THE ROAD STATION *TEMPLUM IOVIS* ACCORDING TO *TABVLA PEVTINGERIANA = ARISTAEVM* AFTER PLINY THE ELDER: SUBSTANTIATION OF A HYPOTHESIS

Martin GYUZELEV
Associate Professor, DSc in Ancient History and Archaeology,
"Prof. Dr Assen Zlatarov" University-Burgas, Bulgaria
martingiuzelev@abv.bg
Konstantin GOSPODINOV
Archaeologist and Independent researcher
gospodinov_kt@abv.bg

mons Haemus, uasto iugo procumbens in Pontum,
oppidum habuit in uertice Aristaeum

Abstract: Our task is to verify the hypothesis related to the identity of *Aristaeum* mentioned by Pliny the Elder and of *statio Templum Iouis* indicated in *Tabula Peutingeriana.* The article contains evidence of historiographical nature and results from our field observations at Cherkovishteto locality (an archaeological site unknown so far) in the eastern part of the Haemus mountains (Stara Planina).

Keywords: *Aristaeum*, Aristaeus, Haemus mountains, *Templum Iouis*, *Tabula Peutingeriana* (TP)
Cuvinte-cheie: *Aristaeum*, Aristaeus, Munții Haemus, *Templum Iouis*, *Tabula Peutingeriana* (TP)

It is well known that the West Pontic road connecting *Histriopolis* with *Constantinopolis* is indicated on the *Tabula Peutingeriana.* A large part of the road stations is in the territories of well-known ancient cities, certainly located on the coast of the Western Pontus. Following this logic, all road stations, including uncertain ones, have been searched along the coast. This is the way that the section (*TP* segm. VII[1]): (ab) *Odessos XI* (m.p. usque ad) *Erite XVI* (usque ad) *Templo Iouis XVI* (usque ad) *Mesembria* has been considered up to date (Fig. 1). In addition to the undoubtedly identified seaside stations, e.g. *Odessos* (present-day Varna) and

[1] *Cf.* Richard TALBERT, *Rome's World: the* Peutinger map *reconsidered*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010; https://www.cambridge.org/us/talbert/talbertdatabase/namesnosymbols-H.html.

Mesembria (present-day Nessebar), another coastal road station that is mentioned is *Templum Iouis* – traditionally located near the town of modern town Obzor[2].

However, there are data in *Tabula Peutingeriana* that disprove the thesis of the coastal location of the above mentioned section of the route, except for its ending points. For instance, on the itinerary *Port. Themomontus* is indicated in the sea. The name clearly suggests that this is a harbour near Emine Cape – on the eastern edge of *Haemimontus* (Stara Planina)[3]. The itinerary lacks connection with the West Pontic road. Therefore, the *Odessos–Mesembria* road of *Tabula Peutingeriana* does not pass along the coast around *Port. Themomontus.* This conclusion is confirmed by all other sources that describe coastal sites between Odessos and Mesembria (see the Comparative table). There is not a single match with the names of the intermediate stations of the *Odessos–Mesembria* section in *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Fig. 2). But, on the other hand, they mention the mountain Haemus reaching as far as the seashore, where Arrian and Anonymous *Periplus Ponti Euxini* (*PPE*) report *ὅρμος ναυσίν,* just as *Tabula Peutingeriana* indicates here *Port. Themomontus.*

There are two more arguments that the section *Odessos–Mesembria* in *TP* does not go along the coast. One is that it is shorter (43 *m.p.* – 63.70 km) than the coastline (80 km). The length of the latter is greater due to the jutting out of Cape Emine into the sea. The second argument arises from it – the significant curvature of the road when moving along the coast, contradicts the principle applied to Roman roads – to be as straight and direct as possible. All the listed problems can be satisfactorily solved if it is assumed that the road from *TP* followed namely the most direct connection between *Odessos* and *Mesembria,* which cannot be along the coast. Besides being straight, this itinerary also corresponds to the distance specified in *TP.* The great obstacle along it is one of the spurs of Stara Planina Mountain – the Emine part of it (the so called Eminska Planina). Its main ridge is west-east oriented. But between Varna and Nessebar the ridge makes a break and for several kilometres its orientation becomes almost north-south. This passage was traditionally used because it was easy to climb from both directions. Two Late Antiquity defensive barriers, close in time to the composition of the *TP,* were erected at the northern and southern ends of the north-south oriented part of the ridge.

According to the *TP* distances, we assume that the road station *Templum Iouis* must have been at the northern spur of the Emine mountain ridge[4]. As it is known, the name of the station means "temple of Iuppiter". The re-localization of *Templum Iouis* to a high place is in unison with the characterization of Iuppiter as a deity worshipped at high places. On such a high place in the mountain, Pliny the Elder, 4.45.11, locates the *oppidum Aristaeum* is located – *mons Haemus, uasto iugo procumbens in Pontum, oppidum habuit in uertice Aristaeum.* If we take the term

[2] Bratya Karel & Hermann SHKORPIL, "Chernomorskoto kraybrezhie i sasednite podbalkanski strani v Yuzhna Bulgaria", pp. 15–16, in *Sbornik za narodni umotvorenia, nauka i knizhnina,* III, 1890, pp. 3–40.

[3] Konrad MILLER, *Itineraria Romana – Römische Reisewege an der Hand der* Tabula Peutingeriana *dargestellt,* Stuttgart, 1916, p. 960.

[4] Konstantin GOSPODINOV, "Patyat Odessos–Mesembria spored *Tabula Peutingeriana",* in *Izvestia na Burgaskia muzey. V pamet na prof. din Ivan Karayotov,* IX, Burgas, 2024, pp. 275–292.

oppidum in its most basic sense, as something built up, it means that Pliny refers not to a city that does not exist there, but to the built temple of Iuppiter. At the same time, the presence of Ἀρισταῖος in the Haemus Mountains is also noted by Diodorus Siculus, 4.82.5–6:

> *διὸ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Σικελίαν οἰκοῦσι διαφερόντως φασὶ τιμηθῆναι τὸν Ἀρισταῖον ὡς θεόν, καὶ μάλισθ' ὑπὸ τῶν συγκομιζόντων τὸν τῆς ἐλαίας καρπόν. τὸ δὲ τελευταῖον μυθολογοῦσιν αὐτὸν εἰς Θρᾴκην παραβαλόντα πρὸς Διόνυσον μετασχεῖν τῶν ὀργίων, καὶ συνδιατρίψαντα τῷ θεῷ πολλὰ μαθεῖν παρ' αὐτοῦ τῶν χρησίμων· περὶ δὲ τὸ* ***ὄρος*** *τὸ καλούμενον* ***Αἷμον*** *οἰκήσαντά τινα χρόνον ἄφαντον γενέσθαι, καὶ τυχεῖν ἀθανάτων τιμῶν οὐ μόνον ἐνταῦθα παρὰ τοῖς βαρβάροις, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς Ἕλλησι.*
>
> "Consequently among the inhabitants of Sicily, as men say, Aristaeus received especial honour as a god, in particular by those who harvested the fruit of the olive-tree. And finally, as the myths relate, he visited Dionysus in Thrace and was initiated into his secret rites, and during his stay in the company of the god he learned from him much useful knowledge. And after dwelling some time in the neighbourhood of Mount Haemus he never was seen again of men, and became the recipient of immortal honours not only among the barbarians of that region but among the Greeks as well" (trans. C.H. Oldfather).

Aristaeus is well-known as a cultural hero and god[5]. The name *Aristaeum* can refer to an epiclesis of Iuppiter, on the island of Keos[6]. On the other hand, the mysterious disappearance of Aristaeus parallels that of Zalmoxis, venerated by the Getae who lived north of East Haemus[7].

To the above arguments we may add our archaeological observations. Where the site of the road station is supposed to be, along the main ridge, in the direction of Emine Cape, on the peak of Cherkovishte (358 m above sea level), we found the remains of a rectangular building, unknown so far. Its orientation is northwest-southeast, with approximate dimensions of 42 × 35 m and it covers an area of about 1400 sq.m. There is stone rubble from the walls. Due to the dense vegetation, there is little pottery on the surface, mainly construction material (*imbrices* and *tegulae*) and fragments of amphora walls and handles from the 2nd–3rd century. We believe that these are remains of *Aristaeum – Templum Iouis.* The road station was probably located at a fork in the main road leading to the temple. All this is grounded in Pliny's

[5] Annette HARDER, *Callimachus, Aetia. Introduction, text and commentary*, vol. 2, Oxford, 2012, pp. 615–616.

[6] Rudolf PFEIFFER, *comm. ad* CALL., *Aet.* III, fr. 75, l. 32–34, 1949, pp. 79–80. See also the entries in the *Banque des données des épiclèses grecques*, n[os] 10188–10189 : https://epiclesesgrecques.univ-rennes1.fr/infos.php. *Cf.* Karl MÜLLER, in ANONYMUS, *Periplus Ponti Euxini, Geographi Graeci Minores*, vol. I, Paris, 1855, p. 400.

[7] Hiller V. GAERTRINGEN, "Aristaios", col. 855, in *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Stuttgart, Bd. II.1, 1895, coll. 852–859.

words. Even if no direct link between Aristaeus and Zeus is hinted in this case, the very presence of the high ridge of Haemus which is clearly visible both from land and sea (Fig. 3), as well as the name of the locality – Cherkovishteto (a place name that local people associate with a church, i.e. some sacred place) supports our hypothesis. This question can only be answered by future archaeological investigations.

Comparative table of ancient authors and sources describing the Eastern end of Haemus

Pseudo-Scymnus, *Orbis Descriptio*	*Περὶ τὴν ὑπώρειαν δὲ τοῦ καλουμένου Αἵμου πόλις ἐστὶ λεγομένη Μεσημβρία,* **740**. *τῇ Θρᾳκίᾳ Γετικῇ τε συνορίζουσα γῇ· Καλχηδόνιοι ταύτην δὲ Μεγαρεῖς τ' ᾤκισαν, ὅτ' ἐπὶ Σκύθας Δαρεῖος ἐστρατεύετο. Αἷμος μέγιστον δ' ἔστιν ὑπὲρ αὐτὴν ὄρος, τῷ Κίλικι Ταύρῳ τὸ μέγεθος προσεμφερής* **745**. *τῇ τε κατὰ μῆκος τῶν τόπων παρεκτάσει ἀπὸ γὰρ Κροβύζων τῶν τε Ποντικῶν ὅρων ἄχριτῶν Ἀδριατικῶν διεκβάλλει τόπων.*	"Round the foothills of the so-called Haimos is a city named Mesembria, the bordering land to Getic Thrace. Chalcedonians and Megarians founded it, when Dareios was waging war on the Skythians. Haimos is the great mountain beyond it, like in size to Cilician Tauros, by extension of the places lengthwise; for from Krobyza and the Pontic borders it runs on to the Adriatic."
Strabo, *Geographica*	**7.6.1.** *...Ὀδησσὸς Μιλησίων ἄποικος, καὶ Ναύλοχος Μεσημβριανῶν πολίχνιον· εἶτα τὸ Αἷμον ὄρος μέχρι τῆς δεῦρο θαλάττης διῆκον...* **9.5.19.** *...καὶ ἐντοῖς ἀριστεροῖς δὲ τοῦ Πόντου κώμητις καλεῖται Λάρισα μεταξὺ Ναυ------- πλησίον τῶν ἄκρων τοῦ Αἵμου.*	"…Odessus, a colony of the Milesians, and Naulochus, a small town of the Mesembriani. Then comes the Haemus Mountain, which reaches the sea here…" "And also on the left of the Pontus is a village called Larisa, between Nau _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [circa 7 letters] near the end of Mount Haemus."
Plinius, *Naturalis Historia*	**4.11.45.** *In ora a Dionysopoli Odessus Milesiorum, flumen Pannysis, oppidum Ereta, Tetranaulochus** (sic) *mons Haemus, uasto iugo procumbens in Pontum, oppidum habuit in uertice Aristaeum; nunc in ora Mesembria, Anchialum, ubi Messa fuerat.*	"Upon the coast, proceeding from Dionysopolis, is Odessus, a city of the Milesians, the river Panysus, and the town of Tetranaulochus. Mount Haemus, which, with its vast chain, overhangs the Euxine, had in former times upon its summit the town of Aristaeum. At the present day there are upon the coast Mesembria, and Anchialum, where Messa formerly stood."

Claudius Ptolemaeus, *Geographia*	**3.10.8.** *Ὀδησσός* *Πάνυσος* *Μεσημβρία*	[Ninth Map of Europe] – "Odessus Panysus Mesembria"
Flavius Arrianus, *Epistola ad Traianum (Hadrianum) in qua etiam Periplus Ponti Euxini*	**fr. 36.** *Ἐκ δὲ Ὀδησσοῦ ἐς τοῦ Αἵμου τὰς ὑπωρείας, αἳ δὴ εἰς τὸν Πόντον καθήκουσι, στάδιοι τριακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα·καὶ δεῦρο ὅρμος ναυσί. Ἐκ δὲ τοῦ Αἵμου εἰς Μεσημβρίαν πόλιν ἐνενήκοντα·ὅρμος ναυσί. Καὶ ἐκ Μεσημβρίας εἰς Ἀγχίαλον πόλιν στάδιοι ἑβδομήκοντα...*	"From Odessus to the borders of Mount Haemus, which range of mountains is extended even into Pontus, three hundred and sixty stadia. From Haemus to the city of Mesembria ninety stadia. Here there is a road for ships…"
Tabula Peutingeriana	(ab) *Odessos XI* (m.p. usque ad) *Erite XVI* (usque ad) *Templo Iouis XVI* (usque ad) *Mesembria*	"From Odessos, there are 11 miles up to Erite; from Erite 16 miles to the Temple of Iuppiter; from there 16 miles up to Messambria."
Anonymus, *Periplus Ponti Euxini*	**81.** *Ἀπὸ δὲ Ὀδησσοῦ εἰς τοῦ Αἵμου τὰς ὑπωρείας, αἳ δὴεἰς τὸν Πόντον καθήκουσιν, ἐν αἷς ὅρμος ναυσὶ, στάδιοι σξ', μίλια λδ΄, ρ΄ς΄.* **82.** *Αἷμος μέγιστον ἔστιν ὑπὲρ αὐτὴν ὄρος, τῷ Κίλικι Ταύρῳ τὸ μέγεθος προσεμφερής, τῇ τε κατὰ μῆκος τῶν τόπων παρεκτάσει· ἀπὸ γὰρ Κροβύζων τῶν τε Ποντικῶν ὅρων ἄχρι τῶν Ἀδριατικῶν διεκβάλλει τόπων.* **83.** *Ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ Αἵμου εἰς Μεσημβρίαν πόλιν στάδιοι ϟ', μίλια ιβ'.*	"81. From Odessos to the foothills of Haimos, which stretch to the Pontos, where there is an anchoring point for ships, there are 260 stades, 34 and 2/3 miles. 82. Haimos is the highest mountain in this region; it is similar to the Cilician Tauros in its size and by the extension of its places, for it stretches from the land of the Krobyzoi and the Pontic territories as far as the Adriatic region. 83. From Haimos to the city of Mesembria is 90 stades, 12 miles."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources

ANONYMUS, *Periplus Ponti Euxini*, ed. Carolus Mullerus, *Geographi Graeci Minores*, vol. I, Paris, 1855.

ANONYMOUS, *Circumnavigation of the Black Sea* (2037), edited by Alexander Podossinov, in *Jacoby Online. Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker Continued*, Part V, edited by Hans-Joachim Gehrke and Felix Maier, Leiden, Brill, online, 2011 (reedited 2021).

FLAVIUS ARRIANUS, *Epistola ad Traianum in qua etiam Periplus Ponti Euxini*, ed. Carolus Mullerus, *Geographi Graeci Minores*, vol. I, Paris, 1855, with an English translation by William Falconer, Oxford, 1805.

CALLIMACHUS, *Aetia III*, ed. Rudolfus Pfeiffer, vol. I, Oxford, 1949.

DIODORUS SICULUS, *Bibliotheca Historica*, vol. 1–2, edd. Immanel Bekker, Ludwig Dindorf, Friedrich Vogel in aedibus B.G. Teubneri, Leipzig, 1888–1890, with an English translation by C.H. Oldfather, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (*Loeb Classical Library* 279), 1933.

KLAUDIOS PTOLEMAIOS, *Handbuch der Geographie: griechisch-deutsch. Einleitung,* Text und Übersetzung, Alfred Stückelberger, Gerd Grasshoff Basel, Schwabe Verlag, 2006.

GAIUS PLINIUS SECUNDUS, *Naturalis historia,* vol. I, libri I–VI, ed. Carolus Mayhoff, Teubner, Leipzig, 1906.

Ps.-SCYMNUS, *Orbis Descriptio,* ed. Carolus Mullerus, vol. I, Paris (*Geographi Graeci Minores*), 1855, with an English translation by Brady Kiesling, ToposText (Last visited on 12/09/2022).

STRABO, *Geographica,* ed. August Meineke, Leipzig, Teubner, 1877, with an English translation by John Bostock, London, 1855.

Tabula Peutingeriana online: ed. Michael Rathmann *et al.*, https://tp-online.ku.de/treffer.php; ed. Richard J.A. Talbert https://peutinger.atlantides.org/map-a/

Secondary sources

GAERTRINGEN, Hiller v., "Aristaios", in *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft,* Stuttgart, Bd. II.1, 1895, coll. 852–859.

GOSPODINOV, Konstantin, "Patyat Odessos–Mesembria spored *Tabula Peutingeriana",* in *Izvestia na Burgaskia muzey. V pamet na prof. din Ivan Karayotov,* IX, Burgas, 2024, pp. 275–292.

HARDER, Annette, *Callimachus,* Aetia. *Introduction, text and commentary,* vol. 2, Oxford, 2012.

MILLER, Konrad, *Itineraria Romana – Römische Reisewege an der Hand der* Tabula Peutingeriana *dargestellt,* Stuttgart, 1916.

(Bratya) SHKORPIL, Karel & Hermann, "Chernomorskoto kraybrezhie i sasednite podbalkanski strani v Yuzhna Bulgaria", in *Sbornik za narodni umotvorenia, nauka i knizhnina,* III, 1890, pp. 3–40.

TALBERT, Richard J.A., *Rome's World: the Peutinger map reconsidered,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Illustrations

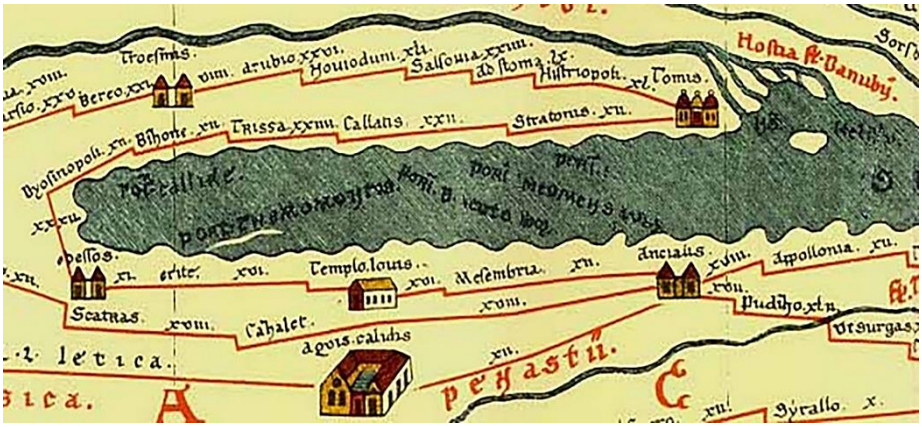


Fig. 1. Section of *Tabula Peutingeriana.* After *Bibliotheca Augustana* (http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost03/Tabula/tab_intr.html – older version. Last visited on 15/12/2002)



Fig. 2. Map of the road section between *Odessos* (present-day Varna) and *Mesembria* (present-day Nesebar) and the road *Odessos–Mesembria* according to *Tabula Peutingeriana*



Fig. 3. Cherkovishteto locality