Dear colleagues,

We hope this email finds you well.

We cordially invite you to our interdisciplinary guest lecture “Religious Power and Religious Opposition” on Wed. May 19, 2021, 5 - 7 pm (German time) on Zoom.

The format comprises the lectures "Constantine as ‘Bishop of those outside’" by Mark Edwards (University of Oxford) and "The Ibāḍīs in North Africa (8th-10th century): an anti-Imperial movement" by Cyrille Aillet (Université Lumière Lyon 2).

Please confirm your participation by May 18, 2021 to romanislam@uni-hamburg.de. You will then receive a link enabling you to access the event.

Kind regards,

Prof. Stefan Heidemann

Prof. Sabine Panzram

Attachments: Abstracts
RomanIslam Lecture Series - “Religious Power and Religious Opposition” on Wed. May 19, 2021, 5 -7 pm (German time) on Zoom.

"Constantine as ‘Bishop of those outside’" by Mark Edwards

This paper will suggest that we take Constantine’s designation of himself as “episkopos of those outside” to be a play on the dual meaning of episkopos in the Bible as “bishop” and “overseer/ruler”. It explains his retention of the title Pontifex Maximus, in acknowledgement of his duty to the pagan majority among his subjects. The paper will consider: (a) the evidence for Constantine’s toleration of pagan worship, and accommodation to pagan sentiment; (b) analogies between Constantine’s selective support or suppression of pagan cults and the policy of his pagan predecessors; (c) Constantine’s ambivalent relation to Apollo; (d) his adaptation of the narrative of his conversion to different times and audiences.


"The Ibāḍīs in North Africa (8th-10th century): an anti-Imperial movement" by Cyrille Aillet

The Ibāḍī stream was born in Basra and soon claimed its difference with the “Khārijite” movement, who had so far embodied the opposition to the Umayyads. The Ibāḍīs did not consider rebellion as an absolute duty nor considered the other Muslims as “polytheists”. Nonetheless, they were sharing with their predecessors a vision of government that deeply contrasted with the Caliphate. Thanks to the “knowledge bearers” who reportedly rooted the doctrine among the Berbers, they played a key role in the secession of central Maghreb and finally founded a flourishing state in Tāhārt (160-296 H/777-909CE). Under the rule of the Rustamids the primitive ideal was gradually influenced by mainstream culture, but nevertheless survived until the 10th century. My lecture focuses on this local model and its relations with the Empire.

Prof. Cyrille Aillet is Full Professor of Islamic medieval history at the University of Lumières Lyon 2 (France) and a specialist of the Muslim West. He mostly deals with political culture, the building of ethnical and religious boundaries, the process of islamization and arabization among local communities. His studies first focused on the Mozarabs, but since 2010 he mostly deals with Ibāḍism in North Africa.