“TRANSFORMATION OF HERITAGE, HERITAGE OF TRANSFORMATION”

POLITICAL CHANGE AND ITS IMPACT ON SYNAGOGUES

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

13 October 2026
Venue: Klaipėda University, 84 Herkaus Manto St., Klaipėda, Lithuania

PROGRAMME

09:00 Arrival and registration, coffee
09:30 Introduction and welcome address

Ruth Leiserowitz (Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology, Klaipėda University, Lithuania) & Ulrich Knufinke (Bet Tfila Research Unit for Jewish Architecture in Europe at Technische Universität Braunschweig, Germany): Introductory Remarks

First Panel
09:45 – 11:15

Reorganization, Restoration and Returns
Chair: Zuzanna Swiatowy
(Bet Tfila Braunschweig)

Christhardt Henschel
(German Historical Institute Warsaw).
Effects of the Legal Reorganization on Jewish Cultural Heritage

Kinga Migalska
(National Museum in Cracow).
”Why was it easier in Kraków? The Story of Restoration of Kraków Synagogues in the late 1980s and 1990s”

Teresa Klimowicz
(Marii Curie-Skłodowska University Lublin).
Between State Ownership and Community Return: Legal Ambiguity and Heritage Politics in Lublin’s Synagogues

11:15- 11:45 Coffee break

Eyewitness account
11:45 - 12:15

Emanuelis Zingeris
(Member of the Seimas of LR).
How the Jewish cultural heritage was legally safeguarded

Second Panel
12:15 - 13:15

Transformation of Heritage in the Baltic Region
Chair: Ruth Leiserowitz
(Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology, Klaipėda University, Lithuania)

Ilya Lensky
(“Jews in Latvia” Museum in Riga).
The Heritage of the Synagogues in Latvia: A Critical Overview

Vladimir Levin (Hebrew University of Jerusalem).
Jewish Heritage in the USSR and in the post-Soviet States

13:15 - 14:15 Lunch break

Third Panel
14:15 - 15:45

Various forms of “Heritagization”
Chair: Neele Menter
(Anhalt University of Applied Science).

Ruth Ellen Gruber
(Expert on Jewish heritage).
Trnava, Slovakia: Two Synagogues and the Evolution of Their Transformations

Hannah Budai
(Eötvös Loránd University Budapest).
Synagogues in Transition: The Impact of the Regime Change on Hungary’s Synagogues

Zuzanna Swiatowy
(Bet Tfila Braunschweig).
Appropriation of synagogues in the face of opportunities for revitalization. Jewish heritage in former German territories (Poland)

15:45 - 16:15 Coffee break

Fourth Panel
16:15-17:45

Once again: The year 1990 as a Game Changer
Chair: Christhardt Henschel
(German Historical Institute Warsaw, Poland)

Ildiko Roed
(University Potsdam).
Political Change and Its Impact on Synagogues: The New Synagogue in Potsdam

Ulrich Knufinke | Neele Menter
(Bet Tfila Braunschweig | Anhalt University of Applied Science).
New Challenges in the Preservation of Jewish Heritage since 1990 (Germany)

Closing reflections

18:00 Reception
19:00 Conference dinner for participants