Samson destroying the temple of the Philistines

› Organisation

Project D2-4 of the Cluster of Excellence: "Martyrdom and the Discourse of Martyrdom in the 4th Century A.D."

Prof. Dr. Johannes Hahn
hahnj@uni-muenster.de
Tel. +49 251 83-24360

› Venue

Public Lecture
Hörsaalgebäude des Exzellenzclusters
Room JO 1
Johannisstraße 4 | 48143 Münster

Workshop
Agora Tagungszentrum
Conferenceroom 1
Bismarckallee 11 B
48151 Münster

› Registration

until 05.09.2017
Matthias Sandberg, M.A. | sandberm@wwu.de
Nicole Abele | abelen@wwu.de
Tel. +49 251 83-24360, or -24367 (Lena Woestmann)

A workshop of the Cluster of Excellence "Religion and Politics" of the University of Münster. Some 200 academics from more than 20 disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and from around 14 countries deal with the relationship of religion and politics across epochs and cultures: from the world of ancient gods and Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period to the current situation in Europe, America, Asia, and Africa. It is nationally the largest research association of its kind and of the 43 Clusters of Excellence in Germany, it is the only one to deal with religion. The German Federal Government and the Federal States support the project with 40.1 million euros in the Excellence Initiative's second funding phase from 2012 to 2018.

Cluster of Excellence "Religion and Politics"
Johannisstraße 1
D-48143 Münster
Tel. +49 251 83-23376
Fax +49 251 83-23246

religionundpolitik@uni-muenster.de

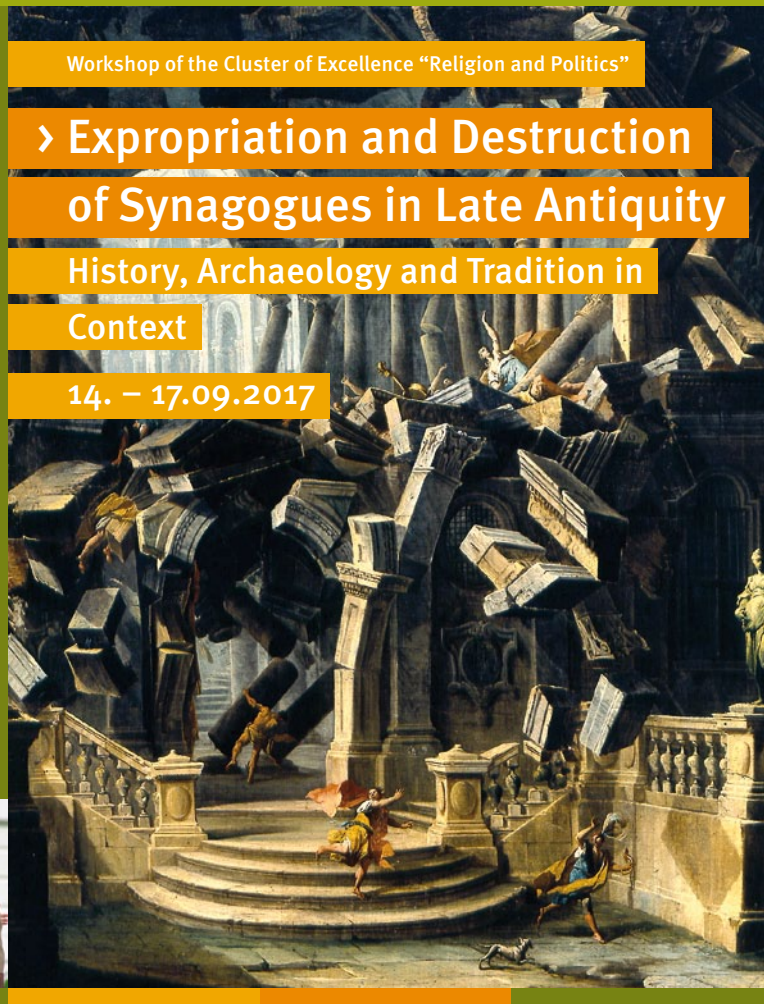
Picture Credit: Samson destroying the temple of the Philistines, Antonio Joli (c. 1700 – 1777). Museo Civico di Storia e Arte, Modena; Vince Musi/The White House, wikipedia

Workshop of the Cluster of Excellence "Religion and Politics"

› Expropriation and Destruction of Synagogues in Late Antiquity

History, Archaeology and Tradition in Context

14. – 17.09.2017



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› Expropriation and Destruction of Synagogues in Late Antiquity

The traditional view of the religious history of the late Roman Empire after the Constantinian revolution as a straight triumph of the Christian Church has been forcefully challenged by historians, archaeologists and scholars of Jewish Studies over the last decades. The master narrative of the irrevocable conversion of the Imperium and of the collapse or destruction of pagan cults and of Judaism and Jewish communities as presented by late antique Christian authors denotes much more a discourse on Christian identity than a trustworthy historical account. We now know that there was no general decline of Jewish life in particular but rather existed flourishing Jewish communities in important regions of the Roman Empire.

Still, various contemporary and later reports and traditions of the expropriation and of the destruction of synagogues and likewise relevant archaeological evidence refer to an increasingly tense religious atmosphere marked not only by religious competition and conflict but, in some cases at least, by the eruption of violence. These literary and archaeological sources deserve close scrutiny.

Important evidence has been brought to light by new excavations with particular rich results in former Palestine. But new synagogues have recently been discovered in the Diaspora as well. In addition, neglected literary sources can throw fresh light on important issues. The presentation, reevalution and historical interpretation of the archaeological and literary evidence will thus be a major objective of the interdisciplinary discussion. The conference will offer, for the first time, a comprehensive critical overview of an important aspect of the religious transformation that marked late antiquity.

› Programme

Thursday, 14.09.2017

16:15–17:30	Welcome, opening and coffee
18:15–19:30	**Public Lecture** Huqoq and the Fate of Late Roman Synagogues in Galilee | **Jodi Magness, Chapel Hill**
20:00	Dinner

Friday, 15.09.2017

Historical Context

09:10–09:40	Introduction
09:40–10:30	Violence in Words: Christian Polemics against Religious Dissenters, especially Jews **Maijastina Kahlos, Helsinki**
10:30–11:20	Ambrose of Milan's Squabble with Theodosius I: Another Look at the Backstage of the Callinicum Affair (388/9 CE) | **Oded Irshai, Jerusalem**
11:20–11:40	Coffee break
11:40–12:30	Religious Conflict in the Urban Space of Late Antiquity. The Synagogues in the Greek Cities in Southern Balcans, in Ionia and in Lydia **Nadin Burkhardt, Eichstätt**
12:30–14:15	Lunch

The East and Palestine

14:15–15:10	The End of the Synagogue in Gerasa/Jerash **Achim Lichtenberger, Münster**
15:10–16:05	The Synagogue in Late Antique Palestine: Prosperity and Decline in Times of Shifting Hegemonies – Between Byzantium and the Umayyad Caliphate | **Zeev Weiss, Jerusalem**
16:05–16:45	Coffee break
16:45–17:40	Destroying the Temple, Again: Christian Destruction of Late Antique Synagogues and the Modern History of Judaism **Steven Fine, New York**
17:40–18:30	General discussion
20:00	Dinner

Saturday, 16.09.2017

The West & North Africa

09:15–10:10	Destruction and Expropriation of the Synagogue on Menorca (418 CE) **R. González Salinero, Madrid**
10:10–11:05	The Expropriation of Synagogues and the Expulsion of the Jews of Alexandria under Cyril **Edward Watts, San Diego**
11:05–11:40	Coffee break
11:40–12:35	Spatial Supersession and Conversion of Late Antique Synagogues in North Africa **Shira Lander, Dallas**
12:35–14:30	Lunch

Various Aspects

14:30–15:20	Synagogual Elites and the Surrounding Society **Walter Ameling, Köln**
15:20–16:10	Byzantine Synagogue Legislation, Christianization, and Postcolonial Theory **Catherine Hezser, London**
16:10–16:30	Coffee break
16:30–17:15	Holy Men and the Destruction of Synagogues **Johannes Hahn, Münster**
17:15–17:20	Break
17:20–18:15	General discussion
19:00–20:00	Dinner

Sunday, 17.09.2017

09:30–10:00	Walk to the Jewish community and to the Synagogue of Münster, Klosterstraße 8-9
10:00–11:00	Guided tour of the Synagogue of Münster by the architect, Nathan Schächter