

Professor Dr. Karla Pollmann
School of Classics
St Andrews University
GB –St Andrews KY16 9AL
kfp@st-and.ac.uk

Vorgesehenes Panel: Turning Points in the Reception of Classical Antiquity
Länge des Beitrages: 20 Minuten

The Fragmentation of Authority: The Receptions of Augustine and Virgil in Comparison

A major project on the reception of Augustine from 430 to 2000 under my direction will reach its final phase in 2009. Its main aim is to map, albeit in an incomplete way, this reception beyond the scope of theology, taking into account among others the areas of literature, ethics, and political thought (for further details see www.st-and.ac.uk/classics/after-augustine). My paper intends to summarize some of the crucial aspects and patterns concerning the reception of Augustine by comparing them with the reception of the greatest poet of Latin Antiquity, Virgil. This is not only justified by the eminent stature of both these authors as far as their reception is concerned, but also by the fact that they both contributed to the same intellectual tradition and that they both lived in times of political crisis and disintegration. Th. Ziolkowski in his book *Virgil and the Moderns* (1993) noted for the first half of Twentieth Century (especially the Interbellum) a fragmentation of Virgil's presence among "the ruins of the Post-Virgilian City", due to a conspicuous parallel between the Augustan past and the American-European present, resulting in a purely aesthetic Post-Virgilianism. I intend to compare his findings with aspects of the reception of Augustine in the same period in order to determine significant similarities and differences in the receptions of these two authors. This should result not only in a more differentiated profile of the specific receptions of these two authors, but also in a widened understanding of the possibilities of reception(s) in general and of the various consequences of the intricate interplay between author and reader.