

The Sounds of War

Sponsored by MOISA -- Society for the Study of Greek and Roman Music and Its Cultural Heritage

Organized by Sean Gurd (University of Missouri, Columbia) and John Franklin (University of Vermont)

From the biblical tale of Jericho, to Tacitus' "silence of desolation" after the battle of Mons Graupius, sound played a major role in the ancient experience of war. The 2018 MOISA panel at the SCS meeting in Boston seeks papers exploring the interconnection of sound, music, and warfare in all its aspects, from any place or period of the ancient world. We welcome papers from any methodological perspective, including (but not limited to) philological, archeological, musicological, anthropological or historiographical approaches. Topics might include:

- Music and military organization.

How was music used to marshal and/or encourage troops before, during, and after battle? What instruments were typical? What evidence is most illuminating in this regard?

- Music and sound as weapons or tools of war.

How were sound and music used strategically on the battlefield, as part of military or psychological operations? Were there changes on this front over time and between cultures?

- Sound and its absence on the battlefield.

When was sound noticed and when was silence noted? What were the different meanings of each, and did these change between cultures or in different authors?

- Ancient descriptions of the differences between the sounds of peace and the sounds of war.

Were there different sounds associated with war as opposed to peacetime? Were there different lexicographies associated with them? What rhetorical use was made of sound or silence in the representation of war and peace?

- Musical representations of battle, combat, or war.

How was war "sung?" What musical or sonic resources did musicians and poets use in order to represent combat -- were there special instrumental effects or unusual compositional techniques deployed in such contexts?

- Musical genres otherwise relating to war and its commemoration (threnos, paian, etc.).

- The sounds of war's victims.

- Images of the sounds of war.

How are battle sounds and music represented in visual media?

- The reception of ancient war sounds in modern art, poetry, music, and scholarship.
- Battle sounds and auditory trauma

Did the memory of war sounds (or war music) cause, or was it thought to cause, traumatic experiences after the fact? What, if any, forms of therapy were there for such trauma?

In an effort to showcase the best papers and the most innovative research in the field of ancient music, we also welcome abstracts that deal with other aspects of Greek and Roman music and its cultural heritage.

Abstracts for 20-minute papers to be presented at the 2018 SCS annual meeting should observe the instructions for the format of individual abstracts that appear on the SCS web site. The deadline for submission is March 1st, 2017, and all prospective presenters should be SCS members in good standing at the time of submission (i.e.: dues must be paid for 2017). Please address your abstract and any questions related to the panel to Pauline LeVen (pauline.leven@yale.edu). In accordance with SCS regulations, all abstracts for papers will be read anonymously by two referees.