



University
of Basel


Department
of History



**The Holy Roman Empire in
Modern Historiography:
A Collection of Portraits**
Conference

February 11-13, 2026

University of Basel
Department of History
Hirschgässlein 21, 4051 Basel



Swiss National
Science Foundation

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

15:00 – 15:30 **Welcome & Introduction**
Sabrina Rospert and Maximiliane Berger (Basel)

15:30 – 16:15 **Late Medieval Presentations of the Holy Roman Empire**
Bernd Schneidmüller (Heidelberg)

Coffee Break

16:45 – 17:30 **Earliest Historiography of Imperial Coronations**
Herman Gerrit Makkink (Vienna)

17:30 – 18:15 **The Holy Roman Empire and Sacral Kingship**
Vedran Sulovsky (Cambridge)

Thursday, February 12, 2026

08:30 – 09:15 **From the Sidelines: 19th century Basel's views on the Holy Roman Empire**
Maria Tranter (Basel)

09:15 – 10:00 **Which Holy Roman Empire is desired, especially in the Shadow of Prussia? Austrian Historians and the Holy Roman Empire**
Jörg Schwarz (Innsbruck)

Coffee Break

10:30 – 11:15 **Italian Historiography and the Late Medieval Empire. New Perspectives Beyond the Crisis**
Caterina Cappuccio (Rome)

11:15 – 12:00 **Wise or delusional? Spanish historiography on Alfonso X's race for Empire**
Giovanni Collamati (Madrid)

Lunch Break

13:00 – 13:45 **Surviving the HRE as a State. Eastern Central European Narratives of Sovereignty in 19th and 20th century „Historisches Staatsrecht“**
Jana Osterkamp (Augsburg)

13:45 – 14:30 **Ottoman perspectives on the Holy Roman Empire as reflected in pre-modern chronicles and diplomatic writings**
Yasir Yilmaz (Vienna)

Coffee Break

15:00 – 15:45 **The ritual practice of election and coronation in the Holy Roman Empire. The place of ceremonial in French representations of the Empire in the 17th century**
Édouard Decauchy (Montpellier)

15:45 – 16:30 **Thinking the Holy Roman Empire from its Opposite. French historiography, from disinterested to dialogue**
Sébastien Schick (Paris)

Coffee Break

17:00 – 17:45 **The Habsburg Netherlands and the Holy Roman Empire. Historiographical Debates across Centuries**
Monique Weis and Aurélien Destain (Luxembourg)

17:45 – 18:30 **The Empire on Maps: Analog Conventions and Computational Permutations**
Luca Scholz (Manchester)

Friday, February 13, 2026

09:00 – 09:45 **Scared by their neighbour? Danish Historiography and the Holy Roman Empire in the Middle Ages**
Bjørn Poulsen (Aarhus)

09:45 – 10:30 **Depicting the Holy Roman Empire in Swedish Scholarship: Images, Narratives, and National Portraits**
Laura-Marie Mork (Osnabrück)

Coffee Break

11:00 – 11:45 **Too Holy, too Roman, too Imperial? British Historians and the Holy Roman Empire**
Len Scales (Durham)

11:45 – 12:30 **Cowboy Barbarossa: The Holy Roman Empire on the American Frontier**
Aaron Vanides (Heidelberg)

Coffee & Conclusions

The Holy Roman Empire (HRE, or simply: the Empire) has been equated with “A Thousand Years of Europe’s History” (Peter Wilson). It has seen both bullish and bearish periods: not only in its history, which according to common periodization lasted from 962 CE to 1806 CE, but also in the historiography dedicated to understanding, explaining, and evaluating this political entity in the middle of the northwestern fringe of the Eurasian land mass. We seek a better understanding of different perspectives on the HRE by placing side by side „portraits“ of the Empire as shaped by – and, in turn, shaping – different historiographical traditions. What do we see, as viewers and painters of the imperial portrait? Chaotic Hydra, legal monstrum or empty glory? This conference brings together scholars of medieval, early modern, and modern history to compare and debate characterizations, from Spain to Switzerland to Scandinavia and beyond.

Participation:

If you are interested in joining our discussions, please register until **February 1, 2026**: portrait-hre-geschichte@unibas.ch

Organisation:

Dr. Maximiliane Berger and Dr. des. Sabrina Rospert

Location:

Department of History, Seminar Room 1
Hirschgässlein 21, 4051 Basel

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