
Cluster of Excellence 'Religion and Politics'

Established in 2007, the Cluster of Excellence 'Religion and Politics' will continue to study the complex relationship between religion and politics across epochs and cultures until 2027. The approximately 150 researchers from 20 disciplines in the humanities and social Sciences focus on Europe and the Mediterranean region, and their interconnections with the Middle East, Africa, North America and Latin America. The Cluster is the largest of its kind in Germany and the only Cluster of Excellence to focus on religion. Since its inception the Cluster addresses a wide range of historical and contemporary issues.

Organization

Cluster of Excellence 'Religion and Politics'

Prof. Dr. Katrin Kogman-Appel

Institute for Jewish Studies

Dr. Friederike Schöpf

Franziska Kleybolte (Hebrew University Jerusalem)

Johannisstraße 1, 48143 Münster

 @religionundpolitik

www.religion-und-politik.de/en

Location and registration

Room J 101 and J 102 (1st floor)

Johannisstr. 4, 48143 Münster

Registration at Dr. Friederike Schöpf (fschoepf@uni-muenster.de) and **Franziska Kleybolte** (fkleybol@uni-muenster.de) by **13 May 2026**.



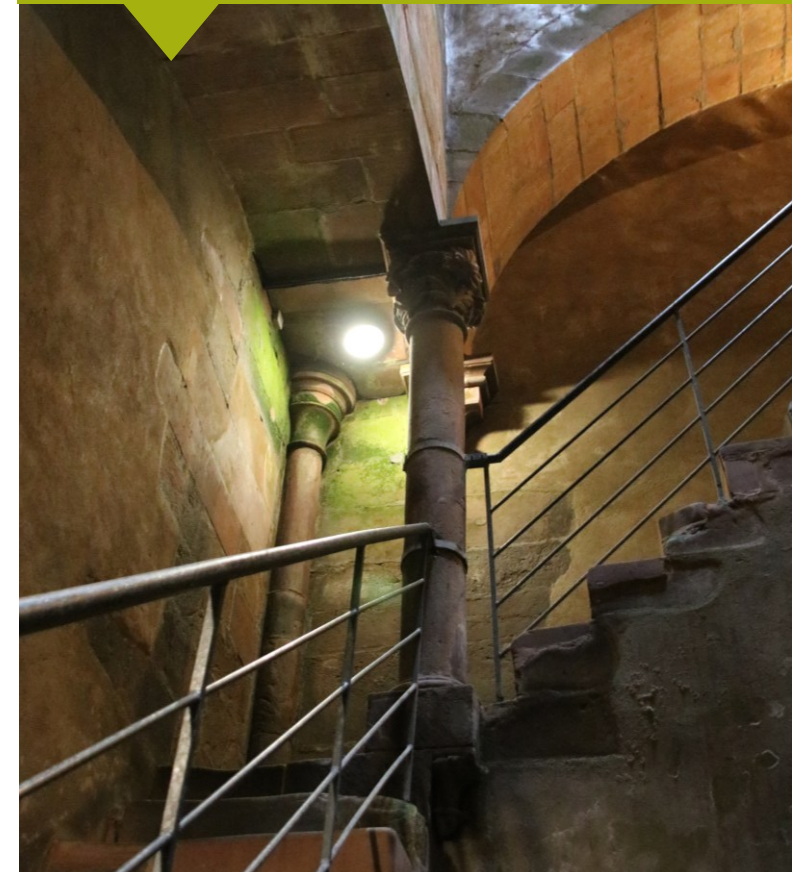
Image: Mikveh of Friedberg, Friederike Schöpf



Conference of the Cluster of Excellence 'Religion and Politics', in cooperation with the Institute of Jewish Studies and the 'Contending with Crises' Project (Hebrew University Jerusalem)

Jewish Medieval Spaces and Places

18 May 2026 | 11 am – 20 May 2026 | 12 pm



Jewish Medieval Spaces and Places

Since the spatial turn of the 1980s, the significance and potential of space as an approach to a variety of sources—particularly to understand its social dynamics—have become widely acknowledged in the humanities. However, spatial theories and concepts have often been treated in isolation within Medieval Studies, a tendency particularly evident in research on Jewish medieval contexts.

The aim of the conference is to expand our understanding of this underexplored topic. To this end, we seek to bridge theoretical approaches with practical insights and address questions such as the following:

What constitutes Jewish medieval space? How were such spaces constructed, and what symbolic meanings did they embody? Where do the boundaries of Jewish space lie? How do spaces evoke emotions, and in what ways did religious and social ideas structure spaces? How is Jewish space defined across different research fields? Which role does heritage preservation, archaeology, and the possibilities of digital methods and humanities play, in order to make Jewish spaces accessible and publicly presented in our modern environment?

Programme

Monday, 18 May 2026

11.00–12.00 **Arrival, Welcoming, and Introduction**

Katrin Kogman-Appel, University of Münster

Friederike Schöpf, University of Münster

Franziska Kleybolte, Hebrew University Jerusalem / University of Münster

Panel 1: **Moving Through Space (I): Migration and Mobility**

12.00–12.30 **The Court Registers of Póznán as a Source for Jewish Migration at the Turn of the 15th Century. Insights into a New Research Project**, Jörg Müller, University of Trier

12.30–13.00 **Overcoming Distances and Expanding Spaces. Migration of Jews from Erfurt in the Late Middle Ages**, Maike Lämmerhirt, Independent Scholar (Mannheim)

13.00–14.00 | **Lunch Break**

Panel 2: **Moving Through Space (II): Pilgrimage and other Processions**

14.00–14.30 **Shipping Bodies: Space, Communal Identity and Burial Practices in High-Medieval Ashkenaz**, Tzafir Barzilei, Bar-Ilan University

14.30–15.00 **Jewish Pilgrims and Shared Sacred Space in the Land of Israel, 12th through 14th Centuries**, Pelia Werth, Johns Hopkins University

15.00–15.30 **Gendering Spaces of Intercession and Intercessors: Jewish Women and their Graves as Sites of Pilgrimage and Assistance 13th–17th Centuries**, Alexandra Cuffel, Ruhr University Bochum

15.30–16.00 | **Coffee Break**

Panel 3: **Digging into Spaces**

16.00–16.30 **The Jewish Medieval Quarter in Cologne: Spaces of Interaction and Perceptions of Self and Others**, Christiane Twiehaus, MiQua. LVR-Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne

16.30–17.00 **Jewish Spaces in Medieval Paris, between Mobility and (Dis)continuity**, Manon Banoun, Hebrew University Jerusalem / Université Paris-I-Panthéon-Sorbonne

17.00–17.30 **Recontextualizing Medieval Ashkenazi Heritage within Jewish and Non-Jewish Museum Spaces in Rothenburg ob der Tauber**, Meyrav Levy, Bavarian State Office for Non-State Museums

Tuesday, 19 May 2026

Panel 4: **Jewish Neighborhoods and Urban Spaces**

10.00–10.30 **Jewish Space in the City – Regensburg around 1200**, Eva Haverkamp-Rott, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich

10.30–11.00 **“kemnata qui fuit judei” – Medieval Jewish Settlements in Northern Germany. Spaces, Urban Topography and Architectural Infrastructure**, Simon Paulus, University of Stuttgart

11.00–11.30 | **Coffee break**

11.30–12.00 **Mühlhausen’s ‘Jewish Street’ and its Population in the 15th Century**, Colin Arnaud, University of Münster

12.00–12.30 **From Shared Streets to Walled Quarters: The Transformation of Jewish Medieval Spaces and Places at the Council of Breslau**, Arik Solomon, Ben Gurion University of the Negev

12.30–14.00 | **Lunch Break**

Panel 5: **Construction of Space in Texts and Thought**

14.00–14.30 **Geography, Terminology, and Perception of the World. Experience and Representation of Space in the Hebrew Sources of the Pre-modern Era**, Rainer Barzen, Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf,

14.30–15.00 **Spatial Dimensions of a Medieval Manuscript – Aspects of Space within the Laud Mahzor**, Hanna-Barbara Rost, University of Münster

15.00–15.30 **Puzzling Book Geographies: Ashkenaz in Jerusalem, the Byzantine Links, and Ashkenazi Jerusalem in Italy**, Ilona Steimann, University of Münster

15.30–16.00 **Coffee Break**

Panel 6: **Stratified and Gendered Spaces**

16.00–16.30 **Jews in the and around the Medieval Brothel**, Savoy Curry, Hebrew University Jerusalem / Northwestern University

16.30–17.00 **Christian Notaries in Jewish Homes: Jewish Space, Legal Culture, and Religious Identity in the Late Medieval Mediterranean**, Sarah Ifft Decker, Rhodes College

17.00–17.30 **The Women’s Synagogues as Architectural Statement: Women’s Synagogues in the 13th century and their Place in the Jewish Quarter**, Friederike Schöpf, University of Münster

Wednesday, 20 May 2026

Panel 7: **Christians Constructing Jewish Space**

09.30–10.00 **“Sinagoga nedejada”: The Extinct St. Christopher’s Church of Valencia**, Encarna Montero, University of Valencia

10.00–10.30 **Who Converted the Ibn Shoshan Synagogue in Toledo? An Analysis of Sanctifying Narratives and Material Realities**, Franziska Kleybolte, Hebrew University Jerusalem / University of Münster

10.30–11.00 **Imagining ‘Jewish Spaces’ in Anti-Jewish Literature**, Florian Datz, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich

11.15–12.00 | **Concluding Discussion with Coffee**