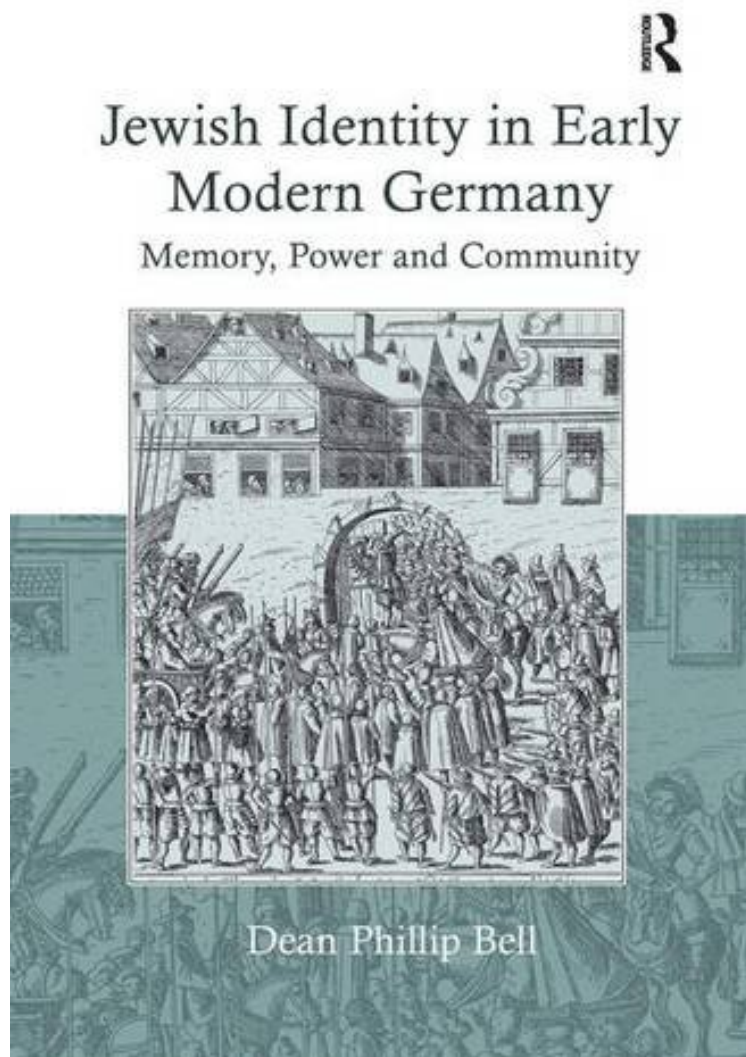


(Mobile book) Jewish Identity in Early Modern Germany: Memory, Power and Community

Jewish Identity in Early Modern Germany: Memory, Power and Community

Dean Phillip Bell

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Dean Phillip Bell : Jewish Identity in Early Modern Germany: Memory, Power and Community before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jewish Identity in Early Modern Germany: Memory, Power and Community:

Although Jews in early modern Germany produced little in the way of formal historiography, Jews nevertheless engaged the past for many reasons and in various and surprising ways. They narrated the past in order to enforce order, empower authority, and record the traditions of their communities. In this way, Jews created community structure and projected that structure into the future. But Jews also used the past as a means to contest the marginalization threatened by broader developments in the Christian society in which they lived. As the Reformation threw into relief serious questions about authority and tradition and as Jews continued to suffer from anti-Jewish mentality and politics, narration of the past allowed Jews to re-inscribe themselves in history and contemporary society. Drawing on a wide range of sources, including chronicles, liturgical works, books of customs, memorybooks, biblical commentaries, rabbinic responsa and community ledgers, this study offers a timely reassessment of Jewish community and identity during a frequently turbulent era. It engages, but then redirects, important discussions by historians regarding the nature of time and the construction and role of history and memory in pre-modern Europe and pre-modern Jewish civilization. This book will be of significant value, not only to scholars of Jewish history, but anyone with an interest in the social and cultural aspects of religious history.

'This volume offers us a variety of perspectives on sources both familiar and new. Its compact organization will invite the attention of nonspecialists as well as experts. One hopes that the book will inspire and encourage others to think creatively in the comparative, synthetic ways Bell obviously does.' *Renaissance Quarterly* 'One of the pleasures of Bell's work is that he has in a concise and persuasive way demonstrated precisely what he claims. From the first chapter to the last, this book is a well organized, clearly articulated analysis of the historiography and history of Jewish identity and memory in early modern Germany. This is no small task.' *Shofar* 'In this richly provocative book, Dean Phillip Bell challenges the view that pre-modern Jews, producing few works of formal history, did not think historically. Using a wide range of sources to demonstrate this awareness, Bell provides a comparative study of early-modern Jewish and Christian views of the past. ...This book is recommended for academic libraries.' *Association of Jewish Libraries Newsletter* 'Overall, this important book depicts Central European Jews much more as the children of their times and respective environments, than as a group that lived in a world apart, defined by a different sense of time and space.' *Journal of Jewish Studies* 'Bell relies on a wealth of primary sources, and he makes very complex and sophisticated arguments that lead to insightful conclusions on Jewish identity in the early modern period.' *Sixteenth Century Journal* About the Author Dean Phillip Bell is Dean and Chief Academic Officer of the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, Chicago, USA.