

History 214-401
Jewish Studies 214
Urban Studies 220

Fall 2008
Thursday: 1:30 – 4:30

JEWS AND THE CITY

INSTRUCTOR: Beth S. Wenger
OFFICE HOURS: Thurs. 12:00-1:15
and by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Jews have always been an extraordinarily urban people. This seminar explores various aspects of the Jewish encounter with the city, examining the ways that Jewish culture has been shaped by and has helped to shape urban culture. We will focus on both ancient and modern societies as well as European and American cities, covering an expansive view of urban culture. We will consider Jewish involvement in political and cultural life, the various neighborhoods in which Jews have lived, relations with other ethnic groups, as well as many other topics. We will read some classic works in the field along with contemporary scholarship.

The course will be conducted as a seminar, requiring diligent preparation and active participation from all students. Students are expected to read and analyze all assignments before class and contribute to class discussions. Class preparation and participation are crucial elements of this course and will be considered as part of the final grade.

*This course fulfills the research requirement for the history major.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Leading Class discussion: Each week, one or two students will lead the class discussion, initiating a conversation about key issues raised in the assigned readings. A set of questions and issues to be raised should be posted to the class listserv no later than noon on Wednesday before the class meeting.

Response/Reflection paper: On the week that they open the class discussion, students will be required to submit a 3-5 page paper that analyzes and reflects upon some aspect of the reading.

Research Paper: All students will be asked to write a 16-22 page research paper on a topic related to the themes of the seminar. You are free to choose your own topic, but you should do so in consultation with me. We will discuss potential topics throughout the semester.

No Later than October 16: you should choose a research paper topic and confirm it with me. Your emphasis and direction may shift as you proceed with research, but you should identify a topic by this date.

On October 30: you should submit a detailed prospectus for your paper along with a preliminary bibliography.

On December 9: FINAL VERSION OF PAPERS DUE AT 12:00 PM!

GRADING:

Class Participation & leading class discussion	20%
Response/reflection paper	15%
Prospectus	15%
Final paper	50%

**** NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED--NO EXCEPTIONS!****

REQUIRED READINGS AVAILABLE AT PENN BOOK CENTER (130 S. 34th St.):

Steven Zipperstein, *The Jews of Odessa: A Cultural History, 1794-1881*

Abraham Cahan, *Yekl the Imported Bridegroom and Other Stories of Yiddish New York*

Hasia Diner, *Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America*

Louis Wirth, *The Ghetto*

Gerald Gamm, *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed*

Henry Goldschmidt, *Race And Religion Among the Chosen Peoples of Crown Heights*

Deborah Dash Moore, *To the Golden Cities: Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L.A.* (1994)

Barbara E. Mann, *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space.*

*** All books ordered for purchase are also on reserve at the library.**

*** A packet containing all other required reading is available for purchase at Wharton Reprographics located in the basement of Steinberg-Deitrich Hall.**

Sept. 4 Introduction

Spiro Kostof, "What is a City?," in *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings through History*, pp. 37-41.

Oscar Handlin, "The Modern City as a Field of Historical Study," in *The Historian and the City*, pp. 1-26.

Arcadius Kahan, "The Urbanization Process of the Jews in Nineteenth Century Europe," in *Essays in Jewish Social and Economic History*, pp. 70-81.

Sept. 11 On Ghettos, Cities, and Jews

David Ruderman, "The Cultural Significance of the Ghetto in Jewish History" in *From Ghetto to Emancipation*, pp. 1-16.

Benjamin C. I. Ravid, "From Geographical Realia to Historical Symbol: The Odyssey of the Word *Ghetto*," in *Essential Papers on Jewish Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. David Ruderman, pp. 373-85.

Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities*, ed. Richard Sennett, (New York, 1969), pp. 143-64.

Moses Rischin, "Toward the Onomastics of the Great New York Ghetto: How the Lower East Side Got Its Name," in *Remembering the Lower East Side*, eds. Hasia Diner, Jeffrey Shandler and Beth Wenger (Bloomington: 2000), pp. 13-27.

Sept. 18 The Shtetl: Myths and Realities

Samuel Kassow, "Introduction," in *the Shtetl: New Evaluations*, ed. Steven T. Katz (New York, 2007), pp. 1-28.

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Introduction," in *Life is With People: The Culture of the Shtetl*, Mark Zbrowski and Elizabeth Herzog (New York, 1995), pp. ix-xlvi.

David Roskies, "The Shtetl as Imagined Community," in *The Shtetl: Image and Reality*, ed. Gennady Estraikh and Mikhael Krutikov (Oxford, 2000), pp. 4-22.

John D. Klier, "What Exactly was a Shtetl?" in *The Shtetl: Image and Reality*, ed. Gennady Estraikh and Mikhael Krutikov (Oxford, 2000), pp. 23-35.

Glenn Dynner, "The Hasidic Conquest of Small Town Central Poland, 1754-1818," in *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 17 (2004): 51-81.

Sept. 25 Odessa and the Port Jews

Steven Zipperstein, *The Jews of Odessa*.

David Sorkin, "The Port Jew: Notes toward a Social Type" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 50:1 (Spring 1999).

Lois Dubin, "'Wings on their Feet and Wings on their Heads': Reflections on the Study of Port Jews" *Jewish Culture and History* 7: 1-2 (2004).

Oct. 2 Holy Space in the City: From Ancient to Modern

?Gil P. Klein, "The Topography of Symbol: Between Late Antique and Modern Jewish Understanding of Cities," *Zeitschrift fur Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 58:1 (2006), pp. 16-28.

Charlotte Fonrobert, "The Political Symbolism of the Eruv," *Jewish Social Studies* 11:3 (Spring/Summer 2005), pp. 9-35.

Seth Schwartz, "The Rabbis and Urban Culture," in *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (Princeton, 2001), pp. 162-76.

Jennifer Cousineau, "Rabbinic Urbanism in London: Rituals and the Material Culture of the Sabbath," *Jewish Social Studies* 11:3 (Spring/Summer 2005), pp. 36-57.

Egon Mayer, "The Perpetuation and Growth of Sectarian Pluralism: The Case of the Jewish Communities of Boro Park, Brooklyn," in *Jewish Settlement and Community in the Modern Western World*, ed. Ronald Dotterer, Deborah Dash Moore, and Steven M. Cohen, pp. 154-64.

Selected newspaper articles about eruv construction in American cities.

Oct. 9 NO CLASS: Yom Kippur

To be made up with tour of Jewish Philadelphia on Oct. 19

Maxwell Whiteman, "Out of the Sweatshop" and "The Fiddlers Rejected: Jewish Immigrant Expression in Philadelphia," in Murray Friedman (ed.), *Jewish Life in Philadelphia, 1830-1940*, pp. 64-98.

Rakhmiel Peltz, *From Immigrant to Ethnic Culture: American Yiddish in South Philadelphia*, pp. 14-25, 73-100.

Online Exhibition and Oral Histories of Jews in South Philadelphia:
<http://nmajh.org/exhibitions/stillhome/index.htm>

Oct. 16 Jewish life on the Lower East Side

Abraham Cahan, *Yekl and The Imported Bridegroom and Other Stories of Yiddish New York*, pp. 1-88.

Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York*, pp. 76-100.

Susan Glenn, *Daughters of the Shtetl: Jewish Immigrant Women in America's Garment Industry, 1880-1920*, pp. 167-242.

Paula Hyman, "Immigrant Women and Consumer Protest: The Kosher Meat Boycott of 1902," *American Jewish History* 70 (Sept. 1980): 91-105.

Film excerpts

Oct. 23 The Lower East Side in Memory

Beth S. Wenger, "Memory As Identity: The Invention of the Lower East Side," *American Jewish History* 85:1 (March 1997): 3-27.

Hasia Diner, Jeffrey Shandler and Beth Wenger eds., *Remembering the Lower East Side*, pp. 1-9.

Hasia Diner, *Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America*.

Oct. 30 Chicago

Louis Wirth, *The Ghetto*

Irving Cutler, *The Jews of Chicago: From Shtetl to Suburb*, pp. 54-114, 182-256.

Erich Rosenthal, "This was North Lawndale: The Transplantation of a Jewish Community," *Jewish Social Studies* 22:2 (1960), pp. 67-83.

Nov. 6 Jews, Catholics, and Urban Debate in Boston

Gerald Gamm, *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed*

Nov. 13 Crown Heights: Jews and African Americans

Henry Goldschmidt, *Race And Religion Among the Chosen Peoples of Crown Heights*

Nov. 20 Los Angeles: A New American City

Deborah Dash Moore, *To the Golden Cities: Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L.A.* (1994, selected sections.

George Sanchez, "Introduction: Los Angeles Studies and the Future of Urban Cultures," *American Quarterly* 56:3, (Sept. 2004), pp. 498-505.

George Sanchez, "'What's Good for Boyle Heights is Good for the Jews': Creating Multiracialism on the Eastside during the 1950s," *American Quarterly*, 56:3 (Sept. 2004), pp. 633-661.

Dec. 4 Tel Aviv

Barbara E. Mann, *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space.*

Ludwig Lewisohn, "Letter from Abroad: A City Unlike New York," *Menorah Journal* 9:2 (April 1925), pp. 167-172.

PAPERS DUE TUESDAY DECEMBER 9 AT 12:00 PM!

ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY: SELECTED STUDIES OF MODERN CITIES

Maoz Azaryahu, *Tel Aviv: Mythography of a City (Space, Place, and Society)* (2006).

Joëlle Bahloul, *The Architecture of Memory: A Jewish-Muslim household in colonial Algeria 1937-1962* (1992).

Murray Baumgarten, *City Scriptures: Modern Jewish Writing* (1982).

Selma Berrol, *East Side/East End: Eastern European Jews in London and New York, 1870-1920* (1994).

Emily D. Bilski, ed. *Berlin Metropolis: Jews and the New Culture 1890-1918* (2000).

Jonathan Boyarin, *Polish Jews in Paris: An Ethnography of Memory* (1991).

David Caesarani, ed. *Port Jews: Jewish Communities in Cosmopolitan Maritime Trading Centres, 1550-1950* (2002).

Lois Dubin, *The Port Jews of Hapsburg Trieste: Absolutist Politics and Enlightenment Culture* (1999).

- Arthur Goren, *New York Jews and Quest for Community: The Kehillah Experiment 1908-1922* (1979).
- Nancy Green, *The Pletzl of Paris: Jewish Immigrant Workers in the Belle Epoque* (1986).
- Jeffrey Gurock, *When Harlem Was Jewish, 1870-1930* (1979).
- Andrew R. Heinze, *Adapting to Abundance: Jewish Immigrants, Mass Consumption and the Search for American Identity* (1990).
- Jack Kugelmass, *The Miracle of Intervale Avenue: The Story of a Jewish Congregation in the South Bronx* (1986).
- Eli Lederhendler, *New York Jews and the Decline of Urban Ethnicity 1950-1970* (2001).
- Steven M. Lowenstein, *The Berlin Jewish Community: Enlightenment, Family and Crisis 1770-1830* (1994).
- Shulamit Magnus, *Jewish Emancipation in a German City: Cologne, 1798-1871* (1997).
- Egon Mayer, *From Suburb to Shtetl: The Jews of Boro Park* (1980).
- Deborah Dash Moore, *At Home in America: Second Generation New York Jews 1920-1940* (1981).
- Ewa Morawska, *Insecure Prosperity: Small Town Jews in Industrial America, 1890-1940* (1996).
- Ben Nathans, *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia*.
- Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews 1870-1914* (1962).
- Marsha Rozenblit, *The Jews of Vienna, 1867-1914: Assimilation and Identity* (1984).
- Scott Spector, *Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka's Fin de Siecle* (2002).
- David Weinberg, *A Community on Trial: The Jews of Paris in the 1930s* (1977).
- Beth Wenger, *New York Jews and the Great Depression: Uncertain Promise* (1996).
- Joshua M. Zeitz, *White Ethnic New York: Jews, Catholics, and the Shaping of Postwar Politics* (2007).

RECENT ISSUES OF JOURNALS DEVOTED TO JEWS & THE CITY

Jewish Studies Quarterly 12: 1 (2005).

Jewish Social Studies 11:3 (Spring/Summer 2005)

Prooftexts: Literary Mappings of the Jewish City 26:1-2 (Winter/Spring 2006)

Studies in Contemporary Jewry: People of the City: Jews and the Urban Challenge 15 (1999)