

UNIVERSITÄT ERFURT
Max-Weber-Kolleg

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

RESEARCH BUILDING "WELTBEZIEHUNGEN" | C19.00.03 | 16:15 - 17:45

30.11.2026 | ELENA MUÑIZ-GRIJALVO

THE EMPEROR IN PROCESSION. EXPERIENCING POWER IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE (IV): ACTORS, SPECTATORS AND THE INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE OF THE ROMAN EMPEROR IN PROCESSION

In this last talk I will focus on the presence and interaction of participants in processions as both sensory and intellectual stimuli. More than other rituals, processions encouraged the active participation of large numbers of actors and spectators. The second wave of cognitive studies has placed special emphasis on enaction and extension, the idea that interaction with the environment actively shapes cognition. Interaction took countless forms, many of them purely sensory: the visual contrast between those marching and those watching, the sounds of the public (conversations, applause, cheers, and also silences), the jostling that created the impression of being immersed in a crowd. The sense of belonging provoked enthusiasm and fervor, which could turn into joyful gratitude towards the imperial image and the person of the emperor, and played a role in shaping the emperor as a figure of exceptional status.



P.P. Rubens, A Roman triumph. © National Gallery, London.

ALL GUESTS WELCOME.
NO REGISTRATION NECESSARY.