Curating and Publishing Digital Archives: The Case of “Mapping Jewish Los Angeles”

Todd Samuel Presner
Ross Professor of Germanic Languages and Jewish Studies
Chair, Digital Humanities Program
Associate Dean of Digital Innovation, Division of Humanities
Advisor, Office of the Vice Chancellor of Research and Creative Activities
University of California Los Angeles
The Origins of “Mapping Jewish LA”

- Thick Mapping
- Digital Humanities
- Experimental Pedagogies

http://mappingjewishla.org
Todd Presner
David Shepard
Yoh Kawano

HyperCities
Thick Mapping in the Digital Humanities

http://hypercities.com
(2006-2015)
The Humanities in the Digital Humanities

"The street conducts the flâneur, not causal time. For him, every street is peculiar, leads downward... into a past that can be viewed more spellbinding because it is not linear."

— Walter Benjamin, The Arcades Project, 1927-38

The figure of the flâneur—the so-called "man of the crowd"—was made popular in the mid-nineteenth century by the likes of Edgar Allan Poe and Charles Baudelaire in short stories and poetry that portrayed the modernity of

...tion remains, sitting idly beside a busy street and soccer park, which exists on the empty ground where the station once stood. (Fig. 2) The past was recognizable, but only just barely.

Time (the simultaneity of the non-simultaneous) / Space (the contiguity of the non-contiguous)

...Great cities like Berlin are almost inconceivably complex and multilayered. Over its nearly eight centuries, Berlin emerged from a backwater mercantile town built on sand to become the capital of a unified Germany under Bismarck and the site of Hitler's dream for a world-dominant Germania. It was devastated by the Thirty Years War, occupied by Napoleon in 1805, rebuilt numerous times throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,
"The onlookers go rigid when the train goes past." — Franz Kafka, 1910. This collection of cultural history of the Anhalter train station in Berlin, arguably the most famous train station in Central Europe during the 19th and early 20th centuries. It is a complex site for and testament to German/Jewish interaction in modern Germany.

Anhalter model
1881-08-26 - 1945-05-01
Creator: Todd

View of Anhalter Train Station, looking north. Train station designed by Franz Schwechten.

As the terminus of the first major, long-distance railway line to open in a German state, the Anhalter Bahnhof has always had more than just an incidental connection to the city of Berlin and its liminal geography as a point of entry to eastern, western, and southern Europe. From the moment it opened in 1840 until its destruction more than a hundred years later, the station served as a testament to the dizzying arrival and violent departure of German/Jewish
"The onlookers go rigid when the train goes past." -- Franz Kaša, 1910. This collection is a cultural history of the Anhalter train station in Berlin, arguably the most famous train station in Central Europe during the 19th and early 20th centuries. It is a complex site for and testament to German-Jewish interaction in modern Germany.

View of Anhalter Train Station, looking north. Train station designed by Franz Schwechten.
Anhalter Train Station

1833-01-01 - 2010-10-18
Creator: Todd Prestler

"The onlookers go rigid when the train goes past." - Franz Kafka, 1910. This collection is a cultural history of the Anhalter train station in Berlin, arguably the most famous train station in Central Europe during the 19th and early 20th centuries. It is a complex site for and testament to German/Jewish interaction in modern Germany.

Kindertransport and Deportations from Anhalter train station
1936-10-10 - 1945-04-17
Author: Todd

Kindertransport on Sept. 2, 1936, from Anhalter Bf. Overlay on 1936 "Berlin Olympic" map.

In the 1930s, the Anhalter Bahnhof became known as an "Abschiedbahnhof" (farewell station) with a "platform of tears" because 3,262 Jewish children were sent out of Germany by their parents from this station. On the Kindertransport of September 2, 1936, German-Jewish children from Berlin were sent to the French port city of Marseille, before traveling further by ship to Palestine. Norbert Wollheim tells about his work seeing the transports off.

We had approximately twenty transports which left Berlin. It was my duty to see them all off. On the day the transports left, we assembled the people at the railway station. I had to rent a special room where everyone could gather. Then came the parents, and the brothers and sisters, and the kids with their knapsacks. There was laughing, there were tears. The children went with the hope that the parents will follow, or that one day they could come back and they would see them again. I did not realize, and I could never realize, that only a year-and-a-half later, from the same railway station, trains would go in the other direction to Hitler's slaughterhouses.
Hi Fi Youth

1990-01-01 - 2012-12-31
Creator : PDUB Productions

Historic Filipinotown is home to several K-12 schools, youth centers, and many young residents. The youth in this section offer their own perspectives on what it's like to live, hang out, and go to school in Hi Fi.

Author : PDUB Productions

Aldryn talks about what's special about his Historic Filipinotown apartment.
Historic Filipinotown is home to several K-12 schools, youth centers, and many young residents. The youth in this section offer their own perspectives on what it's like to live, hang out, and go to school in Hi Fi.

Permanent Vacation - Diane Pascual
2000-11-19 - 2012-12-31
Author: PDUB Productions

Sharline Diane Pascual left the Philippines to visit her grandmother, who lives in Los Angeles’ Historic Filipinotown. From there the story takes a surprising turn. Diane’s story of immigration and adjustment to life in Historic Filipinotown is mixed with the story of her mother’s own adjustment to life in L.A. A former restauranteur and accountant, her mother ends up working as a caregiver.
# AREA DESCRIPTION

Security Map of LOS ANGELES COUNTY

## 1. POPULATION:

- **Increasing**
- **Slowly**
- **Decreasing**
- **Static**

- Class and Occupation: Jewish professional & business men, Mexican laborers, WPA workers, etc. Income $700 to $2000 and up
- Foreign Families: 50% Nationalities: Russian, Polish & Armenian Jews, d. Negro: 1%
- Slavs, Greeks, American Mexicans, Japanese and Italians
- Shifting or Infiltration: Subversive racial elements increasing.

## 2. BUILDINGS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PREDOMINATING</th>
<th>OTHER TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Type and Size</td>
<td>4, 5 &amp; 6 rooms</td>
<td>2, 3 and 4 room shacks 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Construction</td>
<td>Frame and stucco</td>
<td>Apts. &amp; other multi-family 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Average Age</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Old 7 rooms and up 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Repair</td>
<td>Poor to fair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Occupancy</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Owner-occupied</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. 1935 Price Bracket</td>
<td>$2000-3250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. 1937 Price Bracket</td>
<td>$2250-3500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. 1939 Price Bracket</td>
<td>$2500-3750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Sales Demand</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Predicted Price Trend</td>
<td>Static</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. 1935 Rent Bracket</td>
<td>$22.50-35.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First mass lynching in Los Angeles history: 18-20 Chinese men killed on October 24, 1871

Students used historical basemaps, census data, datasets from police records, newspaper articles, photographs, oral histories, and secondary criticism to compose a “thick map.”
Participatory Mapping
Towards a collaborative, thick map
MAPPING JEWISH LA
From Digital to Physical Mapping

http://mappingjewishla.org
“Thin mapping” of Jewish community organizations (educational, religious, political, philanthropic, service) as of 2014.

Courtesy: Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey
Map: Jewish Concentration by Neighborhood, 1951

From “In Search of Fairfax,” by Max Baumgarten (http://mappingjewishla.org)
In Search of Fairfax
Curated by: Max D. Baumgarten

In Search of Fairfax” explores the history of Beverly-Fairfax, a mid-city neighborhood that the Los Angeles Times has described as “the symbolic focus of Jewish life in Los Angeles,” “the city’s cultural ‘Little Israel,’” “the most Jewish stretch of pavement in Los Angeles,” and the “emotional center of Jewish life in Los Angeles.” While consistently boasting the highest concentration of Jewish residents throughout Los Angeles and a
plethora of schools, religious institutions, social clubs, and storefronts that chiefly catered to Jews throughout the latter half of the 20th century, the neighborhood attracted an array of Jewish and non-Jewish micro-communities and subcultures.

Es Geht Wohl Anders (Things Turn Out Differently) The Unexpected Life of Walter Arlen
Curated by: Michael Hass, Bill Katin, and Dr. Mary Pinkerson

Between 1933 and 1941, some 10,000-15,000 exiles and émigrés, fleeing the destruction and persecution of Hitler and the Nazis, sought refuge in Los Angeles. Some seventy percent of these newcomers were Jewish, including internationally renowned artists, intellectuals, musicians and composers who came to the city seeking jobs in the studios of Hollywood. Their performances in Los Angeles brought to the local arts scene, enlivening institutions like the Hollywood Bowl and the UCLA Center for the Performing Arts. Es Geht Wohl Anders (Things Turn Out Differently): The Unexpected Life of Walter Arlen, explores the work of an émigré critic, composer and educator who was part of this cultural revitalization.
Farmers Market

The land surrounding what is now the corner of 3rd Street and Fairfax Avenue had been in the hands of the Gilmore family since the 19th Century, first as a dairy farm and then as a profitable oil field. The Great Depression, however, was not kind on the Gilmore family. Looking for new sources of income, Earl Gilmore was approached by two local entrepreneurs, Roger Dalhjelm and Fred Beck, with the concept of allowing nearby farmers to sell their produce to local residents on his land for 50 cents a day.

Gilmore agreed. Under Dalhjelm and Beck's management, Farmers Market opened in July of 1934 with 18 vendors who sold produce out of their trucks. The market, as local historians David Hamlin and Brett Arena noted, was “an utterly unique blend of rustic and urban.” That is, while the farmers were part of Los Angeles’ older generation, the market was a place for the city’s residents to gather and purchase fresh produce.
Hugo Ballin was a painter, set designer, filmmaker, and muralist, who worked and lived in Los Angeles from 1920 through his death in 1956, where he painted dozens of murals in both public and private spaces. "Hugo Ballin's Los Angeles" highlights some of the artist's most vivid murals to draw connections, both visually and spatially, between the current landscape of Los Angeles, the city's rich artistic and architectural history, and Ballin's vision of art as a site of beauty and a means of cultural improvement. Follow the links above to
Building the Metropolis

Between 1920 and 1955, the Herbert M. Baruch Corporation was one of the largest developers in Southern California, building over 500 projects with the majority in Los Angeles. From the Hollywood Bowl to the Wilshire Boulevard Temple, from downtown office buildings and movie theaters to public schools and emergency wartime housing, the Baruch Corporation changed the urban landscape during the period when Los Angeles was the fastest growing city in the United States. While some of the company's work has disappeared, much is still around and many projects have become landmarks, recognizable around the world. Exhibited here are a sample of materials from the UCLA Special Collections.

Source: Historic photographs and documents from Herbert M. Baruch Corporation Records (Collection 1512). Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

Special Notice: If you have any more information about an item from UCLA Special Collections you’ve seen on this website or if you are the copyright owner and believe the website has not properly attributed your work to you or has used it without permission, UCLA Library wants to hear from you. Please email collections@library.ucla.edu with your contact information and a link to the relevant content.
1921

**LOS ANGELES, 1921**

After their marriage, Khayim (now Henry) and Malke (Mollie) set out on a tour of the United States and Canada, eventually reaching Los Angeles. There, they found a blossoming Yiddish-speaking community of writers, activists and intellectuals, not to mention a climate far more hospitable than Detroit’s, and decided to stay. They moved to an apartment on Cincinnati Street in the heart of Boyle Heights.

Henry Rosenblatt (Khayim Royzenblit)

1930 – 1939

**DI YIDISHE GAS, LA 1930s**

Rosenblatt’s wife Malke gave birth to their first and only child Rena in 1925 and the family purchased their first home on Eastman Avenue in the hills of City Terrace just east of Boyle Heights. He worked as an insurance agent in the neighborhood to support the family, and continued to write. He became a founding member of the Los Angeles Yiddish Culture Club, a new literary circle which like *Di yunge* devoted itself to “art for art’s sake,” and in 1930, the Club helped to publish his fifth volume *Harudes* (Lumps), a book-length poem about his childhood and flight from Europe. In 1935, he followed it with *Leym, fortzetsung fun di yunge*. *Di yidishe gas* completed the trilogy.
Rosa Nevodovskaya: Eybiker yam (Eternal Sea)

Eybiker yam — Eternal Sea
From Azoy vi ikh bin (As I Am) (Los Angeles: 1936): 47.
Translated by Miri Koral.

Sea, sea, eternal sea! I’ve come to speak with you today -
To grasp your endless striving, your wordless ceaseless talk...
Crammed in town, I'm here to part ways with the city's restraints,
And beside you, sea, I seek truth, beside you today I seek accord.

My eyes calm in the vast expanse. Your ceaselessly striving is nearby —
Wide as your waves, sea, is my little human heart.
Our cities, like you, oh, sea, brim with people and life—
Multicolored are our lives …and at times night-black.

What will you, my sea, what will you impart today?
Are you truly freed? Or are you stifled by your endless coast?
Waves and foam and noise—in infinite, tumultuous haste—
Between continents in continual back and forth.

Listen, listen, sea, to my human-tongue!
And let your vast waters rock my anguish and my ache.
My sadness that near you is stilled and quenched like sun,
Hangs over me again in town — as din, as echo, as scream.

Sea, eternal sea! I've come to speak with you today —
To grasp your endless striving, your foamy, ceaseless talk.
I stand beside you, sea, unable to take my leave;
Your endless unrest, like mine, seeks and is unable to find accord.
This digital anthology project aims to map the Yiddish literary landscape of Los Angeles that these local writers created. Each author is presented as a “path” linking biographies and scholarly analysis to selected works ... Using metadata tags and other digital tools, the anthology also identifies the shared themes, topics and motifs they used in their work, exploring what the defining characteristics of the L.A. style of Yiddish writing might be. And using digital visualizations, it examines the social networks and relationships that the writers formed, in Los Angeles and beyond, to consider the literary and artistic influences on their work.
1890 and 1920 Boyle Heights

1930 Boyle Heights: 10,000 Jewish households

1912

Congregation Talmud Torah moves their synagogue and school from Rose Street downtown to Breed Street. Construction on a new synagogue building begins in 1914.

1913

The “National-Radical Club” (a socialist-Zionist cultural club) opens a Yiddish folkshul (“people’s school”) on Soto Street, with classes and programs for children and adults.

1923

Rabbi Solomon Neches dedicates Congregation Talmud Torah’s new synagogue, known as the Breed Street Shul. A dozen more Orthodox and Conservative synagogues open in the area in the 1920s and 1930s, the largest on Cincinnati Street and Fairmount Street.
The Canter brothers open their delicatessen on Brooklyn Avenue, where it remained until the 1950s when it moved to Fairfax Avenue.

1931

1941

The IWO erects a Victory House on the corner of Brooklyn and Soto, selling victory bonds to support the war effort.

1939 and 1967
Boyle Heights
Baist real estate survey map of Boyle Heights (1921)

Student project: How to augment this map by creating virtual pathways through the neighborhood? (AR-app)