

# Introduction: What Made a Space “Jewish”?

*Reconsidering a Category of Modern German History*

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## **Spatial History and Culture**

Our awareness of the spatial dimensions of historical processes and interactions among individuals and institutions has grown considerably since the late 1990s. While these developments do not amount to a fundamental paradigm shift—a “spatial turn”—in academic history, perceptions of history are no longer limited to its temporality but encompass its spatiality, too. There is an increased consciousness of both the impact of history and historical actors on spaces and their potential to themselves shape and impact history, in their material existence as well as in their quality as imagined or figurative spaces. Space as a focus of historical research shows unprecedented promise, be it as an epistemological category, as an analytical approach, or as a subject of historical analysis.

Some of the first historical studies to engage with the category of space centered on macrolevel processes—that is, they revolved around the ways societal structures influence and shape spaces and how spaces shape these structures. More recent historical and cultural studies have applied a spatial perspective to micro- and meso-analyses—for example, investigating the formation and stabilization of communities. The results have been substantial, the most fruitful having emerged from studies that conceive of space in a performative sense and analyze how the actions, perceptions, and experiences of individuals and groups in various historical settings have produced social, cultural, or political spaces.<sup>1</sup> Works about practices of spacing or doing spaces have helped to increase historians’ awareness of the significance of actions that generate spaces and structures within historical processes.<sup>2</sup>

It may seem surprising that it has taken nearly twenty years for these spatial approaches to be applied to the *history* of minorities. After all, socio-geographic, sociological, and ethnological approaches to the study of minorities, ethnic communities, and diaspora cultures have already shown that foci like “space,” “realm,” and “place” have the potential to generate particularly rich insights in this field. The construction and depiction of spaces inevitably go along with negotiating and establishing real or imaginary boundaries; to create and interpret social and cultural space always means defining who is included or excluded. Further, the ways that groups occupy, form, and rework space indicate the form and the extent to which certain ethnic or religious groups became part of the majority society; these spatial processes can point, for instance, to the perception of these groups as permanent or temporary. These are central issues researchers confront when they engage with majority/minority relationships, ethnic communities, and the ethnic or faith-based narratives of identity and belonging or exclusion intertwined with such relationships. In the context of diaspora groups such as the Jewish minority, spatial processes grow even more important. Many of its members perceive of themselves as a group exiled from their ancient “homeland” in Palestine, thus generating a close connection to a distant territory. Such an imagined spatial relation to a former homeland forges a vital part of the minority’s identity, as does a possible future return.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the crucial role these spatial processes play in identity formation, the boundaries that define spaces, and especially symbolic ones, are not static. Far from being set in stone, boundaries are the subject of—and are subject to—discourses, acts of negotiation, and multilayered processes of cultural translation.<sup>4</sup> In other words, their continuity and change make them amenable, indeed necessarily so, to historicization.

Our perspective thus expands from the history of majority/minority relationships familiar to researchers, including acts of state power such as political or legal decrees, to encompass cultural practices, in their entanglement with one another and with wider developments, as they relate to the formation and dissolution of identities, integration and segregation, identification and distancing. This approach has the potential to explore the dual nature of space: on the one hand, as a given form that shapes the experience and identities of those both inside and outside of it and, on the other, as something fluid and contingent, allowing for appropriations and reconfigurations, as well as giving agency to those within it to shape it anew.

## **Judaism, Jewishness, and Space in the Face of Modernity**

At a general level, spatial issues apply to all historical periods, yet they are especially relevant to the modern era, when a number of transformations occurred simultaneously: toward the primacy of the individual subject, toward greater variation in lifestyles and lifeworlds, and toward nation building. These transfor-

mations objectively called nearly all distinct, socially separate groups into question that had often been granted a specific jurisdiction and, in principle, had not clashed with the early modern societal structures. The advent of modernity thus profoundly affected European Jewry as a distinct social group primarily defined by religion and religious law (*Halakhah*) in all spheres of everyday life. The specific character of the Jewish religion, the use of separate non-majority languages (Yiddish/Ladino), and the various forms of discrimination Jews were subject to, over the centuries, had given rise to social spaces and places that fostered particular forms of cohesion and distinctiveness. They formed boundaries and barriers that kept premodern Jewish lifeworlds essentially free of significant external influences, despite the economic and cultural interaction with the “outside” that also took place throughout this period. In this sense, the modern age as it unfolded in Europe was a period of profound transformation for Jewish lifeworlds and the spaces constituting and emerging from them.

The modern age impacted Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews in different ways because of their distinct relationships to space. The Sephardic Jews of Europe had essentially internalized a repetition of the Diaspora experience; their religiously founded relationship to Zion went hand in hand with viewing Sepharad, the land they had been expelled from, as a place of nostalgia. This imagined space became the focus of their specific longing, while the Sephardic Diaspora generated a unique community with its own spatial points of reference and landscapes, many of which related to real places such as seaports.<sup>5</sup> Ashkenazic lifeworlds, by contrast, remained comparatively autonomous in their structures well into the eighteenth century. Their intellectual foundations rested on the medieval centers of learning represented by the ShUM towns (Speyer, Worms, Mainz) in southern Germany. They had their own primarily faith-based norms and values and clear definitions of who “belonged.” Moreover, the specific structures of knowledge that had shaped premodern Ashkenazic spaces entailed a totality and an encompassingly sacred nature that exceeded the general ubiquity of religion characteristic of the early modern period.<sup>6</sup>

The processes of functional differentiation that began to unfold in Western and parts of Central Europe around 1800 resulted in the secular and the sacred becoming differentiated and disentangled from one another. Also, the figure of the modern citizen, rooted in the idea of equality before the law, began to emerge. These developments were essentially incompatible with autonomous social spaces existing beyond society as a whole. The universalist tendencies of the Enlightenment, inherent in the movements toward emancipation and the rise of incipient middle-class systems of thought and being, strongly discouraged all forms of social particularity of religious groups.<sup>7</sup> As a result, modernity jeopardized European Jewry, Judaism, and Jewishness as carried over from the early modern period in many ways. Most importantly, it threatened to destroy the unambiguous signifiers of belonging clearly defined by those on the inside and outside alike and to dissolve the connection between religion and social practices that had heretofore seemed positively solid. From the end of the eighteenth century onward, what

defined Jewishness in both an individual and a collective sense, and what a “Jewish place” was and what was perceived as “Jewish space,” grew increasingly ambiguous; definitions became more dependent on people’s subjective experiences, perceptions, and discourses, and these generated and highlighted certain spaces. Consequently, the transformations Judaism experienced in the modern period were also processes of spatialization.

Against this backdrop, a spatial approach to modern Jewish history—that is, one that recognizes the significance of space in shaping lifeworlds—offers us an opportunity to gain a sense of the changing and increasingly diverse understanding of Jewishness that emerged with modernity and to grasp the wide spectrum of Jewish identities in modern societies. Jews had remained an autonomous minority group on the margins of the premodern state, yet more than a few clearly benefited from the new opportunities that the advent of modernity generated even more rapidly than members of other groups and worked to secure a position for themselves in the center of modern society. This process could be observed on a metaphorical/meta-level and in spatial manifestations such as architecture. Europe’s German-speaking territories, above all, are relevant in this regard. They became the birthplace of the *Haskalah*, the Jewish Enlightenment, making them especially fertile ground for developing concepts to meet the challenges of modernity in ways that allowed Jewishness and Judaism to transform and thus survive while facilitating Jews’ active participation in forming a modern, middle-class culture. In other words, the German states became a vibrant space for developing and negotiating different concepts of identity, making them an ideal focus for this volume’s endeavor to explore Jewish spaces, how they were constituted, how they were perceived, and how those newly created spaces shaped a new understanding of belonging to and identifying with a group.

The German case also allows us to extend our focus to the meta-level—that is, it offers a unique and striking example of how historiography itself has engaged in boundary drawing and thus the construction of historically imagined spaces. Whereas boundaries between Jewish and non-Jewish spaces in modern and postmodern societies have been fluid and contingent, scholars have often obscured this historically open character of Jewish existence by retroactively constructing and projecting boundaries upon it. It is hardly surprising that after the Shoah, boundaries emerged that limited approaches to the interpretation of the history of Jews in Germany; history as an academic discipline, especially in Germany, has long neglected the interaction among Jewish and non-Jewish spaces and thus seems to have avoided analyzing German and Jewish history in the modern and postmodern period as a truly “entangled history.”<sup>8</sup> We hope this volume may contribute to overcoming the still common binary division of “Jewish” and “non-Jewish” and raise awareness of interspaces, gray areas, multiple layers of identities and their entanglements, and patterns of boundary construction that were typical of a given period and cultural setting.

Consequently, this volume seeks to adjust this framework by opening a window onto the multifaceted dimensions of Jewish experience and on the spec-

trum of manifestations of Jewishness, and the Jewish spaces they entailed, in the modern German-speaking territories and beyond. Drawing us to explore spaces constructed or perceived as Jewish either by Jews or by non-Jews are the opposing forces simultaneously at work within them: on the one hand, certain spaces restricted and structured Jewish lives and tended to separate them—actively or passively—from other social groups or even the larger society; but in other ways, these and other spaces facilitated integration, opened up room within which Jews could maneuver, and proved open to changes. Acknowledging the trans-territorial and transnational dimension of Jewish history, we wish especially to contribute to unveiling spatial and temporal structures particular to being Jewish or being defined as such. The concept of Diaspora is one such spatial, and likewise temporal, structure. Indeed, it is often regarded as the key paradigm of Jewish history. Within this view, “Jewish space” has been temporary in nature ever since the Jews were expelled from their historic *place* in ancient Israel, and only Zion, the focus of loss and longing, remained as an explicitly Jewish *space*.<sup>9</sup> We aim here to transcend this perspective and explore the specific properties relating to the “Jewishness” of space and spaces beyond the diasporic context in modern German history.

## Definitions of Place, Space, and Boundaries

While “places” bear unambiguous topographical identifiers and tend toward stasis, “spaces” also exist on an imaginary level; they are mutable and largely defined by experience and history.<sup>10</sup> When one considers the history of minorities, this symbolic property of space holds particular appeal for research; “space” can be conceived as a metaphor of social positions and of inclusion, exclusion, belonging, and identity, so that research can focus primarily on the communicative production of spaces—that is, on semantic systems related to space. Indeed, this is what the chapters in this volume do. Yet they go further, too, by drawing on the widely proven assumption that social position is reflected in geographical space and in the materiality of space we encounter in places like houses of worship, museums, and burial grounds—places that both create space and help constitute other spaces, such as a specific subculture within urban lifeworlds. The arrangement of space rarely fails to exert its influence on individual and group behaviors and actions. Material space—the *raumphysikalisches Substrat* in the words of sociologist Markus Schroer<sup>11</sup>—generates and is shaped by numerous social effects. Thus, in this volume we seek, as far as possible, to dissolve the opposition evident in much thinking about space wherein it is conceived either as materiality or alternatively as discourse. The editors and contributors are interested in exploring the social nature of space, how it emerges, the effects space in turn exercises on the social milieu,<sup>12</sup> as well as the relationship between the two.<sup>13</sup> In other words, material space—or place—shapes an imaginary superstratum, which in turn is reproduced in new places when they are built. The contributors to this volume

use concepts such as “entangled identities,” “hybrid spaces,” and “contact zones” in their analyses of Jewish spaces and their interaction with non-Jewish spaces.

Inherent in this perspective is that while neither material nor immaterial spaces are static and immutable containers, there are limits to their dynamism and re-creatability.<sup>14</sup> Material spaces can be institutionalized and set up for the long term, thus representing what is given, established, reliable, not constantly called into question. Schroer asserts that such spaces frequently serve to reduce complexity by bearing pre-inscribed significance and thus relieve us of the obligation to continually attach new significance to them.<sup>15</sup> Spatial structures prescribe specific frameworks for action—indeed, they define power relations. Nonetheless, even seemingly solid, fortified places are susceptible and subject to appropriation, influence, and acts of configuration and reconfiguration from the social sphere. No space, material or otherwise, is an island; spaces acquire their meaning from subjective perceptions and ascriptions, including the symbols and rituals associated with them. One and the same space may be the object of a range of highly divergent perceptions, with different social groups relating in specific ways to it and all regarding it as their own. This phenomenon prompts fascinating questions concerning the significance of spaces to groups’ ideas of themselves and to others’ perceptions of them, the exclusivity of the structures of spaces that groups relate to in this way, the flexibility of their boundaries, and the historical changes in how people related to these spaces, and, consequently, in the nature of the spaces themselves.

By “boundaries,” we mean markers of socially and culturally shaped symbolic spaces, each with specific regimes of recognition, as Bourdieu termed them. This raises questions of the power and resources individuals or groups possess and use to define their place within these spaces and of networks and communities of recognition that promise solidarity, build self-assurance, and enable those who draw upon them to master everyday life. Although boundaries can be as fluid as spaces and often overlap—or constitute transitions between spaces—the term itself tends to smack of static exclusion and “othering.” In this book, however, we wish to include rather than exclude open and fuzzy zones of overlapping cultures. It is precisely these liminal, transitional spaces, the spaces at the margins and between distinct entities where change begins through interaction, that we aim to explore. We thus focus both on patterns of exclusion and on more dynamic tensions and practices of contact, interaction, coexistence, and transition without excluding conflicts, fractures, and differences in mutual perceptions or expectations. With this approach, we hope to develop a fresh perspective on German-Jewish history that transcends traditional narratives. The transitional *Sattelzeit* between the mid-eighteenth and the nineteenth century, for instance, generated completely new and sometimes highly unsettling challenges for individuals and social groups concerning social relations, sociocultural contexts, and horizons of experience. Hitherto marginal and largely autonomous groups, such as European Jews, were especially affected by this. Historical studies on this era usually concentrate on the limits of integration but rarely consider this period as a time of first encounters between cultures that had previously had only limited

contact. To cite one example, universities were spaces that for centuries had been reserved exclusively for Christians, a practice that went unquestioned. Yet in the *Sattelzeit*, after Prussia and a couple of other German states had permitted males of other religious groups to study much earlier than, for example, England, Jews entered them astonishingly quickly. Thus, academic spaces of the nineteenth century fostered a dynamic interplay between majority and minority cultures. In this context, a broad spectrum of meanings can be applied to the concept of “doing space”—from looking at productive encounters and fear of the unknown to examining practices of social exclusion.

These open concepts of “space” and “boundaries” enable us, then, to approach practices of community building, of distinguishing between the familiar and the uncanny, and of determining what is one’s own and what is the “Other’s.” They also give us access to layers of meaning, structures, and interactions within spaces created by specific social groups.<sup>16</sup> Analogous to the term *Sattelzeit*, with its reference to an in-between period of history on the temporal plane, we could, indeed, identify these liminal spaces and fuzzy boundaries as *Sattelräume*, or “saddle spaces,” on the spatial plane.

Although Bourdieu’s theory of social and cultural fields as rather stable structures with relatively fixed and closed boundaries, connected to an embodied habitus that cannot be manipulated much by will, gains a great deal of importance when it comes to the social relevance of space, we understand spaces and their boundaries as based on communication and experiences, simultaneously limiting and opening up opportunities. Thus, we see them as less fixed and static than Bourdieu’s concept of fields might suggest. Intriguingly, the German language includes terms such as *Handlungsspielraum* (literally: room or space for action) and *Freiraum* (literally: room for freedom, or room to develop), which distinctly emphasize *actors* and the performativity of spaces.

## “Jewish Spaces”: Where Historical Research Is Now

After the historical changes that brought an end to socialist Europe, scholarship in the mid-1990s experienced a soaring interest in space as well as a “memory boom” that included the rediscovery of Jewish traditions. Within this overarching context, and specifically in response to phenomena understood as rediscovered traditions, social and cultural studies were among the first contexts in which scholars reflected on Jewish spaces. There was tremendous interest in generating strategies for visualizing and musealizing what had once been Jewish spaces, particularly those that were being revived and appropriated, above all, by non-Jews.<sup>17</sup> This pattern of appropriation was not as new as many initially thought; before 1990, non-Jews in West Germany had increasingly engaged with Jewish history and culture.<sup>18</sup> Yet the rapid emergence and development of interest in Jewish culture in Eastern Europe after 1990 surprised even experts in the field and inspired academics to analyze the new cultures of memory emerging in this period. This

research, though centered on “history” and “memory,” initially marginalized the “genuinely” historical perspectives on these spaces.<sup>19</sup>

However, given the fact that history takes place in both space *and* time, historical study of these spaces is critically needed. Historical views are essential if we wish to cast light on processes that unfold when long-established practices relating to the use of a space begin to clash with the political or cultural frameworks within which that space had long existed. The case of traditional Ashkenazic religious practices in synagogues, which came increasingly into question from the late eighteenth century by Jews and non-Jews alike, provides a cogent example. After the social and spatial structures that had governed the early modern period dissolved, overlapping manifestations of cultural identification became usual—a strategy that only historical views can reveal. Newly founded Jewish schools, societies, and associations, as well as new regulations and aesthetic standards for the Jewish service, created a unique potential to assure Jews of both their Jewishness and their *Bürgerlichkeit* (middle-class culture and habitus). They provided a forum for acquiring and rehearsing practices that signaled adherence to the middle-class lifestyle taking shape at the same time. Consequently, even religious spaces, or spaces formerly shaped by religion, became experimental settings for a modern way of being Jewish—which by no means always entailed rejection of the tenets of religious law—and, simultaneously, of an emergent middle-class habitus.

Members of the Potsdam-based research group Makom that existed from 2001 to 2007 were among the first scholars to develop a clearly historical focus, although they were much more focused on “Jewish places” than on “Jewish spaces.”<sup>20</sup> Whereas spaces initially remained the domain of literature studies, experts in the history of architecture and Jewish culture and religion, anthropologists,<sup>21</sup> and scholars from other humanities and cultural studies disciplines, such as philosophy and history, gradually began to explore them as well.<sup>22</sup> Michael Meng’s study *Shattered Spaces: Encountering Jewish Spaces in Postwar Germany and Poland* (2012), for instance, took a broad approach extending beyond the exploration of current tendencies and dynamics involved in the emergence of *new* Jewish spaces; he examined the history of Jewish spaces that had appeared to be lost and the ways they were explored, reexplored, and appropriated after 1945.<sup>23</sup> The historicity of Jewish spaces and the influence of space on the history of Jews and non-Jews alike have also been the focus of scholars like Barbara E. Mann, Vered Shemtov, and Anna Lipphardt, even though they are not historians themselves. Following these early studies, new perspectives such as memory history have likewise attracted the attention of historians.<sup>24</sup>

Scholars of the early modern period were among the first researchers of German-speaking regions to utilize space as an analytical category from social and cultural studies and apply it to their own work.<sup>25</sup> A 2009 conference on Jewish spaces in the early modern period<sup>26</sup> prioritized space for analysis, generating highly interesting insights, one of which was that the cultural spaces constituted in mid-eighteenth-century Europe by educated Jews and non-Jews, while largely separate from one another, emerged along startlingly similar lines. The differences



in the structures and sets of rules the Christian and Jewish cultures of learning entailed appear to have been smaller than the differences between the everyday cultures of Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews in contemporary Europe. Some research has suggested that educated Jews and non-Jews shared a relationship of mutual respect that was often absent between certain Jewish groups, such as Jews from different social classes or of differing educational backgrounds, or Jews from the centers of the Jewish Enlightenment versus Polish Talmudic Jews, at that time.<sup>27</sup>

When we move to the modern period, space becomes an even more promising analytical category for Jewish life because in this era Jewishness and its limits became a lifestyle choice, in modern parlance. A broad spectrum of ways of being Jewish unfolded at this time, resulting in an evident and logical diversity of the spaces perceived or defined as Jewish. With this in mind, we might be forgiven for wondering why academics “doing space” have seemingly not yet addressed Judaism in the modern age and in the period of transformation preceding it.

Compared with the German states, there is a little more research on Western Europe, but this, too, is a relatively recent development, having generated several publications since 2008.<sup>28</sup> More recently, a 2015 collection edited by Alina Gromova, Felix Heinert, and Sebastian Voigt explored the nature of Jewish spaces in various urban contexts across Europe from the early modern period up through more contemporary memories of Jewish spaces in modern literature.<sup>29</sup> While some of the essays in this interdisciplinary volume address Jewish spaces within German states or Germany, the geographical scope of analysis is broad, and the underlying approach focuses on *urban* spaces and, within these, on identity formation through spatial politics and practices.

All of the studies published within the last decade clearly show the growing importance of spatial perspectives in historical analyses, as well as new interest in applying space as an analytical category to the modern period. They build the foundation upon which spatial theory could be developed and contextualized within a broader disciplinary perspective. A principal aim of this volume is to contribute to this. We put forth a distinctly historical approach and, with it, a focus on German-speaking Jewry, contextualizing the analysis, naturally, within a broader comparative and/or transnational perspective wherever it is feasible and useful to do so. Coming from this analytical framework, the various essays explore constructions, experiences, perceptions, and practices around the creation, transformation, and appropriation of social, cultural, and political spaces, places, and (symbolic) boundaries as they relate to Jews and Jewishness. This also includes Jewish experiences and depictions of ruptures or removal of space, “re-spacing,” and both voluntary and forced shifts from one space to another.

## **Imaginations, Transformations, and Practices**

In keeping with our sense of the crucial nature of the advent of modernity in uncovering the constituted and constituting properties of spaces in general and for

European Jewry in particular, most of the essays discuss special features of Jewish existence and social interaction with regard to *modern* history. However, we also included contributions on early modern and contemporary history in order to sharpen our view of the major transformations involved in the transition to modernity. These contributions on other eras also highlight underlying inscriptions or hidden spatial scripts that continued to influence behavior.

Along with investigating the historical and sometimes contemporary meanings attributed to physical spaces, several of the contributions transcend the literal to explore the formation of figurative or imagined “Jewish spaces” within practices and how they shaped and were shaped by certain forms of identification and imagination. The contributions encompass a broad range of spatial reference points and manifestations. Some analyze religious and secular spaces that became crucial to emerging Jewish identities or translating them into new contexts; others investigate spaces that were defined and marked by Jews without necessarily being “Jewish spaces”; and still others look at spaces that were perceived, defined, or constructed as “Jewish,” although they were actually scarcely different from non-Jewish or inclusive spaces, like the scholarly culture of the nineteenth century or the realms constituted by societies and associations of the educated upper middle class. However, we also take a closer look at places, like synagogues, that were clearly marked as genuinely Jewish but whose forms and meaning could differ significantly depending on time or cultural context.<sup>30</sup> The study of these various spaces and places therefore has the potential to increase our awareness of entangled cultures like *Bürgerlichkeit*, which could not only be culturally translated into Jewish environments but also be co-constituted and created exclusively within them. Furthermore, these spatial studies shed light on internal Jewish practices of social distinction, boundary drawing, and space formation. How spaces came to be perceived as Jewish or otherwise is at the heart of the book; we ask what made a space Jewish by retracing how both Jewish and non-Jewish actors attributed Jewishness to it and what that implied.

The category of space as used in humanities disciplines today is multivalent, and it is difficult—indeed, impossible—to separate the mental, physical, and symbolic layers of space from one another because they are in dialectical interplay, as Lefebvre maintained.<sup>31</sup> Thus, although we arranged this volume along three dimensions of spaces and boundaries—“Imaginations,” “Transformations,” and “Practices”—we could easily have placed particular essays in a different section. In this, as throughout our endeavor, boundaries have shown themselves to be profoundly permeable and mutable entities.

The essays in part 1, “Imaginations: Remembrance and Representation of Spaces and Boundaries,” examine and compare how historical and recent spaces of remembrance and memory (*Gedächtnisorte* and *Erinnerungsräume*) have been imagined in and outside their time. While some of these—like Berlin’s Scheunenviertel in Anne-Christin Saß’s analysis—have a material point of reference, others, such as the “ghetto,” which is at the center of Jürgen Heyde’s contribution, were more figurative constructions—a topos. Yet for both material and figu-

rative spaces, historical subjects, in meeting the challenges of their time, attached meaning to them either retrospectively or in reference to a projected future. Due to the close interrelationship between spatial structures (*Raumordnungen*) and the formation of subjects and to the fact that this interrelationship is often produced and mediated via symbols, signs, or cultural codes, this section analyzes both forms of remembrance of spaces as specifically related to Jews as well as representations of such spaces by non-Jews. In this context, the nature of spaces as both mediated and mediating comes to the fore—that is, both the ways that media, such as films and the press, produced spaces and how spaces came to mediate ideas and identities. This duality demonstrates the potential of media to be both the source and object of spatial analysis.

Alexandra Binnenkade, whose chapter is concerned with the Swiss village of Lengnau in the nineteenth century (chapter 1), takes a detailed look at the everyday practices that united or distinguished Christians and Jews within the social structure of the village space and the ideas of this space manifested in its architecture. Reiterating the concept of “contact zones” as elements of the spatial experience of minorities, she emphasizes physical components in the creation of space, such as streets and residential buildings, pointing out their influence on the processes of defining identities and states of belonging.

The ghetto, or rather its image in an era when it had (temporarily) ceased to exist, is at the heart of Jürgen Heyde’s contribution (chapter 2). As the walls of real ghettos came down, the imagined space gained currency as a metaphorical point of reference. Heyde’s analysis revolves around a journalistic debate in nineteenth-century Galicia whose participants evinced a fascination with the idea of the ghetto; the debate also drew the attention of many Jews in German states as well.

Nils Roemer (chapter 3) explores the emergence of a Jewish culture of remembrance in German cities, particularly since the Kaiserreich. On the basis of a wide range of characterizations, from travelogues and literature to museums and archives, he analyzes how remembrance is derived from physical remains and how these remains are presented in cities.

Anthony D. Kauders (chapter 4) explores the widespread idea that psychoanalytic theory and practice were particularly “Jewish” fields. Kauders establishes that Jewish and non-Jewish historians of the field, in their attempts to retrospectively trace the real or imagined origins of the practice in Jewish ethnospaces, were the ones who constructed psychoanalysis as a “Jewish” discipline.

The Jewish origins of key figures in a creative process are likewise central to the analysis presented by Ofer Ashkenazi in his essay on Jewish displacement in Weimar film (chapter 5). Ashkenazi looks at two films by Jewish director Ewald A. Dupont, *Peter Voß, der Millionendieb* and *Das alte Gesetz*. Both films engaged with the situation of Jews in the later years of the Weimar Republic and created a language of imagery from which to implicitly address Jews’ position as a minority at that time.

Like Nils Roemer, Michael Meng (chapter 6) retraces the discourse around the literal unearthing of remains, including a *mikveh*, of Jewish life in Frank-

furt's *Judengasse* during postwar construction work. His contribution narrates the development of a broader debate that emerged from this discovery revolving around the politics of memory, ways of approaching the Nazi past in postwar Germany, and how to appropriately remember and commemorate the persecution suffered by Frankfurt's Jews.

Part 2, "Transformations," is dedicated to the exploration of movements of emergences, shifts, and dissolutions in spaces and boundaries. The chapters in this section uncover ways in which Jews and non-Jews created spaces that came to be labeled Jewish—both consciously and unintentionally—at varying points in time. The authors investigate how various actors occupied and appropriated existing spaces that had seemed stable before, tracing how these actors arranged and rearranged these spaces, recoded them, or indeed opened them up to completely new sets of ascriptions and associations.

One component appears to be the enlargement of spaces by expanding purviews. Looking beyond national borders, Kerstin von der Krone (chapter 7) elucidates the emergence of a Jewish press from a transnational perspective. The Jewish press paid attention to issues of interest to a Jewish audience and provided the frame for a modern Jewish public space.

Andreas Gotzmann's contribution (chapter 8) revolves principally around two exclusively Jewish places and their concomitant spaces—the synagogue and the Jewish burial ground—relating the transformations the Jewish minority experienced to changes in Jewish space at the threshold of modernity. He discusses both shifts in the societal and legal frameworks of these spaces and their use, along with increasing diversity within Judaism, all of which provided Jews with a range of options for practicing their faith.

The transformation of spaces and their purposes in the transition to modernity is also at the core of Sylvia Necker's analysis of the changes in the siting and design of synagogues in German cities (chapter 9). Necker argues that Jewish communities, being involved in processes of urbanization, relocated synagogues from the peripheries or run-down parts of town to the old or newly emerging centers, making them increasingly prestigious and visible and thus de-marginalizing them as a symbol of Jewishness. In this, they functioned as a place and a space at the same time.

Björn Siegel's essay (chapter 10) investigates the creation of an increasingly transnational ideal Jewish space in the shape of the Jewish philanthropic movement that came into being in the nineteenth century. Utilizing the example of the humanitarian endeavors organized by Baron de Hirsch, Siegel explains how a Europe-wide Jewish network of assistance arose in response to episodes of Jewish persecution.

Anne-Christin Saß (chapter 11) casts light on the discursive production of associations between material places and imagined spaces by analyzing the ways that Berlin's Scheunenviertel has been perceived and utilized over the long view. She argues that it has been seen as representative of Jewish Weimar Berlin and of the resurrection of Jewish life postwar and particularly post-1989. Concerning

the most recent era, Saß points to the entanglement of topographical depictions with concrete political aims and wish fulfillment, which is inherent in specific nostalgia-driven associations with the space.

Part 3, “Practices: Negotiating, Experiencing, and Appropriating Spaces and Boundaries,” focuses on the things that those who live and act within spaces do. Thus, it zeroes in on the question of what practices give rise to and change spaces and how shifting spaces, in turn, shape practices. Not all of these practices are necessarily dynamic; many historical spaces are stable, influenced by specific power structures, knowledge formations, or rituals passed down through a number of generations. Such spaces can shape social processes over long periods of time. People, individually or collectively, hold particular perceptions of such spaces, acquire experience in and with their structures, and take part in processes of negotiation, interpretation, and translation of them. Although—or even because—these processes frequently give rise to conflict, new spaces or new interpretations of them can also emerge from this. In making use of these spaces, people may perhaps attempt to shift their boundaries, yet—as we see when we consider spaces such as state education systems, workhouses, the military, and places of worship—often find themselves, their agency, and dynamism subject to significant political, religious, or social limitations.<sup>32</sup> Conversely, physical and symbolic boundaries—especially those that became typical of the modern age—sometimes dissolved in the course of historical developments. What happened in these instances? Did new spaces of interaction emerge or fail to do so?

Dirk Sadowski (chapter 12) provides a case study of a specific profession, investigating the degree to which a Hebrew print shop in the town of Jessnitz in the eighteenth century constituted a Jewish space. He demonstrates the reciprocity at the heart of the emergence of space in tracing how the professional practice itself gave rise to an arena of what was perceived as Jewish.

Material components of the production and formation of space form the center of chapter 13, by Joachim Schlör. The threshold, in its capacity as simultaneously a material and metaphorical point of separation between the inside and the outside of a Jewish lifeworld, is the focus of his examination of the significance for Jews of moments of arrival and settling in, of departure and migration.

Michael Berkowitz’s essay (chapter 14) centers around another professional and key cultural medium, photography, exploring both the practice and its practitioners. The chapter recounts the formation of a network of Jews within modern photography that continued to exist in the National Socialist period, when the Nazis exploited the group for their own photographic purposes.

Taking us to the immediate postwar period, chapter 15, by Anna Holian, examines practices of the Jewish lifeworld that then began to arise in Munich’s Möhlstrasse. The multilayered interactions and negotiations within the postwar black market created a Jewish space, yet also gave rise to perceptions from the outside of the space as “foreign” and hence a threat.

A museum and the communicative practices it engenders are at the heart of chapter 16, by Robin Ostow. Focusing on Munich’s Jewish Museum, opened in

2007, she analyzes the production of a space that not only reflects upon Jewish history and culture but simultaneously seeks to create a space of dialogue between Jews and non-Jews about Jewish life in the present day. Ostow refers to the debates that erupted both concerning the museum's location within the Munich cityscape and concerning the practices that have begun to unfold in this space.

In the concluding essay (chapter 17), which reflects the discourse about another Jewish museum that opened only recently in Warsaw (POLIN), Ruth Ellen Gruber reconsiders her previously developed and highly influential concept of "virtual Jewishness"—essentially an artificial filling of the gap left by the Jews murdered under Nazi persecution at formerly Jewish places—and its transformations. As the idea has generated considerable debate, her contribution to this volume elaborates on "misinterpretations," providing a positive assessment of the phenomenon: it opens up new possibilities of communication between Jews and non-Jews in spaces that have been rediscovered as Jewish or re-formed and reappropriated as such. In a sense, then, Gruber's essay also reflects directly on one of the central purposes of this volume—to call into question the still widespread dichotomy between Jews and non-Jews and their respective spaces of living, actions, and experiences and to expose the complex and intertwined nature of "the majority" and "minorities" as they manifest themselves in acts of boundary drawing.

## Outlook

Applying a spatial perspective to modern German-Jewish history, this book explores concepts and theoretical frameworks that might help scholars in and beyond the field of Jewish history to conceive of and reconsider the complexity, the interconnectedness, and the historical variability of spaces, of identities and their markers, of symbolic boundaries, and of social practices and cultural patterns of belonging. We identify spaces where identities were more fluid—spaces whose ascribed characteristics and definitions were more varied and subjected to processes of negotiation—and where diverse interrelationships emerged. The essays discuss mutual perceptions and expectations between various groups and in cultural practices of integration and segregation and of the construction, translation, and negotiation of identities in modern societies and cultures. Some of the authors focus on spaces that breached the solidity of real or symbolic boundaries or translated them into other cultural contexts; some elaborate on spaces whose limits proved immovable and thus impossible to overcome; and some look at spaces that Jews and non-Jews, acting from a range of motives, re-created and transformed. Performative aspects of the creation of new spaces and the appropriation, affirmation, and legitimation of existing ones are key to the endeavor of the whole volume,<sup>33</sup> which pays tribute to the fact that cultural and social spaces can contain multiple subspaces representing various sets of asymmetrical power relations or social hierarchies.

Although we have chosen case studies we found particularly significant for our analytical approach, this volume cannot be comprehensive. The list of questions relevant to but also beyond the German-Jewish context, which itself has still scarcely been researched, is as long as it is stimulating to further research. For instance, we still know relatively little about what made a space exclusive and “closed,” inclusive and “open,” or rather transparent and “mixed”—both in its essence as well as in how it was perceived. It is not always clear what spaces were perceived as Jewish, at what times, and by whom, nor why these perceptions changed when they did and to what extent. More work is needed to understand to what degree space-forming attitudes, perceptions, and practices were conditioned by shared religious or ethnic (Diaspora) roots, as well as how inclusive spaces of interethnic interaction and mutual recognition were constructed and supported or drained and destroyed. Moreover, it would be enlightening to investigate the ways and the extent to which Jews and non-Jews engaged in boundary drawing or attempted to transcend previously held positions and to explore how Jews have managed (or perhaps failed) to preserve what was their own in a space defined from without, in a form respected by those both within and without.

Across all facets of the issue, this book demonstrates that historical spatial perspectives uniquely enhance our awareness of the complexity and diversity of constructions of difference and strategies for negotiating it. It illustrates that cultural difference is not a solid and immutable essence but a product and subject of discourses, negotiations, and translations related to and resulting from specific temporal and spatial contexts. Thus, the dissolution of boundaries such as those between legal jurisdictions, so prevalent in the early modern period, ushered in and made space for new boundaries and new spaces. Such boundaries, and the group-related identities they engender, are invariably shaped by a range of strategies and potential courses of action that notably call for further historical research. Perspectives dominated by dichotomies, such as studies of Jews and other minorities in Germany that have focused on the opposition between assimilation and resistance thereto, have long blocked scholarship from seeing that boundaries are not fixed and inflexible but are mutable, produced as they are by political, societal, and cultural factors in specific historical contexts. Similarly, boundaries can be exclusively imagined, manifestations of processes that distinguish between who is “in” and who is “out,” even where everyday practices resist or soften these dichotomies. And boundaries as well as the spaces they mark are, finally, products of conflict-laden interaction between various groups with contrasting interests who, in drawing them, give expression to hierarchical and power relations. In consideration of all this, those engaged in historical scholarship may feel called to make boundaries, the shifts they undergo, and the spaces and spatial changes they prompt the subjects of their research, especially when their work relates to minorities such as the Jews. This perspective might enable scholars to scrutinize the nature of the majority-minority boundary itself more closely and, by acknowledging its strictly historical essence—that is, that it has never been fixed

and immutable—develop an alternative to the widely assumed characteristics frequently attributed to it.

## Notes

1. Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*; Löw, *Raumsoziologie*. See also Jerram, “Space: A Useless Category?”; and Schwerhoff, “Spaces, Places, and the Historians.”
2. Schlögel, *Im Raume*; Schlögel, “Räume und Geschichte”; Dipper and Raphael, “Raum.” There is a good overview of the spatial in historical research, albeit focused on France and German-speaking regions, in Rau, *Räume*; and multidisciplinary reflections on developments in this arena of research in Döring and Thielmann, *Spatial Turn*.
3. Silberman, Till, and Ward, *Walls, Borders, Boundaries*; Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora*; Hastings and Wilson, *Borders*. See also Agnew, “Borders on the Mind.”
4. Bachmann-Medick, “Translation”; a discussion of the concept’s value for historical research is in Lässig, “Übersetzungen in der Geschichte.”
5. Examples are Dubin, *The Port Jews of Habsburg Trieste*; Schapkow, *Role Model and Counter-Model*; Menny, *Spanien und Sepharad*.
6. On the challenges the various Christian denominations faced at the advent of modernity, see Schlögl, *Alter Glaube*.
7. Eisenstadt, “Minorities.”
8. This is related to two new perspectives on the subject. First, there is the approach championed by Dan Diner of using Jewish history as a promising route, within theories of knowledge, to accessing issues of history in general. Secondly, there is a new awareness that a number of phenomena interpreted by researchers of Jewish history in terms of Jewish “adaptation” or “conformity” were not fixed entities that Jews could “conform” to but were rather emergent in character. Thus, Jews helped to shape them; the new middle-class habitus of the period is one example. Weiss and Gross, *Jüdische Geschichte*.
9. See, e.g., Wettstein, *Diasporas and Exiles*; and Tölölyan, “Rethinking Diaspora(s).” A discussion of the category of diaspora in historical analysis can be found in Rürup, “Von der religiösen Sehnsucht zur kulturellen Differenz.”
10. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*; Tuan, *Space and Place*. On the nature of “space” as a construct and the range of perspectives research has brought to bear on it, see, *inter alia*, Günzel, *Raum*, 121–320; Rau, *Räume*.
11. Schroer, *Räume, Orte, Grenzen*, 176.
12. *Ibid.*, 145.
13. Döring and Thielmann, *Spatial Turn*, 18–19, 26, 81.
14. Schroer, “Bringing Space Back In,” in Döring and Thielmann, *Spatial Turn*, 137, argues against spatial determinism just as much as against spatial volunteerism.
15. *Ibid.*, 142.
16. Bourdieu, “Physischer, sozialer und angeeigneter physischer Raum.”
17. Pinto, “A New Jewish Identity”; Gruber, *Virtually Jewish*; Lehrer, *Jewish Poland Revisited*; Gantner and Kovács, “The Constructed Jew”; Waligórska, “Jewish Heritage Production and Historical Jewish Spaces”; Coles and Timothy, *Tourism, Diasporas and Space*; most recently: Lehrer and Meng, *Jewish Space in Contemporary Poland*.
18. Gilman and Remmler, *Reemerging Jewish Culture in Germany*.



19. Fonrobert and Shemtov, “Introduction: Jewish Conceptions and Practices of Space.” The special issue of *Jewish Social Studies* 1, no. 3 (2005) introduced collected essays focusing on biblical times and the present. Consequently, it does not have a historical focus.
20. A key interdisciplinary publication evolving from the work of this research group is Brauch, Lipphardt, and Nocke, *Jewish Topographies*; see also the essay collection Kümper et al., *Makom*.
21. Gantner and Oppenheim, eds., “Jewish Space Reloaded”; Mann, *Space and Place in Jewish Studies*; Lipis, *Symbolic Houses in Judaism*; Meitner, “The Mezuzah”; Shemtov, “Between Perspectives of Space,” 142; Fonrobert and Shemtov, “Introduction: Jewish Conceptions and Practices of Space”; Fonrobert, “The New Spatial Turn in Jewish Studies”; Baumel and Cohen, *Gender, Place and Memory*; Bodemann, *Gedächtnistheater*.
22. Cohen, *Visualizing and Exhibiting Jewish Space and History*; Ernst and Lamprecht, *Jewish Spaces*.
23. Meng, *Shattered Spaces*.
24. Baumel and Cohen, *Gender, Place and Memory*; with a clear focus on place and displacement: Cesarini, Kushner, and Shain, *Place and Displacement*; Kauders, “Emotional Geography.”
25. Kießling et al., “Räume und Wege.”
26. A report by Rotraud Ries can be found at <http://www.forum-juedische-geschichte.de/ForumBericht09.pdf> (accessed 23 March 2015).
27. Ries cites the example of the Sephardic traveler Hayyim Yosef David Azulai (1724–1806), who perceived Ashkenazic regions as hostile, uncultivated, and unwelcoming; *ibid.*, 8.
28. See, e.g., on France, Malinovich, *French and Jewish*; Haus, *Challenges of Equality*; on England, Kushner, *Anglo-Jewry since 1066*; and on the Netherlands, Frishman et al., *Borders and Boundaries*. For a comparative perspective on London, Paris, and Berlin, see Laguerre, *Global Neighborhoods*.
29. Gromova, Heinert, and Voigt, *Jewish and Non-Jewish Spaces in the Urban Context*.
30. Kümper et al., *Makom*.
31. Schroer, “Bringing Space Back In,” in Döring and Thielmann, *Spatial Turn*, 138, has a detailed discussion.
32. Döring and Thielmann, *Spatial Turn*, 26, point out that while spaces come into being in a social context, we cannot specifically generate every space socially and at times find ourselves socially placed/located within specific spaces.
33. Cf. also Hödl, *Wiener Juden*.

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