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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


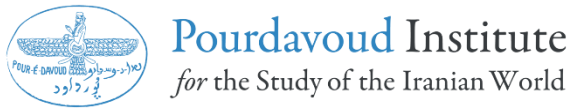




*organized by Robert Rollinger, Krzysztof Nawotka,  
Agnieszka Wojciechowska and Florian Schwarz*

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## 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	
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)
- 16:30-17:00 Introduction  
Robert Rollinger (Innsbruck/Wrocław)
- 17:00-17:45 Keynote 1: *Imperial Religions in Iran, 3rd Century BC – 3rd Century AD*  
Fabrizio Sinisi (Vienna)
- 18:15 Buffet

## Wednesday, Dec 4

### *Section 1 – Seleucid Transformations*

Chair: Kai Ruffing (Kassel)

- 09:00-09:45 Keynote 2: *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 3: *Environmental Change: Its Political and Economic Implications*  
Stefan R. Hauser (Konstanz)
- 11:30-12:00 *The Transformation of Imperial Landscapes: The Elites of Asia Minor and the Coming of Rome*  
Julian Degen (Trier)
- 12:00-13:30 Lunch

Chair: Bernhard Palme (Vienna)

- 13:30-14:15 Keynote 4: *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) and Sebastian Fink (Innsbruck/Sofia)
- 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: 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
- 19:15 Official Dinner

## **Thursday, Dec 5**

### ***Section 2 – Arsacid Transformations***

Chair: Krzysztof Nawotka (Wrocław)

- 09:00-09:45 Keynote 5: “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 (Udine)
- 12:15-13:30 Lunch

### ***Section 3 – Sasanian Transformations***

Chair: Edward Dąbrowa (Kraków)

13:30-14:15 Keynote 6: *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: Sören Stark (New York)

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 Cambuzzi (Innsbruck)

16:45-17:05 *Seleucids and their Heritage in the Late Antique Historical Writing*

Paulina Kaczmarczyk (Innsbruck)

17:05-17:25 *Multilingualism Between Empires. The Eastern Silk Road Borderlands as Linguistic Areas*

Alexander Steiner (Innsbruck)

17:25-17:55 Plenary Discussion

## **Friday, Dec 6**

### ***Section 4 – From Sasanian to Afro-Eurasian Transformations***

Chair: Florian Schwarz (Vienna)

09:00-09:45 Keynote 7: *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 "Steppe Empire" Reconsidered. The Process of State Formation of the Ashina-Turks  
in Historical Perspective

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 8: The Emergence of the Eastern Roman Empire in Late Antiquity

Mischa Meier (Tübingen)

13:30-14:00 Concluding Remarks | Krzysztof Nawotka (Wrocław)

*Farewell and end of conference*