

Call for Papers

Constructions of Jewish Cultural Heritage in Fictional Texts on Architecture, City, and Space

Workshop at the Warburg-Haus, Heilwigstr. 116, 20249 Hamburg

Workshop period: June 26–27, 2024

Deadline: January 31, 2024

The interplay of built architecture and its literary representation in the medium of text is currently enjoying increased academic interest, as relevant publications, research groups and conferences illustrate. In the Jewish context, the descriptions of architecture, furnishings, and spaces created after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE can be seen as prominent reference points that illustrate this interaction of architecture and text. Nevertheless, beyond these early, religious references, other examples can be found in the various Jewish literatures of all periods that illustrate the relationships between built and imagined architecture as well as the importance of urban and spatial experience for literary texts, be it expressionist metropolitan poetry, literary flânerie of the 1920s, or architects as novel characters in contemporary literature. The perception and function of the relationship between text and (built) space thereby changes with the historical preconditions and opens up a complex and fascinating space for negotiation.

The workshop will focus on literary texts on architecture, space, and city from the period between the early modern period and the 1960s. The individual lectures should focus on the respective contribution of the texts to the process of negotiating Jewish cultural heritage. We ask about the understanding of the meaning of architecture, space, and city articulated in the texts, respectively about architecture as a reflection of a knowledge gained in texts. What sign systems, narratives, motifs, and symbols are used for this purpose? Which places, spaces, or landscapes are the focus of the text? How do Jewish identity constructions emerge in the literary negotiations?

Lectures may draw on a range of texts from all genres, including novels, short stories, literary reportage and city descriptions, as well as lyric and dramatic texts.

The Institute for the History of the German Jews, Hamburg, and the Bet Tfila – Research Unit for Jewish Architecture, Technische Universität Braunschweig, are organizing the workshop as part of the DFG-funded project “Constructions of Jewish Cultural Heritage in Theoretical-Critical and Literary Texts on Architecture and Space,” which the two project partners are conducting in the context of the DFG Priority Program 2357 “Jewish Cultural Heritage.”

The workshop will take place from June 26–27, 2024 at the Warburg Haus of the University of Hamburg. The organizers plan to publish the conference proceedings jointly with the project’s results.

With this call, we would also like to draw attention to the online anthology “Jewish Textual Architectures” (<https://jewish-textual-architectures.online>), which is currently being created in the context of the above-mentioned project. Presenters of the workshop are cordially invited to publish contributions in the online anthology as well.

Conference languages are German and English.

Contributions are welcome from all disciplines and from researchers of all stages of qualification. Proposals for papers should not exceed 2,300 characters (including blanks). Please send your abstract including a short CV in one PDF file by January 31, 2024 to:
Dr. Sonja Dickow-Rotter, sonja.dickow@igd-jh.de.

Travel allowances can be granted to a limited extent in accordance with the Hamburg Travel Expenses Act (HmbRKG). For speakers from the SPP Jewish Cultural Heritage, travel expenses should generally be covered from the projects’ own funds.