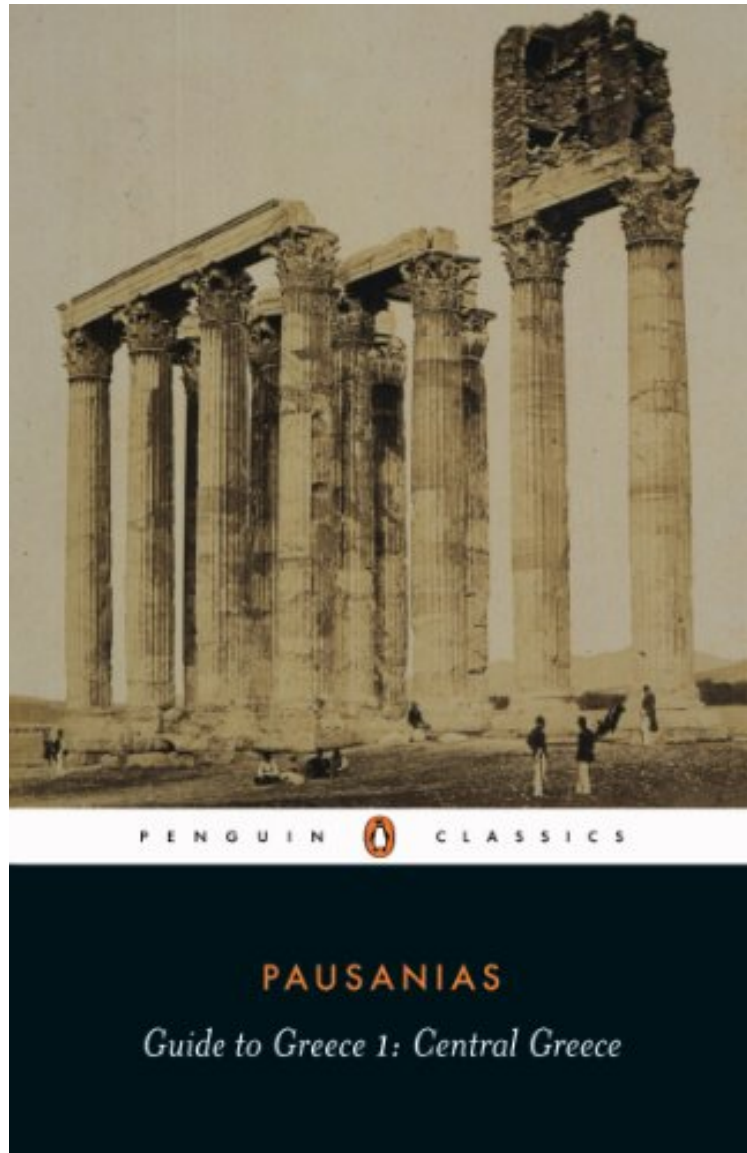


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Guide to Greece, Vol. 1: Central Greece

Pausanias

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Pausanias : Guide to Greece, Vol. 1: Central Greece before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Guide to Greece, Vol. 1: Central Greece:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Travel Guide of AntiquityBy Jan WoutersI always enjoyed Pausanias. He has a wealth of background information to share and many (though) of course not all of the landmarks he describes can still be visited. I think modern travel guides can pick up a few pointers from Pausanias for how to make a decent traveling guide9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Excellent source of info on ancient

Greece. By Alan U. Kennington I read this two years ago, cover-to-cover. It's an essential source for a very wide range of other books on the classical world. Every book I have read about ancient Greece has references to Pausanias. So it was inevitable that I should read this ancient "tour guide". The first thing to note is that this work is big. That means that it must have been of importance to the ancient world. Books only survived into the modern world if they were frequently copied, which cost a lot of money for such big works. This book is like an ancient geographical database. There is enough information for us to imagine what that ancient world was like. Particularly interesting to me was the account on pages 293-295 of the earthquake and tsunami in Helike. "There was an earthquake in the country that effected the demolition of every constructed thing, until the very foundations of the city were lost beyond the inquisition of future ages." My interest in this was stimulated by a TV documentary where archaeologists used the clues in Pausanias to locate and excavate Helike. On page 293 is this. "Further on is the river Selinous, and five miles from Aigion is a place on the coast called Helike. This is where the city of Helike stood and the most holy Ionian sanctuary of Helikonian Poseidon was here." And on page 295, there is this. "...the sea flooded in far over the land and overwhelmed the entire circuit of Helike, and the swell of the sea so covered the sacred grove of Poseidon that nothing could be seen but the tops of the trees. There was a sudden shock from the god, and with the earthquake the sea ran back, dragging down Helike in its backwash with every living man. The same happened in a different form at Mount Sipylos when a city disappeared into a chasm, and water gushed out from the crack in the mountain changing the chasm into Lake Saloe: you could see the ruins of the city in the lake, until the torrent covered up even the ruins. And you can see the ruins of Helike, though not so well now, and mutilated by the sea-water." The honesty and accuracy and level of detail of ancient authors such as Pausanias is astonishing. Even more surprising is the accurate copying of these works for 2000 years. Sometimes the long lists of descriptions of gods, heroes, statues, shrines, myths and legends become a little tiring. But the overall effect is to communicate in crystal clear terms that the ancient Greek and Roman world had a super-abundance of mythology and superstition. It's no wonder that monotheism was becoming popular as an alternative to the plethora of gods and their silly myths and legends. (See for example "Peeping Aphrodite" on page 209. "In the other part of the enclosure is Hippolytos's stadium; above it is the shrine of Peeping Aphrodite: whenever Hippolytos was exercising, Phaidra would watch him from up here and lust for him.") If the accounts in Pausanias seem a bit "too much information" sometimes, one should remember that modern tour guides also rabbit on a bit too much in tour buses. I should also mention that Pausanias is very much more enjoyable if you have a good atlas of the ancient world so that you can find all of the place-names. In fact, I often use books such as this to assist reading an atlas. This book gives meaning to the place names. One of these days, I'll read Volume 2: Southern Greece. 40 of 41 people found the following review helpful. Ian Myles Slater on A Personal Tour of an Antique Land By Ian M. Slater Yes, my title alludes to Shelley's poem about ancient Egypt, but the Greece that Pausanias describes has in many ways suffered a collapse as notable as that of Ozymandias. Looted before his time by Macedonians, Romans, and warring Greeks, it has since suffered from religious upheaval, antiquities collectors of various types, and, not least, the demolition of ancient structures to obtain building materials and limestone (for fertilizer). The notes to Peter Levi's translation (which is in two volumes -- if you order it, be sure to get both) gives many instances of these losses. This is not for someone planning a visit to Greece in the immediate future, nor easy reading for the curious (although browsing can be fun), but it is a remarkably valuable contribution to modern knowledge of the ancient world. Sometime during the reign of Hadrian, a very well-read Greek set down a description of the Greek mainland, paying attention mainly to pre-Roman structures and works of art. A long tradition of German scholarship has denied that Pausanias ever left his library, ignoring English "amateurs" who had little trouble following him on the ground. Those interested in this controversy, or uncertain of whether they want to commit themselves to a work of this size, can now turn to Christian Habicht's first-rate introduction to the book and its critical reception, "Pausanias' Guide to Ancient Greece." Habicht also evaluates existing translations, including this one. There is no substitute, however, for the riches lying within what looks like a dry account of buildings and natural wonders. First of all, Pausanias had the good sense to avoid retelling the best-known stories and historical episodes, and give space to lesser-known material. It is thanks to manuscripts of his work that we have, for examples, the stories of the Messenian struggles against Sparta (a fascinating mixture of history and patriotic romance), and some of the more obscure episodes of Athenian history under Macedonian rule. Secondly, Pausanias provides otherwise unknown versions of many classical myths, explaining exactly where they were told, and how they were connected to the local cults. This is an extremely valuable source for Greek mythology as part of a living culture, instead of a literary theme. From time to time we get a glimpse of rituals, and frequently we learn of abandoned cults and forgotten shrines -- it is sometimes hard to remember that the ancient world was subject to profound changes, even before the rise of Christianity or the Barbarian Invasions. (Come to think of it, Pausanias includes interesting details of a Celtic invasion of Greece which is seldom mentioned in modern general histories.) Finally, if read with great care, Pausanias provides an extraordinary amount of detail about the physical realities of the ancient world. Used with intelligence, it has been of enormous value to archeologists. On the other hand, the descriptions are sometimes extremely obscure, due to unstated assumptions as well as textual corruptions, and the application of Pausanias to the evidence of excavations has often been controversial. (Habicht is, again, a good introduction to the issues.) Although Levi's translation is not

always ideal (the distribution between two volumes is eccentric, and some passages, such as the list of Spartan kings, are shortened), and the line drawings which illustrate it are sometimes as frustrating as they are helpful, it is a handy, relatively inexpensive, and mostly very reliable, contribution. [Notes, September 2013: As will be evident to anyone reading this on, Penguin has since issued the "Guide" in a Kindle edition -- still in two "volumes" (which I find annoying). As for other translations, the bilingual Loeb Classical Library edition is still available in hardcover, and is still -- or, rather, more -- expensive than ten years ago. The excellent, but archeologically very, very dated, six-volume translation-with-commentary by J.G. Frazer (yes, the author of "The Golden Bough," and quite a bit more) has been reprinted, in hardcover and paperback editions. However, it is available *free* as a set of pdf files on Archive.org (a Library of Congress website), along with some translations from the eighteenth- and earlier nineteenth-centuries, which are mainly of curiosity value, unless one is tracing a history of scholarship on some place or topic. Frazer's impressive Classical scholarship still makes his four volumes of commentary (plus a separate index volume) a useful guide to other Classical sources and previous studies. Frazer's translation (in the first volume) is, naturally, rather Victorian-sounding, but not without literary merit.]

The first volume of the time-honored travel book about Greece, written 2,000 years agoWritten in the second century AD by a Greek traveller for a predominantly Roman audience, Pausanias' Guide to Greece is an extraordinarily literate and well-informed guidebook. A study of buildings, traditions and myth, it describes with precision and eloquence the glory of classical Greece shortly before its ultimate decline in the third century. This volume, the first of two, concerns the five provinces of central Greece, with an account of cities including Athens, Corinth and Thebes and a compelling depiction of the Oracle at Delphi. Along the way, Pausanias recounts Greek legends that are unknown from any other source and quotes a wealth of classical literature and poetry that would otherwise have been lost. An inspiration to Byron and Shelley, Guide to Greece remains one of the most influential travel books ever written. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

Language NotesText: English (translation) Original Language: GreekAbout the AuthorPausanias was a Greek geographer and native of Lydia who explored Greece, Macedonia, Asia and Africa, before settling in Rome. Pausanias is believed to have lived in the second half of the second century A.D. and is thought by some historians to have been a doctor as well as a scholar. Peter Levi was a Jesuit priest and archaeological correspondent for The Times before his appointment as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. In addition to his translation of Pausanias he also published biographies of Tennyson, Edward Lear, Virgil, Horace and John Milton, and 22 volumes of poetry.