



Acoustic Pots in Ancient Buildings: State of Art and Historical Questions

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From the 10th to 16th centuries and even later, the practice of using acoustical pots as a common feature in church architecture spread throughout Europe. Three questions could be addressed at their purpose; their efficiency, their origin and the intention of those who inserted them in the buildings.

More than efficiency, we pay attention on the intention of the builders. Behind this question, we attempted to understand the actual knowledge concerning acoustics and "architectural acoustics" at these periods. Particularly, the pots seems to have been inserted using rules related to the practice of musics (pots are often tuned) of, more surprisingly, also related to the volume of the edifice.

Furthermore, their insertion seems also follow symbolic considerations which is not in contradiction with acoustic interpretation. Indeed, at these time, practice and symbolism are deeply linked in a large part of societal and religious questions.

The poster will present, through further points of view (archeology, history of art, linguistics, acoustics), the state of the art of the knowledge of this old acoustical technics and the questions still opened.

The question of their origin which quickly emerged as a crucial one in our research, is also presented. The common idea of a direct filiation from antiquity is discussed but evidences of a renewal (or an emergence) in the 9th century are given.