Ways of Worldmarking

Barry Smith

Department of Philosophy
University at Buffalo

Institute for Formal Ontology and Medical Information Science
Saarbrücken
“On one walk he ‘gave’ to me each tree that we passed, with the reservation that I was not to cut it down or do anything to it, or prevent the previous owners from doing anything to it: with those reservations it was henceforth mine."

The Eruv is UP
Welcome to the Los Angeles Community Eruv.
News and information about the Los Angeles Community Eruv Society.

For the Week of: Friday,
July 21, 2006

The Eruv is not sponsored this week

The Eruv is UP

The Eruv is up
as of 12:30 Friday

To sponsor future weeks, send email to chairman@laeruv.com
or send a check to: Los Angeles Community Eruv P.O. Box 351360, Los Angeles, CA 90035

Parshat Matot-Masei
Friday, July 21, 2006
26 Tammuz 5766
An eruv

• a ceremonially demarcated area within which Orthodox Jews may engage on the Sabbath in activities that would otherwise be prohibited:
  carrying walking sticks, pushing wheelchairs ...
• typically, an eruv is put in place by using existing horizontal wires strung on utility poles together with small vertical black rubber strips, called lechis, that form a symbolic "doorway."
if there is an eruv in your town, it looks like this
eruv

from ‘eruvin’, meaning literally ‘mixture’ or ‘mingling’
a public area is *halachically* converted into a private area

*(Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 2002)*
The Eruv is up

as of 12:30 Friday
Tenafly (NJ)
eruv
Tenafly Council votes to have the U.S. Supreme Court hear its case against the Tenafly Eruv Association (Jewish Week 2.7.2003)

Without permission from the borough, the association put up *lechis* on utility poles, contravening a 1954 ordinance that prohibits placing signs or advertisements in the public right of way without permission (though such items as house numbers and church signs had often been posted on the poles without complaint).
Chicago eruv
Washington eruv
Barnet (N. London) eruv

completed via strands of nylon fishing line stretched between poles at a height of 10 meters from the ground forming a 6½ sq. mile halachically enclosed area
Barnet eruv

• Some Orthodox objected because they saw the restrictions on carrying as necessary to maintain social order

• Liberal Jews objected because they feared “the re-creation of ghettos” (Geoforum 2000)

• Secular liberals objected that the eruv impinges on their “human rights to freedom of thought, conscience and religion”.
Ways of Worldstaining

liberal opponents perceive the eruv to be a challenge to ideas of secularism, the public–private divide and enlightenment rationality – the eruv seems to ‘symbolically stain space’

Liberal objection to the Barnet eruv

• “Eruv-believers would happily pass through their symbolic gateways in the streets, but everyone else would be compelled to do so without such a benefit, even if the compulsory passage through the Eruv structures is offensive to a person’s beliefs.”

• what is the mistake here?
through?

or under?
The Peace of Westphalia (1648)

the governments of sovereign states are free to structure their relationships with their citizens independent of all external interference.

the king has ‘all Rights…without any reserve…with all manner of Jurisdiction and Sovereignty.’
The Peace of Westphalia Declared Eternal

The year 1624 was declared the ‘standard year’, according to which territories should be deemed to be in Roman Catholic or Protestant possession, with the provision that a prince should forfeit his lands if he changed his religion

(Can the Westphalian Sovereign Paradigm Survive in Cyberspace?)
German states in 1648
1914
overlapping partitions
Types of non-Westphalian partitions

condominiums

(overlapping sovereignties)

• The River Our is in Luxemburg and in Germany
• Lake Constance
• The Antarctic
• The Moon
• Berlin under the Four Powers
Types of non-Westphalian partition

temporary boundaries

Camp Zeist, a Scottish enclave located in the Netherlands from 1999 to 2002 created in order to allow the UK authorities to bring two Libyans accused of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing to trial on Scottish soil.
The eruv boundary is there only on certain days of the week.

The Eruv is up

as of 12:30 Friday
Types of non-Westphalian partition

indeterminate boundaries
Lake Constance
An ontological black hole in the heart of Europe
Lake Constance

- Switzerland takes the view that the border runs through the middle of the Lake.
- Austria takes the view that all three countries have shared sovereignty over the whole Lake.
- Germany takes the view that Germany takes no view on the matter.

A patchwork of international treaties regulate specific matters subject to dispute.
Types of non-Westphalian boundary-structures

one-sided boundaries
From the Western side
Types of non-Westphalian partition

fractal boundaries
Baarle Nassau/Baarle Hertog
Figure 5a. Dutch counter-enclaves N3 & N5 in Belgian enclave H1

Figure 5b. Belgian enclave H7
fractal boundaries in Bengal
fractal boundaries in Bengal
fractal boundaries in Europe in 1648
Four Cypriot exclaves within British territorial enclaves in Cyprus

The two Cypriot villages of Ormidhia and Xylotimbou are each surrounded by territory that belongs to the British Sovereign Base Area of Dhekelia. This includes two Cypriot exclaves formed by the territory of the Dhekelia Power Station divided into two parts by a British road.
Fractal boundaries in the Middle East in 2006
Types of non-Westphalian partition

porous boundaries and co-located multiple layers
Chinatown Manchester
New York eruvim

In parts of New York, there are a number of different eruvim constructed by the numerous different religious branches, leading to the creation of a web of overlapping eruvim (Geoforum 31)
Liberal objection to the Barnet eruv

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The meaning of life

• We want our lives to mark the world (we want to leave a trace)
• On the Westphalian paradigm this means we want (e.g.) our nation to be a single contiguous whole over which we have exclusive dominion
we all want to leave traces on reality

what the liberal objectors do not see
is that we can leave traces on reality
in a variety of non-Westphalian (= non-exclusive) ways
Consequences

- people should recognize other peoples’ use of space
Liberals who owned property especially worried

- even though property values in an eruv rise
The End
Virtual Philadelphia

• Imagine a Nozickian virtual reality machine, which generates three-dimensional visual and tactual simulations of landscapes and architectural works. So impressive is the illusion that those inside the machine feel that they are experiencing ordinary reality.

• We could even imagine a community of individuals connected to a single machine that coordinates their experiences in such a way that they seem to be moving around together, meeting in Philadelphia, walking hand-in-hand along the sidewalk.

• A travel agent might advertise trips to Virtual Philadelphia. A real estate agent might offer to sell land there.
Virtual Philadelphia might be better than real Philadelphia

• But if we discovered at some later point that we were living not in real Philadelphia but in virtual Philadelphia, then we would be disappointed. Why?

• In Virtual Philadelphia I can live in the same building with Madonna. But so can 1 million other people. They can all show photographs of themselves in the elevator with Madonna.

• It is precisely this possibility which tells us what is missing. Living in the same building with Madonna is an achievement. It is something highly valued precisely because not everyone can do it. What space provides is the possibility of competition, of economizing; it imposes an ordering of preferences.
Franchise-Operated Quasi-National Entities (Starbucks, Pizza Hut, ...)

(from Neal Stephenson, *Snow Crash*)

A FOQNE is an organization that, like a nation-state, provides and enforces a system of rules within a given geographic territory but with non-contiguous territory.

A FOQNE consists of plots of real estate that are relatively small (ranging in size from a city-state to a portion of a building).

Each FOQNE offers its citizens a number of havens where the rules and culture are uniform and familiar, no matter what region the individual FOQNE site is in.
Snow Crash

• For Stephenson a FOQNE may offer citizens a place to live, or it may specialize in providing certain goods or services (physical plant security protection, drugs, religion, ...):
  – Mr. Lee’s Greater Hong Kong
  – Nova Sicilia
  – Narcolombia
Snow Crash

• Burbclaves = a specialized type of FOQNE consisting of a chain of suburban subdivision-sized city-states (gated communities) and offering citizens a place to reside.
Other explanations

• people do not like physical signs of other peoples’ religions
people like to mark this world

• people like to mark this world by making it point to something transcendent (der Gewölbe des Himmels)