

**M. Emerson, *Greek Sanctuaries and Temple Architecture: An Introduction* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition).** Bloomsbury 2018 ISBN: 978-1-4725-7528-9. Pp.xvii + 270. Illustrations: 119 +2 maps

Emerson's popular and very useful introduction to Greek sanctuaries and Temple Architecture has been reprinted in a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (first edition 2007), with updates and new chapters by the author.

In this review, I first comment on the book as a whole and its core text as has been published in both the 2007 and 2018 editions, before, second, looking in more detail at the new sections that have been added to the 2018 edition.

Emerson herself is at pains to emphasise throughout that this book should be understood as 'an introduction' to the topics it covers. It is aimed at "the reader who knows little or nothing, but would like to gain reasonably in-depth knowledge quickly" (preface). One of the great pluses of the book is that it presume no previous knowledge.

Chapter 2 focuses on 'what was a sanctuary'. This is an important and too often overlooked question for the study of Greek religion. As Emerson points out, not every sanctuary was grand full of ornate buildings and sculpture. A sanctuary could be just a grove of trees. Very little, as Emerson notes, is essential to a sanctuary's architecture, making almost everything in it an active choice by those tending it, financing it, and using it. That makes sanctuaries incredibly detailed and nuanced reflections of their communities.

Emerson divides sanctuaries into 'local' or 'panhellenic' (p. 7) – either run by a local community for the local community or intended for the use of all Greeks. Here I would like to have seen a little more nuance, especially given the earlier emphasis on the variety of sanctuary architecture and user groups. What is a local sanctuary to one community (say the local community of Delphians at Delphi) is a panhellenic sanctuary to others (everyone else). Equally some sanctuaries desperately tried to be panhellenic but in reality never lifted themselves above the local (like Eleusis). And what about sanctuaries that were used by a group of communities, but perhaps not by all Greeks? In that sense these labels are becoming less helpful in understanding the variety and flexibility of the experience, meaning and identity of Greek sanctuaries, and need to be dispensed with.

Emerson treats on the issue of access to temples on page 11, which is again a much overlooked topic and its great to see it included here. Just who could go where and when in sanctuaries is fundamental to how we understand them, and the gathering evidence is that, once again, there was huge variety in access depending on sanctuary, time of year, who the person was, etc.

Emerson's chapter 3 is an excellent introduction to the different elements of Greek architecture and the different orders of building. The end of the chapter (pp. 22–3) flags the enormous and fascinating nature particularly of temples in Eastern Greece, on the

Western coast of Asia Minor. This is absolutely right, and underlines an odd point about this book (especially in its 2<sup>nd</sup> edition) in that it does not then go on to offer an in-depth case-study from the East at all. This is one of the major elements lacking in this volume.

Chapter 4 offers another excellent introduction to architectural sculpture (new to this edition), importantly thinking about issues of colour added to the material, but is sadly short in comparison to the architecture chapter. This could be greatly expanded to think about the many other important aspects and ideas behind architectural sculpture, as well as some other mini case studies.

Subsequent chapters focus on particular sanctuary complexes: Delphi in Chapter 5; Olympia in Chapter 6 – both of which are substantial and interesting introductions to these sanctuaries. Chapter 7 focuses on the historical background of the Athenian acropolis and its development up to the mid 5<sup>th</sup> century; Chapter 8 on the Parthenon, Chapter 9 on the Propylaia; Chapter 10 on the sanctuary of Athena Nike on the Acropolis; Chapter 11 on the Erechtheion. As such we have 5 chapters focusing on one major sanctuary (the ‘Acropolis’) in Athens which reflects the inevitable way in which Athens and Athenian architecture and sculpture dominated the historical and art and architectural record. This is a bit of a missed opportunity to balance the Athenian material (which is often odd and unusual in many ways) with a wider range of case-studies of different sanctuaries from across mainland Greece, not least because Chapter 12 jumps to another well known Athenian temple (although not on the Acropolis) – the Hephaisteion – although the reason for this ‘sanctuary’ being included as opposed to the many others in the agora vicinity of Athens or indeed more widely across Athens is not given. In many ways it would have been more interesting to have a case study of a sanctuary at the borders of Attica (Sounion, Rhamnous) as a comparison to those at the centre of the city.

Chapter 13, again focused on the Acropolis and adding to the particular weighting of the book, however offers a different and important question: asking how viewers understood and thought about the Acropolis when looking at it from different perspectives, and equally what kinds of vistas of their polis they got when looking at it from different directions on the Acropolis. It is exactly this kind of multiplicity and meaning inherent within Greek sanctuaries that it is becoming increasingly important to convey, and Emerson should be commended for including this.

Chapter 14 offers us another case-study – that of the sanctuary of Apollo at Bassae. This is a great counterbalance to the case-studies so far (big, massive, ‘panhellenic’ sanctuaries), and deserved further discussion particularly as to whom its community of users might have been. Chapter 15 (one of the new additions to the 2018 edition) is focused on Paestum. In many ways, this feels like an odd choice – especially, as Emerson notes, the chapter focuses on the sacred buildings of a whole colony, not just a sanctuary (and indeed even extends to look at the territory the colony controlled and sanctuaries in that too). She justifies the choice on the basis of the site’s completeness, its ‘ease to assimilate’, and its ‘excellent museum’ (p. 187). The chapter is as a result as much

bound up in the history of colonisation as it is about the sanctuary, with the result that the descriptions of the temples become increasing bullet-point lists of architectural details (pp. 200–1). I worry here that this approach puts off the introductory reader that Emerson is aiming for, and makes these new additions to the book feel underprepared (they read like research notes more than finished text).

Chapter 16, another new addition, looks at the Temple of Olympian Zeus at Akragas (Agrigento) in Sicily. Again the choice is odd – this time a single (gigantic) temple in contrast to the colony/territory treated before. The description of the temple is detailed and interesting but again I question whether it is at the correct register for the introductory reader, although I much enjoyed the section on ‘influences’ on pp. 242–6 – asking the question where the architect derived the idea for such a giant temple.

Chapter 17 feels oddly positioned: after several chapters on case-study sanctuaries/colonies/ temples, we return to a thematic note with ‘Looking at Art in Greek Sanctuaries.’ Again this is an important aspect of study – how people engaged with and thought about the things they saw in sanctuaries. The chapter focuses on an engagement with the text of Euripides *Ion*, where visitors to Delphi marvel at some of the sculptures they see. It is a useful and interesting section, but I wonder if it should have been placed with, or within the chapter on architectural sculpture.

Overall this remains a useful introduction, although I am not sure that the additions to it in the 2018 version help or hinder its purpose. They also raise the issue of a huge gap in this text: any thorough examination of a sanctuary site in the Greek East. Perhaps for the edition in 2028?

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