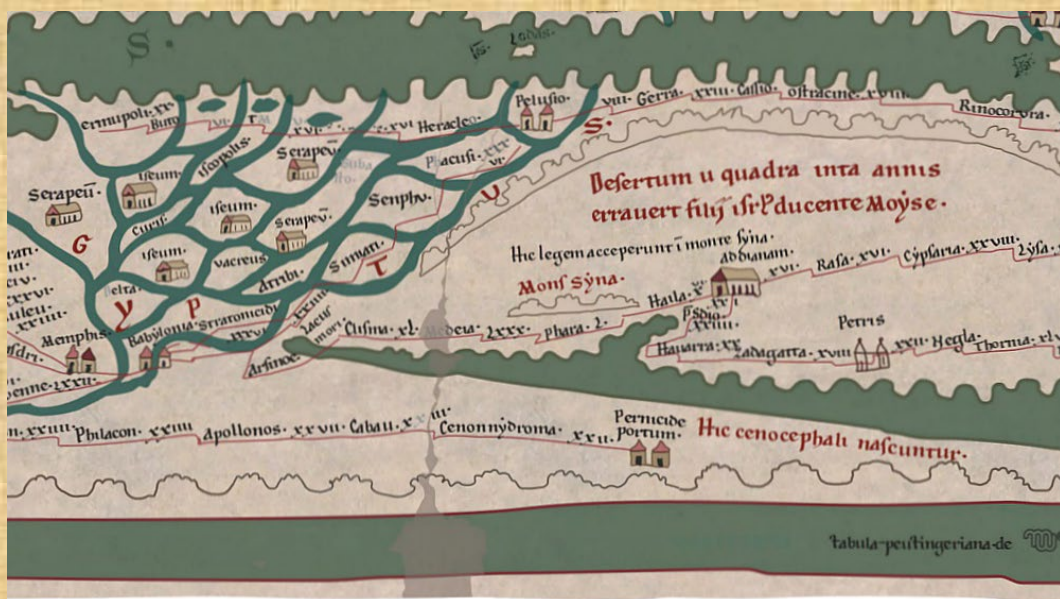
- 430s: under Theodosius II (Franz Christoph von Scheyb 1753, Weber, Salway): Dicuil

- **But what else is post-Constantine?**  
→ **Christianization?**



# How Christian Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

- Nothing Christian in Constantinople or Antioch
- Bethlehem or Nazareth not even mentioned
- What about Judaea / Palestine?





# How Christian Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

**Jerusalem (TP X):**  
*Antea dicta Herusalem  
modo Helya Capitolina  
Mons Oliveti*

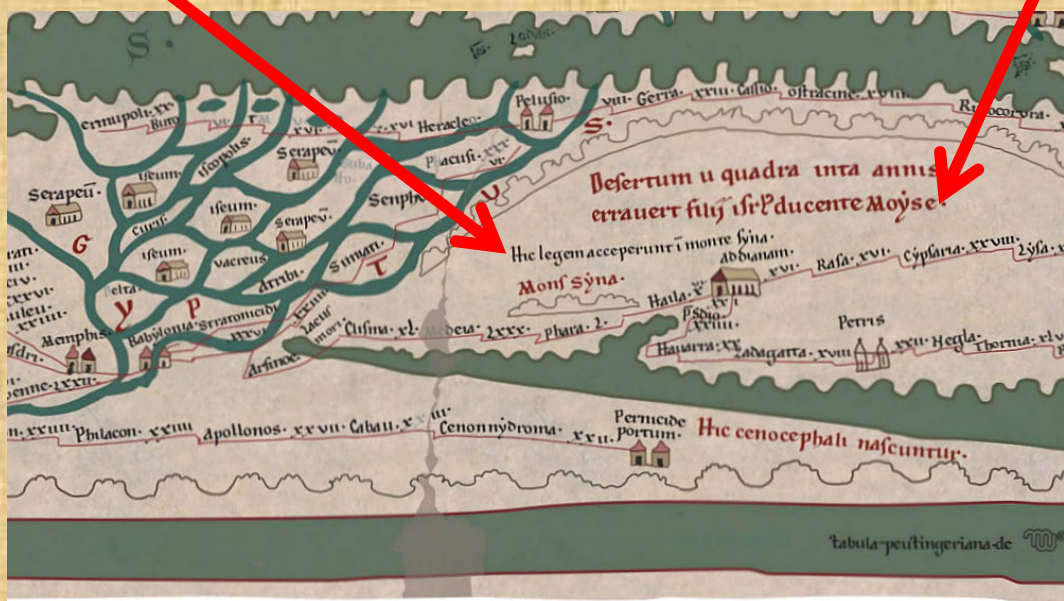




# How Christian Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

**Comments in Negev Desert (TP IX):**  
*Desertum ubi quadraginta annis  
erraverunt filii Israelis ducente Moyse  
Hic legem acceperunt in monte Syna.*

**Jerusalem (TP X):**  
*Antea dicta Herusalem  
modo Helya Capitolina  
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# How Christian Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

**Rather Jewish edits in 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century!**

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*Mons Oliveti*





# How Christian Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

And Rome?

*Ad s(an)c(tu)m Petrum*

St Peter on Vatican

319-333 CE

(cross-shaped basilica  
with 5 naves)

Would Lateran Basilica

(324) not have been

better choice under

Constantine?





# How Christian Is the Tabula Peutingeriana?

And Rome?

*Ad s(an)c(tu)m Petrum*  
St Peter on Vatican  
319-333 CE  
(cross-shaped basilica  
with 5 naves)

Would Lateran Basilica  
(324) not have been  
better choice under  
Constantine?

When would a Christian editor focus on Rome alone? Probably in Middle Ages an older monument (Palatine?) seen from Via Triumphalis was relabeled.





## 2) Conflicting Time Layers in the Tabula Peutingeriana

A) Light Medieval touch-ups (including St Peter)

B) Late Antiquity

- Constantinople (and Antioch)

- Mid-4<sup>th</sup> c.: Castorius? (Miller)

- 430s: under Theodosius II (Franz Christoph von Scheyb 1753, Weber, Salway): Dicuil

But what else is post-Constantine?

→ No Late Roman Christianization, but some

Jewish influence (2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century CE)

→ Western Barbarians?



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**But what else is post-Constantine?**

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**→ Western Barbarians?**

**Vandals (Vanduli) still north of Danube (TP IV)**

**Goths not mentioned at all**

**(Alamannia and Francia may be Medieval)**



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→ No Late Roman Christianization, but some Jewish influence (2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century CE)

→ Western Barbarians? (1<sup>st</sup> half of 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE)

→ Other imperial residences?



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→ Western Barbarians? (1<sup>st</sup> half of 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE)

→ Other imperial residences? Trier (Augusta Tresviro-  
rum!), Milan, Ravenna, Salona/Spalatum,  
Thessalonica, Nicomedia just stations or cities



# Major Imperial Residences

besides Constantinople (330 CE)

Milan, York, Trier, Sirmium, Thessalonica, Nicomedia, Antioch



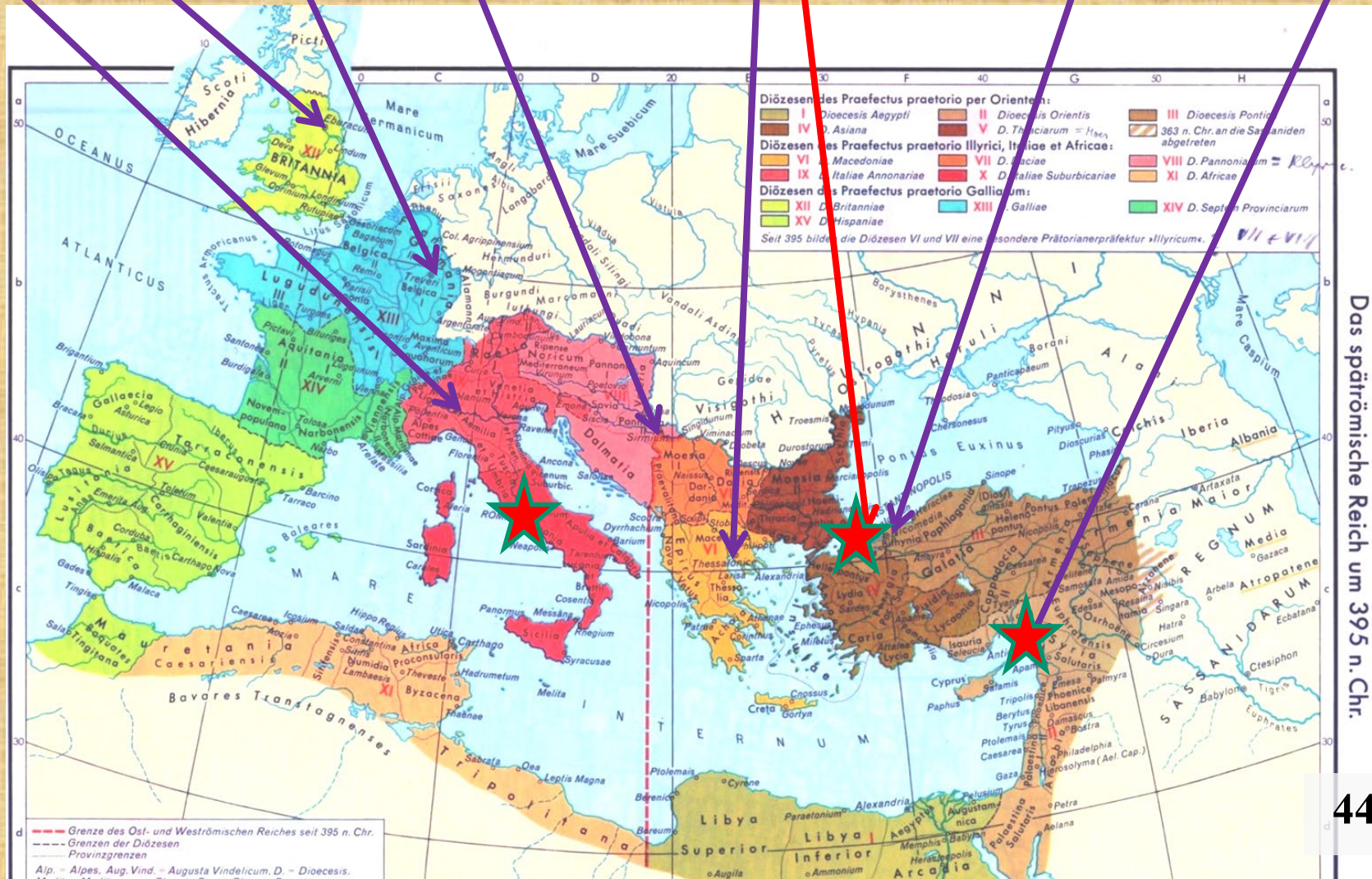
Das spätrömische Reich um 395 n. Chr.



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C) High Imperial Material / Edits ...

But what is early?

→ Aelia (Hylia) Capitolina perhaps 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE

→ Augusta Tresvirovum perhaps Augustan / 1<sup>st</sup> c.



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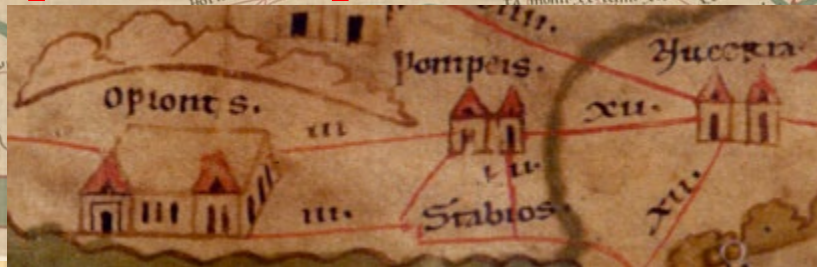
**But what is early?**

→ Aelia (Hylia) Capitolina perhaps 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE

→ Augusta Tresviroorum perhaps Augustan / 1<sup>st</sup> c.

→ Pompei(s)? Eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE

**City or road station?**





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C) High Imperial Material / Edits ...

D) Augustus: *mappa mundi* in Porticus Vipsania,  
based on notes of Agrippa:

- Source or inspiration in older scholarship



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- Rathmann: Latin adaptation of Hellenistic original



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E) Caesar

F) Early-Hellenistic Origin of Greek Map

Cf. Rathmann: Erathosthenes; 'archetype' – map shape largely maintained, content gradually adapted (and translated into Latin)



**Example:**  
**Addition of**  
**Sera Maior**  
**(China)**  
**(TP XII)**





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C) High Imperial Material / Edits ...

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E) Caesar: translation, compilation

F) Early-Hellenistic Base Map, Multiple Sources



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b) Trapezus and the Eastern Corner

5) Roman Cartography under Caesar and Augustus



### 3) Agrippa's Notes & Augustus' Mappa Mundi

Pliny *NH* 3.17: At present the length of **Baetica** from the frontier of the town of Cazlona to Cadiz is 250 miles, and from the sea-front of Murgi 25 miles more; its breadth from Carteia along the coast to the Guadiana is 234 miles. **Agrippa was a very painstaking man, and also a very careful geographer; who therefore could believe that when intending to set before the eyes of Rome a survey of the world he made a mistake, and with him the late lamented Augustus? For it was Augustus who completed the portico containing a plan of the world that had been begun by his sister in accordance with the design and memoranda of Marcus Agrippa.** (Loeb transl.)





### 3) Agrippa's Notes & Augustus' Mappa Mundi

Pliny quotes Agrippa five times for the area ranging from **Byzantium to Pantikapaion** (*NH* 4.77, 78, 81, 83, 91).

Pliny *NH* 6.3: The length of the borders of the **Euxine** from the Bosphorus to the Lake Mæotis has been reckoned by some writers at fourteen hundred and thirty-eight miles; Eratosthenes, however, says that it is one hundred less. According to **Agrippa**, the distance from **Chalcedon to the Phasis** is one thousand miles, and from that river to the **Cimmerian Bosphorus** three hundred and sixty. We will here give in a general form the distances as they have been ascertained in our own times; for our arms have even penetrated to the very mouth of the Cimmerian Straits.





# Naval Campaign to Sinope in 14 BCE



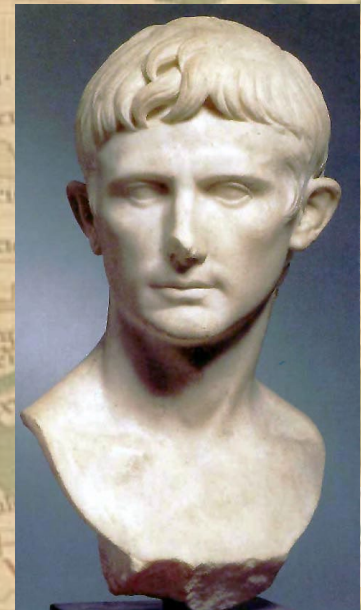
**Agrippa forced Queen Dynamis of the Bosphorus to marry king Polemo of Pontus; she gave in when he harboured in Sinope: Cass. Dio 54.24.4–6; cf. Josephus *AJ* 16.2.1f. (12–23); Orosius 6.21.28.**



### 3) Agrippa's Notes & Augustus' Mappa Mundi

**Podossinov:** Agrippa's knowledge on Black Sea based on campaign, even if somewhat inaccurate; but he followed broader tradition even for mistakes.

**AC:** knowledge Agrippa obtained in person and available under Augustus (see section 5 below) incompatible with his authorship





# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar

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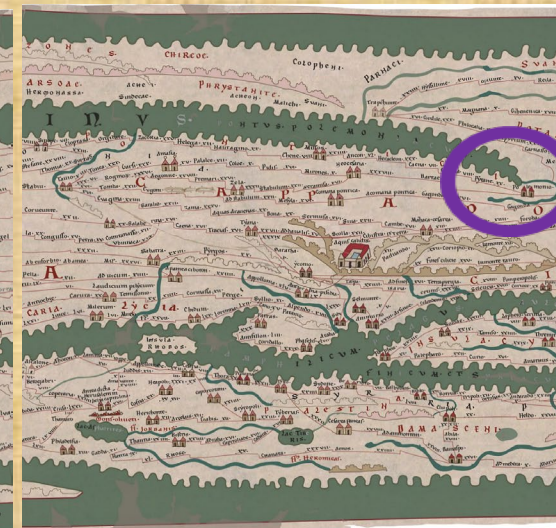
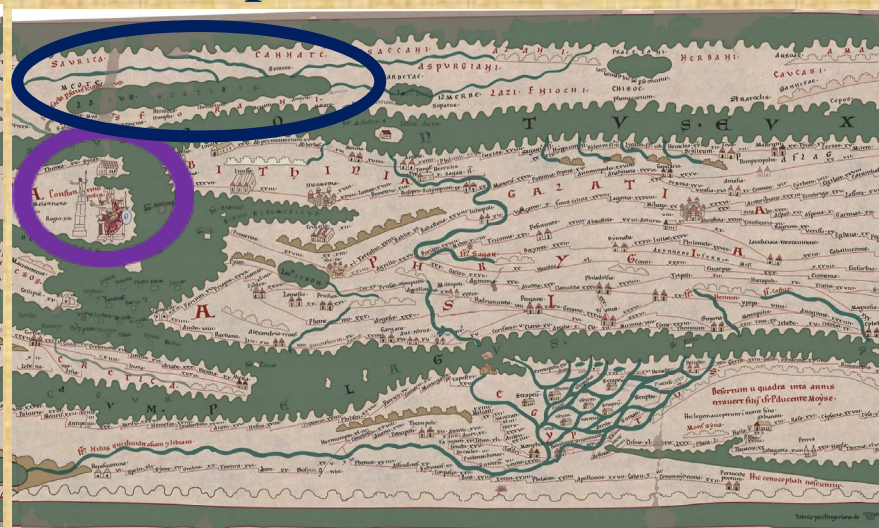
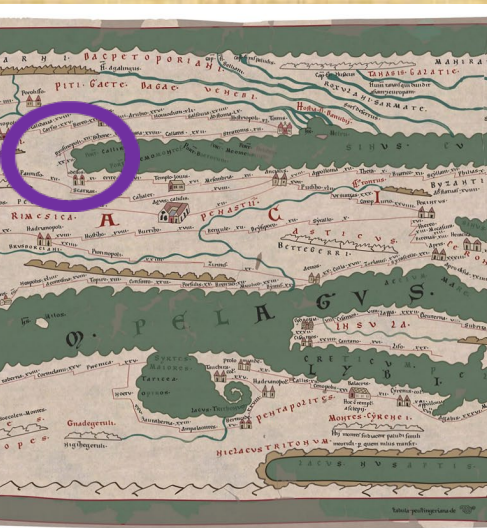
5) Roman Cartography under Caesar and Augustus



# The Careless Representation of the Black Sea on the Tabula Peutingeriana and the Map's Possible Origin under Julius Caesar



**Not:** pragmatic choices to fit into compressed format  
**But:** errors, whether due to tradition or ignorance  
**Example:** Maiotis (Sea of Azov) = is closed lake  
**No 'strait' / 'Bosporus' to the south**





# The Maiotis & Bosphorus (TP IX)



Salomime?

Cabacos?

Theagina = Theodosia



Map from DNP Suppl. VII



# The Maiotis & Bosphorus (TP IX)



Salomime?

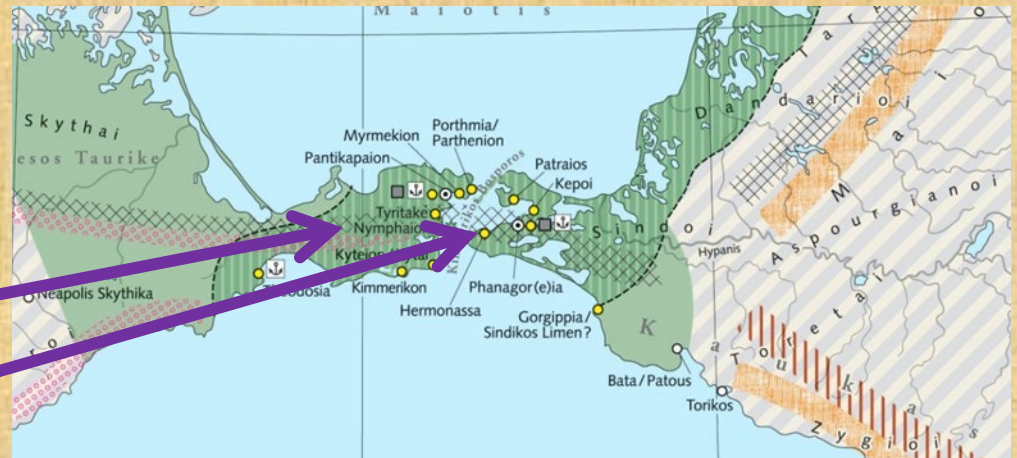
Cabacos?

Theagina = Theodosia

Hermoca-Nymph

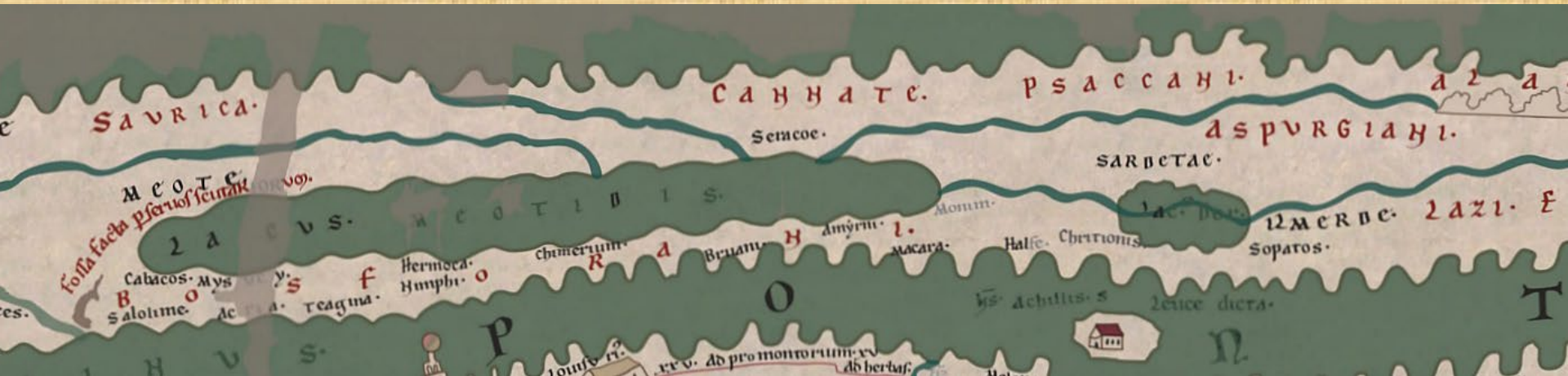
= Nymphaion  
and Hermonassa

Chimerium? Bruani? Amyrni? Macara?





# The Maiotis & Bosphorus (TP IX)



Salomime?

Cabacos?

Theagina = Theodosia

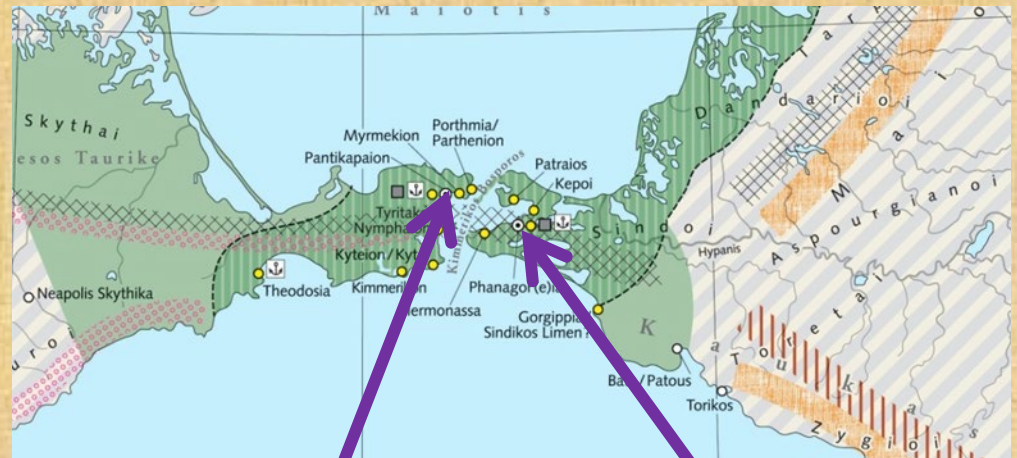
Hermoca-Nymph

= Nymphaion

and Hermonassa

Chimerium? Bruani? Amyrni? Macara?

But where are the royal cities **Pantikapaion** and **Phanagoreia**?





# The Maiotis & Bosphorus (TP IX)

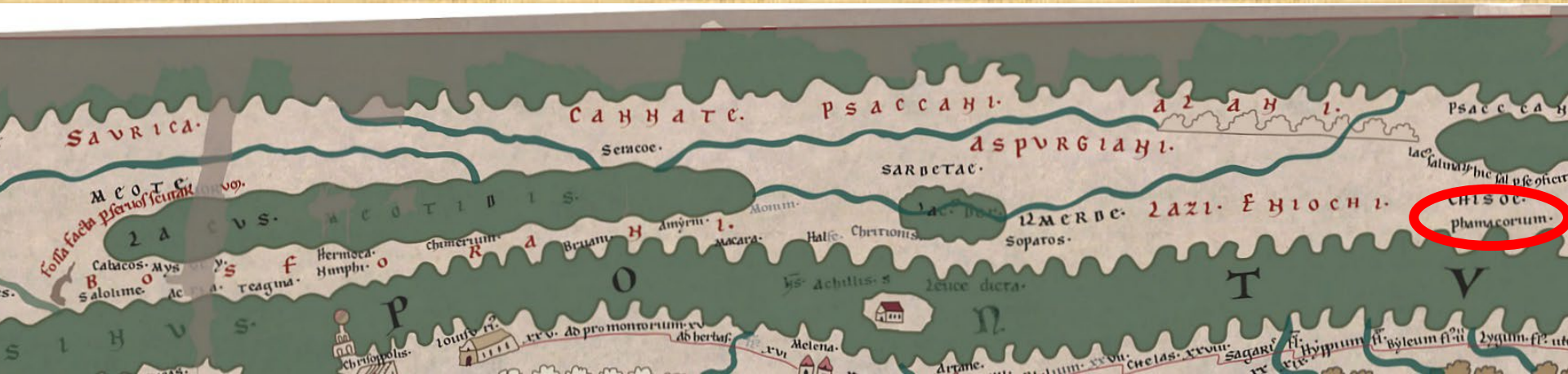


Perhaps Parmacorum <  
Phanagoreia+Panticapaeum?

But where are the royal cities **Pantikapaion** and **Phanagoreia**?



# The Maiotis & Bosphorus (TP IX)



But note further:

Pantikapaion > **Kaisareia**  
 & Phanagoreia > **Agrippeia**  
 under Polemon (14-9/8 BCE)



Heinen, H. 2011: 'Kaisareia und Agrippeia: das Tor zur Maiotis als augusteisches Monument', in N. Povalachev and V. Kuznetsov (eds.), *Phanagoreia und seine historische Umwelt. Von den Anfängen der griechischen Kolonisation (8. Jh. v.Chr.) bis zum Chasarenreich (10. Jh. n.Chr.)*, Göttingen, 225–240.



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# Trapezus, (Dioskurias), and Argonautic Landscapes in TP X



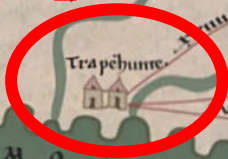


# Trapezunte (Trapezus > Trabzon)





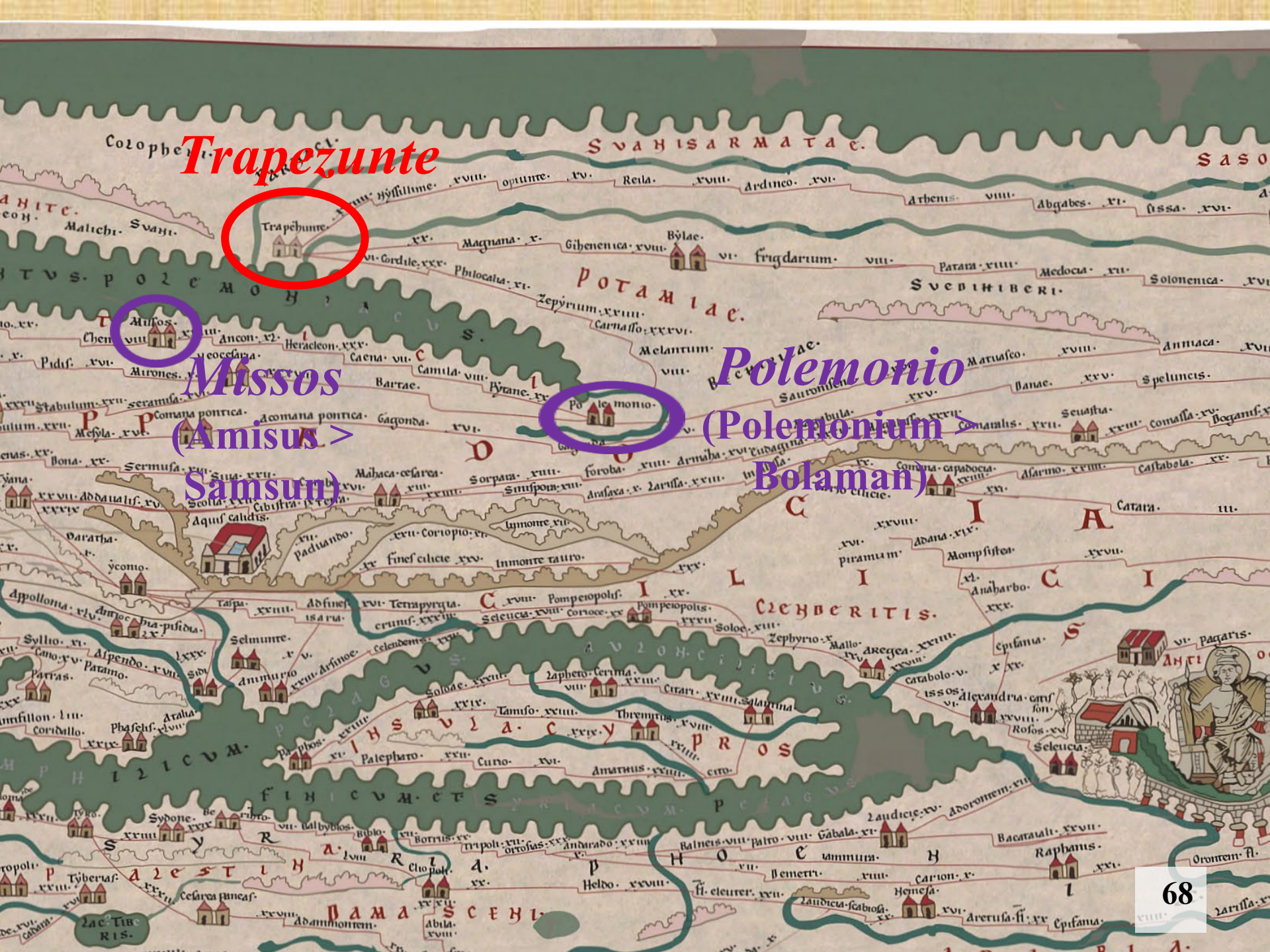
Trapezunte



Missos  
(Amisus >  
Samsun)

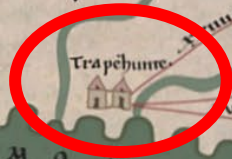


Polemonio  
(Polemonium >  
Bolaman)

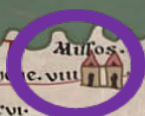




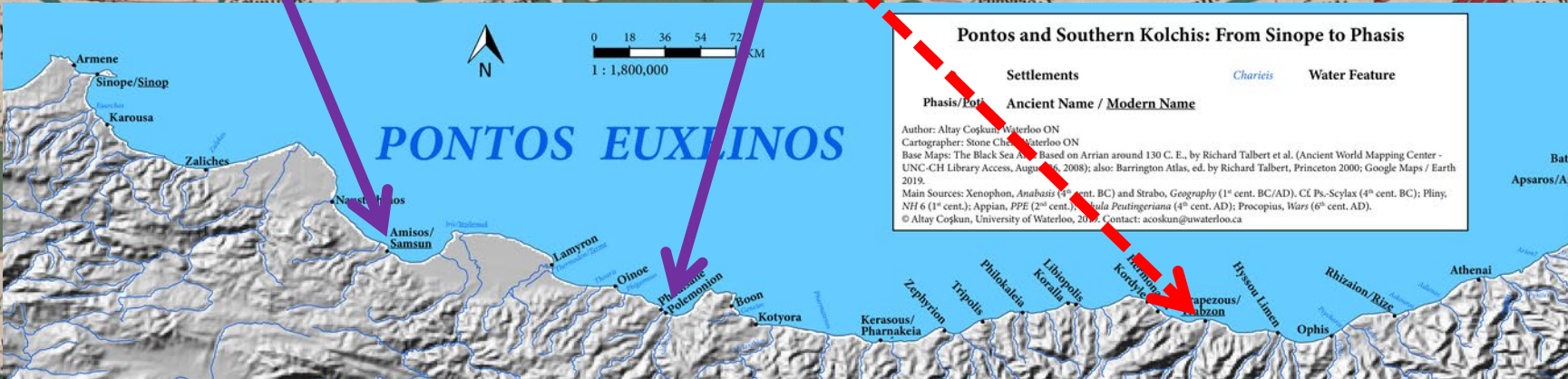
Trapezus



Amisus



Polemonium



Pontos and Southern Kolchis: From Sinope to Phasis

| Settlements                | Charieis | Water Feature |
|----------------------------|----------|---------------|
| Phasis/Pot...              |          |               |
| Ancient Name / Modern Name |          |               |

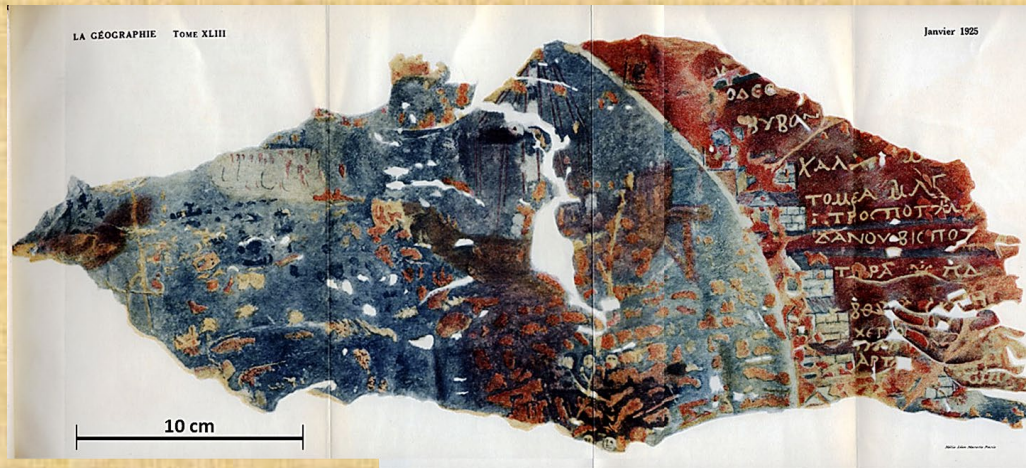
Author: Altay Coşkun, Waterloo ON  
 Cartographer: Same Coşkun, Waterloo ON  
 Base Maps: The Black Sea Atlas, based on Arrian around 130 C. E., by Richard Talbert et al. (Ancient World Mapping Center - UNC-CH Library Access, August 2016, 2008); also: Barrington Atlas, ed. by Richard Talbert, Princeton 2000; Google Maps / Earth 2019.  
 Main Sources: Xenophon, *Anabasis* (4<sup>th</sup> cent. BC) and Strabo, *Geography* (1<sup>st</sup> cent. BC/AD), Cf. Ps.-Scylax (4<sup>th</sup> cent. BC); Pliny, *NH* 6 (1<sup>st</sup> cent.); Appian, *PPE* (2<sup>nd</sup> cent.); *Tabula Peutingeriana* (4<sup>th</sup> cent. AD); Procopius, *Wars* (6<sup>th</sup> cent. AD).  
 © Altay Coşkun, University of Waterloo, 2020. Contact: acoskun@uwaterloo.ca



**Traditional view: result of compression**

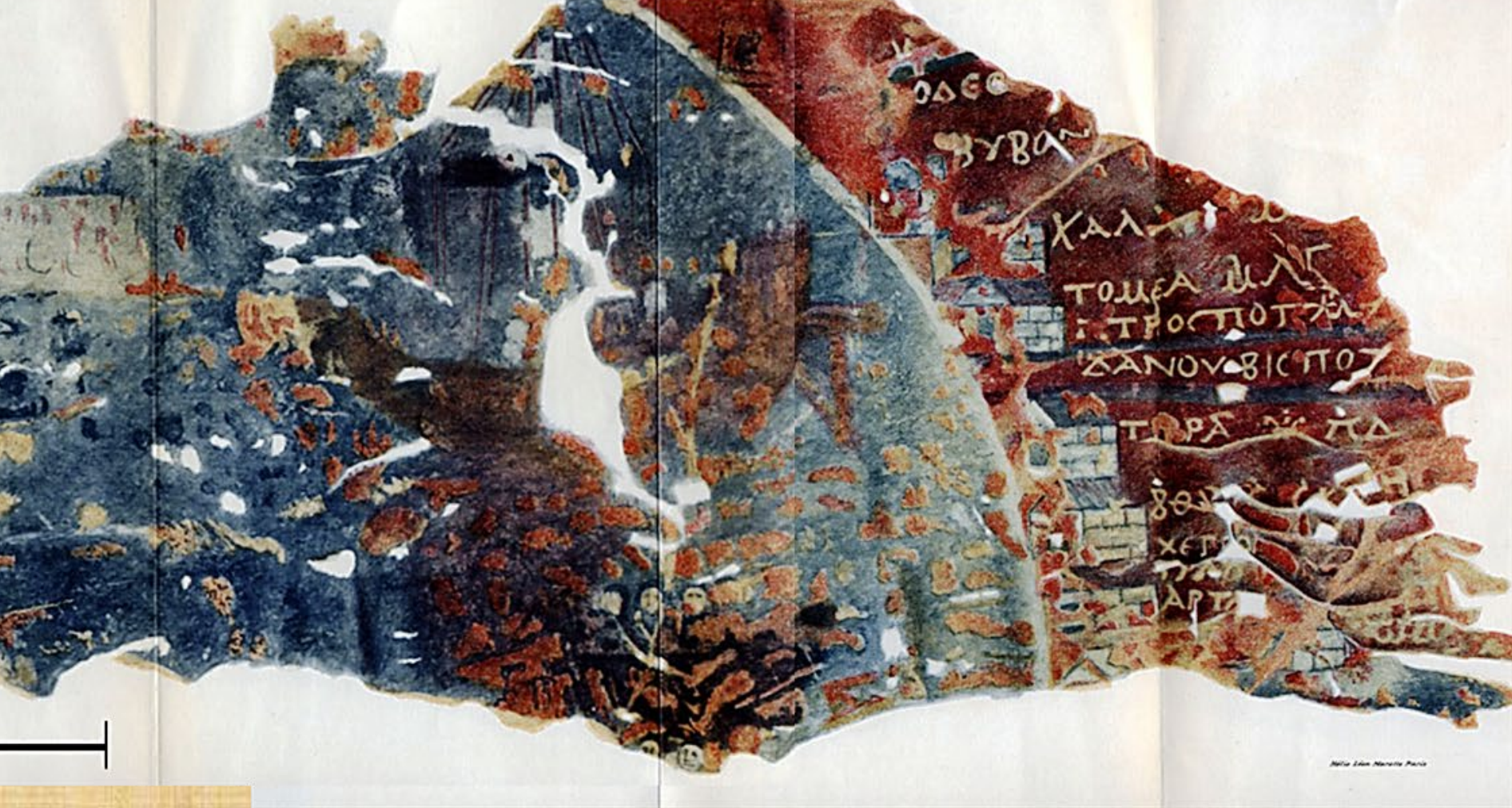
**Podossinov argues with broader tradition, to excuse Agrippa**

**But his evidence is much later than TP AND is uncertain**



**Fragmentary Route Map from Dura Europos**





Fragmentary Route Map from Dura Europos (3<sup>rd</sup> cent. CE), photograph with enhanced colours by Arthur de Graauw, Wikipedia ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dura-Europos\\_route\\_map#/media/File:Doura-EuroposMap.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dura-Europos_route_map#/media/File:Doura-EuroposMap.png))





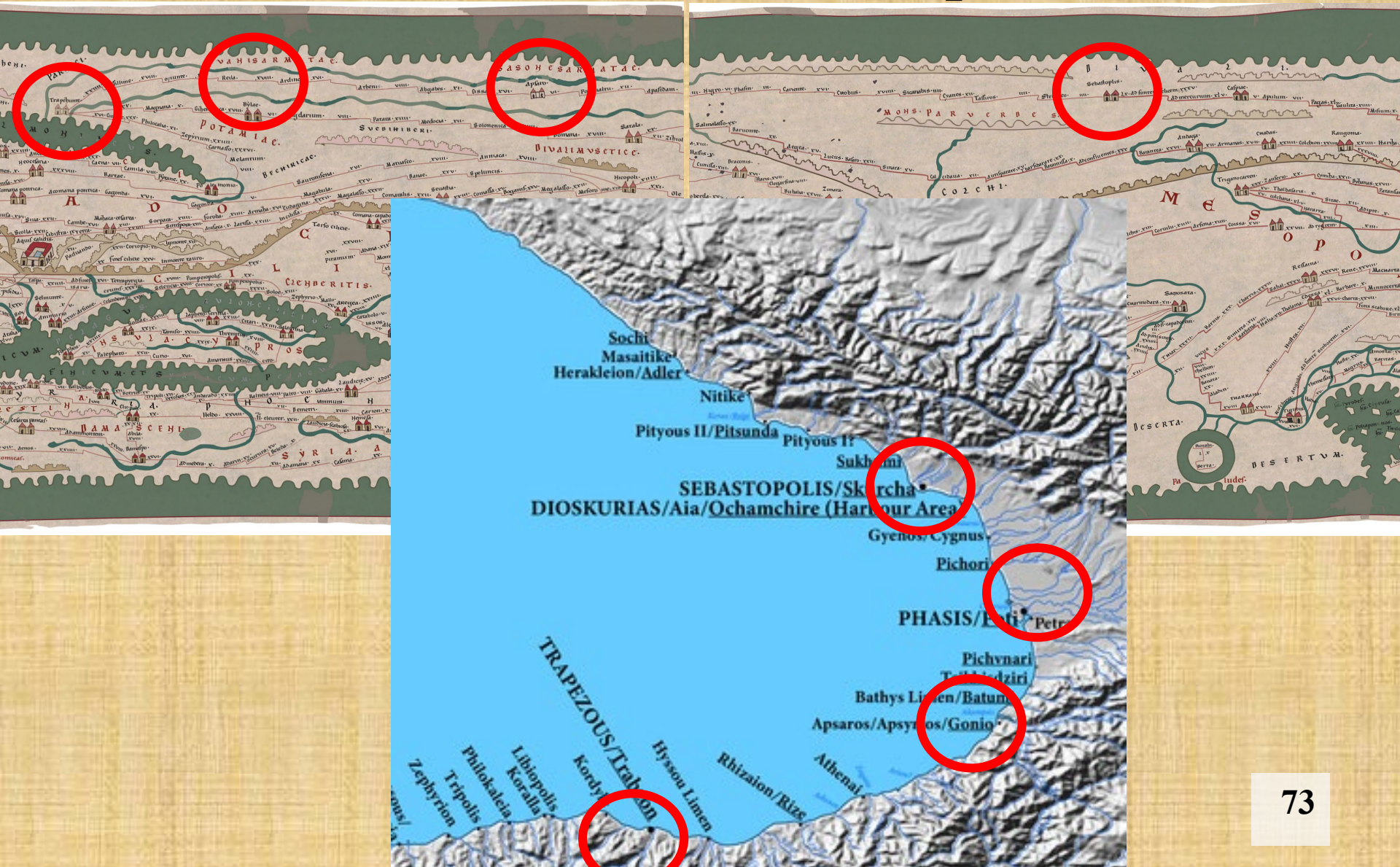
Podossinov: Danubis - Tra[pezus] - ...

- Artaxata

Rather: Danubis – Trapezus = ‘Table Rock’ on Crimea – Arta = Straits



# Omission / Later Addition of Road via Absarus & Phasis to (Dioskurias) / Sebastopolis (TP X-XI)





# Multiple ‘Aiai’ Reflecting Rivalries

Probably first Aia under Milesian hegemony  
located in Colchis, 550/500 BCE

## Dioscurias

A. Coşkun: ‘(Re-) Locating Greek & Roman Cities along the Northern Coast of Kolchis (Gyenos, Dioskourias, Sebastopolis, Pityous and Herakleion)’. Part I: ‘Identifying **Dioskourias in the Recess** of the Black Sea’, VDI 80.2, 2020, 354–376.

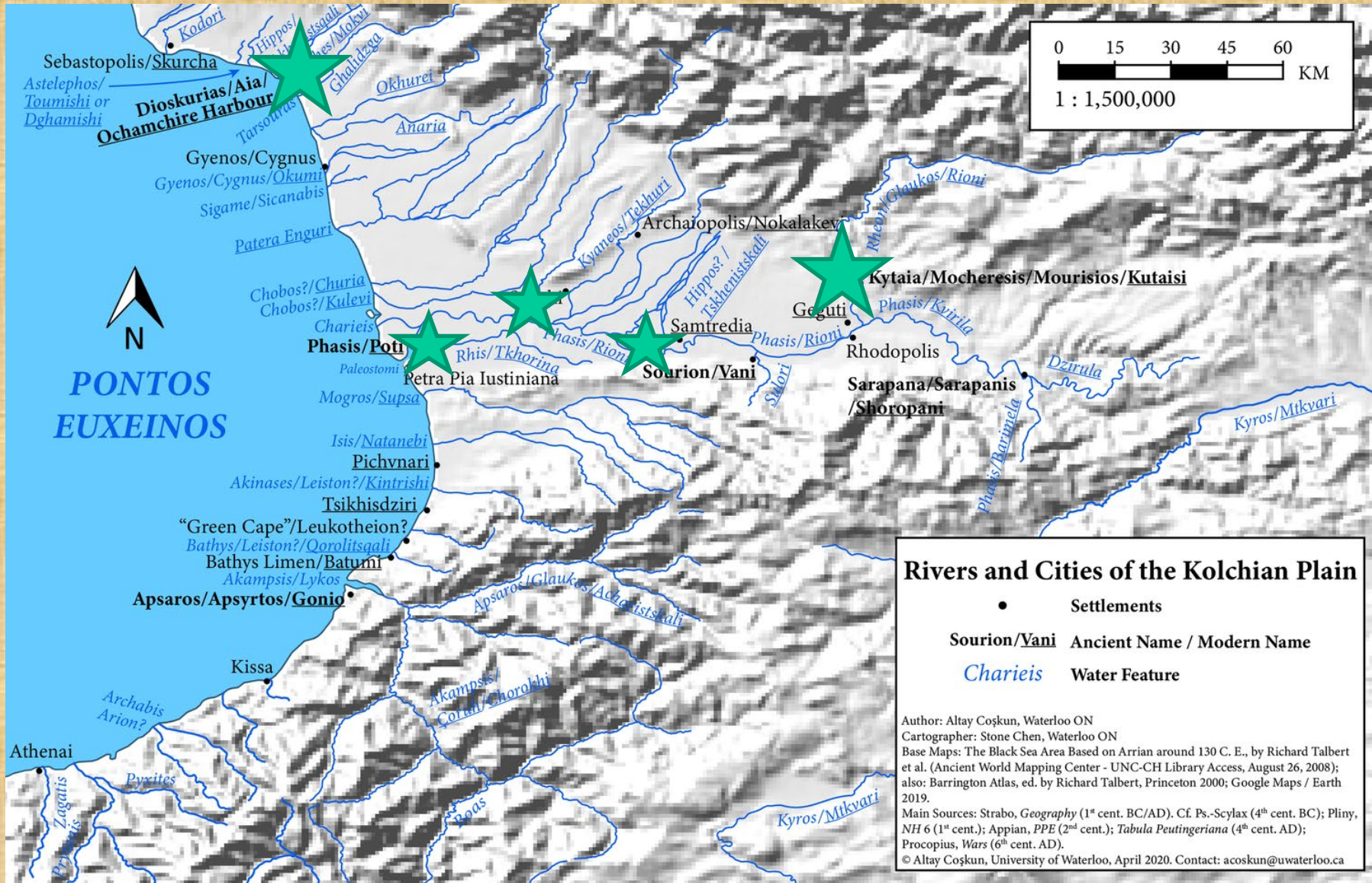
URL: <http://vdi.igh.ru/issues/338?locale=en>.  
Part II: ‘Following Arrian’s Periplous from Phasis to Sebastopolis’, VDI 80.3, 2020, 654–674.

URL: <http://vdi.igh.ru/issues/339?locale=en>.





# Multiple 'Aiai' Reflecting Rivalries





By 600 BCE Milesian Foundation of Sinope

Other cities to follow in 6<sup>th</sup> century

- **Aia located in Colchis:** Pind. *Pyth.* 4.211f., 462 BCE

Athenian Hegemony after 5<sup>th</sup> century

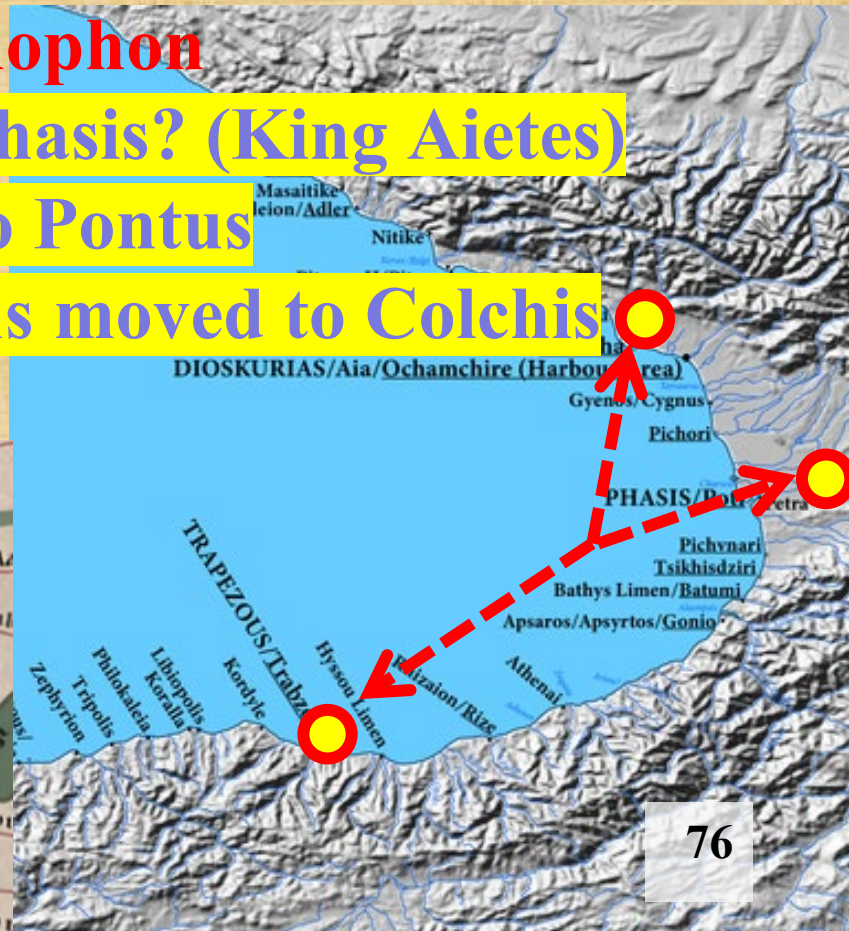
405/1-220/183 Hegemony of Sinope

401 Anabasis of Cyrus & Xenophon

- **by 401 Aia moved to the Phasis? (King Aietes)**

- **virtual Colchis extended to Pontus**

- **After 400: virtual Trapezus moved to Colchis**





# Trapezus in Colchis (Xen. Anab. 4.8.22–24)

From there they marched two stages, seven parasangs, and reached the sea at Trapezus, an inhabited Greek city on the Euxine Sea, a colony of the Sinopeans in the territory of Colchis. There they remained about thirty days **in the villages of the Colchians**, and from these as a base plundered Colchis. / And the Trapezuntines supplied a market for the army, received the Greeks kindly, and gave them oxen, barley-meal, and wine as gifts of hospitality. ...

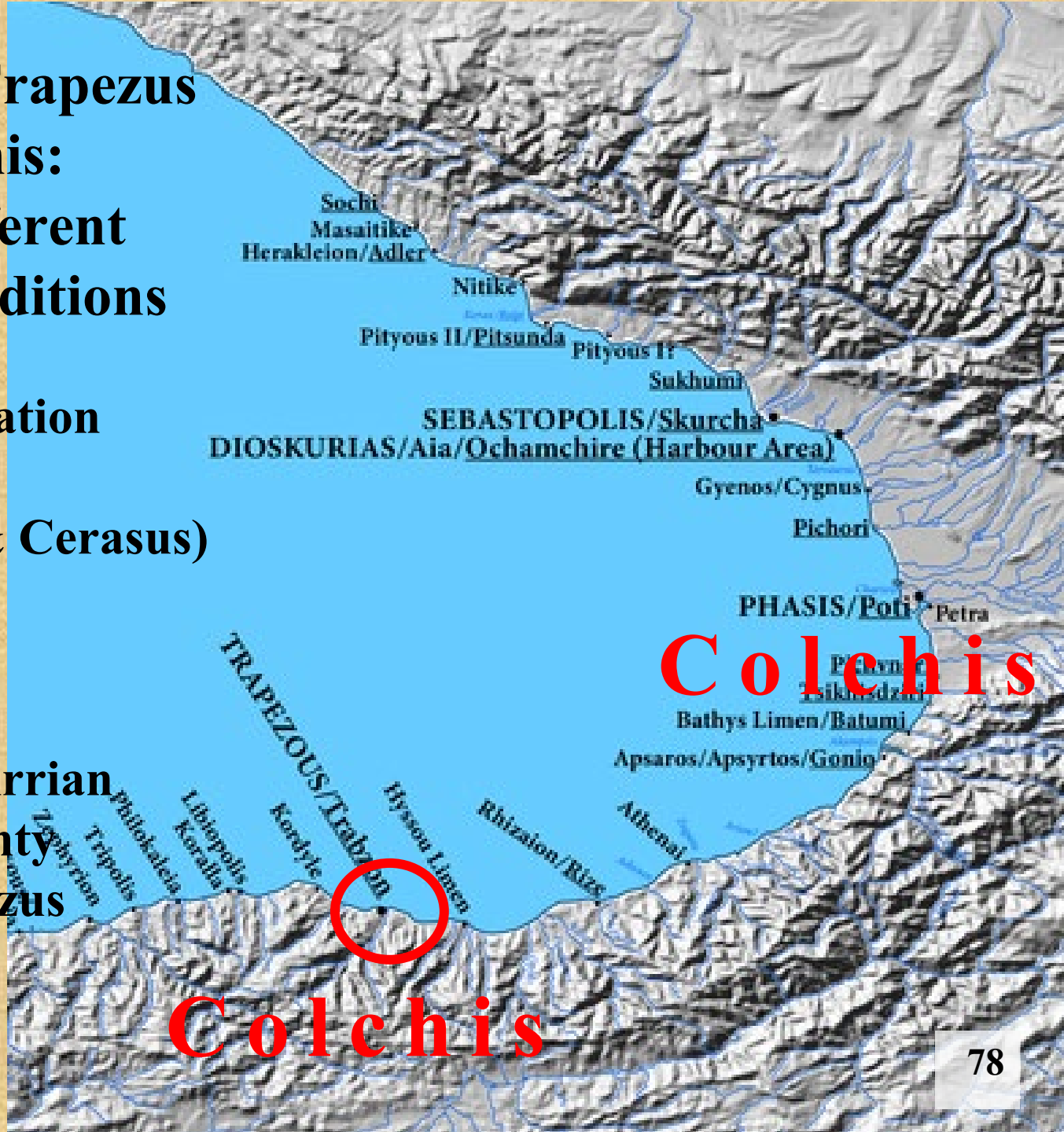




# Location of Trapezus & Colchis: Three Different Ancient Traditions

- 1) Clear Separation
- 2) Neighbours
- 3) Trapezus (& Cerasus)  
IN Colchis  
Xenophon

Strabo, Pliny, Arrian  
reflect uncertainty  
but leave Trapezus  
in South









# Conclusions on Trapezus

Milesian colonists: Colchis = land of Aia; Dioscurias = Aia

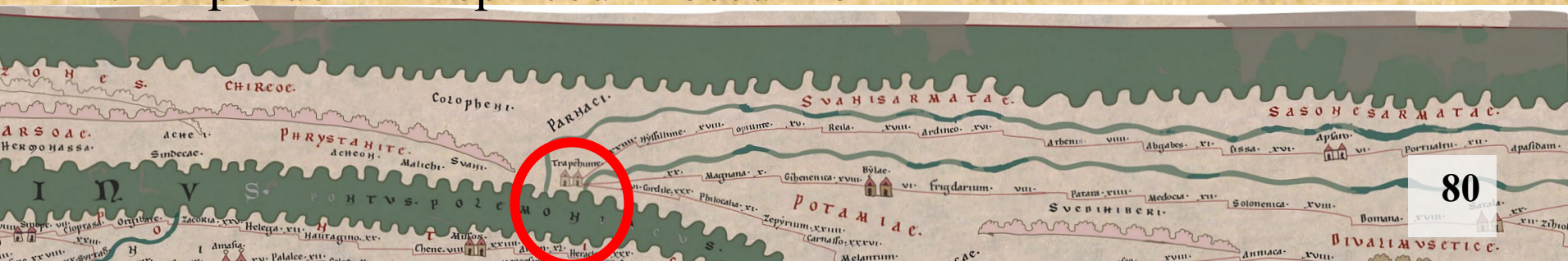
5<sup>th</sup> cent.: Aia moved to Phasis (city on coast?)

Xenophon: Aia up the Phasis (Samtredia, Kytaion, Varni/Surion: Anab. 5.6.37); Trapezus in a Virtual Colchis, directed by Sinope

After Xenophon: virtual migration of tribes near Trapezus:

- Sanni / Suani / Sannigae: neighbours / cofounders of Dioscurias
- Heniochi: Part of Argonautic landscape, first around Dioscurias

TP: Trapezus-Aia replaced Dioscurias-Aia





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## Major Mapping Project Initiated by Caesar 44 BCE

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 septemtrionalis, 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 (24 BCE) annis XXVIII mensibus VIII (17 BCE??) septemtrionalis pars dimensa est.** A consulibus supra scriptis usque in consulatum Saturnini et Cinnae annis XXXII mense I diebus XX meridiana pars dimensa est.





## Tentative Conclusions:

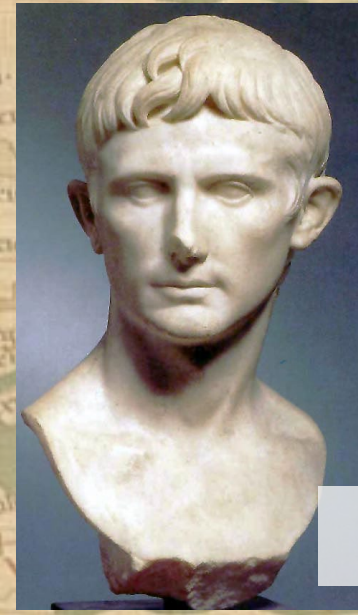
# Roman Cartography under Caesar and Augustus

Base map of Eratosthenes plus other geographical / chorographical materials: compiled and translated under Caesar, perhaps with a view to the Parthian campaign.

Materials inaccurate, hence long-term research project.

Augustus entrusted Agrippa with supervision. Agrippa's notes & Augustus' *mappa mundi* drew on better research.

Predecessor of TP only updated sporadically and never fully.





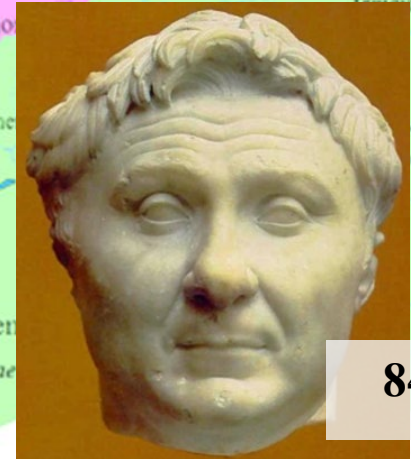
*Or Had the Map Been Commissioned Earlier?*

**123-063 Mithradates VI Eupator**

**89-84 First Mithradatic War (Sulla)**

**82-80 Second Mithradatic War (Mure**

**73-63 Third Mithradatic War  
(Lucullus, Pompey)**





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**Sulla made it to Pergamon, Greek autobiography**

**Lucullus along coast, then to Tigranokerta,**

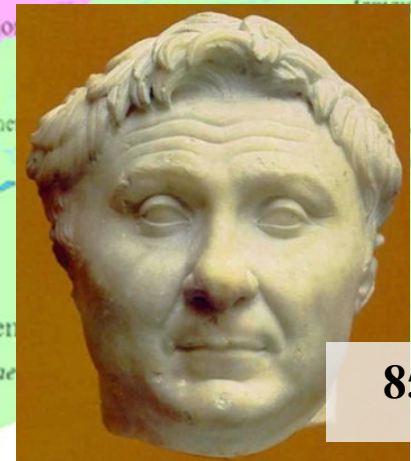
**Greek epic by Archias**

**Pompey to Varna / Surion; reorga-**

**nized cities of Asia Minor;**

**Greek epic by Theophanes,**

**Greek history by Poseidonios**





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**Greek history by Poseidonios**

**Caesar popularis, wrote BG and BC**

**in Latin, with geogr. detail**

