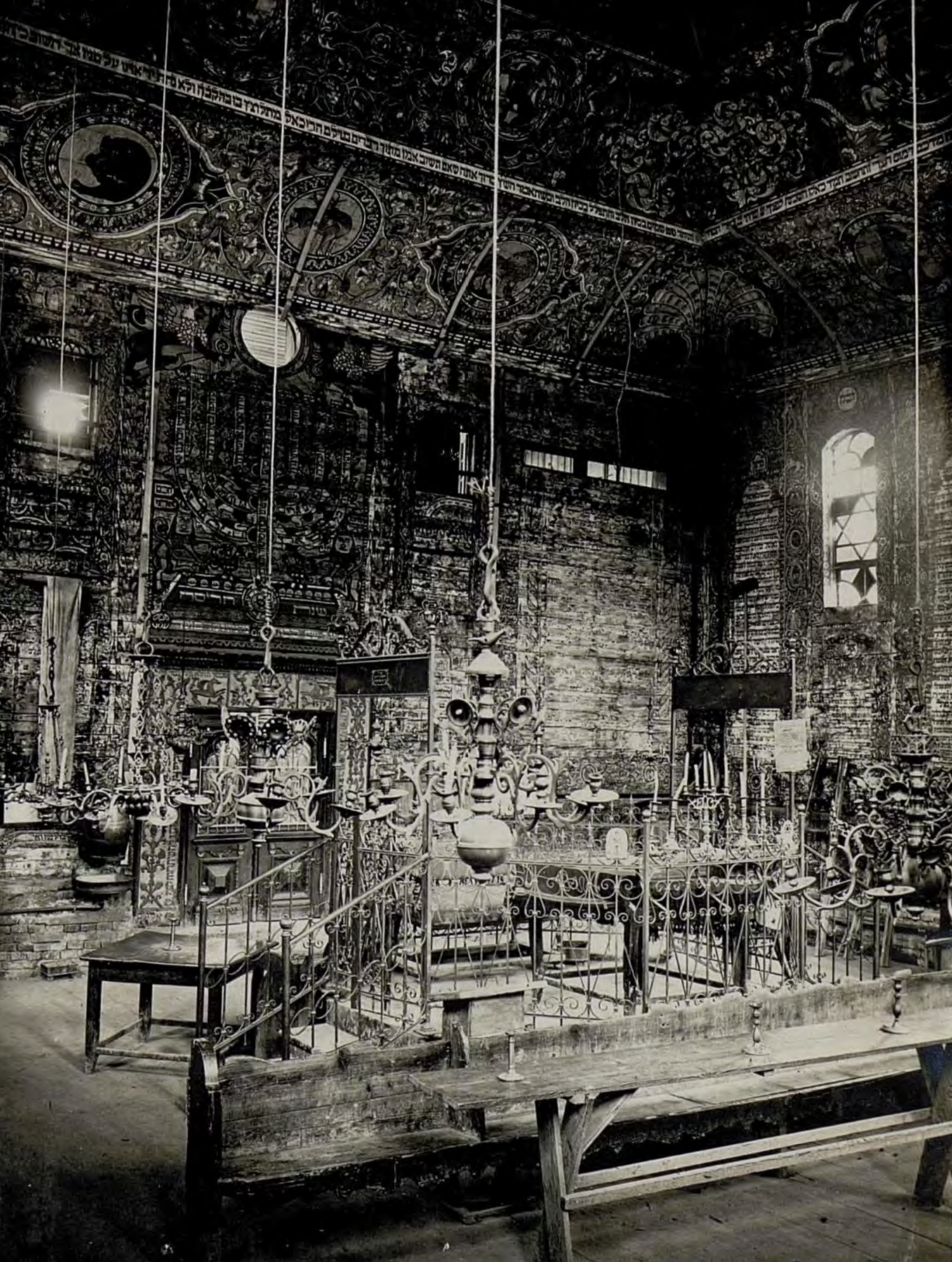


SHUL

Studio Sergison
Accademia di architettura
Università della Svizzera italiana

Autumn Semester 2021

Shul



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Synagogue interior, Chodorow, Ukraine, 1642-1941

Introduction



Working in pairs, students will design a public building to serve a religious purpose on a site in Zurich. At the beginning of the semester, a survey of exemplary buildings will be undertaken in order to develop an understanding of the synagogue as a building type. The case studies selected for the exercise are drawn from buildings in northern Italy and Switzerland.

A study trip to Zurich is planned to visit the proposed project sites and develop an understanding of the needs of the Liberal Jewish Community the project is intended to serve. A number of lectures and presentations will be organized during the semester to support and inform students following the course.

Particular emphasis will be placed on the study of the building's atmosphere in terms of its contribution to the architectural ambitions of the project. This will require the building of large, accurate models, as well three-dimensional drawings.

Painted ceiling detail of the wooden Synagogue,
Horb am Main, Germany

Over the course of the year the studio will work on public buildings. In the Autumn semester 2021 we will focus on *Shul* – the Yiddish word for synagogue derived from the German for school, *Schule* – as a building type.

The building is intended to serve the needs of the Liberal Jewish Community as a home for collective use, a place for ritual practice and religious study. Students are invited to propose projects for one of a number of sites in Zurich.

At the beginning of the semester, working in pairs, students will survey several synagogues in northern Italy and Switzerland (24-26/09/21). A study trip to Zurich (07-09/09/21) is planned to visit the proposed project sites and develop an understanding of the needs of the community the project is intended to serve.

Throughout the semester we will explore architectural solutions that respond to the requirements of the building programme, and particular emphasis will be placed on the study of the building's atmosphere and its contribution to the architectural ambitions of the project. Proposals will be tested by producing large scale models, as well three-dimensional drawings.

Students are asked to work in pairs to develop clear, inventive solutions that accommodate the rituals and functions a synagogue is expected to provide. During the course of the semester a series of lectures will be offered to assist students in their work.

Fasanenstrasse Synagogue, Berlin, Germany
Painting by E. Hesser, 1909

p 8-9 Wooden synagogue, Chodorow, Ukraine





Sites

Project sites

1 Zweierstrasse 61, 8004 Zurich, plot AU6173, 892m²

2 Weststrasse 92, 8003 Zurich, plot WD3115, 611m²

3 Weststrasse 18, 8003 Zurich, plot WD8445, 395m²

4 Parking Kollerwiese, 8003 Zurich, plot WD8336, 1130m²





1

1
Zweierstrasse 61, 8004 Zurich
2
Weststrasse 92, 8003 Zurich



2



3



3
Weststrasse 18, 8003 Zurich



4
Parking Kollerwiese, 8003 Zurich

4

We believe that invention is a necessary ambition in architecture, but it rarely emerges by spontaneous intuition. An architect can only hope to make a truly unique proposal after many years of study and reflection. Indeed, it is debatable whether true originality is achievable. To help you understand the task you are attending to this semester, we would like you to undertake a survey in groups of three of one of the synagogues we have selected in Switzerland and the north of Italy. We believe that surveying an existing building helps develop a deeper understanding of its qualities, a useful corrective to the belief that it is possible to come up with entirely original solutions.

The information recorded in your survey will be drawn upon and referred to throughout the semester and will inform your subsequent work. You should draw the plan and sectional organisation of the building and will be expected to describe it clearly and analytically, employing diagrams where necessary. You should concentrate on understanding the quality and arrangement of the façade, plan and section by drawing a measured survey of the building. This will require you to look very carefully at it, making sketches and taking photographs as a way of recording their condition. We also ask you to make a precise photographic portrait that conveys the atmosphere of the building, the qualities of the main interior space and its relation to the city. You might also photograph an internal space and portray its relationship with the city outside. A seminar will be given to help with this exercise.

Piazza in Campora
Beatrice Zago and Francesco Tudino





1 2



3

- 1 Tempio Maggiore, Florence
- 2 Tempio Israelitico, Turin
- 3 Synagogue interior, Casale Monferrato



4 5



6 7

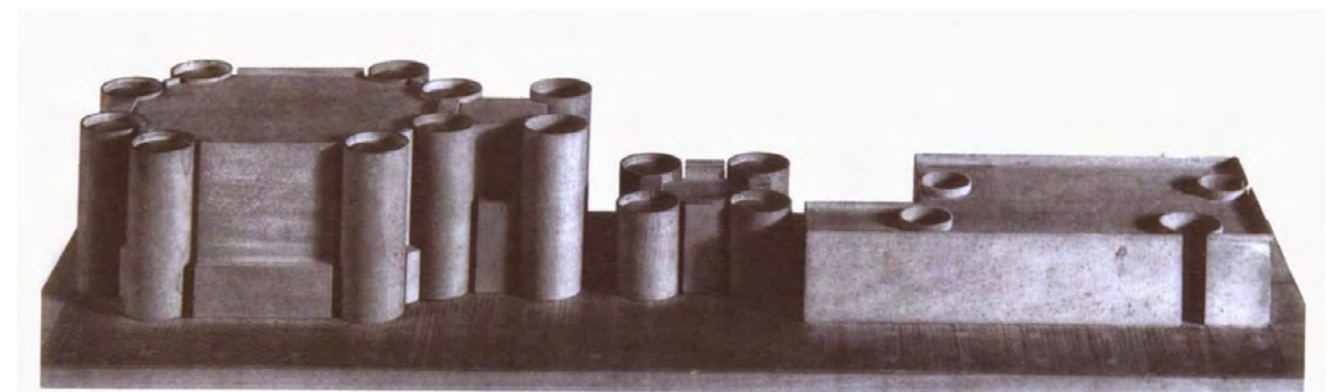
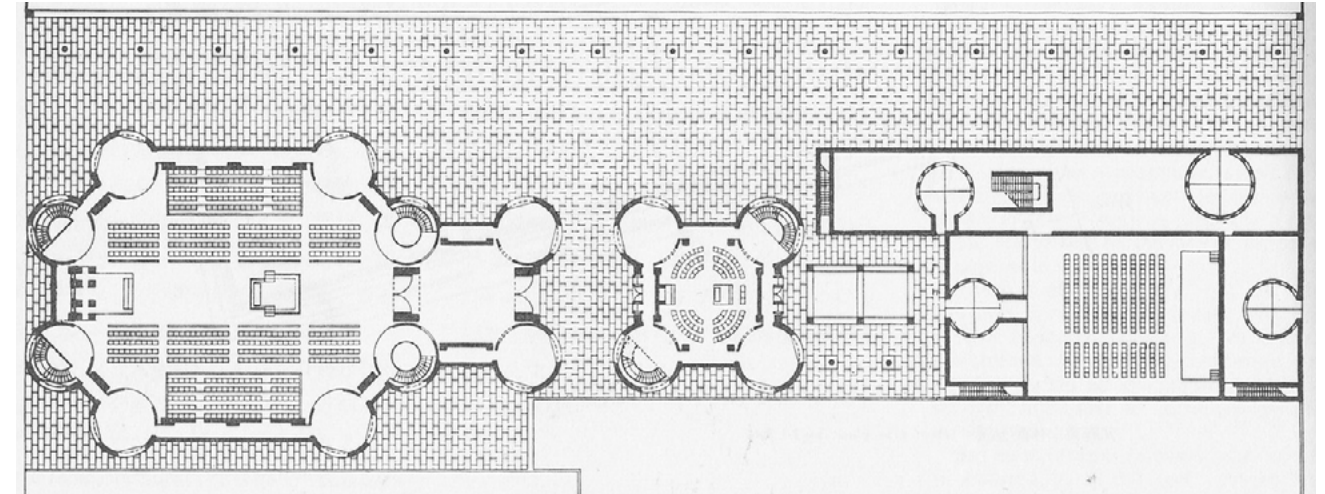
- 4 Synagogue, Endingen
- 5 Synagogue, Lengnau
- 6 Synagogue, Lausanne
- 7 Beth-Yaacov Synagogue, Geneva

Second exercise: building concept

Students are required to produce a 1:200 model of the site they are working on and the wider surrounding area as a group project. This requires both accuracy and careful coordination. Particular care should be taken in the representation of trees.

The model produced should then be used as a tool to help develop a concept for your own project. Consideration should be given to the scale of the building, the way it accommodates the programme and the relationship it establishes with neighbouring buildings and the surrounding landscape.

While priority should be given to an extensive exploration of different massing possibilities, you will be expected to produce drawings in the form of sketches, plans sections and elevations. A lecture will be given at this stage in the semester to broaden your understanding of the themes and issues we are inviting you to consider.



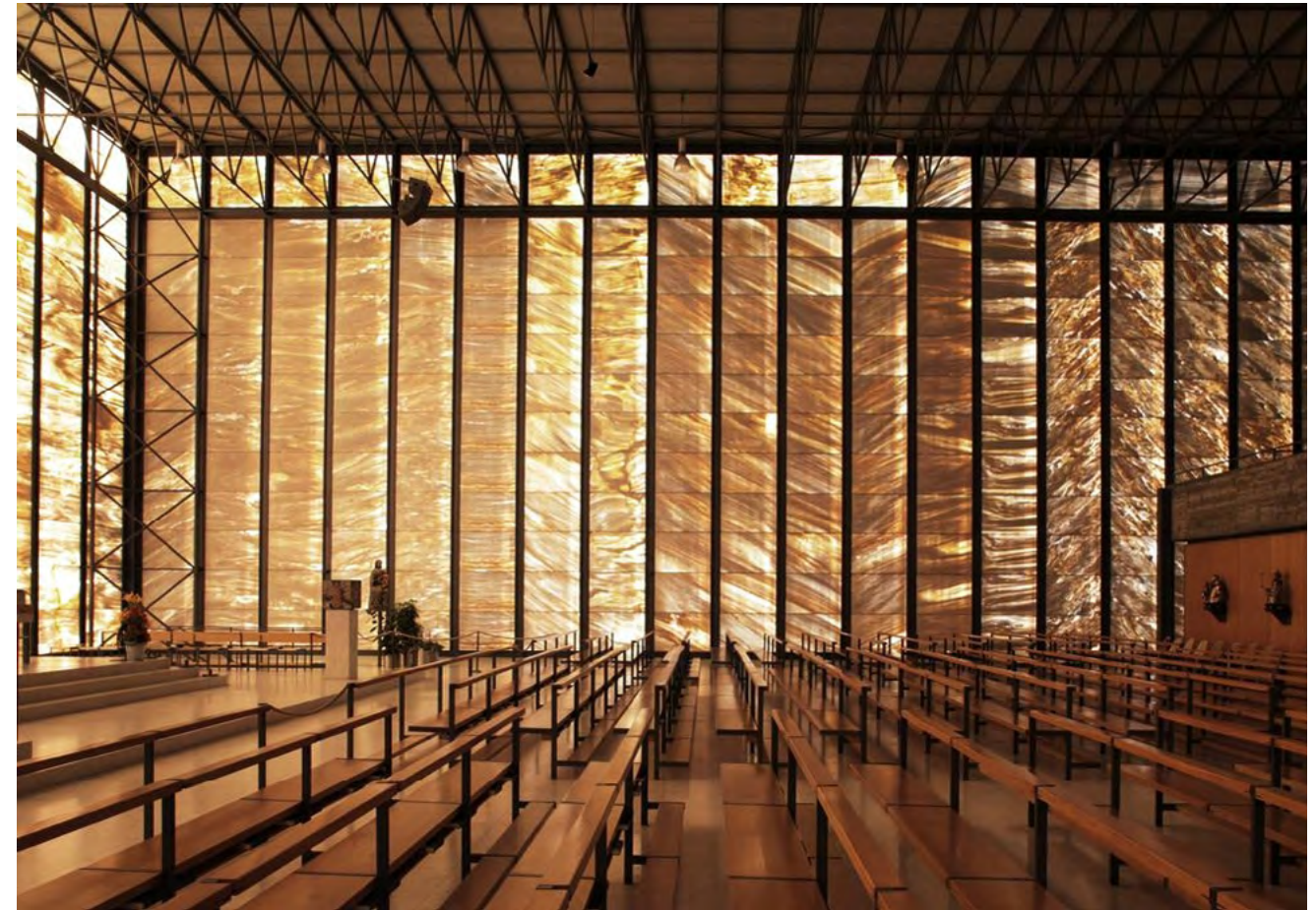
Mikveh Israel Synagogue, Philadelphia, USA
Louis I. Kahn, 1963

Third exercise: room study

With the knowledge you should now have developed of your project, you will be asked to build a model of a room at 1:10 that accurately holds the atmosphere you want it to convey.

Representing a room may require you to indicate its relationship with neighbouring rooms, or the view out to the city. You are expected to make a number of models to explore ideas for this single space. The final version should then be photographed carefully.

This is a key aspect of the work you will produce this semester. An introductory lecture will be offered on this aspect of your work.



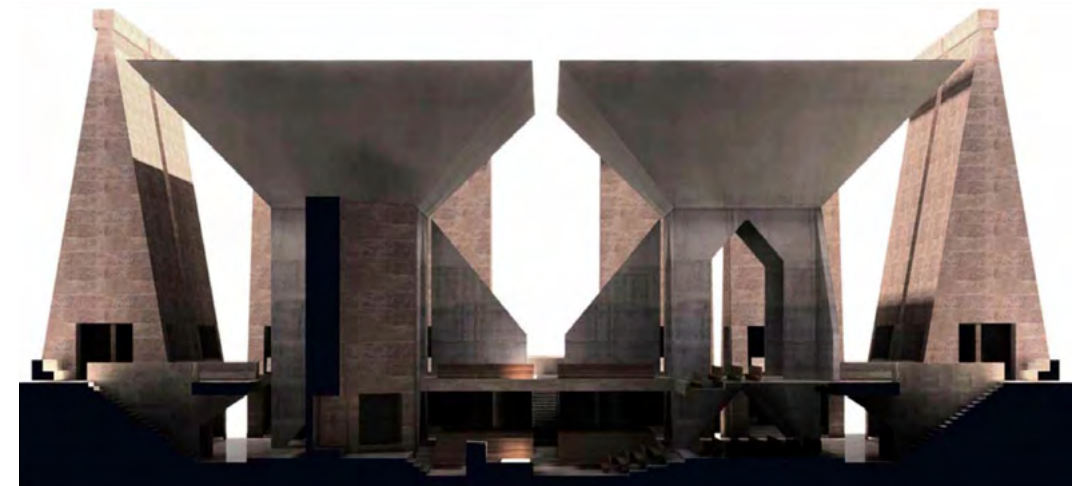
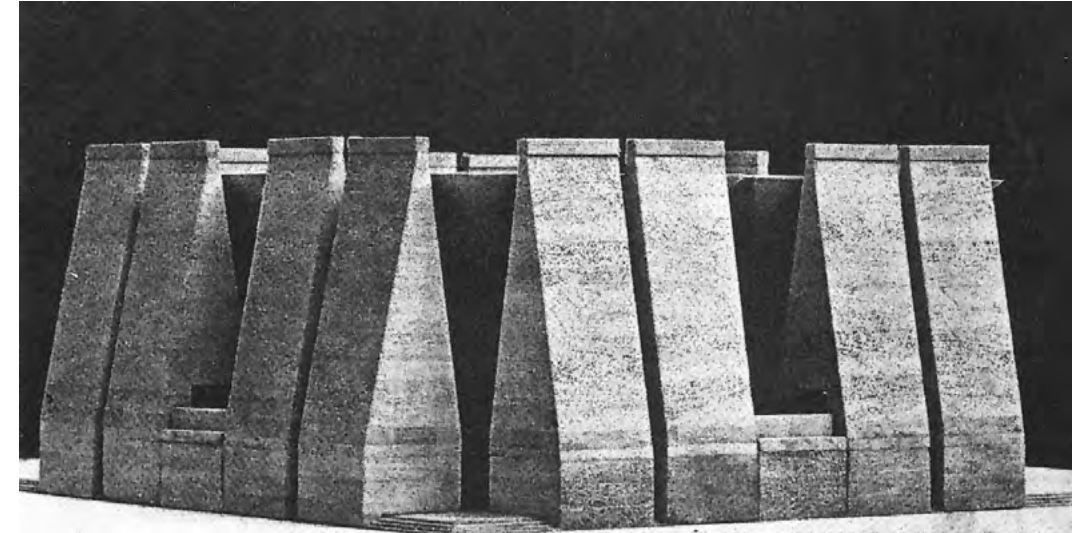
St. Pius Katholische Kirche, Meggen, Switzerland
Franz Füg, 1966

Fourth exercise: project

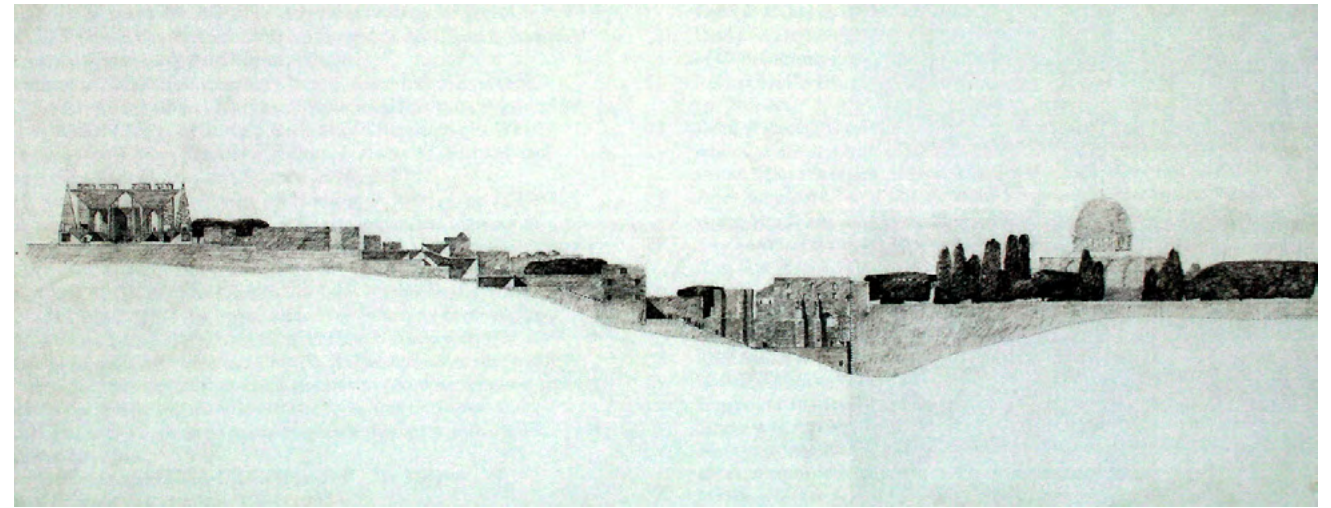
This exercise is intended to build upon the understanding you developed during the previous stage of your work to refine your project further. The focus will be on plastic qualities: you are asked to produce study models at a scale of 1:100 and 1:50. These will allow you to consider your project in relation to the wider context.

The base model should be sufficiently detailed and include enough of the neighbouring buildings to enable you to understand the immediate relationship your project has to its surroundings.

As in the previous exercise, while priority should be given to the making of models that explore ideas about the form, volume, elevation and internal organisation of the building, the process should be supported by drawings.



Hurva Synagogue, Jerusalem, Israel
Louis Kahn, 1968 - unbuilt

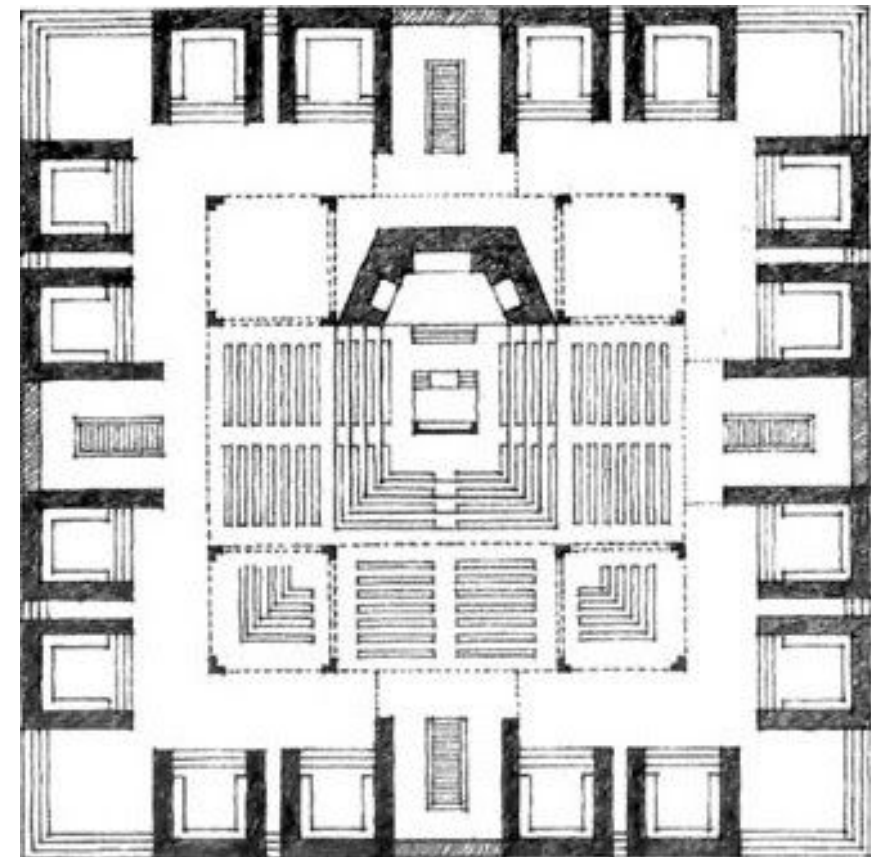


At this stage in the development of your project you will be asked to consider the internal organisation of your building at a larger scale.

The organisation of the plans and sections should be drawn and refined through a reflective and critical process. You should consider carefully the representational character of your drawings and select the most appropriate technique for producing them.

A final set of drawings should be submitted 2 weeks before the final reviews to give you sufficient time to produce the final model. A lecture on ways of drawing will be offered to support your work.

Hurva Synagogue, Jerusalem, Israel
Louis Kahn, 1968 - unbuilt



Date	Event	Details	Assignments
23 September	Studio briefing	Jonathan Sergison presents studio programme. Lecture by Jonathan Sergison 'Sacred space' Lecture by Cristina Roiz de la Parra Solano 'Making a survey' Film (part 1)	Survey Synagogues in Northern Italy and Switerland
30 September-1 October	Review of first exercise	Survey studies Film (part 2)	Review of survey work
7-9 October	Trip to Zurich and Basel	Workshop in Basel Talk by Rabbi Bar-Ephraim in Zurich Trip to allocated project sites	Trip to allocated sites
14-15 October	Tutorials	Review of survey work Film (part 3)	1:200 site models Initial ideas for the building
21-22 October	Review	Review of initial ideas for the building Lecture by Edmund de Waal 'Memory and memorial' Film (part 4)	1:200 drawings, plans, sections and elevations 1:200 model studies
28-29 October	Tutorials	Building concept review of model, plans, sections and elevations Lecture by Jonathan Sergison 'Working with atmosphere' Lecture by Jonathan Sergison 'Atmosphere' Film (part 5)	1:100 drawings, plans, sections and elevations 1:200 model studies
4-5 November	Intermediate review	Project reviews with guest critics	Pdf presentation 1:200 models 1:50 models 1:100 plans, sections, elevations Images
11-12 November	Tutorials	Review of plans, sections and elevations Lecture by Pamela Rosenkranz 'Works'	1:200 models 1:50 models 1:100 plans, sections, elevations
18-19 November	Review	Review of plans, sections and elevations	1:50 plans, sections, elevations 1:20 interior model

Date	Event	Details	Assignments
25-26 November	Review	Review of facade, plans, sections	1:50 facade model 1:50 drawings
2-3 December	Tutorials	Review of facade, plans, sections	1:50 facade model 1:50 drawings
9-10 December	Tutorials	Submission of final drawings	1:50 plans, sections and facades 1:200 situation plan
16-17 December	Review	Review of final models and images	Interior perspectives, 1:20 model Exterior perspectives, 1:50 model 1:200 site model Draft Pdf presentation
22 December	Final review	Guest critics	Pdf presentation 1:200 site model 1:20 / 1:50 model 1:200 situation plan 1:50 plans, sections and facades Interior and exterior perspectives

Reading list

Simon Schama
The Story of the Jews. Finding the Words. (1000 BCE - 1492CE)
Vintage, 2014

Simon Schama
The Story of the Jews. Belonging: 1492-1900
Vintage, 2018

Paul Johnson
A history of the Jews
Harper & Row, 1988

Peter Zumthor
Thinking architecture
Princeton Architectural Press, 1998

Peter Zumthor
Atmospheres
Birkhäuser, 2006

Edmund de Waal
The Hare with Amber Eyes
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010

Edmund de Waal
Letters to Camondo
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020

Irina Davidovici
The Practice of Architecture
Gta Verlag, 2012

Pamela Rosenkranz
Installation, Our product
Swiss Pavilion, Venice Biennale, 2015

Pamela Rosenkranz
No core
JRP Editions SA, 2012

Juhani Pallasmaa
The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses
John Wiley & Sons Inc, 1996

Matthew Wells
Architecture Iconographies: Survey
Park Books, 2021

References

Geoffrey Wigoder
The Story of the Synagogue: A Diaspora Museum Book
Harper & Row, 1986

Harold Alan Meek
The Synagogue
Phaidon, 2005

Ron Epstein-Mil
Die Synagogen der Schweiz : Bauten zwischen Emanzipation, Assimilation und Akkulturation
Chronos, 2017

Annegret Nippa, Peter Herbstreuth
Eine kleine Geschichte der Synagoge aus dreizehn Städten
Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 1999

Barry L. Stiefel
Jews and the Renaissance of Synagogue Architecture, 1450–1730
Pickering & Chatto, 2016

Umberto Fortis
Venice Synagogues
Assouline Publishing, 2016

Carol Herselle Krinsky
Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning
Dover Publications, 1985

Contacts

Professor

Jonathan Sergison
jonathan.sergison@usi.ch

Assistants

Mirella Mascolo
mirella.mascolo@usi.ch

Cristina Roiz de la Parra Solano
cristina.roiz.de.la.parra.solano@usi.ch

Studio

3rd floor
Palazzo Canavée

Office

Dépendance
Ufficio D1.03
Largo Bernasconi 2
CH 6850 Mendrisio