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## Persistence or New Beginning? Byzantium on the Crimea

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**ABSTRACT:** This article investigates to what extent the Byzantine history of Crimea is a continuation of its Ancient history. A differentiation is made between the Byzantine state, the Greek population, and the Church, with all three agents affecting the history of the region on different levels. Thus, the integration of the local Goths as *symmachoi* and the establishment of local bishoprics enabled the Byzantines to incorporate Crimea into their sphere of influence. The development of new ecclesiastical languages (e. g. Caucasian Albanian) provides a useful comparison and can explain why Constantine / Cyril stayed in Crimea, in an attempt to convert the Chazars, before entering Greater Moravia.

**KEYWORDS:** Byzantium, Crimea, Southern Russia, Goths, Huns, Roman Shield from Dura Europos, Caucasian Albanians, Chazars, Constantine / Cyril.

**RESUMEN:** este artículo intenta mostrar hasta qué punto la historia bizantina de Crimea es una continuación de la historia antigua de la región. Se distingue entre el Estado, la población griega y la Iglesia. Estos agentes actuaron a diferentes niveles. Así, la integración de los godos locales como *symmachoi* y la implantación de obispos locales permitió a los bizantinos incorporar Crimea a su esfera de influencia. El desarrollo de nuevas lenguas eclesíasticas (p. e. el albanés del Cáucaso) permite una útil comparación y explicar por qué Constantino / Cirilo estuvo en Crimea en un intento por convertir a los jázaros antes de ir a la Gran Moravia.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Bizancio, Crimea, sur de Rusia, godos, hunos, escudo romano de Dura Europos, Albania del Cáucaso, jázaros, Constantino / Cirilo.

For the year 362 Ammianus Marcellinus reports the episode of an embassy of foreign people, among them also the inhabitants of Bosporos, the former capital of the *Regnum Bosporanum*<sup>1</sup>; at this time, it was exclusively known (like in the later, Byzantine texts) under this name: the strait of Kerç had given to old Pantikapaion a name interpreting its geographical situation (v. *infra*). It is first attested in Demosthenes<sup>2</sup>. We cite the whole passage:

«Proinde timore eius adventus per finitimos longeque distantes latius explicato legationes undique solito ocius concurrebant: hinc Transtigritanis pacem obsecrantibus et Armeniis, inde nationibus Indicis certatim cum donis optimates mittentibus ante tempus ab usque Divis et Serendivis, ab australi plaga ad famulandum rei Romanae semet offerentibus Mauris, ab aquilone et regionibus solis, per quas in mare Phasis accipitur, Bosporanis aliisque antehac ignotis legationes vehentibus supplices, ut annua complentes sollemnia intra terrarum genitalium terminos otiose vivere sinerentur (XX,7, 10 Fontaine)».

We are in the description of the first measures taken by the new ruler; the reception of envoys from remote people<sup>3</sup> is a setpiece of Imperial historiography: The emperor's power is shown by the fame his (new) name enjoys among remote tribes, like the Berbers (*Mauri*) or the Indians from the Ocean (*Divi* is probably identical with Dibbous, the country of "Theophilus the Indian", sent out by Constantius II to Christian Ethiopia in favour of Arianism, and thus against Athanasios; so the Maledives<sup>4</sup>).

But astonishing is the fact that Ammianus wants us to believe that the inhabitants of the *Regnum Bosporanum* are to be placed on the same level as the islands of the Indian Ocean or from the other side of the Tigris (*Transtigritani*), so subjects of the Sāsānian Shāh. Sure, after the devastations of the old ally of the Romans by the Goths in the middle of the 3rd century AD, under the difficult conditions of that turbulent times, the ties had loosened. Corn, the main article of export to Rome, had lost its significance<sup>5</sup>. But about 275/76 king

<sup>1</sup> Many topics of this article are addressed in the volume *International Scholarly Conference XVIII Bosporan Readings. Cimmerian Bosphorus and the World of Barbarians in Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Trade: Routes-Goods-Relations*, Simferopol & Kerch 2017. Of this, I only had the table of contents at my disposal. All references to it are given by the title: *Bosporan Readings* (2017). I express my gratitude to Prof. K. Geus (Berlin) for drawing my attention to this volume.

<sup>2</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 496, n. 3 with ref. to *Adv. Lept.* and Pliny the Elder IV, 78.

<sup>3</sup> V. also *in titulo* «... variis exterarum gentium legationibus aditur»: The stress is on the strangeness.

<sup>4</sup> Kazhdan 1991: 3, 2067 (with bibl.). *Serendivi* is Ceylon.

<sup>5</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 459ff. gives a thorough account of the worsening political and economical situation.

Teiranes had won a decisive victory over the eastern Germanic tribes and their allies (v. IPE 2, 29 Latyshev, where the ruler is called *Τιβέριος Ιούλιος Φιλορώμαιος Φιλοκαῖσαρ*); and beginning with the reign of Aurelian (d. 275) a restoration of the kingdom and its relations to its traditional ally sets in. Gothic incursions from the *Maiotis limne* to the Empire, like the Balkans and Asia Minor (Philippopolis and Trapezunt, e.g.), made possible through the fleet of the Bosporan Greeks by the Goths, end. And the inscription IPE 2, 363 shows that under Diocletian (a. B. 603 = 307 AD) and the tetrarchs the use of the archaistic name (*Ἀγριππέων καὶ Καισαρέων*), ever popular in the North of the Black Sea, was instrumentalised for a demonstrative reaffirmation<sup>6</sup>.

But in 332 (so, 629 BE), the last copper coin is issued in the *Regnum* (with the images of King Rheskouporis VI and Constantine I, so in the old manner). The Goths, even though they were now allies of the Romans and as *Trapezitai* settlers on the hill region of the peninsula, participated in later raids (*ibid.* 479 and n. 47), so after the defeat. Thus, the situation was unclear. Byzantine presence, though, was surely to be felt mostly in Chersonnesos / Cherson (whose relation to the *Regnum* had varied: it was declared, under Caesar, independent and later, by the mission of Plautius Silvanus, the harbour of a Roman fleet: *ibid.*: 334ff. and 344f.).

Now, in the sixties of the 4th c., a new threat was on the horizon: the Huns. The notice in Iordanes (*Get.* 126: *fraudibus et rapinis gentium quiete conturbans*), is not very specific. But if they appeared in 376 on the Danube, it is very likely that they marched through the region north of the *Regnum*; maybe they threatened it directly (by plundering?). Unlike as they had done with Sarmatians, Alans and Goths, the Greek ἄρχοντες of the old kingdom were not anymore capable of integrating the barbarians into its orbit. Helpless and decayed, they turned to Rome. But, as Gajdukevič rightly observes (*ibid.* 484): «Eine verlässliche, systematische Unterstützung konnten die Bosporaner von den römischen Kaisern in dieser Zeit nicht erhalten». It is during this march when they allied with the Alans, touched the area of the former Greek colony Tanais (*ibid.* 492ff. and notes) and made Ermanaric, the powerful and until now very successful Gothic king, to commit suicide:

1. Igitur Huni pervasis Halanorum regionibus quos Greuthungis confines Tanaitas consuetudo nominavit, interfectisque multis et spoliatis, reliquos sibi concordandi fide pacta iunxerunt, eisque adhi-

<sup>6</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 476f.

bitis confidentius Ermenrichi late patentes et uberes pagos repentino impetu perruperunt, bellicosissimi regis et per multa variaque fortiter facta vicinis nationibus formidati.

2. qui vi subitae procellae percussus quamvis manere fundatus et stabilis diu conatus est, inpendentium tamen diritatem augente vulgatius fama, magnorum discriminum metum voluntaria morte sedavit (Amm. XXXI, 3, 1f. Fontaine).

This battle means the definite end of the age old *Regnum*; but it means also the *convivencia* of Goths and Huns on the Crimea and on Taman (the Huns used probably the congelation of the straits [Procop. IV, 5, 15ff] in winter to march from East to West). It marks also the end of any trace of direct Byzantine rule in the region –except for Cherson<sup>7</sup>. All what archaeology and epigraphy have put at our disposal<sup>8</sup> is convincing evidence for the persistence of the Greek element there, including the Iranian (v. *infra*) and Jewish components: In Pantikapaion, a dedicatory inscription from the time after Diocletian’s abdication, the building of a synagogue (προσευχή) for the “Highest God” (θεῶν ὑψίστω, a Septuagint-expression) by the governor of the city; this Aurelios Valerios Sogos has two Roman names connected with the *edictum Caracallae* and the retired Augustus; and he has one Iranian name. His father is called Olympos<sup>9</sup>. The country, including the Greek cities there (like Pantikapaion / Bosporos), was under Gothic or Hunnic rule<sup>10</sup>.

But “Byzantium” means also another institution, though sometimes difficult to distinguish from the State (which leads to the famous *symphonia* in Modern Greece): the Church. In one of his letters (9, 5b Malingrey) to the aristocrat Olympias, John Chrysostom, exiled patriarch of Constantinople (who

<sup>7</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 478, and recently Aibabin in *Bosporan Readings* 2017: 11-15 and Mastykova, *ibid.* 318-330.

<sup>8</sup> Gajdukevič 1971, ch. 11 and 12 *passim*, for older findings.

<sup>9</sup> Latyshev 1904: 26ff. (nr. 21). The inscription is interesting for several reasons; one point is that this building inscription of a Synagogue is dated to the era of the kingdom, but in the autumn of 603 EB (305/06 AD) the mentioned emperors, Diocletian and Maximian, had abdicated (since May 1). The reigning king (until 307) is not mentioned. And, finally, Sogos bears the Roman names “Aurelios Valerios” which means that his family received citizenship by Caracalla. That his father bears a Greek name (and he himself a Greek patronym thus) does not exclude the persistence of Iranian anthroponymy (according to his grandfather?) interpreted by Gajdukevič 1971: 476.

<sup>10</sup> For the economic relations Pantikapaion- Bosporos at this time, see Smokotina in *Bosporan Readings* 2017: 490-495 and, for the 7th century, Khayredinova, *ibid.* 586-591.

had witnessed the anti-Gothic riots in the Capital a few years ago), was concerned about the election of a new bishop for the bishopric of “Gothia”. The deacon Marduarios, he writes (the name looks Iranian: Middle Persian *mard*, ‘man’) had called on the monks, who had in turn written to John: the bishop Unilas, ordered by John Chrysostom himself, had died. John, exiled, is anxious since the new one for whom the Gothic king had asked the μονάζοντες by a letter to the deacon (ἤλθε φέρων γράμματα τοῦ ῥηγός) could not reach his city: οὐδὲ γὰρ δυνατὸν αὐτοῖς πλεῦσαι εἰς τὸν Βόσπορον νῦν οὐδὲ εἰς τὰ μέρη ἐκεῖνα. John, who dislikes the Goths and remembers their former misdeeds, previews a catastrophe (ἀπειλουμένην καταστροφήν). He requests his correspondent to prevent this event which he is afraid of (ὁ μὴ γένοιτο); the allusion is clear then: the Goths could elect just somebody without ecclesiastical supervision. John asks Olympias to send Marduarios rapidly (ἐκδραμεῖν). If not, the locals (ἐγχωροῦντες) should proceed as they like<sup>11</sup>.

This letter from late 404 is precious since it shows the working of the former *Regnum* after the disappearance of the direct Byzantine power; even banished to Koukousos, the patriarch, involved in the Gainas-affair, tries to put the things of his ecclesiastical district in order. The important point is that “Gothia”<sup>12</sup> was not a metropolitan see of the Empire at this time; the oldest list of ecclesiastical hierarchies, the “Ur-*klesis*” whose final redaction is from the time of Justinian, but which knows a history of two hundred years, does not include it, like the whole Northern Pontic region<sup>13</sup>. There, the old Greek cities Cherson and Pantikapaion are listed as autokephalous, thus not dependent on a nearby metropolitan (which would have been perhaps Markianopolis in Thrace to which other cities on the Black Sea belonged). Neither is Gothia put under Cherson’s jurisdiction (this bishopric is called Ζικχία, cf. the tribe’s name Ζιλχοί in Arrian’s

<sup>11</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 511 (with caution).

<sup>12</sup> Ataulf is reported in his wish to transform “Romania” to a “Gotia” (Orosius 7, 43, 4-6). The name means “land of the Goths”. In matters of denominations of provinces, the ecclesiastical had to follow the civil.

<sup>13</sup> Beck 1959: 174f. The reconstruction of this oldest list is due to Gelzer. Gerland 1931 gives on p. 10f. a list, based on Gelzer, of the autocephalous bishoprics: According to it, Bosphoros appears for the first time in 518, Nikopsis in 536 and Cherson in 553. They all belong to the metr. Ζικχία (v. *infra*). Gerland gives under the rubric “dioecesis” the remark: «außerhalb der alten Grenzen». From a later iconoclastic list also de Boor (1894: 588f.) drew the same conclusions (later part of Justinian’s reign). This situation is still reflected in the later list published by de Boor in 1891 on p. 522 (nrr. 85ff.). Also Trunte 1998: 14f. treats a later stage.

*Periplus* 18, 3 Silberman and his comm. n. 190)<sup>14</sup> nor formed it a metropolitan see by its own. This means normally, it was ruled by a *chorepískopos*.<sup>15</sup> The flock of such a see lacked normally a political capital (a μητρόπολις), thus, a Roman city, and they were often *foederati* / σύμμαχοι. And this is exactly as Procopios describes them (*Aed.* III, 7, 13-17). Δόρυ, he explicitly writes, was a country (χώρα), not a town or city, since the inhabitants denied the installation of a castle there. Any archaeological investigation of the castle Δόρυ / Theodoro should take this letter into account. This status of the Goths there did not change, since the διατώπισις made under Leo VI (Beck 1959: 175) does not change this position, and it is only under Andronikos II (1282-1328) that Gothia becomes a regular μητρόπολις.

Unilas preached evidently in Gothic, so it was not easy to replace him, especially after the anti-Gothic reaction in the Capital. But we understand now how Gothic identity could be preserved in the region, even after the Hunnic invasion, the final demise of the *Regnum* and the disappearing of direct imperial control except for Cherson: Their autocephalous bishop, ordered from Constantinople, guaranteed a minimum of connection to the Empire's authorities. *Rex*, the normal denomination of the Byzantines to an allied tribal king, might render here also the Gothic *riks*. After the conflict with the Huns, in the middle of the 5th c., detachments of Goths emigrated to the East. It was then that ancient Gorgippia, mentioned by Arrian (18, 4; 19, 1 Silberman, with comm.) and in the Anonymous *Periplus* (as Σινδικὸς λιμὴν, 10 r 11-13 Diller, with comm. on p. 111), took on the name of Eudousia (Procop. VIII, 4, 7 calls it Εὐλυσία, easily to be corrected by palaeographical mistake). Procopios (VIII, 4, 12f.) mentions that they spoke Gothic and "Tauric" (whatever this means, v. *infra*) and sent an embassy to Emperor Justinian to appoint a bishop for them in 547/48.

So, during the fifth century, we have, with the notable exception of Priskos, only epigraphical evidence, no historical account for the region<sup>16</sup>. But it seems that the Imperial government had understood how to bind a local population by using the institutions of the Church (it is to be remembered that already Constantine the Great wrote a letter to king Shabur II of Persia on behalf of the Christians there, vid. *Vit. Const.* IV, 9; 121ff. Heikel).

<sup>14</sup> This name, whose form varies, appears also in the AnnPPE 10r 2, 9, 10. Cf. Const. Porphyrogenetos, *De admin. imperio* 42.

<sup>15</sup> In the list published by de Boor (1891), *Gottbia* appears, under the wrong number 37 (nrr. 819ff.) with two suffragans; v. also his comment on this in 576f. and 588ff. (*Gottbia* and *Dory* the same bishopric).

<sup>16</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 499, n. 12, dates the Anonymous' *Periplus* to the 5th century, v. *infra*.



In 569 an anonymous monk in 'Amida (today's Diyarbakir) compiled a miscellaneous work on the "things that happened in the world" (*dagdash b-'alama*) in twelve books. In this, he integrated (as III-VI) the "Church history" by Zacharias Rhetor of Mytilene, lost in Greek<sup>17</sup>. In the 12th book, beginning with c. 7, he gives a σκάριφος, a geographical list thus<sup>18</sup> of people, names and places, beginning with Spain, allegedly made for Ptolemaios II. So, the fragment here is not by Zacharias, but of unknown origin<sup>19</sup>.

After mentioning the Amazones (VI, 145f./214ff.) and a people HRWS, the mention of the "territory of the Huns" (*beth Hunaye*, with sounds like a translation of the Greek χώρα τῶν Οὐννων) gives the occasion of how the Bible was translated into their language (*appeq sefra le-leshanbum*). John and Thomas, the author (the compiler? or his source?) tells by their own report, delivered in the monastery of Beth Ishaquni, were captivated during the wars between the Byzantines and the Persians, under Kavadh (488-531). They lived there, in the country of the Huns, after having been sold to them, begetting children, more than thirty years. When they were 34 years there, an angel appeared to the bishop of Arran (v. *infra*), Qarduṣaṭ<sup>20</sup>. The angel appoints the bishop to go to the "plain" (*pqa'tha*) to the North of the Caucasus (maybe through the same doors, *tar'e*, as the captives did before, maybe Derbend, or –more likely– the Darial pass, the "Alanian gates", v. the map). There, he should translate the Bible into Hunnic to convert these people, appoint priests and give them the mysteries (*babb lehon raze*, i. e. to baptize them and let them then communicate the Eucharist). When the envoy of Justinian, Probos, on whom we will come later, hears about Qarduṣaṭ and his seven or six companions, he searches for them eagerly, to get their benediction. The Emperor, called nevertheless (though our source is Miaphysite) *malkan*, 'our king', sends them oil, precious vessels on thirty mules from the adjacent Roman lands (*medinata dRhomaye dqribhan b'way*)<sup>21</sup>.

Since the original name of the bishop is Armenian and the original author does not say that it belongs to this language, it is not impossible that this account

<sup>17</sup> On him, v. Beck 1959: 385f. and Kazhdan 1991, 3, 2218.

<sup>18</sup> The word is extremely rare in Greek and almost restricted to lexicography (v. LSI, with suppl.).

<sup>19</sup> Cited is the Latin version (*versio*) by Brooks together with the Syriac (*textus*) that appeared in the CSCSO, SS Syri, Ser. 3, voll. 5 and 6 in 1919ff.

<sup>20</sup> This name, whose etymology the author gives correctly via Greek and Syriac, *Theokletos* or *Qere lelaba*, is Armenian. This permits conclusions from which language this piece was translated.

<sup>21</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 512f. n. 48. This passage is analyzed also by Trunte 1998: 11ff., though he does not mention the embassy under Justin (v. *infra*). He (*ibid.* 19) identifies the language to Modern Karatschaic-Balkaric.

was translated from this language into Syriac, perhaps orally. Armenians in Syriac monasteries are to be expected, both are Miaphysites<sup>22</sup>. Arran (thus the Middle Persian form, Syriac is here without diacr. marks, arm. is Aluank'), the bishopric of Qarduṣaṭ, is today's Azerbaijan, Caucasian Albania thus. Former a mere name, the language of the Caucasian Albanians has now been rediscovered (modern Udic) thanks to the work of Z. Aleksidze *et al.*<sup>23</sup> If we consider the first invasion of the Sabirs into the southern territories, Armenia proper, thus 515<sup>24</sup>, more plausible (with the later one, chronological problems get unsolvable), and if we take the seven years after their arrival when they began the translation, not too literally, we would pin the bishop's voyage to the north in any case in the fifties of the sixth century, so not too far from the Second Council of Constantinople (553) when Emperor Justinian approached via his court theologian Theodoros Askidas the Miaphysites. This date, though, is in hard problems with Byzantine chronology, since the embassy under the nephew of emperor Anastasios (d. 518), told by Procopios (I. 12, 6 and 9) happened under Justin I (d. 528), so probably 523<sup>25</sup>.

We have a double report, by Theophanes and Malalas, that emperor Justinian had a Hunnic prince, Grod (Malalas), Gordás (Theophanes) baptized in Constantinople, himself acting as godfather, and sent back to the Lake of Azow. There, his subjects rebelled against him, since he began destroying their golden idols. The Huns killed him and made his brother, whose name differs in the sources, king instead<sup>26</sup>. From the report by Malalas we learn how the Empire proceeded: The city of Bosporos (v. *supra*) was renamed (βῶν φόρος, due to tax remittal, in kind instead of cash), an ancient reminiscence is brought into play (the alleged foundation by Heracles)<sup>27</sup>. In Pantikapaion a Roman detachment of

<sup>22</sup> Van Rompay 2005: 250f. explains convincingly why Miaphysitism served as a help for imperial expansion in Justinian's reign outside the borders of Byzantium proper, encompassing so remote areas like Nubia and Ethiopia.

<sup>23</sup> Mahé 2009.

<sup>24</sup> Moravcsik 1983: 67ff.; Pohl 2002: 23f. (analysis of the Byzantine sources concerning the Maiotis).

<sup>25</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 512f. with note.

<sup>26</sup> Malalas 360ff.; Theophanes 175 f. de Boor, 276 and n. 15 Mango (with comm.). On the Onogurs, the Sabians' enemies, v. recently Kazansky in *Bosporan Readings* 2017: 218-229.

<sup>27</sup> This etymology is a popular one to explain the name Bosporos instead of the old -p-; it presumes Modern Greek phonetics (vacillation between /sf/ and /sp/). The older legend, preserved by Eustathios (*Comm. to Dionysios Per.* 242, 28ff.-243, 7), connects the Northern to the Thracian B., and thus to Io. The mythical connection to Herakles (*ibid.* 243, 39ff.) is apt to explain the existence of a settlement to the north of Pantikapaion, on the Maiotis, Herakleion (Gajdukevič 1971: 203), known by Ptolemaios.

Italian soldiers is stationed under a military tribune. And the king is called *rex*, like his Gothic forerunner in the fourth century (v. *supr.*). That this was actually no isolated event is shown by the foregoing story of queen (*regissa* again) Boa, a woman of manlike mind (γυνή τις ἀνδρεία). That we are dealing with the Sabirs is stated in this episode which anticipates so much the voyage of queen Olga of Russia in the 10th century.

That Romans and Persians could in fact get at war by similar machinations, is shown by the story of Tzathios, the king of the Lazoi. This is the Byzantine<sup>28</sup> denomination for the Kolchoi, since they occupied their place (Arr. *Peripl. M.Eux.* 11, 2 and 3 with the comm. by Silberman<sup>29</sup>; AnnPPE 9v, 24 (e) and 31<sup>30</sup>; Procop. VIII, 1, 5 ff.). Their king became a bone of contention between the Empires. Tzathios<sup>31</sup> was at first of the “religion of the Hellens” and a “friend” of the Persians. He fled and converted; his former ally Kavadh (this is the Hellenistic terminology of allegiance) became so angry that he wrote to the Byzantine emperor, Justinus. On his turn, he replied, quite ironically, that Tzathios came by his own free will and was introduced only to the Christian faith: «We dignified him of the heavenly mysteries (μυστηρίων)», i. e. the reply uses the same language as the aforementioned source from Ps. Zacharias the Rhetor. Malalas tells this story as explanation for the outbreak of the Perso-Byzantine war under Kavadh, after the long period of peace in the fifth century; in the year 515, during this war, the Albanians that later ended in a Syriac-speaking monastery, were put into captivity (v. *supra*)<sup>32</sup>.

The frequent mentions by Procopios of the region, including his great excursus in VIII, 1-7 *ineunte*, in his last book of the wars that he wrote during the early fifties in Constantinople, growing of age and after the demise of Belisarios<sup>33</sup>, is best to be explained as it was done by Gajdukevič<sup>34</sup>: the Byzantines, i. e. Justinian try to put this region again under Imperial control. Christian mission is

<sup>28</sup> From their old home beyond Dioskourias, called later Παλαιὰ Λαζική, they moved to the region up to the river Bathys: Plinius VI, 12 seems the first to mention them there. The northern region appears still in the AnnPPE under this denomination (v. the index by Diller).

<sup>29</sup> At Arrian's times, the king of the Lazes was called Malasses and was under Roman sway («who has the crown from you» in Arrian: 11, 2 Silberman 1885).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. also the comm. by Diller 1952: 108f.

<sup>31</sup> Malalas 340f.

<sup>32</sup> On the relations of the various tribes and petty kings in the Caucasus, acting between Rome and the Persian Empire, and the role conversion played in this, cf. Greatrex 2005: 490ff.

<sup>33</sup> Cameron 1985: 137; 140ff.

<sup>34</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 512ff.

just the first step towards this re-incorporation; at least for the emperor<sup>35</sup>. The territorial regaining did not remain peaceful: Procopios (I, 12, 8f.) relates: «The inhabitants of Bosporos, in former times independent (i. e. Procopios does not know or tries us not to know the old *συμμαχία* between the *Regnum* and Rome) searched the allegiance with the Emperor Justin». After the failure of Probos (v. *supra*) and the shifting of the sides by the Iberians (i. e. the Georgian king) Gourgenes (i. e. Vakhtang Gorgasali) in which context the same verb is used, *προσχωρεῖν*, the reaction of the Byzantines ends in this: They send troops, consisting of Huns, and they send a general, Petros. All this shows that, forced by the beginning of the long war between Rome and Sasanid Persia, the Byzantines tried to get direct territorial control of the region since the beginning of the sixth century. Maybe, Hunnic devastations had passed before (Procop. VIII, 5, 28).

This Roman activity culminated, as it is known, in the installation, after the Khazars' domination, of the Byzantine *thema* Klima in ca. 838, of very important consequences for Russian history. But what were the informations the Romans / Byzantines disposed of for this attempt in the sixth century? A lot had changed since the establishment of Huns and Goths and their subsequent contests there (Procop. VIII, 5, 18ff.), when Eastern Rome / Byzantium came back. True: Christianity, based on Judaism, was a major factor in the *Regnum* since the third / fourth centuries at least<sup>36</sup>. The Church tried, as we have seen, to keep in touch, through their bishops, under difficulties. Missionary activities are attested, though Christendom was divided at that time. But the Byzantine State was absent in the region after the middle of fourth century, except Cherson. As good Byzantines, to get informed about a region, the imperial government turned to the main source of information: antiquity, i. e., ancient literature.

Thus, Byzantine knowledge about the region depended on texts (and on everyday experience, orally transmitted or via the *praxis*: this escapes us normally). As written informations are concerned, our information about Arrian's *Periplus* depends on one single Byzantine manuscript, though this is a remarkable one: the codex *Palatinus* 389<sup>37</sup>. This is mutilated at the beginning, but we possess an *apographon*, the codex of Vatopedi 655 on Mount Athos which

<sup>35</sup> Nicephorus (12, 20-28) tells that under emperor Heraclius another "Hunnic" *kyrios* got baptized. Again, this was in the context of the Byzantine-Persian wars (under Ḥusrōy II. Parwez). This time, the outcome got successful (Gajdukevič 1971: 518f. with n.).

<sup>36</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 453 (Judaism); 483 f. (Christianity).

<sup>37</sup> Silberman 1995, XXX ss. sums up Diller 1952: 3-10; 33 (showing image of f. 33v.).

dates from the 14th c. and is preserved in different libraries (Vatopedi, London and Paris)<sup>38</sup>. The fact that it is divided between three libraries played a role in the difficult edition of another *periplous*, Dionysius' account on the Thracian Bosphoros (nr. 4., v. *infra*: so missing in the Palatinus)<sup>39</sup>.

The ms. from Heidelberg knows a remarkable history: bought in 1436 by the Ragusaeen cardinal Stojković (as the inhabitant of an almost island, maybe he was especially interested in the topic), in Constantinople, it was preserved in the convent of the Dominicans in Basel, according to the testament by the prelate of 1443. Hieronymus Froben entrusted the two *editiones principes* out of this codex for the 1533 edition of Arrian (but not of Ps.-Arrian, first edition completely by Diller) to S. Gelen. Instead of returning to the order, it was bought, after the reformation, by the famous Ottheinrich, known to every visitor of the castle of Heidelberg (the *Ottheinrichbau* by the Calvinist prince elector). Brought under the supervision of Leo Allatius to Rome in 1623 during the Thirty Years War (over the Alps!), it was transferred or better stolen by Napoleon to Paris and restituted to Heidelberg in 1816.

So, this is actually the *codex unicus* for Arrian's *periplous*, but also for Ps.-Arrian's work on the same region. Thanks to the codex in Vatopedi nr. 655, we can sketch the original content as follows: six sections; actually, the cod. contains 321 leaves (originally about 390/48 quires). The first section, thus, the mutilated one, comprised almost exclusively geographical works, with one exception:

1. Α ὑποτύπωσις γεωγραφίας;
2. Agathemeros, another ὑποτύπωσις γεωγραφίας;
3. From Aristotle, the names and locations of the winds;
4. The ἀνάπλους of the Bosphoros by Dionysius of Byzantium (ed. by Guengerich in 1927, from the Vatopedi ms.). These four works are not anymore to be found in our codex;
5. A fragment of Ps.-Arrian's περίπλους is still preserved in the Palat. 398;
6. Arrian's Κυνηγητικός. This is the only non-geographical treatise, and to make this section (nr. 1) more consistently a geographical section, it was left out by the copyist of the Vatopedinus.
7. Arrian's original περίπλους. So, again: our total transmission of this description is based on this ms. and its *apographa* are important only for nr. 5.

<sup>38</sup> Arrian's *Periplous*, 10ff.

<sup>39</sup> V. the *praefatio critica* to the ed. by Güngerich.

8. The Περίπλους τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς Θαλάσσης falsely attributed to Arrian;
9. The περίπλους by Hanno;
10. Philo of Byzantium's treatise on the seven miracles (θεάματα);
11. and 12. are excerpts of Strabo and Plutarch (on the names of rivers and mountains, a topic that interested the Byzantines<sup>40</sup>); they formed though parts of sections two and three of the Palatinus. Arrian's Ἰνδικά or the Ἀνάβασις, so, are missing. This is due to the idea the commissioner had about this section: Arrian's historical works should be kept out<sup>41</sup>.

But the fact that this codex is for many of these –more or less important– texts the only attestation, is not the only remarkable fact in this context<sup>42</sup>. Equally important is the date and the provenience of the ms.: During its stay in Paris, F. Bast noted the identical hand with a famous ms. preserved in the Bibliothèque National, the *Parisinus gr.* 1807. This is one of the most important mss. of Plato at all, normally given the sigla A (for Arethas)<sup>43</sup>. It is also one of the most important early codices in minuscola and written very regularly<sup>44</sup>. The *Parisinus* was corrected by Arethas of Kaisareia (d. 944 or later) himself (hand A3)<sup>45</sup>. Since the *Vaticanus gr.* 1 (!), normally called O, is, at least in part, an *apographon* of A, and since O was written 895 by Ioannis Kalligraphos, we will be realistic if we date the copy of Arrian and Ps.-Arrian to the time about 860/870. And we will not be wrong if we put this copy into the framework of the early “Macedonian Renaissance”, the circles around Photios (who was responsible for an older “edition” of Plato's works), and of his pupil Arethas, the irascible archbishop born in Patras. Of the ten works contained in its first section, four are ascribed to Arrian, two of them falsely.

From these facts follows that the Byzantines in commissioning this ms. gave ancient geographical literature a high esteem, even outside Strabo and Ptolemy, i. e. also to the periplous-tradition. Just to remind: We are in the capital of the Byzantine Empire, regaining ground at this time almost at all military fronts.

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<sup>40</sup> Diller 1952.

<sup>41</sup> Diller 1952, 3f. gives a list and a good interpretation to which these lines are very much indebted.

<sup>42</sup> It contains also the work of Hesychios Illustrios, a section of the work later to be called *Patria Constantinopoleos*.

<sup>43</sup> Hunger 1961: 258-262.

<sup>44</sup> Diller 1952: 5 and Silberman 1995: XXXI.

<sup>45</sup> On him, v. Kazhdan 1991: I, 163. Already Diller (1952: 113f.) noticed that two scholia in the ms. belong to the same “milieu” as the Paris Plato.

Photios and Arethas stand in the centre of education and the former also of power (with complicated results). This is the more remarkable as they had at this time no direct political grip on e.g. the Red Sea, under Arabic control since a couple of centuries. Nevertheless, they attributed its description to Arrian<sup>46</sup>. And it is also evident that for them, Arrian held a prominent role among ancient geographers who described a certain region in this non-Ptolemaic vein. It looks as if the Roman governor from Bithynia represented for them hodological geography as Strabo did for “scientific”<sup>47</sup>.

As it is edited by Diller<sup>48</sup>, the Anonymous *periplous* consists of the following works:

- Arrian’s *periplous*;
- Menippos of Pergamon’s (time of Augustus and Tiberius) *Periplous of the Inner Sea*; of this, Marcian of Herakleia had made an *epitome* at the turn of the fourth century<sup>49</sup>;
- Ps.-Scymnos or *ad Nicomedem regem*, a *Periegesis* in verses (iambic trimeters), to be reconstructed by a great deal through the AnnPPE<sup>50</sup>. Unknown, which king of Bythynia of that name is addressed;
- Ps.-Skylax of Karyanda;
- a list of *ethne* compiled by the Anonymous himself, using for the most part in turn Ps.-Skylax, Arrian, Menippos and *ad Nicomedem*<sup>51</sup>.

This last part is important here, since it shows an interest of the Anonymous in *ethne* which we can assume that was one of his main personal goals; to this also the detail points that when coming to the Caucasus, the AnnPPE juxtaposes  $\pi\rho\acute{\omega}\eta\nu$  and  $\nu\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$  designations for people. This shows that he tried, by using his material (mostly from Arrian, but not only) to make his Byzantine readers understand what had really changed there in the ethnic composition of the eastern shore. In this list, two items are by his own, and they affect exactly

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<sup>46</sup> It might be that the fact that the spurious life of Gregentios, archbishop of Taphar, who lived allegedly in the sixth c., was composed in the 9th, is no coincidence, v. the ed. of the dossier by Berger.

<sup>47</sup> On this distinction v. Gehrke 1995.

<sup>48</sup> Diller 1952, esp. 102ff.

<sup>49</sup> Silberman 1995: XXXIII; Diller 1952: 147ff. with subsequent ed.

<sup>50</sup> Diller 1952: 165ff.

<sup>51</sup> Reconstructed by Diller (1952: 108).

people who were important in their stance during the formation of allegiances in the course of the turn of the fourth century: Kolchoi / Lazoi and the Goths (without opposition of names but of a territory:  $\nu\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$  οἰκοῦσιν<sup>52</sup>). At this instance, the AnnPPE is also interested in the language they use: Gothic and Tauric (prob. Hunnic, v. *supra*).

To sum up: Ps.-Arrian is a concoct, a diligent one, of almost exclusively older material, so carefully<sup>53</sup> *bricolé*, stiched together, that it runs sometimes from phrase to phrase, in order that one (i. e. the Byzantine reader) gets a readable whole. In his edition Diller marked this in the text (by the sigla *a, m, n, s...*); this is one of the –many– merits of his. The only part of Ps.-Arrian's *periplous* which he draw by himself before inserting it into his work, is the list of *ethne*<sup>54</sup>, also consisting of older material. But apart from this, he also interspersed the *periplous* with other  $\nu\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$ -data. These are modern names of stations for the seafarer, given by Diller the sigla *c*. Already Diller<sup>55</sup> gives a list of these instances, so it is not necessary to repeat them. According to him, three instances concern the revolt against Anastasios by Vitalianus in 514; this, he assumes, has probably John of Antioch as source or parallel<sup>56</sup>. Six instances (one of them common with Iordanes)<sup>57</sup> are common with Procopios, and as Diller<sup>58</sup> correctly noticed, exclusively with the excursus of his eighth book (v. *supra*). One may add the strange equation of the Maiotis with the Tanais in Procop. VIII, 4, 10 / An. 10r25<sup>59</sup>, taken from Arrian (19.1), but this time accepted by the historian (who criticized Arrian elsewhere, VIII, 1, 8, concerning the Sannoi / Tzanoi, without his name). The parallel to Iordanes is important since Cassiodorus also wrote in the fifties of the sixth century, retired from the Gothic wars fought by Justinian and not ended but in 555. Common with Iordanes is also the use of *Danastris* and *Danapris* instead of Tyras and Borysthenes<sup>60</sup>, though this is older: Ammian

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<sup>52</sup> V. Diller 1952: 108.

<sup>53</sup> Sometimes, the AnnPPE gets confused, since he gets trapped into his Byzantine Greek usage instead of the old one, viz. *Bosporus* for the straits and for the former capital of the *Regnum*.

<sup>54</sup> Diller 1952: 108 gives a reconstruction.

<sup>55</sup> Diller 1952: 109f.

<sup>56</sup> Only one of these is to be found also in the recent (and debated) edition of John by Mariev (John of Antioch 458, 5). In the case of *Sosthenes*, Mariev gives *Laosthenion* (without varr.).

<sup>57</sup> The name of the Byzantine stronghold Chersonnesos changed to Cherson: Iordanes 62, 5 and 63, 12. The case is more complicated as Diller (1952, 110, n. 19) remarks. On I. v. *infra*.

<sup>58</sup> Diller 1952: 110f.

<sup>59</sup> Diller 1952: 104.

<sup>60</sup> V. the index by Mommsen.



31, 3, 3, 5 (palaeogr. corr.), and the shield of Dura Europos (v. image 1). That the parallels with Procopios and Cassiodorus / Iordanes do not show the dependency of the one from the other<sup>61</sup>, seems convincing. It seems more likely that they stem from the same source.

Already Diller (1952: 106) noticed the conversion of distances from stades to Byzantine miles (7/12 to 1), and he noticed also the more demotic character of the Anonymous (116f.). All this finds strong parallels with later Byzantine road books like the one reconstructed in Moravcsik / Jenkins<sup>62</sup> in their commentary on *De administrando* by Constantinus Porphyrogenetus (d. 959) concerning the same region at a time when the Russians were the major threat to the Byzantine presence on the Crimea.

This work gives, as it is known, the name of the rivers to the Black Sea in both languages, Slavonic and Scandinavian; the AnnPPE gives in 12v1 the name of the old Milesian colony, Theudosia (today Feodosija) also in its “Alanic or Tauric dialect”: *Ardabda*, meaning *Eptatheos*. This has been traditionally<sup>63</sup> explained as Iranian (to which Modern Ossetic, the offspring of Alanic belongs): *awda*, ‘seven’. This would presuppose a metathesis or an error in transmission. Though, after the shield of Dura Europos has been found, this explanation has become difficult, since the last name partially readable is *Arta-*. Cumont and Rebuffat have interpreted this as the city of Artaxata in Greater Armenia<sup>64</sup>. Uhden and, more recently, Arnaud understood correctly that this fragmentary place name has to be identified with Theudosia (as *Trapezous* with the mountain on the Crimea; thus, the name of the Goths, *Trapezitai*)<sup>65</sup>. Thus, the form with *Arta-* is old. The Iranian etymology though can be saved if one takes the AnnPPE literally: In fact, the personified *Arta-*, ‘truth’, common since Herodotus in many Iranian names, is just one of the seven “holy righteous”, the *Ameša Spentas* of Zoroastrianism. Thus, the name could be understood as a classical bahuvrihi-compound, meaning “the place of the seven Gods of whom *Arta-* is one”<sup>66</sup>. It seems probable, thus, that AnnPPE, Procopios (who had access to

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<sup>61</sup> Diller 1952: 112.

<sup>62</sup> Constantinus Porphyrogenetus: 153f., the introductory note to ch. 42, and the “general introduction”, 2-4; v. also *peri ethnon* in 157.

<sup>63</sup> Miller 1974: 6.

<sup>64</sup> Cumont 1925: 9; Rebuffat 1986: 92.

<sup>65</sup> Uhden 1932: 119f.; Arnaud 1989: 377ff.

<sup>66</sup> I hope to come back to this –more linguistic and orientalist– topic on another occasion.

archival material) and Cassiodorus likewise drew on a list that served the administration at the time when these works were written; then, the shield would be an early offspring of this.

But Diller concludes, by an evidence mostly<sup>67</sup> based on the identification of a river's name, called "bold conjecture" by the author himself<sup>68</sup>, that the AnnPPE is a work not earlier than from the second half of the sixth century. But since at this time the front on the Crimea to the northern nomads was, apart from the brief interlude of the (first) Turkish invasion, secure<sup>69</sup>, there was no need to affirm Byzantine Rule there. On the other hand: The Avars appear in 558 by an embassy at Justinian's court<sup>70</sup>; any actualisation written after their establishment on the Caucasus would have been senseless without mentioning them.

A consequence of the successful baptism of the nameless Hunnic *kyrios* under Heraclius is not known (v. *supra*). At the end of the sixth / the seventh centuries, the Byzantines had other problems: mainly, again, the Persians, but this time, after the flight of prince Ḥusrōy, on the southern part of the front. And with 632, the Islamic invasions set in. Thus, it seems more reasonable for the datation of the Anonymous to go back to the first half of the sixth century, since, and this is to be hoped by this investigation, the second *periplous* is written as a handbook for the Byzantine master plan for the region: as the inscription IPE 2, 491 shows<sup>71</sup>, the Byzantines tried to make look their domination as the restoration of the *Regnum Bosporanum*, that had ceased to exist in the fourth century. They did so, even by introducing the old title ἐπὶ τῆς πινακίδος. This fits to Justinian's basic idea of the *renovatio*<sup>72</sup>. The character of this rule, though, had changed. And the Anonymous is a handbook for the Empire, for re-orientation, in order to regain<sup>73</sup>.

<sup>67</sup> Diller 1952: 112, n. 29-31 argues by the use of sources on ecclesiastical geography; but Hierocles belongs to the former half of the sixth century and generally the appearance of a bishopric is an *argumentum ante quem*. V. also *supra*.

<sup>68</sup> Diller 1952: 112.

<sup>69</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 518f.

<sup>70</sup> Pohl 1988: 471.

<sup>71</sup> Gajdukevič 1971: 515f.

<sup>72</sup> V. e.g. Pazdernik 2005: 185ff. and Meier 2003.

<sup>73</sup> For the strait of Kerch during the Khazar rule, cf. Shumilov in *Bosporan Readings* 2017: 637-41.

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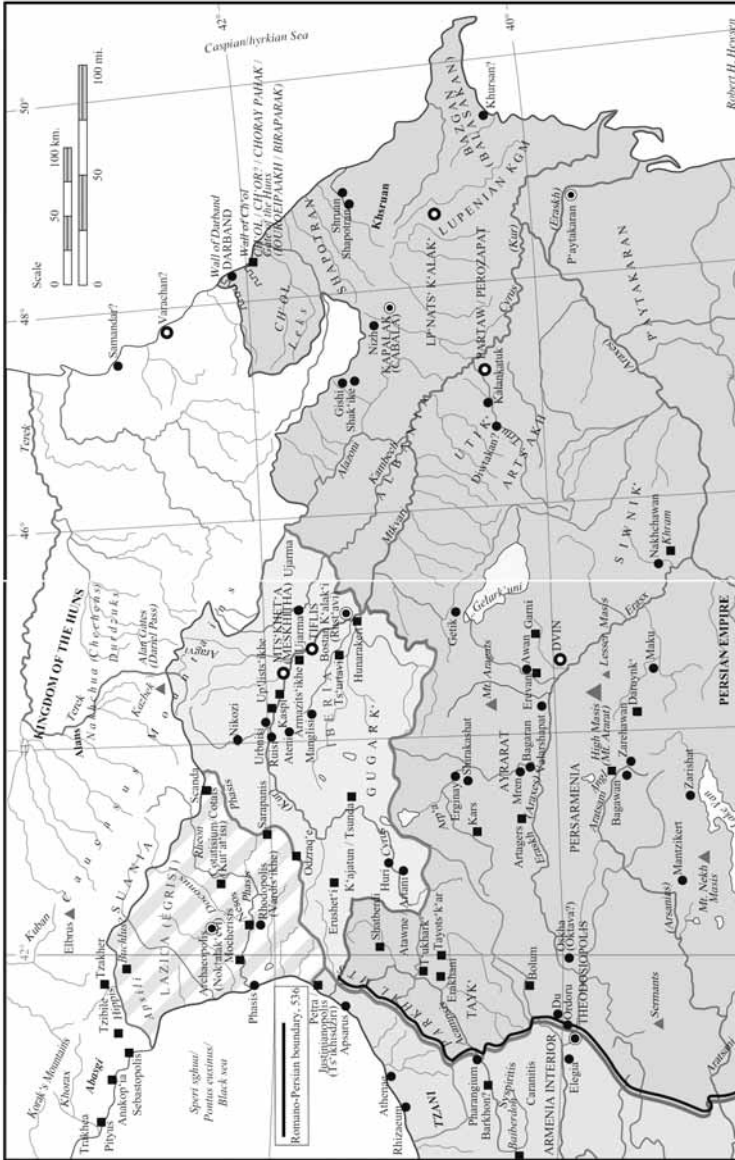
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The Roman-Persian borderlands in the Caucasus (from Greetrex 2005: 492f.)



## Discusiones y reseñas

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