

REVIEW

SOUNDSCAPE AND LANDSCAPE AT PANHELLENIC GREEK SANCTUARIES.

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Soundscape and landscape are underestimated subjects and this for several reasons, not least the fact that archaeological remains are indirect evidence and need special hermeneutical devices. Even more abstruse is the interpretation of literary references to ancient sounds and landscapes. Even more challenging is to study both issues in a ritual context, considering how difficult is to study any cultural or religious subject. Let's remind that culture and religion are concepts derived from Latin words and do not have correspondents in ancient Greek. Erica Angliker and Angela Bellia accepted the challenge and gathered other three daring scholars from different countries: Fábio Vergara Cerqueira (Brazil), Pamela Jordan (USA and The Netherlands) and Lucio Maria Valletta (Italy and France). The resulting volume proves that new avenues are open for further exploration.

The volume aims at stimulating the study of music at Greek Panhellenic sanctuaries offering a multidisciplinary reconsideration of performances at these sites, including archaeology, history, Greek language and literature, art history and architecture. Looking for new perspectives the volume gathers

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case studies and there is a concluding afterword (towards a soundscape archaeology). Fábio Vergara Cerqueira focuses on a couple of musical instruments, aulos (flute or double flute) and salpinx (trumpet or war-trumpet), at the most important sanctuary at Olympia. The aulos was more suitable for athletic competitions and the salpinx was more appropriate for quadriga races. The salpinx may reinforce the ideology of virility at the festival. Albeit a generalization, the duality scheme of aulos/female and salpinx/male proposed by Aristides Quintilianus (*On Music*, 2, 15-16) is worth considering. Erica Angliker explores the many functions of sound at the ancient sanctuary of Zeus at Dodona, Epirus in northwestern Greece. Even if it is hard to know its origins, it is possibly as early as the Bronze Age (2600-1900 BCE). From the Classical period onwards, the sanctuary functioned as a neutral zone between Greek states. Zeus was deemed to speak through the sound produced by the movement of the sacred oak leaves in the wind. The sacred space near the oak was a soundscape. The sound of the bronze cauldrons at Dodona had an apotropaic function. It is possible that bronze cauldrons sounds would have been perceived as human voices. Other sounds, coming from wood pigeons or the repetitive gongs, could also have created impressions of the human voice, enhancing the religious atmosphere at the sanctuary.

Experimental archaeology also plays a role. Recordings on-site may use binaural recording technology and psychoacoustic analyses. The use of a pair of microphones transmitted separately to the two ears of the listener helps to recreate the sonic atmosphere. The branch of psychology concerned with the perception of sound and its physiological effects contributes to guess the ancient soundscape and its subjective perception by ancient people themselves. Pamela Jordan applies those techniques to the sanctuary to Zeus on Mount Lykaion. The sanctuary layout is characterized by an upper

and lower sanctuary, 200 m in elevation below the summit. It is proposed that the architecture concretized previously existing practices and relationships embedded within the landscape through hundreds of years of previous operation and experience. A phenomenological approach is also proposed, trying and reassessing acceleration, choreography and marching in ritual movement, integrating action and practice, beyond reflection. Performance is key here. Cult rituals often involved song, music, performance, and places of resonance, such as caves, often sites of worship. The sonic character of the space would be one of shared, public exposure, permeability, and reverberation. The hypothesis of the presence of an interior creating a form of echo near where Pan was worshipped is captivating.

Divine sway as acting in a numinous ambience depended on a soundscape too, as studied in the temples of Hera (Heraia) in Magna Graecia, including built cultic environment and its natural surroundings. Angela Bellia resorts to the archaeology of musical performance. At Poseidonia, Hera cult had an extra-urban liminal position, as in the Argive and Peloponnesian religious tradition and this may be related to Hera herself the goddess of the cultivated and wild landscapes, a female fertility deity. The Heraion at the mouth of the River Sele, some five kms north of Poseidonia, produced fragments of aulos, possibly used to propitiate fertility associated to Hera. A different approach is put into action to explore literary sources relating to Spartan choral performances. Thucydides (1.10.2) famously mentioned the absence of costly temples and buildings in Sparta. Lucio Maria Valletta then explores conceptual aspects as present in ancient and modern literature. The religious thought is taken as an element of the process of acculturation, domestication or anthropization of space, creating landscape, including soundscape. Valletta starts by studying Alcman's poem (fr.3 88-91 Calame): "She is actually the one who heals our

strains; and from Hagesichora (female chorus-leader) the girls will get lovely peace". In relation to the wider environmental context related to main Spartan sacred places a couple of elements were determinant for the soundscape: water and wind. The Spartan presence in a wider Panhellenic cultic context served to affirm the presence of Sparta in a wider Greek world. In the afterword, Angela Bellia starts by joining Christopher Tilley in arguing that the experience of landscapes could provide us with a deeper knowledge of past cultures on an experiential level and consequently foster new interpretations of material culture. Soundscapes are discussed theoretically but the applied study of ancient soundscapes is still very much open to archaeological exploration. Acoustical research focused on physical aspects of sound must be followed by cultural and performative anthropological and archaeological interpretive proposals. Acoustemology, acousteme, or the potential of acoustic knowing is an innovative approach proposed by Steven Feld in 2015. Only by acknowledging, investigating, and recognizing the role of sound in a landscape we can cope with the complex relationship between spaces, social interactions, and the environment. The volume is thus an invitation to pay attention to a subject often neglected in the past, for several reasons, not least the intricacies of understanding soundscape in different cultures. But also, by the fact that it is not that easy to figure out past sounds in action. However, it is a path worth taking, rendering the past a multisensory experience.