

The Transformation of Sacred Spaces (Leipzig, 15–16 May 25)

Leipzig, Heilandskirche, Stadtteilzentrum "Westkreuz", May 15–16, 2025
Registration deadline: Apr 20, 2025

Stefanie Lieb, Köln

The Transformation of Sacred Spaces. Patterns and Paths across Europe.
5th Annual Conference of the DFG Research Group 2733 - TRANSARA.

Thinking about the adapted reuse of church buildings, some binary differentiations seem self-evident:

"Protestant churches are more easily used cooperatively because they are connected with a different understanding of sacrality than Catholic churches."

"Secularization is connected with a continuing loss of sacred spaces."

"In the cities, successful transformation is more likely because of a variety of stakeholders present."

However, the work of the last years in the research group illustrates a complication of confessional, religious, and urban-rural binaries that initiated our comparative endeavor with the selection of the two research areas in East and West Germany. Effects of minority-/majority-confession came into view as well as differences in building culture. Not only did the economic capital appear as a cross-sectional dimension, but also potential for tourism, engagement cultures, and guiding images of the church.

The conference aims to develop a more complex web of transformation paths and patterns and situate it in the European context. Emerging propositions from the inner-German ecumenical comparison will be discussed in relation to perspectives from academic research and experiences in church practice / religious heritage preservation in different parts of Europe.

Prof. Dr. Alexander Deeg, Dr. Kerstin Menzel, Elisabeth März
Subproject 2, Leipzig University
Prof. Dr. Albert Gerhards
TRANSARA Spokesperson, University of Bonn

The conference is supported by Wüstenrot Stiftung.

Conference Program

Thursday, 15th May 2025

12.00 - Get-together

13.00 - Welcome

13.15 - Patterns and Paths. Hypotheses from the work of the research group (30 min, 15 discussion)

14.00 - Panel I (3 lectures 25 min, 30 min discussion)

- Dr. Henrik Lindblad, Department of Art History, Uppsala Universiteit
- Prof. Dr. Johannes Stückelberger, Neuere Kunstgeschichte, Universität Basel / Institut für Praktische Theologie, Universität Bern
- Dr. Linda Monckton, Policy Development Department, Policy and Evidence Group, Historic England

16.00 - Coffee

16.30 - Panel II (3 lectures 25 min, 30 min discussion)

- Mgr. Barbora Spalova, Ph.D., Department of Sociology, Charles University Prague
- Prof. Sven Sterken, Ph.D., Faculty of Architecture, KU Leuven
- Marcus van der Meulen, Faculty of Architecture RWTH Aachen/ FRH Europe

18.30 - Dinner

19.30 - Roundtable I

- Martin Reichenbach, Kirkerådet / Nordic conference on extended and new use of church buildings, Oslo
- Lilian Grootswagers-Theuns, Advisory Board President FRH, Erfgoed.nu
- N.N.

Friday, 16th May 2025

9.00 - Resumée and questions

9.15 - Groups: Mapping the transformation

10.15 - Vectors of comparison I

- Secularization: Prof. Dr. Monika Wohlrab-Sahr, Institut für Kulturwissenschaften, Universität Leipzig
- Economic factors: N.N.
- Church and the wider society: Prof. Dr. Bernd Hillebrand, Katholisch-Theologische Fakultät, Universität Graz

12.00 - Lunch

13.00 - Vectors of comparison II

- Paradigms of architecture: Prof. Andrea Longhi, Politecnico di Turino
- Religious heritage: Dr. Eva Schäfer, ArchitekturGeschichten, Bern

14.30 - Coffee

14.45 - Roundtable II

15.30 - Closing discussion

16.00 - End

Continuously: Mapping the landscape of transformation

Registration and Date

Date and Place

Thursday, 15th May 2025 - Friday, 16th May 2025

Leipzig, Heilandskirche / Stadtteilzentrum "Westkreuz"

Registration & Fees

Please send registrations to prtheol@uni-leipzig.de by 20 April 2025

50,00 € (including Catering)

Students 25,00 € (including Catering)

Reference:

CONF: The Transformation of Sacred Spaces (Leipzig, 15-16 May 25). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 11, 2025

(accessed Jan 22, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/44782>>.