16 Diaspora/Galut: At Home Abroad in Jewish Tradition

With David C. Kraemer, PhD

Or Zarua Perspectives (formally JTS Context)

Six Tuesdays beginning March 26, 6:30 pm

Our next class is a six-session course presented by Dr. David C. Kraemer, Joseph J. and Dora Abbell Librarian and Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics. Jewish historiography in recent years has often emphasized the centrality of the hope to return to Zion as a linchpin in Jewish ideology and history. But Jews have, for most of our existence, lived in diaspora, and—as one would expect—we have developed robust ideologies of diaspora, ones that have seen our abodes “away from home” as genuine homes, and even as “Zions.” In this class, we will examine examples of such expressions, from the teaching of the “prophet of the exile,” (Ezekiel), to the arguments of the Babylonian rabbis in the Babylonian Talmud, to the teachings of Hasidic masters, whose “Holy of Holies” was in Galicia, not in Jerusalem. Of course, these often-positive expressions are a product of the fact that Jewish experience in “exile” was not always suffering, but often peaceful and productive as well. Consideration of these realities will help us to re-balance our understanding of Jewish religious and political history. The course meets in the OZ library and begins on March 26; tuition is $350. This reading-intensive seminar is designed for graduates of the Me’ah or Context two-year program or for those with similar Jewish learning backgrounds. Registration will be done through the OZ office; details will be available soon.