

## Contact

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In order to attend online or in presence please  
register by **June 14, 2024** with  
[romanislam@uni-hamburg.de](mailto:romanislam@uni-hamburg.de)

More: [www.romanislam.uni-hamburg.de](http://www.romanislam.uni-hamburg.de)



All three major empires of the larger western hemisphere, the Roman, the Islamic, and the Spanish Empire conquered capital cities of preceding empires, which they then inherited in one or the other way. Each of the three empires initiated transcultural processes, by which the indigenous people embraced the imperial language and western salvation religion. They became part of their identity. While the Roman Empire adopted a salvation religion only late in its history as a means for its own invigoration, the Islamic Empire brought along a new one, and the Spanish Empire has always been deeply committed to a centuries-old salvation religion. The effects of these empires were the creation of cultures of their own. This resulted in two to three paradigms of Western Empires (including Islam). The Roman Empire conquered Carthage and Alexandria from the Ptolemies, Antioch from the Seleucids, and many capital cities in Gaul and Iberia; also, the Islamic Empire seized Alexandria, Caesarea, Antioch, and Ktesiphon from the Romans; and the Spanish Empire took Tenochtitlan from the Aztecs and Cusco from the Incas.

How did the newcomers deal with the legacy of these cities, whether physical or symbolic? Did they come to terms with them, or did they rather turn them into symbols of *Translatio Imperii*, the transfer of imperial power?



## The Quest and Conquest of Capital Cities in the *Translatio Imperii*

Hybrid Workshop  
**Universität Hamburg**  
**June 17, 2024**



An image of the Lighthouse of Alexandria, painted by J. B. Fischer, 1721  
Source: Wikimedia Commons

**RomanIslam – Center for Comparative  
Empire and Transcultural Studies  
(Early Islam)**



## Monday, June 17, 2024

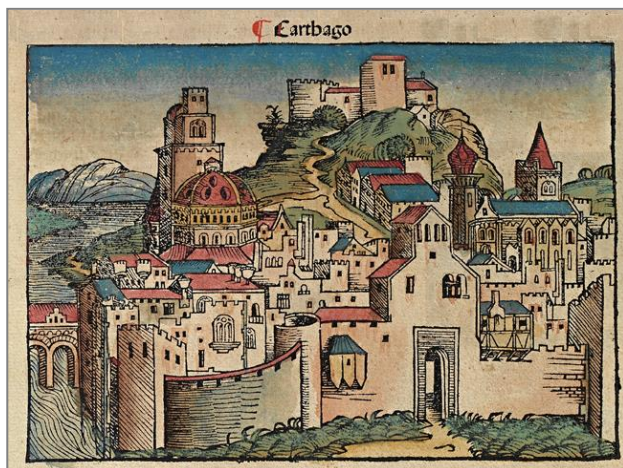
Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, Hamburg, Rm. 11

12:30 Introduction and Welcome

12:45 **Stefan Heidemann**  
(RomanIslam Center, Universität  
Hamburg)  
Conquests and Quest for a Capital in the  
Early Islamic Empire

13:30 **Stefan Rinke**  
(Freie Universität Berlin)  
The Fall of Tenochtitlan

14:15 Coffee Break



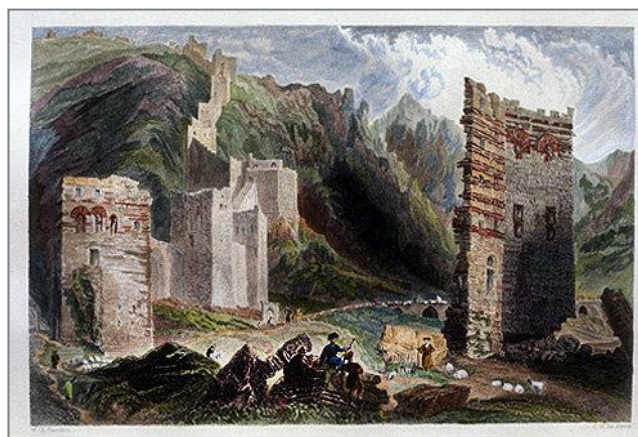
Carthage, woodcut from the Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493  
Source: Wikimedia Commons



Ktesiphon arch © Nick Maroulis

14:30 **Peter Bang (online), Kurt Franz, Stefan  
Heidemann, Stefan Rinke**  
Round Table: *Translatio Imperii* and the  
Choice of Capital Cities in the Three  
Empires

18:00 Dinner



W. H. Bartlett - Antioch from the West, 1840  
© S. Halliday

## Abstracts

### Stefan Heidemann

Conquests and Quest for a Capital in the Early  
Islamic Empire

In the early conquest of the Islamic Umma, many  
capital cities of the Roman and Sasanian world  
were conquered. None of them was used for a  
*Translatio Imperii*. Antioch was greatly diminished  
in its importance. Caesarea Augusta in Palestine  
became a third-rate city. Alexandria was replaced  
by Fustat, and Carthage by Qayrawan. Ktesiphon in  
Iraq was marveled for its ruins. It will even be  
debated whether the Islamic empire had capitals  
in the western sense or whether we could speak  
about capital cities, cities which serve as  
administrative and military centers and  
occasionally as residences.

### Stefan Rinke

The Fall of Tenochtitlan

When the capital city of the Aztec empire  
Tenochtitlan fell in 1521 a new form of government  
developed that laid the fundament for European  
colonialism. In this process many actors –  
European and non – European – were involved.  
What were the different interests in creating the  
new society? What did they accomplish, where did  
they fail?

### MORE INFORMATION

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