

## Pons Servili

A bridge over the river Black Drim at Dobovjani must have existed on the road of Via Egnatia, known as Pons Servili. On the right bank of the river was unearthed a part of a 3 meter large statue in marble, probably erected in honor of Gnaeus Servilius Caepio, Consul 169 BC, who negotiated with Philip V when a military confrontation between Rome and Macedonia began to emerge.



Leg of marbel statue found at Dobovjani

## Mutatio Patras

On a distance of 2 km from the bridge over the Black Drim at Dobovjani, on road to Gorno Tatesh, there are remains of some old settlement that may have been Mutatio Patras. The place is still not yet identified by the macedonian archaeologists. A station with that name on the road of Via Egnatia is specified in Itinerarium Burdigalense of anno 333-334 AD, by accounting Cledo, Patrae and Claudanon.

## The battle events at Pelion



Vevchanska reka a stormy river

Arrian in his book Alexander's Expedition tells us how Alexander passing through the countries of the Agrians, and Paeonians, he received intelligence that Clytus the son of Bardylis had revolted from him, and joined in confederacy with Glaucias king of Taulantii. Alexander after this, marching near the river Erygone, advanced towards Pellion, whose city Clytus had seized, it being the strongest in all those parts. When Alexander approached, and had pitched his tents near the river Eordaicus, he determined to batter the walls the next day. Clytus had encamped his forces upon the adjacent mountains, which were very high, and covered with thick woods, determining that if the Macedonians assaulted the city, they would rush upon them on all hands, for as yet Claucias king of the Taulantii had not jet joint them. An attempt was made by Alexander to capture the surrounded llyrians within the walls, but hearing the next day that Claucias was on upon his march to their relief with a huge army, he therefore changed his resolution, and send his horses to forage in the enemies country. By mastering the Macedonian army, Alexander arranged to overcome the blockade and without any major military confrontation he succeeded to drive away the enemy army, so that many were slain and prisoners were taken.

## OKTISI

Oktisi is a large sub-mountain village in the foot of Jablanica and among the people there is thought to be one of the oldest settlement in the region of Struga. Of antiquities from the past there are remains of an early Christian church with floor mosaics and a number other old churches, making folk to believe that here existed a town. Otherwise, there are remains of two fortresses with the toponymes of Dolno and Gorno Gradishte on some elevated grounds, of which Dolno Gradiste is in the middle of Oktisi, while Gorno Gradiste lies on an elevated ground, west of the village. At the time of the Turkish occupation of the region in 1449, the population migrated and Oktisi become a deserted settlement. On Gorno Gradishte, also known as Vajtos there are remains of an old settlement, that we are convinced to be the location of Pelion.

## VAJTOS

Vajtos, also known as Gorno Gradiste, is a fortified settlement located about 2 km southwest of the village of Oktisi, at the foot of Mount Jablanica. Here, on this spot we assume that the ancient Macedonian city of Pelion existed, which was then the strongest of all in these parts. The whole territory north of Lake Ohrid formed the core area of the Lyncestian Empire. Thucydides informs us that Arrhabaeus is the king of the Lyncestians, the people of Macedonia, and that the Lyncestae, Elimiotae and other tribes of the highlands are subject to Perdicas II, son of Alexander I. Pelion as settlement on the hill at Vajtos, erected on one of several such hill tops, was ideally situated to observe and guard the important passage, which was the only communication route within that part of the Macedonian Empire. It ran in the area from Pelagonia to Lyncestis, and further more out in direction south of the Ohrid Lake leading into Eordea. A look on the site confirms that the fortification has existed for a long time.



The pavement on the road Via Egnatia near Pelion

The fortification long axis is oriented in the east-west direction and its length reaches about 160 m, the width is about 50 m. The northern fortification wall is made of big rectangular stones, in a pseudo-isodomos technique (varying between 125-180x45-95x40-45 cm). The remains in the south, identified as a part of the defensive architecture, are made of considerably smaller stones (max. 80x40x30 cm), possibly representing the remains of a watchtower. The eastern entrance to the rocky spur of the fortification (based on the terrain possibly the main entrance) is heavily damaged by several robbers' trenches which uncovered stone walls, some bound by mortar, some not. The walls can be attributed to several different phases of the settlement as they were built over each other in different directions. The height of some of them exceeds 1 m, their width is about 40-50 cm. The eastern area yields the highest amount of surface material, architectural ceramics (roof tiles, one with an imprint of a pig hoof), three different rims of dolia and several pcs. of Hellenistic (black glaze) and Late Antique pottery.



Republic of Macedonia

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THE BATTLE OF PELION 335 BC



EORDAICUS  
APSUS  
DRYMON  
Black Drim  
Crni Drim

PELION  
OKTISI  
VEVČANI  
Gorno Gradishte  
Vajtos Kale

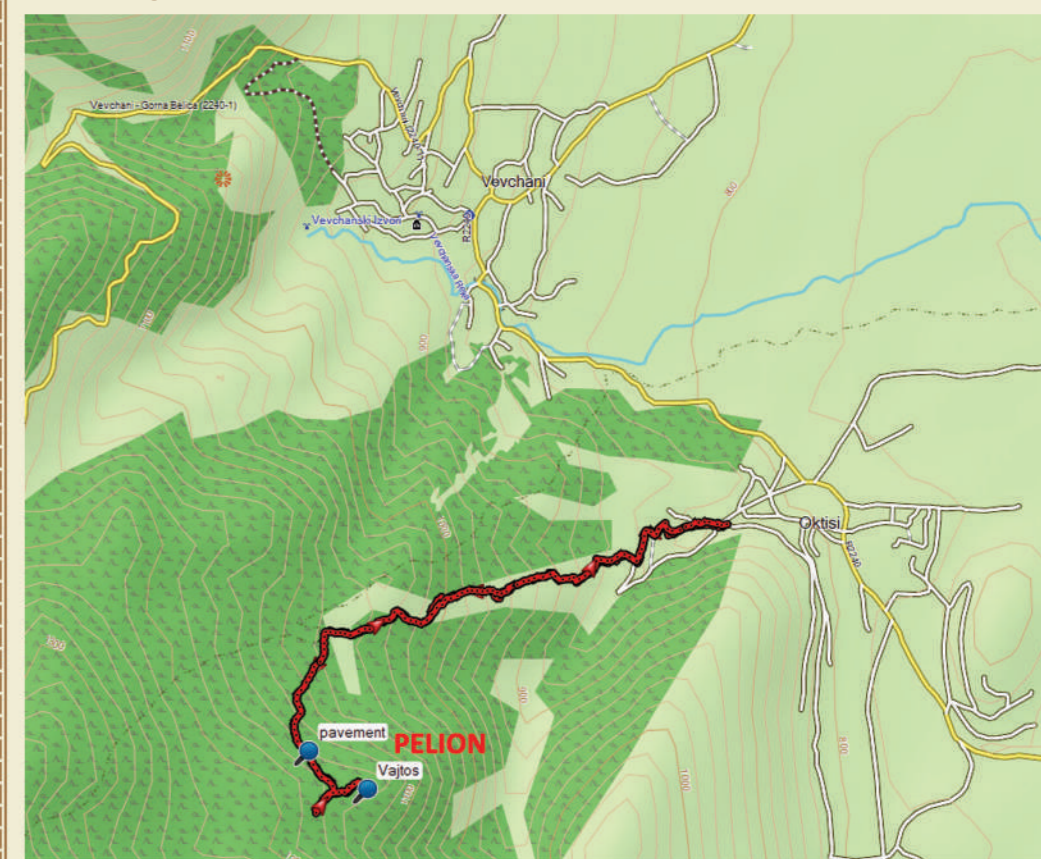


## PELION



The hill of Vajtos Kale on location at Gorno Gradishte

Pelion was an important western Macedonian border fortress, that obviously existed on the spot of the village of Oktisi, located on a hill, on western side of Ohrid-Struga valley, on the foot of Jablanica mountain. All that area including the Ohrid-Struga walley belonged to the Lyncestian Kingdom, with Lyncus as their capital, that existed at the village of Gorenci, and Trebenishte, known as the cemetery of the Lyncestian rulers. During the time of the Crusade invasion did not exist any land communication from Struga to Ohrid as it does now. Anna Comnena tells us that the river Black Drim, "Drymon runs down from the Lake Lychnis through some hundred channels and that they never failand flow separately in this way until they join" and forms a united flow as a river at todays village of Dobovjani. At Dobovjani there must have existed a bridge called Pons Servili over the river Black Drim, on the road Via Egnatia, where also a leg of a 3 m high marble statue was discovered on the right river bank. Strabo mention Pylon trough wich Via Egnatia passes, and that may have been identical with Pelion, as a place on the Candavian road, wich separates Illyria from Macedonia. On the mountain road that leads to Pelion at Vajtos there are still visible remains of pavement of an old road that may have been Via Egnatia.



## ARRIAN - The anabasis of Alexander

Arrian of Nicomedia was a Greek historian, public servant, military commander, and philosopher of the Roman period, who lived in the second century of the present era (86/89–146/160AD). He was the author of a work describing the campaigns of Alexander the Great, titled Anabasis. In the prologue of the book, Arrian explains which sources he has used: "It seems to me that Ptolemy and Aristobulus are the most trustworthy writers on Alexander's conquests, because the latter shared Alexander's campaigns, and the former - Ptolemy - in addition to this advantage, was himself a king, and it is more disgraceful for a king to tell lies than for anybody else."

## Alexander – The King of Macedonia

Alexander III of Macedon, commonly known as Alexander the Great, a king of the ancient kingdom of Macedon, happened to die in Babylon 356 BC at an age of 33. He succeeded his father Philip II to the throne in 336 BC at an age of 20 after the assassination in 336 BC at Aegae, at an event of marriage of a daughter. Philip II prepared to go in war with Persia on several grounds and reasons including territorial expansion. News of Philip's death lead to revolt at many allied states in Greece, the tribes to the north of Macedon and at the Illyrians on west. At that moment Alexander responded quickly by putting them to subject under military control, before he left Macedonia, to fulfill the planned war with Persia.

## Revolt of Clitus and Glaucias

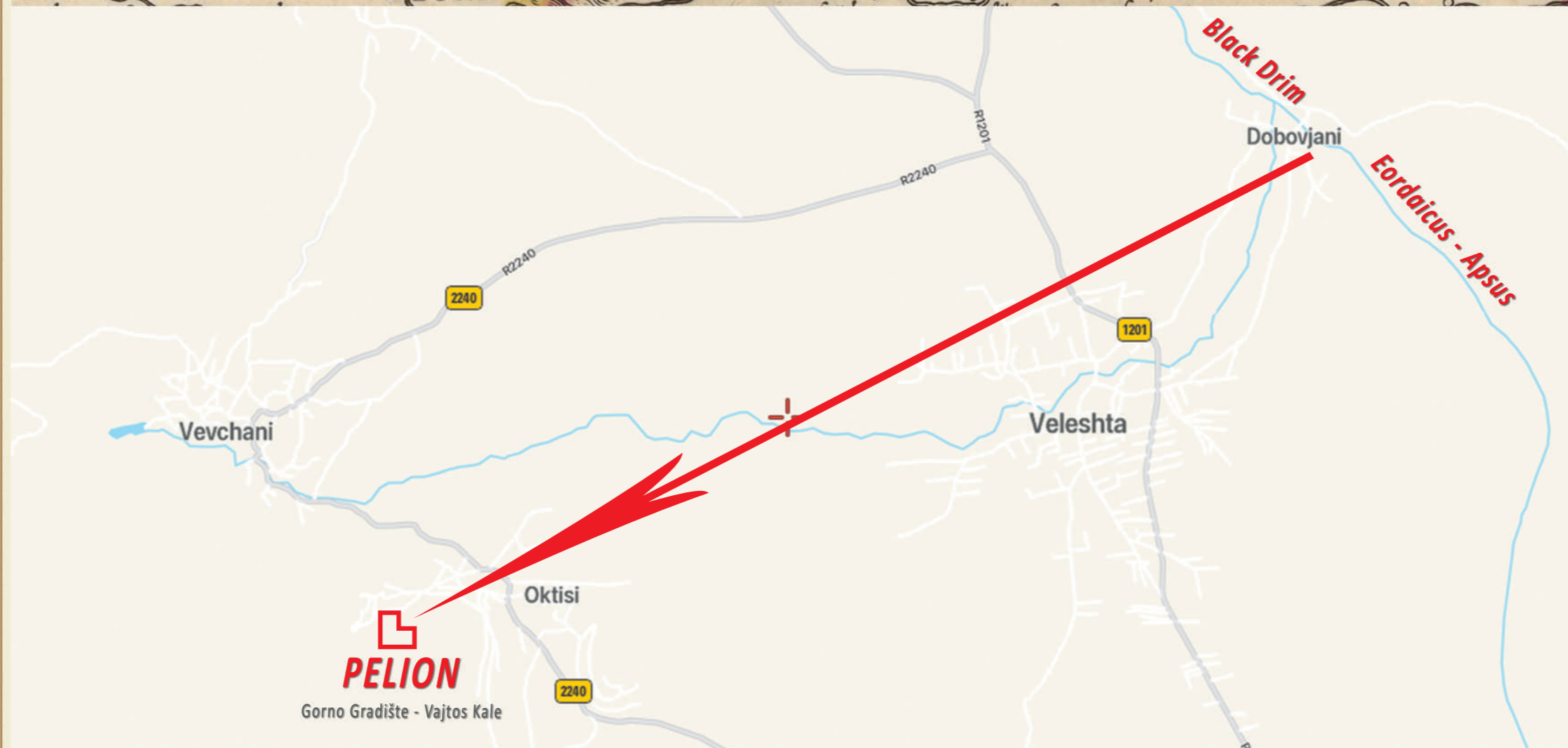
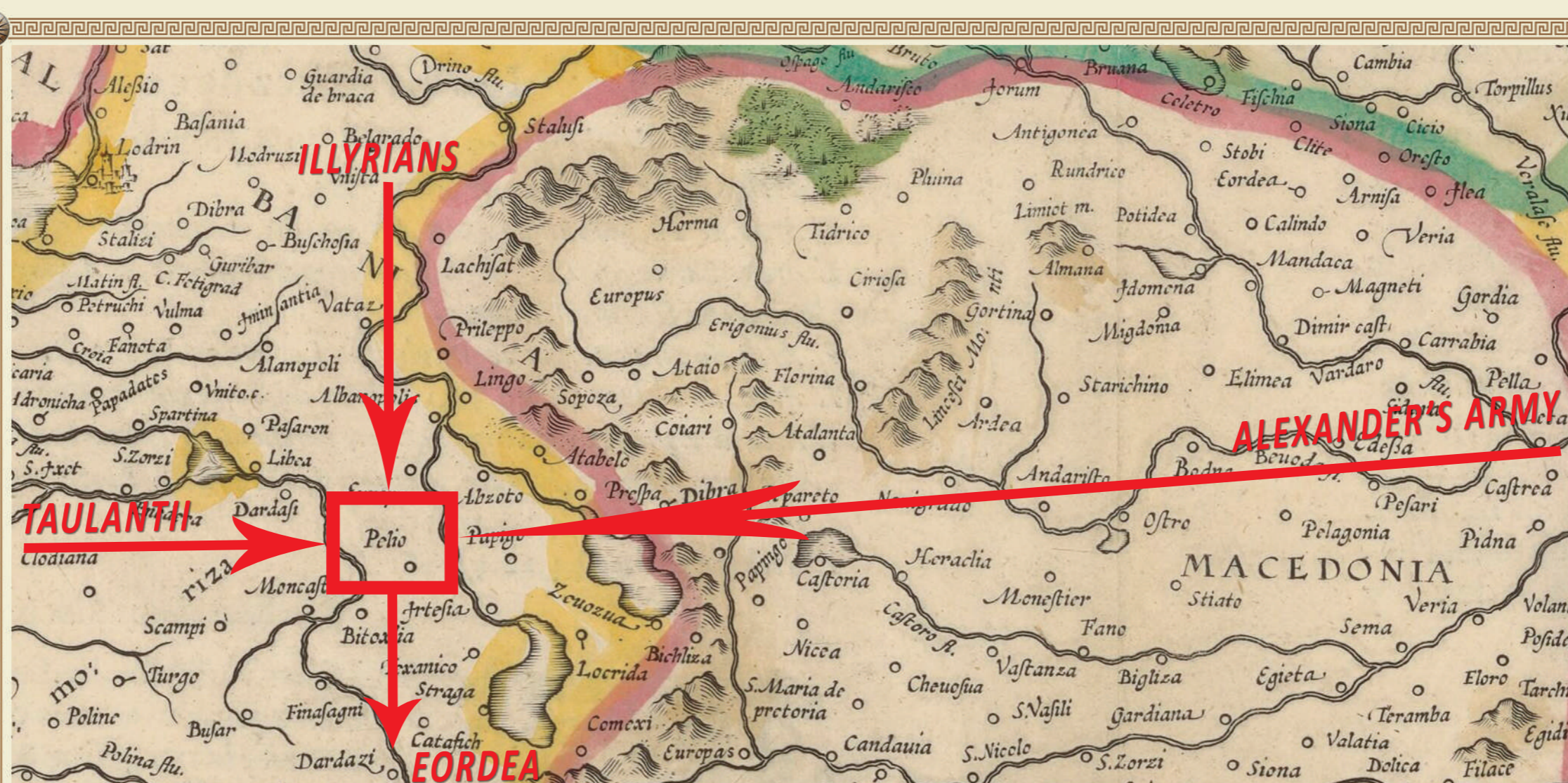
After subduing of the Triballians, Alexander advanced into the land of the Agrinians and Paeonians, where messengers reached him, who reported that Clytus, son of Bardylis, had revolted, and that Glaucias, king of the Taulantians, had gone over to him. He also heard that the Autariatians intended to attack him on his way, which did not happen due to intervention by Langarus, king of Agrinians, who was friend of Alexander. On his march, Alexander followed the road near the river Erigone, taking the shortest route to the river Eordaicus, beyond which Pelion was seated. Pelion, the strongest city in all that part, already was taken by Clitus, when Alexander approached, and pitched his tents near the river Eordaicus, with intention to break down the walls the next day.



The bridge over Black Drim at Dobovjani

## Passage over the river Eordaicus

Arrian do not tell us how Alexander's army passed the river Eordaicus. We are told how Alexander approached the river and how he pitched his tents near the Eordaicus, with determination to storm the walls and take Pelion the next day. If the river Eordaicus or Apsus is identical with Black Drim as we suppose, he must have encamped on the right bank of the river, at the village Dobovjani, where there is enough place to accommodate his army. The main question is about how Alexander managed to pass the river. Either there must already have existed a passable bridge at the time when the Illyrian invaders already used at time before Alexanders arrival, or that a bridge was built on order to server its purpose of passage during the night. On a distance of 8 km from the river bank is located the village Oktisi, the actual place where Pelion is supposed to have existed, on an fortified elevated ground, called Gorno Gradiste or Vajtos.



The Black Drim sources its water from the Ohrid Lake

## EORDAICUS - APSUS - DRYMON

### The river Black Drim

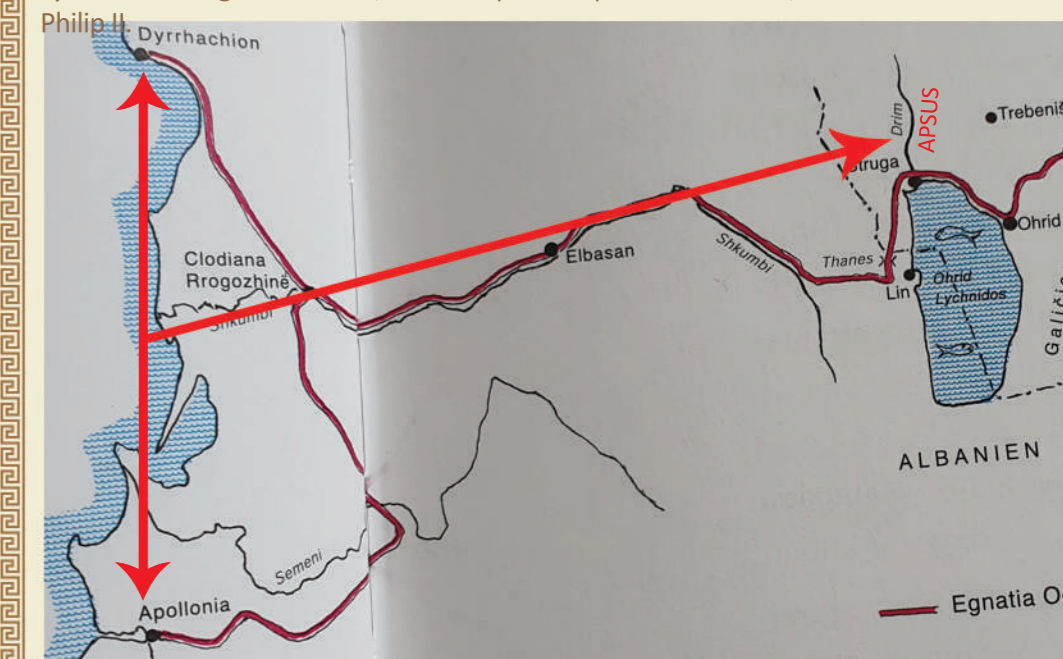
The river Black Drim gets its water from the Lake Ohrid at Struga with an altitude of 695 m. It flows 12 km stright over the Struga valley on a deeply formed riverbed and at the village Dobovjani it reaches an altitude of 692 m. Nearby, at the village of Moroishta it abruptly flows into a deep narrow strait, called Drimkolska Klisura, the Dimkol Gorge.

At the time of the Crusade invasions there was not any land connection from Struga to Ohrid as there is now. The river Black Drim, also called Drymon received its water from the Ohrid Lake, almost along the whole shore by forming some hundred channels and thus at that time it made the Ohrid-Struga basein a swampy and muddy terrain.

However, a passable bridge over the river Black Drim must have existed nearby the village of Vranishta, as the main road that ran from Trebeniste to the village Belica at Oktisi.

At Vranishta existed the episcopal church where the St Clement of Ohrid served as episcopy at Devol. On that road passed also the Byzantine emperor Alexios I Komnenos on his routh to Dyrrachium with aim to defend the empire from the invadery Crusaders.

At that moment when emperor Komnenos was defeated at Dyrrachium and was in need hastily to reach Ohrid, he took the shortest way and traversed over all that hundreds channels running from the Ohrid Lake. It is known that Trebenishte was an important crossroad, where the station Cledo existed. Here, in 1918 were unearthed the royal tombs with the rich funeral inventory characterized by unique golden masks, a hand cover and sandals, that obviously belonged to the kings of the Lyncestian dynasty. Nearby lies the village Gorenci on the shore of the Ohrid Lake, where Lyncus, the capital of the Lyncestians Kingdom existed, the birth place of princess Euridice, who was the mother of Philip II.



Apsus must be the same river as Eordaicus. A river with that name was mentioned at the time of the second Macedonian war with Rome. Livy tells us that the consul Sulpicius, who was at that time encamped on the river Apsus, between Apollonia and Dyrrachium, having ordered Lucius Apustius, lieutenant-general, thither, sent him with part of the forces to lay waste the enemy's territory.