Baltics: only the one essay reviewed here, and even that essay is more about the Swedish literary and academic influence on Finnish and Sámi religious studies and less about the pre-Christian religions themselves. One could have wished for more space to Sámi and Finnish religious studies, especially since it was mentioned as a goal in the introduction and it is likely to have been an area that was less familiar to many students and scholars of pre-Christian religions of the North. This reader was also a little confused by how the terms Scandinavian and Nordic were being employed. It is admittedly an ongoing issue when discussing the topic in English. Is Scandinavia a cultural, linguistic, or geographic description? Are the Finns and Sámi to be included? How should one refer to the people living on the Scandinavian peninsula speaking a Germanic language as opposed to their Finno-Ugric neighbors? An example of an area that is curiously missing altogether is oral theory. There has been some work looking at issues of orality and performance in the Poetic Edda in the wake of Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord’s work on the subject starting in the early twentieth century with a crescendo half a century later, but there is no mention of this area of study in the work. References to scholars like Paul Acker and Robert Kellogg, and even my own work are missing, as well as work in progress on orality in saga prose. It must be said that this volume is ambitious: pre-Christian religions of the North have made a considerable mark on research and culture, especially over the last two centuries. Therefore, some things were bound to be left out, and whereas the volume’s aim is to “track the reception history of ideas” (p. xxiii), it is possible this line of inquiry was considered outside the purview of the book. In the end, scholars, researchers, and students will find this book a very useful reference work for a survey of scholarship and reception in a wide variety of fields relevant to The Pre-Christian Religions of the North.

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A revision of a 2016 dissertation from the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Räume erzählen consists of five chapters, although chapters two and three, the theoretical background and framework and an applied study on the Nibelungenlied, comprise the bulk of the volume (274/315 pages). A brief introduction outlines the study’s operational interpretative frameworks of space, from the primary observation that space is a self-legitimizing signifier within the wider meaning of the text and not merely a function of the narrative, to the current state of the spatial turn in Medieval Studies. The aim is to provide a semantic analysis of space as a dynamic and relative conceptual area according to literary-theoretical positions and juxtapose this view with various traditional conceptions of locus/topos in the study of the medieval German epic.

In the second chapter, aesthetic, fictional, literary spaces are categorized and contextualized for the present study from phenomenological, structural, narratological, and linguistic analytical approaches (p. 13), as well as within Medieval Studies past and present. The first division of chapter two concentrates on a “micro-” and “macrohistory” of Raum, that is, a diachronic Wort- und Begriffsgeschichte (p. 14) and synchronic comparison of the semantic field rûm/ rûmen around 1200.
The diachronic discussion begins with Proto-Germanic and ends with bipartite semantic developments in line with the French and English cognates from Latin, parallel spectra of meaning designating, on the one hand, a territorial, settlement-focused practice and, on the other, a bounded location within which phenomena and objects are found or interact. The synchronic portion notes the collocative dimensions of the transitive and intransitive verbal forms, namely usage in both natural and architectonic domains, alongside idiomatic/phraseological combinations; for the substantive forms, verbal and adjective collocations likewise show a range of primary and secondary meanings – Hammer argues that it is only on the polylexical level that the lexeme can be understood in its synchronic context. Standard lexicographical resources inform these sections, which, while nevertheless useful and argumentatively sound, would be profitably augmented by corpus data from, for example, the *Mittelhochdeutsche Begriffsdatenbank*.

Turning to Foucauldian discursive domains that transgress disciplinary boundaries, Hammer situates a historical overview of space from antiquity to the modern world in the cosmological/physical-empirical, theological, cartographic, symbolic, phenomenological, and sociological spheres, recounting the main theoretical developments from Platonic and Aristotelian worldviews onwards. Related conceptual approaches, such as borders and liminality, center/periphery, and space in exegetical contexts, appear alongside these divisions, further complicating the discursive status of space; appropriately, the author notes that different discursive regimes rule at different times, and that the semantic and semiotic division of space into relative and absolute spheres is too simplistic to capture its lexical biography as evidenced in texts. The spatial turn in narratology, or “the spatialization of narratology” (pp. 80–81), bridges the prior theoretical gap between Bakhtin and contemporary developments on the one hand, and the modern and premodern periods on the other, bringing both recent studies in *germanistische Mediävistik* and a broader state of the field survey to bear in schematizing the primary discursive divisions in current and historical approaches to space in medieval (German) literature, namely theology, cartography, phenomenology, sociology, and virtuality (p. 121). Proceeding from previous conceptions of types of space in literature, Hammer focuses on geographical, topographic, and communicative spaces, respectively “die räumliche Makrostruktur” (the spatial macrostructure), “die Schauplätze der Handlung” (settings of the plot), and “nicht konkret begehbar[e]” (not concretely accessible) spaces of communication, which both require and generate specific types of space and spatial semiotics (p. 128). The goal is to expose “das Wechselspiel zwischen vertikaler, räumlicher Konfiguration und horizontaler Ereignisstruktur und deren gegenseitiger Modellierung im narrativen Verlauf” (p. 130, the interplay between the vertical, spatial configuration and horizontal event structure and their reciprocal modelling in the narrative progression).

In the third chapter a number of concrete approaches and spatial types in German literature around 1200 on the example of the *Nibelungenlied* provide a testing ground for the typological discussions in the previous chapter. Historicized, real spaces bleed into the epic-legendary layers in the first section on geographical spaces (historicity, fantastic geography, and travel in fictive realms); pairs of related locations form the basis for a discussion of topographical spaces (seas and rivers, woods and wilderness, house and court) in the second; and the public and private spheres, as well as the internal-personal domain, constitute communicative spaces in the third. Each subsection discusses first a general, theoretical approach to the topic followed by a specific treatment in the context of the *Nibelungenlied*. 
The chronotope of the Heroic Age/Völkerwanderungszeit provides fertile ground for the discussion of real geographies in the context of the shifting, transferable gray zone of epic space and time, from fluvial axes to peripheral markers, but is inescapably bound to the chronotope of the ca. 1200 real geographies of the world of the text’s manuscript composition and audience. At first referred to as opposing one another (p. 143), the two strata may be described “auf paradigmatischer Ebene als Schichtung verschiedener Chronotopoi mit jeweils spezifischen historischen Einlagerungen” (p. 144, on a paradigmatic level as a layering of different chronotopes with, respectively, specific historic encapsulations), while on a syntagmatic level “extreme” locations (in the etymological sense) comprise the primary geographical scenes of action. Distance, accessibility, and related tropes (danger, foreignness, civilization and its lack, etc.) of real and fictive locations are brought into the long history of spatial analysis in the poem, here focused primarily on the structural characteristics of travel vis-à-vis the bridal quest theme and border-crossing between Burgonden, Islant, Nibelungenlant, and Etzellant.

The semanticization of topographical features and natural spaces in medieval literature has a literary and linguistic-philological history in topos research too expansive to fit comfortably in the briefly theorized introductions to the tripartite second section of the third chapter. Because of the possible excess of interpretive history, this portion appears thin, mentioning how waterways and bodies of water fit into the previously mentioned layers of spatiality in the text. It likewise mentions the anti-courtly function of the wilderness and locus amoenus, liminal zones, and other aspects of the wooded realm, as well as a return to civilization and anthropic centers of power in architectonic structures from individual rooms to the burg as an indivisible object and symbol (e.g., as booty in the bridal quest narrative, p. 198). Some attention is paid to the lexical-phraseological evidence of spatial understanding and conceptualization, for example, in compounding with hof, but the study would benefit from increased attention to the insights to be gained through a wider corpus study of collocations and lexical variants in the general sections.

In the final portion of the third chapter, the spatial aspects of communication receive attention in their “interaktive, virtuelle Dimension” (p. 215, interactive, virtual dimension[s]) rather than their architectonic arrangement and meaning, conceived primarily as an axis of lawful-public/unlawful-private space that reflects concerns regarding communication around 1200. Strategic, ludic communication follows from the realization of the symbolic meaning of public space; because perception determines aspects of performance and its textual-pragmatic linguistic instantiation, a socio-pragmatic mode dominates the analysis. On the opposite end of an inclusive-exclusive conception of space are the intimate, private spaces that give rise to secrecy, illegal activities, betrayal, invisibility, and the like that drive so much of the Nibelungenlied narrative. Finally, the chapter turns to subject-internal, emotional-mental spaces, primarily as expected within the sphere of sadness and grief, which generates for reasons of plot so much of the lexical evidence for internal states. An internal-external parallel perspective to the public-private spatial spheres (leading to a “nicht zum Stillstand kommende dialektische Lesart” [p. 287, ever-motive dialectical reading) is offered between the anarchic, individualistic heart and the social world without.

A brief conclusion of the preceding chapter and “methodological reflection” follow as chapters four and five. As the author states, the approach here is both productive in terms of bridging systematic, theoretical conceptions of space and the spatial turn with focused studies of medieval German literature, specifically
epic around 1200, and challenging in terms of reclassifying space in the *Nibelungenlied* along different axes than typically suggested. As a study of the *Nibelungenlied*, it remains to be seen what other, wider conclusions one might draw from a quadripartite formation of space opposed to a traditional bipartite reading, but the methodical organization of the real-geographical, topological, and communicative spaces, among others, along discursive axes of focus has produced a viable approach for other medieval German texts. As mentioned above, there are several points, both in the theoretical discussion and the textual study, at which it would be useful to see a greater reliance on corpus data to underscore arguments from lexical-semantic variation and general lexical frequency, but the study provides a useful new addition to spatial studies in medieval literature on the one hand and grounds for further studies in medieval German texts on the other.

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Albrecht Classen’s interdisciplinary studies of facets of medieval life seek to introduce twenty-first century students and scholars to the mentalities and values of the medieval and Early Modern periods in Europe by examining types of human behavior and experience through cultural-historical, anthropological, and literary-critical lenses. In numerous publications, Classen investigates sexuality in the premodern era: love, marriage, sexual transgression, and violence. With the current volume, the first in Lexington Books’ series “Studies in Medieval Literature,” Classen aspires to undertake the first comprehensive study of late medieval and Early Modern European literary treatments of prostitution. Though the study begins with an ambitious scope, brings many attestations of prostitution in medieval and Early Modern literature to light, and marshals an extensive bibliography from a range of disciplines, numerous typographical and linguistic errors, as well as occasional misreading and overreading, weaken its impact. The reader comes away with the impression that the volume was rushed into publication before it could be edited and proofread.

Classen begins his study by broadly considering prostitution in ancient and medieval history and literature as well as in modern practice and controversy. His survey of prostitution in ancient history confines itself to a few of the several mentions of it in the Old and the New Testament. Incomplete scriptural references aside (“1 Corinthians 9–10” [*sic*] for 1 Corinthians 6:9–10, “1 Corinthians 16” [*sic*] for 1 Corinthians 6:16, and “1 Corinthians 18” [*sic*] for 1 Corinthians 6:18 [p. 9]), Classen’s readings sometimes fall short and are harbingers of difficulties to come. His reading of Tamar’s deception of Judah, for example, does not consider the latter’s neglect of his obligation to arrange a levirate marriage for her as his daughter-in-law as the impetus for her actions or the cultural context for the Hebrew prohibition of prostitution. For Classen, the story simply illustrates patriarchal double standards. While Classen reads John 8:1–11 accurately as Jesus’s challenge to the Pharisees to understand that they, as fellow sinners, are in no position to punish a woman caught in adultery, the conflation of adultery and prostitution here foreshadows the difficulty with which instances of prostitution in medieval and Early Modern literature are identified as such in later chapters.