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[Accueil](#) > Beyond the visual. The acoustic reconstruction and simulation of ancient senate sessions (Christian Fron)

BEYOND THE VISUAL. THE ACOUSTIC RECONSTRUCTION AND SIMULATION OF ANCIENT SENATE SESSIONS (CHRISTIAN FRON)

After historical research has applied to the visual aspects of human perception for a long time now, as of recently the investigation of acoustic matters arouse an increased scientific interest too.¹ So far still largely unresearched has been the concrete speech situation in premodern times before electro-acoustic amplification. In a large-scale study the department of ancient history in close collaboration with acousticians of the Fraunhofer-institute as well as other research disciplines attempts to adequately reconstruct and simulate ancient historic speech situations. During this research of course some further variables have to be taken into account, which nowadays barely have this central impact on the audibility of orations anymore: the spatial position of the orator, his own vocal power and speaking techniques, the behaviour of the audience (as potential disruptive factor/ additional source of noise during a speech) as well as the specific acoustic conditions of the room in which a speech is held - away from any technical means to modify this acoustic condition.
