JEWISH CULTURE AND CONTEXTS

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Jewish Studies at the Crossroads of Anthropology and History

Authority, Diaspora, Tradition

EDITED BY

Ra'anan S. Boustan,
Oren Kosansky,
and Marina Rustow

PENN

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS

PHILADELPHIA

Publication of this volume was assisted by a grant from the publication fund of the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania.

Published by
University of Pennsylvania Press
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-4112
www.upenn.edu/pennpress

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Jewish studies at the crossroads of anthropology and history : authority, diaspora, tradition / edited by Ra'anan S. Boustan, Oren Kosansky, and Marina Rustow. — 1st ed.
p. cm. — (Jewish culture and contexts)
A collection of essays written by scholars invited to the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania in 2003–2004.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-8122-4303-1 (hardcover : alk. paper)
1. Judaism—Study and teaching. 2. Jews—Study and teaching. 3. Authority—Religious aspects—Judaism. 4. Jewish diaspora. 5. Tradition (Judaism) I. Boustan, Ra'anan S., 1971– II. Kosansky, Oren. III. Rustow, Marina. IV. Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies. V. Series: Jewish culture and contexts.
BM42.J485 2011
296.071—dc22

2010034237

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culture and society. I wish to thank these three individuals for their achievement; I also wish to thank the other contributors to this volume as well as the fellows who are not represented in the book but who contributed significantly to the intellectual community from which it has emerged.

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Introduction

Anthropology, History, and the Remaking of Jewish Studies

Ra'anan S. Boustan, Oren Kosansky, and Marina Rustow

This volume is organized around three terms—authority, diaspora, and tradition—that have exerted a tenacious hold on the field of Jewish studies. The centrality of these terms reflects their analytical utility for the study of the Jewish past and present: Jews from antiquity onward have made use of competing sources of legitimacy, followed patterns of geographic dispersion, and lodged claims to historical continuity; print capitalism, the existence of a Jewish state, and post-Enlightenment secularism have not rendered these terms outmoded in the least. The rough correspondence between these concepts and "native" Jewish ideas such as *masoret* (authoritative tradition) and *galut* (exile) further helps to explain their enduring status in the field. Indeed, the terms authority, diaspora, and tradition refer not only to conceptual tools derived from modern social philosophy and postcolonial theory, but also to domains of discourse within Judaism itself.

The seductive congruence between analytical and indigenous categories signals the fundamental problem that the present volume addresses. One major challenge of Jewish studies in the twenty-first century is to rethink these governing categories of inquiry and their relationship to the historical phenomena they are meant to capture. This challenge, as the field is already taking it up, begins with the recognition that analytical categories provide neither natural nor neutral frameworks of inquiry and that they can distort Jewish historical experience as much as illuminate it. It is clear enough, for instance,

that the reduction of Judaism to a matter of private conscience and personal faith, following the Protestant model, risks obscuring the institutional forms and embodied practices that have created Jewish tradition from the ground up. Analytical categories derived from normative Jewish discourse are equally limiting: for instance, paradigms of diaspora that unequivocally valorize a sacred center can hinder an appreciation of the ways Jews have sanctified certain places in diaspora; approaches that see Jewish law as the reflection of actual behavior, or even as a set of authoritative ideals, often fail to account for the fact that authority is not an imminent property of canonical texts but rather an emergent effect of the social institutions and practices in which they are embedded.[1]

The field's most important response to an excessive reliance on normative categories has been to take a more inclusive stance toward the study of Jews. Over the past forty years, Jewish studies has been characterized by a phenomenological approach that embraces all varieties of Judaism rather than privileging certain dominant ones. At its best, this particularizing approach hesitates to favor any single Jewish variant (e.g., *rabbinic* authority, *Zionist* conceptions of diaspora, *Ashkenazi* tradition), and thereby avoids the analytical pitfalls of anachronism, teleology, and ethnocentrism. Such pluralistic strategies have been especially evident in comparative projects organized around Jewish "traditions," "diasporas," "cultures," "societies," and "identities," now typically rendered in the plural.[2]

The multicultural turn in Jewish studies is the culmination of developments that reach back to the mid-twentieth century. The "new Jewish studies," as one commentator has dubbed this pluralist trend, is characterized by increasing emphasis on several forms of heterogeneity. First, pluralists have turned to a much wider assortment of texts, including previously overlooked genres and authors (qabbalistic and Hasidic writings, women's prayer manuals), newly uncovered sources (the Dead Sea Scrolls, documents from the Cairo Geniza), and recently exploited archives in Europe and its former colonies. Second, scholars are now looking beyond the text to other modes of expression, including ritual practices, spatial arrangements, artistic production, and oral performances. Third, numerous studies now pay attention to previously neglected social groups: the study of women, children, magical practitioners, tradesmen, peasants, and laborers indicates the extent to which social heterogeneity has moved to the center of Jewish studies. Finally, the field now attends more systematically to temporal and geographic heterogeneities, focusing increased attention on periods and regions previously relegated to its periphery.[3]

While recognition of these types of heterogeneity productively challenges essentialist conceptions of Judaism, the regnant pluralistic framework has its own potential limitations. Nominalist views that judge a phenomenon as Jewish according to whether some Jews recognize it as such re-essentialize the boundaries of Jewish tradition by adopting a monothetic approach, in which inclusion in the category rests on a single criterion—in this case, what Jews recognize as Jewish. Polythetic approaches to "Judaisms" and "Jewish traditions" avoid this problem by refusing to rely on any single criterion. But they just as often fail to attend adequately to the historical processes that have led to the domination of certain traditions over others, suggesting instead that each bears equal importance. The chapters in this volume put power at the center of analysis by demonstrating how the heterogeneous elements of Jewish civilization can be studied as the products of asymmetrical social relations, global political forces, and instituted textual practices. Embracing certain aspects of pluralism but also moving beyond it, the authors gathered here foreground the practices that authorize texts, artifacts, beliefs, customs, places, and populations as Jewish in the first place, and then transmit them as such throughout their historical duration.[4]

Our claim is that the best response to the dangers of essentialism is neither to give up on the potential of analytical categories such as authority, diaspora, and tradition nor to treat them merely as catchments for the empirical study of Jewish diversity. What is required, rather, is to rethink these categories in a manner that not only makes room for Jewish heterogeneity, but that also accounts for hegemony in determining the scope and substance of what has historically been incorporated into the Jewish tradition.

Beyond Disciplinary Pluralism

The increasing number of academic disciplines included within Jewish studies is one hallmark of the multicultural turn. History, religious studies, and the philological fields (most often included in departments of Near Eastern and Middle Eastern studies) still operate at the core of Jewish studies and continue to play a role in maintaining the textual emphasis that, in the past, circumscribed the field more completely. Now, however, anthropology, comparative literature, the history of art, and other disciplines are bringing non-textual and non-Western phenomena under fuller consideration. Yet accumulating a larger repertoire of methodologies to capture more levels of Jewish experience,

or turning to new academic disciplines to expand our coverage of the globe, does not necessarily help us to rethink the analytical categories and frameworks with which the field continues to work.

The current trend to include anthropology, in particular, within Jewish studies' inventory indicates the advantages as well as the potential pitfalls of disciplinary expansion. There are good reasons to applaud the recent anthropological turn: ethnographic methods shed light on social categories and processes that textual sources never fully capture, and often obscure; anthropology's still-reigning orientation toward the non-Western world facilitates the collection of detailed knowledge about previously understudied populations; and anthropology's focus on the present expands the scope of research on living Jewish communities. Anthropology has, for these reasons, taken its place as one of the privileged social sciences within a field increasingly oriented toward representing Jewish diversity on a global scale.[5]

Although a big-tent approach that includes anthropology is commendable, it also reproduces the major fault lines that continue to underlie pluralistic approaches to Jewish diversity. Within Jewish studies, anthropology functions largely to help fill the lacunae left by disciplines that typically focus on masculine, textual, and Western Jewish traditions. One less salutary effect of this disciplinary division of labor is that, beyond simply increasing our appreciation of Jewish heterogeneity, it also naturalizes the geographic and cultural boundaries according to which Jewish diversity is mapped. Indeed, because anthropology has tended to cover the more quotidian aspects of Jewish experience and its geographically "exotic" forms, there remains the danger of reinstating the old distinctions along disciplinary lines. An alternative approach requires not only new methods and topics but also new concepts that situate Jewish phenomena on both sides of the borders between texts and practices, the elite and the popular, Jews and non-Jews, the past and the present, and the East and the West.[6]

Recent developments at the crossroads of history and anthropology have helped move Jewish studies in this direction. The old distinctions between the two disciplines—one diachronic, the other synchronic; one textual, the other ethnographic; one focused on the elite, the other on the popular; one oriented toward the West, the other toward the rest—no longer hold. The revision of these vulgar contrasts and the emergence of a research agenda situated at the boundaries between them suggest alternatives to a naïve pluralism. In what follows, we delineate three such alternatives and indicate how they are already taking hold in Jewish studies. The first, following on the textual turn in anthropology and the hermeneutic turn in history, focuses on what we call textual hegemony as a way to rethink Jewish authority. The second uses the lens of postcolonial theory to refocus the study of Jewish diaspora. The third suggests that discursive tradition, as the concept is being developed especially in anthropology and religious studies, offers a productive frame for rethinking Jewish tradition.

Textual Hegemonies

The "historical turn" in twentieth-century anthropology reflected a recognition that history and anthropology, despite their methodological differences, shared the common hermeneutical problem of interpreting unfamiliar cultural "texts." Texts had previously been a point of differentiation between the two disciplines, with anthropology focused on preliterate societies and history attending to civilizations documented in written records. By the 1970s, the text, taken metaphorically to include the social actions that ethnographers observed as well as the archival evidence that historians gathered, emerged as an idiom of common purpose. Written texts themselves have also become a concrete point of intersection between the two disciplines: anthropologists attend to the textual artifacts and practices that circulate even in "ethnographic" societies, while historians look to anthropology for conceptual tools, modes of analysis, and cross-cultural comparisons to assist in the interpretation of textual sources.[7]

This interpretive and methodological rapprochement has been palpable in Jewish studies. Historians of Judaism now regularly draw on anthropological concepts and cases in the study of texts, and not only when dealing with characteristically ethnographic topics such as magic, pilgrimage, sacrifice, and rites of passage. Anthropologists, for their part, approach Jewish texts as sources of cultural history, objects of ritual and pedagogical practice, and artifacts of symbolic value. The chapters in this volume demonstrate some of the ways in which research in Jewish studies is capitalizing on the overlapping interests in textual materials and material texts that have defined the crossroads of anthropology and history.[8]

Recently, scholars working at this crossroads have moved beyond the treatment of texts as repositories of meaning, prescriptive blueprints for social life, or objects of ritual significance. This shift has been motivated by a recognition that texts are embedded within regimes of power, as are the practices with

which they are associated and the institutions that mediate their production, dissemination, and use. The turn toward the study of textual hegemony entails a focus on how concrete textual forms (legal documents, census reports, textbooks, prayer manuals, ethnographic accounts, amulets) and institutions (synagogues, mass media, courts of law, schools, archives) operate in the variable contexts of state structures, colonial empires, and global economies.[9]

Textual hegemony, as we use the idea, does not refer primarily to the power of texts to fix singular versions of otherwise heterogeneous oral narratives, or to displace previously non-textual modes of expression. While these processes have occurred in the history of Judaism, a restricted focus on the hegemony of texts fails to account for the more dynamic relationship between textual codification and non-textual forms of expression. The ascendancy of textual authority—whether represented by the early modern canonization of the printed Talmud and the *Shulḥan 'arukh* or late-modern orthodoxy's reliance on offset printing—has never entailed a monopoly of texts within Jewish life. Indeed, medieval and early modern efforts to fix the form of the Jewish liturgy led to a proliferation of diverse and competing prayer manuals rather than their reduction to a single form. Moreover, Jewish prayer books continued to mediate liturgical experiences that entailed oral recitation, bodily comportment, and a range of visual practices.[10]

Jewish textual hegemony is characterized, then, not necessarily by the supremacy of texts but by the variety of positions they occupy within an array of oral, corporeal, and visual forms of expression.[11] Because those positions have been subject to radical transformation, we use the concept of textual hegemonies to refer to the ways in which texts and textuality have crystallized into relatively enduring structures of authority. Consistent with the pluralistic approach, this analytical strategy insists that the significance of Jewish texts must be understood in their contingent historical contexts. But unlike many pluralistic approaches, the study of textual hegemonies stresses the hierarchical arrangements among various expressive media and among competing textual regimes.

To take an early example, the formation of a scribal hegemony in the temple polities of antiquity entailed the ascendancy of a restricted class of textual specialists who commanded both religious authority and political power. The monopolization of public performances of writing, reading, recitation, and textual interpretation was crucial to the consolidation of priestly and dynastic power. In the Hellenistic and Roman periods, a competing set of sociopolitical institutions and pedagogical disciplines formed an alternative mode of Jewish

textual hegemony. Dominated by the elite citizenry of the emergent polis, this rhetorical hegemony centered on the mastery of grammar, persuasion, and memorization as filtered through oral practices that competed more vigorously with textual ones. Rhetorical hegemony, however, did not replace scribal hegemony: the two overlapped in a productive tension out of which novel forms of textual power emerged.[12]

Jewish textual hegemonies are never fully autonomous, but always embedded within more extensive forms of textual domination that reach beyond Jewish society. The Temple in Jerusalem, dominated by a priestly class at the center of a sacred polity, was situated within patterns of priestly oligarchy that operated throughout the ancient Mediterranean. The emergent rabbinic movement, within which the rhetorical arts were transmitted through master-disciple relationships, was part and parcel of Greek *paideia*. A similar embeddedness can be seen with respect to the forms of the liturgical-legal hegemony that emerged in the medieval period, when the biblical text, the prayer service, and the Jewish legal corpus were canonized into written form. The attempt to fix Judaism according to textual standards controlled by rabbinic literati reflected the more widespread distribution of new technologies (for example, paper and the codex) that had measurable effects on Christianity and Islam as well. Likewise, the development or adoption of new textual genres such as responsa, institutions such as law courts, and authorities such as judges and court clerks went hand in hand with emerging forms of law, administration, and governmentality that remade both Christian and Islamic societies.[13]

The concept of textual hegemony shifts the focus from Jews' acculturation to "outside" forces to their engagement with communicative regimes across religious boundaries. Beyond taking into account the "broader" forms of textual discipline and domination that function at any given historical moment, the study of Jewish textual hegemonies examines how Jewish institutions and practices constitute those "broader" processes themselves. Thus, when a modern Jewish textual regime emerged with the return to Scripture, the standardization and diversification of prayer books, and the textual objectification of Judaism, a new denominational hegemony recast the Jewish text alternatively as a vehicle of confessional faith, a source of universal ethics, and an incontrovertible locus of tradition and authority. This happened precisely as print capitalism and the nation-state reconfigured the confessional landscape of Christian Europe. It would be wrong, however, to conclude that the modern textualization of Jewish authority was simply derivative of the Christian enlightenment or dependent on new technologies of mass communication.

Rather, Jews were an integral part of European religious transformation, just as the Jewish press was formative in the expansion of public literacy in Eastern European and Ottoman society.[14]

This reappraisal also refines pluralistic approaches that continue to rely on facile—and teleological—distinctions between modernity (conceived of as secular, democratic, and global) and tradition (conceived of as religious, stratified, and provincial). As recent research in anthropology and history makes clear, the "secular" emerged through new relationships between religion, polity, and power rather than through their slow disaggregation. The modernness of Jewish denominational hegemony, in this light, is characterized not by the receding reach of religion into politics, but rather by a reconfiguration of the relationship between the two. The maskilim of early modern Europe were no less implicated in states and empires than were the priests of antiquity. Along the same lines, the effects of modern mechanical reproduction and mass dissemination cannot be reduced to the secular fragmentation and democratization of Judaism. Jewish textual traditions had never been monolithic, and they continued to be structured by hierarchies of authorship, production, and distribution. The contemporary technologies and economies of Judaism are modern, rather, primarily insofar as they have exposed increasingly literate Jewish publics to textual discipline through institutions such as publishing houses, schools, universities, and seminaries.[15]

Similarly, the modernity of Jewish denominational movements is not reducible to their global scale. Jewish mobility is not, of course, unique to recent centuries: trans-regional trade networks, pilgrimage routes, charitable missions, travel in pursuit of learning, and forced relocations have facilitated the dissemination of Jewish textual hegemonies across global empires since antiquity. Movements such as the Alliance Israélite Universelle, with a network of Jewish schools that once extended across several continents, and Ḥabad Ḥasidism, with its worldwide outreach, are modern because they have relied on modes of communication (print media; the Internet) and transportation (steamships; air travel) that reworked, rather than created, Jewish diasporic globalism. As significantly, these movements are modern because they were made possible by European and American empires: the Paris-based Alliance was an extension of the French imperial project; the missionary reach of the Brooklyn-based Ḥabad movement reflects the expansion of American political and economic power. Accordingly, new directions in Jewish studies focus on how colonialism and empire reconstituted the diaspora as a terrain of Jewish diversity and an object of knowledge.[16]

Trans-regional historical processes are, therefore, inseparable from the formation of Jewish textual hegemonies. For this reason, a fully adequate approach to Jewish authority demands consideration of the circulation of people, objects, and practices across global terrains.

Beyond Diaspora Essentialism

A second salient point of intersection between anthropology and history is diaspora studies. The study of diaspora is no longer associated primarily with the Jewish case, but also with colonial and postcolonial migrations and with global circuits of labor. This broader conception of diaspora has productively destabilized the boundaries that were once thought to define relatively isolated societies and national territories. Insofar as the Jewish diaspora preceded recent patterns of mobility and fragmentation, the study of Jews has provided a historical counterpoint to postmodern inclinations to view diaspora as a resolutely contemporary condition.[17]

Surprisingly, the concept of diaspora has played a largely conservative role within Jewish studies. While Zionist-oriented scholarship has cast the diaspora as the defining counterpoint to a more genuine national-territorial Jewish identity, a countervailing tendency has been to claim extraterritoriality itself as the principle locus of Jewish historical identity. Even some scholars who otherwise insist on flexible and non-hermetic forms of identity have asserted that the diaspora is the sine qua non of Jewish authenticity. The substitution of the diaspora for a territorial homeland as the uniquely genuine space of Jewish identity reverts to the very forms of essentialism that the concept has so usefully disrupted when deployed in other cases. Recent academic disputes over whether the Israeli nation-state represents the zenith of Jewish vitality and the fruition of Jewish national destiny or Jewish agency and creativity have thrived primarily in the diaspora demonstrate the point. Both sides of this hoary debate share the reflex to search for a single mode of authentic Jewish identity that excludes others. Discounting territoriality, in any of its ancient or modern forms, as a central Jewish motif bears as much potential for essentialism as does rooting Jewish identity exclusively in a territorial homeland.[18]

Other scholars have avoided the question of authenticity, preferring to demonstrate the intricate dialectics of Jewish homelands and diasporas.[19] Research in this vein shows, for example, how Jews have identified with diasporic

homes by creatively revising and reapplying Jewish idioms of sacred homeland. The existence of "little Jerusalems" across the globe provides only a glimpse of the social and semiotic mechanisms through which Jews have made diasporic places into Jewish homelands. Conversely, even Jews motivated partly by liturgical fervor to return "to Jerusalem" have experienced modern Israel as a place of exile. The celebration of the Moroccan festival of *mimuna* in Israel, for instance, is partly an expression of postcolonial nostalgia for a lost North African homeland. At their best, studies of such phenomena destabilize the homeland-diaspora paradigm by demonstrating that it has never provided a single, simple, or uncontested map of Jewish space.[20]

Yet even the most nuanced approaches to diaspora and homeland, in which they are taken as mutually constituting categories and geographically fluid spaces, do not necessarily call into question the dualistic terms of the model itself. This oversight partly reflects the analytical internalization of native Jewish and Zionist categories. But it also points toward the fact that Jewish studies emerged as a Western academic discourse in an age of European colonialism and nation building. A deep-seated dualism also reflects discourses of empire that bifurcate global space in other binary terms, such as Occident and Orient, metropole and colony, and First World and Third World. Indeed, Jewish studies emerged as part of a long history in which Jews were both objects and propagators of orientalist discourses and colonial projects. Only recently has the field started coming to grips with what Ivan Kalmar and Derek Penslar have identified as a significant relationship between orientalism and the Jews.[21]

Within Europe, Jews were for centuries cast as others whose semitic bodies, Levantine roots, and Eastern mentalities placed them outside the religious, racial, geographic, and civilizational sphere of the West. European Jews were subjected to forms of ethnographic representation, administrative regulation, residential segregation, and bodily violence that were concurrently and subsequently applied to colonized societies.[22] But Jews were not only the passive objects of representational and regulatory practices. Although over the course of the Enlightenment, some Jews (and Christians) attempted to recuperate the oriental Jewish past as the origin of Western rationality and spirituality, the rhetoric of European Jewish emancipation relied heavily on teleological narratives in which that past gave way to a modern European or Zionist future. Indeed, European Jews applied their own orientalist discourses to non-European Jews, representing them with the same oppositions—between civilized and savage, rational and superstitious, literate and oral—that justified the Western

imperial project and that framed the implementation of colonial rule. In the Jewish case, orientalism also reflected a unique investment in the teleological narratives of Jewish emancipation, which cast Arab, Turkish, Persian, and Russian Jews as exemplars of the feudal, superstitious, and parochial past that Western Jews had already escaped. As colonizers, Jews established their own imperial ventures couched in term of education, philanthropy, and advocacy for their Eastern European, North African and Middle Eastern coreligionists. Organizations such as the Alliance, and later the American Joint Distribution Committee, reproduced imperial hierarchies of cultural difference and mapped the Jewish diaspora accordingly.[23]

One enduring effect of Jewish orientalism has been the resignification of the terms "Sefaradi" and "Ashkenazi" to encompass the entire Jewish diaspora and to divide it along a single axis of difference. The globalization of these terms partly reflected the late medieval and early modern migrations and expulsions that led Sefaradi and Ashkenazi liturgies, customs, and legal precepts to dominate those of local Jewish communities. The meaning of the term "Sefaradi" ultimately expanded to include not only Jews who traced their ancestry directly to the Iberian Peninsula but also all those located within Europe's Islamic colonies; this semantic generalization entailed the leveling of locally salient distinctions between Sefaradi immigrants and native Jewish communities (such as *megorashim* and *toshavim* in Morocco and Sefaradim and Romaniote in Ottoman realms). In the lexicon of Jewish ethnicity in Israel, the term "Mizraḥi" ("oriental") has largely replaced Sefaradi, with the new term retaining, and even augmenting, the capacity to encompass and homogenize Jews from Europe's former colonies.[24]

The academic representation of the Jewish diaspora has perpetuated these modern topographies of European hegemony. Jewish studies continues to be organized into subdivisions, research centers, conference panels, and edited volumes that follow from the colonial heritage. "Sefaradi studies" and "Mizraḥi studies" are marked categories in Jewish scholarship in a way that, with rare exceptions, "Ashkenazi studies" is not. Likewise, the study of Jews in the modern Islamic world remains predominantly an anthropological and folkloric enterprise, whereas Jews of the Christian West have been taken up primarily as objects of historical and sociological inquiry.[25]

The growing number of ethnographic studies that deal with Jewish communities in postwar Europe as well as of historical monographs about Jews in former colonies represents a welcome change from disciplinary conventions that follow closely from the colonial bifurcation of the Jewish diaspora.[26]

Likewise, other conventional dichotomies are now being questioned. Rather than retrojecting binaries such as Christians and Jews, priests and rabbis, and Qaraites and Rabbanites onto periods before they existed, scholars are now attending to the gradual and uneven processes through which these categories emerged.[27]

Along these lines, recent research in Jewish studies works explicitly across imperial and national boundaries. In the wake of 1391 and 1492, Sefaradi identity functioned as a mode of Jewish cosmopolitanism that reached from Europe across the Mediterranean and into the Levant. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Jews continued to play an important role as diplomatic, economic, and cultural intermediaries between Europe and its colonial possessions. As North Africans and Middle Easterners, Jews were selectively cultivated as colonial intermediaries through the efforts of institutions such as the Alliance and through diplomatic regimes such as the protégé system by which European powers granted some Jews limited legal protection. Recent research has demonstrated how Jewish trade networks, commodity exchanges, diplomacy, philanthropy, and ritual practices linked empires (e.g., European and Ottoman) and moved between metropoles and colonies.[28]

The study of global networks within the Jewish diaspora also prompts a reconsideration of the nationalist scaffolding that still girds much work within Jewish studies. For the most part, pluralistic approaches have moved well beyond the competing nationalisms, both European and Zionist, previously embedded in the practice of Jewish history. Devoid of such commitments, the study of Jewish diasporic diversity along national lines succeeds best in documenting the wide variety of traditions and identities that took shape in local and national contexts. A growing set of historical and ethnographic monographs dedicated to premodern and non-European Jewries moves even further by questioning the applicability of nation-state idioms to Jewish society.[29]

Even so, the uneven mapping of the Jewish diaspora continues to reflect postcolonial and nationalist legacies. In comparison with the vast library of meticulous historical monographs on Jews of Western Europe and North America, there are fewer full-length studies about colonial and postcolonial Jewish communities. The nation-states that emerged from former colonies tend to be lumped together into regions that recapitulate orientalist topography. The recent spate of edited volumes on Jews from non-Western regions of the world is an important development, but such collections bear the potential to reinscribe a colonial divide on the far side of which lie the cumulative populations of the East.[30]

Explicitly comparative studies also tend to portray a world divided along the lines of the nation-state. To take one prominent example, it has been proposed that the diaspora offers "laboratory-like" conditions for the study of Jewish adaptation to diverse national environments. But national contexts are not naturally bounded ecosystems; they come into being and change through long histories of interaction that contaminate the purity of the samples (the local Jewish communities) upon which the model depends for its coherence. This model also focuses on how Jews (as dependent variables) adapt to their environments, while paying less attention to the converse process. Medieval European religious disputations, for example, did not merely force Jews to respond to their Christian environment; such events were part of the processes though which medieval Christianity came into being and defined itself. The same can be said for German National Socialism, Moroccan monarchism, or the American civil rights movement.[31]

Comparative projects of this sort also represent the stubborn persistence of "host society" models, in which the diaspora appears to be made up of bounded national or imperial contexts into which Jews intruded or, at the very least, in which they remained a discrete minority. The analytic approach to Jews as "guests" is, of course, not the same as characterizing them as "parasites," but both implications of the "host" society metaphor follow the same exclusionary logic according to which Jewish difference is objectified and taken as the axiomatic starting point for analysis. Conversely, the host-society model implies a homogenous national context against which Jewish difference is thrown into unique relief. Insofar as ancient and modern empires were linguistically, ethnically, and religiously diverse, applying the concept of a host society to premodern contexts seems to retroject a nationalist logic onto contexts from which that logic was largely absent.[32]

In its blunter forms, the host-society model has framed studies of Jewish "assimilation" and "acculturation" into societies presumed to preexist the Jews. Critiques in the pluralist mode have pointed to this model's failure to recognize that Jews also contributed to the creation of those societies. Among the insights to emerge from this more nuanced and dialectical approach is the recognition that Jews have crafted their own distinctive identities by borrowing and subverting motifs from the cultures in which they live—a process that Ivan Marcus has termed "inward acculturation."[33] But the underlying structure of the host society–minority model persists even in some pluralistic approaches that dispense with those terms. One is left confused, for example, by contradictory exhortations to avoid seeing Jews as outsiders who "borrowed

from" surrounding cultures, and at the same time to appreciate how Jewish minorities "adopted non-Jewish beliefs or practices but infused them with traditional Jewish symbols."[34] The idea that Jewish communities should be viewed as one organ in a larger organism corresponds with old sociological models that presupposed a boundary of discrete identity (the organ) within an encompassing context (the organism). Likewise, "acculturation," "assimilation," and "adaptation" have surprisingly remained part of the analytical tool kit of Jewish studies even as those terms have been increasingly challenged in history and anthropology.[35]

An acute contradiction, then, characterizes the pluralistic turn in Jewish studies. On the one hand, new approaches offer a better appreciation of how Jewish beliefs, practices, and identities come into being at the social and cultural border between Jews and others. On the other hand, such studies continue to rely on concepts, models, and metaphors that presume that the boundary has already been fixed. Moving beyond these approaches requires a full-fledged revision of how we understand the scope and substance of diaspora. It also requires accounting in a more complex fashion for Jewish tradition and the formation of Jews within it.

Judaism as a Discursive Tradition

Tradition, as the concept has been revised at the junction of anthropology and history, is no longer a catch-all category for everything premodern. The study of tradition is now characterized, rather, by a more complex understanding of the relationship between a putatively static past and a dynamic present. The distinguishing elements of colonized cultures (social structures, religious rituals, legal systems, languages) no longer appear as timeless holdovers, but instead as traditions "invented" by ethnographic practices of representation and harnessed to administrative strategies of control. Modernity, in turn, is no longer studied as the successor to tradition, but rather as its golden age, within which both long-standing cultural practices and new ones are institutionally objectified by reference to the legitimating past.[36]

Within Jewish studies, cataloging the varieties of Jewish historical expression across time and place goes a long way toward dispelling the view that tradition is a homogenous counterpoint to modernity. Examining Zionism as a manifestation of Jewish modernity, for example, suggests some of the ways in which novel political forms rely heavily on traditionalizing claims to communal and territorial continuity. Other modern Jewish projects that claim to be deeply conservative, such as denominational orthodoxy, have utilized modern means (bureaucratic, mechanical, capitalist) to objectify "tradition" and make it into a new kind of authorizing discourse. The geography of tradition and modernity is likewise being remapped. Jewish law in the "traditional" Middle East, for example, has been shown to be at least as flexible as its "modern" reformist and orthodox counterparts in the West.[37]

An emphasis on the multiplicity and dynamism of Jewish traditions does not, however, necessarily lead to an effective critique of the analytical models that continue to essentialize tradition within Jewish studies. Pluralistic scholarship has yet to offer a fully developed alternative to the essentialization of either Jewish textual unity ("the Jewish tradition") or Jewish heterogeneity ("Jewish traditions"). We suggest that the idea of discursive tradition, as elaborated by Talal Asad, can productively reorient our approach to the various types of Jewish heterogeneity (textual, expressive, social, and temporal/geographic) that pluralistic approaches to Jewish traditions have highlighted but not adequately reconceptualized.[38]

Judaism is a discursive tradition only partly because it makes reference to a set of foundational texts. Those practicing in the name of Judaism have generally agreed on the authority of texts, but just as significantly, Jews have contested which texts are canonical, which interpreters authoritative, and which hermeneutical methods legitimate. The notion of discursive tradition, then, takes us beyond a limited corpus of foundational texts and instead focuses our attention on the processes through which *every* Jewish text potentially participates in the creation of a canon and the modes of authority associated with it.[39]

The study of Jewish textual heterogeneity cannot, therefore, be simply a matter of collecting texts while presuming or leaving unquestioned the processes that made them canonical or failed to do so. This is one insight that follows from the phenomenological turn in Jewish studies, in which Gershom Scholem and Jacob Neusner stand as towering figures. As a result of their work, the field attends more carefully to what is at stake in the dynamic processes of textual canonization. Subsequent scholarship has extended their phenomenological approach from the centers of Jewish canonical authority deeper into the peripheries. Studies in this vein demonstrate that even the most "marginal" of hagiographic, magical, mystical, millennial, or paraliturgical texts do not simply draw on more authoritative textual traditions; marginal texts themselves are constitutive elements of those traditions.[40]

Ethnographic research can be especially useful in forging an appreciation of how even the most marginal of Jewish texts are read, understood, and employed as full constituents of "Torah," that is, of authoritative textual tradition—only sometimes against the grain of competing elite propositions. A Moroccan Jew, for example, can see a twentieth-century Judeo-Arabic hagiographic text as an exemplar of Torah by virtue of her familiarity with the graphic forms—typefaces, page arrangements, decorative motifs—it shares with the prayer books, volumes of Talmud, Hebrew texts framed for home decoration, Torah scrolls, and mezuzot that she knows from the bibliographically dense Jewish landscape she inhabits. Such a phenomenological rethinking of Jewish textual canonicity moves well beyond the now largely suspect model of "great" and "little" traditions, which presumed a wide gap between the universal, textual, and elite aspects of "world religions" and their local, ritual, and popular manifestations. The well-recognized problems with this model pertain no less to Judaism: "local" Jewish beliefs and practices have their cosmopolitan dimensions; texts circulate among illiterate Jews; religious elites engage in ritual practices from which they draw much of their authority.[41]

It would therefore be a mistake to limit the phenomenological investigation of Jewish canonicity to the ethnographic study of how texts are received by the Jewish "masses." Rather, ethnographic and textual approaches must converge in a phenomenological approach to the expansion and experience of the canon itself. The marginal books, vernacular hymns, and local liturgies encountered by Jews less well versed in texts are likely to have been written by rabbis schooled in the canonical arts of Jewish learning and literacy. Local Jewish authors compose texts using rhetorical and generic strategies that determine Jewish canonicity more universally. Such authorizing strategies include the use of Hebrew, Hebrew characters, rabbinic attributions, biblical quotations, commentary in the midrashic style, ancient and medieval liturgical forms, and so forth.[42] Those who deny the canonicity of "heterodox" texts must ignore, willfully or not, the densely packed literary mechanisms that function to authenticate the work in question.

Neither the masses nor the elites, then, monopolize textual canonicity. The rabbi who writes a hagiography, those who read it to themselves or to their children, and those who hear it all partake in the text's incorporation into the Judaic canon. Moreover, rather than dividing Jewish societies into elite and popular classes, it helps to recall that most Jews are situated somewhere in the middle as semiliterate, modestly schooled, and institutionally intermediate social actors. Circumcisers, ritual butchers, cantors, schoolteachers, scribes, mortuary guardians, minimally trained bar mitzvah boys, pious laypeople, and anyone who can recognize and appreciate the formal qualities of a Jewish text without necessarily being able to read it him- or herself all confirm the authority of situated canonical Jewish texts without necessarily being able to compose or even read them.[43]

Understanding Jewish textual heterogeneity is not simply a matter of pushing back the boundaries of the Jewish canon; it requires rethinking the idea of the canon itself. Jewish texts do not naturally sort into an authoritative hierarchy based on relative proximity to a canonical core, whether defined by the Hebrew Bible, the Talmud, or other formative Jewish texts. Putatively foundational and marginal texts alike become and remain canonical as the result of concrete social, semiotic, and rhetorical mechanisms with which Jews authenticate, promote, and contest the inclusion of certain texts as "Torah." That even those Jewish texts whose normative status has been most widely accepted harness such mechanisms more or less effectively is clear from the myriad works rejected as noncanonical, from modern reform movements back through the long processes of rabbinic redaction and biblical canonization.[44]

To ignore these points is to substitute the leveling aesthetics of multiplicity, pluralism, and conversation for the historical realities of imposition, debate, and dissension. Approaching Judaism as a discursive tradition, by contrast, entails recognizing that the assertion of power is integral to the formation of any recognizable canon. The discursive quality of Jewish tradition alludes to what Brinkley Messick has called the authority *in* texts, by which he means the way their authority emerges formally, rhetorically, and graphically in relationship to other texts, both within the tradition and outside it. Messick also calls our attention to the authority *of* texts as they function in relationship to non-textual modes of practice. What makes a tradition discursive, then, is not only that it is textually mediated, but that textual mediation itself takes place within a broader range of expressive forms that have their own authoritative weight.[45]

While the pluralistic turn has brought Jewish studies to this important recognition, most scholarship continues to presume that texts provide the anchor for other modes of Jewish expression. Even the pluralists within Jewish studies continue to proclaim the text as the authoritative and centripetal force that binds together diverse Jewish traditions. Of course, historians must rely on texts when other evidence is absent. Yet, the textual emphasis that still dominates Jewish studies has its own modern genealogy. Although textual authority has obviously operated within Judaism since antiquity, mod-

ern communicative regimes recentered the text as the unequivocal source of "normative," "traditional," and "authentic" Judaism; the scripturalist values of religious reformism converged with print capitalism to reify the text as both the unparalleled receptacle of divine revelation and a fetishized commodity with its own generative power. This is not to say that texts were insignificant to Judaism before the modern period. It is simply to point out that modern modes of producing, distributing, and reading texts have determined how scholars of Judaism conceive of Jewish textuality. The scholarly focus on the text also reflects modern Judaic aversions to the material, embodied, and visual manifestations of Jewish tradition.[46]

In recent decades, historians and ethnographers of Judaism have begun to work against the textualist grain by studying Jewish artifacts (art, crafts, architecture, gravesites, amulets, clothing, tools, machines, broadsheets, codices) and practices (pilgrimage, magic, pietism, gastronomy, life-cycle events) as integral constituents of Jewish tradition. Yet, even as Jewish studies attends more closely to non-textual forms of expression, textual analysis remains the default mode of research in the field.[47] Moreover, the balanced attention that some scholars now give to the interactions between texts and practices has not extended equally to the study of Jewish traditions across the globe. In some cases, in fact, the challenge facing Jewish studies is to focus more intently on texts. The long Christian history of representing Jews as carnal rather than spiritual, material rather than philosophical, orthoprax rather than orthodox, is still evident in scholarship on Middle Eastern Jews that overemphasizes the practical and material sides of Judaism and neglects the textual. The folklorization of North African and Levantine Jews reflects the once dominant scholarly inclination to view these groups as "traditional"—illiterate, oral, practical, superstitious—and therefore as more appropriately studied with ethnographic methods than textual ones. Judeo-Arabic, Judeo-Spanish, and Judeo-Persian literatures were seen to occupy non-serious popular genres; scholars mostly overlooked the prolific textual production and venerable literary traditions that extended well beyond what was preserved in the Cairo Geniza or produced during the Andalusian golden age.[48] Only recently have scholars begun to redress these oversights by looking more closely at the pervasive textuality of non-European Jewish communities: historical studies now focus more regularly on Middle Eastern rabbinic and literary traditions, and ethnographic studies deal with the production of textual artifacts, the centrality of textual institutions, the circulation of textual materials, and the practice of textual rituals in North African and other societies.[49]

The pluralistic turn in Jewish studies also represents the recognition that the placement of texts in evaluative and experiential Jewish hierarchies is always subject to negotiation. Texts are rarely absent from fields of Jewish experience and authority, even when books are relatively unavailable and illiteracy prevalent; but neither does textuality always dominate within hierarchies of expressive authority that include other practices as well.[50] Beyond this insight, however, the relationship between text and practice remains ill conceptualized. Judaism is composed not only of texts and practices, with the latter either flouting or enacting normative written prescriptions; it is also composed of textual practices through which the tradition performatively emerges. A discursive approach highlights the capacity that such textual practices harbor to endure as citable marks of Jewish tradition, a tradition that is thereby inscribed in the writings, images, sounds, and habits that, transmitted across generations, contribute to the formation of Jews as Jews.[51]

Attention to the transmissibility of Judaism across a range of media also provides an alternative to pluralistic approaches: a discursive approach to Jewish tradition shifts focus from seemingly static social divisions across lines of gender, class, education, and prestige to the social production of internally differentiated Jewish subjects. Such an inquiry begins with the instituted practices through which Jews are disciplined into Jewishness across the entire range of expressive media and contexts. This approach requires the study of Jewish education and pedagogy, but also of the pietistic, artistic, professional, medical, judicial, and other institutions through which Judaism is daily transmitted. Every iteration of Jewish expression is necessarily an act of transmission for those who experience and witness it, just as every strategy of Jewish transmission is also a form of Jewish expression. Like all traditions, Judaism is, in this sense, a performative one. The fact that its transmission is always imperfect—characterized by both rupture and continuity—need not be viewed as a threat. It is an inherent feature of all living traditions, which must remain mutable in order to survive.[52]

Even practices performed and identities cultivated against the grain of the dominant forms of Judaism in any given context are part of the discursive tradition. This seems clearest at those formative moments when the difference between the Jewish and the non-Jewish was unclear and debated. But the principle holds no less with respect to crypto-Jews in Spain and the Sefaradi diaspora, Ethiopian Hebrews, or modern Jewish messianists ("Jews for Jesus"). Our point is not the nominalist one that all those who call themselves Jewish are part of the tradition, though this is a conclusion to which the present

analysis may lead. Our point is rather that the supposed boundaries of Jewish tradition are the emergent effects of social interactions, theological apologetics, heresiologies, legal pronouncements, and other statements and iterations of power. The boundaries are not intrinsic or transcendent features of Jewish tradition itself.[53]

Likewise, the boundaries that distinguish Jews from others are determined neither entirely by Jews, as theorists of Jewish agency would have it, nor by others, as ideologues of Jewish victimization in the diaspora once held. Rather, Jewish identity is established dialogically by Jews and non-Jews who possess, wield, and resist the power to set those boundaries. In some cases, boundary setting occurs collusively, as when the Jews of modern France denied their racial distinctiveness (as *juifs*) while emphasizing their spiritual inclusion in what elsewhere came to be called the Judeo-Christian ethic; non-Jewish republican apologists accepted and elaborated similar discourses of French national identity within which secularized Jews appeared as exemplary citizens whose confessional religious identity (as *israélites*) properly receded into the private sphere of civil society. In other cases, Jews have had identities inescapably foisted upon them, as when those very same claims to citizenship came under fire from countervailing discourses of French national purity and racialized semitic difference.[54]

The boundaries between competing Jewish identities and variant Jewish traditions come into being though a similarly dialogic process. European Jews represented themselves as "brethren" to Jews in the colonies, often by reference to common ancestral identity. At the same time, European Jews also emphasized both the superiority of their own civilization, in which they positioned themselves as beneficiaries of emancipation, and the backwardness of their Arabic-speaking coreligionists. Colonized Jews did not remain silent, as when local rabbinic authorities called into question the Jewish authenticity of religious educators in the Alliance schools. At the same time, colonized Jews resisted their treatment as undifferentiated natives (*indigènes*), often by denying the Arab identity imposed upon them.[55]

This fraught play of identities indicates that Judaism and Jewishness are not transmitted homogenously through disciplinary institutions with a monopoly on determining what remains inside and outside the boundaries of tradition. Rather, the tradition is transmitted heterogeneously through competing institutions. The Alliance schools, for instance, never fully displaced other institutions of Jewish socialization in shaping the subjectivities of their colonized Jewish students: students cut class to make pilgrimages to saints' shrines; Jewish parents who sent their children to study science continued to patronize magicians and amulet writers; just when the Alliance had successfully inculcated Francophonie and French came to prevail over Arabic in quotidian Jewish conversation, the popular Judeo-Arabic press experienced unparalleled growth. Moroccan Jewish subjectivity, like all forms of subjectivity, is not merely divided along lines of class, gender, educational achievement, and so forth; it is divided within every individual.[56]

This view of discursive subjectivity also puts us in a position to rethink the local and global extents of Jewish tradition. Calling Judaism a "total way of life" is misleading if, by that claim, one means that Jews in the "traditional" past led lives determined entirely by precepts of Jewish law and custom: the Jew who served time in an Ottoman jail, paid port taxes in Aden, apprenticed as a metalworker in Tunisia, composed a sonata in Germany, or went to a baseball game in Brooklyn indicates otherwise. Judaism has never had the exclusive capacity to form the identities and subjectivities of individual Jews. Judaism is a total system only in the sense that every act committed in its name indexes a set of institutional practices that does not necessarily respect the boundaries that ideally define the autonomous realms of modern civil society (religious, legal, educational, economic, domestic, and political).[57]

Nor should the totality of Judaism be confused with the assertions of particular orthodoxies, whose power to shape what is normative is always limited. The secular American Jew who gives money to the Ḥabad movement represents both the power and weakness of normative Jewish projects. This does not mean, as some have asserted, that Jewish normativity is characteristically sectarian in the absence of a centralized Jewish clergy. Jews have established numerous structures of centralized authority—from the Jerusalem Temple and the gaonic yeshivot to the Consistoire and the Israeli state—and those structures possessed or negotiated access to coercive power.[58] Likewise, Jewish normativity is not distinctive by virtue of reference to the past or rejection of it; as in other traditions, the Jewish past is a normative benchmark to be variously utilized or deliberately ignored. Jewish orthodoxies are normative, then, not because they successfully discipline every Jew, fully monopolize Jewish authority, or maintain continuity with the past. Orthodoxies are normative because they assert, more or less successfully, disciplinary, authoritative, and rhetorical power. In this regard, the pluralist inclination to move "beyond" Jewish normativity by dismissing it as a "second order" construct that produces an illusory essentialism fails to account for the ways in which orthodoxy is, in fact, a mode of power. Normative Judaism is a very real effect of the

discursive construction of the Jewish tradition and the disciplinary processes that form Jewish reasoning minds and practicing bodies.[59]

Finally, if Judaism is in any sense a global tradition, this is not because it brings together a worldwide community within a stable discourse of common identity. Indeed, Jews have often experienced difficulty in establishing common ground, whether they have found themselves circumscribed within relatively local contexts or troubled by the conflict between diasporic identities and Zionist ones.[60] Rather, Judaism and Jewishness are global because they circulate in cosmopolitan networks of mobility and communication, within which relatively autonomous religious traditions and identities reflect and refract each other. As we have been arguing, Jewish tradition is always contaminated by others and contaminates them in return. In this sense, Judaism is discursive because it is heteroglossic and hybrid—constituted, and not merely modified, at the boundary between "interfering" religious systems, whether the local and imperial religions of the ancient Near East and Mediterranean or Christianity and Islam.

Jewish studies, especially in its pluralist incarnations, has moved well beyond the evaluative discourses of orthodoxy and nationalism, which, for different reasons, cast Judaism as an essentially autonomous tradition. Notions such as hybridity have become key frames of analysis that have reoriented Jewish studies to the borders between Judaism and other discursive traditions. Indeed, even potentially outmoded analytical categories such as acculturation and syncretism have recently been revised so that they no longer follow derivatively from native concepts, such as heresy and apostasy (*minut*, *kefira*), that make hybridity appear to be the exception rather than the rule. Attempts to recuperate these analytical categories, once associated with naïve essentialism, represent one important step in the remaking of Jewish studies at the crossroads of anthropology and history. The recuperation of other such categories—including authority, diaspora, and tradition—represents a next step forward.[61]

Authority, Diaspora, and Tradition

We have argued that the three rubrics into which we have divided this book—authority, diaspora, and tradition—remain indispensable to the field of Jewish studies, despite their overburdened genealogies within various Jewish discourses as well as in the field itself. When properly reconceptualized, all three bear the potential to remake Jewish studies in fundamental ways. We are also convinced that these three critical terms are viable as analytical categories only when understood and deployed in concert. With that in mind, we offer the reader a guide to the book's contents.

The book's first section includes studies that move beyond abstract or prescriptive statements about where authority resides "in Judaism" and attend, instead, to how various institutional modes (political, religious, cultural) and media (texts, practices, artifacts) have, in practice, served to establish and contest authority in specific Jewish contexts. The chapters in this section thus emphasize the constructed nature of authority and, more interestingly, the conditions for its transformation and even corrosion.

Riv-Ellen Prell's fine-grained account of an intense social drama that unfolded at Camp Ramah during the summer of 1965 presents a case in which conflicting claims to authority drew upon competing Jewish discourses. Prell analyzes how campers and staff reacted to a group of Black Jews who spent a Sabbath on the Ramah campus. She argues that the partial accommodations that the various participants reached regarding the eligibility of Black Jews to be called to the Torah heralded the emergence of a novel form of Jewish subjectivity that was grounded in American discourses of racial justice. As Prell demonstrates, the controversy brought to a head unresolved tensions between Conservative Jewish views of halakhah and what some in the camp community viewed as the equally authoritative Jewish imperatives embodied by the civil rights movement.

J. H. Chajes's chapter on the discourses and uses of magic within rabbinic culture analyzes the capacity of individual rabbis to navigate competing modes of authority. Chajes attends to rabbinic elites' tactical participation in activities that they themselves deemed to be illicit and potentially dangerous. From antiquity to modernity, these elites exhibited a finely tuned sense of how best to negotiate this fraught but also potentially empowering domain. Chajes shows that rabbis adopted a wide range of postures, at times distancing themselves from potentially suspect practices while also claiming magical expertise in order to bolster their own authority in the context of widely held ideologies of supernatural efficacy.

As Yoram Bilu demonstrates, audiences, no less than authors, participate in the construction and deterioration of authority. In his analysis of the rise and fall of a saint's shrine in contemporary Israel, Bilu charts the space between the personal dreamworld of a single individual and the shared cultural framework of a wider community. Bilu examines how the ongoing process of

dream narration initiated by the shrine's impresario authenticated devotional practice at the shrine by using a recognizable vocabulary shared by others. The site thus owed its short-lived success to the formation of an identifiable, if relatively transitory, community that came together through the "public" circulation in speech and writing of "private" dream experiences.

Like Bilu's chapter, Shalom Sabar's study of Jewish marriage contracts (*ketubbot*) accords special prominence to the performative dimension of authority. Sabar focuses his analysis on the interplay between widespread rabbinic norms and divergent iconographic conventions. Sabar asks how the written formulas prescribed by rabbinic law, the ornamental motifs of local artistic traditions, and the materiality of the object itself have worked in concert to produce legally binding agreements as well as affectively charged artifacts. He finds that the authority of marriage documents emerges from their performative force in the ritual settings that transform inert objects into both legitimate contracts and protective amulets.

The second section of this volume ranges over the *longue durée* of the Jewish diaspora, from Mediterranean antiquity to the period of modern Jewish nationalism. The authors in this section demonstrate how Jews have regularly contested both the primacy of a single sacred center in the Holy Land and the meaning of dispersion, often undermining the very dichotomy between diaspora and sacred center.

Ra'anan S. Boustan's essay on the fate of the Temple vessels in rabbinic sources from the centuries after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem invites us to reconsider the tension between views of diaspora as either the unequivocal site of Jewish degradation or the unparalleled context of creative authenticity. He argues that new modes of religious authority grounded in rabbinic practices of Torah study did not entirely displace the authority of visual experience, especially with respect to the material artifacts associated with the Temple in Jerusalem and its priestly rituals. Rather, the materiality of authority as it had been elaborated in the cultic center remained a frame of reference even within a self-consciously text-centered rabbinic Judaism.

Lucia Raspe's study of medieval mortuary practices focuses on how the "graves of the righteous" contributed to the formation of Jewish identity in the diaspora. Extending research on Jewish pilgrimages and shrines that has focused primarily on North African and Hasidic contexts, Raspe traces the development of similar traditions in the heart of Ashkenaz. She shows that enshrinement in the medieval German context corresponded with corollary Christian traditions, but also took shape in the crucible of relatively autonomous Judaic ideologies, liturgical customs, and rabbinic debates. Raspe argues that the graves of the righteous served to establish diasporic places as sacred Jewish homes, even as those homes came to be imagined in ways that reinforced the paradigm of an orienting Jewish center in the Holy Land.

Andrea Schatz's analysis of Samuel Romanelli's *Masa' ba'ʾav* reminds us that Jewish diasporic identity is not always negotiated with reference to territorial homelands and diasporas. Her essay explores how an eighteenth-century Italian maskil, in his depiction of the Jewish communities of Morocco, used a set of rhetorical tactics that recapitulated orientalist representations of the East as a distant place of radical otherness. Yet Schatz also insists that Romanelli inflected Christian orientalism by invoking points of identity that linked him to his North African interlocutors. Schatz provocatively concludes that Romanelli's text constructs the diaspora as a new kind of Jewish home, one that is located in the rational and mobile epistemology of the Enlightenment rather than in any territorial location.

Tamar Katriel's essay on "rescue narratives" in modern Israeli culture examines the legacies of orientalism in the context of modern Jewish nationalism. Katriel analyzes mass-mediated Israeli discourses that have represented communities from Africa and Asia as passive populations in need of heroic intervention by the Jewish state. In these narratives, the diaspora emerges as both the common ground of idealized Jewish unity, to be fully realized through "the ingathering of exiles," and a zone of Jewish difference and hierarchy, inhabited by those supposedly incapable of redeeming themselves. At the same time, Katriel demonstrates that the "rescued" communities have voiced counter-narratives that recuperate diasporic locations outside Israel as spaces of nostalgic longing, heroic sacrifice, and historical agency.

The final section of this volume is composed of chapters that destabilize the notion that "traditions" emerge neutrally from a preexisting and fixed repository of past beliefs and practices. Each chapter examines key moments in which the idea of "the Jewish tradition" appears to take an active and self-conscious role in its own construction. The section also demonstrates that Judaism provides a context particularly well suited to studying the uses of tradition in legitimizing claims to continuity.

Albert I. Baumgarten and Marina Rustow's essay on Jewish discourses of tradition from antiquity to modernity argues that claims to continuity emerge precisely during periods of rapid change. Their analysis invites us to reconsider the distinction between genuine and spurious traditions and to question the standard periodization that holds "the invention of tradition" to be a uniquely

modern phenomenon. Their survey of key moments in the genealogy of "tradition" as an object of Jewish discourse demonstrates that the insistence with which Jewish authorities assert fidelity to the past tends to be diagnostic of historical moments in which structures of authority are undergoing significant challenges and transformations.

Sylvie Anne Goldberg's essay on the controversy over the calculation of the calendar in medieval Judaism similarly takes up the dialectic between discourses of continuity and contexts of change. At the heart of the essay is what Goldberg calls the "troublesome" situation in which Se'adyah Ga'on (882–942) instituted radical changes and reforms while justifying them as the seamless continuation of past practices. Goldberg demonstrates that Se'adyah brought together two competing Judaic discourses of tradition: the biblical notion that it is handed down unchanged as a sacred legacy and the rabbinic idea that it is something constructed over time.

In his essay on the liturgical practices of medieval European Jews, Ephraim Kanarfogel focuses on the realm of prayer to investigate the relationship between the oral and the written in the performance and transmission of Jewish liturgy in Ashkenaz and Sefarad. The question of orality and literacy was particularly fraught in late antique and medieval halakhah, which regulated what could be transmitted in oral and written form. Kanarfogel demonstrates that far from being immutable, this legal corpus exhibited flexibility depending on the availability of written prayer books. He also argues that close readings of textual sources produced by the elite can provide precious evidence of popular practices and competences.

Tamar El-Or's contribution focuses on the transmission of tradition among Sefaradi ultraorthodox and *ḥaredi* women in contemporary Israel. El-Or studies women "returning" to traditional Jewish practice who have developed a new method of fulfilling the halakhic obligation to bake Sabbath bread and to sacrifice part of the dough symbolically. In these women's hands, a ritual that had previously been relegated to the private space of the kitchen has been transformed into a public act that attests to their embrace of "tradition." El-Or's analysis situates this transformation in the context of global and postmodern religious discourses in which public "spiritual experience" has emerged as a form of women's resistance to the patriarchal relegation of women to the domestic sphere.

Concluding a set of chapters that touch on moments in which Jewish practices comment on their own relationship to previous traditions, Michael D. Swartz offers a study of what he terms "ancient ritual theory" in early Judaism. Comparing late antique prescriptive and liturgical sources regarding the defunct sacrificial rite for the Day of Atonement (the 'Avodah), Swartz argues that rituals often include systematic metadiscourses about themselves. Building upon theories that highlight the opacity of ritual and its inherent resistance to exegesis, Swartz suggests that at moments when new forms of authority emerge, rituals can become public acts of interpretation in which the recitation of a bygone practice is transformed into a performative constituent of tradition itself.

Finally, Harvey E. Goldberg's epilogue to the volume reflects on the transformation of Jewish studies over the past generation by tracing key moments in the emergence of the anthropology of Jews and Judaism. One of the field's founding and most influential scholars, Goldberg offers a compelling account of these developments that is at once personal and synthetic, autobiographical and analytic. He situates the preceding chapters within the scholarly currents of anthropology and Jewish studies, and offers them as evidence of the productive "cross-fertilization" between the fields. Goldberg concludes with the suggestion that the remaking of Jewish studies depends on the willingness of scholars to move collaboratively beyond the conventional methodological and substantive boundaries that previously separated anthropology and history.

As we have suggested, and as the integrative approach taken in the epilogue makes clear, the rubrics of authority, diaspora, and tradition cannot be considered effectively in isolation from one another. The tripartite division of this volume, therefore, should not be regarded as constraining the themes that the individual chapters address. Thus, for example, Prell's account of the contested Torah service at Camp Ramah, though it appears in the section on authority, is as much about a sphere of traditional practice as about the dynamics of halakhic and ethical authority. Schatz's analysis of Romanelli's travel writings, which appears in the section on diaspora, attends to the emergent authority of Enlightenment epistemology as much as it sheds light on the diasporic encounter between Jews from different worlds. Swartz's argument about ancient ritual theory is both about the creation of new exegetical and liturgical traditions and about how such traditions reflect the efforts of Jewish authors and functionaries to bolster their own authority. Although Bilu's chapter is situated in the section that deals with authority, his case study of a Moroccan shrine in Israel also reflects the reconfiguration of the Jewish diaspora after 1948. Similarly, Katriel's discussion of "the rhetoric of rescue" in the Israeli mass media focuses not only on the problem of diaspora but on the

contested forms of narrative authority asserted by the Israeli state apparatus and subaltern ethnic communities.

The volume as whole, then, suggests that authority, diaspora, and tradition are not independent facets of Jewish historical experience but interconnected frames of reference. Keeping the connections among them in mind prevents a return to essentialism and, more importantly, to those modes of analysis that celebrate diversity from the pluralistic standpoint of liberal modernity. Having authority on one's mind when thinking about tradition serves to hedge against normative approaches to tradition and to clarify the contested nature of institutionalized Jewish discourses. Considering diaspora in its historical specificity and its global expanse disrupts approaches that rely on implicit hierarchies of place and obscure the relationships between them. Tradition, likewise, can no longer be understood comparatively, as the heritage of relatively isolated communities, or relativistically, as a mosaic of colorful varieties; Jewish tradition comes into being through trans-regional processes and within social fields of authority and debate. We hope that the reader will appreciate the following chapters as an ensemble that suggests future directions for Jewish studies.

PART I. AUTHORITY

Goitein's earlier ethnographic research on the social life, language, and literature (oral and written) of Jews from Yemen was constantly on his mind as he worked with medieval documents. His appreciation of the Jews in Yemen as reflecting their Arab Muslim milieu—he called them "the most Jewish and the most Arab of all Jews"—went hand in hand with his sensitivity to centuries-long continuities in aspects of Jewish life.[33]

What allowed Goitein, master of textual details, to make such presumptuous supra-epochal inferences? How was he able to appreciate cultural integration and stability while also being keenly aware of change? Perhaps a hint is to be found in his brief autobiographical sketch from 1975: "I started out as an essentially medieval being," for whom "there exists only one real issue in life, overriding all others: religion. I have remained, I believe, a *homo religiosus*, but have become a thoroughly modern man."[34] This evolution must have entailed much internal personal dialogue, to which were added the conversations he carried out with a range of disciplines and scholars, as outlined in the epilogue to the last volume of his work. Among them were two anthropologists: Erich Brauer, a friend and fellow immigrant to Mandate Palestine from Germany who also researched Jews from Yemen; and Clifford Geertz, whose programmatic statements about cultural analysis Goitein acknowledged as resonant with his own.[35] One way of envisioning the contribution of the present volume is that it transposes and extends the conversation-based middle ground that Goitein achieved from the realm of a single scholarly virtuoso into the collective habitus of future researchers into Jewish history, society, and culture.

Notes

Introduction

1. On problems associated with categories of analysis in the study of religion, see Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, 1993). With respect to Judaism in particular, see Gershom G. Scholem, "Revelation and Tradition as Religious Categories in Judaism," in *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (New York, 1971), 282–303; William Cutter, "Jewish Studies as Self-Definition: A Review Essay," *Jewish Social Studies* 3 (1996): 158–76; Jonathan Boyarin, "Jewish Ethnography and the Question of the Book," *Anthropological Quarterly* 64 (1991): 14–29; Jonathan Boyarin and Daniel Boyarin, eds., *Jews and Other Differences: The New Jewish Cultural Studies* (Minneapolis, 1997); David Nirenberg, "The Birth of the Pariah: Jews, Christian Dualism, and Social Science," *Social Research* 70 (2003): 201–36; and Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia, 2004).

2. See, e.g., Todd M. Endelman, ed., *Comparing Jewish Societies* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1997); David Biale, ed., *Cultures of the Jews: A New History* (New York, 2002); Howard Wettstein, ed., *Diasporas and Exiles: Varieties of Jewish Identity* (Berkeley, Calif., 2002); and André Levy and Alex Weingrod, eds., *Homelands and Diasporas: Holy Lands and Other Places* (Stanford, Calif., 2005).

3. Pathbreaking early examples of this approach, both by now canonical, include Gershom G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, rev. ed. (New York, 1946); and S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 6 vols. (Berkeley, Calif., 1967–93). For recent reflections on these trends, see Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "The Corporeal Turn," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 95 (2005): 447–61; and Scott Jaschik, "The New Jewish Studies," in *Inside Higher Ed*, December 21, 2005, http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2005/12/21/jewish (accessed January 17, 2010).

4. Scholem famously took a nominalist approach in his "Shelumei emunei Yisra'el be-fi doram," in *'Od davar: Pirqei morashah u-tehiyah* (Tel Aviv, 1989), 98–104, reprinted from his 1958 response to R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, "Hirhurim 'al Shabbetai Tsevi shel G.

Shalom," *Molad* 15 (1957): 113–37. Against Werblowsky's defense of "normative" Judaism, Scholem proposed with the title phrase of his essay ("those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel," 2 Sam 20:19) a definition of Judaism as what Jews do in the name of the tradition, those "who saw themselves as obligated by the heritage (*yerushah*) of the generations and as obligated to the tradition (*masoret*) of historical Judaism" (103). For the classic methodological statement advocating a "polythetic" rather than "monothetic" or "normative" approach, see J. Z. Smith, "Fences and Neighbors: Some Contours of Early Judaism," in *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago, 1982), 1–18.

5. The embrace of anthropology in Jewish studies also draws on developments within the discipline of anthropology itself. See Harvey E. Goldberg, "Introduction: Reflections on the Mutual Relevance of Anthropology and Judaic Studies," in *Judaism Viewed from Within and from Without: Anthropological Studies*, ed. idem (Albany, N.Y., 1987), 1–43; Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, introduction to *Life Is with People: The Culture of the Shtetl*, ed. M. Zborowski and E. Herzog, 2nd ed. (New York, 1995 [1952]), ix–xlviii; Gelya Frank, "Jews, Multiculturalism, and Boasian Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 99 (1997): 731–45; and Marcy Brink-Danan, "Anthropological Perspectives on Judaism," *Religion Compass* 2 (2008): 674–88.

6. The non-Western orientation of Jewish anthropology has been significantly counterbalanced by the prominence of the United States and Europe as loci of ethnographic research. See Riv-Ellen Prell, *Prayer and Community: The Havurah in American Judaism* (Detroit, 1989); Jack Kugelmass, *The Miracle of Intervale Avenue: The Story of a Jewish Congregation in the South Bronx* (New York, 1996); and Matti Bunzl, *Symptoms of Modernity: Jews and Queers in Late-Twentieth-Century Vienna* (Berkeley, Calif., 2004). Israeli anthropology was, until recently, concerned almost exclusively with immigrants from non-Western contexts. For discussion, see Harvey Goldberg and Orit Abuhave, eds., *Perspectives on Israeli Anthropology* (Detroit, 2009).

7. Formative observations on the confluence of anthropology and history include E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Anthropology and History: Essays in Social Anthropology* (London, 1962); Claude Lévi-Strauss, "History and Anthropology," in *Structural Anthropology* (New York, 1963), 1–27; and Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, trans. P. Putnam (New York, 1953). For groundbreaking exemplars of the interpretive turn in anthropology and the social sciences, see Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973); and Paul Rabinow and William M. Sullivan, eds., *Interpretive Social Science: A Reader* (Berkeley, Calif., 1979). In history, see Carlo Ginsburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore, 1980); and Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Stanford, Calif., 1987). On the study of textual practices, see the introduction to Jonathan Boyarin, ed., *The Ethnography of Reading* (Berkeley, Calif., 1993); and Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (New York, 1990).

8. Examples in which anthropological theory has been brought to bear on textual Jewish studies include Jacob Neusner, *The Talmud as Anthropology* (New York, 1979); Lawrence A. Hoffman, *Beyond the Text: A Holistic Approach to Liturgy* (Bloomington, Ind., 1987); Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, *The Savage in Judaism: An Anthropology of Israelite Religion and Ancient Judaism* (Bloomington, Ind., 1990); Ivan G. Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood: Jewish Culture and Acculturation in the Middle Ages* (New Haven, Conn., 1996); Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (Oxford, 1999); and Lawrence Fine, ed., *Judaism in Practice: From the Middle Ages through the Early Modern Period* (Princeton, N.J., 2001). Ethnographic studies of Jewish textual culture include Harvey E. Goldberg, "The Zohar in Southern Morocco: A Study in the Ethnography of Texts," *History of Religions* 29 (1990): 233–58; Shlomo Deshen, *The Mellah Society: Jewish Community Life in Sherifian Morocco* (Chicago, 1989); and Jonathan Boyarin, "Voices around the Text: The Ethnography of Reading at Mesivta Tifereth Jerusalem," *Cultural Anthropology* 4 (1989): 399–421. Folklore has provided another field in which Jewish texts have been mined "ethnographically" for cultural material: Joshua Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition* (New York, 1939), is an early example; Galit Hasan-Rokem, *Web of Life: Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature* (Stanford, Calif., 2000), is a recent one.

9. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London, 2006) has been especially influential in focusing attention on the relationship between print capitalism and modern nationalism. The now-extensive anthropological literature on textual power deals largely with Islamic societies. See Dale F. Eickelman, *Knowledge and Power in Morocco: The Education of a Twentieth-Century Notable* (Princeton, N.J., 1985); idem, "Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies," *American Ethnologist* 19 (1992): 643–55; Andrew Shryock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan* (Berkeley, 1997); and Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt* (Berkeley, Calif., 1998). Our use of textual hegemonies draws on Brinkley Messick's *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Context* (Berkeley, Calif., 1996).

10. On the notion of textual hegemony, see Teresa E. P. Delfin, "Postcards from the Andes: Politics of Representation in a Reimagined Peru," in *Ecosee: Image, Rhetoric, Nature*, ed. S. I. Dobrin and S. Morey (Albany, N.Y., 2009), 203–22; Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (Berkeley, Calif., 1998); and Charles L. Briggs, "The Politics of Discursive Authority in Research on the 'Invention of Tradition,'" *Cultural Anthropology* 11 (1996): 435–69. On the hegemony of texts in postwar modern Orthodoxy, see Haym Soloveitchik, "Rupture and Reconstruction: The Transformation of Contemporary Orthodoxy," *Tradition* 28 (1994): 64–131; and Jeremy Stolow, "Communicating Authority, Consuming Tradition: Jewish Orthodox Outreach Literature and Its Reading Public," in *Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere*, ed. B. Meyer and A. Moors (Bloomington, Ind., 2006). On contemporary Jewish liturgical performance, see Samuel C. Heilman, *Synagogue Life: A Study in Symbolic Interaction* (Chicago, 1976); and Arnold M. Eisen, *Rethinking Modern Judaism: Ritual, Commandment, and Community* (Stanford, Calif., 1998).

11. On the authority of visual experience in Judaism, see, esp., Chapters 3–6 of this volume.

12. On the relationship between scribal and priestly authority in ancient Near Eastern contexts, see David M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford, 2005), 111–73; and Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007), 75–108. On rhetorical authority in the ancient Judaism, see, esp., Martin S. Jaffee, "The Oral-Cultural Context of the Talmud Yerushalmi: Greco-Roman Rhetorical Paideia, Discipleship, and the Concept of Oral Torah," in *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality, and Cultural Diffusion*, ed. Y. Elman and I. Gershoni (New Haven, Conn., 2000), 27–73; and Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism, 200 B.C.E.–400 C.E.* (New York, 2001).

13. On the importance of priestly-scribal power focused on Jerusalem and its temple throughout the Second Temple period, see Martha Himmelfarb, *A Kingdom of Priests: Ancestry and Merit in Ancient Judaism* (Philadelphia, 2006), esp. 11–52. On Jewish *paideia*, see Catherine Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine* (Tübingen, 1997). On medieval textual canonization, see Lawrence A. Hoffman, *The Canonization of the Synagogue Service* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1979). On the impact of new writing technologies on Judaism, see Marina Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community: The Jews of the Fatimid Caliphate* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2008), 37–52.

14. See David Sorkin, *The Berlin Haskalah and German Religious Thought: Orphans of Knowledge* (London, 2000); idem, *The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton, N.J., 2008); David Ruderman, *Jewish Enlightenment in an English Key: Anglo-Jewry's Construction of Modern Jewish Thought* (Princeton, N.J., 2000); Shmuel Feiner, *The Jewish Enlightenment* (Philadelphia, 2002); and Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Making Jews Modern: The Yiddish and Ladino Press in the Russian and Ottoman Empires* (Bloomington, Ind., 2004).

15. For critical reevaluations of secularism, see José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago, 1994); Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Baltimore, 1993). For alternative views of modern Jewish secularism, see Daniel J. Schroeter, "A Different Road to Modernity: Jewish Identity in the Arab World," in *Diasporas and Exiles: Varieties of Jewish Identity*, ed. H. Wettstein (Berkeley, Calif., 2002), 150–63; and Yehouda Shenhav, "Modernity and the Hybridization of Nationalism and Religion: Zionism and the Jews of the Middle East as Heuristic Case," *Theory and Society* 36 (2007): 1–30.

16. On the Alliance Israélite Universelle in a global context, see Aaron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey, 1860–1925* (Bloomington, Ind., 1990). For reflections on Habad Judaism as a transnational phenomenon, see Jonathan Boyarin, "Jews in Space; or, the Jewish People in the Twenty-First Century," in idem, *Thinking in Jewish* (Chicago, 1996), 160–82.

17. See Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur, *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader* (Malden, Mass., 2003). On the anthropological turn toward diaspora, see Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, eds., *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology* (Durham, N.C., 1997); and Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley, Calif., 2006). For reflections on the Jewish genealogy of diaspora as an anthropological concept, see Gelya Frank, "Melville J. Herskovits on the African and Jewish Diasporas: Race, Culture and Modern Anthropology," *Identities* 8 (2001): 173–209. For evocative portraits of premodern Jewish diasporic mobility, see Amitav Ghosh, *In an Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler's Tale* (New York, 1992); Ammiel Alcalay, *After Jews and Arabs: Remaking Levantine Culture* (Minneapolis, 1993); and Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, Mass., 2002). For a particularly rich re-theorization of diaspora and the extent to which imagined communities rest on (mis)translation, see Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003).

18. For an early, provocative statement in praise of diaspora, see Gerson D. Cohen, "The Blessings of Assimilation in Jewish History," commencement address, Hebrew College, Boston, June 1966, reprinted in *Jewish History and Jewish Destiny* (New York, 1997), 145–56. For an influential statement on the new Jewish diaspora studies, see Jonathan Boyarin and Daniel Boyarin, "Generation: Diaspora and the Ground of Jewish Identity," *Critical Inquiry* 19 (1993): 693–25. We are convinced by the Boyarins' careful unmooring of Jewish identity from fixed territorial grounds, but startled by the way they obscure territoriality as a historically entrenched facet of generational transmission itself. Other recent celebrations of diaspora include David Biale, *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History: The Jewish Tradition and the Myth of Passivity* (New York, 1986); Caryn Aviv and David Scheer, *New Jews: The End of the Jewish Diaspora* (New York, 2005); and Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz, *The Colors of Jews: Racial Politics and Radical Diasporism* (Bloomington, Ind., 2007). For a review of these trends, see Arnold Band, "The New Diasporism and the Old Diaspora," *Israel Studies* 1 (1996): 323–31. For a critique of the new diaspora theorists, see Allan Arkush, "From Diaspora Nationalism to Radical Diasporism," *Modern Judaism* 29 (2009): 326–50.

19. In this volume, see, esp., the chaps. in Part 2.

20. On the tension between diaspora and territory, see Eyal Ben-Ari and Yoram Bilu, eds., *Grasping Land: Sacred Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience* (Albany, N.Y., 1997); Sander Gilman and Milton Shain, eds., *Jewries at the Frontier: Accommodation, Identity, Conflict* (Urbana, Ill., 1999); Jasmin Habib, *Israel, Diaspora, and the Routes of National Belonging* (Toronto, 2004); and Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert and Vered Shemtov, "Introduction: Jewish Conceptions and Practices of Space," *Jewish Social Studies* 11 (2005): 1–8, and the articles that follow.

21. Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek Penslar, eds., *Orientalism and the Jews* (Waltham, Mass., 2005). On the dualistic reflex in studies of Jewish diaspora, see William Safran, "The Jewish Diaspora in a Comparative and Theoretical Perspective," *Israel Studies* 10 (2005): 36–60.

22. On orientalizing representations of Jews in Europe, see R. Po-chia Hsia, "Christian Ethnographies of the Jews in Early Modern Europe," in *The Expulsion of the Jews: 1492 and After*, ed. R. B. Waddington and A. H. Williamson (New York, 1994), 223–35; and Yaacov Deutsch, "Polemical Ethnographies: Descriptions of Yom Kippur in the Writings of Christian Hebraists and Jewish Converts to Christianity in Early Modern Europe," in

Hebraica Veritas: Jews and the Study of Judaism in Early Modern Europe, ed. A. P. Coudert and J. S. Shoulson (Philadelphia, 2004), 202–33. On the intersecting treatment of Jews and colonial subjects, see Jonathan Boyarin, *The Unconverted Self: Jews, Indians, and the Identity of Christian Europe* (Chicago, 2009); idem, *Storm from Paradise: The Politics of Jewish Memory* (Minneapolis, 1992); and Aamir Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton, N.J., 2007).

23. On the application of orientalism to Jews to the east and south of the European center, see Daniel Schroeter, "Orientalism and the Jews of the Mediterranean," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 4 (1994): 183–96.

24. On Jewish ethnic categories, see Ella Shohat, "The Invention of the Mizrahim," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 29 (1999): 5–20; and Harvey E. Goldberg, "From Sephardi to Mizrahi and Back Again: Changing Meanings of 'Sephardi' in Its Social Environments," *Jewish Social Studies* 15 (2008): 165–88. The politics of Ashkenazi identity followed a similar trajectory when German-speaking Jews from Central Europe discriminated against the "oriental" Jews of Eastern Europe (*Ostjuden*). See Jack Wertheimer, *Unwelcome Strangers: East European Jews in Imperial Germany* (New York, 1991); Noah Efron, "Trembling with Fear: How Secular Israelis See the Ultra-Orthodox, and Why," *Tikkun* 6 (1991): 15–22, 88–90; Aziza Khazzoom, "The Great Chain of Orientalism: Jewish Identity, Stigma Management, and Ethnic Exclusion in Israel," *American Sociological Review* 68 (2003): 481–510; and Arieh Bruce Saposnik, "Europe and Its Orients in Zionist Culture before the First World War," *Historical Journal* 49 (2006): 1105–23.

25. Within Israel, the same division of labor has conventionally prevailed; see Harvey E. Goldberg and Chen Bram, "Sephardic/Mizrahi/Arab-Jews: Reflections on Critical Sociology and the Study of Middle Eastern Jewries within the Context of Israeli Society," in *Sephardic Jewry and Mizrahi Jews*, ed. P. Y. Medding (Oxford, 2007), 227–58.

26. For recent trends in the anthropology of European Jews, see above, n. 6, and Sascha L. Goluboff, *Jewish Russians: Upheavals in a Moscow Synagogue* (Philadelphia, 2003). On North African and Middle Eastern Jewries, see Daniel Schroeter, *Merchants of Essaouira: Urban Society and Imperialism in Southwestern Morocco* (Cambridge, 1988); Joel Beinin, *The Dispersion of Egyptian Jewry: Culture, Politics, and the Formation of a Modern Jewish Diaspora* (Berkeley, Calif., 1998); Yaron Tsur, *Qehilah qeru'ah: Yehudei Maroqo ve-ha-le'umiyyut, 1943–1954* (Tel Aviv, 2001); and Emily Benichou Gottreich, *The Mellah of Marrakesh: Jewish and Muslim Space in Morocco's Red City* (Bloomington, Ind., 2006).

27. On the fluid boundaries and contested borderlines between Christianity and Judaism, see, esp., Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford, Calif., 1999); and the essays in Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, eds., *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Tübingen, 2003; repr. Minneapolis, 2007). For criticism of an overly simplistic bifurcation of rabbinic and priestly Judaisms in late antiquity, see Ra'anan S. Boustan, *From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism* (Tübingen, 2005), 139–47, 264–81. On the gradual emergence of Qaraism and rabbinic Judaism's response, see, most recently, Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 33–34, 45–47, 52–65.

28. On global Jewish connections across modern national, regional, and imperial boundaries, Daniel J. Schroeter, *The Sultan's Jew: Morocco and the Sephardi World* (Stanford, Calif., 2002); Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Plumes: Ostrich Feathers, Jews, and a Lost World of Global Commerce* (New Haven, Conn., 2008); Lisa Moses Leff, *Sacred Bonds of Solidarity: The Rise of Internationalism in Nineteenth Century France* (Stanford, Calif., 2006); Oren Kosansky, "Tourism, Charity and Profit: The Movement of Money in Moroccan Jewish Pilgrimage," *Cultural Anthropology* 17 (2002): 359–400; Elliot Horowitz and Moises Orfali, eds., *The Mediterranean and the Jews: Society, Culture, and Economy* (Ramat Gan, 2002); and Resianne Fontaine, Andrea Schatz, and Irene E. Zwiep, eds., *Sepharad in Ashkenaz: Medieval Knowledge and Eighteenth-Century Enlightened Jewish Discourse* (Chicago, 2008).

29. On Zionist historiography, e.g., see David N. Myers, *Re-inventing the Jewish Past: European Jewish Intellectuals and Zionist Return to History* (New York, 1995). On the limits of national models in the study of Jewish identity, see Schroeter, "Different Road to Modernity."

30. For a recent example, see Emily Benichou Gottreich and Daniel J. Schroeter, eds., *Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa* (Bloomington, Ind., 2010).

31. See Chapter 1 of this volume. On the laboratory model in comparative Jewish studies, see Endelman, *Comparing Jewish Societies*, 13–18. Several of the chapters in that volume, in fact, work explicitly against the comparativist approach—most notably, Zachary Lockman, "Railway Workers and Relational History: Arabs and Jews in British-Rule Palestine," 235–66.

32. David Nirenberg offers a notable exception in his studies of the genesis of a racialized converso class in fifteenth-century Iberia. Nirenberg, "Conversion, Sex, and Segregation: Jews and Christians in Medieval Spain," *American Historical Review* 107 (2002): 1065–93; idem, "Mass Conversion and Genealogical Mentalities: Jews and Christians in Fifteenth-Century Spain," *Past and Present* 174 (2002): 3–41; idem, "Enmity and Assimilation: Jews, Christians, and Converts in Medieval Spain," *Common Knowledge* 9 (2003): 137–55; idem, "Une société face à l'altérité: Juifs et Chrétiens dans la péninsule Ibérique 1391–1449," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 62 (2007): 755–92.

33. Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood*, 11.

34. Biale, preface to *Cultures of the Jews*, xvii and xxi.

35. The organ/organism metaphor is from Biale, preface to *Cultures of the Jews*, xvii. At the same time, Biale's preface levels a thoughtful critique of the notion of assimilation along lines similar to those we are suggesting here.

36. The idea of invented tradition was developed most influentially in Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1989). The ensuing literature is vast. For critiques and applications in religious studies, see James R. Lewis and Olav Hammer, eds., *The Invention of Sacred Tradition* (Cambridge, 2007). With respect to Judaism, see Jack Wertheimer, ed., *The Uses of Tradition: Jewish Continuity in the Modern Era* (New York, 1993), esp. Michael K. Silber, "The Emergence of Ultra-Orthodoxy: The

Invention of a Tradition," in ibid., 23-84. For an anthropological reflection with relevance to the present arguments, see Briggs, "Politics of Discursive Authority." In this volume, see Part 3, esp. Chapters 9 and 12.

37. Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis: Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages*, trans. B. D. Cooperman, rev. ed. (New York, 1993), presents an overly schematic model of modernity and tradition. Katz's influence has proved durable and has been extended beyond the European context in which he worked; his reification of this dichotomy has been applied, e.g., in Reeva S. Simon, Michael M. Laskier, and Sara Reguer, *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times* (New York, 2003). Cf. Kosansky, "The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times (Review)," *Shofar* 24 (2006): 196–98. For a summary of critical revisions within Jewish studies, see Bernard Dov Cooperman's afterword in Katz, *Tradition and Crisis*, 236–53. On the emergence of ritual strictness and textual constraint in modern orthodoxy, see Soloveitchik, "Rupture and Reconstruction"; Stolow, "Communicating Authority"; and Adam S. Ferziger, *Exclusion and Hierarchy: Orthodoxy, Nonobservance, and the Emergence of Modern Jewish Identity* (Philadelphia, 2005). On the flexibility of Jewish traditions in premodern and modern Arab contexts, see Zvi Zohar, *Tradition and Change: Halakhic Responses of Middle Eastern Rabbis to Legal and Technological Change* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1993).

38. For an early statement, see Asad's programmatic *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, Occasional Papers of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (Washington, D.C., 1986); see also idem, *Genealogies of Religion*; and idem, *Formations of the Secular*. For reflections on Asad's influence, see David Scott and Charles Hirschkind, eds., *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors* (Stanford, Calif., 2006). Michael L. Satlow has suggested the utility of Asad's discursive approach for the study Judaism in "Defining Judaism: Accounting for 'Religions' in the Study of Religion," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 74 (2006): 837–60; and idem, *Creating Judaism: History, Tradition, Practice* (New York, 2006).

39. In *Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, Asad moves rather quickly over the textual entailments of discursive traditions. With respect to Islam, he refers to "the founding texts of the Quran and the ḥadith" as the textual place where Muslims "begin" (14). This brevity has led to misreadings: Satlow ("Defining Judaism," 850) takes Asad to suggest that discursive traditions are first and foremost textual, a reading at odds with Asad's emphatic focus on instituted practice and apt performance (*Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, esp. 14–17). Asad attends more fully to the role of texts in the regulation of religious bodies in his discussions of medieval Christianity (e.g., *Genealogies of Religion*, 83–167).

40. Scholem's phenomenological approach is especially evident in *Sabbatai Ṣevi: The Mystical Messiah, 1626–1676*, trans. R. J. Z. Werblowsky (Princeton, N.J., 1976 [1957]); see also above, nn. 3–4. Jacob Neusner's corpus is vast. A characteristic statement on the open-endedness of "Torah" can be found in *Major Trends in Formative Judaism*, 2nd ser. (Chico, Calif., 1983), 38–47. Satlow's claim ("Defining Judaism," 844–45) that Neusner reduces Judaism to the rabbinic movement mistakes Neusner's hermeneutic totalism, which is rightly criticized, for a transhistorical claim that he clearly rejects. The movement

in Jewish studies toward the textual peripheries can be seen in works such as Michael Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton, N.J., 1996); Chava Weissler, *Voices of the Matriarchs: Listening to the Prayer of Early Modern Jewish Women* (Boston, 1998); Ephraim Kanarfogel, *Peering Through the Lattices: Mystical, Magical, and Pietistic Dimensions in the Tosafist Period* (Detroit, 2000); and J. H. Chajes, *Between Worlds: Dybbuks, Exorcists, and Early Modern Judaism* (Philadelphia, 2003). In this volume, see Chapters 3 and 6 on hagiographic texts and practices; and Chapters 2 and 4 on magic.

41. The Moroccan example is taken from Kosansky, "All Dear unto God: Saints, Pilgrimage, and Textual Practice in Jewish Morocco" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2003), 123–30. For critiques of the distinction between the great and little traditions and related two-tiered models of religion, see Asad, *Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, 15–16; and Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981), 16–22. For critical engagement of the model within the anthropology of Judaism, see Harvey E. Goldberg "Torah and Children: Some Symbolic Aspects of the Reproduction of Jews and Judaism," in idem, *Judaism Viewed from Within and from Without*, 107–70.

42. See, e.g., Swartz, *Scholastic Magic*, 173–208; and Ra'anan S. Boustan, "The Emergence of Pseudonymous Attribution in Heikhalot Literature: Empirical Evidence from the Jewish 'Magical' Corpora," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 14 (2007): 18–38. For a theoretical statement on the authorizing function of generic forms, see Charles L. Briggs and Richard Bauman, "Genre, Intertextuality, and Social Power," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 2 (1992): 131–72.

43. On the relative intermediacy of social actors and texts within a discursive tradition, see Messick, *Calligraphic State*, 1–15. The ethnography of Judaism, as represented by many of the chapters in this volume, often works with such intermediate social actors.

44. For an exemplary study of the contested process of canonization and marginalization, by Jews and Christians of various stripes, of one particularly important and fraught text from the Second Temple period, see Annette Yoshiko Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature* (Cambridge, 2005).

45. Messick, *Calligraphic State*, 1.

46. The notion of textual tradition as a centripetal force is from Satlow, *Creating Judaism*, 12. Biale, preface to *Cultures of the Jews*, xxii, similarly suggests that Jewish cultural unity "rested on" the Hebrew Bible. On the effects of modern Jewish iconoclasm on Jewish studies, see Kalman Bland, *The Artless Jew: Medieval and Modern Affirmations and Denials of the Visual* (Princeton, N.J., 2000); and Naomi Seidman, "Review: Carnal Knowledge: Sex and the Body in Jewish Studies," *Jewish Social Studies* 1 (1994): 115–46.

47. This excellent collection offers compelling accounts of Jewish oral, visual, and embodied practices across a range of experiences. Somewhat paradoxically, however, the analyses it contains are based almost exclusively on textual evidence, something of which the volume's title gives no indication.

48. On the question of Jewish orthodoxy versus orthopraxy, see Marina Rustow, "Karaites Real and Imagined: Three Cases of Jewish Heresy," *Past and Present* 197 (2007): 35–37; for Islam, see Devin J. Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelve Shiite Responses to the Sunni Legal System* (Salt Lake City, 1998), 45–48. On the ethnographic representation of European Jews, see n. 22 above. On Christian representations of excessive Jewish materiality and carnality, see, e.g., Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (New York, 1991); and Derek Penslar, *Shylock's Children: Economics and Jewish Identity in Modern Europe* (Berkeley, Calif., 2001). For a prominent recent example of the folklorization of North African and Middle Eastern Jewries, see Issachar Ben-Ami, *Saint Veneration among the Jews in Morocco* (Detroit, 1998).

49. For renewed attention to subaltern Jewish textual traditions, see Alcalay, *After Jews and Arabs*; Stein, *Making Jews Modern*. The contribution of scholars working in postcolonial academic diasporas has been crucial to this development, e.g., Haïm Zafrani, *Littératures dialectales et populaires juives en Occident musulman: L'écrit et l'oral* (Paris, 1990); and Joseph Chetrit, *Written Judeo-Arabic Poetry in North Africa: Poetic, Linguistic, and Cultural Studies* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 2004). Examples of the growing literature on the gendered hierarchies of Jewish textuality include Susan Starr Sered, *Women as Ritual Experts: The Religious Lives of Elderly Jewish Women in Jerusalem* (Oxford, 1996); Weissler, *Voices of the Matriarchs*; and Tamar El-Or, *Next Year I Will Know More: Literacy and Identity among Young Orthodox Women* (Detroit, 2002). On Moroccan pilgrimage as a textual practice, see Kosansky, "All Dear unto God."

50. See Chapter 11 of this volume.

51. On the textual production of Jews, see Goldberg, "Torah and Children"; idem, *Jewish Passages: Cycles of Jewish Life* (Berkeley, Calif., 2003); Samuel Heilman, *The People of the Book: Drama, Fellowship, and Religion* (New Brunswick, N.J., 2002); and Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood*.

52. In *Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, 15, Asad is clear about the analytical starting point for the study of discursive traditions: "the proper theoretical beginning [for a discursive approach] is . . . an instituted practice (set in a particular context, having a particular history) into which Muslims are inducted as Muslims." Our emphasis on the disciplinary mechanisms of transmission follows from what we take to be the most important arguments forwarded in Boyarin and Boyarin, "Generation." Recent studies have attended to the formation of Jewish subjects and subjectivities in non-pedagogical institutional contexts, including medical ones. See Susan Martha Kahn, *Reproducing Jews: A Cultural Account of Assisted Conception in Israel* (Durham, N.C., 2000); and Mitchell Bryan Hart, *The Healthy Jew: The Symbiosis of Judaism and Modern Medicine* (Cambridge, 2007).

53. Satlow's claim that "Messianic Jews and Black Hebrews have, from a non-normative perspective, every right to call themselves 'Israel,' but through their rejection of postbiblical Jewish literature they have largely ceased to engage in the same conversation as other Jewish communities" (*Creating Judaism*, 15) is analytically imprecise. It would be more accurate to say that many Jews reject the claims of messianists, just as the latter reject some canonical Jewish texts.

54. Biale, *Power and Powerlessness*, focuses predominantly on assertions of Jewish agency and power in the diaspora. Satlow is even clearer on this point: "Communities become Jewish first and foremost because they say they are" ("Defining Judaism," 849). His claim that Christian ideas of Judaism had "some impact" on Jews themselves seems naïve in the face of the Spanish Inquisition and the Nazi extermination.

55. On the dialects of Jewish identity in the French Empire, see Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews*; and Schroeter and Chetrit, "Emancipation and Its Discontents." On Jewish identity as a product of European colonial representational practices more generally, see Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, Heritage* (Berkeley, Calif., 1998).

56. Albert Memmi, one of the twentieth century's major theorists of fractured colonial subjectivity, provides a pronounced counterpoint to David Biale's claim that Jews and "non-Western colonized peoples under Western Colonialism" share a similarity insofar as their identities have been formed in "a rich dialectic" with "majority" cultures (preface to *Cultures of the Jews*, xx). In fact, Jews numbered among the colonized, and the conditions of their identity formation were often violent. See, esp., Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, trans. Howard Greenfield (Boston, 1965 [1957]).

57. On the comparable tendency to exaggerate the religious subjectivity of Muslims, see Asad, *Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, 13; and Michael Gilsenan, *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Middle East* (London, 2000), 9–26.

58. In this volume, see, esp., Chapters 1, 8, and 10.

59. Asad (*Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, 9–11) similarly critiques exaggerated views of Islamic sectarianism; cf. Satlow, *Creating Judaism*, 11, and idem, "Defining Judaism," 843–47, for the idea that normative Judaism is a "second-order" crutch for Jewish identity formation.

60. On the difficulty of finding common Jewish identity within even a single national context, see Jack Wertheimer, *A People Divided: Judaism in Contemporary America* (Waltham, Mass., 1997).

61. For one recent approach to Jewish syncretism and hybridity, see David Frankfurter, "Syncretism and the Holy Man in Late Antique Egypt," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11 (2003): 339–85.

Chapter 1. "How Do You Know That I Am a Jew?"

I wish to thank the funders who supported this research: the College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota; the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania; the Lucius Littauer Foundation; and the Hadassah Brandeis Institute. I appreciate the comments of Deborah Dash Moore, Steven S. Foldes, Eric Goldstein, Elaine Tyler May, Sara M. Evans, Rabbi Morris J. Allen, and especially Ra'anan S. Boustan on earlier drafts of this chapter. A different version of this chapter appeared as "Jewish Summer Camping and Civil Rights: How Summer Camps Launched a Transformation in American Jewish Culture, the Bellin Lecture," published by the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, University