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I first encountered Pausanias at Oxford with a post-graduate student looking to improve his Greek. Whether it did is moot, but the *Periegeesis* so struck me that I proposed using it for prospective undergraduates to discuss at interview. My proposal was tolerated for as long as it took our first hapless candidate to flounder in the sea around Sounion. "I think we'll go back to Virgil," my senior colleague pithily remarked.

Recent scholarship has done much to challenge the long-held antipathy towards Pausanias, even if some of the best studies appear "enamored not so much of Pausanias himself as they are of the idea of Pausanias". As one of the leading new Pausaniacs, Greta Hawes has been at the vanguard of efforts to get the measure of this storied landscape. Her book needs no such caveat, even if its appeal goes far beyond the converted. By following Hawes on "a journey — or, rather, the very act of journeying — through the southern and central Greek mainland with a curious narrator who fixes the conceptual world of myth onto the realia of the Imperial landscape" (1), we can arrive at a far better sense of "how Greek storytelling worked" (2). Through Pausanias we can see Greek myth as not "a singular, abstract system" but one rooted "in time and to place" (2). The *Periegeesis's* central conceit — that "each passage of text (topos) is also a place in the landscape (topos)" (8; cf. 79-80) — Hawes traces back to Herodotus (77-78), who similarly describes his text spatially and "pressing on" (ἐπέβαλε, 1.5.3; cf. Pausanias 1.26.4) through it. Only in Pausanias the space of the text is the space on the ground, where the act of putting the world into words "mirrors something of the external reality it represents" (77). Pausanias's great innovation is to place Greek myth, to reveal the extent and depth to which its notorious plurality nevertheless conforms to a "logic motivated by encounters" (17).

Each chapter of Hawes's itinerary grounds stories in place. Chapter 1 ("Sightseeing") shows us around Thebes and tracks Heracles to establish how the narrative sites (and cites) Greece. Chapter 2 ("Taking Bearings") erects the architecture of Hawes's "mythographic topography", through which storytelling emerges not only as agonistic but entangled in the "natural chauvinism of localism" (99). In chapter 3 ("Encounters"), Hawes exposes Pausanias's storytelling infrastructures — "the on- and off-site phenomena that scaffold the ability of a place to continue to proclaim its mythic importance" (27). Chapter 4 ("Localisms") explores the differing storytelling structures of certain places — Thebes, Corinth, Mycenae and Messenia. Two appendices catalogue ruined cities and cross-references of mythical material.

Hawes usefully draws on contemporary analogies to guide us through this "work of placemaking" (143). Whether it is replicating the experience of visiting a well-known place like London (118-120) or providing alternative accounts for why the archipelago we call "Aotearoa-New Zealand" has its shape (143-145), Hawes approaches the *Periegeesis* as "a record of [stalked] locales" (124), or, better, of the *locals* "who live intimately with these places, these names, and these stories" (144) — places don't have stories; "people attach stories to places" (143). The text can feel "strangely unpeopled", conveying "little of the immediacy of the traveller's experience" (36), while appearing to fix "its gaze nostalgically on the past" (19) and Greece's past glories (146). Nowhere is this idea of material and conceptual decline more emblematic than in her ruins. Yet not only does Hawes reveal Pausanias's textual ruinoigraphy to be "in fact quite mundane", where there is "little by way of Romantic contemplation, sublime appreciation or inspired musings"; still more striking is "the lack of space he gives to [ruins]: some are just placenames noted in passing; most receive just a sentence or two" (147). The physical landscape — the source of romantic notions of the sublime — "offers up surprisingly little by intrinsic virtue of its existence"; "it is the people who make meaning" (201).


The timelessness of myth is a mirage (20). What distinguishes Pausanias’s myths is their place-boundness. Take the story of Aigeus (21). Where Hyginus flattens out topography to draw an etymological connection to the Aegean Sea, from Pausanias’s vantage point high up on the Acropolis such a claim is impossible: “From here the sea is fully visible and this is where Aigeus leapt from and died, or so they say” (1.22.4-5). Where Apollodoros narrates the myths of Heracles in sequence (56), Pausanias hunts out more obscure souvenirs based on local knowledge (58) to supplement the repertoire (60). Where Strabo (8.4.5) anatomizes the uncertainty and dispute over which seven cities Agamemnon offered Achilles (Hom. Il. 9.149–53), Pausanias treats each city as he comes to them in the same Homeric order, indicating "the tendency for Messenian myth to accord as far as possible with existing consensus" (193). For Hawes, the idea of there being any "normal" case untouched by historical forces is a fiction (59); even ruined cities, which lack distinctiveness or idiosyncrasies (148), vary according to the storytelling "scaffolding" erected around them. Delphi, the classic ruined site, is "denuded by lost relics" but home to all Greeks, its stories almost all "scaffolded by literature" (160). Similar is Imperial Thebes, whose versioning as the polis of Pindar and Aeschylus suggests "data preserved off-site comes to be localized on the place itself" (167). Contrast Argos, whose long continuous history invokes an impressive array of relics and stories (2.18.4–224.4) — too many, according to Pausanias, who depicts the Argives claiming “to possess heroic tombs that they simply should not have” (161). Pausanias’s locals are not all alike but are rather "an expression of the personality of the place" (163).

Messenia is a good example. Hawes shows how their lack of theoremata (comprising only six of its thirty-six chapters) directly relates to their lengthy subjugation under Sparta, which not only erased any landscape antiquity (188-189) but also impacted on their conceptual infrastructure — a lack of confidence evident in that Homeric-based list of cities. But Pausanias also reveals tensions, not least where to divide the land / his text. While "the textual division between books three and four aligns with [the] geo-political border of the time at the river Chorios", the narrative suggests that "the fundamental cultural divide between the regions lies further south" (199), as Messenian perspectives start encroaching well in advance of "their" book. So, at Leuctra, Pausanias notes that "the Messenians say" the city takes its name from their hero Leucippos (3.26.4-5), while Gerenia is connected to Pylos by being remembered as Nestor’s birthplace or place of exile (3.26.8).

What I find most striking here is the value of reading the Periegesis as narrative. This might seem a non-sequitur, only Hawes announces her book as a “florilegium of Pausanian selections” (1, citing Elsner 2001: 19), for which there are no "tidy explanations". Whether reading the Periegesis as a narrative would produce tidy explanations is another matter: there is meaning in the journey, when you’re constantly at risk of being tripped up by radical shifts in time and feel. There is politics too. Not the "explicit act of protest" (126) kind from which Hawes rightly steers away, but equally something more than ceding, "this is, simply, Greece as it appears to an individual deeply embedded within the prevailing culture of his time" (126). Though Hawes notes that "engagements with Greece’s past are political acts" (126) and that "there is no ‘neutral’ way to narrate Greek myth or to present its data" (109), a lingering nostalgia leads her at one point to conclude that "all the significant activity belongs to the past"; the narrative energy of these stories "has been spent"; "the world of the present passively receives the remains of the past" (71). But this is not the reading I took away, for example, from Hawes's discussion of the myth of Hymnetho (109-117), whose tomb two cities claim, first Argos (2.19.1), then Epidaurus (2.26.1-2). The shift marks her migration from her father’s city to her husband’s; but there’s more at stake when Pausanias rejects the tomb at Argos with the injunction: "whoever has not discovered the traditions of Epidaurus believe it!" For Hawes, this isn’t so much about sending the reader away to discover the "traditions of Epidaurus" (2.28.5-6) as an invitation "to read on, to learn what Pausanias has discovered" (115).

What Hawes is describing here is the text’s performativity. For all its "unpeopled emptiness", the Periegesis places "human experience — the realm of affect, idiomatic response, and mental engagement — at its heart" (26). Drawing on work by Luuk Huitink, Hawes relates how “ancient rhetoricians emphasize not the precision of epichrastic images, but their vividness (enargeia)" (35); that is, the "ability to transport the reader or the listener to the place of [their] choosing" (35-36). Hawes circles around the "bodily leap of imagination“ for a

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while (22; cf. 26, 28-29, 31-32, 33). But no sooner does she arrive at the point that vividness is not about the amount of detail "seen" but its "feel" (36, citing Huitink) than she appeals to autopsy: "For the reader on site, gazing on the Imperial City [of Thebes] with Pausanias' account in hand, no further words are necessary; the relationship of the two houses of Cadmos to one another, the material reality of the city, its depopulation, its touristic (re-)packaging — these are not riddles to be mulled over or scenarios to be imagined. These are observable facts" (40). This comes as a surprise, not least because Hawes has pointed out that for archaeologists working in situ the text "offers less a treasure map than a word-puzzle" (33). Were we to join the dots (28) or fill in the gaps (29) of Pausanias's description of Thebes (9.12.3-4), we would have "to make different decisions in rendering the unstipulated elements on a specific site plan" (29). Significantly, this description of accommodating imprecision recalls Elizabeth Minchin's enactivist approach to the depiction of civic festivity on Achilles's shield, the spatial vagueness of which allows each audience member to reimagine the scene for themselves and place themselves in it.4 Hawes herself cites the example of Libanios's criticism of Bemarchios, whose detailed description of a church at Antioch falls flat at Constantinople (Or. 1.41): "He rambled on and on about pillars, trellised courts, and intercrossing paths which came out of heaven knows where...". Words alone cannot transport an audience "to a place both visually unfamiliar and culturally meaningless" (41). Pausanias avoids precisely this kind of bewildering ecphrasis, not because he is relying on a reader's autopsy, but rather because, like Homer, he provides us with just enough information to think ourselves in the topography and feel part of it.

In my view Pausanias's enactivism challenges the reader at every turn to make sense of Greece's sites, particularly if we read his use of the second person as a way of placing the reader in the landscape, as Scarlett Kingsley has recently argued for Herodotus.5 His is a "restless narrative" (1) that, far from having had its narrative energy spent (71), "does something, that provokes active engagement from its readers" (30), and that leaves most of the work of recreating the overall impressions of a place to the reader (102). Following the path of Herodotus's performative inquiry (cf. 8-10, 37, 77-78, 140-143, 162-165), the Periegesis doesn't only represent a journey(ing) but reproduces one. Its enactivist description is not solved by autopsy but rather stimulates it. Building on her own "formative experience" (72) of reading Pausanias, which has immersed her "in the work of making sense of the Greek mainland" (73), Hawes describes the Periegesis as transmitting "to generations of readers something fundamental and quite beyond the realm of pure data". A reader like Patrick Leigh Fermor, who sets off to determine the site of the cave through which Heracles returned from Hades, to see whether this might in fact be an entrance to the underworld. "Leaving his wife Joan and skipper on board, he strips off his clothing and dives down into the depths of the cave" (75)...

Taking Hawes's path, Pausanias's narrative re-emerges from the gloom re-energised and reproducing for every intrepid adventurer who falls into it a series of negotiations that expose the "power dynamics which fuel the whole business of storytelling" (109). Her book, like the Periegesis, is a call-to-action, a stimulus to get involved in the business of working out what myth means in context, of placing myth. It is a book that will transmit to generations of readers something fundamental and quite beyond the realm of pure data.6

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6 Hawes has produced the data too. With Scott Smith, Hawes co-directs MANTO, a dynamic digital portal into Greek myth. Pausanias is one of (many) source texts.