

2nd Annual Conference



**IMPERIAL DYNAMICS, BORDERLANDS AND RESISTANCE:
ENTANGLED WORLDS OF AFRO-EURASIA
(CA. 1000 BCE – 2000 CE)**

Innsbruck, 17 – 20 November 2025

Organized by Robert Rollinger (Innsbruck), Erich Kistler (Innsbruck), Melanie Malzahn (Vienna),
Nina Mirnig (Vienna), Bernhard Palme (Vienna), Oliver Jens Schmitt (Vienna),
Florian Schwarz (Vienna), Ulrike Tanzer (Innsbruck)



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Venues: ÁGNES-HELLER-HAUS, Innrain 52a

KAISER-LEOPOLD-SAAL DER THEOLOGISCHEN FAKULTÄT, Karl-Rahner-Platz 3 (2nd floor, room 203)

Mon, 17 November

Arrival Day

ÁGNES-HELLER-HAUS, Innrain 52a

15:30-16:00 **Opening and Welcome Address**

University of Innsbruck: Rector Veronika Sexl, Vice Rector for Research

Gregor Weihs, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and History Dirk Rupnow

University of Vienna: Rector Sebastian Schütze

Cluster of Excellence EurAsia: Claudia Rapp (Vienna) and Robert Rollinger (Innsbruck)

Section 1: Balkans, Byzantium and the Steppe
(convened by Oliver Jens Schmitt and Walter Pohl)

16:00-16:30 Katalin Szende (Central European University, Vienna)
Premodern Buda-Pest: A City between Empires?

16:30-17:00 Kata Tóth (University of Vienna)
Embracing the Mountains. The Carpathian History of the Eurasian Steppe
(14th-17th Centuries)

17:00-17:30 Coffee

17:30-18:00 Mariya Kiprovska (University of Vienna)
Not quite Center, not quite Periphery: Steppe Dynamics along the Lower Danube
Borderland in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Period

18:00-18:45 Keynote: Oliver Jens Schmitt (University of Vienna)
The Balkans and its Steppe - The Story of a (Non-)Relationship

Opening Buffet

Tue, 18 November

KAISER-LEOPOLD-SAAL DER THEOLOGISCHEN FAKULTÄT, Karl-Rahner-Platz 3 (2nd floor, room 203)

Section 2: Eastern Europe and Japan (convened by Ulrike Tanzer)

09:00-09:45 Keynote: Pieter M. Judson (European University Institute, Florence)
Title tba

09:45-10:15 Christine Frank (University of Innsbruck)
Just A Further Instance of Modernisation? The Expansion of the Japanese Empire into
Mainland Asia and Its Representation in the Western Press

10:15-10:45 Coffee

10:45-11:15 Larissa Cybenko (University of Vienna)
Ukrainisches Narrativ der Kulturgeschichte der Krim

Section 3: Mediterranean and Levant (convened by Erich Kistler)

- 11:15-12:00 Keynote: Achim Lichtenberger (University of Münster)
The Cities of Koile Syria: Perspectives on the Southern Borderlands of the Seleucid Empire
- 12:00-12:30 Veronika Sossau (University of Basel)
In the Midst of the Edge? Dynamic Hubs at the Northern Margins of the Ancient Mediterranean Oikumene in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods
- 12:30-14:00 Lunch
- 14:00-14:30 Jehan Hillen (University of Innsbruck)
A Rebellion from the Byzantine Borderland: Heraclius' Rebellion and the last Roman Consuls

Section 4: Middle East and Africa (convened by Bernhard Palme)

- 14:30-15:15 Keynote: Adam Łajtar (University of Warsaw)
The Emergence of Nubian Kingdoms in the Nile Valley on the Southern Border of the Roman Empire, and their Christianisation (4th–6th Cent.)
- 15:15-15:45 Jitse Dijkstra (University of Ottawa)
Entangled Worlds on the Southern Egyptian Frontier in Late Antiquity
- 15:45-16:15 Coffee
- 16:15-16:45 Anna Dolganov (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)
On the Edge of Empire: Case Studies from the Roman Near East

Section 5: Early Career Researchers' Poster Session (convened by Mariia Golovina and Clemens Steinwender)

16:45-18:15

- Amelie Jochmus (University of Innsbruck)
South Italian and Sicilian red-figured pottery between Carthage and Syracuse in the divided Sicily of the late 5th, 4th, and 3rd centuries BC
- Sina Kazemirashid (University of Innsbruck)
Material Embodiment of the Image and Perception of Space in the Arsacid Empire: An Analytical Reconstruction of Nisa's Landscape, Topography, and Architecture
- Salvatore Liccardo (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)
Legacies of the Huns – Human Mobility, Group Identities, and Practices of Power in the Early Medieval Carpathian Basin (5th–6th Centuries)
- Christopher J. Sprecher (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)
Westward Gazes on Eastern Rome: South Caucasus Perspectives on Byzantine Mobility
- Raphael Szeider (University of Innsbruck)
Hadrianus.Augustus – Hadrian's Legitimation and (Re)constructions of the Past

19:00 Pub Quiz

Wed, 19 November

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Section 6: Central Asia and China (convened by Melanie Malzahn)

- 09:00-09:45 Keynote: Tomas L. Høisæter (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Stord)
Elite Culture, Imperial Models, and Local Agency in the Tarim Basin in the 1st Millennium AD
- 09:45-10:15 Patrick Wertmann (University of Zurich)
Scale by Scale: Military Innovation and Technology Transfer Across Eurasia
- 10:15-10:45 Coffee
- 10:45-11:15 Milad Abedi (University of Innsbruck)
A Globulus Traveling the Globus – Tracing Ancient Iranian Contact Networks through Terms for Coriander

Section 7: Central Asia and South Asia (convened by Nina Mirnig)

- 11:15-12:00 Keynote: Robin Coningham (Durham University and UNESCO)
Mapping the Mauryans: Negotiating Hierarchies and Heterarchies across Early Historic South Asia
- 12:00-12:30 Kathrin Holz (University of Würzburg)
Epigraphic Transitions: Tracing the Shift from Buddhist to Hindu Society in Medieval Northwestern India (6th–10th c. CE)
- 12:30-14:00 Lunch
- 14:00-14:30 Viola Allegranzi (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)
Architectural inscriptions and the geography of power in the Ghurid Sultanate under Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad (1163–1203 CE)

Section 8: Iran and Central Asia (convened by Florian Schwarz)

- 14:30-15:15 Keynote: Marie Favereau Doumenjou (Paris Nanterre University)
Title tba
- 15:15-15:45 Paul Wordsworth (University College London)
Pathways of Resistance in the Desert Zones of Medieval Central Asia
- 15:45-16:15 Coffee
- 16:15-16:45 Clemens Steinwender (University of Innsbruck)
The Sasanians at the Caucasus. Resilience and Resistance against Imperial Politics in a Late Antique Borderland Region

Section 9: Early Career Researchers' Workshop (convened by Boris Fornakov)

- 16:45-17:15 Valentina Cambruzzi (University of Innsbruck)
Peripheries in Perspective: The Case of Arsakes in the Babylonian Astronomical Diaries
- 17:15-17:45 Alexander Steiner (University of Innsbruck)
Spatial Imagination of the Borderlands between Assyria and Urartu

19:00 Official Dinner

Thu, 20 November

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Section 10: Iran and India (convened by Robert Rollinger)

- 09:00-09:45 Keynote: Wu Xin (Fudan University, Shanghai)
Building Empires at the Edge: Achaemenid and Han Borderland Formation
- 09:45-10:15 Suchandra Ghosh (University of Hyderabad)
The Local Elites of the Indo-Iranian Borderlands: Voices from Epigraphy, Archaeology and Visuals
- 10:15-10:45 Coffee
- 10:45-11:15 Ian Macgregor Morris (University of Innsbruck/Salzburg)
The King at the Borderlands: Models of Kingship across and between Cultural Traditions
- 11:45-13:15 **Visit to Exhibition @ ÁGNES-HELLER-HAUS (2nd floor)**
Changing Horizons in Touch
organized by Andreas Obrecht, Gerlinde Thuma, Erich Kistler and Bernhard Palme
- 13:15-14:30 Lunch

17:00-19:00 **Section 11: Öffentliche Podiumsdiskussion (organisiert von Ulrike Tanzer)**
Kontext ‚Eurasien‘: Wie wir die Welt sehen und sahen

Mit **Gudrun Harrer** (Österreichische Journalistin „Der Standard“ und Nahostexpertin), **Franz Fischler** (ehem. Bundesminister und EU-Kommissar sowie Präsident des Europäischen Forums Alpbach), **M. Rahim Shayegan** (Professor für Iranian Studies, UCLA und Direktor des UCLA Pourdavoud Institute for the Study of the Iranian World)
Moderation: **Oliver Jens Schmitt** (Historiker, Osteuropaexperte)

Closing Buffet