

WERE THE TRITAIANS (PAUSANIAS 6.12.8-9) ARKADIAN? PAUSANIAS AT WORK

By James Roy

Summary: This article examines what knowledge of Arkadia Pausanias already had, and how he used that knowledge, when he sought to determine whether, as a victor-monument at Olympia claimed (Paus. 6.12.8-9), the *polis* Tritaia (known as Achaian) had ever been Arkadian.

In his account of Olympia Pausanias writes (6.12.8-9) of the victor-monument of Agesarchos son of Haimostratos of Tritaia, who, according to the verse on his monument, won the men's boxing at the Olympic, Nemean, Pythian, and Isthmian Games. The verse also said that the Tritaians were Arkadian, and Pausanias discusses whether that could be true. He then concludes his account of the monument by saying that it was the work of the sons of Polykles, which allows it to be dated to the second century BCE.¹

There have been considerable discussions by modern scholars about textual problems in this passage, particularly at two points. The first (in 6.12.8) is the statement by Pausanias that – depending on the wording of the text – he did, or did not, find true the verse's claim that the Tritaians were Arkadian. Since Pausanias says a little later (6.8.9) that one might think that the Tritaians were attached to the Arkadians, his earlier statement cannot have been a flat denial that he found the claim true. The second textual problem, at the end of 6.12.8, is whether an Arkadian federal decree did, or did not, give the names of minor Arkadian communities. Since there would have been no point in Pausanias' mentioning the

1 See Jacquemin 2002: 183.

decree if it did not give information about such minor communities, his text cannot have denied that the decree did give the information.²

It may also be noted that, while there have been several valuable studies of Pausanias' interest in inscriptions, none has examined how he deals with the epigraphic evidence in 6.12.8-9.³

Despite the attention given to the text of this passage, there has been little discussion of the wider significance of its content. However, the text is revealing about the knowledge Pausanias had of Arkadia when he wrote this passage, and a comparison of the knowledge of Arkadia shown here with what Pausanias says later in Book 8 on Arkadia is instructive about his gathering of information. It is widely supposed that Pausanias wrote the ten books of his work in the order in which they now appear,⁴ but Knoepfler has argued that Books 7 and 8, in which Pausanias shows knowledge of the work of Polybios, were written after all the others.⁵ However, even that argument would not change the evident fact that when Pausanias wrote Book 6 he had some knowledge of Arkadia, but not all the knowledge that he displays in Book 8.

The structure of 6.12.8-9 is as follows:

1. An account of what is recorded on the monument of Agesarchos.
2. A declaration that after enquiry Pausanias found true the statement that the Tritaians were Arkadians.⁶
3. An explanation, introduced by the Greek word *gar* ('for'), of why Pausanias found the claim true. There is a statement that, of Arkadian poleis, some had achieved glory and for them information about their founders was known, while others from the outset be-

2 The text of the closing words of 6.12.8 as published by Casevitz (in Casevitz et al. 2002: 38) would mean that the decree did not give the names of minor Arkadian communities, but in that case, Pausanias would have had no reason to mention it.

3 There is valuable discussion on epigraphic evidence in the work of Pausanias in Habicht 1984 and 1985; Tzifopoulos 1991; Whittaker 1991; and Zizzi 2006.

4 See e.g. Pretzler 2007: 6-7.

5 Knoepfler 2004.

6 On the language used here by Pausanias about making enquiries see Akujärvi 2005: 91-97, and particularly 95 n. 16.

cause of weakness were more obscure and were therefore incorporated in Megalopolis, and a decree passed by the Arkadian *koinon* contains their names.

4. A declaration that it is not possible among the Greeks to find a *polis* Tritaia other than that of the Achaians. (Here, though he does not say so explicitly, Pausanias is eliminating the possibility that there could be both an Achaian and also an Arkadian Tritaia.)
5. A statement that in the circumstances one might think that the Tritaians were attached to the Arkadians, just as at present some Arkadians are attached to the *Argolikon*.⁷
6. A concluding statement that the monument was the work of the sons of Polykles, who will be mentioned again later. (This mention is at 10.34.8 in a completely different context.)

Though Pausanias makes no mention of it in this passage, he knew that in his day Tritaia was part of the territory of Patras in Achaia, by a decision of the Emperor Augustus.⁸

It is clear that the information in item 3 about Arkadian material provides the evidence for the view that Pausanias adopts about Tritaia, but the nature of the evidence is not obvious. Pausanias divides Arkadian poleis – apparently all Arkadian *poleis* – into two categories. The first is made up of the famous *poleis*, and, though nothing is said here about Tritaia, it would not belong in that group since it was obviously not a famous Arkadian *polis*. Yet, though the famous *poleis* do not show whether Tritaia was ever Arkadian, Pausanias also mentions that information is available about the founders of these *poleis*. For the other, insignificant, *poleis* Pausanias says nothing about evidence of founders, and the implication is that for them Pausanias did not know where information about their founders might be found. However, the obscure pol-

7 Pausanias states at 8.22.1 that in his day Stymphalos was part of what he calls the *Argolikon*, but that he nonetheless regards Stymphalos as Arkadian, as it was in Homer, and says that it was founded by a grandson of Arkas. At 8.23.1 he says that Alea was likewise part of the *Argolikon* but was founded by Aleos son of Apheididas (i.e. by a king of Tegea), and he treats Alea too as part of Arkadia.

8 Pausanias 7.22.6, with the commentary of Lafond 2002: 197-98.

eis were, he says, mentioned in a federal Arkadian decree. Pausanias implies that the two categories, famous and obscure, together made up all Arkadian poleis, but that presents problems since it would suppose that the more obscure poleis in all parts of Arkadia were incorporated in Megalopolis, and that was obviously not the case. Arkadians from elsewhere may have chosen to move into the new city, but there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that Megalopolitan territory extended beyond southwestern Arkadia. Yet, if Tritaia, situated near northwestern Arkadia, was included in Megalopolis, or somehow attached to it, Megalopolis would need to have extended far beyond its attested territory. However, if when Pausanias wrote 6.12.8-9 he did not have a clear idea of the extent of Megalopolitan territory, he might have supposed that Tritaia could have been attached to Megalopolis.

Pausanias' account (8.27.2-6) of the synoikism of Megalopolis does refer to an Arkadian federal decree about the foundation of the new city, with a list of the communities to be incorporated in it. There is no need to suppose that Pausanias had in mind a physical object, a text engraved on stone or metal: his text may well be referring simply to what an Arkadian informant of his own day could tell him about such a decree. Moggi argued that around 200 B.C. the Megalopolitans had at their disposal a version of this decree adapted to suit their claims at that time; his arguments have been carefully reviewed by Nielsen.⁹ Though I originally supposed that Pausanias' list of communities to be incorporated in Megalopolis reproduced the list presented in the original decree of the 360s, I have now come to the view that Pausanias is reproducing in his list information given to him by Megalopolitans of his own day, information that will have evolved over roughly five centuries from the synoikism until Pausanias' travel in Arkadia. The information given to Pausanias was presumably not pure invention, but rather an adaptation to suit Megalopolis' territorial claims as they developed in the period from the Roman victory in Greece in 146 B.C. to Pausanias' day.¹⁰

9 The reference to a decree is at Pausanias 8.27.5, and the list of communities at 8.27.3-4. See Moggi 1974, and Nielsen 2002: 434-42.

10 Roy 2025: 433-39.

When commenting on the monument of Agesarchos at 6.12.8-9 Pausanias apparently knew that information was available about the communities to be incorporated in Megalopolis on its foundation but did not yet have a detailed account. If he had known the detail, he would have known that the list of communities to be incorporated did not include obscure poleis from all over Arkadia. Also, when writing 6.12.8-9 Pausanias did not have the information that he gathered later about the founders of at least some of the obscure poleis that were incorporated in the new *polis*. It was only later, after travelling in the territory of Megalopolis, that he sought information about the legendary founders of the small poleis incorporated in Megalopolis that he had visited, even if in his day some of these poleis were abandoned.¹¹ He does not explain why he took such interest in the founders of small communities within Megalopolis, but showed no such interest in the founders of small Arkadian communities elsewhere, particularly in northern Arkadia. It is notable that, when writing in Book 8 of communities in northern Arkadia, Pausanias describes several places simply by the rather vague term *chorion* without further comment.¹² Some others are not even called *chorion*: they may have been mere toponyms or they may have been small communities.¹³ Even some communities of north Arkadia that had earlier had the status of poleis receive virtually no attention from Pausanias: examples are Halous, also called Oryx (8.25.2), which may once have been a *polis*; Thaliades (8.25.2), which had struck coinage and had certainly been a *polis*; and Paos, dismissed by Pausanias as “the ruins of the *kome* (village) Paos” (8.23.9) though it had been described by Herodotus (6.127.3) as “the *polis* Paion”.¹⁴ For some reason that he does not explain Pausanias took little interest in the smaller communities of northern Arkadia, but developed an interest in the founders of small communities that he visited when travelling in Megalopolitan territory. He must have made enquiries

11 Roy 1968: 290-91.

12 Karyai 8.13.6; Lykouria 8.19.4; Kondylea 8.23.6; Tropaia (8.25.1); Leukasion (8.25.2). ‘Chorion’ could mean ‘village’ but it could also mean other things, including ‘fort’ and simply ‘place’.

13 Seirai 8.23.9; Mesoboa 8.25.2; Boupagion 8.26.8.

14 See Nielsen 2004: 512 no. 272 ‘Halous’; 533-34 no. 299 ‘Thaliades’; 435-36 no. 288 ‘Paion’.

about the founders of these Megalopolitan communities, presumably from Megalopolitans of his own day, and then included the responses in his text of Book 8, but there is no reason to think that he had already made such enquiries when he wrote 6.12.8-9.

Some conclusions can be drawn from the above arguments about how much Pausanias knew about Arkadia when he wrote 6.12.8-9. He certainly knew that Stymphalos and Alea were attached to the Argolikon, though he nonetheless regarded both as Arkadian. He believed that information was available about the oikists of famous Arkadian poleis. In fact, he mentions these oikists mainly in his account of the mythical kings of all Arkadia, and many are sons of Lykaon.¹⁵ Pausanias says (8.6.1) that he made considerable enquiries about the kings and that “the Arkadians” provided information. It is likely that most of the evidence about oikists in the king-list came from Megalopolitans,¹⁶ and Pausanias’ information about the founders of small communities within Megalopolis was surely from Megalopolitan sources. Whatever conversations eventually provided such information for Pausanias had evidently begun before he wrote 6.12.8-9, since he already knew then that information was available about the founders of the more famous cities. However, he says nothing at 6.12.8-9 about information on the oikists of the small, more obscure, communities, which suggests that he had not yet discovered that such information could be obtained. On the other hand, he did know that there was a decree that mentioned such obscure communities (6.12.8), but in that passage he mentions no details and makes no use of evidence from the decree in his argument. (As argued above, the ‘decree’ in question was probably not a physical object but rather the account then current at Megalopolis of the communities incorporated in Megalopolis when it was founded.) It seems likely that when Pausanias wrote 6.12.8 he knew that information was available at Megalopolis but had not yet learnt the details. If he had had detailed information, he would have known, for instance, that Tritaia was not involved in the creation of Megalopolis or its territory.

15 Pausanias’ account of the kings of Arkadia is at 8.1.4-8.6.1, including the sons of Lykaon (8.3.1-5).

16 See Roy 2025.

The above arguments suppose that when Pausanias came across the monument of Agesarchos at Olympia, he had already spent time in Arkadia and had begun to gather information about Arkadian communities. He had evidently had conversations particularly at Megalopolis, though he had not gathered significant information about the small communities in Megalopolitan territory and only later discovered that the legendary founders of such communities were still remembered. He had developed an interest in the legendary founders of Arkadian communities and had come to the view that there was a significant difference between well-known Arkadian poleis with known founders and more obscure communities about whose foundation he has nothing to say at 6.12.8-9. He later changed that view, at least as regarded small communities in Megalopolis, though he never developed much interest in small communities in more northerly regions of Arkadia.

Clearly the Olympic monument of Agesarchos, with its claim that the Tritaians were Arkadian, posed a problem for Pausanias, and he used such evidence as he had already gathered on Arkadia in his attempt to assess the validity of the claim. Later, as his interest in at least parts of Arkadia developed, he gathered more information, but apparently saw no reason to write more about the problem of Tritaia.

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