

THE LIST OF THE ERMANARIC PEOPLES: FOLLOWING THE ROUTE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

*This article raises the issue of locating the peoples mentioned in Jordanes's work *De origine actibusque Getarum* (Getica). It examines the narrative of this ancient author, which mentions the arctoi gentes, and presents a list of the various tribes: Golthescytha, Thiudos, Inaunxis, Vasinabroncas, Merens, Mordens, Imnis, Caris, Rogas, Tadzans, Athaul, Navego, Bubegenas, and Coldas. The study reveals that there are different semantic issues in Jordanes's list. The Arctoi gentes are not "northern peoples," as scholars believe, but actually point to the neighboring tribes, adjacent to the Goths whom in the 4th century conquered the king of the Ostrogoths, Ermanaric. The next list represents demonyms listed according to a specific geographic principle. This article defines and locates these demonyms. Modern scholarly opinion suggests that Jordanes is referring to the peoples of the Volga region – Chud, Ves, Mordvins, Merya and others, but the author rejects this view. Rather, he analyzes the location of the Goths and examines the military-political situation of their context. Through comparative analysis, it becomes obvious that the series of tribes cited by Jordanes is an itinerarium that partially repeats the route of Alexander the Great's campaigns through Central Asia. Also, the list of identified demonyms coincides with the section of the Silk Road up to the border with Serica (ancient northern China). It is concluded that Ermanaric, according to Jordanes' information, "passed through" the Crimea, the Caucasus, Transcaucasia, Iran, and Central Asia. The itinerarium comes from the stories of Gothic merchants and travelers which were recorded and delineated by a specific ancient historian or geographer. Cartographic evidence clearly verifies the article's conclusions.*

Key words: Goths, Ermanaric, Jordanes, Alexander the Great, the Silk Road, Scythia.

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ANCIENT authors described in detail their vision of the world around them, but modern researchers reading their works are at a loss to guess what the chroniclers and writers of those distant times reported. One of the mysteries that has reached us is the story by Jordanes in his treatise *De origine actibusque Getarum* (Getica) about *arctoi gentes* and his subsequent list of certain tribes and nationalities. Scholars believe that it refers to the "northern peoples" that were conquered by Ermanaric. The peoples represented by Jordanes are recognized in the following list: Golthescytha, Thiudos, Inaunxis, Vasinabroncas, Merens, Mordens, Imniscaris, Rogas, Tadzans, Athaul, Navego, Bubegenas, and Coldas (Jordanes 1960: 150). The compatibility of the morphemes from some of these words causes some to assume that among these tribes are the Chud (Thiudos), Merya (Merens), Mordvins (Mordens), but then the agreement comes to a halt. Golthescytha is associated either with the Golyad; or with the hydro-

nym Goltva (Machinsky, Kuleshov 2004: 39–40); or with a certain Gotoscythia (Napolnykh 2012: 24). At the same time, some attempt to simply ignore the expressed doubt that the "northern peoples" start from the Kiev region, and then inexplicably jump to the Chud (Machinsky, Kuleshov 2004: 46). The Inaunxis tribe is attributed to the Olonets territory, between Ladoga and Onega, meanwhile, being associated with the Chud (Machinsky, Kuleshov 2004: 46–47). Some divide the text in their own way and they state that the Inaunxis is the homeland for the Vas (what the Roman annalists called, Ves) (Napolnykh 2012: 25). Further, some derive the Meshchera from the corrected *Imniscaris* to *in Miscaris* (Machinsky, Kuleshov 2004: 52; Napolnykh 2012: 26). The next group who underwent similar correction (*Stadjans* are proposed for the *Tadzans*) and some combine groups, (thus, the *Rogas Tadzans*) and are assigned to live on the banks of the Volga (Ra) (Machinsky, Kuleshov 2004: 56; Napolnykh 2012: 26–27). The *Athaul* are placed on the

Volga and South Kama (*Machinsky, Kuleshov* 2004: 56) or compared to the North Caucasian tribe *Thalli* (Tals) (*Napolnykh* 2012: 27). *Navego*, like the previous ethnonym, is placed by different scholars in opposite directions. Some tend to locate them on the Lower Kama (*Machinsky, Kuleshov* 2004: 57), others place them between the Don and the Azov sea, comparing them with the *Nevaza* (Naevazae) found in Pliny's works (*Napolnykh* 2012: 28). Various interpretations are offered for the two remaining names. A number of scholars unite the *Bubegenas* and *Coldas* and mention the headwater of the Kama River as their location (*Machinsky, Kuleshov* 2004: 63). In another direction, the *Bubegenas* are compared with the country of *Papagia*, mentioned by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, which supposedly was found on the territory of modern *Adygea*. The *Coldas* "resembles one of the groups of *Circassians*" (*Napolnykh* 2012: 28–29).

The problem evidently remains far from being solved, which allows for an independent examination of the source and the ability to make certain assumptions about what *Jordanes* wrote. First, one should examine the following passage: "116. Nam Gothorum rege Geberich rebus humanis excedente post temporis aliquod Hermanaricus nobilissimus Amalorum in regno successit, qui multas et bellicosissimas arctoi gentes perdomuit suisque parere legibus fecit. Quem merito nonnulli Alexandro Magno comparavere maiores. Habebat si quidem quos domuerat Golthescytha Thiudos Inaunxis Vasinabroncas Merens Mordens Imniscaris Rogas Tadzans Athaul Navego Bube-genas Coldas" (*Jordanes* 1960: 150). The translation is roughly as follows: "116. After the king of the Goths, Geberich, retired from human affairs, he inherited for a while the kingdom of Ermanaric, the noblest of the Amals, who conquered many very warlike northern tribes and forced them to obey their laws. Many ancient writers worthily compared him with Alexander the Great. He conquered the tribes of Golthescytha, Thiudos, Inaunxis, Vasinabroncas, Merens, Mordens, Imniscaris, Rogas, Tadzans, Athaul, Navego, Bube-genas, Coldas" (*Jordanes* 1960: 89).

One of the key terms used by *Jordanes* is *arctoi*. At this point one immediately discovers contradictory translations by modern scholars as indicated in the commentaries to *Getica*: "The Greek word *arctoi* that has wedged into the Latin text seems suspicious" (*Jordanes* 1960: 265). Indeed, instead of being considered a Grecism, one can read it as the Latin word *arctus* (an irregular form for *artus* meaning tight-fitting, scanty, cruel, close, etc. (*Gaffiot* 1934: 156, 167)), which in our case defines a territorial affiliation, or the areas adjacent to the Goths. At the same time, with careful attention, one notes that the terms defining ethnic affiliation were indicated with a capital letter, that is, in the text of *Jordanes* often rendered the "northern"

peoples there should have been *Arctoi* (*Gaffiot* 1934: 156). Then the phrase in question reads "... Ermanaric conquered many very warlike adjacent (cruel) tribes and forced them to obey their laws"

It is worth focusing on a later passage by *Jordanes* in which he reports on another of Ermanaric's campaigns: "After the defeat of the Herulians, Ermanaric moved his army against the Vends, who [...] are now known under three names: the Vends, the Antes, the Sklavens With his mind and valor, he subdued also a tribe of the Aesti who inhabit the furthest coast of the German Ocean. Thus, he ruled over all the tribes of Scythia and Germany, as his own possessions" (*Jordanes* 1960: 90). Obviously, *Jordanes* does not mention any tribes, except for the well-known Sklavens, Antes, Vends, and Aesti, thus, he does not know details about the inhabitants of the nearby northern and northeastern territories of Scythia, not to mention the Scythian periphery. It is these locations that modern scholars place Golthescytha, Thiudos, Inaunxis, Vasinabroncas, Merens, Mordens, Imniscaris, Rogas, Tadzans, Athaul, Navego, Bube-genas, and Coldas. Apparently, these peoples had nothing to do with the Ladoga-Volga-Kama region.

The next "strange" fact is *Jordanes'* reference to a non-Latin ethnonym *Thiudos* (*þiuda*). This situation has prompted researchers to conclude that the list of tribal names is, to one degree or another, a Gothic itinerary (*Jordanes* 1960: 266; *Machinsky, Kuleshov* 2004: 38; *Napolnykh* 2012: 22–24). However, in practice, the situation involving the copying of manuscripts results in the matter being a bit more complicated, which will be shown later.

In order to trace Ermanaric's "path of combat," it is necessary to determine the route's starting point. According to *Jordanes'* description, at that time, the Goths were located "on the Pontic Sea" (*Jordanes* 1960: 72). Further, we read that "the king of the Gepids, Fastida ... sent ambassadors to Ostrogoth ... so that they would find him who had settled in the mountains and demand one of two things: that he would either prepare for a war, or the vastness of his lands" (*Jordanes* 1960: 85). Consequently, to the west, the land of Ostrogoth bordered the Gepids. Once again, *Jordanes* mentions this region in connection with Geberich, who was Ermanaric's father, with the Vandals: "At that time they lived in the place where the Gepids are now settled, along the rivers Marisia, Miliar, Gilpil and Grisia. From the east [from the Vandals] then lived the Goths" (*Jordanes* 1960: 89).

The Antes (the Vends tribe) were east of the Goths, who "... spread from Danaster to Danapre, where the Pontic Sea forms a bend" (*Jordanes* 1960: 72). To the north lay the Carpathians, Sklavens, and Vends while to the south was the Pontic Sea. Thus, the Goth lands lay in the Prut-Dniester region, and Os-

trogoth “sat” in the southeastern Carpathian Mountains. However, after the conquest of the *arctoi gentes* and then the Herulians, who lived near the Maotian swamp, Ermanaric headed for the Vends and up to the Aesti (Jordanes 1960: 89–90).

After some time, the Huns moved from the territory of the inner Meotida to the Scythian region and “there seized the Alpidzurs, Altsildzurs, Itimars, Tunkars and Boisks, who inhabited the coast of this very Scythia” (Jordanes 1960: 91), which was roughly defined as the lands between the Don and Dnieper.

Obviously, under these conditions, in order to conquer the peoples found on this list, Ermanaric could only have traversed to the Crimea, the Bosphorus, the Caucasus, Southwest Asia, and Central Asia.

In this context, an important scenario comes to the fore which researchers ignored. Inserted between the statement about Ermanaric’s conquest of the *arctoi gentes* and the list of the peoples of Golthescytha, is a comparison made of Ermanaric with Alexander the Great. Jordanes did not place his comparison of Ermanaric’s equality with Alexander after the final phrase that Ermanaric “thus ruled over all the tribes of Scythia and Germany as his own possessions.” Although, this location in the text is where the parallel would be appropriate. The present insertion by Jordanes into the text of the story about Alexander the Great may speak of Ermanaric’s conquest of the same regions in Scythia which were also conquered by Alexander. Thus, the Scythian territories closest to the Goths through which Alexander passed are West and Central Asia.

In this case, Jordanes’ mention of the ethnonym *Bubegenas* in the list raises an interesting point. The Roman historian, Quintus Curtius Rufus, in his *History of Alexander the Great* indicates that the Macedonians, before their campaign in India, “... conquered a country called Bubacene” (Curtius VIII.5.2). Thus, the *Bubegenas* are presumably the inhabitants of a province in Central Asia (Gaffiot 1934: 229). Scholars believe that this ancient region corresponds to the Kafirnigan river basin, one of the largest tributaries of the Amu Darya in Tajikistan which generally coincides with the locality of the ethnonym under question (Rapin 2010: 140; Rapin, Khassanov 2013: 44). An even more defining landmark could be the Baba ridge which is part of the Hindu Kush mountain system.

The location of Mordens can serve as another “reference” point. The treatise of Constantine Porphyrogenitus *De administrando imperio* mentions Mordia: “Pachinakia is five days’ journey from Uzia and Khazaria, from Alania it is six days, from Mordia (Μορδία), ten days, from Russia, one day, from Turkey, four days, from Bulgaria, a half a day. It is very close to Kherson, and even closer to the Bosphorus”

(Constantine VII 1989: 157). Scholars believe that this is “the only early medieval evidence concerning the name of the land attributed to the settlement of this Finnish tribe – the Mordva” (Constantine VII 1989: 391). There is no confusion around the definition of “only,” which requires, at least, an explanation of how this tribe deserved such attention from the Byzantine emperor. Although doubts about the Mordva are dispelled by Constantine Porphyrogenitus himself, he points out in another passage that “from the ‘mouth of the Dnieper’ the Rhos are moving to Black Bulgaria, to Khazaria, and to Mordia” (Constantine VII 1989: 175). It is doubtful that the Rhos in order to arrive to the location listed as Mordva arranged such a difficult route through the mouth of the Dnieper. Also, the Byzantine emperor mentions a group called the Amardians who served as mercenaries and raided Armenia (Constantine VII 1989: 73, 83). At the same time, the Amardians (Μάρδοι, Ἀμαρδοί) are mentioned by Pliny the Elder and Strabo, while the latter places them on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea (Pliny pr. 6, V. 16). Indeed, in that region one finds the hydronym *Amard* (this river flows into the Caspian Sea), from which the people who lived near Hyrcania derived their name. (Gaffiot 1934: 90). Also, of interest, is the territory of ancient Mardistan (the land of the Amardians, Mardalia) currently on the border between Turkey and Iran. Mardov is mentioned by Xenophon in his *Anabasis*. When the Greeks reached the border of Armenia and the country of the Carduchi, they settled on the banks of the Kentrit River and on the other side of the river stood the mercenary army of Orontes and Artyukh comprised of the Armenians, Amardians, and Chaldeans (Ancient Geography 1953: 59). Pliny the Elder placed the Amardians just north of the Dioscuriada (Ancient Geography 1953: 260). There is located the city of Mardin in today’s northeastern Turkey. Obviously, Mordia is a southern territory that has nothing to do with the annalistic *Mordva*, therefore, the Mardaites and the Amardians are the southern tribes of Transcaucasia and the Caspian region.

Merens. The neighbors of the Amardians were the Mars (Pliny pr. 6, V.16), a tribe that lived on the upper Euphrates and mentioned by Herodotus (Budanova 2000: 285), who Jordanes called *Merens*. A point of reference for where they lived may be the city of Mary, now Igdir, in modern northeast Turkey (Thomas Metsopsky 1957). Another possibility could be the Imereti ridge in Adjara.

Thiudos. In this instance, Theodosia (Θεοδοσία, Theodosia) may have been one of the first locations of the Goths. The Gothic vocalization of *Thiudos* (Theodoses is probably the way an unknown author recorded the inhabitants of the Milesian colony) merely emphasizes Jordanes’ use of the non-Latin itinerari-



Fig. 1. Schematic of Ermanaric's campaign and the Silk Road.

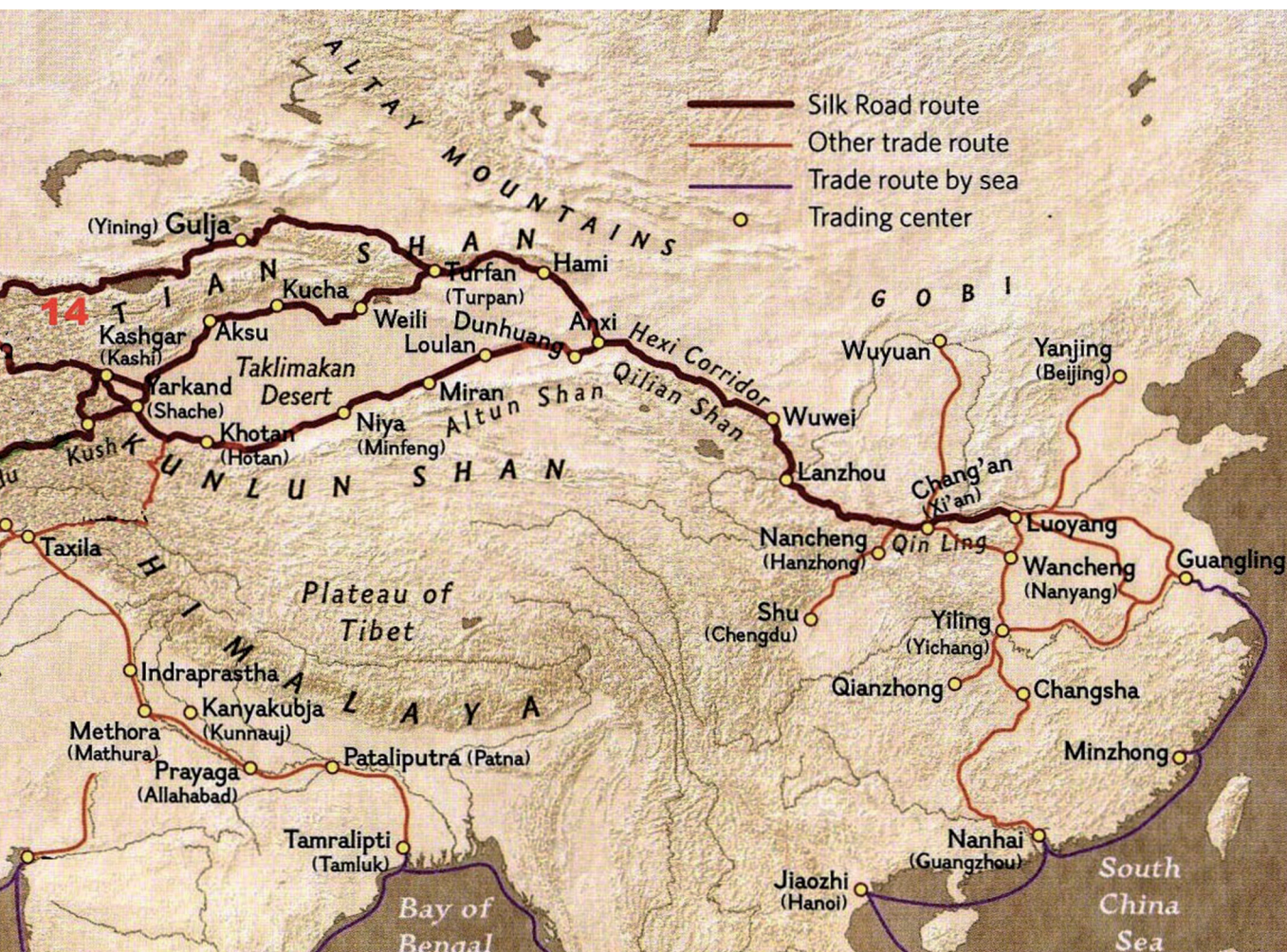
Source: The old trade route dubbed the 'Silk Road' by 19th century German geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen.
 URL: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1377055/history-debunking-the-myth-of-the-silk-road>

um, since earlier in the text Jordanes himself used the word *Theodosia* (Jordanes 1960: 135). Theodosia was a fairly important settlement and a strategic location in ancient geography. For example, Strabo mentions: "Behind the aforementioned mountainous area lies the city of Theodosia. The city occupies a fertile plain and has a harbor that can accommodate a hundred ships" (Strabo 1964: 283).

Golthescytha. Strabo continues: "Previously, they [the rulers of the Bosphorus] possessed only a small part of the country near the mouth of the Meotida and Panticapaeum to Theodosia; and the Scythian tribe of Tauri occupied most of the area up to the isthmus and Karkinit Bay. This whole country, as well as almost the entire region beyond the isthmus up to Borysthenes, was called Lesser Scythia (Strabo 1964: 284). Constantine Porphyrogenitus expressed more definitely in his treatise *De administrando imperio*: "From the Dniester River to the Dnieper River is a distance of 80 miles, the so-called 'Gold Coast'" (Con-

stantine VII 1989: 173). This is the land which is a good candidate for Golthescytha, in which the first half of the word is represented by the Romanized form for the Gothic *gulf* (goltz) or gold (Kroonen 2013: 194), thus the meaning of the name in its entirety is Golden Scythia. Here it is appropriate to recall the Gothic dream of Oyum (Fedchenko 2019: 47–48), as well as consider Strabo's opinion about those lands: "In addition to the mountainous coastal region stretching to Theodosia, the rest of Chersonesos is flat and fertile, it is especially rich in bread" (Strabo 1964: 284). At the same time, he used this particular toponym in order to emphasize only a specific part of Scythia Minor and to avoid confusion, because, as Jordanes noted, "Queen Tomira went to that part of Moesia, which, having taken the name from Greater Scythia, is now called Scythia Minor" (Jordanes 1960: 78).

Vasinabroncas. As noted above, modern scholars seek to force the annalistic tribe of the Ves as being the Vasinabronca, placing them in an unknown re-



gion of Abroncas. Meanwhile, Jordanes recorded in *subp.* 52-53: “Soon after that, it [the Caucasian ridge] turns, bending at an angle, toward Syria and sending out many [various] rivers in the Vasian (Vasianensem) region. According to the most widespread opinion, it empties into the navigable Euphrates and Tigris from the abundant breasts of inexhaustible sources” (Jordanes 1960: 75). Researchers admit that the Vasian region (*Vasianensis regio*) is ancient Phasiana in Armenia (Jordanes 1960: 230). At the same time, Jordanes writes the name of the Fasis River as “Phasis” (Jordanes 1960: 138). A historical region known as Phasiane is noted in eastern Anatolia. From this it can be assumed that this is the desired Vasina and its second component *broncas* (bronus, bröchus, brochus, broccus, brunchus) with the semantic meaning of “toothy, rocky, or protruding surface” indicates that Vasinabroncas is the mountain Faziana.

From this, the location of Inaunxis becomes obvious. This territory, located between Thiudos and Vasinabroncas, is determined by the lands of the *Heniochi* people (Heniokhs) and the city of Oenanthia also rendered Oenunia (Gaffiot 1934: 1071-1072). They

were located on the northeastern coast of the Black Sea along the border of the historical regions of the Bosphorus and Colchis.

It is unjustified that scholars combine *Imniscaris* into a whole, despite the fact that, as was indicated above, they still try to separate this word into two parts. However, two words with the same structure – *Imnis* and *Caris* – seem to be more logical. At the same time, the first demonym *Imnis* may correspond to the historical region of Minni, better known as Manna (the Mannaeian kingdom). This region is located on the eastern side of Lake Urmia. Later, it became part of Media Atropatene.

In the same Median province, traces of *Caris* are found which can be associated with the southwestern Caspian region. It is here on Ptolemy’s map that the *Coreo regio* is found (Ptolemy: 35v – 36). Based on both Ptolemy and Ammianus Marcellinus, *Κυρόπολις* (the city of Cyrus) is also located in the same area between the mouths of the Kura and [A] mard rivers which are found in the southwestern Caspian region (the historical region Media Atropatene) (Podosinov 2002: 227). It is this region of the south-



Fig. 2. Schematic of the route of Ermanaric's campaigns and the route of Alexander the Great's campaigns.
Source: A map of Alexander the Great's empire at its largest extent c. 323 BCE including details of key roads, locations, and battles. URL: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MacedonEmpire.jpg>

ern Kura basin (Cyrus, Kor) and the coastal part of the Caspian Sea that is the Caris region mentioned by Jordanes.

Rogas. The location of this demonym may correspond to an important transportation hub in antiquity – the city of Raga (Ragi, Ράγα, Ράγαι, Ράγοι της Μήδίας, now Ray (Iran); the historical province of Rhagiana in Media, which is located on the way from Ecbatana to the Caspian gates (an area of modern Gorgan).

Tadzans. This word is probably associated with the Tejen oasis and, accordingly, the Tejen River (ancient Iranian *tačani*) and the city of Tejen. The neighboring settlements of Tajan (Iranian Khorasan) can certainly be put in the same vicinity. Historically, this name is a hydronym (Tejend referred to the lower reaches of the river, while the middle and upper reaches were called Ariu /Heri-rud (Rawlinson 1893: 1, 5, 9).

Athaul. In the current context, this term can be used to define the Hephthalites (Ἐφθαλιται), who are considered the ancestors of the Turkmen tribe known as the *Abdal*. Some researchers also associate this ethnonym with the name of the ancient country Khuttal (Haftal) (Denisov 2005: 79). The location of this people leads into the Pamir region of Badakhshan and in the Eftal Valley of the Faizabad area in modern day northern Afghanistan (Gumilyov 1954).

Navego. The location of this demonym can be associated with the Bajaur region and its main city Nawagai, located in northeastern Pakistan (there is a settlement of the same name in the nearby Bun-

er region). In the same region, along the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan, it is also possible to note the Noshaq mountain peak of the Hindu Kush ridge. This region was known in history for the inhabitants' stubborn resistance to the onslaught of Alexander the Great.

Coldas. Located to the east of the Bubacene country, two hydronyms Kara and Kulja are found (in one case, it identifies the name of the upper reaches of the Chatkal River) in the area of the Fergana ridge, and just to the east is the ancient city of Ghulja (now Yining) in northwest China. Probably, Coldas is the Romanized form of this toponym (similar, for example, to Khojand/Khujand) mentioned by Jordanes.

Conclusion. What do these identified toponyms and ethnonyms have in common? Simple, if they are plotted on a map, a very definite route emerges. First, to some extent it coincides with a section of the Great Silk Road (Fig. 1). Additionally, the path begins in the Black Sea region and ends just at the border with Serica (the country of the Seres, the name in antiquity for northern China). The route was quite realistic: First the coast of Pontus, then along the Araks Valley, transitioning to the coast of the Caspian Sea, moving along its southern coast, then through the Tejen Oasis to the Amu Darya Valley, and to the mountainous regions on the border with Serica. On the other hand, this route partially repeats the campaign of Alexander the Great into Central Asia (Fig. 2). At the same time, all considered ethnonyms and demonyms are tied to geographic objects which makes locating them possible.

Within the framework of this research, the theory of the “cultural transfer” of Central Asia gains additional impetus. The contacts of Alexander the Great with the Scythians, and later, more broadly, the Europeans’ interactions with the peoples of Central Asia, which incorporated the Sogdians, Chinese, Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Iranians, shaped the so-called “crossroads of cultures” in this region. As during Alexander’s era, this region continued to become an important trade and economic enclave between the West and the East. As Etienne de La Vaissière notes, trade in the Mongolian period and earlier (9th – 10th centuries) along the Silk Road was conducted through the so-called “Ortaq traders” (*de la Vaissière* 2013: 202–203). Moreover, if we retrospectively admit that similar relations occurred in the first centuries of our era, then the proximity to the region’s border with Serica provided a strategic advantage in trade which drove

Alexander the Great to Central Asia. Therefore, we observe the apparent coincidence with Alexander’s route of conquest route and the Silk Road itself. Later, in the Middle Ages, the focus shifted to the Middle East, where, for example, the quality of silk improved in comparison to the cheap Chinese version (*de la Vaissière* 2013: 204).

The examined list of Jordanes can be presented in the following table:

Thus, the primary sources for this list came from the stories of the Gothic merchants, recorded by some ancient author, perhaps Maes Titianus. Subsequently, this information in the form of an itinerarium was used by Jordanes and presented in one scenario as a comparison between Ermanaric and Alexander since a coherence existed with the campaigns of the great Macedonian commander.

Figure No	Jordanes	Ancient titles	Actual reference
1	Golthescytha	“Gold coast”	Black Sea lands between the Dniester and the Dnieper (Ukraine)
2	Thiudos	Θεοδοσία, Theodosía	Theodosia, Crimea
3	Inaunxis	Oenanthia, Oenunia, Οινουνία	Northeast coast of the Black Sea south of Pitsunda and north of Diaskuria (Abkhazia)
4	Vasinabroncas	Φάσις, Phasis	Area south of the city of Poti (Georgia)
5	Merens	Merya	Upper Euphrates, Igdır (Turkey)
6	Mordens	Μάρδοι/Αμαρδοι, Mardi/Amardi	East of Lake Van, near the city of Maku (Turkey, Iran)
7	Imnis	Manna, Minni, Minyas	East of Lake Urmia (Iran)
8	Caris	Κυρόπολις, Kura (Kir, Kor)	South of the Kura River (Iran)
9	Rogas	Ράγα, Ράγαι, Ράγοι της Μήδίας	City of Ray (Iran)
10	Tadzans	Tejen oasis	Tejen river, Tejen city (Turkmenistan, Iran)
11	Athaul	Ἐφθαλιται	Historical Badakhshan Region (Tajikistan, Afghanistan)
12	Navego	Nawagai	Noshaq mountain of the Hindu Kush ridge (Afghanistan, Pakistan)
13	Bubegenas	Bubacene	Basin of the Kafirnigan River, south of the city of Dushanbe (Tajikistan)
14	Coldas	Ghulja/Gulja/Qulja	Osh region (Kyrgyzstan) onward to Yining (China)

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