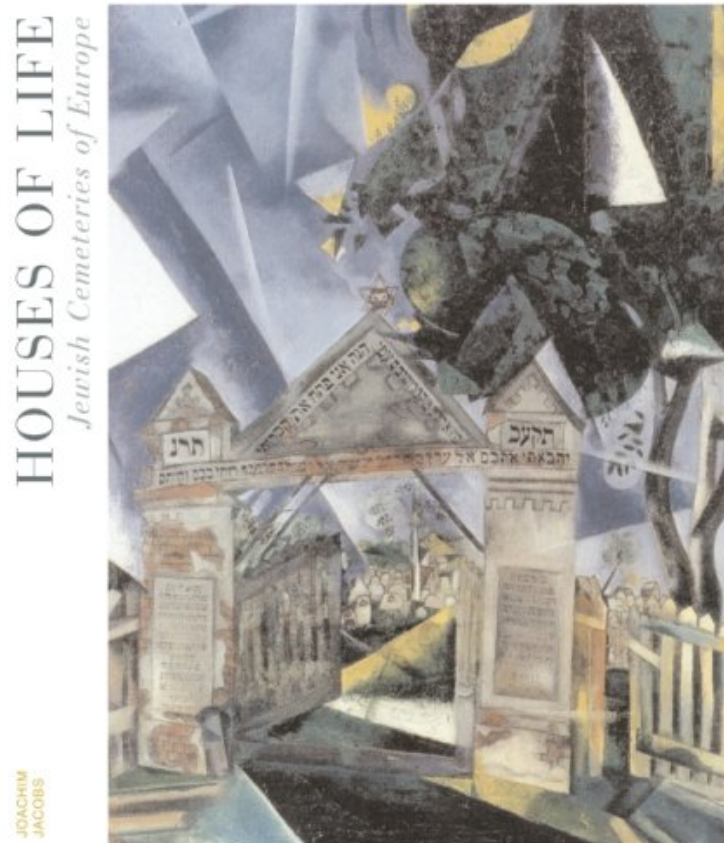


(Download pdf) Houses of Life: Jewish Cemeteries of Europe

## Houses of Life: Jewish Cemeteries of Europe

*Joachim Jacobs*

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**Joachim Jacobs : Houses of Life: Jewish Cemeteries of Europe** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Houses of Life: Jewish Cemeteries of Europe:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An important book for people interested in Jewish History By Laura Leibman This book is a must have for anyone interested in either Jewish History, Genealogy, or Gravestone Art. Several things make this book fantastic: one, it provides a history of European Jewish cemeteries from the early Roman period through today. Two, it is beautifully illustrated: in addition to featuring some of the most important artwork created about these cemeteries (including the cover illustration by Chagal and the Prague Cycle), it is richly illuminated by the photographs of Hans Dietrich Beyer. I also appreciated the range of cemeteries Jacobs covers: although I own a book by Minna Rosen on the Haskoy Cemetery in Istanbul, I liked being able to see the photographs of that cemetery next to ones from the same era from elsewhere in Europe and hearing how it differed stylistically from other Sephardic cemeteries. The city maps with the cemeteries highlighted are awesome, as are the archival photographs. Although some of the ground covered in this book has also been explored by Hannelore Kunzl in *Judische Grabkunst von der Antike bis heute* (German Edition), Jacobs' book will have the strong advantage for most American readers of being in English. Given the large number of color photographs and images and the large number

of communities and cemeteries it covers, this book is extremely well priced at \$65 USD. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Jewish cemeteries across Europe throughout history By Henry Berry House of life is a euphemistic term used by Jews for cemeteries. It's *beit hachaim* in Hebrew. This term is often used because it implies that cemeteries are where the dead await the coming of the Messiah and their resurrection. House of eternity (*beit olam*) is also used; as is *beit kevarot*, house of graves. A group of Jews settling in a new place would establish a cemetery before they would a synagogue. Since Jews were often not allowed to buy land, a group would try to lease a suitable plot of land for centuries in the hope they would eventually be able to buy it. Despite the problems and obstacles Jews had in obtaining land for cemeteries, as this work evidences, they nonetheless were able to establish cemeteries throughout Europe, including major cities, which have endured for centuries. Whatever arrangements were made for use of the land, they were reliable enough so that Jews put much planning into the cemeteries and large tombstones and mausoleum-like structures were common features. Antique architectural plans and old city maps and plans marking the areas of Jewish cemeteries attest to their permanence and acceptance. A German landscape artist, the author Jacobs is not only interested in presenting the survival of Jewish cemeteries throughout history and the establishment of more recent ones, but also in their evolution from Roman times, how they reflected the culture around them, and in some cases as with cemeteries founded after the Holocaust, the particular circumstances of their founding. "This book charts this process of change [in Jewish cemeteries] in Europe...starting with the catacombs in Ancient Rome." Jacobs' evolutionary perspective then moves to Jewish cemeteries in the Middle Ages, followed by the Renaissance and Baroque Periods. The geographical area covered in the time period coming down to post-World War II extends from England to Eastern Europe and Istanbul, from St. Petersburg in Russia to the Iberian Peninsula. Cities and towns of all sizes are included not only to show the variety of Jewish cemeteries, but also how they reflected the local or regional architecture of the period and the customs of the broader culture. Thus cemeteries not only in the major cities of Paris, London, and Berlin are represented, but so are ones in the villages and small towns of Venosa, Furth, and Faro. Jacobs' tour not only takes one to the venerable, far-flung, varied Jewish cemeteries throughout Europe, but is also a narrative on aspects of Jewish culture and burial customs throughout the ages. Sephardim and Ashkenazim culture within Judaism and the renewal of Jewish religion and culture after World War II partly through the founding of new cemeteries are particular topics Jacobs turns to in the broad historical approach. "How is this returning life reflected in the continent's post-war cemeteries?" is a question answered with both text and photographs. The variety of Beyer's photographs and related historical visual matter match the range and specifics of Jacob's text. The abundant photographs range over inscriptions on tombs, above-ground ornate, antiquated tombs, park-like areas, vaulted walkways, old iron fences, high surrounding walls, buildings, and in a few instances, adjacent neighborhoods. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful and informative By RHRI picked up this book in order to prepare a talk on non-Catholic burials in Rome. The book not only covers Rome in great detail but takes the reader all over Europe, from Spain to Russia to Greece to England. Outstanding photographs accompany a well-written and thoroughly research text.

Jewish cemeteries are called Houses of Life for good reason. This book shows how burial grounds across Europe reflect the ways that specific Jewish communities have lived and continue to live. Thirty cemeteries are profiled, starting with the Roman era, running through Islamic Spain and medieval Italy to baroque and 19th-century Germany, and ending in present-day Britain and France. Each cemetery is illustrated with historical and current plans, maps, paintings, drawings, and photographs of both the cemeteries and the communities they have served.

Houses of Life covers 2,000 years of Jewish history by examining burial grounds in Europe. The author, a Berlin Landscape architect who recently designed an extension to the Jewish cemetery in Grunewald, Berlin, profiles 30 Jewish cemeteries from the Roman era through Islamic Spain and medieval Italy to baroque and 19th-century Germany, culminating in present-day Britain and France. Richly illustrated with historical and current plans, maps, paintings, drawings, and photographs, the book reflects the resiliency of the Jewish culture. --Landscape Architecture This is not a depressing book. On the contrary, attractively produced, it celebrates the richness and diversity of Jewish art and culture across Europe. --Victorian His book is clear, accessible and follows a largely chronological pattern, superbly illustrated with maps, engravings and photographs by Hans Dietrich Beyer. Houses of Life is full of insights into Jewish history and follows the crucial changes in Jewish history and follows the crucial changes in Jewish life of over 2,000 years... Jacobs has written an interesting and accessible introduction to a rich and important subject. The photographs are superb and the end-notes and bibliography are a helpful guide to a growing literature. --Jewish Renaissance About the Author Joachim Jacobs is a landscape architect based in Berlin. He specializes in regeneration projects across Germany and has contributed to numerous publications. He recently designed an extension to the Jewish cemetery in Berlin Grunewald. Hans Dietrich Beyer, born in Berlin in 1955, studied history and archaeology. He has worked as a professional photographer for the past 20 years. His regular commissioners include The State Museums of Berlin (Pergamon Museum), Museum 'Topography of Terror' Berlin (former SS-Headquarters), Jewish Community of Berlin, Touro University New York/Berlin and many other public

institutions.