



LUDWIG-
MAXIMILIANS-
UNIVERSITÄT
MÜNCHEN

Abteilung für Alte Geschichte
Cambridge-LMU Strategic Partnership



International Workshop

Empire and Individual

in the Ancient and Late-Antique Mediterranean

Munich, 15-17 March 2024

Cambridge – Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
Organized by Michael Hahn and John Weisweiler

Venue: IBZ München, Amalienstraße 38, 80799 Munich

The resurgence of geopolitical conflict in recent years had led to a revival of interest in imperialism. How do the ruling elites of large multicultural states with universal ambitions justify their actions? How do empires affect the lives of the men and women who live under their rule? What scope does the individual have to resist violence and coercion by these vast super-states? The empires of the ancient Mediterranean and Near East were the first political organisations whose reach extended across multiple continents. The institutions and ideologies they developed have fundamentally shaped the self-understandings and practices of government of later imperial states in Europe and the Americas. This conference explores the relationship between empire and individual in ancient Assyria, Sparta, Athens, the Hellenistic kingdoms and Rome. A group of scholars from the Universities of Cambridge and Munich will examine the ways in which these ancient states reshaped the lives and self-understandings of imperial elites and subject populations.

In den letzten Jahren sind geopolitische Konflikte auf der eurasischen Landmasse neu aufgeflammt. Dies hat zu einem neuen Interesse am Thema Imperialismus geführt. Wie rechtfertigen herrschende Eliten großer multikultureller Staaten mit universellen Ambitionen ihr Handeln? Wie wirken sich Imperien auf das Leben der Männer und Frauen aus, die unter ihrer Herrschaft leben? Welche Möglichkeiten hat der Einzelne, gegen dieses riesigen Superstaaten Widerstand zu leisten? Die Imperien des antiken Mittelmeerraums und des Nahen Ostens waren die ersten politischen Organisationen, die sich über mehrere Kontinente erstreckten. Die von ihnen entwickelten Institutionen und Ideologien haben das Selbstverständnis und die Regierungspraktiken späterer imperialer Staaten in Europa und Amerika entscheidend geprägt. Diese Konferenz untersucht das Verhältnis zwischen Imperium und Individuum im antiken Assyrien, Sparta, Athen, den hellenistischen Königreichen und Rom. Eine Gruppe von Wissenschaftlern an den Universitäten Cambridge und München wird untersuchen, auf welche Weise diese antiken Staaten das Leben und das Selbstverständnis imperialer Eliten und unterworfenen Gruppen neu bestimmten.

15 March, Friday

15:00 – 16:00 Welcome and Introduction

16:00 – 16:45 **Mary Frazer (LMU)**: An Example of Successful Interpellation?
Scholars as (Loyal) Subjects of the Assyrian Empire

16:45 – 17:30 **Denise Reitzenstein (LMU)**: Xerxes and Damaratus, Herodotus'
Unequal Kings: (Not) Ruling and Reigning an Empire

18:00 Guided tour of the museum for Egyptian Art (SMAEK)

16 March, Saturday

9:00 – 9:45 **Daniel Sutton (Cambridge)**: Cleon and Antiphon

9:45 – 10:30 **Henry Heitmann-Gordon (LMU)**: The Unaccountable Ruler and the
Subaltern Sock Puppet: Accommodating the King in early Hellenistic Thought

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 – 11:45 **Cecily Bateman (Cambridge)**: Empire of Normalcy: Disability and the
Roman Empire

11:45 – 12:30 **Megan Murphy (Cambridge)**: The presentation of disability in the
Letters of John and Barsanuphius: everyday conversations oscillating between
metaphor and Christian philanthropy

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 14:45 **Ben Kolbeck (Cambridge)**: Individual, Empire, and Opportunism:
Christian apology and the state apparatus of the imperial petition

14:45 – 15:30 **Giulia Grossi (LMU)**: Taxation and subaltern cooperation in the later
Roman Empire

15:30 – 16:15 **Mathijs Clement (Cambridge)**: The naked theologian and the power of Rome: Between self and community in Gregory of Nazianzus' first orations (Or. 1-6) and letters (Ep. 1-7)

16:15 – 16:45 Coffee break

16:45 – 17:30 **Harvey Pythian (Cambridge)**: Dangerous Individuals and Imperial Government in the Late Fourth Century: The Case of Eutropius

17:30 – 18:15 **Younes Köhler (LMU)**: Between Byzantium and Islam: The dux and the provincial elite in early Arab Egypt

18:15 – 19:15 General discussion