

Antikens kultur och samhällsliv
Göteborgs universitet

Movement in Space

An architectural analysis of public space in Archaic to Hellenistic Greece

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Abstract

The study of ancient Greek architecture has, with a few exceptions, been focused on the different building types used by the Greeks: the stoa, the propylon and especially the temple, the latter held in the highest esteem since the 18th century. Architecture as an expression of the material culture of a civilisation is analysed frequently according to style and period, but rarely in terms of interacting items creating a stage for social activity. In this study an alternative perspective of public space is adopted through the use of four aspects of architecture: the *sequence* (relative chronology), *edges* (material boundaries of space), *circulation paths* (possibilities of moving in space), and the unfinished features observable in public space; a distinctive approach to viewing and explaining architecture emerges. By combining archaeological and architectural knowledge of the individual building and the interaction between the buildings (the aspects emphasised in the study) at ten sites from various parts of the Greek world, the architecture is explored in detail at each place and the layout of public space in general is interpreted.

The results of the investigation are numerous reflections that can be applied to public space in different areas and situations. In the sequence, the long use of buildings as elements in the composition of space (termed *endurance*) can be noted, stressing the appearance of the older buildings. Considering the use of dismantled or unfinished buildings in significant locations, the effort of designing and erecting buildings can be identified as an important aspect of construction. The investment in architecture included not only the material characteristics of the structure but also the *visible labour* involved. The edges and the circulation pattern were arranged to manipulate the three-dimensional quality of the environment, by positioning terraces as well as buildings in such a way that the natural terrain had an eliminating or emphasising effect, not least the contrast between *built and unbuilt space*. In regard to the endurance of a majority of the buildings in the composition of space, minor elements like statue bases and votive monuments served to articulate the circulation paths within the environment. These monuments became important guides and transformers in the public space in relation to the older framework of buildings which persisted through time.

Key words: Aegina, agora, Argive Heraion, Assos, Athens, Greek architecture, public space, Kalydon, Kassope, Olympia, Priene, sanctuary.