

TWO GREEK EMPORIA SOUTH OF APOLLONIA PONTICA<sup>1</sup>

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The journey for ships sailing between Apollonia Pontica and Byzantium was not very long, but due to several circumstances quite difficult. Adding the distances between Apollonia Pontica and Byzantium, as presented by Arrian in his *Periplus Ponti Euxini* 24 (GGM 1965, 400-1; Arrien 20), we get a journey of 1.440 stadia, about 225 km if we take 177 m as the length of one stadion.

Herodotus states (4.86): “a ship will for the most part accomplish seventy thousand fathoms in a long day’s voyage, and sixty thousand by night”. Elsewhere he states (2.149) that 100 fathoms equal a stadion of 600 feet (= 177 m). A ship may, therefore, accomplish in a long day’s voyage 700 stadia, in a night 600 stadia. The journey between Apollonia Pontica and Byzantium would then require somewhat more than a day and a night, since it was virtually impossible to harbour in between the two cities from at least Aulaeouteichos (present-day Akhtopol) to Byzantium. Furthermore, in the Bosphorus or on the Asiatic side close to the Bosphorus, no suitable harbour is available (the first ship’s station, on the Asiatic side is in the Artanes River, suited only for small ships, at a distance of 390 stadia from the Bosphorus (Arr., *Periplus Ponti Euxini* 17).

An extra problem is that the Bosphorus could (and generally still can) best be sailed in daytime, among others, due to the complicated course of the main current (BSP 1969, 45). As the Pilot puts it: “... passage through it during daylight presents few difficulties, but no stranger should attempt to navigate it by night” (BSP 1969, 155). Going out from Byzantium, a ship should therefore start early in the morning, to have plenty of time to deal with the current and the prevailing wind, both coming from northerly direction, and steer as far as possible into the Black Sea; going to Byzantium the captain should steer about midday, or only slightly later, into the Bosphorus. In the first case Apollonia could be reached in the morning of the next day, in the second case the captain should start early in the afternoon of the previous

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a revised version of one which was submitted several years ago for a book in honour of the Bulgarian archaeologist M. Lazarov. That book however was never published.

day from Apollonia: in both cases the ship should stay well away from the coast during the journey and could not beach during the night.

The reason why it was not safe to beach between, somewhat north of present-day Akhtopol and the entrance of the Bosphorus is at least twofold:

1. there are almost no harbours safe against the prevailing northerly winds and the strong northerly currents;
2. where there might have been protection, the inhabitants were far from cooperative.

The last is especially clear for the anchorage south of Cape Thynias (modern Ineada Burnu; Burnu = cape, headland), the anchorage directly south of Serveh Burnu (between Serveh Burnu and modern Kiyiköy), and the harbour south of the cliff on which modern Kiyiköy is situated. The coast between Ineada Burnu and the entrance to the Bosphorus belonged to the territory of Salmydessos; Kiyiköy (also called Midiah, Midya, or Kikiköy) may be identified as the town of Salmydessos (Stronk 1991, 97-108; Stronk 1995, 243-6 and plates XXXI-XL). The account of the region given by Xenophon (*An.* 7. 5. 12-4) shows the dangers facing the Greeks landing on or sailing along this coast best.

According to G.A. Short (Short 1937, 141-55), the four main requirements for Greek colonisation in the Black Sea were:

1. the sites should be defensible against raids of pirates;
2. there should be a presence of food supplies;
3. defence against attacks by land should be possible;
4. there should be a good harbourage.

We like to offer another two requirements:

5. fresh sweet water in the form of a river or a well should be available;
6. the inhabitants of the region should not be extremely hostile to the colony.

With these requirements in mind, we can take a look at the western Black Sea coast and more specifically at the region between Apollonia Pontica (nowadays Sozopol, Bulgaria) and Aulaeouteichos (nowadays probably Akhtopol, Bulgaria).

Only three places in this area satisfy the above mentioned six requirements. Namely:

1. the mouth of the river Ropotamo near Cape Maslen;
2. the mouth of the river Djavolska near Primorsko;
3. the mouth of the river Karaagasch near Kiten.

At all of these sites stone anchors and stone and lead anchor-stocks were found (Venedikov *et. al.* 1976, 450-52; Porojanov/Popov 1982, 313), so

probably all three were used as ports of refuge as were the bays Galta, Milos, and Vatrohi Bays. At the mouth of the River Ropotamo and on the shore of Cape S. Demetrius, traces of a settlement can be found.

Underwater finds and excavations at the mouth of the Ropotamo uncovered settlements from the Chalcolithic till the 18th century AD, including Greek ceramics from the 5th century BC, among others amphorae from Thasos. I. Venedikov and I. Karajotov were, in our opinion, right to identify this place as Arrian's Chersonesos (Venedikov *et. al.* 1976, 450-52; Karajotov 1990, 64-5; Karajotov 1992, 277-9), especially because the distance of 60 stadia (mentioned by Arrian) almost perfectly matches the distance between Sozopol and the mouth of the Ropotamo.

Geophysical research just south of the mouth has proved the existence of the remains of several buildings<sup>2</sup>. This settlement on the River Ropotamo was probably identical with that mentioned by Ptolemy (*Geogr.* 3. 11. 12) called Tonzos. It is interesting that the name Tonzos is still found on maps of the 15th and 16th centuries AD, while on a map of the 18th century AD, the name Gersonosus returns (Besevliev 1992, 148, 152, 163). Chersonesos/Tonzos was definitely located inside the territory of Apollonia Pontica, which is confirmed by the find of a brick with a stamp ΑΠΟΛΑ, ascribed to the state brick works of Apollonia Pontica. It is not likely that the Roman naval base at Cape Maslen with the name Tera can also be identified with the same settlement as both Arrian and Ptolemy would have used this name. The function of the settlement at the mouth of the Ropotamo is not clear from the state of archaeological evidence, but possibly this settlement, besides use for fishing, hunting, and agriculture, was somehow connected with the mining activities in the nearby Strandzja Mountains (Gaul 1942, 400-8).

There may well have been still another *emporion* somewhat further to the south, south-west of Cape Kiten, just some meters west of the modern Sozopol-Michurin road. Into the bay of Kiten empties a river, the Karaagasch, nowadays in summer dammed by a sandbank, but which flows from the Strandzja mountains. Just behind the spot where the road crosses the river, a land survey was made in 1983. During it, sherds of Rhodian, Samian, and Chian ware, and an Attic tile were found, all dating from the 5th or early 4th century BC, and a number of fragments of coarse grey/black (local?) ware, which were difficult to date. At this site there are also the remains of some walls.

Between 1988 and 1989, an EBA settlement was excavated in the Bay of Kiten at the ancient mouth of the Karaagasch and near the Cape of Ourdoviza. During these excavations, large amounts of Classical (from the 5th century BC onwards) and Byzantine pottery fragments were found

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<sup>2</sup> Unpublished reports from 1988, kept in the Centre of Underwater Archaeology in Sozopol.

(Draganov 1995, 228). Earlier underwater research had already yielded ceramics from the 12th-18th centuries AD (Iosifova 1992, 303-14).

The earliest proof of the southern border of the Apollonian *chora* is a funerary epigram on a limestone block from the 5th-4th centuries BC, found in the area of the modern village of Kiten (*SEG* 1979, 663). It was in honour of Satyros, son of Eragoras, both citizens of Apollonia Pontica and owning land in its territory near the city of Perinthos.

According to Strabo (Strabo 7.6.1), the region around Thynias, nowadays Cape Iniada in Thracian Turkey, and the area bordering Salmydessos belonged to Apollonia Pontica. It is however extremely unlikely that the *chora* of Apollonia Pontica in the Archaic and Classical periods reached that far. So it is almost impossible that the town of Perinthos on the Propontis, near presently Marmaraereglisi in Turkey, is meant in this inscription.

However, Ptolemy (*Geog.* 3. 2. 3) mentions a place called Peronticum north of Alaeouteichos (the modern village of Akhtopol). It was also mentioned on the 15th and 16th century AD maps based on Ptolemy's *Geographia*, examples whereof are the *Tabula noma Europa in Cosmographia* from Fr. Belringhieri (Perotico) and a 16th century AD historical map of the Black Sea area by the Flemish cartographer Ortelius (Peronticum).

So epigraphic evidence, the information of Ptolemy, the 15th-16th centuries AD maps and archaeological finds make it a reasonable assumption that the ancient name of the settlement near Ourdovitza/Kiten was Perinthos. This settlement was inhabited between the 5th century BC and (according to later 18th century maps and archaeological finds) the 18th century AD. The reason that this site does not figure in Arrian's *Periplous Ponti Euxini* is unknown. But Arrian also omits Alaeouteichos which definitely existed during his journey. A further survey of the area will be needed to establish more data about the nature, date, and duration of this settlement, but the funeral epigram mentions agricultural activity of Apollonian citizens in this area.

Finally, some remarks on Alaeouteichos. It is omitted on Arrian's list as an *hormos*, though it figures as such in a *Periplous Ponti Euxini*, written by some anonymous author (largely based on Arrian: *GGM* I, p. 421, ad 87). Danov names it as a pre-Greek Thracian settlement (Danov 1962, 1070), probably the northern border of the hostile tribes living around Salmydessos. If one looks at the present situation, it is not surprising that Arrian left the place out as a ship's station. It is open to the winds and currents from the north and offers practically no protection to ships. As we indicated above, the coast south of modern Akhtopol was not suitable for beaching. Regarding the coast south of Apollonia Pontica as a whole, we find only a few places where such emergency-ports or even *emporion* might be expected and their presence may be attested archaeologically.

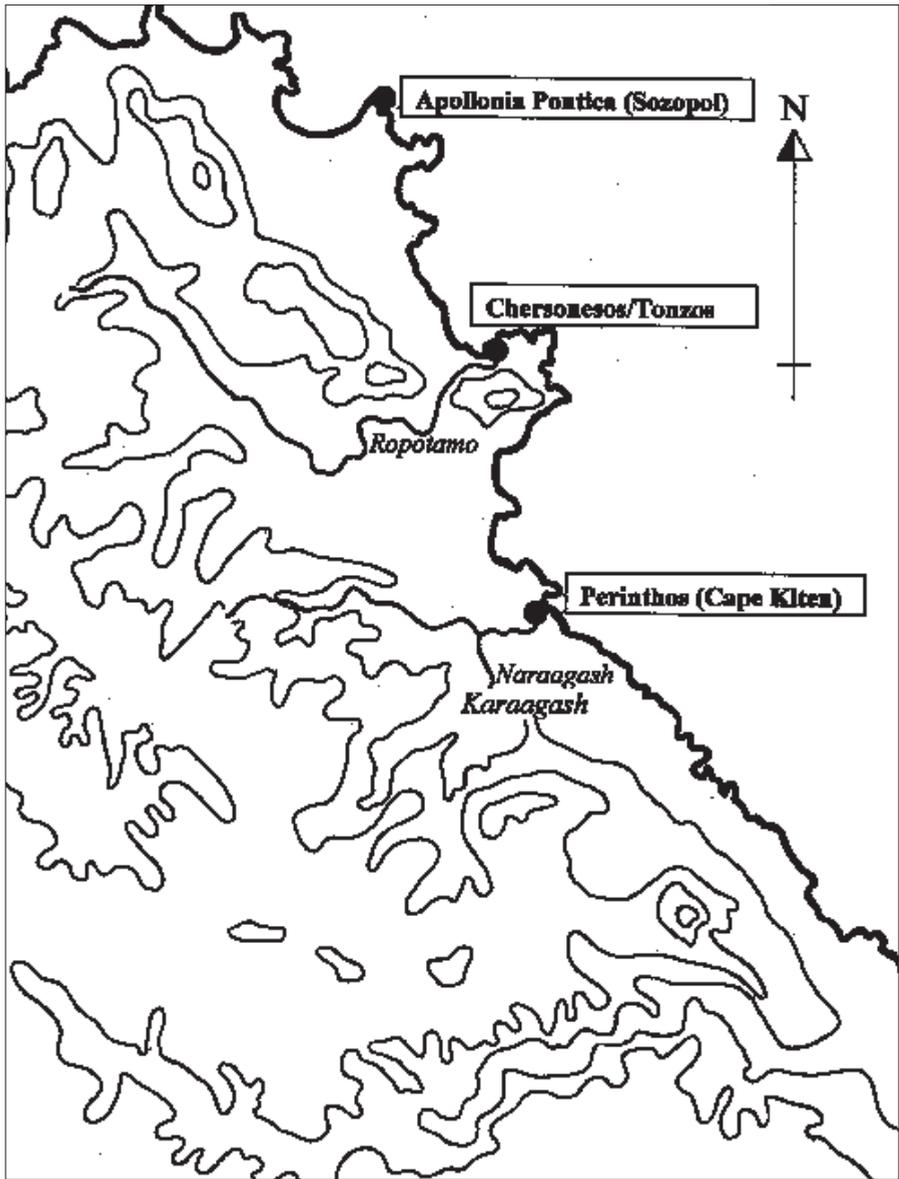


Fig. 1. Map of the area south of Apollonia Pontica.

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