

Call for Papers

ECHOES OF CHANGE

International Conference
15th to 17th May 2025
Marburg, Germany

Marburg Centre for the Ancient World
Research Training Group 2844
"Staging of Religious Atmosphere in Ancient
Cultures"

Exploring the Dynamics of Religious Atmospheres

"Temples, Sire, are the soul of the countryside: they mark the beginning of its settlement, and have been passed down through many generations to the men of today" (Libanius, Oration 30.9; translation N. Lardner).

The fourth century orator Libanius points out a religious quality in temple structures that allows for a perception of connection through time. They appear to generate an awareness – an 'atmosphere' beyond mere bricks and mortar. Following research on contemporary atmospheres (cf. Radermacher 2018 for an overview) the research training group "Staging of Religious Atmosphere in Ancient Cultures" is developing approaches to study this intriguing phenomenon. In light of this, we are delighted to announce our first international conference which will focus on changes in religious atmospheres in antiquity and beyond. It will take place in Marburg from the 15th to 17th May 2025.

Interweaving the dimensions of space, action and perception, our approach offers an alternative way of studying religions with an interdisciplinary focus. The conference will examine the stages religious atmospheres pass through; exploring conception, creation, curation, transformation, failure, demise and remainders. These focal points will provide a unique access to religions and their atmospheres and, therefore, pave the way for future research. In addition to presentations, there will be discussions and workshops to enrich the academic debate with our own atmospheric experiences.

We welcome contributions from all disciplines represented within the research training group: Ancient History, Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Archaeology, Biblical Studies, Classical Philology, History of Pharmacy and Medicine, Indo-European Linguistics, Religious Studies and Roman Law. We also invite other fields such as Anthropology, Psychology, Philosophy amongst others. The conference is open to all interested scholars and we particularly call on young academics to participate. Contributions will be eligible for publication in the Conference Proceedings. The common language for the conference will be English, German presentations will also be accepted.

Contributions may address, but are not limited to the following questions:

1. What are the preconditions in establishing religious atmospheres?
2. What are the whos, whens, wheres, whys and hows contributing to changes in religious atmospheres? How is change perceived? What are the consequences of that change?
3. How are religious atmospheres curated? What are conditions for the successful staging of religious atmospheres?
4. How and why do religious atmospheres fail and how is that failure perceived?
5. What remains of a religious atmosphere once a specific cult has declined? What are reactions to such a decline?

We plan to facilitate an invigorating discourse along the stages of religious atmospheres, aiming to perceive the echoes of change through the mists of time. We invite those interested to participate in what promises to be a fascinating conference.

We look forward to receiving your abstract for a 25–30 minute paper by 9th October 2024 as one single PDF (title, abstract of max. 300 words).

CONTACTS

Conference Committee

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<https://www.uni-marburg.de/de/mcaw/grk2844/das-grk-2844>

Martin Radermacher (2018). "Atmosphäre": Zum Potenzial eines Konzepts für die Religionswissenschaft. Ein Forschungsüberblick, in: Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft 26 (1), 142–194, DOI: 10.1515/zfr-2017-0018.