



MONDAY LECTURES | WISE 2024/25

IN RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES

RESEARCH BUILDING “WELTBEZIEHUNGEN” | C19.00.02/03 | 16:15 - 17:45

LECTURE SERIES BY FRANCESCO MASSA

BEYOND LAST PAGANS: ROMAN POLYTHEISM RESHAPING IN LATE ANTIQUITY

09.12.2024 | PART IV

WHO REALLY ARE THE *HELLENES* AND THE *PAGANI* IN THE FIFTH-CENTURY ROMAN EMPIRE?

The final lecture will analyze the presence of “pagans” (*pagani* or *hellenes*) in the fifth-century empire. If both legal texts and Christian sources attest to the existence of pagans in the empire’s various provinces, who were the worshippers of traditional religion in an empire that was now largely Christianized? To answer this question, we need to start with an overview of the sources available for the fifth century. A “map” of Greek and Roman polytheistic practices in the Empire at this time still does not exist, but it is necessary to assess the meaning of the “pagan” label used by Christian authors.

We will analyze accusations of “paganism” directed at political figures and resulting in legal trials: for instance, the affairs of Isocasius in Constantinople or Basilius and Praetextatus in Rome. Next we will focus on the ritual practices mentioned in the sources to understand how polytheistic identity was expressed.

**ALL GUESTS WELCOME.
NO REGISTRATION NECESSARY.**