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The present issue of SVMMA contains three different studies on historical sound landscape; that is, three studies on the relationship between sounds, communication, musical expressions and the environment where they were produced in the past. Research on sound landscape is relatively new, even more in the case of sound landscapes that cannot be recorded, that is, historical sound landscapes. The term *sound landscape* was coined in the 60s in the context of the World Soundscape Project, a catalogue of sounds of the world promoted by the Simon Fraser University (Vancouver) and led by R. Murray Schaffer,¹ in a moment when the history of senses was starting to be perceived as a legitimate field of study by different disciplines (anthropology, sociology, and communication studies among others) and as a source of knowledge of the past.

Sound and landscape gradually made their way into ethnographic, literary, linguistic, and historical research, going beyond the musicological approach to treatises and scores, and the strictly iconographic approaches to musical instruments. Already in the 90s, a new field of study started gaining momentum in parallel to the studies on musical palaeography, iconographical analyses, and the reconstruction of musical instruments: archaeomusicology. This burgeoning discipline involved the archaeological study not only of sound-producing objects—that is, musical or communication instruments—but also of the spatial context related to sound production.²

The first studies on reconstruction of musical instruments were carried out by both musicians specializing in ancient music and luthiers, but over the years many other disciplines have joined the effort to shed light on this matter, such as history, archaeology, and linguistics. In a first stage, the technical and organological approaches started from analyses of the sound in relatively recent periods, particularly the Baroque and Modern ages, and then extended these studies to earlier

¹ SCHAFFER, R. M., 1977. *The Tuning of the world*, London, Random House. It has been translated into many different languages, most recently into Spanish in 2013. *El paisaje sonoro o la afinación del mundo*. Madrid, Intermedio.

² The starting point for the medieval archaeomusicological studies is the research carried out by Catherine Homo-Lechner: HOMO-LECHNER, C., 1996. *Sons et instruments du Moyen Âge. Archéologie musicale dans l'Europe du VIIIe au XIVe siècle*. Paris, Erance.

periods.³ Later on, in the 90s, luthiers adopted a more experimental approach, using medieval materials, techniques, and geometric and calculus concepts.⁴ Lately, a new term, ‘archaeolutherie’, has been coined for a field that aims at the reconstruction of musical instruments, spaces and sound-related objects by privileging archaeological insight over aesthetic criteria, thus favouring the sound of a research object over the search for a sound suitable for a 21st century audience.⁵ In the beginning, the main concern of this field was the conservation of past scores, but currently it tries to understand the value of sound in past contexts by taking into consideration the materials, resources, techniques, and spaces available in those specific periods.

Moreover, sound, as a part of our sensorial experience of the world, concerns not only music, but also different aspects of communication. This is why, lately, many interdisciplinary research projects have been focused on different sound realities (voice, silence, the shouts and intrinsic noises of human activities), thus highlighting their importance for communication and learning purposes.⁶ The three studies included in this issue of SVMMA, in line with the approach used in these projects, tackle different aspects of sound.

Jean-Marie Fritz, lecturer at the University of Burgundy, carries out his research on the sound in the Middle Ages making use of the written word: documentary and literary sources.⁷ His talks and papers are mainly concerned with the sound environment and space, acoustics, communication, the value of deliberate silence, and the role of cries and noises. In the paper included in this issue, he deals with the stage—almost theatrical—effects evoked by the space and the acoustics outlined in the chansons de geste and chivalric romances. Among these effects we find the resonance of spaces, halls, and landscapes, and the use of sound to draw the attention of the public, either the actual or the fictitious/non-real/imaginary audience. It is worth stressing that the subject of this study is a literary production that has its origins in oral tradition—with its own suggestive and spatial staging elements—which must be conceptualized within the popular storytelling tradition.

³ David Munrow, in England, and Enric Gispert along with the Ars Musicae ensemble, in Catalonia, pioneered this type of studies in the 70s.

⁴ This is the case of the vast project of restoration of the musical instruments portrayed in the Portal of Glory in Santiago de Compostela, at the initiative of historians who are also luthiers, such as Christian Rault or John Wright; on this subject see LÓPEZ-CALO, J. (coord.), 1993. *Los instrumentos del Pórtico de la Gloria. Su reconstrucción y la música de su tiempo*. 2 Vol. Coruña, Fundación Pedro Barrié de la Maza.

⁵ Since 2006, the research association Apémutam (Association Pour l’Étude de la Musique et des Techniques dans l’Art Médiéval) is a reference for this type of analysis. They address sound reconstruction through an interdisciplinary approach. The association involves researchers from all over Europe. www.apemutam.org [2016/12/16]

⁶ The experiences developed in the context of the *Instrumentarium de Chartres seminari restitution du son* MULLER, W. (dir.), 2015, *L’instrumentarium du moyen âge. La restitution du son* (Paris, L’Harmattan) are especially remarkable.

⁷ Fritz is an Art Historian, and lecturer in Medieval French Literature; FRITZ, J. M., 2000. *Paysages sonores du Moyen Age, le versant épistémologique*. Paris, Champion, and FRITZ, J. M., 2011. *La cloche et la lyre. Pour une poétique médiévale du paysage sonore*. Ginebra, Librairie Droz.

Olivier Feraud,⁸ with more than 20 years of experience in the reconstruction of historical musical instruments, makes use of musical iconography to address the problem of sound reconstruction. He does not try to present an iconographic catalogue that illustrates the context within which each instrument was born, but tries to outline the iconographic, archaeological, and ethnological evolution of said instrument, in an effort to understand a sound that, even today, is not very well known. It is quite common to use the Arabic lute as the basis for the study of plucked stringed instruments with neck, thus neglecting the early medieval iconography that draws on Roman art/tradition, and coexists with the success of the viola from the 11th century onwards. The comparison between all these iconographic motifs and the present ethno-musicological heritage allows the author to fill some important gaps in the sound aesthetics of the Carolingian period. In this same line, his research as a luthier and his study on the performance of instruments are in themselves exercises in experimental archaeology throughout reconstruction tests. Feraud's strong technical background (for he uses the work tools, geometric concepts, and materials characteristic of the period) enables him to reconstruct objects that allow us to grasp spaces and contexts, departing from current aesthetic trends that tend to recreate musical scores in the form of concerts.

As for sound landscapes, Laura de Castellet analyses the sound parameters used for the defence of a territory, that is, for long-distance communication between fortifications or civilian buildings when visibility was poor.⁹ The primary data sources for the study are military records, iconography, archaeological studies on sound-producing objects and on those constructions where they were used (towers and castles), and, mainly, in situ experimentation with sound instruments. In the latter case, the author has made use of micro-historical analyses, comparative archaeological data that give precise details of very specific places, local documentation, and toponymy in order to extrapolate a more general outlook of the sound resources available at one period, as well as their chronological evolution. Sound communication ends up intertwined with defence strategies, but at the same time becomes a contributing factor for community cohesion, shaping both landscape and the social interaction with it until our days.

These three articles are therefore an attempt to contribute to a better understanding of different aspects of communication and the context in which it takes place. Sound pervades all human activity, from aesthetics to military needs, from enclosed spaces to vast landscapes.

⁸ Laboratory of Urban Anthropology (CNRS/EHESS); FÉRAUD, O., 2015. "Pierre, bois, gouge et compas. Lecture croisée du monocorde et du psaltérion à travers sa reconstitution", *L'instrumentarium du moyen âge. La restitution du son*. Paris, L'Harmattan: 171-190.

⁹ www.blogscat.com/paisatgesonormedieval [2016/12/16]