

Jewish Space
HSAR 730b/JDST 716b/REL 955b/RLST 794b
T 1:30-3:20
Loria 258

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This seminar examines modern concepts of Jewish space, concentrating on how people have imagined, constructed or enacted space in Jewish life from the period from the nineteenth century until now. The course is structured around three themes: the characteristic blend of the secular and sacred; the relation between space and time; and between Jews and others. The types of spaces considered range from the secular to the ritual, memorial and spiritual. Thus ways in which spaces are constructed or conceived to include or exclude Jews are considered, as well as spaces where people mingle with one another in imagination or reality. The themes overlap, particularly in cases where concepts of time merge with concepts of space, as in spaces, such as the Eruv, that are activated only at certain times. Examples of spaces treated include synagogues (modern buildings and ancient objects of modern scholarship), Eruvim, prison (or concentration) camps, baseball fields, Jewish Museums, and Eretz Israel. Readings include theorists of space including Henri Lefebvre as well as writers associated (as primary or secondary sources) with the particular case studies. Students will make presentations and submit papers on topics of their choosing in consultation with the professor. A major aim of the seminar is a better understanding of the role of space in concepts of Jewish identity, as conceived by Jews and others. Qualified undergraduates are welcome.

Requirements:

Readings:

All readings are due on the day they are assigned. Come to class prepared to discuss them. Each student takes on one or more assignments based on the reading, as explained in class. These will take the form of discussion board entries. All students will be required to read these. Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place* and *James Sturm's America* have been ordered through Labyrinth Books and the Divinity School Bookstore. All other readings can be found on the course website under the Resources tab.

Reports:

Twenty-minute talks or other appropriate presentations based on topics of your choice, to be discussed with and approved by me, during the first month of the course.

Papers:

Graduate Students: 15-20 page papers based on the seminar report, but not necessarily identical to it.

Undergraduates: 10-15 page papers. If appropriate, a project in an alternative form may be accepted in lieu of a paper.

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Draft Calendar and Readings:

**In the interest of full disclosure, I have indicated those topics on which I have written by citing at least some of the bibliography in small type under the topic to which they pertain.

Jan. 11: Introduction to “Jewish Space”

Jan. 18: 1. Space and Jewish Space

Readings: Michel de Certeau, “Spatial Stories”; “Foucault, “Of Other Places”; Anna Lipphardt, Julia Brauch, Alexandra Nocke, “Exploring Jewish Space An Approach”; Charlotte Fonrobert, “The New Spatial Turn in Jewish Studies”;

Jan. 25: 2. Theory of Ritual Space - Rosenzweig

Reading: Rosenzweig, from *The Star of Redemption*

Feb. 1: 3. Theory of Ritual Space 2

Reading: Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual*

Feb. 8: 4. Structures Permanent and Temporary

Readings: Miriam Lipis, “A Hybrid Place of Belonging: Constructing and Siting the Sukkah.” *Sukkah City* (illustrations)

Feb. 15: 5. The Eruv

Reading: “Laws Concerning the Eruv,” from *The Code of Maimonides, Book Three: The Book of Seasons*. The Yale Eruv (illustrations)

Olin, “The Eruv from the Talmud to Contemporary Art.” In *The Cambridge World History of Religious Architecture*, Jewish section edited by Steven Fine. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. In progress.

Olin, ed. “The Eruv: A Symposium,” *Images: A Journal of Jewish Art and Visual Culture* 4 (2011), in progress

Feb. 22: 6. Mapping Jewish Space: Studying the Dura Europa Synagogue

Readings: from Clark Hopkins, *The Discovery of Dura Europos*; from M. Rostovtzeff, *Dura-Europos and its Art*; from Rachel Wischnitzer, *The Messianic Theme in the Paintings of the Dura Synagogue*; from Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert Kessler, *The Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue and Christian Art*.

Olin, “The Exile Scholars of Dura Europos.” In *Dura Europos: Crossroads of Antiquity*. Exhibition Catalog. Yale University Art Gallery, 2011, forthcoming.

March 1: preliminary discussion of seminar topics

March 8, 15: Spring Break

March 22: 7. Homogenizing Jewish Space: The baseball field:

Reading: James Sturm, *The Golem's Mighty Swing*, from *James Sturm's America*; Barnett Newman, Design for a synagogue (illustrations)

Olin, "Jewish Art and Our National Past Time," *Images* 3 (2010): 83-101.

March 29: 9. Memorial Spaces and Jewish Museums

Readings: James E. Young, "Germany's Holocaust Memorial Problem - - and Mine"; Margaret Olin, "The Stones of Memory" and "Overheard in the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe." Matti Bunzl, "Of Holograms and Storage Areas: Modernity and Postmodernity at Vienna's Jewish Museum."

Olin, "Lanzmann's *Shoah* and the Topography of the Holocaust Film." *Representations* 57 (1997): 1-23.

With Abigail Glogower, "Between Two Worlds: Ghost Stories under Glass in Vienna and Chicago." *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 26: Jewish Museums as Contemporary Interpreters/Narrators of the Past and Present (2011), forthcoming.

April 5: 10. Israel:

Readings: From *Object of Memory: Arab and Jew Narrate the Palestinian Village*; Rachel Kallus and Ziva Kolodney, "Politics of Urban Space in an Ethno-Nationally Contested City: Negotiating (Co) Existence in Wadi Nisnas."

April 12: Seminar reports

April 19: Seminar Reports

April 26: Seminar Reports

May 3: Seminar Reports: (at least) 3 hour session (may have to be rescheduled, depending on exam schedules)

May 10: Papers/Projects Due