

BOOK REVIEWS

Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World. By JOHN PEDLEY. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp. xviii + 272. Paper, \$25.99. ISBN 0-521-00635-X.

Divided into 14 chapters which together offer a coherent progression of topics and case-studies, John Pedley's *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World* presents a clear and readable introduction to the subject. The book was written with classroom use in mind and could easily provide the basic structure for an undergraduate course on ancient Greek sanctuaries and religion. Because of the intended audience, P. must often present the evidence or its interpretation somewhat dogmatically or in a greatly simplified manner, but he does not shy away from alerting readers to difficulties and scholarly disagreements where appropriate. The writing style tends toward the conversational (e.g. contractions are ubiquitous), presumably in an attempt to increase its accessibility. Bibliography, located at the end of the book but keyed to the individual chapters, allows topics of interest to be pursued further; a glossary of terms, also located at the end, should provide help with most unfamiliar words. Overall, the book is well illustrated with numerous site-plans and photographs of objects, generally to the point. I personally found a number of details with which to take exception, as presumably will many readers. But viewed as a whole P.'s book succeeds admirably as a text for use in the classroom and as such can be wholeheartedly recommended.

After three short chapters ("Introduction," "Setting the Stage," "Growth and Variety") that provide a point of entry to the student unfamiliar with basic concepts of Greek religion and sanctuaries, P. turns to the locations in which sanctuaries are found. He distinguishes between those that are interurban, urban (treating suburban and extra-urban sanctuaries under separate headings) and rural; the importance of this division is explored via a simplified but essentially accurate account of the work of de Polignac. While not everyone will agree with the utility or importance of understanding sanctuaries this way, the gain is two-fold: the student is given a framework, followed throughout the remainder of the book, for distinguishing types of sanctuaries and is introduced to relatively recent scholarly developments and conceptual models.

The book falls into two discrete halves of seven chapters each. After the introductory material noted above, P. proceeds to three chapters outlining architecture, rites and rituals, and offerings. In all these chapters the arrangement of topics is sensible and works well to recreate the experience of visiting a sanctuary and participating in a religious festival. Thus, for example, in Chapter V ("Architecture for the Gods: Sacred Building"), P. discusses individually the various architectural features (temenos wall,

propylon, altar, temple, etc.) often found in sanctuaries, but structures the discussion to correspond to the order in which a visitor might encounter them when entering a sanctuary. The building types are illustrated with examples drawn both from the sites chosen as case-studies in the second half (see below) and from other sites throughout the Greek world.

The second half of P.'s book consists of five case-studies (Olympia, Delphi, Samos, Poseidonia and the Athenian Acropolis) followed by two concluding chapters. The case-studies are reasonably well chosen for illustrating the types of sanctuaries distinguished by P. at the outset, although to cover them all Poseidonia must do rather heavy duty. More importantly, the inclusion of examples from the west and the east breaks out of the usual Athens-Olympia-Delphi nexus; the juxtaposition of familiar and unfamiliar leaves the student with a better impression of the geographical range of the Greek world. The sites P. has chosen allow for useful comparison and discussion of the categories of evidence available and how one might interpret that evidence; in a manner that may be eye-opening to students, P. raises the issue of practicalities, particularly in the case of Poseidonia, that can hinder archaeological exploration, and thus the extent to which these realities can affect our knowledge and collection of evidence.

Less successful are the final two chapters, which cover Greek sanctuaries from the Roman period to the present day, although P. is to be commended for including this material at all. Understanding the advent of the Romans as a major turning point in the life of a sanctuary may make sense in the case of Poseidonia, but works less well for the non-western sanctuaries. P. falls into the all too common trap of failing to distinguish adequately between a purely chronological as opposed to a cultural use of the term "Roman" as applied to Greece; whatever the case in the west, sanctuaries and the activities that occurred in them continued on much as before in Greece and the Greek east until well into the Imperial period. At the close of the final chapter, somewhat in the nature of an epilogue, P. comments on the often tense and conflicted relationship between archaeology and tourism. His sensible remarks on this issue contain much of value but may seem out of place to readers, despite the attempt to place them within the context of the afterlife of the sanctuary.

A few points of detail. The illustrations are frequently taken from handbooks, which on occasion leads to incongruities or even outright error. For example: fig. 24, the Archaic *perirrhantērion* from Isthmia, is said to be housed in the Corinth Museum (it has been in the Isthmia Museum for the past 30 years), and the illustration depicts the old reconstruction (for the current reconstruction, see M. Sturgeon, *Isthmia IV. Sculpture I: 1952-1967* (Princeton, 1987), p. 17 and pl. 1); on p. 59 the propyla at Eleusis are discussed but not marked on the accompanying fig. 25; the small *naiskos* within the north colonnade of the Parthenon is

mentioned on p. 69, but is shown neither in the accompanying fig. 34 nor in any of the other plans which include the Parthenon. Similar discrepancies abound. Characterizing Macedonian hegemony merely as a force that put "an end to th[e] squabbling among Greek states" and thus allowed Athens, "now free of the expenditures of war..." to "turn its revenues to more peaceful endeavors" seems naive at best. The bibliography is generally sound and up to date, but some gaps remain, e.g. Ulrich Sinn's publications on Olympia, some of which have even appeared in English translation. Typographical errors are rare, and so the reader must wonder whether the reference to "the death of certainty" (p. xv) is one of the few examples or instead an ideological statement.

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