

ORGANISATION

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VENUE

Käte Hamburger Kolleg
Iduna Building | Room 7011 (7th floor)
Servatiiplatz 9
48143 Münster/Germany

REGISTRATION

Register online at
<https://go.wwu.de/yvm9d>



KÄTE HAMBURGER KOLLEG

The Käte Hamburger Kolleg “Einheit und Vielfalt im Recht | Legal Unity and Pluralism” (EViR) at the University of Münster has been funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) since 2021. Fellows from all over the world, together with scholars from Münster, examine the dynamic tension between legal unity and pluralism from antiquity to the present. This is the first attempt to systematically investigate the phenomenon in its entire historical depth and across disciplinary boundaries. In addition to (legal) history, many other disciplines such as ethnology and sociology, as well as literature and religious studies, are involved in the Kolleg.

CONTACT

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Image: The allegory of mercy, Miniature from Jacques Legrand, Livre des bonnes moeurs, Source gallica.bnf.fr / BnF.



**INTERNATIONAL
WORKSHOP**
2–3 NOVEMBER 2023

**THE POWER TO PARDON
IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY
MODERN CHRISTIANITY**
EXCEPTIONS AND DIVERSITIES

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KÄTE HAMBURGER KOLLEG MÜNSTER
EINHEIT & VIELFALT
IM RECHT 
LEGAL UNITY & PLURALISM

PROGRAMME

Thursday, 2 November 2023

9.00–9.30
Quentin Verreycken (Louvain-la-Neuve)
Ulrike Ludwig (Münster)
Welcome and introduction

Theme 1: Discussing pardon, norms, and legal pluralities

Chair: Quentin Verreycken

9.30–10.30
Philippa Byrne (Oxford)
The absolution (or not) of Solomon: theology, law, and politics in a twelfth-century debate on an exceptional case

10.30–11.00 | *Coffee break*

11.00–12.00
Bernadette Meyler (Stanford)
Grace or forgetting? Acts of oblivion in historical context

12.00–14.00 | *Lunch*

Theme 2: Pardon, legal practices, and agencies

Chair: Eva Schlotheuber (Düsseldorf)

14.00–15.00
Elisabeth Lusset (Paris)
Competition or complementarity of pardons? When supplicants turn to both the Apostolic Penitentiary and the King of France (15th century)

15.00–15.30 | *Coffee break*

15.30–16.30
Darlene Abreu-Ferreira (Winnipeg)
Pardons for and by racialized and enslaved individuals in pre-modern Portugal

16.30–17.30
Tomás A. Mantecón (Santander)
Justice, gendered agency and royal pardon in Old Regime Spain

18.30 | *Dinner*

Friday, 3 November 2023

Theme 3: Pardon, multilevel of power, and the construction of sovereignty

Chair: Ulrike Ludwig

9.00–10.00
Rudi Beulant (Dijon)
From the duke to the king. Pardoning criminals in Dijon under the king of France after 1477

10.00–11.00
Luke Giraudet (Louvain-la-Neuve)
The power to pardon as a tool of governance: the case of the Spanish Low Countries, 1540-1633

11.00–11.30 | *Coffee break*

11.30–12.30
Gerd Schwerhoff (Dresden)
Hanging or pardoning? Coping with the rebels after the Peasant's War of 1525

12.30–14.30 | *Lunch*

14.30–15.30
Simon Berggren (Umeå)
Petitions for mercy and the construction of royal authority in Early Modern Sweden

15.30–16.30
Nancy Kollmann (Stanford)
The Tsar's power to pardon

16.30–17.00 | *Coffee break*

17.00–18.00 | Summary keynote

Xavier Rousseaux (Louvain-la-Neuve)
Penitence, penalty, and pardon: How Medieval and Early Modern practices of forgiveness have shaped the Western conception of violence, power, and justice

18.00–18.30
Final discussion

19:00 | *Dinner*

THE POWER TO PARDON

In the medieval and early modern Christian world, the power to exercise pardon over rigor of justice was one of the strongest manifestations of sovereignty and, as such, it was almost ubiquitous. While the Pope was probably one of the first monarchs to initiate an extensive use of pardon after establishing the Apostolic Penitentiary in the thirteenth century, he was rapidly imitated by lay rulers – kings, princes, and even magistrates – who started to grant letters of pardon for those who petitioned for clemency after committing a crime. For these merciful rulers, the exercise of pardon was a means to enforce peace and impose their authority and justice over any other jurisdiction, whereas for the subjects, it was primarily a way to save their lives and escape punishment that was often less expensive than other mitigating practices. For historians and legal scholars, finally, studying the predominant role of pardon in medieval and early modern societies raises the question on how these pardons operated in complex legal systems characterized by a plurality of legal orders, where various means of conflict resolution coexisted, interacted, and sometimes replaced each other, while litigants had to navigate between multiple levels of authorities.