

Stsiapan Stureika is associate professor at the European Humanities University in Vilnius, a Belarusian university in asylum. There, he is supervising both BA and MA programs on cultural heritage preservation, curating research and publishing projects aimed at actualization of heritage's social, economic and environmental potentials. His research interests focus on the theory of heritage, architectural preservation, new museology, theory of nationalism, and ethnic relations. He also holds a chair at ICOMOS National Committee of Belarus. His recent publications include *Synagogues in Post-Soviet Belarus and the Region: Overcoming Abandonment through Appropriation*, in: Agata Wąsowska-Pawlik and Jacek Purchla (ed.), *Heritage and Environment*, Kraków 2021; *Cultural Heritage as Discursive Conflicts, Borrowings, and Rituals*, in: Mikael Löfgren (ed.), *Heritage, Conflict, Dialogue in Belarus and Sweden*, Göteborg 2022.

Diána Vonnák is a research fellow at Stirling University. As a social anthropologist, she is focusing on cultural heritage regimes in Eastern Europe and beyond. She looks at the intersections between political-economic and heritage regimes, the role of soft power and cultural diplomacy in shaping heritage futures, and the role of experts in various contexts. She obtained her MA (2013) and PhD (2020) degrees at Durham University. Currently she is looking at the ways the war has changed heritage work and archiving in Ukraine, focusing on the Donbas. Together with Olena Andronaty, she is the co-author of *Jewish Cemeteries and Tourism Development – An ESJF Guide* (2020). She is working on a book about the post-Maidan heritage policies in Ukraine, focusing on Lviv.

Chair:

Christhardt Henschel is a research fellow at the German Historical Institute Warsaw, where he initially conducted a project on the German occupation during the Second World War in Poland. Previously, he worked at the Simon Dubnow Institute for Jewish History and Culture in Leipzig where he wrote his doctoral dissertation *Jeder Bürger Soldat. Militär, Juden und Zweite Polnische Republik zwischen Geschichte und Gegenwart* [Every Citizen a Soldier. Military, Jews and the Second Polish Republic between History and the Present]. Currently he is focussing on a study on negotiation processes of German-Jewish cultural heritage in post-war Poland. His latest publications are *Blocked Pathways. Regional Room for Manoeuvre of the Jews in the Administrative District of Zichenau, 1939–1945*, in: Janine Fubel, Alexandra Klei, Annika Wienert (ed.), *Space in Holocaust Research: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Spatial Thinking*, Berlin 2023; *Ostpreußens Kriegsbeute. Der Regierungsbezirk Zichenau 1939–1945*, Osnabrück 2021 (as editor).

The discussion will be held in English.

photos: Ruth Leiserowitz

The **Joachim Lelewel Talks** of the German Historical Institute Warsaw take place in a forum format, during which contentious issues surrounding the Polish history are discussed in their European context. Each time the representatives of Polish, East and West European and international history as well as the present audience take part in a panel discussion.

The intention of the Joachim Lelewel Talks is not only a confrontation of contradictory assumptions and views but also an engagement of various research milieus in an intensive exchange of ideas. The Talks enable the continuous development of the discussed issues as well as facilitate new openings to diverse methodical aspects.



The Orphaned Synagogue in the Urban Space. Why Do We Recall Them?

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6 p.m.

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The Orphaned Synagogue in the Urban Space. Why Do We Recall Them?

In spite of the destruction of Jewish communities by German occupiers, synagogues remained in numerous cities of Central and Eastern Europe. They, however, lost their original function and significance as religious centres. This process was also influenced by drastic geopolitical changes and forced migrations in the wake of the Second World War. Frequently, former synagogues were used for secular purposes without any reminder of their original function.

Only in recent decades have local historians, former residents as well as their descendants and monument conservators taken an active interest in. They have been trying to document the significance of former Jewish prayer houses for local history and recognise them as cultural heritage. Thus, in some cities, synagogues have been re-established according to their original purpose. In most cases, however, they do not fulfil any religious or cultural function anymore. In countries like Poland, Lithuania, Hungary and Ukraine, various actors have shaped and promoted all these processes of rediscovery and appropriation. In consequence, we can identify a variety of paths and efforts to preserve synagogues.

The aforementioned processes raise many theoretical and practical questions for historians, social and cultural scientists as well as for monument conservators. What, beyond cultural and historical motivations, inspires them? Which conflict lines can be observed? Is there any connection to the general efforts to restore historic urban spaces? What place does the memory of Jewish history and culture take in such processes and to what extent are Jews involved in them? How significant is the motive of tourism promotion? Is it possible to identify national or regional specificities with regard to the actors, their motives and procedures?

These topics will be addressed during the panel discussion on the eve of the international conference *Jewish or Common Heritage? (Dis-)appropriation of Synagogue Architecture in East-Central Europe since 1945* on 12–14 September 2023, which is part of the common research project *Appropriation and Revitalization. Negotiation Processes of the German-Jewish Cultural Heritage in Poland* realized by the German Historical Institute in Warsaw and the Bet Tfila – Research Unit for Jewish Architecture in Europe at the TU Braunschweig within the framework of the DFG Priority Program 2357 “Jewish Cultural Heritage.”

The panellists:

Eleonora Bergman is one of the most renowned experts on Jewish cultural monuments, their history and documentation in Poland. After graduating from the Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw University of Technology, she received her Ph.D. at the Institute of Art of the University of Warsaw. She cooperated with the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences, conducting measurements of architectural monuments in many regions of Poland. She is the author and co-author of numerous historical studies for urban development plans, mainly in the regions of Mazovia and Silesia. Since 1991, she has worked at the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, of which she was the director in 2007–2011. She is the author of various publications, such as *“Nie masz bóżnicy powszechnej” Synagogi i domy modlitwy w Warszawie od końca XVIII do początku XXI wieku* (“There is no common synagogue.” Synagogues and Houses of Prayer in Warsaw from the late 18th to the early 21st Century, 2007).

Vladimir Levin is the director of the Center for Jewish Art at Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He holds a Ph.D. from the Hebrew University and headed numerous research expeditions to document synagogues and other monuments of Jewish material culture in Eastern and Central Europe. Moreover, he led several research projects in the field of Jewish Art, the most important of which is the creation of the *Bezael Narkiss Index of Jewish Art* – the world’s largest digital depository of Jewish heritage. Among many other publications, he is the author of *From Revolution to War: Jewish Politics in Russia, 1907–1914* (in Hebrew, 2016) and co-author of *Synagogue in Ukraine: Volhynia* (2017, together with Sergey Kravtsov). He co-edited *Synagogues in Lithuania: A Catalogue* (2010–2012) and a special issue of the *Judaic-Slavic Journal* devoted to the Jewish history in Siberia (2021, with Victoria Gerasimova). Currently he works on a monograph about Jewish material culture in Siberia (with Anna Berezin) and on a book about synagogues in Podolia (with Sergey Kravtsov).

