

**UNIVERSITÄT
ERFURT**

Max-Weber-Kolleg

MONDAY LECTURES

IN RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Max-Weber-Kolleg | Seminar für Religionswissenschaft

05.02.2024 | 16:15

Research Building „World Relations“

C19.00.02/03

MONDAY LECTURES: VALENTINO GASPARINI

Building the Divine Power in the Greco-Roman World: (4) From Human to Divine Power

The fourth and last lecture in the event series “Building the Divine Power in the Greco-Roman World” will deal with the topic of creative transfer of both onomastic and iconographic features from human political leaders to gods. Within the Greco-Roman polytheistic system, the puissance of each god could be perceived and experienced through iconographic attributes, which have traditionally been considered as visual materializations of the divine power that make their specific referents easily recognizable. Similarly, specific onomastic attributes (“epithets”) have commonly been explained as responding to the need to inscribe the divine activity within a specific, personalized sphere of competences. In contrast to this “prosopographic” approach, which engenders an excessively fixed and compartmentalized image of ancient gods, the OMEGA project aims to take in the gods’ mutual relationships and the social and individual emic strategies of construction and representation of human/divine networks. When scholarship historically conceptualizes the mechanisms of negotiation between human and divine power, it tends to focus on the strategies used by humans (e.g. Hellenistic rulers or Roman Emperors) to increase their own worldly power, among which religion has always played a leading role. The OMEGA project intends to radically overturn this perspective by focusing instead on the strategies through which divine power was constructed by exploiting the onomastic and iconographic features of human political leaders, thus “cannibalizing” their symbolic capital.

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