An archaeology of the senses: prehistoric Malta.


Abstract

This chapter critically synthesizes the growing literature relating to the archaeology of the senses and situates it in the light of the emerging interdisciplinary paradigm known as sensual culture studies. It also defines some key terms and concepts. The first section explores the background to these intellectual developments, outlines the core aims of sensual culture studies, and attempts to clarify the nature and applicability of their research methods. The second section examines in more detail the various human senses, and discusses how they have been investigated and interpreted by archaeologists, particularly in recent work on prehistoric Europe and Western Asia. The final section then introduces the rich case-study of prehistoric Malta through which these ideas are re-considered in the rest of this book.

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The National Museum of Archaeology is a Maltese museum in Valletta, with artefacts from prehistory, Phoenician times and a notable numismatic collection. It is managed by Heritage Malta. The Auberge de Provence was opened as the National Museum in 1958 by Agatha Barbara, the then Minister of Education. The museum originally included the archaeological collection on the ground floor and fine arts on the first floor. The first curator was Captain Charles G. Zammit, the son of the eminent Maltese The oldest prehistoric buildings in Europe are found in Malta and Gozo, the megalithic temples of Malta and Gozo are older than the Pyramids of Egypt. The Human story of Malta starts around 7000 years ago.Â It has been suggested that the temples might have represented the head, arms and legs of a deity, since one of the commonest kinds of statue found in these temples is a 'fat' woman ( Venus of Malta from Hagar Qim ), a symbol
of fertility. This period can be categorized into phases: Zebbug c. 4100-3800 BC. All Research Projects. An Archaeology of the Senses: Prehistoric Malta. A research project of the Department of Archaeology. Background. This book aims to establish a well-defined methodology for an archaeology of the senses, produce a challenging new synthesis of Maltese prehistoric archaeology, and provide a rich archaeological case-study for the new field of sensual culture studies. The introduction defines ‘sensual culture’ as peoples’ multi-sensory experiences and perceptions of the world and their construction of culturally diverse sense-based values and orders. Part 1 critically explores...