

UNIVERSITÄT ERFURT
Max-Weber-Kolleg

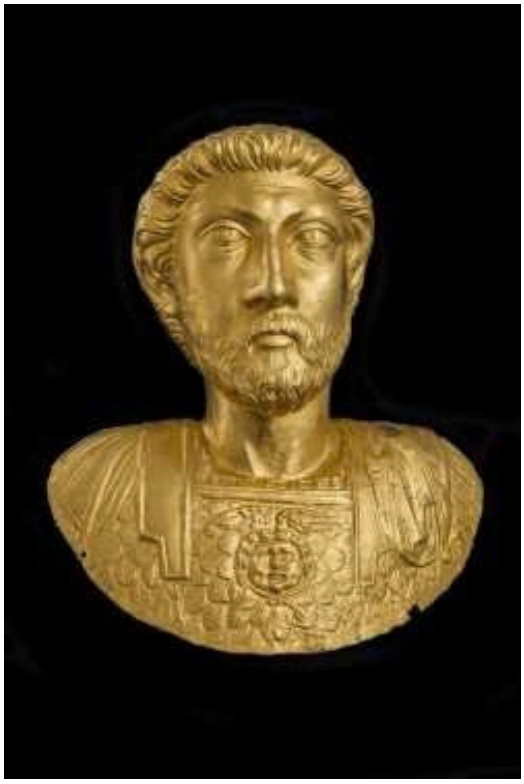
MONDAY LECTURES | WISE 2026/27
IN RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES

RESEARCH BUILDING "WELTBEZIEHUNGEN" | C19.00.03 | 14:15 - 15:45

16.11.2026 | ELENA MUÑIZ-GRIJALVO

THE EMPEROR IN PROCESSION. EXPERIENCING POWER IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE (II): 'I AND THE EMPEROR ARE ONE': EXPERIENCING THE EMPEROR THROUGH HIS PROCESSIONAL IMAGE

This talk will focus on the processional images (statues or portraits) of the emperor. I will contend that it is quite likely that these images did not constitute a category in themselves and were not essentially different from other portraits of the emperors. However, several features of processional images could make the emperor be experienced as a 'special agent', endowed with superhuman power and actively participating in the ritual. Drawing on recent studies on the effects of images on the cognitive processes of their viewers, I will first analyze the capacity attributed to images to share—wholly or partially—the essence of what they represented. Attention will then turn to other features of imperial images in procession that could suggest the emperor's active presence and extraordinary power: material, shape, and dimensions of the emperors' images, as well as their placement in the parade. Finally, I will analyze the names given to the processional statues of the emperor, which unveil interesting connotations attached to imperial effigies.



Golden bust of Marcus Aurelius
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ALL GUESTS WELCOME.
NO REGISTRATION NECESSARY.