

## ORGANISATION

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Project EXC 2060 A3-27 -  
Cosmocracy and Pantocracy in  
Early Christianity (KoPaC):  
Roots, Functions, and Effects  
of Early Christian Rulership  
Images of the Cluster of  
Excellence: „Religion and  
Politics“



## CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE “RELIGION AND POLITICS”

The Cluster of Excellence “**Religion and Politics. Dynamics of Tradition and Innovation**” has been investigating since 2007 the complex relationship between religion and politics across eras and cultures. The 140 researchers from 20 disciplines in the humanities and social sciences focus in the funding phase (2019 to 2025) on the “dynamics of tradition and innovation”. They analyze in transepochal studies ranging from antiquity to the present day the conditions and factors that make religion an engine of political and social change, with their focus being above all on the paradox that religions often develop their innovative potential precisely by drawing on their traditions. The focus of interest is on Europe and the Mediterranean region, as well as on their entanglements with the Near East, Africa, North and Latin America. The research network is the largest of its kind in Germany; and, of the Clusters of Excellence, one of the oldest and the only one to deal with the issue of religion. It will receive funding of 31 million euros from 2019 to 2025.

## CONTACT

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## LOCATION

Stadthotel Münster  
Aegidiistraße 21  
48143 Münster

## REGISTRATION

Registration for the conference until 22 June 2023 with  
Claudia Herbers (herbersc@uni-muenster.de)

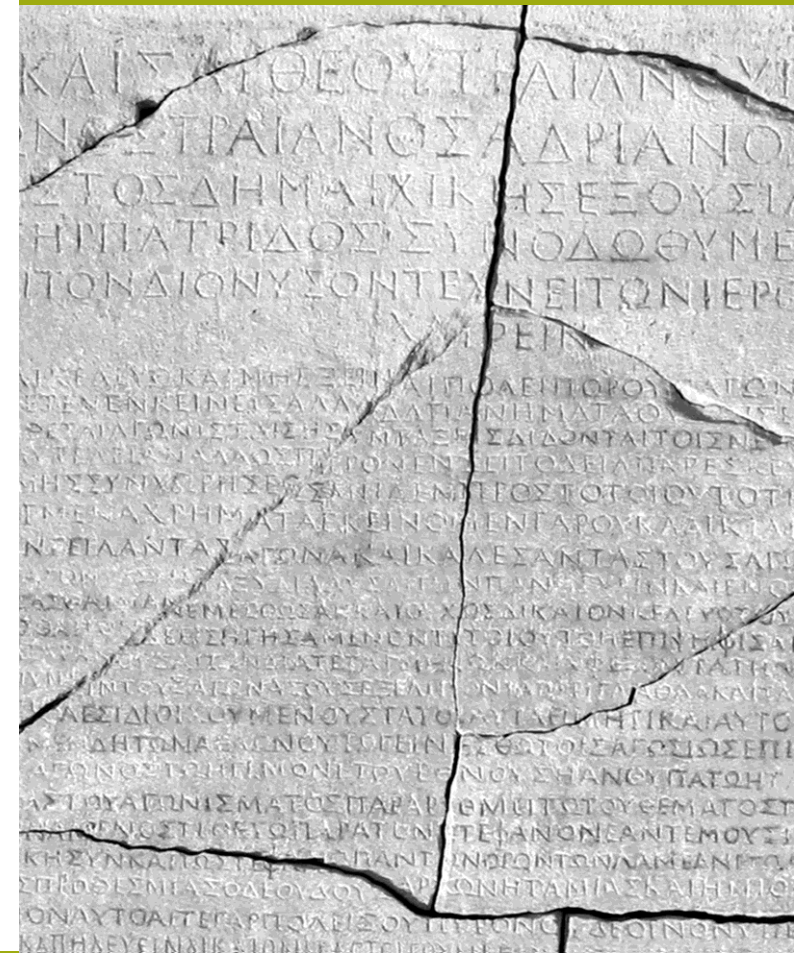


International Conference of the Cluster of  
Excellence “Religion and Politics”

## LETTER WRITING AND THE REPRESENTATION OF POWER IN ANTIQUITY

### ROYAL CORRESPONDENCE IN COMPARISON

06–07 July 2023



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## LETTER WRITING AND THE REPRESENTATION OF POWER IN ANTIQUITY. ROYAL CORRESPONDENCE IN COMPARISON

Imperial and Royal letters survive in large numbers from various cultures of the ancient world. The variety of the material is striking and calls for a comparative approach, all the more so as the last 25 years saw a tremendous increase in the number of new texts and corpora. How does this new evidence challenge our knowledge of royal correspondence and what does it tell us about prevailing models of communication?

Whereas previous research on the matter rather centered on the practical requirements and administrative needs of royal letter writing, this conference's focus is on representation. By understanding royal correspondence as a means of self-presentation, the roles ancient sole rulers assumed in their letter writing (e.g. as benefactors, protectors of the people, divine authorities, admonishers, empire-wide organizers, friends or lords of other rulers etc.) will be discussed. By taking royal correspondence as a manifestation of power, visual strategies and the materiality of the texts including their design come into play.

Beyond the heuristic value of the letters as self-testimonials, the papers presented at the conference will also shed new light on another form of representation: it will be asked how ancient rulers, their correspondence and relationship to their chancery is reflected and represented in the writing of ancient authors.

Another key interest to be pursued in the conference is whether New Testament letters adopt formal elements, argumentative strategies and techniques of representation from letters written by ancient rulers. Is it possible to describe these letters as Imperial letters as well?

## PROGRAMME

Thursday, July 6, 2023

### I Methodological Approaches to a Comparative Study of Royal Letter Writing

10.00–10.30 | Introduction

**Christoph Hammann (Münster), Sebastian Scharff (Trento)**

10.30–11.00 | Text oder Kommunikationsform? Zu Netzwerk- und Kommunikationskonzepten in der Forschung zum antiken Brief

**Jochen Strobel (Marburg/Mainz)**

### II Royal Letter Writing in the Ancient Near East

11.30–12.00 | A Biography of Rib-Hadda's Correspondence. Amarna Letters in Context

**Jana Mynářová (Prague)**

12.00–12.30 | Words of Power, Power of Words: a Perspective from the Hittite International Correspondence

**Marta Pallavidini (Berlin)**

12.30–13.00 | A Case-Study in Assyrian Royal Ideology: Self-Presentation and Legitimation in the Letters of the Neo-Assyrian Kings

**Mary Frazer (Munich)**

13.00–14.15 | Lunch Break

14.15–14.45 | Königsbriefe aus Babylonien aus der Mitte des 1. Jahrtausends v. Chr.

**Kristin Kleber (Münster)**

14.45–15.15 | The Persian King as Hellenistic Ruler in the Aramaic Letters of Ezra

**Christophe Nihan (Münster)**

### III Hellenistic Royal Correspondence

15.45–16.15 | Royal Roles and Responsibilities in Macedonian Royal Letters from the Age of Alexander and the Diadochoi

**Alexander Meeus (Heidelberg)**

16.15–16.45 | Royal Letters and Diagrammata as Sources of Law and Diplomatic Tools in Hellenistic Macedonia  
**Manuela Mari (Bologna)**

18.15–19.45 | Information, Argument and Agency in Roman Imperial Correspondence

**Clifford Ando (Chicago)**

20.00 | Dinner

Friday, July 7, 2023

09.00–09.30 | Royal Idioms: the Language of the Seleucid Chancery  
**Paola Ceccarelli (UCL)**

### IV Imperial Letter Writing in the Roman Empire

09.30–10.00 | Doing things with letters – Die attalidischen Herrscher als Briefschreiber

**Victor Walser (Zurich)**

10.00–10.45 | Herrscherbriefelemente in der paulinischen Epistolographie?

**Eve-Marie Becker (Münster), Oda Wischmeyer (Erlangen)**

11.15–11.45 | What is in a Dogma? Apostolic and Imperial δόγματα in *Luke-Acts*

**Sigurvin Lárus Jónsson (Münster)**

11.45–12.15 | Die sogenannten Sendschreiben in der Johannesapokalypse (Apk 2-3) als Herrscherbriefe?

**Christoph Hammann (Münster)**

12.15–14.00 | Lunch Break

14.00–14.30 | Des Kaisers neue Kleider? Eine Serie von Briefen aus Pessinous und die Überlieferungsbedingungen von Herrscherschriften in der hohen Kaiserzeit  
**Rudolf Haensch (Munich)**

14.30–15.00 | Imperial Roles in the Correspondence of Second-Century AD Roman Emperors

**Sebastian Scharff (Trento)**

15.00–15.30 | Fronto and the *domus Augusta*. Are there 'Private' Letters of the *princeps*?

**Christoph Michels (Tübingen)**

16.00–16.30 | "I Was Compelled to Respond Kindly": Self-justification and Changes of Policy in Imperial Pronouncements of the Tetrarchic Era

**Simon Corcoran (Newcastle)**

16.30–17.00 | Final Discussion