BRULÉ (P.) **Comment percevoir le sanctuaire grec? Une analyse sensorielle du paysage sacré**. Paris: Les Belles Lettres. 2012. Pp. 261. €25.50. 9782251444536.
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Brulé will be familiar to the majority of Classical scholars for his excellent books, edited volumes and articles over the last three decades on varying aspects of ancient Greek religious practice (for example *La fille d'Athénes*, Paris 1987; *La norme en matière religieuse en Grèce ancienne*, Liège 2009). This book in turn represents the results of a long period of consideration on the fundamental ways in which we perceive and study the sacred in ancient Greece.

Central to this work is the idea that we are missing out on a crucial part of the way in which the sacred was conceived of by the ancient Greeks if we focus solely on the built architecture of the sanctuary. Instead, this book seeks to identify and analyse the role and sense of nature in the creation of the 'sacred'. It asks, on the one hand, what were the salient parts of the natural landscape perceived by the ancient Greeks as denoting the presence of a divinity and which catalysed the labelling of a particular place as sacred; and, on the other, to what extent did thinking about the divine conjure up in the ancient Greek mind a series of particular images and landscapes? This work, as a result, goes far beyond the traditional *temenos* of the 'sanctuary' and engages more widely with what Brulé terms 'l'archèologie des sensations' (225).

In responding to his challenge, Brulé offers us a complex and detailed analysis of the literary evidence for the identification, categorization and perception of 'sacred' landscapes in the first half of the book and an extremely useful and diverse investigation of the epigraphic evidence for the maintenance and protection of particular kinds of natural landscapes within 'sacred spaces' in the second half of the book. What emerges as a result, Brulé argues, is the importance of key factors, such as 'beauty' (33), 'charm' and 'purity' (for example 39) as well as the density of natural features (for example 210) and the presence of a topological specificity (for example 210) in the association of a natural landscape with the divine. Most useful as well is his confident treatment of the variety of Greek terms associated with the 'sacred' (25–90), as well as his argument for an enduring Greek concern both with maintaining the integrity of a sacred landscape (193) and for the description of the sacred often by way of advertising what it is not (200). In parts, Brulé also strengthens his argument by reference to Biblical, Achaemenid and modern examples (for example 17, 210).

This is a rich, diverse and thought-provoking work, and, in its essence, few will not applaud Brulé's goal to widen our gaze when it comes to the essence of the sacred in ancient Greek culture. The two halves of the book amass a fascinating and difficult range of evidence about what is, as all will agree, a slippery and subtle topic, and Brulé is by and large convincing in his central argument that the natural landscape was more important in shaping the sacred than we have previously given it credit for. In this vein, his work overlaps with that of other recent works, such as S. Cole, *Landscapes, Gender and Ritual Space: the Ancient Greek Experience* (Berkeley 2004), and more generally the developing field of the archaeology of the senses (*cf*. much of the recent work of Yannis Hamilakis); this makes it even more surprising that Brulé does not take all the previous work in this field into account. There is no mention, for example, of the central work perhaps closest to Brulé's thesis (particularly 63–69): V. Scully, *The Earth, the Temple and the Gods: Greek Sacred Architecture* (New Haven 1969). The book does, however, offer a rich range of literary and epigraphical sources (translated into French with the key Greek terms and phrases picked out), as well as a useful index of both French and Greek terms.

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HORSTER (M.) and KLÖCKNER (A.) *Eds* **Civic Priests: Cult Personnel in Athens from the Hellenistic Period to Late Antiquity** (Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten 58). Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2012. Pp. 249. €99.95. 9783110-258073.
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This book collects together seven papers by six authors who took part in a workshop held in Berlin in March 2010. Each paper is provided with a bibliography and an index closes the volume.

As the two editors explain in a short introduction, the main questions concern the social and political functions of cult personnel in the civic community and how the priest's identity was

constructed in the city. The frame is Athens and Delos under the last Athenian domination, from the Hellenistic period to late antiquity; the editors reserve for a future book Asia Minor and the Aegean islands (now published: M. Horster and A. Klöckner (eds), *Cities and Priests: Cult Personnel in Asia Minor and the Aegean Islands from the Hellenistic to the Imperial Period*, Berlin 2013).

In the first paper, M. Horster offers a useful overview of key questions and trends in recent research on priests and cult personnel, and their place within the social and religious life of their societies. She then proposes potential new areas for further study.

A. Klöckner presents a detailed study of two votive reliefs dedicated by Attic priests (the Lacrateides' relief and a relief of a hierophant) as case studies of priestly representation and self-fashioning in the late Hellenistic and imperial periods. If her interpretations of these reliefs raise some doubts, the last two chapters contain interesting reflections on the connection of these reliefs with Classical models and on the relationship between priest and god.

In a well-documented paper, S.D. Lambert explores the social construction of priests in the Athenian decrees honouring them dating from the fourth century BC to the Augustan period; texts and translations of the 28 decrees analysed are presented in a large appendix. Lambert shows that in the language of these decrees, the services performed by the priests and the qualities they were expected to display, there was no significant difference between *genos* and 'democratic' priesthoods, not even between priests and magistrates, but there was between feminine and masculine priesthoods. The diachronic analysis of the material reveals an emphasis on the personal contributions of the priests from the Hellenistic period onwards, an evolution which was driven by the creation of an increasingly narrow economic and political elite. Gradually, and especially after the 166 BC acquisition of Delos, this elite also became an elite of birth, by means of family strategies.

Compared to Lambert's paper, the contribution of E. Perrin-Saminadayar seems somewhat redundant (his appendix 3 reproduces virtually all the texts of Lambert's appendix). The author scrutinizes the honorific decrees from Athens and Delos during the second Athenian domination in order to establish the place held by priests in the city during this period. He concludes that priests were treated like all holders of an *arche*, which is to be explained, according to a prosopographical analysis, by their shared membership of the same social group of leading citizens. But Lambert observes that this similarity between priests and magistrates was already visible in the fourth-century honorific decrees of the city. However, one important conclusion of this prosopographical enquiry is that the priesthood was not a simple first step before assuming more prestigious functions.

In a long paper, M. Horster poses an interesting question: why, in Athens, were the names of certain priests who served longer than one year used as eponyms in the inscriptions of the sanctuary? The answer to this question conducts her to examine the political and religious implications of the tenure of priesthoods and their method of selection. Concerning the use of the names of the lifelong priestesses of Athena Polias on the Acropolis and of Demeter and Kore in Eleusis on votives, Horster rightly says that this is no eponymy. She sees a connection between the young feminine cult officials (frequently honoured in these inscriptions) and the priestesses who were responsible for them, the persons whom the dedicating relatives would think appropriate to name in an inscription. This hypothesis, however, does not explain the votives for other people which bear the name of the priestess. If these lifelong priestesses are mentioned on votives, isn't it simply because it is under their authority over the sanctuary that the votive has been dedicated?

E. Sironen addresses an extremely important topic – the Attic priests of late antiquity – based on a collection of 52 inscriptions dated to around AD 200–500, with the addition of some references from a few late antique authors. But this short study is based on a 100-year-old epigraphical corpus, and arbitrarily separates the priesthoods of the Olympian gods from the others, disregarding the epicleses.

J.N. Bremmer closes this volume with considerations based on Lambert's and Sironen's papers. He asks good questions, but often gives astonishing answers. For example, while attempting to examine how people would have looked at the last pagan priests, he sees a certain 'globalization' of the priestly figure in late antiquity, and concludes that 'the rise of the ruler cult must have been a unifying factor in the originally so multifarious world of the Greek city' (227). The concluding considerations, where the author explains the defeat of the pagan priests by their Christian counterparts, saying, for example, that 'flexibility

made the Greek priesthood much more liable to political manipulation than the Christian one' (230), have no place in a scholarly book.

In short, this book deals with an important and stimulating theme, considering the material from both historical and archaeological perspectives. One can find a lot of interesting reflections on the subject, but one can deplore the disparity in quality of the papers.

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CHANIOTIS (A.) *Ed*. **Ritual Dynamics in the Ancient Mediterranean: Agency, Emotion, Gender, Representation** (Habes 49). Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011. Pp. 390, illus. €62. 9783515099165.
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Chaniotis opens his introduction to this edited volume of collected papers with an aspiration about the 'challenges that face modern students of ancient rituals': 'to overcome the experiences and biases of their own time and culture, and to overcome the shortcomings of the source material' (9). The first of his challenges is absolutely to the point – especially in the arena of religion where it is so difficult, even in what may already be a post-Christian culture, to shed our Christianizing expectations. The second, however, is extremely strange. That we should aspire to tell stories that are as plausible as possible based on a wise assessment of the great difficulties of our exiguous empirical evidence, would be uncontroversial. But what could it mean 'to *overcome* the shortcomings of the source material'? Surely overcoming the meagre evidence is precisely the danger and not the aspiration! Cautious empirical evaluation of the potential of that meagre evidence may be a problematic and unsatisfactory exercise, but how could anything else give us any confidence we are getting closer to, rather than further from, the ancient world?

In the context of this volume, it is the particular leap from our exiguous evidence to conclusions about ancient emotions ('almost all the papers in this volume address aspects of the relation of ritual to emotion', 14) that is in question. And this leap shows up the dangers most clearly; identifying emotions is extremely difficult without foregrounding the 'experiences and biases of [our] own time and culture'. Chaniotis' own paper exemplifies admirably the problem about the move to emotion. Starting from the truism that 'emotions were an inherent feature of every Greek festival' (264), he then has his evidence demonstrate the point and ends by showing how emotions create emotional communities. For any of this to work, you have not only to assume – as we surely must – that emotions were inherent to Greek festivals, but also to believe that the evidence proves it. But does the evidence in fact do so? Can it? In support of the claim that 'the prevailing emotion is that of affection between the worshipper and the dedicated slave', Chaniotis quotes this inscription (279):

> I, Maria, a sacred slave of the Mother of the Gods and lighter of lamps, dedicate to the goddess a girl, by the name of Theodote, whom I bought immediately after her birth and raised, approximately three years old.

I don't see any explicit emotion here, let alone affection. How would the inscription have been different if Maria had loathed the sight of Theodote and decided that this was the best way to get rid of her? The only way to see what Chaniotis sees, is through some version of the 'experiences and biases of [our] own time and culture'. Is there a way out of this dilemma? At the very least we need a rigorous methodological discussion of all the stages by which one can extrapolate emotion – or any other entailment – out of this kind of evidence. And I remain very sceptical of the modern category of emotion as an analytic model by which to assess the ancient world.

Chaniotis has arranged an impressively wide-ranging volume that moves from ancient Egypt to Rome chronologically and across the entire Mediterranean basin. The papers span a great variety of sub-disciplines within Classical studies, from epigraphy and archaeology to literary studies (for example on Homer and on Attic drama) and even to the ancient historians. Many contributions are theoretically informed, but the role that theory plays is problematic, since the sparse ancient evidence is simply not capable of proving some modern sociological or anthropological theory relevant to the particularities of antiquity (even to begin to attempt such a proof would require much more empirical demonstration of the appropriateness of any given method than this volume offers). Given the grand claims about the volume's themes ('agency, change, emotion, gender and representation', 15) it is striking that these are never defined and the reader is never shown how they might help us seek empirical access into a lost experiential world.