

Organised by  
the École française d'Athènes and the Swedish Institute at Athens,  
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and of the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities

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|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Programme                                             | ReligiS       |  |
| Religions et sociétés face<br>aux défis contemporains |               |  |
| porté par l'                                          | Université    |  |
|                                                       | de Strasbourg |  |



The Royal Swedish Academy of  
Letters, History and Antiquities



FRIDAY 20 / 03 / 2026

HYBRID EVENT

Swedish Institute at Athens,  
Mitseon 9, Athens  
& online

## Contemporary Polytheisms in Europe

Reflections on the Possibilities and  
Limitations of a Comparative Approach

Mandatory registration  
[u.efa.gr/kx](https://u.efa.gr/kx)



This study day aims to explore contemporary polytheist and so-called 'Neopaganisms' religious movements in Europe through the lens of comparison. While these movements have attracted growing scholarly interest, research has often remained focused on national or regional case studies.

The objective of this meeting is to open a collective reflection on the possibilities and limits of comparison in the study of contemporary European polytheisms. It asks how situated fields of research can be brought into dialogue at a European scale, and what comparison allows us to grasp (or to problematise) in the analysis of these contemporary forms of religiosity. Particular attention will be paid to the tensions between, on the one hand, transnational dynamics (networks, rituals, references to Antiquity, claims of continuity, strategies of legitimisation) and, on the other hand, forms of local embeddedness shaped by cultural, linguistic, legal, and religious contexts.

Without aiming to provide an exhaustive mapping of "contemporary polytheisms," the study day pursues a methodological and theoretical objective at the intersection of anthropology and the history of religions. It seeks to interrogate comparison not only as an analytical tool, but also as a mode of knowledge production, taking into account the fact that these movements themselves generate comparative discourses and forms of transnational solidarity.

Discussions will be grounded in case studies from different European contexts (Mediterranean, Northern, and Eastern Europe). A final round table will bring these approaches into dialogue around shared questions concerning the relationship to the field, the categories mobilised by researchers (notably that of "Neopaganism"), and the uses of comparison across time and space.



**09.00 - 09.30 | Welcome**

**09.30 - 10.00 | Greetings**

**Jenny Wallensten** Swedish Institute at Athens & **Gilles de Rapper** École française d'Athènes

**10.00 - 10.30 | Introduction**

**Néphélie Skarlatos** École pratique des hautes études/PSL - École française d'Athènes

**10.30 - 11.00 | Rasa Pranskevičiūtė-Amoson** Vilnius University, Institute of Asian and Transcultural Studies

Ancient Baltic Faith Community "Romuva": (Comparative) Insights from the Research Field

**11.00 - 11.30 | Coffee Break**

**11.30 - 12.00 | Giuseppe Maiello** University of Finance and Administration, Prague  
Contemporary Polytheism in the Czech Republic: Historical Roots, Social Dynamics, and Future Perspectives

**12.00 - 12.30 | Stamatis Zochios** Hellenic Folklore Research Centre/Academy of Athens, École pratique des hautes études/PSL

Constructing the Myth: The (Re)Creation of the Past among Slavic Neo-Polytheists

**12.30 - 14.00 | Lunch Break**

**14.00 - 14.30 | Kerem Görkem Arslan** Université de Strasbourg - Institut français d'études anatoliennes

New Religiosities at the Margins of Dominant Religions: Methodological Reflections on the Study of Contemporary Pagan Movements in a Transnational Context (Turkey–Europe)

**14.30 - 15.00 | Galia Valtchinova** Université de Toulouse, CETOBaC (UMR 8032, CNRS/EHESS/Collège de France)

Claiming "Thracian Religion": Re/inventions of Ancient Polytheism in Postsocialist Bulgaria (from Historiographical Constructions to Field Performances)

**15.00 - 15.30 | Evgenia Fotiou** Department of Sociology/University of Crete, Rethymno  
Contesting Narratives of the Past and Forging Alliances for the Future: Religious Revitalization in Greece

**15.30 - 16.00 | Coffee Break**

**16.00 | Conclusive Round Table**