



# **An Inch or Two of Time: Time and Space in Jewish Modernisms (Dimyonot: Jews and the Cultural Imagination)**

*Jordan D. Finkin*

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In literary modernism, time and space are sometimes transformed from organizational categories into aesthetic objects, a transformation that can open dramatic metaphorical and creative possibilities. In *An Inch or Two of Time*, Jordan Finkin shows how Jewish modernists of the early twentieth century had a distinct perspective on this innovative metaphorical vocabulary. As members of a national-ethnic-religious community long denied the rights and privileges of self-determination, with a dramatically internalized sense of exile and landlessness, the Jewish writers at the core of this investigation reimagined their spatial and temporal orientation and embeddedness. They set as the fulcrum of their imagery the metaphorical power of time and space. Where non-Jewish writers might tend to view space as a given—an element of their own sense of belonging to a nation at home in a given territory—the Jewish writers discussed here *spatialized* time: they created an as-if space out of time, out of history. They understood their writing to function as a kind of organ of perception on its own. Jewish literature thus presents a particularly dynamic system for working out the implications of that understanding, and as such, this book argues, it is an indispensable part of the modern library.

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