

eTopoi

Journal for Ancient Studies

Special Volume 1 (2011)

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Plenary Agenda Report for Research Group E-I

Ancient Spaces as Spaces of Movement in the Postclassical Era: Factography, Imagination, Construction

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Keywords: Space of Movement • Decontextualization • Recontextualization • Epic • the Beyond • Cartography • Narratology of Space • Travel • Novel • Spoliation • Transformation

Abstract: The Research Group E-I investigates artistic forms of the transmission of knowledge concerning spaces of antiquity. In this respect long-term chains of transformative processes are to be observed through which the interrelationships between space and knowledge established in antiquity have been altered by historical agents through specific epistemic and medial claims. The aim is twofold: to analyze these knowledge-based processes of transformation in precise areas of investigation on a reliable material basis on the one hand; on the other to formulate relevant statements concerning the history of the transformation of space and knowledge through the consolidation of research results. For this reason, the research group takes up the all-encompassing topic of the artistic transmission of knowledge about space in the post-classical era in the context of the following precisely formulated contoured topic areas: (1) spoliation and transposition, (2) travels through spaces of antiquity, (3) the fictionalization and resemanticization of antique spaces in epics and novels of the Middle Ages and early modern period, (4) concepts and semanticizations of the Beyond in the Middle Ages and early modern period. Interdisciplinary research into the processes of formation and transformation of the interrelationships between space and knowledge in antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the modern period, however, calls for an integrative and sufficiently elastic concept, albeit one that is by no means arbitrary and which serves as a methodological foundation while remaining receptive to procedures of abstraction as well as of concretization, and which is adaptable to the participating disciplines. As for our research group, the concept of space as an area of movement has a heuristic function; it has proven to be an especially stable concept because the term space of movement pictures the dynamism of the concept of space which is applied by the group. We conceive of space as being generated performatively on a variety of levels through actions, perceptions, language, etc. In accordance with this emphatically dynamic conception, the term space of movement also clarifies the irreducible processual quality of formation and transformation. The concept of a space of movement remains open; it is not bound to the ontological status of the object, nor is it restricted to specific disciplinary methodologies;

it implies nothing normative, but serves instead as an exclusively heuristic concept. The application of the concept of the space of movement leads toward a multiplicity of concrete individual results, particularly in the framework of the qualifying projects; moreover, it has proven possible to provide research on spoliation with a new perspective, to differentiate concepts of space in literature in historical terms, and to criticize cartographic procedures in the framework of scientific reconstructions.

Projects:

- »Ancient Spaces as Spaces of Movement in 19th Century French-Language Texts« (Joachim Küpper)
- »Ancient Buildings and Monuments in Early Islamic Spain« (Carmen Marcks-Jacobs)
- »The Dismantling of the Septizonium and the Reuse of Its Construction Materials« (Christine Pappelau)
- » Perception, Imagination, and Construction of Ancient Greek Spaces in 18th-Century British Travel Writing« (Katalin Schober)
- »Deterritorialization and Appropriation: The Transformation and Resemanticization of Ancient Spaces in Heinrich von Neustadt's *Apollonius von Tyrland*« (Lea Braun)
- »Face and Text: Revelations of the Spaces of the Beyond in Texts from Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages« (Maximilian Johannes Benz)
- »The Aesthetics of the Beyond« (Verena Lobsien)
- »Representations of the Beyond in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*« (Jana Lehmann)
- »Literary Interpretations of the Spaces of the Beyond in Romance Language Texts of the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period« (Joachim Küpper)
- »Spaces of Antiquity in the Novels of the Early Modern Period« (Nils Schellmann)
- »Spoliations of Antiquity in North Africa« (Stefan Altekamp)
- »Perceptions and Transformations of Ancient Spaces and Conceptions of Space in 18th-Century German Travel Literature« (Claudia Anna Gräßner)
- »Paths through Rome: Literary and Pictorial Documents up to 1600« (Lisa Roemer)
- »Relationships between the Deconstruction of Ancient Spaces and Post-Classical Building Projects with Reference to the Case of the Utilization of Spolia in the Construction and Reconstruction of St. Peter's in Rome« (Bernhard Fritsch)

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1 Results Results of the Research Group with Regard to the Questions as Posed by the Excellence Cluster Topoi

1.1 Spoliation and Transposition

Research Group E-I does not regard space as something which exists ›as such,‹ something which is essentially and substantially ›there‹ and which incorporates everything, objects and movements, ›within itself‹ (cf. BÖHME 2009, 196; CSG-II *Culture Theory and Its Genealogies*), but instead as being constituted – for example – through action. Encounters with the various categories of space in antiquity occurred – and occur – in superimpositions with respective contemporary spaces of movement, whether via confrontations with antique artefacts which are now present in one's own environment, or through encounters with them through travel. Perception is shaped by cultural patterns of interpretation which diverge markedly depending upon place and time, and depending upon the kind and intensity of the transmission of knowledge concerning the conditions existing in antiquity. Such forms of knowledge, but also the respective artistic intentions involved, are decisive for the semanticization or resemanticization of antique spaces.

The working group »Spoliation and Transposition« seeks to identify processes of transformation which were performed upon antique artifacts when subjected to processes of reutilization. Here, antiquity becomes a field of objects, and not simply of references. The primary objects of spoliation were buildings and sculptures, but also indirectly as well pre-existing structures in the form of transport networks and the complexes of ancient urbanism. In this context, significant results emerged from the decision of the research group to reemphasize a hitherto substantially neglected branch of spoliation research, namely the investigation of fixed locations that were subjected to spoliation and reutilization, and hence to processes of decontextualization and recontextualization. Their fate was determined by the circumstance that spaces of movement which were shaped by permanent architectural structures were often subjected to subsequent transformations. This occurred already in antiquity, and has continued up to the present day. Urbanity, sacrality, representation, and production have been subjected to an evolutionary process which required a more rapid adaptation of the built ambience than could be accommodated with regard to its material and technical characteristics.

In late antiquity, the tension between potential permanence and revision acquired a new dimension when the reconstruction of the pre-existing world reached an unprecedented scale. Earlier construction materials were incorporated regularly in visible ways into new structures, which to some extent were assembled substantially from spolia; available for the harvesting of spolia was the urban architectural inventory which had become obsolete through the above-mentioned process of evolution. On the basis of a new methodological foundation, it was possible to confirm again that this process of transformation – which was for a long time regarded exclusively as a symptom of crisis, as the expression of material shortages and waning productive powers – was in fact endowed with the profound dynamism so characteristic of antiquity. Prior to the partial political and economic collapse of the Imperium Romanum, a process of auto-spoliation accompanied the formulation of a late developmental phase in the ancient world, one which adapted pre-existing urbanistic and architectonic conditions to radically new requirements. A multiplicity of postclassical procedures of spoliation and translocation ensued which on the one hand virtually emptied some source locations, while on the other disseminating the object

culture of antiquity far beyond the Mediterranean region and integrating its elements into new contexts. Regarding the topic of spoliation processes in antiquity and the post-classical era, our attention is drawn in divergent directions: to questions of provenance, and to those involving recontextualization. The visualization of both perspectives through the resources of archaeoinformatics as pursued in the framework of the individual projects on the reconstruction of St. Peter's in Rome, open up new paths of investigation (*A-III-6 Archaeoinformatics. Methodological Basic Research in Archaeoinformatics: Is Stratigraphy Measurable?*). It is not just material that enters into movement through reconstruction and relocation is not just material; real spaces and spaces of meaning mutate as a consequence. The spoliation of ancient spaces is an ongoing process which continues to the present day.

The above-described aspect of the overlap between ancient and postclassical spaces of movement raises the question of the forms of knowledge which are transferred between them. »Spaces of movement« becomes a heuristic category within which it becomes possible to explore knowledge concerning that which is transmitted: were forms of living knowledge associated with the reuse or new use of architectural elements or with the removal of portions of such structures? What was the basis of such knowledge? What, accordingly, were the criteria of selection? Which past epochs were more esteemed, and which less?

Clearly, such questions can be investigated in the framework of various epochs, and in the context of spaces and movement defined in very different ways, and moreover under a variety of aspects. In the framework of the investigations undertaken by our research group, accordingly, significant results have emerged in a variety of fields.

1.1.1 The Case of Rome

In the city of Rome (whose residents were confronted with the political glory of past epochs as in no other location within the Roman Empire), the postclassical period saw the erection of honorific statues which involved the reuse of earlier statues whose lack of correspondence in stylistic terms to contemporary fashion signaled deliberate references to the past (cf. GEHN forthcoming). As inscriptions on the occasionally surviving bases of these statues suggest, the members of the senatorial class often endowed such monuments or allowed themselves to be depicted in this manner, a circumstance which makes it possible to exclude the possibility of economic motivations for this practice of reuse. Instead, attempts were made to reenlive the scenes of past greatness which formed the settings of their present-day activities, presenting themselves in togas draped with umbos, which is to say: in an anachronistic manner, i.e. attired in ways which alluded explicitly to past epochs.

By integrating earlier statues with contemporary elements in such a pastiche (and this became evident at a colloquium organized by our research group), narrative references could be generated on the one hand, while on the other, a glorious past was invoked as well. While in the above case, we observe an attempt to in some sense redeem the present, the appropriation of ancient statues in early Christian contexts might have served in a similarly ambivalent fashion to denigrate the pagan past while highlighting the contrast with the Christian present.

1.1.2 The Case of Ravenna

The results of the above-described assignment, i.e. to observe processes of transformation within specific spaces of movement and to relate these consistently to ancient conditions and situations, can be demonstrated with reference to the case of Ravenna (cf. JÄGGI forthcoming). In the period between the 5th and 16th centuries, Ravenna's architectural inventory experienced highly contrasting phases with regard to its treatment by the town's rulers. Otherwise than might be assumed, economic considerations played an at most ancillary role with regard to interventions involving spoliation. More decisive, evidently, was the significance attributed to certain locations as the settings of previous epochs. During the period of Theoderic, Ravenna was a destination for imported spolia, principally from Rome; probably for ideological reasons, the old capital was obliged to supply material to the new one. In the Carolingian period, the tables were turned, and Ravenna itself became a source for exported spolia because (having long since advanced to the status of a political center) it had now become attractive as the point of origin for spolia.

1.1.3 The Case of North Africa

Very different facets emerge on the basis of the same methodological approach when we consider in North Africa a space of movement which is characterized by sharp discontinuities vis-à-vis the bearers of civilization (cf. ALTEKAMP forthcoming). The reuse of architectural material, which became customary in late antiquity, and the mixture of technically heterogeneous elements characteristic of it, stood within the flux of building traditions. The intensified form of deconstruction and reutilization which is observable in the Byzantine era as well and which dramatically altered townscapes still bore clearly evolutionary traits. The conversion of ancient buildings via constructive alterations and forms of reuse which became customary in late antiquity and the Byzantine era integrated ancient architectural substance in extensive ways.

The Islamist conquest of the 7th century brought a shift in building technology, with the sharp ascendancy of less durable materials (unbaked clay) and composite materials (stucco) alongside stone construction. Likewise, the spectrum of building types is characterized by continuity and discontinuity. Fortifications and hydraulic infrastructures continued to be erected in the forms already widely disseminated throughout the region, while other building types fell into disuse (profane assembly buildings, large public baths, churches) and new types emerged (mosques, palaces).

Ancient buildings were spoliated rather than converted, as antique buildings were integrated into new architectural contexts in the form of isolated elements selected for structural, formal, or aesthetic reasons. In North Africa, the reuse and continued use of ancient architectural elements continued unabated into the period during which such practices were increasingly abandoned in Europe.

In the Maghreb, the appropriation and further development of the ancient cultural landscape did not encounter political-cultural continuity. The treatment of pre-existing remnants of the historic past was conditioned by contingent patterns of cultural interpretation. This is true, for example, for the reutilization of ancient building materials in Cairo (cf. GREENHALGH forthcoming). In this context, we should recall that the 10th century

urban core arose upon undeveloped terrain, and hence did not develop in the immediate context of ancient architectural substance that could be subjected to spoliation. Before ancient architectural elements could be integrated into representative Arabic buildings, they had to be brought into the town at considerable expense. Through their assistance, access was sought to contemporary western architecture, which was copied using ancient spolia. Evidently, continuity was constructed between ancient locales and the western architecture under the influence of Christianity that was regarded as exemplary – and for whose sake such material appropriations were carried out.

1.1.4 The Case of the Iberian Peninsula

The knowledge of the Moorish conquerors concerning the monuments of antiquity found on the Iberian Peninsula must be regarded as mediated and imagined to a still greater degree (cf. MARCKS-JACOBS forthcoming). An appreciation is to be observed here – one shaped by an awareness of ancient literature – of a past deemed worthy of esteem, albeit an appreciation not accompanied by a comparable knowledge of ancient objects and their significance. To be sure, past epochs such as those of the Greeks or Persians are named, but in the absence of any awareness of the temporal dimensions or geographic extension of their respective spheres of influence. Such epochs were singled out simply in terms of categories of permanence and age. Presumably, even the capacity to distinguish between the Roman and postclassical eras was essentially absent. Here, spoliation reveals itself more strongly than in the case of Cairo as an expression of a scenario of upheaval, one that can be traced back, here as there, to a change in the dominant culture. The image of ancient architecture held by the Arabs who conquered the Iberian Peninsula in the 8th century was conditioned in essential ways by attributes of permanence and indestructibility. As demonstrated by the example of Mérida, the subsequent redesign of the urban realm was conditioned by an attitude of esteem that was based on an extremely vague notion of the past. This leads to the circumstance that the urbanistic focus comes once again to constitute the town's center of gravity primarily on the basis of its physical monumentality, and hence in a sense fortuitously (A-I-3 *At the Transition from Late Antiquity to Islam. Resafa in Syria: Cult Site and Center of Power in Relation to the Landscape*).

It seems apparent that the design of postclassical spaces of movement through spolia drawn from antique spaces proceeded on essentially ›knowledge-based‹ lines, while at the same time highly diverse facets of such knowledge relations are to be identified. It should be remarked, moreover, that today, contrary to expectations, there is no evidence that spoliation was carried out already in prescientific phases for the purpose of transposing ancient spatial concepts. Spatial concepts were transposed for the first time on scholarly bases, that is to say, with scholarly objectives – one one may think of the Pompeianum in Aschaffenburg, of the reconstruction of the Parthenon in Nashville, or of the Villa dei Papiri for the Getty Museum in Malibu. For these projects, no antique spolia were used.

1.2 Spaces of Movement in Literature

The category of the space of movement also serves a heuristic function in the context of investigations of ancient knowledge of space carried out in the field of cultural and literary studies. As a result, it has been possible to address the complex question of the genuine literary representation of spaces in a new way – a question which functions as an indispensable methodological precondition, and not only for the history of the postclassical transformation of the interrelationship of space and knowledge which was established in antiquity. As a matter of fact, this question comprises far-reaching implications for processes of the formation of ancient knowledge of space in artistic and linguistic media (cf. BENZ – WEITBRECHT 2011). Without attempting to update the problem of the differentiation of the spatial and temporal arts, we can say that an important distinction between pictorial and linguistic representations of space lies in the degree of the mediateness of the depiction. Precisely because the simultaneity of an impression of a given space cannot be invoked directly in the medium of language, the narrative of movement through space turns out to be a helpful way of resolving the problem of linearization as it affects linguistic representations of space. Through the work of our research group, this systematically formulated finding was differentiated in historical terms, namely by comparing various movement-based cultural practices involving spatial experience and their textual but also visual-artistic coding (C-III *Acts*; C-IV *Ancient City Spaces. Conceptions of Urban Space in Literature, Architecture, and Art*; CSG-II *Culture Theory and Its Genealogies*; E-II *Historical Epistemology of Space: Experience and Theoretical Reflection in the Historical Development of Spatial Knowledge*). Specifically, it emerged first of all in relation to descriptions of Rome transmitted in the form of guides intended for medieval pilgrims that non-narrative representations of the experience of ancient spaces – for instance the urban space of Rome in the *Codex Einsidlensis* 326 (presumably early 9th century) – at times played a greater role than texts organized in narrative terms. Concerning this last example in particular, it was observable with regard to the design of the text space that elements of visual perception condition the design and arrangement of the text on the parchment, thereby mixing together linguistic systems of coding with forms of visual presentation of space. Second, it became clear with regard to texts whose organization is non-narrative that although the linguistic structure seems to picture a specific context of use, we cannot draw direct conclusions concerning cultural practices of spatial experience from linguistic forms of representation. In the specific case of Roman travel literature, we have identified instructions designed to shape concrete, real movements in urban space only beginning in the late 15th century, when the meanwhile strongly systematized modes of description of urban spaces which accompanied the differentiation of visual spatial conceptions (maps and vedute) was now adapted to visual perception of spaces through the growing utilization of route descriptions (cf. the workshop »Rom als Bewegungsraum – Das antike Rom in Karten und Wegbeschreibungen von 1400 bis 1600,« April 16, 2011, which formed the second part of the series »Space and Movement in Ancient and Post-Ancient Times,« B-IV *Applied Historical Geography*). In this context, we attempted to modify and to render more precise the integrative concept of the space of movement in ways adequate to our purposes through the use of spatial concepts such as that of »hodological space,« according to which spaces are defined not in terms of an overview, but so to speak via tunnel vision, via the trajectories upon which the focalizer moves. The heuristic concept of the space of movement now becomes an analytical category. In this regard, it was possible to delimit a variety of forms of the perception of ancient spaces in the postclassical era from one another on the basis of bodily,

imaginary, or meditative movements, thereby further developing research into the narratology of space (cf. DENNERLEIN 2009) via approaches based in the history of textuality. What is more, the distinction between »map« and »tour« proved to be productive as well and could be developed into a concept of narrative movement. This distinction, established by cognitive science, has undergone re-thinking, and recent finds as discussed within the area of cultural studies have been taken into consideration (cf. BÖHME 2005). The concept of narrative movement represents a viable descriptive category in the field of literary studies for texts which ascribe to their constructed characters specific forms of knowledge in the context of movement through spaces – whether the geographically localizable spaces of Greek or southern Italy, or the imaginary spaces of the Beyond. The conceptualization of space as a space of movement not only allows us to establish – through a media-specific differentiation – a perspective on travel literature which genuinely does justice to the field of literary studies, but also allows us to comprehensively consider the visual-artistic element, and at times the interplay between linguistic-literary and pictorial representations. The factographic requirements of travelers, then, generated interference with cultural and temporally-specific patterns of perception as well as with media-specific models of representation (cf. GRÄßNER forthcoming).

A further central conclusion arrived at by our research group is that the intricate relationship between spaces of movements which can be reconstructed in cultural-historical and literary terms respectively calls for an extension via the question of the space of movement as a space of imagination and projection. In this context, the history of the post-classical transformation of ancient knowledge of space was also explored with regard to the effects of the construction of identity and alterity; fictional sources were incorporated as well such as the narrative literature of the Middle Ages and Early Modern period, but also of the 19th century, as well as the epic poetry of the Renaissance and the lyricism found in the longer poems of the 17th century (cf. LOBSIEN forthcoming a). Through productive adaptations, these represent first of all manifest transformations of pretexts, narrative models, and sources of ancient knowledge of space; in the context of the respective spatiotemporal segment, second of all, they model relevant knowledge about antiquity, displaying it in ancient spaces of action which exist only in the imagination. Such retrospective projections of ancient spaces, themselves in turn the results of reconstructions, and the productive recourse to ancient conceptions, the purposeful selection among them, their imaginative rearrangement, as well as the generation of new, hybrid spaces, not only allow a deepened understanding of such historically-specific reconstructions of antiquity, but also place our knowledge of the poetics of the various narrative genres on new foundations. By analyzing the structure of the narrated territorial and sacred spaces and of the actions of the hero described in the narrative as they relate to the configuration of space, we can gain insight into the structure of large-scale, complex medieval narratives whose action is set in antiquity and which can be traced back to the literature of antiquity, for example Heinrich von Neustadt's *Apollonius von Tyrland*. In the Early Modern novel, moreover, the localization of the action in antique spaces serves to situate contemporary concepts in epochs which were perceived as having authoritative status. In the grand historical allegory of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, finally, the imaginative space of the chivalric quest is blended together with the real and bitterly contested spaces of contemporary English colonization in Ireland on the one hand, while depictions of ancient places of sanctification and initiation assume a legitimating function on the other. The results sketched above are to be presented soon in the form of a long article and a monograph.

1.3 Critiques of Cartography

Another important result of the interdisciplinary work of our research group has been a methodologically-grounded critique of cartography and of the kinds of scientific reconstructions based on cartographic methods (cf. the workshop »Kritik der Karte,« with researchers from all areas, which took place on January 28, 2011) which have experienced a boom in a variety of forms in recent years in both the Anglo-American and German research landscapes (D-III *Spatial Models and Spatial Thinking*). For the realm of the imagination of the Beyond, it could be said with some certainty that attempts to map topographies of the Beyond which are generated in narrative form remain inadequate (B-I-1 *Surveying and Limitation*). Nonetheless, numerous research projects have made such attempts, and have inscribed normative implications into their analyses. This critique of »mapping,« however, can raise further claims to validity: once again, it has been demonstrated that the modeling of spaces, particularly in premodern texts, is not governed by factographic criteria, but that spatial dispositions are instead based on principles related to relationships of the contiguity of knowledge. It seems questionable whether interrelationships governing past spatiotemporal segments, with their specific spatial conceptions and perceptions, can be represented in a historically adequate way using the cartographic techniques of the present day. Problems also emerge with regard to the medial specificity of maps: in any event, analogous conceptions are hardly able to convey a sense of ambivalence. Moreover, new material emerges continuously in the course of transposition: maps disambiguate or construct relationships which do not exist objectively. From an epistemological perspective, it is precisely the evidence of cartographic representations which generate a problematical suggestive potential. Playing an important role in our critique of the boom of all possible forms of »mapping« is the theoretical innovation of the concept of the space of movement: a variety of texts, ranging from the heterogeneous sources comprising the corpus of routes through Rome, all the way to reports by English and German travelers through the geographically localized spaces of antiquity, do not code spaces with the help of a reference system which is independent of locale, but instead in ways that are dependent upon the successive movements of perceiving agents from place to place. Precisely because it is not simply spaces which are being mapped, because such spaces instead serve as models for coding and transmission, but also for the generation of postclassical knowledge about antiquity, the question poses itself of the relationship of geographically and topographically describable spaces and their symbolic cathexis.

This interdisciplinary critique of cartography also led to the epistemological problematization of projects being carried out in collaboration with our research group. Representing a useful working instrument on the one hand is the »GeoCensus,« a pilot project which projects the storage locations of ancient objects during the Renaissance as well as their present-day locations onto the »Google World Map.« Becoming visible through the bird's eye view, on the other, are relationships which mirror our medial customs, but which did not necessarily exist in a strictly historical perspective. Here, the question poses itself as to whether the projection of the locations of artifacts onto the »Google Map« has only a heuristic function. This epistemological critique harbors considerable innovative potential: emerging in contradistinction to a purely illustrative procedure which links document and location is the necessity for the comprehensive elaboration of contextual information and an additional spatiotemporal differentiation which would allow us to incorporate archaeological results in a differentiated manner, making it possible to develop a four-dimensional model out of a two-dimensional illustration.

1.4 Transformations

A close collaboration with the Collaborative Research Centre 644 »Transformations of Antiquity« is a central aim. Although the questions and methodology of our research group are occasionally clearly connected to the innovations of this Collaborative Research Centre, the following differences are nonetheless present. They point toward the independence of our research group as a component of a genuine research association in the field of ancient and classical studies (E-II *Historical Epistemology of Space: Experience and Theoretical Reflection in the Historical Development of Spatial Knowledge*). While the crucial insight that ›the ancient world‹ as such does not exist, but is instead always a construction is valid for our research group as well, our focus is nonetheless not on the process of this construction. With our point of departure in processes of formation in antiquity, we instead investigate the postclassical transformation of space and knowledge. This means first that in contradistinction to the above-mentioned Collaborative Research Centre, it is emphatically the case that ancient contexts constitute the object areas of our research (i.e., not predominantly only reference areas). The bifocal perspective of spoliation research – which focuses not only on recontextualization, but also on the preceding processes of deconstruction of the material inventory of ancient spaces as well as on their impact – makes a contribution here, as does the reconstruction of the formation and transformation of the semantics and spatial concepts of the Beyond since the period of early Judaism. Through a number of projects carried out by our research group, it was demonstrated that it is by no means sufficient to consider Dante’s *Divina Commedia* as a kind of paradigm which served as a point of departure for the premodern modeling of the spaces of the Beyond. Coming into play as well is the apocalyptic literature of early Judaism and early Christianity (B-III-2 *The Organization of Diversity in the Ecclesiastical Space of Antiquity*), ancient and pagan concepts of the Beyond, but also a variety of texts from the high Middle Ages which – in each case considered for themselves – represent transformations of ancient artifacts. It can also be demonstrated how in the Early Modern period, allegorical procedures which are firmly anchored in ancient rhetoric and which constitute texts as spaces of movement were deployed imaginatively in order to establish and to scenarize spaces of the Beyond which were semanticized as ancient, spaces which in turn open up transitions to politically and theologically explosive possibilities for thought. The transcending of the reality narrated in the epic, as repeatedly undertaken and reflected upon for example in Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*, proceeds for its part in philosophical modalities which are modeled in antique terms (concretely: in Neoplatonic, but also Epicurean and Stoic terms). But with respect to the works of a contemporary European author such as W. G. Sebald as well, it becomes clear the ways and the extent to which modern conceptualizations of this-worldliness are based both on early modern reports concerning ancient urn burials, as well as on the imagination of ancient spaces of and journeys into the Beyond, for instance the *nekylia* (cf. LOBSIEN forthcoming b), and the profound sense in which a present day »englische Wallfahrt« (English Pilgrimage) can be structured by the naturalistic spatial imagination of the ›bird’s eye view,‹ as presented already in Lucretius’s *De rerum natura* (cf. LOBSIEN forthcoming c).

Finally, it must be mentioned that a focus on the formation and transformation of the interrelationships between space and knowledge established in antiquity makes it possible to pursue a systematic and historically developed investigation in the context of various spatiotemporal segments. This integration of exemplary analyses under the aegis of an overarching question and the consistent collaboration of scholars from the field of

ancient and classical studies with mediavalists and researchers in the field of modern history makes possible the strict, material-based, methodologically-grounded investigation of longitudinal developments, and illuminates the multifarious ways in which the ancient formations of the interrelationships between space and knowledge were transformed during the postclassical period according to specific anthropological, cultural-historical, and media-theoretical requirements, thereby being constituted as the foundations of our own culture.

2 Publications of the Research Group/Bibliography

Altekamp forthcoming

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Gräßner forthcoming

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3 Citation

Maximilian Johannes Benz – Carmen Marcks-Jacobs, »Plenary Agenda Report for Research Group E-I »Ancient Spaces as Spaces of Movement in the Postclassical Era: Factography, Imagination, Construction«.« In Friederike Fless – Gerd Graßhoff – Michael Meyer (eds.), *Reports of the Research Groups at the Topoi Plenary Session 2010*. eTopoi. Journal for Ancient Studies, Special Volume 1 (2011). <http://journal.topoi.org>.