

Istros (Black Sea coast, Romania) - A geoarchaeological perspective regarding harbours location

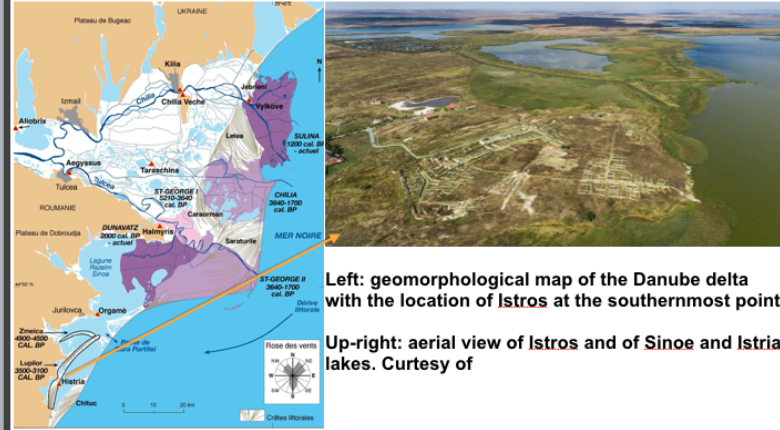
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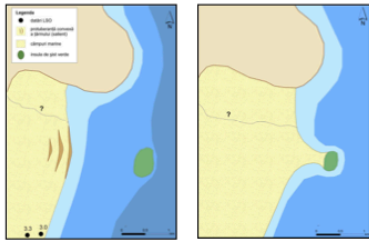
WHY ISTROS?

Geomorphological setting

- Located on a beach-ridge plain in the Razelm-Sinoe lagoon system, on the **Black Sea coast**.
- The area represents the southernmost tip of the **Danube Delta**.



- The city was founded on a **tombolo**, with the **Acropolis** on a green schist island and the civil area on the beach ridge plain (**Western Plateau**).



Historical framework



- Founded during the **7th c. BCE**.
- One of the oldest **Milesian** colonies on the western Black Sea coast and the in the Black Sea in general
- **5 main phases** of occupation spanning 1300 yrs.

WHAT ABOUT THE HARBOUR?

Archaeological insights

- Hellenistic and Roman **inscriptions**.
- Roman **coins** attesting a lighthouse.
- Previous **archaeological** and **geophysical** investigations.



αγαθὴν τύχην
ἢ βουλήν καὶ ὁ θεῶν ἐφίη
ἀρχαῖα καὶ ποταμῶν ἐν
[---] ἐν [πολι-
] τοῖς διαβεβλημένοις ἐφίη
περὶ τὴν πατρίδα εὐνοίαν,
προνοσοῦμενον δὲ [καὶ]
τῆς κατασκευῆς ἐφίη Ἀλ-
μῆνος καὶ Λογιστῆς [οὐκ]
τα μετὰ πόλεμον πύρρον
δημοσία τῆ ἀνατολῆς [τοῦ]
ἀνδραγαθῆτος ἡμετέρας[τοῦ].

ISM I 20, 2nd c. AD. The inscription is about the "rebuilding" of the harbour. It can be also interpreted as dredging works in order to maintain the harbour operational.

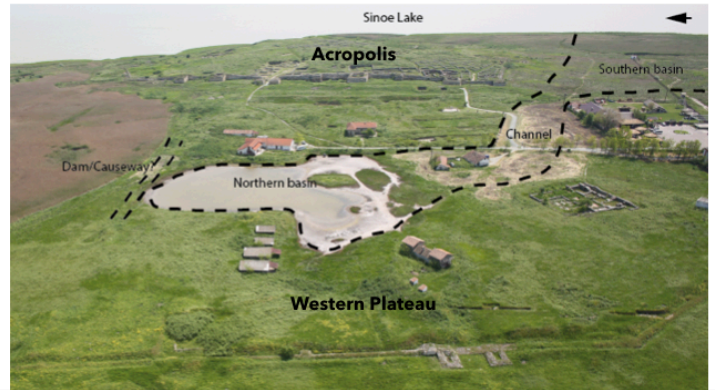
IN SEARCH OF THE HARBOUR(S)

Cores & bio-sedimentological analysis

- Long continuous **cores**.



- Main proxies: **biological** (mollusks, ostracods) and **sedimentological** (granulometry and sediment texture).



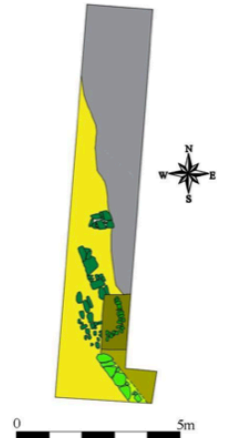
PRELIMINARY HYPOTHESIS: the existence of a dam/causeway linking the Acropolis with the Western Plateau.

Geophysical & archaeological investigations



- **Three** superposed structures.
- Chronology: **4th c. BCE - 1st c. AD**

- **Electroresistivity** and **GPR** in the dam/causeway area.



PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

- During the **Archaic** period, the anchorage was made on a **pocket beach**; at least as early as the **Hellenistic** period, **Istros** might have a **cothon** type harbour.
- The presence of water to the north, as well to the south of **Istros** indicates a **causeway/dam** linking the Acropolis with the Western Plateau.

Acknowledgments

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