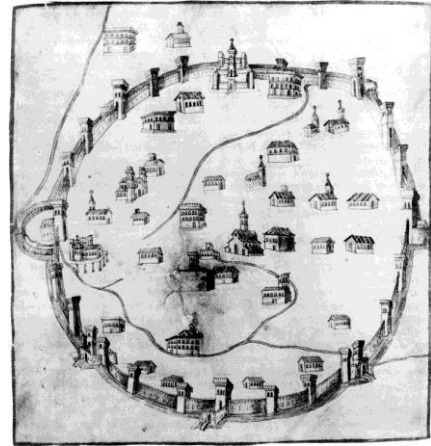


Milan – Imperial Capital and Christian Metropolis (3rd – 6th century CE)

29-31 October 2020, University of Regensburg
Altes Finanzamt, Landshuter Str. 4, 93047 Regensburg

Abstract and Call for Papers

*Omnia quae magnis operum velut aemula formis
excellunt nec iuncta premit vicinae Romae.*



Writing in the fourth century AD, Ausonius left no room for doubt that the city of Milan was an imperial, religious and cultural centre alike; a leading metropolis in the Western Empire that stood comparison even with nearby Rome. For almost 120 years, Milan indeed played a pivotal role as the predominant centre of power in the Western late-Roman empire (286–402). And adding to this century of fame was Milan's rise as a Christian religious centre, most actively furthered by Ambrose during his tenure as bishop of the city (374–397). Yet, this formative period not only changed Milan's role and significance across the empire, it also concerned the city itself; and it is this aspect of Milan's history – the late antique city from within – that the conference will be devoted to. Bringing together experts from all fields concerned by the theme, the conference will inquire into Milan's urban history before, during, and after the presence of the imperial court and Ambrose's time.

Without laying claim to discrete fields of enquiry, the conference will be organized in chronologically ordered sections. The first section focuses on the Tetrarchic and Constantinian age and on the effect that these decades had on Milan, both in terms of building activities as well as societal and cultural change. The second section is dedicated to the city under Ambrose. And while Ambrose's significance for 'his' city may seem as if it has already been studied in all its facets, latest research has proved the opposite. A new attention for the city's role in the spread of the cult of the saints has recently re-evaluated Ambrosian Milan as the centre of a wide religious network. And recent archaeological work has fundamentally enhanced our knowledge of Milan's Christian infrastructure and, at the same time, questioned the traditional dating of such prominent building as the cathedral complex. As a result, Ambrose's role in the Christian transformation of Milan today seems less clear than ever before. One of the objectives of the conference, therefore, will be to assess the current state of debate and to attempt a preliminary synthesis.

Focusing on the fifth and the sixth centuries respectively, sections III and IV consider a period less well known. In our perspective, however, the time between the remove of the imperial court to Ravenna and the Lombard conquest is just as important to the late antique history of the city as the 'classical' period. Questions to be addressed concern, e.g., the implications of the loss of political power for the Milan's urban development in general. Furthermore, we shall ask which individuals and social groups were occupying the once imperial and now open space, be it physical, political, or social space? How did intellectual and religious life develop during these centuries, traditionally regarded as some kind of dark age? And which strategies were chosen in order to remember Milan's imperial and Christian past – and in order to shape its future? For discussing these and other questions a variety of sources ranging from

archaeological, epigraphy, art, hagiographical, liturgical, and other genre of literature shall be addressed.

As of today, scholarly access to late antique Milan is mainly provided by specialized studies, conference proceedings, exhibition catalogues etc. – and primarily in Italian. We lack an English handbook that brings together the latest research from all disciplines concerned and sheds new light on sources both well known and recently discovered. Therefore, the aim of the conference will be the production of an edited volume that draws a comprehensive picture of Milan from Tetrarchic to Early Lombard times. The volume will be published in the series *Civitatum Orbis MEditerranei Studia (COMES)* (www.mohrsiebeck.com/schriftenreihe/civitatum-orbis-mediterranei-studia-comes).

Confirmed speakers:

Prof. Dr. Massimiliano David, Massimiliano (Università di Bologna) - Prof. Dr. Ivan Foletti, (Masaryk University) - Dr. Alžběta Filipová (Masaryk University) - Prof. Dr. Stéphane Gioanni (Université Lumière-Lyon 2)- Dr. Paola Greppi (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano) - Prof. Dr. Uta Heil (Universität Wien) - PD Dr. Bianca Schröder (LMU München) - Prof. Dr. Claudia Thiersch (HU Berlin)

The conference will run based on **precirculated papers**. We are thus asking all contributors to submit a first draft of their articles by **September 1, 2020**. During the conference, we shall limit ourselves to a short recapitulation of the individual papers (10 mins.) and use the remainder of each presentation (35 mins.) for an extensive discussion of the respective paper.

Contributions from Economic and Legal History, Latin Philology, History of Christian Liturgy, Patristics, Theology, and Religious Studies, drawing on new methodological and theoretical approaches, are more than welcome.

Depending on funding we hope to cover all travel costs.

Please direct your **proposal** (not exceeding 400 words) to the conveners Markus Löß (Regensburg, m.loex@gmx.de) and Florian Wöllner (Copenhagen, flw@teol.ku.dk) by **October 15, 2019**.

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