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## Arkadia and the sea

Strabo in a few words sums up a perception of Arkadia that was common in antiquity, and is indeed still common today. Arkadia, he says (Strab. VIII 8, 1), is in the middle of the Peloponnese, and is made up largely of mountainous terrain. Arkadia, so described, would be cut off from the sea, and it may seem strange to speak in this conference of a region that had no access to the sea. In fact it is not strictly accurate to say that Arkadia did not have a coast in antiquity. Triphylia was Arkadian from 370 or 369 for an unknown period, ending at latest in the mid-third century B.C., and had a coastline, though it had no major harbour<sup>1</sup>. In addition Pausanias says that smaller ships could sail up the lower course of the Neda<sup>2</sup>. Frederick Cooper tentatively suggested that there might be mooring for a few ships on the Neda in the territory of Phigalia<sup>3</sup>. However, whatever allowance may be made for Triphylia's coast while it was Arkadian and for possible moorings at Phigalia, it is nonetheless true that most of Arkadia was not in direct contact with the sea.

In assessing the significance of Arkadia's generally land-locked situation it is worth remembering that a coastal position was not always exploited as fully as might have been by Greek states: in his history of archaic Argos Kelly observed that: «there is no reliable evidence that the city possessed a navy at any time in its history»<sup>4</sup>.

Various ancient texts illustrate the view that Arkadians were not men of the sea, from Homer onwards. In the Catalogue of Ships Homer says (*Il.* II 609-614) that Agapenor led the Arkadians to Troy in sixty ships, and that Agamemnon gave them the ships because 'seamanship was not their concern' (line 614). As late as

<sup>1</sup> Nielsen 1997: on harbours see Roy 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Paus. VIII 41, 3; see Freitag 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Cooper 1972.

<sup>4</sup> Kelly 1976, 103.

the first century B.C. or early first century A.D. Mantinea (then officially Antigo-nea) praised a man who had twice gone to Rome as an ambassador for the city. The text, which survives on an inscription (*JG* V 2, 268), lays heavy emphasis on the dangers of crossing the sea, saying that ‘the Adriatic, which people of the coast are wary of crossing even once, this man from the middle of the land (*mesogaios*) crossed twice without concern.’ Of course many Greeks besides the Arkadians saw the sea as dangerous<sup>5</sup>.

One piece of supposed evidence should however be rejected. In Book XI of the *Odyssey* (120-126) Teiresias tells Odysseus that he must travel, carrying an oar, until he comes to a land where men know nothing of the sea or ships and someone mistakes Odysseus’ oar for a winnowing-fan. On the basis of some coins issued by Mantinea in the fourth century Svoronos suggested that Teiresias might have been referring to Arkadia, and this suggestion is still accepted in Malkin<sup>6</sup>. However Lacroix has shown that the coins in question depict not Odysseus with an oar but a man performing the dance *pyrrhiche*.<sup>7</sup> Odysseus was nonetheless important in Arkadia, and was in several places linked with the god Poseidon. There were several cults of Poseidon in Arkadia, some of which had associations with the sea. At Mantinea, for instance, there was in the abaton of Poseidon a well of sea-water.<sup>8</sup>

Contact with coastal areas was economically important for Arkadia. A passage of Thucydides (I 120, 2) throws an interesting light on Arkadia’s economic reliance on the sea. At the congress of the Peloponnesian League in 432 the Corinthian envoys warn those of the allies who live in the interior that, although less directly threatened, they must help in defending the maritime allies against the Athenians or else they will find more difficult the export of their produce, and also the import of such goods as come by sea. In speaking of ‘those who live in the interior’ Thucydides does not name the Arkadians, but they must have made up by far the greatest part of the allies of the interior to whom the Corinthians delivered their warning. (Other allies concerned may have been inland parts of the Argolid, like Phlious. Most of Achaia, including the inland areas, did not form part of the Spartan alliance at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War: Thuc. II 9, 2). The word used by Thucydides for produce – *horaia* – applies particularly to agricultural produce.<sup>9</sup> It therefore appears that there was an export trade by sea of

<sup>5</sup> See Corvisier 2008, 94-108 on the dangers of sailing for the Greeks, while Picard 1938 surveys ancient Greek folklore concerning the sea.

<sup>6</sup> Malkin 1998, 120-126.

<sup>7</sup> Lacroix 1967; see also Walker 2006, 351, no. 1475. Apollodorus *Epitome* VII 34 says that the land in question was Thesprotia.

<sup>8</sup> On Poseidon in Arkadia see Mylonopoulos 2003, 98-131; on the well of sea-water at Mantinea see Paus. VIII 10, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Thuc. III 58, 4, the only other occurrence of the word in Thucydides; and also Xen. *Anab.*

produce, probably agricultural produce, from Arkadia, as well as an import trade.

There is also evidence that fish was transported from the coast into Arkadia, though it comes in two rather odd texts concerning Tegea. A fish-merchant who tried to cheat Epidaurian Asklepios of a promised tithe was struck by divine vengeance in the market-place at Tegea<sup>10</sup>, and a fish-porter who carried fish from Argos to Tegea won a contest at the Olympic Games<sup>11</sup>. In addition shell-fish must have been transported from the coast into Arkadia: remains of them have been found at Stymphalos<sup>12</sup>. Curiously, the Arkadian poet Pankrates, writing probably in the Hellenistic period, produced a work called 'the labours of the sea' (*thalassia erga*), cited several times by Athenaeus<sup>13</sup>. The lines quoted by Athenaeus<sup>14</sup> show that Pankrates was well-informed about fishing and sea-fish, but his knowledge may have come from books.

Arkadia naturally contributed little to Greek naval history. When in 413/2 Sparta imposed on its allies a programme of ship-building (Thuc. VIII 3, 2), in all one hundred ships were to be built, and the charge of construction was distributed among the allies. Arkadia, despite its forests, was assigned, together with Pellene and Sikyon, a total of only ten: its contribution was clearly limited. Later, as strategos of the Achaian League during a war against Nabis Philopoimen undertook a naval campaign. He had a ship launched that had not sailed for forty years: it leaked and endangered the lives of its crew. Philopoimen's naval campaign ended in defeat in a sea-battle (Plut. *Philop.* 14, 3). Plutarch narrates the event as a story of a landsman who did not understand sailing. However the sequel is interesting (Plut. *Philop.* 14, 4). Realising that the enemy would not expect him to attempt another venture by sea after his defeat, he put troops on board ships, landed them unexpectedly by night near Gythion, which the enemy was besieging, and burned the enemy camp and killed many men. Plutarch's passage in fact raises questions about the view that Arkadians were incompetent by sea.

There is certainly evidence to suggest that Arkadians were accustomed to sail.

In 365 Lykomedes, the leading political figure in the Arkadian Confederacy, went to Athens to negotiate an alliance. Once his object was achieved, he chose a boat on which to return home, and chose where it was to drop him: his destination must have been somewhere on the east coast of the Peloponnese, though Xenophon does not say where exactly. Unfortunately for Lykomedes there were Arkadian exiles at the place where he landed, and they took the opportunity to kill him.

V 3, 9 and 12; Xen. *Oec.* 15, 1; Plat. *Leg.* 845E-846A.

<sup>10</sup> *SEG* XI 423, 21-29.

<sup>11</sup> Arist. *Rhet.* 1365a and 1367b.

<sup>12</sup> Williams 1996, 96-97.

<sup>13</sup> *RE* 18.3: 612-4, *Pankrates* 3; *Brill's New Pauly* 10: 430, *Pankrates* 2.

<sup>14</sup> Athen. VII 283A, 305C and 321D.

Clearly Xenophon (*Hell.* VII 4, 3) tells the story because of the death of Lykomedes, and it is an incidental point, not worth special comment, that an Arkadian should choose to return home from Athens to Arkadia by sea. Also in 362 the Athenian forces going to join the anti-Spartan faction in Arkadia travelled by sea to the Peloponnese, landing in Lakonia (*Xen. Hell.* VII 5, 7): this may have been, at least partly, in order to avoid enemy forces on the way.

In the light of these reports it is worth examining a well-known fragment of the comic poet Hermippus (fr. 63 Kassel-Austin). The fragment offers a list of imports that Dionysos has brought to Athens, and the list includes, at line 18, Arkadian mercenaries. The verses make very clear that these imports are brought by sea: they are the goods that Dionysos trades on the wine-dark sea, and that he has brought in a black ship for men. In this list each item has two elements: a place (or a ruler associated with a place) and a product or products carried from that place by sea to Athens. Elements in the list are clearly comic: the opening of the passage, for instance, has clear echoes of Homer, giving a comically grand introduction, while the great and incongruous mixture of products in the list also has a comic colouring. However the various places mentioned do not appear to be inherently comic, whereas there are obviously jokes among the things transported (e.g. line 7 'an itch for the Spartans' from Seuthes, and line 8 from Perdikkas 'lies in very many ships'). The geographical locations of the places from which the imports come confirm that they will have been brought by sea: the only one about which there could be any doubt is Arkadia. However Lykomedes' voyage home shows that Arkadians travelled between Athens and Arkadia by boat, and there is no reason to doubt that Arkadian mercenaries too could travel to Athens by ship. In that they would resemble the mercenaries of Xenophon's *Anabasis* (V 1, 2-4; 2, 16; 3, 1) who showed a clear preference for sailing rather than marching. Also in the *Anabasis* (VI 4, 8) it is worth noting the language of Xenophon when he writes of the mercenaries who left Greece to join the Persian prince Kyros, many of whom were of course Arkadian. They were men who 'sailed out', going of course not simply to Athens but to Asia Minor, possibly via Athens. It is in any case clear that many Arkadians had experience of travelling by sea.

It is also clear that Arkadian ambassadors sailed when necessary, even if, as noted above, a decree of Antigonea (Mantineia) in the first century B.C. or early first century A.D. stressed the dangers for an ambassador who crossed the Adriatic twice. Megalopolis (or possibly Mantineia) sent an ambassador to Magnesia on the Maiander in the fourth century to ask for a contribution to the cost of building a city-wall.<sup>15</sup> In addition on a stele set up in the *agora* at Megalopolis in honour of Polybios a text in verse claimed, with evident pride, that he had traveled over every land and sea (Paus. VIII 30, 8).

When however we turn to myth, then the Arkadians appear in much more

<sup>15</sup> *Inschriften von Magnesia* 38 line 27: see Roy 2003.

frequent contact with the sea. A report in Pausanias (VIII 14, 10-11) illustrates the point. He says that at Pheneos behind the temple of Hermes there is the tomb of Myrtilos, and explains that the Greeks say that Myrtilos was the charioteer of Oinomaos. In the chariot-race that Oinomaos imposed on every suitor of his daughter Hippodameia Myrtilos drove skilfully, and during the race Oinomaos killed the suitor. In fact Myrtilos was himself in love with Hippodameia, but for want of boldness kept out of the competition, and continued to drive for Oinomaos. In the end however he betrayed Oinomaos, because Pelops promised under oath that he would let him sleep one night with Hippodameia. When Myrtilos reminded Pelops of the oath, Pelops threw Myrtilos off his ship. (Pausanias is clearly unsure of why Pelops was sailing, and supposes that the voyage was simply from the Alpheios to the port of Elis, which would be Kyllene: VIII 14, 12). The Pheneates say that they recovered the body of Myrtilos once it had been thrown up by the waves, and buried him. Thereafter once a year at night the Pheneates conducted a sacrifice to Myrtilos. It is not obvious how the people of Pheneos, far from the sea, could have recovered a body washed up on the shore, and the question has troubled modern commentators. Jost suggests that there may have been a cult to a local Pheneate figure called Myrtilos who was eventually identified with the man of the same name in the Oinomaos myth<sup>16</sup>, while Chuvin suggests that an episode of Elean myth may have been consciously transplanted into a local Pheneate myth<sup>17</sup>. While a local Pheneate myth may somehow have been combined with the widely known myths of Oinomaos and Pelops, there is also another, more straightforward, explanation. In myth the Arkadians were in frequent contact with the sea, and indeed travelled widely on it. That the Pheneates recovered the body of Myrtilos on the sea-shore is only one example, among many others.

Also in Pausanias (VIII 24, 3), for instance, we read that the acropolis of Zakynthos was called Psophis because the first man who crossed to Zakynthos by ship was Zakynthos son of Dardanos from Psophis, who was the founder of Zakynthos. Pausanias does not point out – though he presumably knew it – that Zakynthos' father Dardanos had sailed even farther, to Samothrace and then to Asia Minor, where he was the eponym of the Dardanians<sup>18</sup>. Other such examples could be cited, but in what follows only a few cases of major importance are set out<sup>19</sup>.

The myth of Telephos and his mother Auge is well-known, especially because of its importance for the Attalids of Pergamon<sup>20</sup>. Auge was the daughter of

<sup>16</sup> Jost 1998, 191 on Paus. VIII 14, 10-11.

<sup>17</sup> Chuvin 1992, 329; see also the comments of Moggi and Osanna 2003, 359.

<sup>18</sup> Versions of the myth of Dardanos putting his birth in Arkadia seem to be fairly late: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* I 50, 2-3 and 61, 1-5 gives a full version. On Dardanos see Thrämer 1901.

<sup>19</sup> On myths of Arkadian foundations overseas see Scheer 1993, 2010 and 2011.

<sup>20</sup> The deployment of the Telephos-myth at Pergamon is examined at length in Scheer 1993,

Aleos king of Tegea, himself a grandson of Arkas. Auge became pregnant by Herakles and was cast out by her father. Details of the myth vary in different versions, but Telephos and his mother arrived, separately or together, in Teuthrania in Mysia. Telephos played a leading role in fighting the Greeks when they attacked Teuthrania in the mistaken belief that they were attacking Troy. Having received a wound from Achilles' spear that would not heal, Telephos had to go, in accordance with an oracle, to Argos to find the Achaians and be cured by rust from the spear that had wounded him. He then showed the Greeks the way to Troy. Telephos succeeded Teuthras as king of Teuthrania, and was thus the leading hero of the area in which the town of Pergamon developed from, at least, the fifth century. His story was told by poets from the archaic period onwards. The Greeks' attack on Teuthrania was treated in the *Cypria*, of the late archaic period, and Telephos descendant of Arkas appears in the newly-found poem of Stesichorus<sup>21</sup>. Telephos was then the subject of a tragedy by Euripides, and appeared elsewhere in literature. When the Attalids came to power in Pergamon in the third century Telephos was thus a well-known hero with very strong links to their territory. The Attalids therefore promoted the legend of Telephos, and by the time of Attalos III, if not before, he was considered their legendary ancestor<sup>22</sup>. His most famous memorial at Pergamon was the frieze depicting scenes from his life on the Great Altar on the acropolis of Pergamon. For present purposes what matters is how Auge was cast out by her father, and how she crossed the sea to Asia Minor. There are various versions: in that given by Pausanias (VIII 4, 9), for which he cites Hecataeus as source, Aleos put Auge and the baby Telephos in a chest and cast them into the sea. On the frieze at Pergamon there is a scene in which Aleos, the king and Auge's father, watches carpenters build the boat in which Auge is to be cast out, while Auge herself, wrapped in a cloak, sits waiting. Evidently a king of Tegea has no difficulty in casting his daughter out on the sea.

The mythical voyages of Arkadians to Italy were also famous. Though the number varies in different accounts, in Arkadian myth the sons of Lykaon were always numerous. Many of them became oikists of cities, or gave their names to geographical regions and their inhabitants. Of these several went to Italy. Fabre has plotted on a map the travels of sons of Lykaon from the Peloponnese to Italy, or to places on the Adriatic: his map is composite, drawing on a range of different sources<sup>23</sup>. Not all of these sons of Lykaon were significant: Nikandros, writing in the third or second century and quoted by Antoninus Liberalis *Metamorphoseon*

71-152: within that treatment pp. 138-141 are devoted to the Telephos-frieze on the Great Altar of Pergamon.

<sup>21</sup> *P. Oxy.* 4708: see Obbink 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Hansen 1971, 469.

<sup>23</sup> Fabre 1981, 37 bis, carte n. 12.

*synagoge* 31, gave the Daunians in Italy as ancestor Daunus son of Lykaon. However Daunus son of Lykaon never reappears, and seems to have been an unsuccessful literary addition to the list of Lykaon's sons. However Daunus' brothers Oinotros and Peuketios were well-established as the ancestors of Italian peoples. Dionysius of Halicarnassus writes at some length about Oinotros<sup>24</sup> citing Sophocles, Antiochus of Syracuse, and Pherecydes. Dionysius explains that Lykaon had twenty-two sons and had to share Arkadia among them<sup>25</sup>: Oinotros was not content and, with his brother Peuketios, left the Peloponnese and sailed to Italy. Dionysius goes on to say that with Oinotros and Peuketios were many Arkadians, and also other Greeks who did not have enough land. They all sailed in an Arkadian fleet:

ταύτης μὲν δὴ τῆς αἰτίας ἔνεκα Πελοπόννησον Οἴνοτρος ἐκλιπὼν  
καὶ κατασκευασάμενος ναυτικὸν διαίρει τὸν Ἰόνιον πόρον καὶ σὺν  
αὐτῷ Πευκέτιος τῶν ἀδελφῶν εἷς.

For that reason Oinotros left the Peloponnese and, having equipped a fleet (*nautikon*), crossed the Ionian Sea, and with him Peuketios, one of his brothers.

The most famous Arkadian migrant to Italy was however Evander, who founded the first settlement on the Palatine at Rome<sup>26</sup>. There were many accounts of Evander, who appears already in Hesiod (fr. 109 and 112 K), and in Stesichorus and Pindar. He attracted great attention in Augustan Rome: Virgil describes at length how Aineas finally arrived at Rome and met Evander and his Arkadians, already established for sixty years on the Palatine (*Aen.* VIII 25-406), and there are also extended accounts of Evander at Rome in Dionysius of Halicarnassus and in Ovid's *Fasti*<sup>27</sup>, besides mentions in Livy and Varro<sup>28</sup>. Of the three extended Augustan treatments, that of Virgil presents Evander when he is already long-established on the Palatine, but both Dionysius and Ovid speak of how Evander travelled, and how he arrived at Rome. For Dionysius it was a relatively modest expedition, involving the crews of two ships<sup>29</sup>. Ovid however shows first Evander's own ship sailing to Italy and then up the Tiber amid the advice and prophecies of his mother Carmentis<sup>30</sup>:

<sup>24</sup> Dion. Hal. *Rom. Ant.* I 11, 2-13, 3.

<sup>25</sup> Dion. Hal. *Rom. Ant.* I 11, 3.

<sup>26</sup> On mythical Arkadian connections with Rome see Gruen 2011, 243-9, with references to earlier work.

<sup>27</sup> Ovid *Fasti*, especially 1.461-586 but also 2.279-80, 4.65, 5.91-100 and 643-8, and 6.505-6.

<sup>28</sup> Liv. I 5, 1-2; Varr. *LL* V 21 and 53.

<sup>29</sup> Dion. Hal. *Rom. Ant.* I 31, 1-4.

<sup>30</sup> Ovid. *Met.* 1.497-500.

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*vocibus Evander fermata mente parentis  
nave secat fluctus Hesperiamque tenet.  
iamque ratem doctae monitu Carmentis in amnem  
egerat et Tuscis obvius ibat aquis.*

His spirit strengthened by his parent's words, Evander with his ship cleft the waves and reached Hesperia. At now with the guidance of wise Carmentis he had directed the ship into the river and was advancing, meeting the Tuscan waters.

Then, as Evander lands, we learn that an Arkadian fleet of several ships has reached the site of Rome<sup>31</sup>:

*puppibus egressus Latia stetit exul in herba,  
felix exilium cui locus ille fuit!*

Landing from the ships, he stood an exile on the grass of Latium, fortunate to have that as his place of exile.

Great is the power of the mythical sea, on which Arkadian fleets sailed.

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<sup>31</sup> Ovid. *Met.* 1539-540.

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*Abstract*

Arkadia had no direct access to the sea, except at Phigalia to a limited extent and, for a time, in Triphylia. Arkadia's landlocked position was commented on in antiquity, from Homer's *Catalogue of Ships* onwards. Yet Arkadia appears to have been linked to sea-borne trade, both imports and exports. In addition Arkadians certainly travelled by sea, including men who left Arkadia to serve as mercenaries. Even more striking, however, is the ready contact that Arkadians had with the sea in myth. This is attested both in purely local myths attached to communities within Arkadia and in more widely known myths that linked Arkadia to influential areas outside Greece. Three examples of the latter are examined: the myth of Telephos, taken up and promoted by the Attalids of Pergamon; the myth of sons of Lykaon, notably Oinotros and Peuketios, who gave their names to areas of Italy; and the myth of Evander, who founded the first settlement on the Palatine and was used by Roman writers to establish links between Arkadia and Rome. All three examples involved travel overseas from Arkadia, and in some versions such travel involved the movement of Arkadian fleets.