Introduction

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Space has come to occupy a prominent position in the scholarly agenda of various disciplines across the humanities. An awareness of the fundamental nature of space as a sociocultural construct, which was fostered by ground-breaking studies in sociology and human geography starting from the 1970s and 1980s, has stimulated a growing interest in the various ways human societies perceive, talk about, and attribute meaning to space.[1] In the field of literary studies, scholars have proved attentive to representations of space, places and geography in literary works, and to the potential of such representations to negotiate cultural meaning.[2]

Classical philology has not been left untouched by the 'spatial turn' in the humanities.[3] Recent years have witnessed the publication of important monographs and collective volumes, which have investigated literary constructions of space in a variety of ancient works and across a broad time-span.[4] The present volume – which has evolved from a workshop held at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München in February 2016 and jointly organized by the Graduate School 'Distant Worlds' (LMU München) and by OIKOS (The National Research School in Classical Studies in the Netherlands) – aims to stimulate critical reflection about one crucial issue regarding space in ancient narratives, viz. spatial semantics. By this term, we mean the attribution of extra-spatial meaning to spatial elements within a narrated world.

As a growing corpus of narratological scholarship has shown, the space in which the events related by a narrative are set is not merely a realistic or ornamental frame;[5] rather, space plays a variety of narrative

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[1]   See, e.g., Döring – Thielmann 2008a; Gregory – Urry 1985; Lefebvre 1991; Soja 1989; Warf – Arias 2009.

[2]   For surveys of the debates about the 'spatial turn' in literary studies cf. Hallett – Neumann 2009b; Tally 2013.

[3]   For a history of the term 'spatial turn' see Döring – Thielmann 2008b.

[4]   Among others: Baldo – Cazzuffi 2013; de Jong 2012; Fuhrer – Mundt – Stenger 2015; McInerney – Sluiter 2016; Paschalis – Frangoulidis 2002; Skempsis – Ziogas 2014; Spencer 2010.

For a survey of space-related issues concerning Graeco-Roman antiquity from a historical perspective see Scott 2012.

[5]   In recent decades narratologists have shown increasing attention towards space as a component of narratives. The following is a list of some basic work in this field, although it is far from exhaustive: Bachtin 2008; Bal 1985 (see esp. 132–142. 214–217); Bridgeman 2007; Buchholz – Jahn 2005; Chatman 1978 (see esp. 96–107); Dennerlein 2009; 2011; Herman 2002; Hoffmann 1978; Lotman 1973; 1974, 200–271;

functions and actively participates in shaping the overall meaning of a text. Following Irene De Jong,[6] one can speak of a 'thematic function', in which space is 'one of the main ingredients of a narrative',[7] of a 'mirroring function', in which space 'mirrors or contrasts themes of the narrative'[8] through techniques such as *mise en abyme*, of a 'characterizing' or 'psychologizing function', in which space gives some information about a character's nature or situation, or about his or her feelings, or finally, of a 'symbolic function', in which space 'becomes semantically charged and acquires a particular significance on top of its purely scene-setting function.'[9] While the semantic potential of space is particularly evident with respect to its symbolic function, it is also relevant to the other functions mentioned above. Characterization through space, for example, often plays on semantic connotations of the setting (see Heitmann-Gordon and Müller in this volume, on how cultural connotations of the Athenian city-space and of Spanish landscape could work towards the characterization of deviant citizens in Theophrastus' *Characters,* and of the Pompeian army in the *Corpus Caesarianum*, respectively); and, when space plays a thematic function (as the city of Rome does in Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*: see Fabrizi in this volume), that very space often comes to embody general ideas or values (in our example, the power and stability of the Roman *res publica*).

Different types of spatial elements can be the object of semanticizations in narratives. On the one hand, as was first suggested by Jurji Lotman,[10] abstract spatial notions – especially spatial dichotomies such as 'high/low', 'open/closed', 'near/far', etc. – can play a structural role in articulating the value system of a text. On the other hand, specific places within the narrated world can be charged with meaning. This applies both to fictional places and to places existing in the actual world beyond the texts, which can be represented within a literary work in such a way as to take on semantic connotations. This latter phenomenon is particularly interesting, because it involves interplay between the culturally-related experience that people have of the world and the shaping of narrative meaning in literature. Such interplay works both ways; on the one hand, literary narratives reflect the assumptions of a society about specific places, while, on the other, they affect the way in which that society imagines and interprets those places, thereby modifying perceptions of geography, topography, and identity.[11]

Most of the essays in this volume address precisely the kind of spatial semantics whereby a place or space existing in the actual world is made to bear meaning within a narrated world. In doing so, the essays question the role of space and literature in structuring ancient Greek and Roman experiences of politics (Heitmann-Gordon, Fabrizi), of national identity and war (Müller), and of a people's past (van Rookhuijzen, Förg). The final chapter of the volume (Hafner) asks questions about the relationship between the actual world and the narrated world(s) of literature from a more general perspective, by

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    Nünning 2009; Ronen 1986; Ryan 2009; van Baak 1983; Zoran 1984.
[6]   De Jong 2012, 13–17.
[7]   De Jong 2012, 14.
[8]   Ibid.
[9]   De Jong 2012, 15.
[10]   Lotman 1973; 1974, 200–271. See also van Baak 1983.

[11]   An analysis of narrative space which takes into account the socially constructed character of space has been called for by adherents of the so-called 'topographical turn' and by scholars interested in the 'geography of literature' or 'geopoetics': see, e.g., Böhme 2005; Hallet – Neumann 2009b, 19; Piatti 2008.

engaging with an ancient attempt to bring spatiality and temporality together by means of ekphrasis. The texts under investigation belong to different genres of Greek and Latin literature, and are located at different points of a chronological span which ranges from the fifth century BCE to the first century CE.

The first two chapters of this volume analyse narrative constructions of civic space as a means to negotiate moral and political values, with an emphasis on contested spatial behaviour and spatial transgression.

Henry Heitmann-Gordon (Space and Civic Imaginary in Theophrastus' *Characters*) looks at the spatial patterning of Theophrastus' *Characters,* and reads the text against the backdrop of political struggles for the control of Athenian civic space in the late fourth century BCE. The micro-narratives of deviant social behaviour which make up the *Characters* are recognizably set in Athens, and mostly focus on the spaces of interaction among adult male citizens. Heitmann-Gordon suggests that the *Characters* can be interpreted in terms of psychological theories of the 'distributed self'; the individual Athenian citizen appears, in this light, as the sum of its relations, and the spatial settings of the micro-narratives appear as loci of mutual observation and evaluation. The implied reader is involved in such a process of observation and comes to share in a collectivist evaluation of individual action, which is firmly anchored in the spatial framework of the Athenian city, and implies collective control of Athenian civic space.

My own paper (Breaching Boundaries: Collective Appearances of Women Outside Their Homes in Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*), shifts the attention to constructions of civic space along gender lines, by considering accounts of the collective appearance of women in the Roman city-space of Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*. In particular, I concentrate on three elements which appear to play a crucial role in the gendered semantics of Livy's Rome, namely the notion of the boundary between 'public' and 'private' space, the representation of women's movement through the city-space, and the psychological experience of the city-space that the narrator of the *Ab Urbe Condita* attributes to women. I show that Livy tends to represent women in the Roman city-space according to a conventional image of the distressed or frenzied woman, which he varies according to the different circumstances he reports. Such a narrative strategy, which depicts the presence of women outside their homes as transgressive, reinforces the overall spatial patterning of the *Ab Urbe Condita*, whereby the breaching of gendered boundaries marks the disruption of socio-political stability.

The two chapters that follow examine the role played by settings of war in ancient historiographical discourses about military ethics, exemplarity, and memory.

Jan Zacharias van Rookhuijzen (Die delphischen „Rolling Stones" und die imaginäre persische Belagerung von 480 v. Chr.) addresses a crucial feature of places which emerges at the interface between real-life experience and literary representation – namely, their potential for embodying, transmitting, and negotiating memories of the past. According to a tradition reported by Herodotus, in 480 BCE a Persian attack on Delphi was repelled by the miraculous falling of great rocks from Mount Parnassos. Van Rookhuijzen locates the origins of this story within the sacred landscape of post-war Delphi, where specific monuments and places acted as mnemotopes. They served to anchor circulating stories to visible landmarks, thereby supporting their claim to authenticity, and, at the same time, they cued

the development of new traditions. The incorporation of the story in Herodotus' history appears, in its turn, to have been affected by a set of narrative motifs that emerge in different literary works throughout antiquity, and which are attached to particular elements of the landscape of Delphi.

Marvin Müller (Krieg auf schwierigem Terrain. Die iberische Halbinsel als militärstrategischer Raum in Caesars *Bellum civile* und im *Bellum Hispaniense*) makes a case for the semantic functionalization of military terrain in Roman historiographical writing, by analysing representations of the Spanish peninsula as the setting of war in the *Corpus Caesarianum*. Müller concentrates on the accounts of the battles of Ilerda in Caesar's *Bellum Civile* and of the battle of Munda in the *Bellum Hispaniense*. In the first text, the rugged Spanish landscape works towards the characterization of the Pompeian soldiers as Spanish 'Barbarians', in contrast with the Roman *virtus* displayed by Caesar's army. In the latter text, the 'Barbarian' character of the Pompeian army is even more forcefully stressed, as the focus shifts from Caesar's strategic planning to his soldiers' ability to conquer even the most unfavourable terrain. Müller connects the dissimilarities between the two texts to the different perspectives which appear to be dominant in each of them – the commander's perspective in the *Bellum Civile* and the soldier's perspective in the *Bellum Hispaniense* – and demonstrates the utility of such an approach in addressing questions about the political climate to which the *Bellum Hispaniense* belonged.

The last two chapters of this volume deal with interactions between spatiality and temporality in ancient texts, and with their consequences for the production of narrative meaning.

Manuel Förg (Wider die Poesie? Überlegungen zur Funktion der literarischen Topographie anhand des „Romspaziergangs" in Vergils *Aeneis*, 8,308–369) focuses on the well-known narrative of Aeneas' visit to the future site of Rome in Book 8 of the *Aeneid*. Over the last two centuries, scholars have either attempted to reconstruct the topography of Aeneas' tour on the basis of archaeology, or have investigated the connection between Vergil's epic 'Rome' and Augustan Rome. Förg instead calls for a reading of the narrative which sets it within the framework of Vergil's constructions of topography in the poem. Through intratextual comparison with the presentation of Carthage in Book 1 of the *Aeneid*, he shows that the epic landscape of Vergil's Rome works as an 'association frame', encouraging the reader to move across several chronological layers linking the distant past with the Augustan present. In this reading, Vergil's poetic mapping of Roman history can be said to serve a function analogous to descriptions of artwork in poetry, since it allows for a representation of – in Förg's words – 'die gleichzeitige literarische Darstellung von Ungleichzeitigem' ('the simultaneous literary representation of the non-simultaneous').

Markus Hafner ('This Place is Called "Life"'. On the Boundaries of Ekphrasis in the *Tabula Cebetis*') shifts attention from specific places within the actual world to human life itself viewed as a 'place', thus offering an effective demonstration of the pervasiveness of spatial imagination in the process of attributing meaning to the world. The object of his analysis is the so-called *Tabula Cebetis*, a text written in the first century CE which consists for the most part of the ekphrasis of a tablet. The latter was allegedly found by the narrator in the 'temple of Cronus' and displayed an allegorical depiction of 'Life'. Hafner focuses, in particular, on how

the pictorial representation of the tablet allows for the simultaneous representation of different life-paths and perspectives, and how the narrative, in its turn, translates such a simultaneity into a 'hodological route' across several stages of life. In so doing, the text alludes to the genre of biography – the temporal genre par excellence – but at the same time, by offering a universalized picture of 'Life' rather than relating the life of any individual person, triggers general questions about the boundaries of ekphrasis and the relationships among spatiality, temporality, and narrative.

Acknowledgements

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