
Living beyond Borders. Lived Spaces in the Ancient Proasteion

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Abstract

In studies of the Greek city, the lived spaces of the acropolis, asty and chora have been extensively treated. We are acquainted with the organization of these territorial entities and the lived spaces connected to them (urban temples, agorai, residential and productive quarters, extra-urban sanctuaries, farms, fortresses, etc.).

Conversely, the suburban territory between asty and chora (beyond the walls or beyond a border), which ancient sources identified with the term proasteion/proastion, did not receive the same interest.

Proasteia, mostly related to burial areas, were complexly organized districts that housed commercial, productive, political, social, economic and religious activities. For these reasons, they are perfect contexts for thinking about the lived spaces of ancient communities.

Moreover, the topic of suburban spaces, which has been a long-developed in Roman archaeological research, has been much neglected in studies of the Greek world. The most important publication on this theme is: "Proasteion. Recherches sur le périurbain dans le monde grec" edit by Pascal Darcque, Roland Étienne and Anne-Marie Guimier-Sorbets.

This book, published in 2013 in the host nation of the 20th International Congress of Classical Archaeology, is a pioneering work that paved the way for the study of the suburban territories of the Greek poleis.

Since then, scholars have made progress, so the time is ripe to open a discussion on the lived spaces in ancient proasteion.

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