

TAVANTA

The Black Sea Region in the Greek,
Roman, and Byzantine Periods

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
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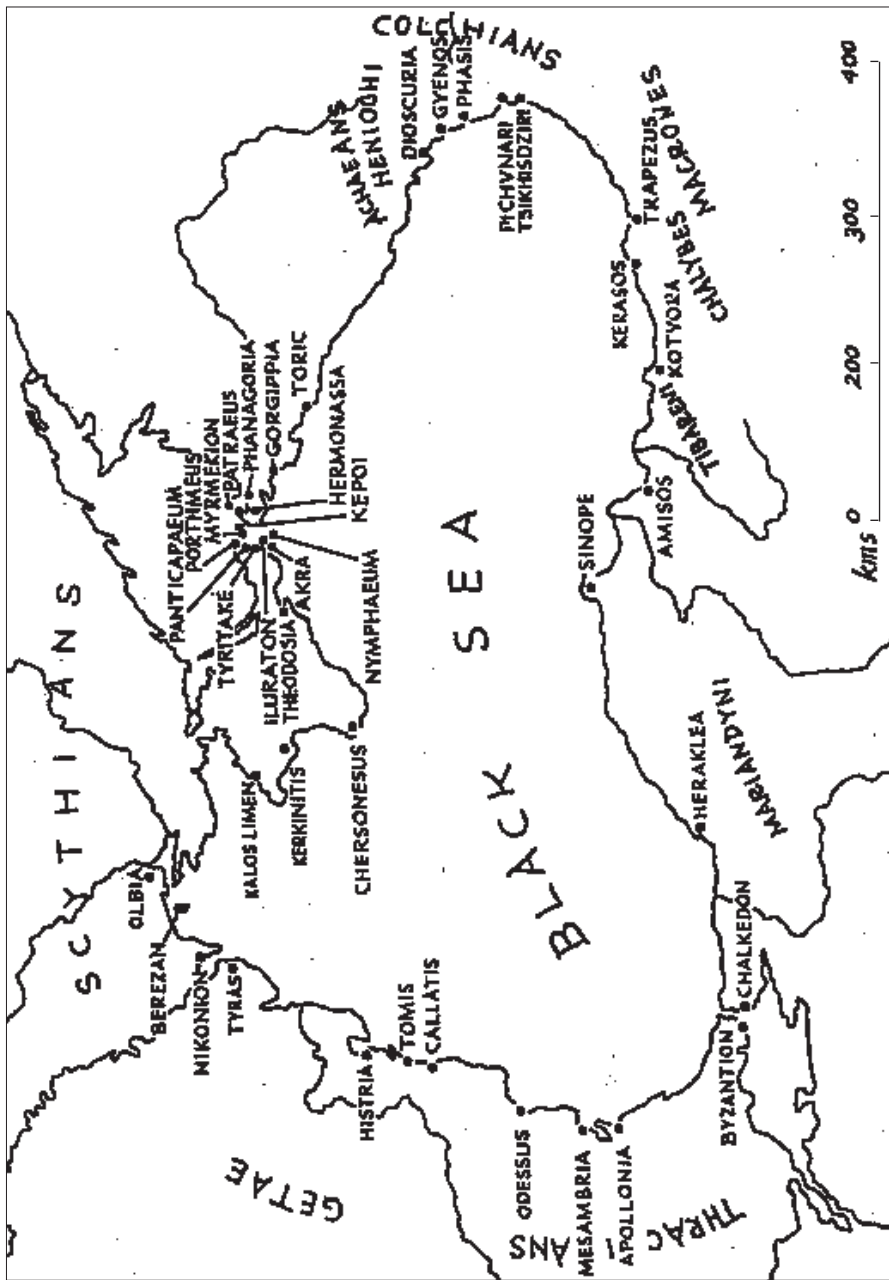
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INTRODUCTION

When, in 1969, the board of the Dutch Archaeological and Historical Society decided to launch TALANTA, it intended to create a platform for interdisciplinary studies into the Roman-provincial- and Mediterranean field (in its widest sense). At the same time the present editors also acknowledge the need for discussion on special topics, more or less related to the main areas of our goals. The special “*Black Athena: Ten Years After*” (TALANTA 28/9 (1996-7)) is, we think, a good example of what multidisciplinary approach may add to a, still always hotly debated, issue.

Now, we present another special, but of a different kind. We focus on a specific area that is, undeservedly so in our opinion, little known among most western scholars: the Black Sea region. As in the case with the Black Athena-issue, we gladly offer two scholars who have extensively occupied themselves with this area (and still do), Dr. G.R. Tsetskhladze and Drs. J.G. de Boer, the opportunity to open as guest-editors new horizons from various points of view.

R.F. Docter
J.P. Stronk
M.D. de Weerd



Black Sea Region.

PREFACE

TALANTA has had a long interest in Eastern European and Black Sea archaeology, most notably with the important series of articles it has published on new spectacular discoveries of princely tombs in Thrace. This periodical and the Dutch Archaeological and Historical Society have made a considerable contribution to bringing together Eastern and Western classical scholarship. The publication of this issue, dedicated entirely to Black Sea antiquities in Graeco-Roman and Byzantine times, is a development that builds on these foundations. Although more than a decade has elapsed since the Berlin wall came down, and scholars from both sides of it are now able to meet each other and work together without ideological and political obstacles, problems remain, most obviously the poor accessibility of literature and the barriers of language. This is something of a cliché, but it is a fact nonetheless.

The main aim of this collection is to present the Black Sea littoral as a single, unified area, but with regional diversity. The articles are published like a periplous (ports of call on our journey around the Black Sea coast), starting on the southern shore, passing through modern Georgia, the Taman Peninsula, the Crimea, Olbia and the Romanian and Bulgarian seaboard, terminating in the hinterland of Thrace. The vast majority of papers present new material or evidence hitherto unpublished in the West. Some, such as those of V.D. Kuznetsov and G. Gergov, are controversial and, we hope, will provoke healthy discussion. In the tradition of TALANTA the volume concludes with book reviews, in this case concentrating on Black Sea archaeology and ancient history.

We would like to thank sincerely Prof. Sir John Boardman, Prof. A. J. Graham, Dr. J.F. Hargrave, Dr. J.P. Stronk, Dr. M.D. de Weerd, and Drs. F.C. Woudhuizen for their help in editing, commenting upon and retyping various of the contributions. Without the support of the Dutch Archaeological and Historical Society, of the Editorial Board of TALANTA, and of the contributors themselves, this lengthy issue would never have seen the light of day.

Gocha R. Tsatskheladze and Jan G. de Boer
London/Amsterdam

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