

Excellence Cluster 264 Topoi

Research Area E – Posters on Research Activities 2007–2009

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Monuments of the Past in Early Islamic Spain

Traditions of Knowledge and Continuity of Functions

The ancient city centre of Mérida (Augusta Emerita), the so-called Colonial Forum, was situated around a monumental temple building made of granite. This temple, known as the Templo de Diana, was still standing as a ruin, when, around 800 AD, the Arabs began to interfere with the urban structure of the city. The Roman building became part of a newly erected palace complex, whose centre was to be located on the podium of the antique temple, although it is not quite clear how the temple was incorporated into the residential complex. Immediately south of the residence at about the same time houses were built which provide evidence of an ambitious style of living.

The archaeological data raise the following questions: Was there any knowledge linked to the reused temple? And was there a continuity in function that developed antique structures in such a way as to allow the former Roman forum to retain a central position in the early Islamic city? Generally speaking one has to inquire into the attitude of the Arabs of the 8th to 11th century towards the antique heritage they were confronted with on the Iberian peninsula.

Information on this subject is scarce, but in the few written Arabic sources that mention ancient buildings, we are constantly confronted with the idea that they were built for eternity. The build-

ings of the past were admired especially because of their persistence and huge dimensions. But the sources never inform us of the function of the ancient buildings, their environment, their position within the urban context, or their utility. Nor are we informed of the historical provenance of the edifices, about their chronological setting or their commissioner.

Much the same holds true for ancient statues. They were esteemed because of their brilliant workmanship and beauty and honoured as witnesses of times past and empires that had perished, but we are informed neither about what they represented nor about the artists who made them. What is said about ancient monuments seems to be nursed by some literary erudition. References to the Romans or even to Greeks and Persians seem to go back to literary sources, as is also the case with the columns related to activities of Hercules.

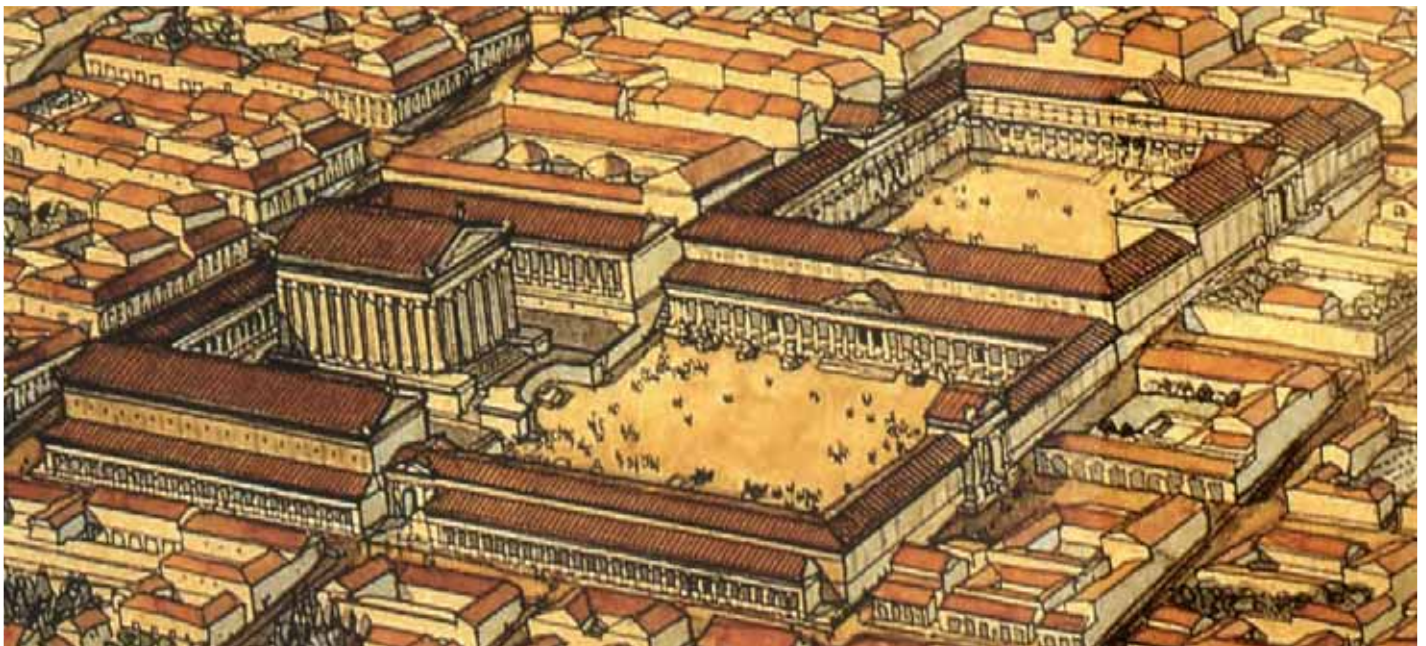
As there was no relation to the ancient buildings and sculptures, they were treated in a purely pragmatic way and were spared and reused or spoliated, as required. With a view to the pragmatic aspects and to applying the results obtained from the literary sources to the archaeological evidence in Mérida, it may be stated that neither ancient town planning nor the so-called Templo de Diana



The „Templo de Diana“, taken from: J. M. Álvarez Martínez / T. Nogales Basarrate, *Forum Coloniae Augustae Emeritae: „Templo de Diana“* (Mérida 2003) pl. 93 (photo by C. López)

were of any interest as documents of their time. But the Templo de Diana, this huge granite building in the centre of the city, for its material alone represented the ideal embodiment of the so frequently admired durability.

The Templo de Diana was in a way the architectural magnet that attracted the aspirations of the upper early Islamic citizenry in Mérida. So the space around the old forum also became the center of the new city, but this was not based on any tradition concerning former times.



Ideal Reconstruction of the Colonial Forum Complex of Augusta Emerita, taken from; J. M. Álvarez Martínez / T. Nogales Basarrate, *Forum Coloniae Augustae Emeritae: „Templo de Diana“* (Mérida 2003) pl. 111, A (drawing by J. C. Golvin / J. M. Álvarez / T. Nogales Basarrate)

Conversion and Spoliation in North Africa

Late Antiquity to the Present

DURABILITY AND MODULARITY INVITE CONVERSION AND SPOLIATION

Mediterranean antiquity marked a peak in population density and production intensity for many centuries. It left a quantity of material debris unrivalled in a globally premodern context. Monumental building stood out in two respects: it preferred solid to perishable materials and it made extensive use of modular modes of construction. Durability constitutes a handicap to revision, modularity supports it. Typical Graeco-Roman construction invites posterior users to accommodate themselves in a manmade environment converted to new needs or to dismantle and reassemble preexisting constructions. Conversion and spoliation are obvious ways of transforming the classical landscape. The project investigates the transformation of antiquity as a material reality in North Africa from late antiquity to the present.

Converted monuments and spolia clearly reveal their status as reused objects. The formal properties they lend to potentially new compositions may easily assume new meanings in new contexts. The project follows the possible semantic and aesthetic fields opened up by the subsequent lives of converted or spoliated objects in North African territories.

LATE ANTIQUE PERIOD

Late antiquity witnessed a dramatic metamorphosis of the urban landscape. The abandonment of obsolete architectural functions as well as the emergence of new building types account for intensive processes of conversion and spoliation accompanied by continued traditional production. The result shows an extreme adaptiveness with regard to preservation and readjustment. The old forum basilica of Leptis Magna, converted into a church (Fig. 1), appears nearly unchanged, while its pulpit is made up of reused, heterogeneous material. Tradition is both confirmed and denounced.



Fig. 1: Leptis Magna (Libya) - Roman forum basilica converted into church (6th c. CE) - Pilaster capitals from an imperial honorary arch are reused for the pulpit of the church



Fig. 2: Kairouan (Tunisia) - The doorframe of the entrance to the minaret of the Great Mosque (9th c. CE) is formed by architrave blocks from a demounted Roman building



Fig. 3: Tunis, Musée du Bardo (Tunisia) - Foot from a colossal Roman statue on display in the museum

EARLY ISLAMIC PERIOD

The first centuries of Muslim Ifriqiya witnessed an ongoing adaptation of the material heritage. While basic infrastructure such as aqueducts or cisterns were maintained, spoliation took the lead over conversion. Diverging settlement patterns and construction modes led to the abandonment or dismantling of the antique townscape. Classical architecture continued to be handed down in the form of *disiecta membra* and entered new compositional schemes mainly due to its formal and aesthetic properties, as in the doorframe of the Great Mosque of Kairouan (Fig. 2).

LATER ISLAMIC PERIOD

Unlike in contemporary Europe, the use of classical spolia did not stop in the Ottoman period. Antique columns and other decorative pieces continue to be extracted and their formal value exploited in mosques, madrasas, fortresses etc. The project will examine whether this conservatism includes an explicit canonization of an early Islamic habit of incorporating spolia.

COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL PERIOD

European overidentification with antiquity reinvested all remnants of the classical age with the quality of cultural *paradeigmata*. Paradoxically, however, the persisting remains were dramatically alienated from their former contexts. Accumulations of ruins were converted into walkable projections of ancient city life, while strategies of ostentatious display created new spolia environments like museums, where figural art, once largely banned for religious reasons, prevailed (Fig. 3). The colonial impact still overshadows the postcolonial situation.

Moving Beyond Topological Imagination in the English Renaissance

THE SPACE OF VIRTUE

Can we spatialize virtues? What kind of imaginary space do they need? Is it possible to present the virtues essential to the functioning of an early modern commonwealth so that they will help to “fashion a gentleman or noble person”? How can these be modelled in a literary text that preserves and refigures what appears most valuable in antiquity, while relating it to present-day concerns? Is there a way of conveying meanings which go beyond the officially permissible? How can I create a world that is wholly imaginary – a fairyland peopled by errant knights, warrior princesses, evil sorcerers, damsels in distress, dragons and monsters – and that nevertheless refers to burning contemporary issues, such as the conflict with the Roman Catholic church or the Irish question? How can I please my sovereign so that she will not only recognize me as a major poet but also grant me a handsome pension?

SHOWING THE INVISIBLE

These are some of the questions the English poet and administrator Edmund Spenser (c. 1552-1599) may have asked himself while composing what was to become the greatest English epic of the Renaissance: *The Faerie Queene*, dedicated to Queen Elizabeth I. Spenser’s vast work remained unfinished. Or perhaps it assumed its present shape because this was precisely appropriate for a book which tried to do the impossible – to represent what cannot be represented. *The Faerie Queene* attempts to show, in a literary text, what is invisible but capable of shaping (“fashioning”) individual life-styles as well as political fates. In order to attain this goal, nothing less than a new aesthetics is called for – an aesthetics of transcendence, which ‘moves beyond’ the established boundaries, including those of the topological imagination.



sion in which the ‘otherworld’ of *The Faerie Queene* is unfolded. It also proves an insufficient explanation for some of its major effects. More often than not, the six virtues presented as essential for a “gentleman” – *Holinesse, Temperaunce, Chastitie, Friendship, Justice, Courtesie* – are explored in non-allegorical modes.

The most important of these, and the most obviously indebted to ancient concepts, is the pastoral mode. Spenser had already worked in this genre in *The Shepheardes Calender*. In *The Faerie Queene*, arcadian space is opened up and blended with the “plains” through which the various chivalric questers are made to move. It offers a way out of the aporias in which the knights find themselves. And it questions, sometimes in a devastating manner, the validity of

the politically correct stances they appear to take. Spenser’s pastoral imagination creates paradoxical places which, like the erotic Bower of Bliss, the Neoplatonic-Epicurean Garden of Adonis, or Mount Acidale in the realm of Pastorella, arrest and dynamize the heroes’ wanderings while functioning as portals of transcendence towards a world beyond.

Moving Beyond explores the aesthetics underlying the pastoral in Spenser’s epic as well as other Renaissance texts. Its focus will be on the transformations ancient topoi undergo in their new contexts. With this in mind, reference will also be made to More’s *Utopia* and Sidney’s *Arcadia*, as well as to various pretexts, from Castiglione, Ariosto and Tasso to Virgil and Ovid.

SPENSER’S SPACES: PASTORAL BEYOND ALLEGORY

There is, of course, a rhetorical strategy traditionally imbued with the power to achieve this type of representation: allegory. Allegory provides a way of spatializing meaning by communicating on two levels of signification at the same time. Over long stretches, Spenser’s narrative does proceed allegorically, e.g. with the Redcrosse Knight representing English Protestantism in its difficult relationship to Duessa, the beautiful witch, who ‘stands for’ the enticements of Catholicism. But allegorical romance constitutes just one dimen-

Illustrations

The soft delights of pastoral (Illustration for Book Six by Walter Crane, c. 1890)

Title page and dedication to the 1596 edition of *The Faerie Queene*

Doctoral Theses

Knowledge of Ancient Spaces as Processed by the Arts

SPOLIA

Bernhard Fritsch explores the links between the deconstruction of ancient spaces and post-ancient construction projects in the city of Rome by examining the use of spolia – antique building elements such as columns or marble blocks that were re-used in newer monuments – in the construction and re-construction of St. Peter's Basilica.

Christine Pappelau studies the dismantling of the ancient Septizonium in Rome and the re-use of its construction materials. On the one hand, the doctoral thesis focuses on the reasons for and processes involved in the elimination of a toponymic ancient monument. On the other hand, it investigates the creation of new spaces and structures by re-using spolia in new contexts.

TRAVELLING

Lisa Roemer's project focuses on Rome as a space of motion in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Acts of walking as space-opening motions as well as traces of these acts in written and pictorial testimony from the 9th to the 16th century will therefore be examined with special consideration given to the perception and imagination of the ancient space of Rome in post-ancient times.

Claudia Anna Gräßner investigates the perception and literary transformation of ancient spaces in German travel writing of the 18th century. Representative travelogues based on journeys through Italy, Sicily, and parts of Greece are examined to show how the description of ancient spaces oscillates between objective knowledge transfer and subjective literary imagination.

Katalin Schober's project focuses on travel writing by English travellers touring Greece in the 18th century. The verbal and visual techniques used in the travelogues will be analyzed in order to show how ancient Greek spaces were perceived and imagined. In this way, questions concerning the reception of Antiquity and aesthetic categories will be considered.

FICTIONALIZATION

Lea Braun researches the transformation and resemantization of ancient spaces in Heinrich's of Neustadt *Apollonius von Tyrland*, which transforms the travelling space of its ancient original into a universal space of governance. Ancient spaces are thus hybridized, made dynamic, and inscribed into a specifically medieval salvific and courtly history.

Nils Schellmann explores spaces of antiquity in early modern novels, particularly the relation between fictionalization and early modern knowledge of ancient spaces. He assumes that novels like Daniel Casper von Lohenstein's *Arminius* (1689/90) function as implicit encyclopaedias in the process of the historical transformation of ancient spatial knowledge.

BEYOND

Maximilian Benz enquires into descriptions of purgatory, hell and paradise given in widespread Latin and Middle High German visionary texts from Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: How were transcendental spaces generated by literature or represented in texts? How were spatially organized imaginings of the afterworld popularized, stabilized, or modified?

Jana Lehmann investigates the setting of John Milton's poem *Paradise Lost* (1667). This epic version of man's fall from grace and subsequent expulsion from paradise is set in hell and in heaven, in the cosmos and in the Garden of Eden. The doctoral thesis focuses on Milton's conception, construction, and depiction of these different afterworld spaces.



Maarten van Heemskerck, View of the Forum Romanum, drawing, pen, brown ink, wash, 1535, Berlin, SMBPK, Kupferstichkabinett (KdZ 6696 r) (Source: CensusID 10006991)

The Great Cosmological Controversy

The Transformation of Spatial Knowledge in Early Modern Times

The research project aims at understanding the epistemic and social processes that led to the establishment of the heliocentric worldview. Who argued in favor of the new cosmological hypothesis and who opposed it? What kinds of arguments were mentioned and what function did they serve in the discourse? Is it possible to relate different types of arguments to different forms of knowledge or different social groups?

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

In 1543, Nicolaus Copernicus published his opus magnum *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* (On the Revolution of the Heavenly Spheres) claiming that the sun, rather than the earth, is at the center of the universe. Although this heliocentric hypothesis had already been suggested in classical Antiquity, it was not until the early modern period that it was elaborated so as to represent a full-fledged alternative to the geocentric worldview. The emergence of this new cosmology marked the beginning of a fundamental transformation of ancient concepts of space. Following Immanuel Kant, the term “Copernican Revolution” was coined to describe the epistemological shift linked to the acceptance of heliocentrism. Scholars such as Thomas Kuhn stressed the revolutionary and fundamental character of this change in cosmology, which was seen as a prime example of a paradigm shift in the history of science. This view has greatly influenced the historiography of astronomy and cosmology.

THE “REVOLUTION”

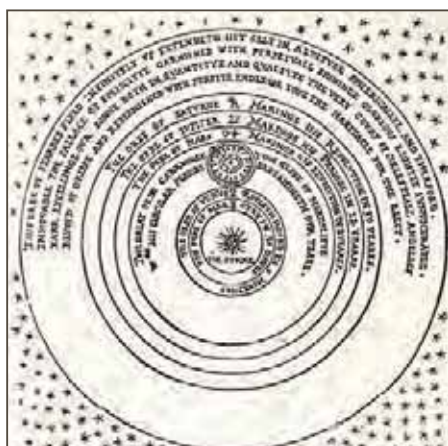
Contrary to what the term “revolution” might imply, however, the change from a geocentric to a heliocentric worldview was not achieved overnight, but as the result of an enduring cosmological controversy. This change resulted in a centuries-long struggle for acceptance between different social groups that were more or less connected to the scientific community and had diverse epistemological claims. The establishment of Copernicanism reflects a complex interaction between different forms of knowledge. This involved, for example, empirical arguments drawn from new scientific instruments like the telescope, or arguments based on older philosophical traditions preserved through scholastic Aristotelism.

In viewing this historical development solely in terms of a revolution, one loses sight of the complexities of the establishment of the new worldview. The variety and diversity of cosmological models at that time (see images below) is a first hint to the shortcomings of a concept that describes the controversy in cosmology as existing only between two fixed and antagonistic poles: Ptolemaic geocentrism and Copernican heliocentrism. The allegorical frontispice of Riccioli’s *Almagestum novum* (see image on the right) indicates that there were at least three poles around which the controversy revolved. Furthermore, before the middle of the 17th century, people often did not choose between two mutually exclusive alternatives, but rather concentrated on technical or mathematical details or picked certain elements of the theories suitable for their purposes.

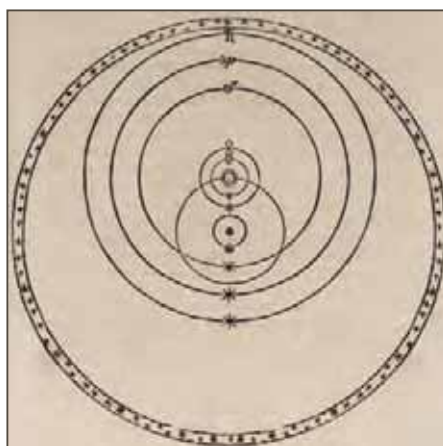


Frontispice of C. B. Riccioli’s *Almagestum novum*, 1561 (Digital environment ECHO: <http://echo.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/home>)

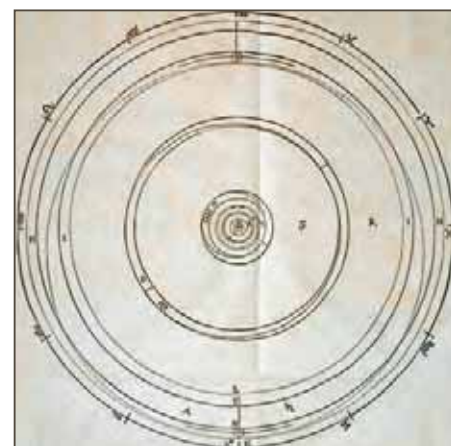
Finally, the description of the movements of celestial bodies in the new framework led to the reorganization of traditional concepts of motion. In the context of this project, the process of acceptance of the new cosmology is examined as a transformation of ancient bodies of knowledge and the arguments by which this transformation took place are reconstructed.



Depiction of the heliocentric worldview in: Thomas Digges, *A Perfit Description of the Caelestiall Orbes...*, 1576. London: Thomas Marsh. From: Johnson/Larkey Thomas Digges, *The Copernican System, and the Idea of the Infinity of the Universe* in 1576, *The Huntington Library Bulletin*, No. 5, p. 69



Depiction of the geo-heliocentric worldview in: Tycho Brahe, *De mundi aetheri recentioribus phaenomenis*, 1588. Vicenza: Biblioteca di Babele. From: Francesco Bertola, *Imago mundi. La rappresentazione del cosmo attraverso i secoli*, Biblos Edizioni, p. 142–143



Depiction of the heliocentric worldview in: Johannes Kepler, *Prodomus dissertationum cosmographicarum: continens Mysterium cosmographicum*, 1596. Tubingae: Georgius Gruppenbachius, p. 55. (Digital Library Florence: <http://fermi.imss.fi.it/rd/bd?lng=en>)

Representations of Space

Language, Cognition and Culture

RESEARCH AIM

"[T]here are very substantial differences between languages in the semantic parameters utilized in spatial description, and that makes it natural to ask how these parameters correlate with non-linguistic cognition." (Levinson 2003: xviii)

This research project surveys the linguistic representation of spatial concepts in various cultures. The focus is on the linguistic representation of places, distances, scope, scale, and perspective, but also cardinal directions and orientation. Furthermore, cultural-specific practices and traditional habits are investigated to learn more about spatial representations, e.g. house-building practices (see pictures to the right and below) and hunting practices etc. The project explores the degree to which cultural and environmental experience is reflected in language and how language, in turn, shapes spatial thinking. To exemplify the influence of non-linguistic information upon linguistic representation, two non-related and structurally distinct languages are placed at the center of the research. Eipo is spoken in the central mountains of the Province of Papua, West New Guinea (Indonesia), and Dene Chipewyan in Cold Lake, Alberta (Western Canada).



Seemingly chaotic construction of a sacred men's house by the Eipo in West New Guinea. Note that the number of house-builders determine the circumference of the house. Quelle: Prof.Dr. Wulf Schiefelhövel (private).



Finishing the seemingly chaotic construction of the house. Quelle: Koch, Gerd 1984. Malingdam. Ethnographische Notizen über einen Siedlungsbereich im oberen Eipomek-Tal, zentrales Bergland von Irian Jaya (West-Neuguinea), Indonesien. Berlin: Reimer, p. 40.

SPATIAL CONCEPTS

"The naming of geographic features as part of territorial marking and orientation is a common occurrence in all cultures [...] Topographical names reflect specific cultural interests and historical developments within the possibilities given by the morphology of the language." (Fowler & Turner 1999: 424)

Spatial concepts are constructed via experience based on the ontogenesis of a speaker and the historiogenesis of a speaker community in a particular culture. The process of naming geographic and territorial landmarks is crucial for all cultures. More specifically, topographical names indicate particular cultural interest as represented by the language repertoire. Indeed, the data reveal a detailed linguistic system of topographical maps represented, e.g., in place names. Based on anthropomorphic spatial knowledge in Eipo and Dene Chipewyan, this project investigates fundamental spatial concepts and representations often assumed to be universally valid.

REPRESENTATIONS OF SPACE

People in both cultures (and indeed many others, such as Hopi, Navajo, Slavey) use place names in their specific environments to construct a dense topographical matrix for spatial orientation. Hence, environmental experience is represented via language, and language, in turn, profiles and constructs spatial concepts. Thus, this research is not restricted to detailed linguistic encoding of certain spatial environmental concepts only, but extends as well to culture-specific practices. The ultimate goal is to improve the theoretical understanding of the relation between culture-specific experience (as represented through language, practices, or traditions) and universal human potential for spatial cognition.

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- Levinson, Stephen C. 2003. *Space in Language and Cognition. Explorations in Cognitive Diversity*. Cambridge U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Historical Epistemology of Space: Experience and Theoretical Reflection in Conceptual Development

This project focuses on the history of basic structures of spatial thinking, ranging from prehistory to the most recent and ongoing scientific revolutions. It concentrates on the questions of how the emergence and development of spatial concepts is shaped by experience and how, in turn, these concepts influence the acquisition of further experiential knowledge. Experience is understood in a broad sense within the project, as ranging from the interaction of biological organisms with their environment to the systematic production of knowledge by means of the complex experimental systems of modern science. The experiential spaces that one may thus distinguish have traditionally been investigated by various disciplines such as developmental psychology, anthropology, ethnology and psycholinguistics, archaeology, and the history of science and technology. The project sets these fields in relation to each other with respect to their research potentials and results concerning the historical development of spatial knowledge.

THE EXAMPLE OF 'DISTANCE'

The concept of distance between two objects may serve as an example of a basic concept whose history is far from trivial. Studies in developmental psychology have shown that the ontogenetic development of the concept involves fundamental changes. Thus, young children's concepts of distance differ from those of adults, e.g. in that a barrier placed between two objects reduces the distance between them. Moreover, ethnological and psycholinguistic studies suggest that the ontogenetic development of the concept is conditioned by the cultural environment. The Eipo in West New Guinea, for example, a stone-age level culture do not possess an abstract term for 'distance'. Still, the dimensions of the houses they build are prescribed by their tradition: they are



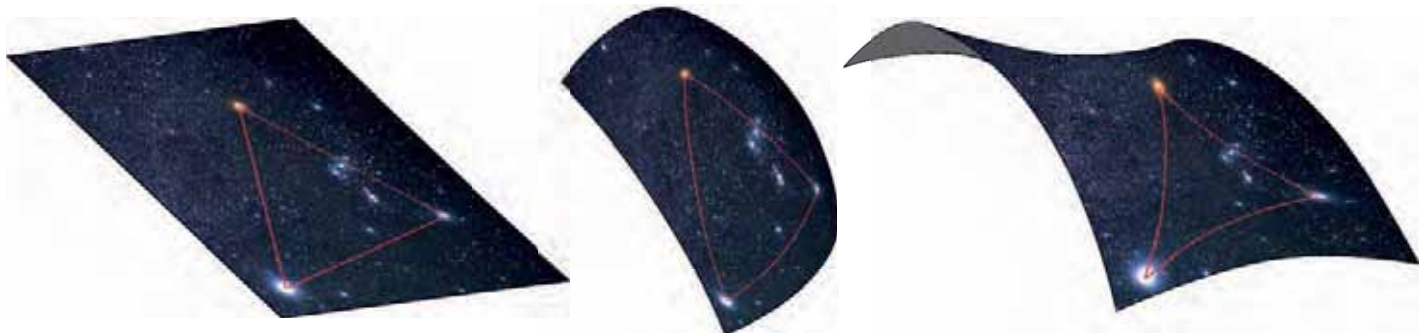
The oldest surviving manuscript of Euclid's *Elements*, 9th century AD. The *Elements* document an early theoretical reflection on the figures that can be drawn with compass and ruler and became a paradigm of deductive reasoning with far-reaching consequences for the later development of the concept of space. (© 2004 Octavo)

implicit in the collective ritual actions performed in building the house (see the poster *Representations of Space*).

A concept of distance that was applied to a large range of magnitudes emerged in the context of the state bureaucracies of early civilizations, when integrated systems of units of length developed. In Greek Antiquity, the existence of a context-independent concept of distance is prominently reflected in the *Elements* of Euclid. The concept of distance is implicitly defined in the so-called Common Notions, stating, for instance, that "Things which are equal to the same thing are also equal to one another."

In early modern times, when Euclidean geometry was applied to Newton's three-dimensional absolute space, the Euclidean concept of distance appeared to represent an innate knowledge structure that could never be changed by future

experiences. Kant's conception of space as *reine Anschauungsform* which constitutes the basis for geometrical judgements *a priori* is the most prominent expression of such an epistemological view. Yet, it was the very fact of the representation of geometrical knowledge in terms of axioms, theorems and proofs that allowed, by way of reflection, the discovery of the possibility of non-Euclidean geometries. This discovery immediately raised the question whether these geometries apply to physical space, a question that has been answered in the affirmative in modern relativistic physics. While relativistic chronogeometry strongly contradicts common sense notions of distance by implying its dependence on the state of motion, it was only by reflecting on the elementary instrumental actions by which space and time are measured that Einstein arrived at this modified concept of distance.



Two-dimensional models of space with different curvatures. The flat surface (left) represents Euclidean space; the angle sum of a triangle is 180° . Spherical space is represented by a spherical surface (middle); the angle sum of a triangle is always more than 180° . Hyperbolic space can be visualized as a saddle surface (right); the angle sum of a triangle is always less than 180° .

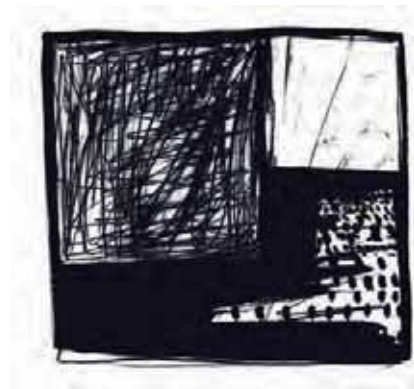
Cultural Theory and Its Genealogies

Cross-Sectional-Group II and Its Perspectives

The aim of the research group is the analysis of spatial practices and techniques of space production as well as space organization since antiquity.

Taking classical antiquity as a starting point, these spatial practices and techniques will be explored with regard to alterations and transformations that gave rise to and resulted in the reorganization and reevaluation of cultural theory.

The six research projects of the CSG-II focus on either a corporeal, a social, an agricultural, a metrological or a networked epistemology of space. In doing so, they aim at specific perspectivalizations as well as at a historical synthesis of cultural theories.



Motive: Kathrin Jauer

CULTURES OF SPACE

Cultural theory examines forms of spatial organization and regimes of space that result from acts of demarcation: i.e., the differentiation of natural and cultural, sacred and profane, civilized and cultivated spaces; of networks, juridical spaces, spaces of otherness, social and oriented spaces. These spaces are not just given; rather they are produced, arranged and sustained by specific practices and techniques. This does not only account for their cultural significance, but also for their instability, that is, for the possibility of change by way of exposure, application and reception; by utilization, transformation, shifts, cataclysms, or reinventions. Spatial practices and techniques are characterized by a high degree of habitualization and therefore take on forms of implicit and/or embodied knowledge.

Yet, spatial organization and regimes of space tend to be related to experts, professions and remote fields of knowledge before they become objects of systematic survey, record, taxonomy, mensuration and visualization. In times of cultural shifts, however, they tend to lose their apparent self-evident character.

As objects of critical reevaluation, of dramatization, narration, of visual as well as speech acts, of regulative acts, and of theoretical investigation, spatial organization and regimes of space take on a concise form only when they are about to transform or disappear. It is therefore the transformations of ancient spatial practices, techniques, and structures that are at the center of attention. Focusing on epistemological shifts in European history, these transformations will be analyzed in terms of the effects they eventually had on the reorganization of cultural theory.

The reconstruction of the formations as well as the transformations of spatial practices, techniques, and structures since classical antiquity is methodologically based on a genealogical approach. This allows for a critical examination of regimes of space that will put

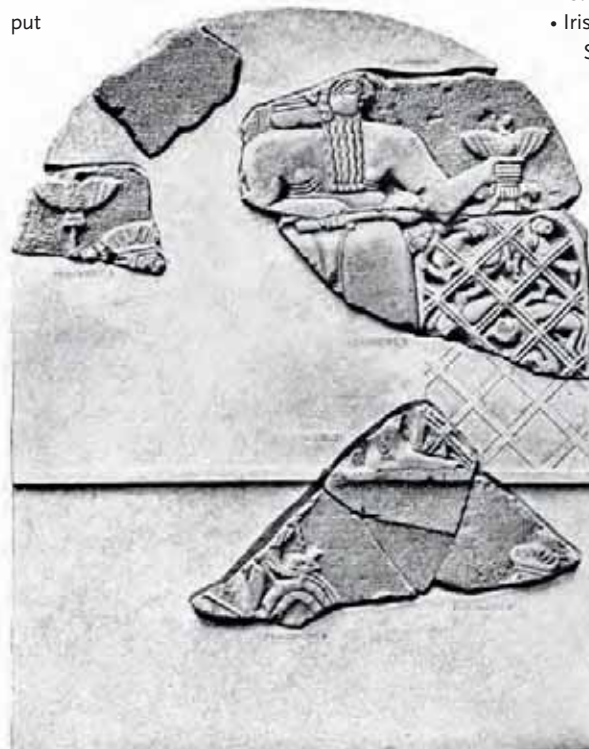


Groma from the tombstone of L. Aebutius Faustus, 1st century A.D., Ivrea, Museo Civico Ivrea, Italy

more recent practices into perspective on the basis of their embeddedness in the history of culture.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Hartmut Böhme: Culture and Space. A History of Cultural Theories
 - Iris Därmann: Serving. From Slavery to Service Culture
 - Anna Echterhölter: Metrology. Scales and Situations of Justification since Antiquity
 - Sebastian Gießmann (Doctoral Fellow): Nets and Networks. A Cultural History
 - Rebekka Ladewig (Doctoral Fellow): Orientation. Paradigms of Spatial Orientation since Antiquity
 - Ute Seiderer (Postdoctoral Fellow): Agrimensura. Culture, Agriculture, and 'agrimensura' in the Roman Empire and in 15th and 16th Century Italy



'Stele of the Vultures' from Lagash, detail with net, 2440 B.C., Louvre, Paris

The Spread of Knowledge Through Cultures

GEOGRAPHIC INTERDEPENDENCE

The early cultures of the so-called “ancient world” — the Mediterranean and the Black Sea areas, the Eurasian Steppe and the Near East — were not only regionally located but also trans-regionally connected. The ancient world was, to a degree that has often not been recognized, multicultural, multilingual, and interdependent. Encounters between diverse cultures in the Mediterranean and the Near East repeatedly triggered innovative developments, the results of which have reached other, more distant (from both a synchronic and diachronic perspective), cultural spaces. Even in antiquity, the transfer of knowledge from other cultures was practiced and explicitly recognized. With the heritage of late antiquity, and, in particular with Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, the cultures of the ancient Near East achieve a continuity reaching far beyond their immediate historical-political presence.

KNOWLEDGE SITUATED IN SPACE

Knowledge is often conceived (especially in disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, and the cognitive sciences) as something mental and private. But from a historical and social viewpoint, it is necessary to consider knowledge as something that moves from one person to another; something that may be shared by members of a profession, a social class, a geographic region, or even an entire civilization. From this perspective,

knowledge, and its movements, may be mapped. Shared knowledge is especially important, in fact, to the artistic, religious, legal, and economic systems that constitute cultures; and knowledge travels together with artifacts and artistic styles, myths and rituals, laws and norms, goods and wealth.

EPISTEMIC NETWORKS

The transmission of knowledge can be understood as taking place in an epistemic network, in which the nodes (or “vertices”) constitute possessors or potential possessors of knowledge, such as individuals, groups of artisans, or scientific communities; and the links (or “edges”) constitute the routes that knowledge must follow to travel from one node to another. Epistemic networks are not random networks, but rather possess a topology in which certain nodes, termed “hubs,” are especially important, in that they are connected to many other nodes. Thus, for example, while mathematicians and philosophers were scattered throughout the Greek world, certain centers (“hubs”) were especially important, such as (in chronological order) Miletus, Athens, and Alexandria. The importance of such centers is not unrelated to geographic, political, and economic factors. Hence the appearance of cosmological thought in Miletus, at the heart of Asia Minor, a cultural crossroads where the cosmological knowledge of the Babylonians would most likely have found its way.

VEHICLES FOR TRANSMISSION

Knowledge may travel with people, or it may travel in the form of external representations. These are its vehicles. Various vehicles possess their peculiar characteristics, such as speed of transmission, reliability of transmission, and so on. Spoken language has always constituted one of the chief means of transmitting knowledge. Of special note here are two types of linguistic situations that were as frequent in the ancient world as in the modern: multilingualism and *linguae francae*. The invention of writing created a new and powerful tool for the transmission of knowledge, since it allowed knowledge to travel, in both time and space, beyond the immediacy of the speech situation. Writing emerged in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, initially independent of spoken language, as a technology for the administration of centralized politico-economic systems. Under the rubric of “vehicles for the transmission of knowledge”, one must not overlook the importance of artifacts that may not have been explicitly intended as representations of knowledge.

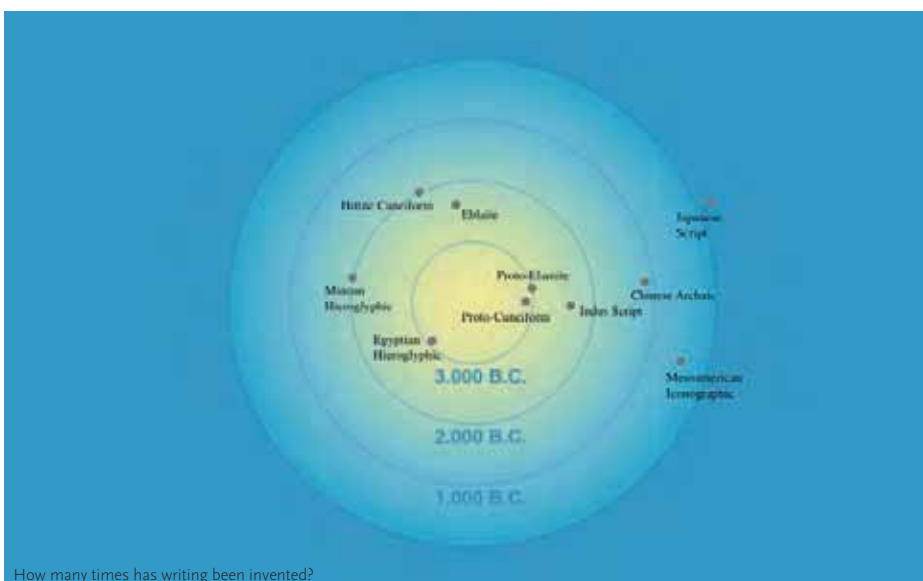
RESEARCH FOCI

The research program of CSG-III in its initial phase will concentrate on three interlinked sub-projects. These are intended as transdisciplinary endeavors that will bring together researchers from various areas of Topoi and with diverse academic specializations. The foci of the three sub-projects are objects of study complex enough to require an approach that combines disciplinary methods and results.

1. Writing as a means for the transmission of knowledge
2. Multilingualism, language contact, and the spread of knowledge
3. The spread of scientific knowledge in the “classical world”

Four major over-arching research questions will guide work within CSG-III:

1. How did new forms of knowledge arise in antiquity? How were they represented and transmitted?
2. In antiquity, were innovations only internal developments that spread outward? Or did cultural contact and mixture itself lead to innovations?
3. What conditions were needed for the successful transmission of knowledge?
4. How did local political and social fluctuations affect the transfer of knowledge?



How many times has writing been invented?

Cross Sectional Group IV – Museums

Ancient Spaces in the Context of Exhibitions and Museums

This subsection of Research Area E aims to assess how and with what effects ancient spaces, spatial imaginations, and spatial concepts are constructed, transformed, and received in exhibitions and museums. This investigation includes a comparative approach to the tradition of the presentation of ancient cultures in museums and its impact on knowledge and thought about the ancient world. The group also seeks to survey and compare recent strategies and techniques of presentation in order to develop an appropriate strategy for further exhibitions and presentations of ancient spaces and spatial concepts. Research activities are subdivided in three main areas:

CONTAINING SPACE

CSG-IV examines the memories of ancient spaces relevant for museum installations ranging from texts, drawings or three-dimensional models to the 1:1 reconstruction of original spaces inside exhibition halls. The latter is determined by a contradictory context of an interior showroom and a therein presentation of exterior spaces like e.g. the Pergamon Altar or the market gate of Miletus. In this context, the problems of reduction and an antagonism of educational and aesthetical demands are evident. The group analyses the historical and spacial forms of reception history and its awareness of proportionality and prospects as forms of designing ancient history within the context of archeological museums. Two main projects are carried out: a special exhibition „ZeitRäume. Milet in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike“ (06.05.2009–21.03.2010) in the Pergamonmuseum



The spatial structure of Egyptian seated statues manifests itself in the juxtaposition with Giacometti's "Diego assis". Foto: D. Wildung

and research about the basic conception of Walter Andrae in the Museum of Ancient Near East. Furthermore a conference on "Außenräume in Innenräumen" took place in December 2009 (11./12.12.2009), organized in cooperation between the Collection of Classical Antiquities and the Museum of the Ancient Near East.

OBJECTS IN SPACE

Ancient Sculpture, miniature art or objects of daily life lose their original context if they are presented outside the archeological context. Therefore every object displayed in a museum demonstrates a severe deprivation of its own space. CSG-IV studies this phenomenon of losing space and its contextualization in archeological museums. The main focus is the question of an adequate presentation. Two projects are realized: an analysis on the presentation of ancient near eastern miniature art and a special exhibition "Giacometti, der Ägypter" in the Egyptian Museum (29.10.–31.12.2008).

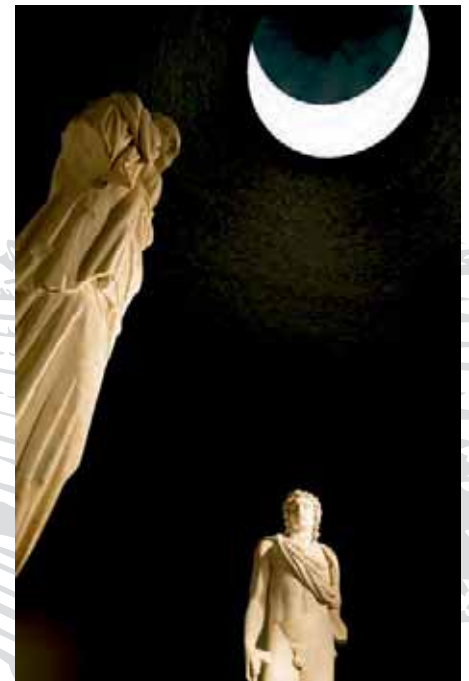
EMOTIONAL SPACE

Museum presentations of the ancient artifacts and architecture have the general ability to evoke certain emotions. Different senses can be used



for gaining cognition and knowledge transfer of ancient spaces and objects at the intersections between the audiences perception of certain educational intention and scientific approaches. A seminar on "Besucherstimmen auf der Museumsinsel. 1830–1989" will be held at Technische Universität Berlin in summer term 2010.

Fig. above: VAM – Historical view (1935) of the Assyrian Palace Hall designed by Walter Andrae. © Fotoarchiv VAM, SMB



Neues Museum: View into the southern cupola hall with statue of Helios. Foto: J. Laurentius

TOPOI EXHIBITION 2012

CSG-IV is further responsible for the concept and organization of a special exhibition, which will present the relevant research fields of TOPOI based on newly found standards of visualisation to a wider public. Planned venue for autumn 2012 is the Pergamonmuseum on the Museum Island.

MEMBERS

Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung:
Friederike Seyfried, Dietrich Wildung
Antikensammlung: Andreas Scholl,
Martin Maischberger, Wolf-Dieter Heilmeyer
Institut für Museumsforschung:
Bernhard Graf, Gabriele Pieke, Elsa van Wezel
Museum für Islamische Kunst: Stefan Weber
Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte:
Matthias Wemhoff
Vorderasiatisches Museum:
Beate Salje, Barbara Feller
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin: Astrid Dostert
Technische Universität Berlin: Bénédicte Savoy
Senior Fellows: Filiz Çakir Phillip, Désirée Heiden
Doctoral Fellow: Sabine Plöger

‘The Recovery of Space’

The Significance of Andrae’s Concept and the Re-contextualization of Miniature Art in Modern Museum Presentations

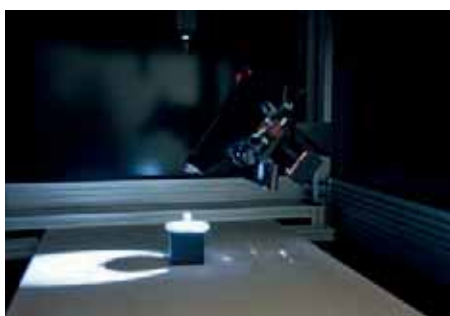
Within the framework of the excellence cluster Topoi, the Vorderasiatisches Museum (VAM/SMB) is running a research program focused on the interface between exhibition concepts and the principal concepts of space in cultural history as well as its material objects of knowledge. The program is divided into two subprojects (SP 1 and SP 2) and combines research on reception history and the implementation of museums as places of mediation (cf. VAM/SP 1: “Containing Space”) with research on the historic core complexes of the museums’ inventories while taking into account innovative approaches to research (cf. VAM/SP 2: “Objects in Space”).



Seal and Sealing (lapis lazuli and clay). VA 3605

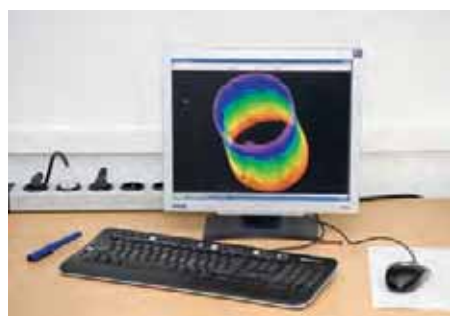
VAM/SP 1 “CONTAINING SPACE”

The aim of subproject 1 is to explore and “re-assess” the concepts of spatial representation that were employed in the Vorderasiatisches Museum by its former director, Walter Andrae. Based on these findings, new concepts of spatial representation are to be developed, particularly with regard to the redesign of the museum once the overall refurbishment of the VAM has been completed. As there has been no scientific research on Walter Andrae’s exhibition concepts so far, a comprehensive review of the sources contained in the different archives (which in part is already being conducted) as well as the combination of all information gained in the different research projects is indispensable. At the same time, the results gained are compared with historical presentations of ancient oriental cultures displayed in affiliated museums in Paris and London and are thus placed in an international context. The scientific and historical evaluation of “Andrae’s concept” represents the final and essential stage of the research project. On the basis of this evaluation, an innovative exhibition concept will be developed for the VAM.



VAM/SP 2 “OBJECTS IN SPACE”

The aim of subproject 2 is, among other things, the “recovery of space” for the representation of miniature objects of art in museums by developing innovative exhibition concepts which include new technological and scientific methods. It was possible to gain the “Fraunhofer Institut IOF Jena” as a cooperation partner for the project. The researchers managed to translate the idea of a circumferential measuring method into reality by developing and implementing the prototype of a device called “KolibriMulti”. By means of this unique circumferential measuring device and thanks to new measurement methods used in the research of miniature art, it is now possible to conduct evaluations on the content and use of space in ancient oriental seals which have been deemed unfeasible in the past. Furthermore, the results gained are to be integrated into the development of a promising exhibition concept for the presentation of miniature art in the VAM. Using the evaluations of images and data provided by the “KolibriMulti” device, different presentation techniques are tested and the effects of so called



“experimental showcases” on the recipients determined. The aim of these test series conducted in cooperation with the Institut für Museumsforschung (Institut of Museums Research) is to examine ways how different concepts of space can be conveyed to different target audience.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

Based on a historical study of sources and the implementation of novel techniques, the two interconnected subprojects of the VAM have a common objective: on the one hand, the “comprehension and reassessment” of Andrae’s concept as a basis for the redesign of the VAM, on the other hand, the recovery of space for objects of ancient oriental miniature art using a modern exhibition concept which leads to a re-contextualization of this specific genre of art in modern representations of art in museums.

▽ The “KolibriMulti” device in operation. Fotos: Olaf M. Teßmer SMB-PK



Antiquity in Islam

Locating Artefacts and Concepts of Space in Muslim Cultures

THE NEW EXHIBITION CONCEPT OF THE MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART

As one of the most important western collections of pre-modern Islamic art and archaeology, the museum in Berlin is especially notable for its excellent range of objects from the early Islamic periods. Masterpieces from the palatial and residential structures of Ctesiphon, Khirbet al-Minya, Qusair Amra, Mshatta, Samarra and Afrasiab/Samarqand, which date from the 7th to 9th centuries, are outstanding examples of manifestations of spatial diversity and relations between Late Antiquity and eastern regions. They define the Mediterranean as a single cultural region, in which Islamic art and architecture plays a significant role. Not only during the early years of Islamic rule, but also throughout the medieval centuries, artistic designs related to each other, cited and transformed Mediterranean and Eastern traditions, and also had great impact on western art and concepts of art.

The façade of the caliphal palace of Mshatta, one of the most important monumental architectural objects of the Museum of Islamic Art, illustrates several layers of antique traditions - such as acanthus friezes, vine scrolls, animals and mythical creatures as well as classical forms of vessels - and highlights relevant issues regarding the project: how did the craftsmen at Mshatta make use of familiar artistic vocabulary to translate elements of their social system (in this case, ruler and power) for the ruler's subjects? How did familiar patterns and concepts of space from different traditions come to be applied in unknown combinations? Antique forms are transformed into the architectural language of a new form of political rule – the Caliphate. Early Muslim concepts of space developed from the familiar (e.g. the acanthus or the classical form of a basilica, which is applied in the throne hall of this desert castle) into a significantly revealing programme of forms, which are recognisable by their subject and intermingling citations of the past and conscious modifications of the present.

The Eastern Roman Empire, later known as the Byzantine Empire, had been the preserver of Romano-Hellenistic traditions for centuries; following the Seljuk conquests in the second half of the 11th century, the former Byzantine heartland Anatolia was confronted with Islamisation – turning a geographical space into a new cultural space (Kulturraum). The Islamic architecture of the Seljuks in Anatolia was subjected to multiple influences. Impulses and adoptions from Central Asia, Iran, Mesopotamia and Syria appear, as well as paragons from Anatolia itself, i.e. its antique heritage. Seljuk architectural decor is outstanding in form; it consists not only of inspired examples made especially for the respective architecture but also of incorporated antique and byzantine spolia. Iconium (Konya) became the cultural centre of this new Turkic-Islamic synthesis. Objects from this region are an important part of the Museum of



Stone relief from Konya, 13th C (Museum für Islamische Kunst)

Islamic Art collection. The location of artefacts within their spaces and spheres of life is the project's primary topic. Concepts of space provide the analytical framework, serving as models for returning museum objects to their primary cultural areas and to the social spaces in which they were used, so that the meanings these objects formerly possessed can be decoded.



Archaeological Museums Istanbul/Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri (Photography: St. Weber)

TRADITIONS OF MUSEUMS AND KNOWLEDGE

Moreover, a second important topic of the project concerns the question to what extent and with what repercussions do museums and museum installations construct, transform and adapt antique space, concepts of space and perception of space. The project's results will be implemented within the new exhibition concept of the Museum of Islamic Art, which will be housed on three levels of the northern wing of the Pergamon Museum, following renovation.

In the 19th century, for example, antiquity became a subject of interest to the Ottomans as well. At that time, antiquity was being seriously reviewed in museum exhibitions and archaeological excavations were booming. Due to the centralised power of the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul became an indispensable centre for this progress. It was with the general directors of the Ottoman Imperial Museums, Osman Hamdi Bey and later his younger brother Halil Edhem Bey, that archaeology took shape in the Ottoman Empire. From then on, the review of antiquity was channelled, among other things, into the architecture of the new Ottoman Imperial Museums. The rediscovery of the ancient heritage of Anatolia was then directly informed by European discourse.



Antique and pre-Islamic traditions in the decoration concept of the façade of the palace of Mshatta (Photographs: D. Heiden)

Miletus in Roman Imperial Times and Late Antiquity

Exhibition in the Pergamonmuseum, May 2009 – March 2010

SPACES IN TIME TIME AND SPACE

Located on the Ionian shore of Asia Minor in what is today Western Turkey, Miletus was one of the most important cities of the ancient world. During the archaic period, it was doubtless one of the Mediterranean's leading centres. After its destruction during the revolt against the Persians in 494 B.C., it was rebuilt on the same site, but regained only some of its former splendour and wealth.

FROM EXCAVATION TO MUSEUM PRESENTATION

Like Pergamon and other ancient cities of Asia Minor, Miletus was already being excavated by Berlin archaeologists and architects during the late 19th and early 20th century. Hundreds of objects found in the course of the first excavation, most of them architectural elements and sculptures made of marble, were officially acquired by the German excavators from the Ottoman state and brought to Berlin. The most prominent and spectacular among them is the market gate dating from the early 2nd century A.D., which has been reconstructed as a whole in a hall of the Pergamonmuseum dimensioned to fit the monument's scale. While this full reconstruction can give an idea of the original setting and appearance, most of the other monuments – whether isolated pieces of architecture, sculptures or mosaics – are comprehensible to modern visitors only in a greatly reduced way. Furthermore, it

RESTORATION AND 3D RECONSTRUCTION

Therefore, the most important goal of the exhibition was to re-contextualize objects both in their ancient urban settings and in their museum presentation. This has been done mainly in two different ways: On the one hand, archaeological artefacts nearly forgotten for decades have been fetched out of the museum's deposits, restored and put on display, together with related monuments, where possible. Thus, some major monuments of Miletus like the market gate and the nymphaeon could be notably enriched by adding sculptures that once decorated them to the museum's existing presentation.

On the other hand, 3D reconstructions were created of the city as a whole, including the changing environment of the Maeander valley, as well as of the Faustina baths, one of the town's best preserved building complexes, remaining in use until late antiquity. The city and its public monuments can now be much better understood, as is the case for the many statues of gods, heroes and emperors which still stood and were admired when Christianity already had arisen to power. Topoi has made a substantial financial contribution to the exhibition, which together with other sources has helped make the exhibition a reality.

has to be stressed that the vast majority of the finds have never been publicly presented, or have remained out of the public eye over the past few decades due to damage or partial destruction suffered during World War II and Germany's subsequent division.

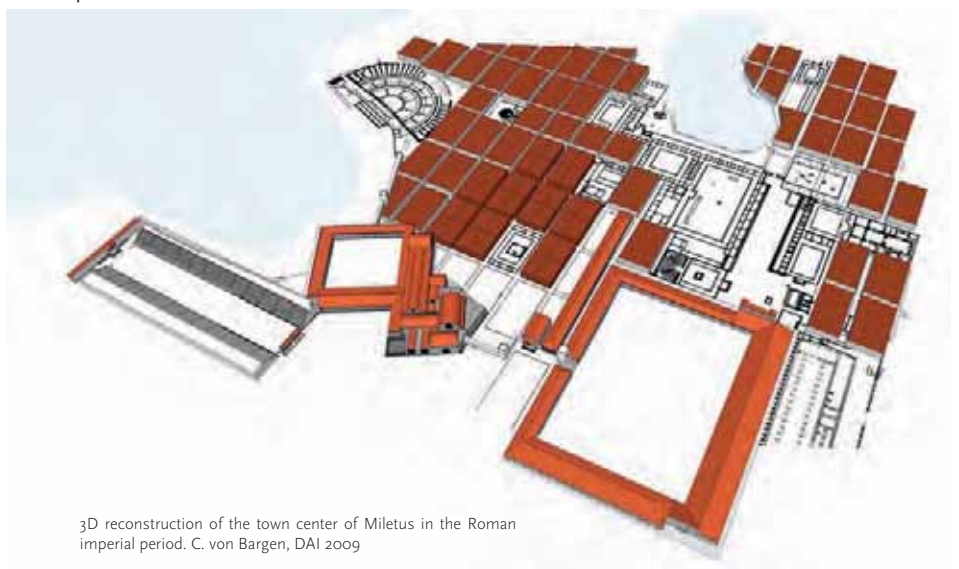


Glimpse of the exhibition in the Pergamonmuseum, 2010. Photograph: J. Laurentius.

Poster of the exhibition including a historical photograph of the Faustina baths in Miletus at the time of the first excavation, c. 1910. Graphic: J. Denkinger, DAI



The exhibition presented in the Pergamonmuseum on Museum Island in Berlin (May 6th, 2009 – March 21st, 2010) focuses on the city's late periods and on the impact which public places and buildings, as well as the sculptures displayed there, had on the town's appearance – especially in view of the profound changes which occurred due to the shift from the traditional pagan religion to Christianity from the 4th century A.D. onwards. The exhibition has been organized by the Collection of Classical Antiquities of the State Museums of Berlin together with the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) within the framework of CSG-IV research activities. At the same time, it presents the preliminary results of several years of field work conducted as a joint venture project of the Museum and the DAI at the Faustina baths in Miletus from 2006 to the present, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG).



3D reconstruction of the town center of Miletus in the Roman imperial period. C. von Bargaen, DAI 2009

Neues Museum Berlin

A New Concept for the Exhibition

Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte

As part of the discussion on how space-knowledge-structures should be presented in a museum context, five senior fellows, working together with the curators of the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, have developed scientific concepts for parts of the exhibition in the Neues Museum on the Museum Island.

Palaeolithic and Mesolithic: Prof. Dr. Thomas Terberger (Greifswald); Neolithic: Dr. Kirsten Gebhard (Berlin); Development of calendrical structures: Dipl. Phys. Rahlf Hansen (Hamburg); Analyses of the Trojan silver vessels: Dipl. Rest. Nicole Reifarth (Bamberg) and Dr. Elisabeth Völling (Würzburg). The results of these studies are shown through selected exhibits in the Neues Museum.

Thomas Terberger worked together with Dipl. Hist. Almut Hoffmann on three main topics:

1. Comparison of different kinds of men and their cultural capabilities: The Neanderthal of Le Moustier and the anatomically modern man of Combe Capelle.
2. Environmental changes and the relationship between man and nature: epipalaeolithic and mesolithic artefacts and faunal remains from the Berlin-Brandenburg region.
3. Climate change and the future: The dynamics of natural and manmade climate change based on prehistoric archaeology research.

Kirsten Gebhard structured the era between the 6th and 3rd millennium BC into four complexes, once again working together with Almut Hoffmann (Fig. 1):



Fig. 1: Neolithic room (Foto: C. Plamp)

1. Settling down: Setting out for Europe; the newest insights on the origin of the first settlers and domesticates through genetic analyses.
2. Death and the after-life: Funeral customs of the Middle Neolithic illustrated through the graves from Rössen.
3. New environments – new materials: The use and meaning of stone and copper for the societies of the Late Neolithic.
4. The new face of Europe: Diversity and expression of new identities and beliefs as seen through the shaping and ornamentation of pottery.

Rahlf Hansen and Alix Hänsel developed a concept using key finds with calendrical references in order to demonstrate the existence of astronomical knowledge from the Neolithic onward (Fig. 2):

1. Oldest solar observatories: Neolithic earthworks as places of astronomical calculations.
2. Babylonian lunar and solar calendar: First insights to correlate lunar and solar calendars.
3. Cosmic symbols on artefacts of the 2nd millennium BC: From Nebra to Trundholm, calendrical calculations on metalwork masterpieces.
4. The calendrical meaning of the Bronze Age Golden Hat: Calculation of the solar-lunar cycle and the cycle of lunar eclipses.
5. Calendars from the 1st millennium BC to the present: The Egyptian and Julian-Gregorian solar calendar, the Islamic lunar and the Jewish lunar-solar calendar.

Nicole Reifarth and Elisabeth Völling explored the Trojan silver vessels dating from the treasures of the 3rd millennium BC as part of a review of Hein-



Fig. 3: Textile structures (Foto: N. Reifarth)

rich Schliemann's collection. They are now the focus of an exhibition in the Troy hall of the Neues Museum. Pictures of the inside of the vessels taken with a digital microscope at a magnification of 175 show textile structures (Fig. 3), proving that the vessels were not exposed to fire damage in their place of deposition, contrary to Manfred Korfmann's suggestion.



Fig. 2: Golden hat (Foto: C. Plamp)

CSG-V – Space and Collective Identities

A Platform for Methodological and Conceptual Investigations



Fig 1: The Sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia. Copper engraving by Antonio Tempesta 1608 (Kunze 2003, 159 cat. no. VII.2)

In times of globalization, in the light of migration and mass tourism, everyone has come to use the terms „identity“ and „space“. In the politics of science, these expressions are practically developing into a magic formula. The frequency of their use is inversely proportional to the accuracy, however. Concepts of identity as well as of space have already gone through various cycles in the different humanities. Still, an intensive discussion about the contemporary definition of the terms, as well as the possibilities and limitations of their use is barely taking place in the classical studies.

The newly founded Cross Sectional Group V intends to provide a platform for communication regarding these topics. The Group’s main aim is to methodologically and conceptually investigate the core problem of the connection between spatially

bound material culture and collective identities – especially ethnic groups – as preserved in written records. In this field, unconsidered and not infrequently ideologically and politically charged identifications have been made. Furthermore, the humanities have to react to progress in the natural sciences, for example in genetics or isotopic analysis. Their new results have to be integrated into humanistic research in a methodologically critical manner, also to be able to constructively encounter the biologicistic notions which are recurring ever more frequently at present. In order to do so, it is also necessary to deal with the questions that the history of science has raised, as well as with the contemporary formation of identities based on archaeological sites and observations. In addition, the study of intercultural exchange which illustrates the dynamics of identities and

space, as well as linguistic and narrative discourses of identity, for example in the form of eponyms or myths, are key aspects of the Group’s research.

The following central questions are being discussed by the Cross Sectional Group V:

1. How have “space” and “collective identities” been constructed in previous research?
2. How are archaeological sites constructed in modern times, and do these constructs affect the formation of identities?
3. What can spatially bound material culture tell us about collective identities?
4. What significance does space have for the formation of identities?
5. How do collective identities make an impact on space?
6. In what way do concepts of space vary in different socio-cultural groups?

Spokesperson

Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Gehrke

Coordinator

Dr. Kerstin P. Hofmann

Selected research projects

- Olympia as Eidikotop
DAI (Hans-Joachim Gehrke)
- Troy. The methodology of classical studies and archaeology
Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte Berlin (Matthias Wernhoff)
- Archaeotopia. The archaeological site as focus, expression and motor of collective identities
Institut für Archäologie, Klassische Archäologie & Ägyptologie und Archäologie Nordost-Afrikas, HU Berlin (Stefan Altekamp, Claudia Näser, Cornelia Kleinitz)
- Acculturation in Pre- and Protohistory. Possibilities and constraints of an explanatory model
DAI (Kerstin P. Hofmann)
- Europa and her Genealogy. Migrations and the construction of identities in mythotopographic space
Institut für Religionswissenschaften, FU Berlin (Almut-Barbara Renger)

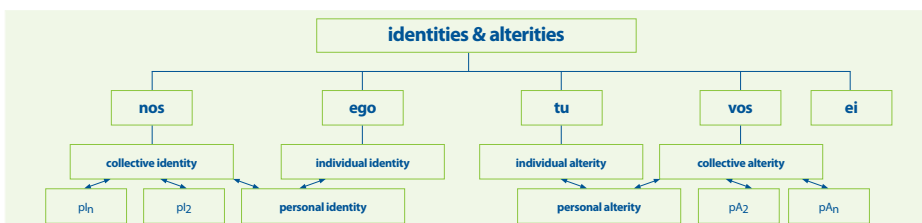


Fig. 2: Identities and Alterities (after Hofmann 2009, 33 fig. 4)

Archaeotopia

The Archaeological Site and The Formation of Collective Identities



Fig. 1: Carthage: Archaeological zone on Byrsa Hill
Huge pillars originally supporting a large platform comprise part of a massive Roman building scheme on Byrsa hill, which buried the ruins of older Punic houses. Archaeological excavation allows for the paradox of giving a simultaneous insight into the Roman layers and the Punic houses historically destroyed and covered by them. The extended excavation zone is surrounded by modern suburbia. It's up to the recipients to decide to which period Carthage belongs (photo: Stefan Altekamp)

“Archaeotopia” focuses on archaeological sites as culturally charged locations and as a category of space sui generis in the contemporary cultural landscape. The mere act of designating a site – often accompanied by distinct physical markings and a change in legal status – can lead to abrupt termination of most previous and alternative uses, such as settlement and agricultural activities or the material exploitation of the physical remains of the past. The designation, development and maintenance of archaeological sites involve numerous interest groups and stakeholders, including local residents, landowners, academic experts, their institutions and funding bodies, policymakers at different administrative levels, visitors of all shades, local staff and economically interested parties. While archaeology and the notion of an archaeological site represent an ideational import from the Western world, this scenario is further broadened by such constellations as local versus foreign, national versus international, etc.

Whereas their status alone can bring archaeological sites into the focus of manifold political, economic and cultural interests and make them an arena of multiple social practices, they are also frequently subjected to severe physical transformations by individual interest groups. Usually, archaeologists and other academic parties enjoy privileged access for the sake of research, preservation and dissemination of historical knowledge. But archaeological sites can also be impregnated with further, potentially very divergent cultural

messages by other stakeholders, or can lend themselves to intensive commercial exploitation.

“Archaeotopia”, one of the projects within CSG V, investigates the motivations, scope and regulating factors of interventions in archaeological sites by a multitude of interest groups. The processes of identity formation triggered by and expressed in these appropriations are analysed in representative case studies using a variety of methods, which include topological survey, anthropological fieldwork and the evaluation of media coverage, textual material and pictorial sources. At present, studies on Carthage (Tunisia - Fig. 1), Thebes (Egypt - Fig. 2) and a range of smaller sites in the Middle Nile Valley (Sudan - Fig. 3) are envisaged. Due to their genesis and their ongoing appropriation by multinational agents, all of these sites offer a global perspective. After all, these sites are embedded in modern social contexts. Local communities at least partially dissociate themselves from them, but at the same time favour their appropriation under certain circumstances. Of specific brisance is the concept of the intrinsic value of cultural heritage, which appears as a foreign



Fig. 3: Middle Nile: Workmen in front of Lion Temple
Local workmen in front of the rebuilt Lion Temple at Musawwarat es-Sufra (Sudan): a new profession with a strong impact on the socioeconomic constitution and sociocultural identities of nomadic groups living in the vicinity of the archaeological site (photo: Thomas Scheibner)

import in these contexts. It does, however, play a fundamental role in the appropriation of these sites by international, national and local stakeholders – discussion of this concept will therefore be an important part of the project.



Fig. 2: Thebes: Houses in Qurna
The village of Qurna with locally-run souvenir shops amidst the ancient Egyptian necropolis of Western Thebes – before the settlement was finally pulled down and its inhabitants removed from the archaeological zone in 2008 (photo: Wikipedia)

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Participating Universities

Technische Universität Berlin

Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Technik
Berlin

Central European University, Budapest

Partner Institutions

Berlin-Brandenburgische
Akademie der Wissenschaften

Deutsches Archäologisches
Institut

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