



GRADUATE SCHOOL AT KIEL UNIVERSITY
human development in landscapes

BIWEEKLY COLLOQUIUM
Monday, December 15th, 4:15 p.m.

Temenos: Greek Sanctuary Boundaries

Konrad Hitzl
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Our word 'temple' does not correspond to the Latin *templum*; instead, it needs to be translated as *aedes* (feminine), *hò naós* in ancient Greek. Latin *templum* actually denotes the sacral precinct occupied by a temple. The Latin word *templum* finds its Greek equal in *témenos* (neuter), i.e., *tò témenos*. In urban locations, it will have been unlikely that the *témenos* extended significantly beyond the temple itself. Greek holy sites of course claimed much greater sacred areas. The question is, how were *teméne* segregated from their profane surroundings? Would a given *témenos* change in size over time, or remain static? Pausanis repeatedly mentions the Altis in Olympia, the sacred grove, but never describes any *témenos*. In the second century A.D., were the Altis and *témenos* of Olympia identical? According to a single source existing from the fourth century B.C., the Olympian *témenos* far exceeded the Altis in size. It is also proven for the Cycladian island of Delos that the *témenos* dedicated to Apollon varied repeatedly.

New approaches to the study of mortuary practices in the Roman Empire

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"Sprinkle my remains with pure wine and fragrant nard; Bring balsam too, stranger, with crimson roses. Unending spring pervades my tearless urn: I have but changed my state, and have not died." Ausonius, 4th century AD

For centuries there has been speculation about the use of organic substances in Roman period mortuary contexts. In the 1970s a burial 'package' was proposed: inhumation in a stone sarcophagus and/or lead-lined coffin, plaster body-coatings, textiles and the use of organic substances, such as resins. The additional investment was suggested to represent a deliberate attempt at body preservation. Recent analysis of well-preserved examples from various parts of the Roman Empire has provided support for this view. Using gas-chromatography mass-spectrometry (GC-MS) we provide molecular confirmation for the use of plant exudates in Roman mortuary contexts. These include native and imported substances hinting at the importance of their presence in burials. The recovery of these hitherto invisible traces from diverse settings provides new insights into the treatment of the body in the Roman period. Their material properties speak to both the biological reality of the decomposing body and to the individual as a social being. Interpretation requires an integration of archaeological and molecular evidence combined with classical texts.

Venue: Leibnizstraße 1, Seminar Room 204