

The 'great lake' and the Autariatai in Pseudo-Skylax*

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Ce passage controversé du Périples se rapporte au fleuve Naron, à la place commerciale située en amont à 80 stades de la mer et à un grand lac (avec une grande île fertile) à l'arrière de l'emporium. Le lac, d'où s'écoule le Naron, s'étend jusqu'aux Autariatai, une communauté illyrienne. Or, aucun lac n'existe en amont du fleuve Naron (Neretva), mais seulement de très vastes marais. Trois hypothèses majeures ont été avancées à ce jour pour identifier le « grand lac », soit les marais de Mostarsko Blato à l'ouest de Mostar, Hutovo Blato à une dizaine de kilomètres à l'est de Metković, et enfin le lac Labeatis, c'est-à-dire le lac de Scodra (Liqeni i Shkodrës/Skadarско Jezero). L'article explique pourquoi Hutovo Blato est l'identification plausible du « grand lac » du Pseudo-Skylax. Ces vastes marais ont pu en effet avoir autrefois l'aspect d'un lac important et il est possible d'affirmer que la Neretva s'en écoule par la voie d'un petit affluent, la Krupa. L'emporium ne peut être que Narona, et il n'y a pas de raison de rejeter ce qui est écrit dans le Périples : la localisation des Autariatai au-delà du « grand lac » et de la Neretva.

Périples du Pseudo-Scylax, Adriatique, Naron (Neretva), Narona, Hutovo Blato, Autariatai

The disputed passage in the Periplous refers to the river Naron, the upper trading-town, distant 80 stades from the sea, and a great lake (with a large fertile island) inland from the emporium. The lake, from which the Naron flows, extends to the Autariatai, an Illyrian community. No lake exists upstream from the Naron (Neretva) River, merely some very large marshes. Three main hypotheses have been suggested to date to identify the 'great lake', ranging from the marshes of Mostarsko Blato to the west of Mostar, Hutovo Blato some 10 km to the east of Metković, and Lake Labeatis, the Lake of Scodra (Liqeni i Shkodrës/Skadarско Jezero). The article explains why Hutovo Blato is the most plausible identification of Pseudo-Skylax's 'great lake'. These extensive marshes had once resembled a huge lake and it could be claimed that the Neretva does flow from them by way of its small tributary, the Krupa. The emporium could only be Narona, and there is no reason to reject the location of the Autariatai beyond the 'great lake' off the Neretva River, as is written in the Periplous.

Pseudo-Scylax's Periplous, the Adriatic, the Naron (Neretva), Narona, Hutovo Blato, the Autariatai

(PSEUDO-)SKYLAX AND THE *PERIPLUS*

Geographical descriptions in the texts of classical writers, notably in those of the early geographers, referring to distant or lesser known regions, often lack precise data and are therefore vague. Such passages require special attention, and it is particularly important to analyze them in their context. The *Periplous* ascribed to Skylax (often referred to as Pseudo-Skylax) was probably

composed in the mid-fourth century BC, and – as is implied by the name of the author – must be in one way or another related to the famous navigator and explorer Skylax of Karyanda. He undertook a voyage down the Indus to its mouth by order of the Persian king Darius I (522-486 BC), and is known to have written an account of it, including descriptions of other coasts that he had visited. He is mentioned among others by Herodotus, Aristotle, Strabo, and Avienus¹, as well as in the *Scholia* to Apollonius

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1. Hecat. F 291, 295, 296 (indirectly); Herodotus 4.44; Aristotle, *Pol.* 7.13.1 p. 1332b 12; Strabo 12.4.8 C 566; 13.1.4 C 582-583; 14.2.20 C 658 (παλαιὸς συγγραφεύς); Avien., *Or. mar.* vv. 44; 367.

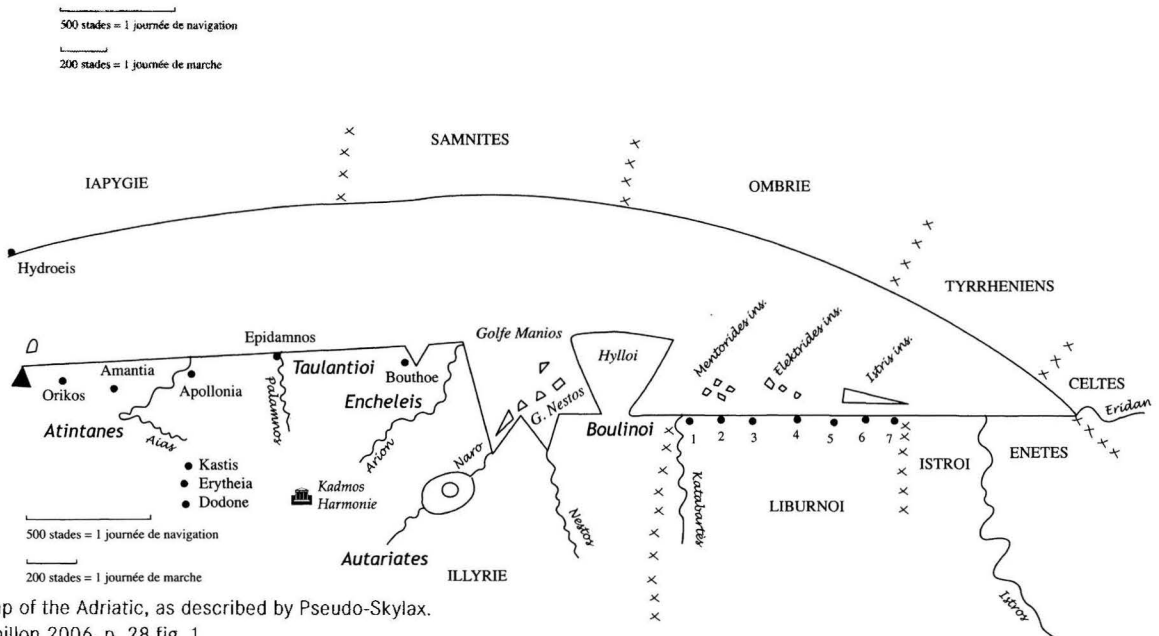


Fig. 1 - Map of the Adriatic, as described by Pseudo-Skylax.
From Counillon 2006, p. 28 fig. 1.

Rhodium, in the *Suda*, and by Stephanus Byzantius². According to Herodotus, Skylax would have reached the isthmus of Suez (4.44).

However, it has recently been argued that the *Periplus* was not a modified version of a work by Skylax of Karyanda, as had often been supposed³, but a circumnavigation by an unnamed geographer who had written it prior to Alexander the Great. He may have been an Athenian or residing in Athens, which would be indicated by his remark that the Saronic Gulf in the Aegean was 'the sea on our side' (c. 40)⁴. It cannot be excluded that among various written and oral sources, some of which were older, some more recent, the author also included a few data from Skylax, hence the name attached to his *Periplus*. Rather than a seafarer's guide, the nature of the work is geographical, a kind of a basic description of the *oikoumene*, covering more than only the world inhabited by the Greeks. The author seems to have known about the program of various data gathering begun by Plato's successor Speusippos (as also by Aristotle and Theophrastos), and may have belonged to that cultural and intellectual *milieu*⁵.

The *Periplus* contains descriptions of many coasts, mainly Mediterranean, among others also that of the eastern Adriatic (including some of its immediate hinterland), which begins with the lands of the Enetoi (Veneti; fig. 1); after them, the author mentioned the Istroi and the Ister River, adding that this river also empties into the Black Sea⁶.

The idea of the bifurcation of the Danube appears for the very first time in the *Periplus*⁷. The voyage along the coast is measured in days of navigation, with most of the important islands and harbours noted, including information about large rivers where they flow into the sea, and also containing some data concerning the hinterland. K. Müller provided the standard edition of the text, which until the new edition of G. Shipley remained the most relevant⁸. M. Suić published his annotated edition of the Greek text concerning the eastern Adriatic part of the *Periplus*, but his proposed emendations are very drastic and can no longer be regarded as acceptable⁹. P. Counillon has cautiously suggested various contaminations of the original text, which are difficult to assess,

2. Schol. 1. 1177; 4. 1215; *Suda*, s.v. Σκύλαξ; Steph. Byz. s.v. Καρύανδα (παλαιὸς λογογράφος). Cf. Gisinger 1927, p. 621 ff.
3. Most notably by Peretti 1979.
4. Counillon 2004, 11; Marcotte 1986; Shipley 2011, 4 ff.
5. Shipley 2011, 10 ff.

6. C. 20: Μετὰ δὲ Ἐνετοῦ εἰσὶν Ἰστροὶ ἔθνος καὶ ποταμὸς Ἰστρος· οὗτος ὁ ποταμὸς καὶ εἰς τὸν Ἰόντον νεῖσι βάλλει.
7. See, on this passage, Gonzáles Ponce 1994.
8. Müller, *GGM* 1, pp. 15-96.
9. Suić 1955. See on it *infra*, n. 12.

as for example a source that described the eastern Adriatic coast from the south to the north¹⁰. All in all, the *Periplus* has preserved much precious information. Its author used several sources, which is not least revealed by his variation between the 'days and nights' measurements and the distances in stades. Among his sources were probably Herodotos, and other historians, perhaps Ephoros; the author seems to have made little use of Hekataios, since their data sometimes differ, but he drew from geographers, notably from Phileas of Athens (fifth century BC), from various descriptions of coasts (*periploi*), and he also included some ethnographical data¹¹.

THE DISPUTED PASSAGE

Several data in the description of the eastern Adriatic coast by Pseudo-Skylax are not easy to explain. The text, in which he mentioned a 'great lake' (c. 24), here reproduced, is based on the edition of Shipley¹², and reads in his translation (with minor changes) as follows¹³:

1. And past the Nestoi is the Naron river: and the voyage into the Naron is not narrow, and even a trireme sails into it, and boats do so into the upper trading-town, distant 80 stades from the sea. And these people are a community of the Illyrioi, the Manioi.

And there is a lake inland from the trading-town, a great one, and the lake extends to the Autariatai, an Illyrian community. And there is an island in the lake of 120 stades, and this island is extremely good for farming. And from this lake the Naron river flows away.

2. And from the Naron up to the Arion river is a day's voyage. And from the Arion <up to the Rhizous> river: a half-day voyage.

And Kadmos' and Harmonia's stones are here, and a sanctuary above the Rhizous river. And from the Rhizous river the voyage is to Buthoe and the trading-town.

The question of whether or not the Greek *periploi* presuppose some rudimentary cartographic knowledge, which may have extended back to Anaximander of Miletos (sixth century BC)¹⁴, cannot be answered with certainty. In any case, however, they contained the geographically most important landmarks, and, as is evident from the cited passage, these consisted of rivers, peoples, and significant settlements along the coast, as well as in its immediate hinterland. The Manioi only appear in the *Periplus* of Pseudo-Skylax, where in the previous chapter (23) a Manian Bay is also mentioned. The only other time that this bay is referred to is in a Greek inscription from Salonae concerning a delegation from Issa or Tragurium, sent to Caesar in Aquileia on 3 March, 56 BC¹⁵.

Let us concentrate on the *emporium* up the Naron River, the Autariatai, and particularly on the 'great lake'. Most earlier scholars agreed that the data on the Autariatai, as well as on Kadmos and Harmonia, had been later additions to the original *Periplus*, probably inserted by the author when compiling additional sources¹⁶. However, it seems much more likely that the *Periplus* does not consist of an 'ancient nucleus' subsequently increased by various additions, and neither is it a record of voyages or a sailors' guide. It is rather an academic work, a literary compilation of geographical character, in which first-hand and eyewitness

10. Counillon 2006, p. 23; p. 24.

11. Counillon 2006, p. 27; Shipley 2011, 8 ff.

12. Shipley 2011 is now the standard edition. The reading of P. Counillon was based on K. Müller's edition as the best available until Shipley's; Counillon criticized the edition of Suić (1955) for having based it on the text of the *Palatinus Vaticanus* gr. 142 instead of on its model, the *Parisinus suppl.* gr. 443, see Counillon 2006, p. 19, n. 1. Suić is further criticized for his thesis that the *Periplus* had been contaminated with the notes influenced by Eratosthenes, as well as for his too audacious emendations; on this latter point, see, e.g., Counillon 2006, p. 21 n. 14.

13. Shipley 2011, 28 (the second part of the chapter is not reproduced in Greek): 24. 1. {Μανιοί.} ἀπὸ δὲ Νέστων ἐστὶν ὁ Νάρων ποταμός· ὁ δὲ εἰσπλοῦς ὁ εἰς τὸν Νάρωνά ἐστιν οὐ στενός· εἰσπλεῖ δὲ εἰς αὐτὸν καὶ τριήρης καὶ πλοῖα εἰς τὸ ἄνω ἐμπόριον, ἀπέχον ἀπὸ θαλάσσης στάδια π'. οὗτοι δὲ εἰσιν Ἰλλυρίων ἔθνος Μανιοί. λίμνη δ' ἐστὶ τὸ εἶσω τοῦ ἐμπορίου μεγάλη, καὶ ἀνήκει ἡ λίμνη εἰς Αὐταριάτας, ἔθνος Ἰλλυρικόν. καὶ νῆσος ἐν τῇ λίμνῃ ἔνεστι σταδίων ρκ'· ἡ δὲ νῆσος αὕτη ἐστὶν εὐγέωργος σφόδρα. Ἀπὸ δὲ ταύτης τῆς λίμνης ὁ Νάρων ποταμός ἀπορρεῖ. Cf. also Müller, § 24; Counillon 2006, p. 25; the only important change is Shipley's omission of the Manioi at the beginning of the paragraph.

14. See, e.g., Jacob 1991, p. 36 ff.

15. Čače 1997-1998, p. 60. On the inscription see Brunšmid 1898, p. 33-34 no. 31; Suić 1966 (1973); Culham 1993; AE 1993, 1254.

16. Suić 1955; Peretti 1979, p. 219 ff.; Counillon 2006, p. 25.

ness information is interwoven with data that had already been out of date at the time of its composition¹⁷. The Naron, the *emporium* and the 'great lake' represent real geographical features of the region along the Neretva River, and their identification is not at all impossible, while this, on the contrary, may not be true of the location of the legendary 'stones of Kadmos and Harmonia' and their sanctuary.

Nonetheless, not all the data of the author of the *Periplus* concerning the 'great lake' are precise, and the entire passage requires commentary. It seems methodologically important that as many pieces of information in an ancient geographical text as possible be regarded as (more or less) correct, or – if wrong – wrong in an expected way that might possibly be understood and clarified. The few data that seemingly remain incompatible should acquire an explanation within the context of the text. In any case, however, the information set forth by an ancient writer should not be arbitrarily altered.

SOME OF THE PEOPLES, ISLANDS, AND RIVERS NOTED IN C. 22-24

The author of the *Periplus* began c. 22 with the Illyrioi, who are mentioned after the Libyrnoi (Liburni), extending as far down as the Chaones and Alkinoos' island of Kerkyra. An unidentified city of Herakleia is mentioned, along with the peoples of the Hierastamnai, Bulinoi, and Hylloi. The chapter ends with the Nestos River (Cetina)¹⁸, and the next one begins with the Nestoi. In c. 23 the Manian gulf is mentioned and the islands Tragyras (Trogir), Brattia (Brač), and Olynta (Šolta),¹⁹ as well as Pharos (Hvar) and Issa (Vis). Between the Nestos and the Naron (Neretva) Rivers no cities or settlements are listed, mention is only made of the islands of Melite (Mljet) and Black Korkyra (Korčula). After the Nestoi come the Manioi and the cited passage; the Illyrians should obviously be understood as a collective name for all the peoples between the Liburni and the Chaones²⁰,

which may reflect a powerful 'Illyrian' kingdom, whose name could have become eponymous for the southeastern Adriatic regions.

Since the Nestoi are mentioned in connection with the Nestos River, and the Manioi with the Naron, it is evident that the Naron is suitably placed here, and should not be arbitrarily changed to the Drilon (Drim), as had been proposed by M. Suić, who thought the two rivers had been confused by Pseudo-Skylax²¹. The implausibility of the hypothesis of Suić is further confirmed by Eratosthenes in the third book of his *Geography*, where he likewise placed the Nestaioi along the coast opposite the island of Pharos (*FGrHist* 709 F 9: καὶ Ερατοσθένης ἐν γ' Γεωγραφουμένων φησί· »μετὰ Ἰλλυριοῦς Νεσταῖοι, καθ' οὗς νῆσος Φάρος, Παρίων ἄποικος «)²². The author of the *Periplus* and Eratosthenes may have both used the same source, since Eratosthenes, too, located the Nestaioi/Nesti after the Illyrians²³. This was an early period before the arrival of the Ardiaei on the coast, which must have occurred at some time after the date of composition of the *Periplus* of Pseudo-Skylax (the mid-fourth century BC); the Ardiaei are not mentioned in it at all, but instead the Nestoi and Manioi are located along the coast in the broad region of the lower Naron (fig. 2)²⁴. These indigenous populations may have later been subdued by the Ardiaei, probably also the Nestaioi/Nesti, who had been located, as has been noted, opposite Pharos by Eratosthenes before Strabo placed the Ardiaei there (7.5.5 C 315; fig. 2)²⁵.

After the Nestoi, the Manioi, and the Naron River, an 'upper *emporium*' along the Naron is mentioned in the *Periplus*, located 80 stades from the sea. The distance equals ca. 14,2 km, which would more or less correspond well to Vid near Metković, the site of the Greek and indigenous *emporium* of Narona (fig. 3)²⁶.

17. Shipley 2011, 9-14.

18. See Counillon 2006, p. 24 and n. 34.

19. See very plausibly Čače 1997-1998, p. 62 ff., and for different opinions, Counillon 2006, p. 24 n. 40.

20. See also Kaljanac 2009. The Illyrians appear in ch. 22, in which the Hylli and Bulini are mainly described.

21. Suić 1953.

22. Roller 2010, p. 105 (inadequate translation); cf. p. 216.

23. Čače 1997-1998, p. 70-71; p. 85.

24. Suić 1955.

25. The Ardiaei are further attested along the coast extending towards Rhizon (one of the capitals of Agron and Teuta), as well as in the broad region of Lissus, see Šašel Kos 2005, p. 314 ff.

26. Gabričević 1980 and Zaninović 2004, p. 19.

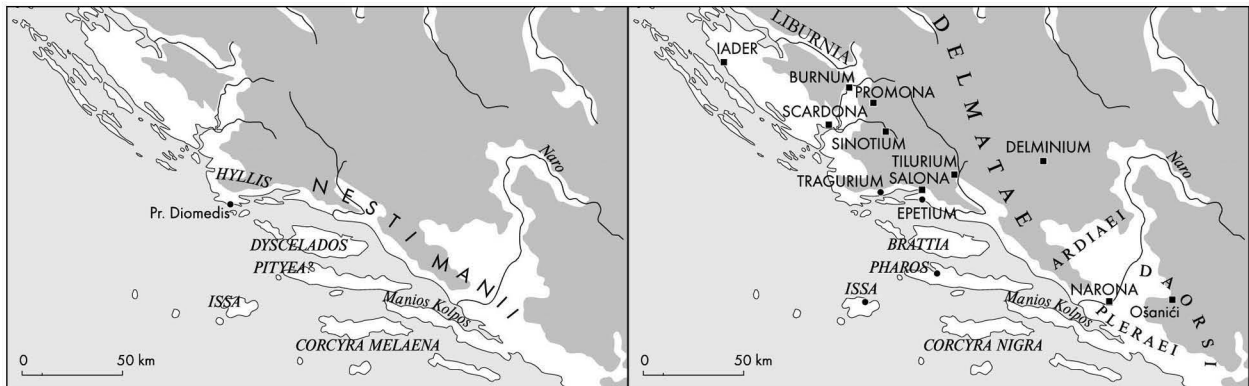


Fig. 2 - The Manian Bay at the time of Pseudo-Skylax (left) and from the mid-third century BC onwards (right).

The lower course of the Naron and the *emporium* along it were well known already to Theopompos, or, rather, the source he had used. According to him, the Black Sea and the Adriatic must have communicated in some way, since pottery from the islands of Chios and Thasos had been found in the Naron River, and both seas could be seen from a mountain²⁷. The information about pottery indirectly refers to the *emporium* of Narona, where it was sold or exchanged for goods from the region. It must have arrived in the Naron Valley through Macedonia, along the important commercial route linking Chalkidike with Epidamnos (the later *Via Egnatia*), and further from this important Greek colony up along the Adriatic coast as far as the Naron River and Narona.

The Aegean and the Adriatic were linked in various ways, since Euboian, Corinthian, Athenian, Chalkidian, and other Greek interests were involved in both areas, and it is significant that Thasos, mentioned by Theopompos in connection with the Naron River, was a colony of the island of Paros, as was Pharos (Hvar) in the Adriatic. The important role of the Naron River cannot be doubted, although it does not seem plausible to connect it with the Argonauts and identify it as a kind of 'Via Argonautica minor', which would have linked the Danube with the Adriatic via the Neretva and Drina Valleys. This has recently been suggested on the basis of the mentioned Theopompos' data²⁸; however, any route across the high Bosnian mountains such as Bjelašnica



Fig. 3 - Vid near Metković, the ancient Narona. From Marin 2003, 30 fig. 2.

(ca. 2000 m), where rivers force their way through high gorges, would have been far too precarious for any meaningful traffic between the Adriatic and the Danube²⁹. Important, however, is the fact that the Naron was well known to Theopompos; this is an indication that trading with the continent indeed took place along the lower course of the Naron River³⁰.

THE 'GREAT LAKE'

Onwards from the *emporium* along the Naron River a 'great lake' is mentioned by Pseudo-Skylax, from which the Naron flows. Allegedly it contained

27. *FGrHist* 115 F 129 = Strabo, 7.5.9 C 317; see Braccisi 1979, p. 114 ff.; Nikolanci 1989, p. 57.

28. Braccisi 2003, p. 57-60.

29. The only route that led from the coast to the eastern Balkans across the Gatačko Plain and the Drina Valley was the Dubrovnik Route (*Dubrovački put, via Ragusa*), cf. Bojanovski 1985, p. 15; it became important in the mediæval and Turkish periods.

30. Kindly pointed out by Prof. Slobodan Čače.



Fig. 4 - A view of Hutovo blato.
Photo Peter Kos.

a highly fertile island measuring 120 stades (which corresponds approximately to 20 km), extending as far as the Autariatai. It is not easy to identify any lake upstream the Naron River, since no lake exists in this region, merely some very large marshes, such as Hutovo Blato and Mostarsko Blato. Three main hypotheses have been suggested to date to identify the 'great lake', all of them proposed by scholars who knew the classical sources well, as also the region in question.

The first was put forward by W. Radimský in an article of 1896, where he argued that the 'great lake' in the *Periplus* would have been the marshes of Mostarsko Blato. They extend to the west of Mostar, measuring 12 km (corresponding approximately to 68 stades) from the northwest to the southeast, and are inundated annually from late autumn to the month of May. During the summer, however, there is no water in this area, which is consequently highly fertile and is used for fields and pastureland. Radimský postulated that the author had not seen the 'lake' himself but had only heard about it from the inhabitants on the coast. This would explain his inexact description of it, particularly the facts that there is actually no island in the lake and that the Neretva does not run through it but merely near it³¹.

Ten years later, C. Patsch published an article on the same topic, concluding that Pseudo-Skylax's 'great lake' could only be Hutovo Blato;

his thesis should in fact be regarded as plausible³². These extensive marshes had once resembled a huge lake and it could be claimed that the Neretva does flow from them by way of its small tributary, the Krupa River³³. Hutovo Blato is a Karst area, a sub-Mediterranean marsh (two to three meters above sea-level, 7411 ha), which is situated some 10 km to the east of Metković and 7 km to the southeast of Čapljina³⁴. It is most interesting that there is indeed a lake at the northern edge of it, the Deransko Lake (Deransko jezero), dividing Hutovo Blato into two parts; the Krupa River, a tributary of the Neretva, flows from it. During the rainy season, the entire region resembles a large lake, with the water level at least one meter high, or even a meter and a half (fig. 4).

Another interesting feature is a kind of peninsula called Ostrovo, an elevation of 123 m a.s.l., extending from Deransko Lake into Hutovo Blato; the area does look like an island. It is not as large as the *Periplus* states (*i.e.*, ca. 20 km), but it is not at all small, measuring ca. five by one km³⁵. According to Patsch, however, the island mentioned by Pseudo-Skylax would have been composed by the villages of Teoc, Čeljevo, Zgoni, Višići, Skočim, and Trsana; it is not clear how 120 stades should be understood, perhaps as the size of the island, not its length³⁶.

Hutovo Blato certainly also functioned partly as a water way, and not surprisingly, the remains of a mediaeval boat were discovered in 1971 at the site of Desilo near the village of Bajovci, as well as a load of amphorae from a Roman period shipwreck. The amphorae have been dated to the second century BC and could only have arrived at this site along the Naron River from Narona³⁷. The area has been surveyed recently³⁸, and is still under investigation; another two indigenous ships, loaded with amphorae from the second century BC were disco-

31. Radimský 1896. For some earlier opinions, see Suić 1953, p. 112 ff.

32. Šašel Kos 2005, p. 174 ff.; Shipley 2011, 108-109, proposes Lake Svitava, which is not plausible, since this is an artificial water accumulation, related to the Čapljina hydroelectric power station.

33. Patsch 1906.

34. The information is taken from the *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije* 4 (1960), p. 306 (S. Ši[niković], s.v. Hutovo blato).

35. See Šašel Kos 2005, p. 176-177.

36. Patsch 1906, p. 373.

37. Atanacković-Salčić 1981; for this information and the reference I am grateful to Darko Periša.

38. Vasilj 2003.

vered in 2007. In the mid-fourth century BC, the time of the *Periplus*, the inhabitants of the Naron regions were the Manioi along its lower course, and probably the Ardiaei somewhere within its middle course, while on the other side of the lake, the Autariatai were settled. At some time in the second century BC, the Manioi disappeared from historical sources, and the Ardiaei³⁹ and the Daorsi appeared as an important people, while the Narensii inhabited some of the territory, which had earlier been known as that of the Autariatai. As is indicated by their name, they certainly inhabited some of the regions along the Naron, and may have appeared in the sources after the coalition, dominated by the Autariatai, had disintegrated. After the Manioi had disappeared from history, the Ardiaei and Daorsi became known as the inhabitants of some of their former regions.

The third hypothesis concerning Pseudo-Skylax's 'great lake' was the last to have been proposed; in the opinion of M. Suić, the lake should be identified with Lake Labeatis, the Lake of Scodra (Liqeni i Shkodrës/Skadarsko Jezero). The river Barbanna (Bojana) flows through it, which is then united with the Drilon/Drinius (Drim); this river has its source in Lake Lychnidus (Ohridsko jezero, Lake Ohrid)⁴⁰. Suić first of all argued that the author of the *Periplus* had confused the Naron and the Drilon Rivers. This seems to be an arbitrary interpretation of the text of Pseudo-Skylax⁴¹, and it is not plausible at all to postulate that in the *Periplus* the Naron would have been confused with the Drilon, particularly since the Naron is correctly placed in the context of the Manian Bay, the present-day Neretvanski kanal (Neretvan channel), the sea area closed off from the open sea by the Pelješac peninsula and the island of Hvar⁴².

After an unidentified Arion River and the Rhizous River, which could only be near the town

of Rhizon (present-day Risan in the Gulf of Kotor, Boka Kotorska), the author of the *Periplus* noted Buthoe (Budva) as the next town along the coast, which is still quite distant from the Drilon River and Scodra further south, which are not mentioned in the *Periplus*. The Arion cannot be the Rhizous, since the latter is noted separately. In any case, the Arion should be sought somewhere near Dubrovnik, since the distance between Dubrovnik and Budva (ca. 55 km) corresponds approximately to half a day of navigation. The Arion could perhaps be identified with the Ombla to the north of Dubrovnik⁴³.

The thesis of Suić is rather complicated and, indeed, somehow far-fetched; he postulated that the 'great lake' should signify Lake Lychnidos because the latter is called that in Pseudo-Skymnos (vv. 429-430). However, Suić argued, in the case of Pseudo-Skylax it cannot be Lake Lychnidos because it is too distant and too far from the sea. Rather, it should be identified with Lake Labeatis, since both lakes had sometimes been confused.

But there is no need at all to regard the colorless expression 'great lake' as particularly characteristic for Lake Lychnidos, even if it is so described by Pseudo-Skymnos; any large lake can be so termed. Eventually, his thesis solves no problems, it merely creates new insurmountable ones. It can consequently be concluded that the Naron with an important *emporium* is indeed no other river than the Naron, and the *emporium* should be identified with Narona (Vid near Metković)⁴⁴. Narona was the earliest and most important trade centre off the Adriatic coast, which would be well in accordance with the information in the *Periplus*. No mention is made of Lake Labeatis and the Drilon River in the text, which do seem important landmarks, but may not have had any significance for the continental trade at the time of the *Periplus*⁴⁵.

39. Čače 1997-1998, p. 60 ff.

40. Suić 1953.

41. Counillon 2006, p. 26 and p. 28, fig. 1.

42. See on it exhaustively Čače 1997-1998, correcting the earlier view that the bay would extend from Rt Ploča (Punta Planka) to the Pelješac peninsula; see also Suić 1995.

43. Müller, *ad locum*, p. 30; Peretti 1963, p. 39; Suić 1953, p. 116-117, admits that Arion in the context of the *Periplus* should better be identified with the Ombla, but nonetheless argues for the Drilon, since it seems to him impossible that the author would have mentioned a small river but not an important one. It is true, however, that the 'Drilon', from the paleographic point of view, would be a plausible emendation for the elsewhere unknown 'Arion'.

44. This *emporium* was also identified as Narona by Gabričević 1980 and Zaninović 2004, p. 19.

45. A pertinent comment of Prof. Slobodan Čače.

THE AUTARIATAI

This brings us to the Autariatai and their location. According to Suić, they would have been settled beyond Lake Labeatis and this would confirm his identification of the 'great lake' with Lake Labeatis. He rejected the opinion that they would have inhabited the region beyond the large lake off the Neretva River, as is written in the *Periplus*. Even if incompatible with the text of the *Periplus*, his hypothesis found favour with F. Papazoglu because it was also in accordance with her location for the Autariatai⁴⁶. However, in terms of a methodological approach to a classical text, it is inadmissible to reject two perfectly plausible pieces of information, the Naron River and the *emporium* further upstream along it, for the sake of Lake Labeatis, which indeed is one of the largest on the Balkan peninsula and contains some 50 islands, but is located much further to the south. Nor does Lissos seem a plausible substitute for the 'upper *emporium*' as described in the *Periplus*⁴⁷.

The hypothesis cannot be right, since it is in direct contradiction with Pseudo-Skylax's description of the 'great lake' and its geographical context. Its false premise is the idea that a 'great lake' must necessarily be *Lacus Labeatis*, not least because in the opinion of Suić this would correspond well to the location of the Autariatai⁴⁸. However, the Autariatai were a large agglomeration of diverse peoples and tribes, and are most problematic in terms of historical geography. Their location depended on various factors, not least on changeable economic and political alliances, the transhumance and migration of peoples within their league, intertribal struggles, wars and various conquests of new territories. An ancient people can only be located approximately, since its borders were constantly changing. At different times, it could understandably be placed in different areas by different sources.

Consequently, a people known to an external Greek observer under the name of the Autariatai must have indeed inhabited the regions within

the upper course of the Naron, as the text of the *Periplus* has it (fig. 5).

However, it is not stated in the *Periplus* how far beyond the lake their settlements actually extended. The tribes settled along the Naron could have at that time been known under the general name of the Autariatai, but bore their own individual names at a later period⁴⁹. This would imply that all along they had their own identities, which came to the front again at a later date. Probably they were the Narensii, who were at that time as yet unknown under this name in the ancient literary sources. The importance of the Autariatai as a coalition of several peoples is in accordance with the statements of Strabo and Appian that the Autariatai were one of the most powerful Illyrian peoples⁵⁰; they must have occupied rather vast territories. From the middle La Tène period onwards, the lands formerly inhabited by them were settled by the important people of the Daesitiates (with their centre at Breza)⁵¹, who had earlier most probably belonged to the union of the Autariatai, in a similar way as the Narensii, the Dindari, Glinditiones, Melcumani, and others⁵².

Papazoglu maintained, however, that the Autariatai had inhabited the valleys of the rivers Tara, Lim, and Western Morava (the Angros) further to the east, between Domavia (the Srebrenica district) in the north and Novi Pazar in the southeast, denying their connection with the Naron River and the area around Konjic. According

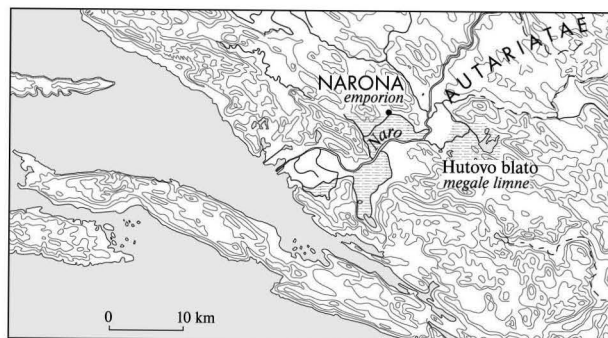


Fig. 5 – The emporium along the Naron River and a large lake in the *Periplus*: proposed identification.

46. Papazoglu 1978, p. 93-95; see also Papazoglu 1963. There are other even less plausible suggestions, see Peretti 1979, p. 248-252.

47. Suić 1953, p. 126-127.

48. Suić 1953, p. 122-124.

49. Bojanovski 1985, p. 21.

50. Strabo 7.5.6 C 315; 7.5.11 C 317; 7.5.11 C 318; App., *Illyr.* 3.7.

51. Paškvalin 2000.

52. Bojanovski 1988, p. 103 ff.; Periša 2003, p. 100.

to her, similarly the Ardiaei would not have been located to the northwest of the Pleraei, where they are placed by Strabo in the cited passage, but rather to the southeast of them, in the hinterland of Rhizon, Buthoe and *Lacus Labeatis*⁵³.

It is known from Strabo that the Autariatai were engaged in continuous wars against the Ardiaei for the possession of certain salt springs that were located in their mutual border area (7.5.11 C 317). In the opinion of Papazoglou, this area must have been situated somewhere above Lake Labeatis, near the upper course of the Tara River. However, her thesis, similar to that of Suić, is based on the erroneous conviction that a hypothesized location of the Autariatai should dictate changes in the text of Pseudo-Skylax. In the west, the Autariatai probably inhabited the regions from the hinterland of the Ardiaei reaching up to the upper Naron, while in the east they extended as far as the Dardani⁵⁴, which indeed agrees well with the extant sources⁵⁵.

The ever-growing confederation of the Autariatai could be traced from the seventh century BC onwards. For almost a century, they grew in power, extending their authority over the neighbouring territories, thus creating a tribal league bearing their name. In the following hundred years, they were conquering new regions and also subdued the Triballi. At the time of their greatest expansion in the fifth century BC, there seems to have been no central authority, the conquests were carried out in various regions by local chieftains; by the fourth century BC, however, when they eventually appeared in the classical sources, the Autariatai had already lost much of their strength, particularly on account of intertribal struggles, but it was finally the Roman conquest that caused them to disappear from history as the Autariatai⁵⁶.

Regardless of the exact location of the mutual borders of the Autariatai and the Ardiaei, the

former no doubt inhabited regions along the Tara River, and it is almost certain that their name derived from the name of this river⁵⁷. At the time of their greatest power in the sixth and fifth centuries BC, the union of tribes known under the name of the Autariatai were settled in much of present-day Bosnia, northern Montenegro, and western Serbia. It could be concluded that Papazoglou most probably located them correctly, which is confirmed by the results of research carried out by R. Vasić⁵⁸. However, she denied them some of their western territories along the upper course of the Naron River, which had been assigned to them by the *Periplous* of Pseudo-Skylax. On the other hand, her location of the Ardiaei does not agree with several classical sources⁵⁹. The disastrous rain of frogs that befell the Autariatai towards the late fourth century BC, which is mentioned several times in the classical literature, would perhaps also support the location of some of their territories in the proximity of extensive marshes⁶⁰.

The location of most of the so-called Illyrian tribes and peoples is problematic or at least unclear in all details, due, in part, to wars, migrations, varying alliances, and other, unknown, factors. It is not even known which peoples could have been legitimately called 'Illyrian' in the fourth century BC. There must have been several Illyrian kingdoms at the time, if the later situation could be applied to the earlier period. The Romans in 229 BC fought against the Illyrian kingdom under Agron and Teuta, which was called Ardiaean by Cassius Dio (12, fr. 49; Zonaras, 8.19.3-7). Next to the Autariatai, the Ardiaei were no doubt one of the most influential league of peoples at the time of Pseudo-Skylax's *Periplous*, when they were at war with one another. Their territories must have met somewhere along the upper Naron River, not far from the 'great lake', which must almost certainly be identified with Hutovo Blato.

53. Papazoglou 1978, p. 90-95.

54. Earlier literature is cited by Papazoglou 1978, p. 91 ff., including the map showing the location of the Autariatai. See also Čović 1998-1999, p. 29 ff.

55. See more on it in Šašel Kos 2005, p. 166 ff.

56. Vasić 2005.

57. Krahe 1955, p. 112; Čović 1967, p. 105-106; p. 119-120; Papazoglou 1978, p. 128-129.

58. Papazoglou 1978, p. 90 ff.; Vasić 1991; Vasić 2005; cf. Wilkes 1992, p. 139 ff.

59. Papazoglou 1963. See more on this problem in Šašel Kos 2006, p. 185-188.

60. See, among others, App., *Illyr.* 4.8; Aelian, *Nat. anim.* 17.41; exhaustive commentary on this enigmatic episode in Šašel Kos 2005, p. 166 ff.