

## ***Space, Power, and Ritual – Interrelations and Interdependencies***

**IGS Autumn Conference 2023 in Graz**

**Date: 23 to 25 October 2023, Location: Schloss Martin in Graz**

The conference aims to look at the interdependencies and mutual influences of the three notions of space, power, and ritual, which partake in the formation of groups, communities, and societies against the background of resonance theory. Space, power, and rituals are produced and situated in specific social contexts and thus have a specific function for that social environment. Power uses rituals and (modelled or empty) space to present and corroborate its claims, but at the same time it produces spaces according to its own interests and needs. Space and rituals in turn may also shape (new forms of) power. Rituals as performative acts take place in a spatial environment, and hence, those performing them must consider the available space and have options to re-shape it in the performative repetition which is intrinsic to ritual. Resonant experiences triggered by affection and emotion, leading to transformation can contribute to the production of space, to the generation and acknowledgment of power, and to the effectiveness or failure of rituals.

To shed light on the topic in a comprehensive way, the contributions cover a range of socio-historical and socio-cultural environments from the perspective of various disciplines (archaeology, history, literary studies, sociology, theology). They engage with space, power, and ritual in a multidisciplinary scope, they are clear about their methodologies and put their approaches up to discussion.

Main themes of the conference address urban and funerary spaces and the pertaining socio-religious practices; divine healing power in texts and material objects; access to (divine) power in space and time; spatial practices of mainstream and sub-culture; spatial arrangements as expression of a socio-religious heterogeneity; sports and sports venues as spaces of social formation, and put a focus on the following questions:

- In how far do rituals and space make power visible and stable? What are the methods and strategies of those in power or striving to gain power to make use or form spaces and rituals?
- What changes do rituals and/or space undergo when the system of power or hierarchies change? In what situations and constellations do significant changes or only slight adaptations appear? When do new forms of power invent new rituals and form new shapes of space?
- In how far can rituals be transferred to new spaces? What is the difference between rituals bound to specific forms of space (e.g., *augurium*, *football fans' chants*) and those independent from their setting or creating their setting (e.g., prayer, libation)?
- Where do appropriations of space happen and have an impact on power relations (subversive and deviant actions, marginal groups, and spaces)?
- How are spaces of religious, social, or political power produced?