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**Between and Beyond Empires:
From the Seleucids to the Sasanians (2nd c. BC – 7th c. AD)**
Wrocław/Breslau, December 3–6, 2024

*organized by Robert Rollinger, Krzysztof Nawotka,
Agnieszka Wojciechowska and Florian Schwarz*

About

As a follow-up of the conference in Obergurgl (*The Achaemenid Persian Empire and Imperial Transformations in the Ancient Near East, 7th – 2nd c. BCE*, July 3-7, 2023) the one in Wrocław will continue to focus on the phenomenon of imperial transformations in the framework of a *longue durée* perspective and within a transdisciplinary approach. On the one hand, empire as phenomenon should no longer be thought as an organic biological “creature” with a clearly defined beginning and end. Moreover, the various paths of transformation processes that occur in phases of turmoil and crisis ought to be followed. On the other hand, special attention should be drawn on the agency of the vast imperial borderlands as these areas in particular are often entangled actively in these processes of transformation. The central focus of this conference lies on western Afro-Eurasia within a broad chronological framework that runs from the “Hellenistic” period to the early Islamic era. The various contributions are asked to address transformation processes as well as phenomena of imperial heritage and imperial “argumentation” through time and space. Although the Eastern Mediterranean, Western Asia (Near East) and the Iranian highlands are regarded to represent key zones of the inquiry, their outreach towards Central Asia, the Steppe, the Balkans and the Arabian Peninsula is not to be neglected. Therefore, the conference intends to develop a broad and transregional understanding of the various transformation processes involved as well as their spatial and chronological dimensions.

Institutions

Austrian Academy of Sciences, Commission “Transformation Processes and Empire in the Ancient Afro-Eurasian Worlds”	
University of California, Los Angeles, Pourdavoud Institute for the Study of the Iranian World	 Pourdavoud Institute for the Study of the Iranian World
University of Wrocław, NAWA Project “From the Achaemenids to the Romans”	
University of Innsbruck, Department of Ancient History and Ancient Near Eastern Studies	
University of Innsbruck, Doctoral College “Entangled Antiquities”	
Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Iranian Studies	
Austrian Science Fund (FWF) [COE8], Cluster of Excellence “EurAsian Transformations. Resources of the Past & Challenges of Diversity”	

PROGRAM

Tuesday, Dec 3

Arrival and Opening

- 16:00-16:30 Welcome Addresses | Robert Rollinger (Innsbruck/Wrocław), Florian Schwarz (Vienna), Krzysztof Nawotka (Wrocław)
- 16:30-17:15 Keynote 1: *The Seleucids and their Imperial Heritage*
Josef Wiesehöfer (Kiel)
- 17:15-18:00 Keynote 2: *Imperial Religions in Iran, 3rd Century BC – 3rd Century AD*
Fabrizio Sinisi (Vienna)
- 18:30 Buffet

Wednesday, Dec 4

Section 1 – Seleucid Transformations

Chair: Kai Ruffing (Kassel)

- 09:00-09:45 Keynote 3: *Imperial Heritage in the Hasmonean Judea*
Edward Dąbrowa (Kraków)
- 09:45-10:15 *Imperial Benefactions? Seleukid Munificence in the Aegean and the Question of Centre and Periphery*
Christoph Michels (Münster)

10:15-10:45 Break

Chair: Kai Ruffing (Kassel)

- 10:45-11:30 Keynote 4: *Environmental Change: Its Political and Economic Implications*
Stefan Hauser (Konstanz)
- 11:30-12:00 *Imperial Societies and Geography: Strabo on the Transformation of the Asia Minor's Imperial Landscape*
Julian Degen (Trier)

12:00-13:30 Lunch

Chair: Bernhard Palme (Vienna)

- 13:30-14:15 Keynote 5: *Hellenistic Iaitas – Roman Ietas: From Border Buffer Zone to Imperial Borderland*
Erich Kistler (Innsbruck)
- 14:15-14:45 *Transformations of the astral sciences in the wake and/or at the outskirts of empires*
Victor Gysembergh (Paris)

14:45-15:15 Break

Chair: Bernhard Palme (Vienna)

- 15:15-15:45 The Origins of Chorasmian Art: A Socio-Cultural Inquiry
Michele Minardi (Naples)
- 15:45-16:15 Emesal Lamentations and their Imperial Setting from the Seleucid to the Parthian Period
Bernhard Schneider (Wrocław) (co-author Sebastian Fink, Innsbruck)
- 16:15-16:45 Break

Intersection I: New Generation – New Thoughts

Chair: Brigitte Truschneegg (Innsbruck)

- 16:45-17:05 Conceptualization of “Past Space” in Present Academic Discourse: Nisa, an Example from the Arsacid Period
Sina Kazemirashid (Innsbruck)
- 17:05-17:25 Alien Wisdom and the Cultural Legacy of the Persian Empire
Nina Mazhjo (Wrocław)
- 17:25-17:45 Interactions between Empire and City-States in the Levant from Hellenistic to Roman Times
Piotr Głogowski (Wrocław)
- 17:45-18:15 Plenary Discussion

Thursday, Dec 5

Section 2 – Arsacid Transformations

Chair: Krzysztof Nawotka (Wrocław)

- 09:00-09:45 Keynote 6: “Referenzraum und Verstehungshorizont”. Embedding Global Diversity in the Late-Hellenistic Kingdom of Commagene at the Euphrates
Miguel John Versluys (Leiden)
- 09:45-10:15 Innovations and Persistence within the Cults in Palmyra
Aleksandra Kubiak-Schneider (Wrocław)
- 10:15-10:45 Economic Policy and Commerce in the Arsacid State
Marek Jan Olbrycht (Rzeszów)
- 10:45-11:15 Break

Chair: Agnieszka Wojciechowska (Wrocław)

- 11:15-11:45 Freedom and Citizenship in Post-Hellenistic Iran
Jake Nabel (Penn State)
- 11:45-12:15 All The Great King’s Men: Arsacid Crisis in Roman Authors
Leonardo Gregoratti (Durham)
- 12:15-13:30 Lunch

Section 3 – Sasanian Transformations

Chair: Touraj Daryaee (Irvine)

13:30-14:15 Keynote 7: The Sasanians and their Imperial Heritage

James Howard-Johnston (Oxford)

14:15-14:45 Jewish Communities in and between the Roman and Persian Empires during the 6th and 7th Centuries

Nikolas Hächler (Zürich)

14:45-15:15 Break

Chair: Touraj Daryaee (Irvine)

15:15-15:45 Arabia between the Romans and the Sasanians: Agency and Transformation of an Imperial Borderland in Late Antiquity

Clemens Steinwender (Innsbruck)

15:45-16:15 The Plagues of Justinian, Sheroe and Amwās. Imperial Spaces, Epidemic Dynamics and Geopolitical Transformations in Western Afro-Eurasia, 5th-8th Century CE

Johannes Preiser-Kapeller (Vienna)

16:15-16:45 Break

Intersection II: New Generation – New Thoughts

Chair: Valentina Cambrozzi (Innsbruck)

16:45-17:05 Coin Finds and their Significance for the Ancient Economy using the Example of the Sasanian Empire

Andrea Pancheri (Innsbruck)

17:05-17:25 Seleucids and their Heritage in the Late Antique Historical Writing

Paulina Kaczmarczyk (Wrocław)

17:25-17:45 Multilingualism Between Empires. The Eastern Silk Road Borderlands as Linguistic Areas

Alexander Steiner (Innsbruck)

17:45-18:15 Plenary Discussion

19:00 Official Dinner

Friday, Dec 6

Section 4 – From Sasanian to Afro-Eurasian Transformations

Chair: Florian Schwarz (Vienna)

09:00-09:45 Keynote 8: Iran's Bridge to Africa: The Sasanian Expansion into Egypt

Bernhard Palme (Vienna)

09:45-10:15 The Transformation of Empire and Imperial Heritage in Africa

Philipp von Rummel (Berlin)

10:15-10:45 Break

Chair: Florian Schwarz (Vienna)

10:45-11:15 **The Turks and their Imperial Heritage**
Sören Stark (New York)

11:15-11:45 **The Bulgars and the Imperial Heritage**
Daniel Ziemann (Vienna)

11:45-12:45 Lunch

Chair: Robert Rollinger (Innsbruck/Wrocław)

12:45-13:30 **Keynote 9: The Emergence of the Eastern Roman Empire in Late Antiquity**
Mischa Meier (Tübingen)

13:30-14:00 **Concluding Remarks** | Touraj Daryaee (Irvine) and Krzysztof Nawotka (Wrocław)

Farewell and end of conference