

the same direction of the course on which the early Phœnician navigators had adventured.

Before the migrations of the Dorians and Æolians, the Bœotian Orchomenus, near the eastern extremity of the Lake of Copais; was already a rich commercial city of the Minyans. The Argonautic expedition began at Iolcus, the principal seat of the Thessalian Minyans, on the Pagasæan Gulf. The locality of the myth, considered with respect to the aim of the undertaking, after having been variously modified* at different times, was finally associated with the mouth of the Phasis (Rion), and with Colchis, a seat of ancient civilization, instead of with the uncertain and remote land of Æa. The expeditions of the Milesians and their numerous colonial cities on the Euxine enabled them to obtain a more exact knowledge of the eastern and northern limits of that sea, and thus gave a more definite outline to the geographical portion of the myth. A number of important new views was thus simultaneously opened. The Caspian had long been known only on its western coast; and even Hecataeus regarded this shore as the western boundary of the encircling Eastern Ocean.† The father of history was the first who taught that the Caspian Sea was a basin closed on all sides, a fact which, after him, was again contested, for six centuries, until the time of Ptolemy.

* Otfried Müller, *Minyer*, s. 247, 254, und 274. Homer was not acquainted with the Phasis, or with Colchis, or with the Pillars of Hercules; but the Phasis is named by Hesiod. The mythical traditions concerning the return of the Argonauts through the Phasis into the Eastern Ocean, and across the "double" Triton Lake, formed either by the conjectured bifurcation of the Ister, or by volcanic earthquakes (*Asie Centrale*, t. i., p. 179; t. iii., p. 135-137; Ofr. Müller, *Minyer*, s. 357), are especially important in arriving at a knowledge of the earliest views regarding the form of the continents. The geographical phantasies of Peisandros, Timagetus, and Apollonius of Rhodes were continued until late in the Middle Ages, and showed themselves sometimes as bewildering and deterring obstacles, and sometimes as stimulating incitements to actual discoveries. This reaction of antiquity on later times, when men suffered themselves to be led more by opinions than by actual observations, has not been hitherto sufficiently considered in the history of geography. My object is not merely to present bibliographical sources from the literature of different nations for the elucidation of the facts advanced in the text, but also to introduce into these notes, which permit of greater freedom, such abundant materials for reflection as I have been able to derive from my own experience and from long-continued literary studies.

† *Hecataei, Fragm.*, ed. Klausen, p. 39, 92, 98, and 119. See, also, my investigations on the history of the geography of the Caspian Sea, from Herodotus down to the Arabian El-Istâchri, Edrisi, and Ibn-el-Vardi, on the Sea of Aral, and on the bifurcation of the Oxus and the Araxes, in my *Asie Centrale*, t. ii., p. 162-297.