



## The Architecture of Election: Temple Architecture in Judaism and Western Thought

Yeshiva College, JST 2215 (311)

Fall 2020

Tues. 1:05-2:45

Prof. Joseph Angel

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### Course Overview

The temple of Jerusalem stood at the center of ancient Jewish society for a millennium. Even after the physical destructions in 586 BCE and 70 CE, the image of the temple continued to exert a powerful influence, reflecting fundamental religious and social trends within Judaism and beyond. This course explores the relation between temple architecture and the expression and development of religious values and social identity in Jewish and Western tradition. The course is less concerned with architectural realities than with exploring the meaning behind the varying representations of the temple by different authors, thinkers, and artists from biblical Israel to modernity. In analyzing portrayals of the temple from vastly different time periods and places, we will aim not only to deepen our appreciation of the cultural importance of temple architecture in Jewish and Western thought, but also to understand how the image of the temple, the supreme symbol of divine presence on earth, was deployed in order to capture, embody, and reflect deep-seated religious, political, and social values throughout the ages.



## Course Format

This course will be taught completely online. We will be making heavy use of our Canvas course website, where you will find materials (readings, assignments, links, etc.) related to each weekly meeting divided into modules keyed to this syllabus. In case Canvas and online learning are new to you, I've posted two helpful modules, "Get to Know Canvas" and "Getting Started with Online Learning," under the modules tab on Canvas. Since all of our meetings will be virtual, it will be especially important to maintain frequent and appropriate contact through the internet. Please note that if you have any course related questions or personal concerns you may email me directly. In lieu of regular office hours, please feel free to reach out to me to request a Zoom meeting. I'm available most nights after 8:30 pm.

*Netiquette:* When posting on the discussion boards and chat rooms, it is important to understand how to interact with one another online. You can read more about the rules of netiquette by visiting the "On netiquette" file under the "Getting Started with Online Learning" module on Canvas. I emphasize the importance of a few rules about Zoom here:

- It is required that you be in a room by yourself with the door closed.
- Raise your hand when you have a question. This can be done with the icon in Zoom or by actually raising your hand. This will be at your professor's discretion.
- Be on time, keep your video cameras on and stay in class.
- Contribute and make our live online classes rich and deep. We value what you think and what you have to say.
- Students should be sitting up, not lying down.
- Students should not be in bed.
- Students should be dressed, not pajamas.
- Please do not set goofy or distracting Zoom backgrounds.

## Course Structure

In addition to our normal lecture/discussion sessions, this course will feature (mostly in the second half of the term) a series of guest lectures by a group of fascinating and gifted scholars, who will treat the topic of temple architecture from an array of different perspectives and expertises. While I will certainly miss our face to face meetings, Zoom has made it possible to confirm the participation of visitors from places as far away as Bar Ilan University.

As for the structure of each individual meeting, you can expect that each of our 100 minute sessions will include a mixture of lecturing, discussion, group work, and active learning assignments. This is a new era for learning and I recognize that some adaptation may be necessary. Your feedback is very important to me. If you have ideas about what works and/or what doesn't, I urge you to share them with me. My belief is that we can't go wrong with open, honest, and frequent communication.

## Required Texts



There are none. Most of the readings for the course are easily accessible online. Oftentimes you will find pdfs of required reading directly under the module for a given lesson. At other times, it may be necessary to check e-reserve, which is accessible without a password on Canvas under the “Library Resources and E-Reserve” tab. Please note that you must register for off-campus access to library resources in order to use e-res or library resources from off-campus locations.

## Course Components and Grading Breakdown

1. *Attendance, participation, engagement* (20% of final grade). Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory. For most sessions, students will be assigned a number of primary and secondary readings, as indicated below. Since much of the discussion in class will focus on these readings it is crucial that they be done prior to each meeting. Students should come prepared to contribute to discussion. It is vital that your web cameras remain on while class is in session.
2. *Written Responses* (30% of final grade). Many of our meetings will require that you respond to a lecture, reading, or image in writing. You can expect multiple writing assignments of differing length and intensity over the course of the semester. While all will be graded on a scale of 100, they will be weighted according to their intensity and significance. All of this work will be made available via Canvas, where it is to be submitted as well.
3. *Oral presentation* (20% of final grade). On our last day of class (12/15), each student will give a 15 minute oral presentation on a topic related to our course. Your presentation may focus on any aspect of “temple architecture” from narrow (e.g., the meaning of a particular feature of the temple) to broad (e.g., depictions of the temple or aspects of the temple in Renaissance art). The choice of topic is yours and should reflect your own interests. If you are having difficulty locating a topic, I will be happy to assist you. In addition, we will be spending some class time in order to familiarize students with research resources and the location of appropriate readings for your project. More detailed instructions will be offered in coming weeks.
4. *Final exam/assignment* (30% of final grade). This will be an open-book exam/assignment asking you to synthesize and/or apply the knowledge gained from the course. I will clarify the details as we progress. The official exam date for this course is December 28, 1:00-3:15 pm.

## Course Policies and Student Support

*Academic Integrity:* This course is subject to Yeshiva University’s academic integrity policies, which may be accessed via [this link](#).

*Special Needs:* Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services, [akelsen@yu.edu](mailto:akelsen@yu.edu) during the first weeks of class. Once you have been approved for



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accommodations, please submit your accommodation letter and discuss any specifics with me to ensure the successful implementation of your accommodations.

*Student Support:* Academic support is available to you if you are having any difficulties that could include the following but are not limited to these: understanding assignments, navigating research papers, issues with time management of your schedule and your life or general college adjustment, please make an appointment with [daphne.herskowitz@yu.edu](mailto:daphne.herskowitz@yu.edu).

*Writing Help:* Free Help with Your Writing! The Wilf Campus Writing Center offers individualized tutoring that can support your writing for this course. All writers need feedback, even strong ones. Find out more and make an appointment at <https://yu.mywconline.net/>.

### Course Schedule (subject to change)

#### Week 1 (9/1)                    Introducing the Temple(s)

- C. Meyers, “Temple, Jerusalem,” in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Sections A, B, C, D2, D3. (The rest is optional.)
- Virtual tour (link on Canvas)

#### Week 2 (9/8)                    *Kedushat Makom: Approaching Sacred Spaces*

- N. Helfgot, “K’dushat Makom: On Sacred Space,” in *Sanctification—Kedushah* (ed. B. Blech and D. Birnbaum; 2015), pp. 223-42
- J. Branham, “Penetrating the Sacred: Breaches and Barriers in the Jerusalem Temple” in *Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West* (ed. S. E. J. Gerstel, 2006), pp. 6-24
- Optional: M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (Harcourt Brace, 1987), pp. 20-65

#### Week 3 (9/15)                    The Mishkan and the Sinai Revelation

- Exodus 25-31
- J. Berman, “Sinai and Sanctuary,” in *The Temple: Its Symbolism and Meaning Then and Now* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1995), pp. 35-56
- C. Meyers, “The Biblical Tabernacle: From Sinai to Jerusalem” in *Jewish Religious Architecture: From Biblical Israel to Modern Judaism* (ed. S. Fine; Brill, 2020), pp. 7-23, focus on pp. 10-18

#### Week 4 (9/22)                    Solomon’s Temple: A House for God’s Name



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- 1 Kings 6-8
- Berman, “Political Prominence: The Prerequisite to Solomon’s Temple,” in *The Temple*, pp. 57-81.
- V. A. Hurowitz, “The Temple of Jerusalem in Biblical Israel,” in *Jewish Religious Architecture*, pp. 23-50.

**Week 5 (10/13)      The Second Temple: Shifting Barriers in Jewish Thought & Practice**

- J. Angel, “The Second Temple of Jerusalem: Center of the Jewish Universe,” in *Jewish Religious Architecture*, pp. 51-71.
- S. Fine and P. Schertz, “Herod’s Temple: An Ornament to the Empire,” in *Jewish Religious Architecture*, pp. 72-95.

**Week 6 (10/20)      Guest Speaker: Rabbi Dr. Meir Soloveitchik**

- Readings TBA

**Week 7 (10/27)      Replacing the Temple in the Dead Sea Scrolls: From Temple Scroll to “Temple of Men”**

- Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), pp.119–22 (“The People of Qumran and Their Predecessors”), and pp. 154–59 (“The Temple Scroll”).
- L. Schiffman, “Architecture and Law: The Temple and Its Courtyards in the Temple Scroll,” in *The Courtyards of the House of the Lord: Studies on the Temple Scroll* (ed. F. García Martínez; STDJ 75; Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 215–32.
- G. Brooke, “The Ten Temples in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel* (ed. J. Day; London: T & T Clark, 2005), pp. 417–34.

**Week 8 (11/3)      Guest Speaker: Professor Eyal Regev**

- E. Regev, *The Temple in Early Christianity: Experiencing the Sacred* (Yale, 2019), preface (ix-xi) and introduction (pp. 1-17).
- Additional reading TBA

**Week 9 (11/10)      The Temple Plan of Mishnah Middot**

- Mishnah Middot
- L. Schiffman, “The Mishnaic Description of the Hasmonean Temple Plan” (pre-print draft).



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- N. Cohn, *The Memory of the Temple and the Making of the Rabbis* (Philadelphia: UPenn, 2013), pp. 73-89.

**Week 10 (11/17) Guest Speaker: Professor David Gelernter**

- Readings TBA

**Week 11 (11/24) Guest Speaker: Professor Marnin Young**

- Readings TBA

**Week 12 (12/1) Guest Speaker: Professor Marc Epstein**

- Readings TBA

**Week 13 (12/8) Guest Speaker: Elizabeth Eisenberg**

- Readings TBA

**Week 14 (12/15) The Temple Today; Student Presentations**