



Rheinland-Pfalz

GENERALDIREKTION  
KULTURELLES ERBE

Direktion Landesdenkmalpflege

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## CALL FOR PAPER

### Conference: Roles, Images, and the Social Position of Women in the Medieval Cities on the Rhine: Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Venue: Mainz, State Museum  
Organizer: General Directorate of Cultural Heritage  
of the State of the Rhineland-Palatinate (GDKE)  
Dates: 4 – 5 November, 2019  
Application deadline: 31 March, 2019

During the High Middle Ages, episcopal centres grew into vibrant urban communes. Craftspeople, Traders and Merchants developed new forms of social and political organization. Many towns and cities on the Rhine received liberties from emperors and kings or from their episcopal lords. The Jewish communities played an exceptional role in this process. In Speyer, Worms, and Mainz talmudic academies reached Europe-wide fame. Known as *ShUM* (*Shpira, Warmaisa, and Magenza*), the three communities wielded great authority in matters of religion, ritual, and Jewish law. They built synagogues and *miqwa'ot* that became models for such buildings in central Europe.

What roles, what images, and what social standing did the Jewish and Christian women attain in the emerging new forms of social and political organization in the Rhenish cities? Did their status vary according to their cultural and religious identity? How were their roles expressed, and who expressed them? These questions are the focus of an interdisciplinary conference. Its aim is to highlight the role and position of Jewish and Christian women in the medieval urban societies of the Rhineland in view of their social, cultural, and religious aspects and contexts. Particularities as well as intercultural exchange will be discussed, and needs for further research identified.

The conference builds a bridge between the current UNESCO World Heritage campaign “The ShUM Sites: Speyer, Worms and Mainz”, and the State Exhibition “From Charlemagne to Frederick Barbarossa: The Emperors and the Pillars of Power”, to be opened in the State Museum of Mainz in September 2020.

The organizers call for papers dealing with the following thematic fields:

- The roles of women in the towns and cities of the Rhineland
- Women in the emerging new forms of social and political organization
- Comparative studies on the roles and standings of women in the different cultural contexts
- Religious role-models and experiences of Jewish and Christian women
- The self-images of medieval Jewish and Christian women
- Daily life and economic activities
- Images and self-images of women in contemporary sources
- Expressions of women's roles and self-image in art, architecture, and literature
- Teaching gender in historical exhibitions

Please submit abstracts for papers, which should last no longer than 20 minutes. Papers are accepted in German and English. The organizers aim to cover the travel and accommodation expenses. A publication of the papers is previewed.

Please send your abstracts and a short CV by 31 March, 2019, via mail to [nadine.hoffmann@gdke.rlp.de](mailto:nadine.hoffmann@gdke.rlp.de)

We are looking forward to receiving your proposals.