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Boeotian landscapes. A GIS-based study for the reconstruction and interpretation of the archaeological datasets of ancient Boeotia.

Farinetti, E.

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STELLINGEN/PROPOSITIONS

Boeotian landscapes: a GIS-based study for the reconstruction and interpretation of the archaeological datasets of ancient Boeotia

Emeri Farinetti (Leiden 2009)

1. Boeotia constitutes a favorable example to appreciate the variety of landscape characters within a short distance, typical of the Greek landscape: from the morphologically homogeneous human modified landscape of the Tertiary plain to the hard karstic formations of the limestone massif, from the cultivated plains and winter lakes to the abrupt slopes covered with pine forests, and to the sea.
2. The division into 'districts', which characterises the Boeotian political landscape, would seem to find in Boeotian history itself its origin and the reasons for its particular application.
3. A focus on the micro-region enlightens us on the role of landscape character, as a result of the association, transforming through time, between landscape zones and activities within a wider region.
4. Sometimes cultural micro-landscapes are well defined by physical constraints, while in other cases borders are vaguer and only cultural elements or meanings would define and mark the border line between the territories of two communities.
5. Clues on the social use of the landscape in the past can be obtained by looking at the location in the landscape of the units of social evidence, at the pattern of settlement and activity areas, at the association between activities and landscape zones, and especially at their long-term shifting within a settlement chamber.
6. Landscape is a dynamic synergy between natural and cultural factors, and carries in its forms the memory of its diverse pasts.
7. Landscape has to be approached not as a sum of discrete entities, but rather as a *continuum*, both horizontally, as a continuous and multiform surface which carries the signs of the history of its occupation and use, and vertically, as a product of continuous and multiform transformations which progressively inform the interaction between natural and cultural factors through time.
8. A human landscape cannot be approached except diachronically to be fully understood.
9. A critical examination of archaeological data is crucial in order to infer archaeological meanings.
10. You need to love and enjoy what you are doing in order to be strong enough to pursue a positive end.
11. The conclusion of a Ph.D. comes at the end of a long pathway which gets gradually enriched by scientific knowledge, field experience and personal human development.