This lecture considers the boarding-house (pension) stories that the Yiddish modernist Dovid Bergelson (1884-1952) wrote in Berlin during the 1920s as a representation of urban space. In these stories, the contradictions of the pension are constituted through the provisional intimacy of strangers, at once public and private, embedded within an urban, metropolitan culture, yet called into existence by the rootlessness and dislocation of transient tenants.

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