

# Das Seminar für Klassische Philologie

lädt ein zu einem Vortrag von

Herrn

**PROF. DOUGLAS CAIRNS**  
(Edinburgh)

(Mercator Fellow im Marburger Graduiertenkolleg ‚Inszenierung religiöser Atmosphäre in antiken Kulturen‘)

## *Honour and the Rhetoric of Slavery in Herodotus*

**Dienstag, 26. November 2024, 18 Uhr c.t.,**  
Wilhelm-Röpke-Str. 6, Block D, WR 05 D07

This paper focuses on the rhetoric of freedom and slavery in Herodotus, i.e. on the presentation of the subjects of the Persian King as ‘slaves’ and on the presentation of Persian imperialism (esp. Xerxes’ invasion) as an attempt to ‘enslave’ free peoples. It asks what the implications of these metaphors are for our understanding of the intersection of the ideologies of slavery and honour and will argue that the presentation of the Persian project as one of enslaving subject nations and of the relationship between King and subject as master and slave tracks the ways in which honour is implicated in actual relationships involving master, slave, and community.

Douglas Cairns (Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Fellow of the British Academy, Member of Academia Europaea) is Professor of Classics in the University of Edinburgh and author of *Aidôs: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (1993). His most recent edited volumes include *In the Mind, in the Body, in the World: Emotions in Early China and Ancient Greece* (with C. Virág, 2024), *Hubris, Ancient and Modern: Concepts, Comparisons, Connections* (with N. Bouras and E. Sadler-Smith, 2025), and *Slavery and Honour in Ancient Greece* (with M. Canevaro and D. Lewis, 2025).