

Daniela Bartáková

# Power and Space

## Detention Protocols and Criminal Proceeding Records of the Jewish Inhabitants in Protectorate Prague, 1939–1943

### Abstract

During World War II, numerous locations in Prague underwent significant transformations, particularly affecting the Jewish population. Synagogues, prayer houses, buildings, and apartments changed their function and were converted into storage facilities under the *Treuhandstelle*, which managed these assets. Public spaces were also altered; Jews were barred from many places, the Vltava embankments and city parks, and Jewish cemeteries were repurposed as city greenery. These changes reflect broader efforts to control and marginalise the Jewish community. This study highlights specific areas in Prague where anti-Jewish activities were notably prevalent, necessitating a demonstrative display of authority and power.

*(...) I don't have to explain that it wasn't allowed; nothing was allowed. Radios and gramophones, sweaters, and bicycles had to be handed over; it was not allowed to go to the library, the theatre, or the cinema. Nowhere. It was not allowed to go to the public park either. Nothing. It was not allowed to leave Prague later. For example, in the trams, yellow Magen David was only on the back platform, so we were not allowed to walk through the centre of Prague. When we wanted to meet as a youth, and we wanted to meet, we were not allowed to walk; we had to walk around and everything on foot because on Saturdays and Sundays, we were not allowed [to meet] at all. And so on, and so forth. Then they kicked us out of the apartment. They just told us, "You can leave the furniture and everything here; you have a room in a shared apartment with two more families. Each family has one room".<sup>1</sup>*

### Introduction

This article analyses and interprets the data set collected within the project "Integration and Segregation in Cityspace: the History of the Holocaust in Prague Through a Web Application".<sup>2</sup> While the application makes it possible to study historical information in public space and trace the fates of the victims of the Holocaust to the city space, the article offers some additional aspects of interpretation of the primary sources examined for the application – the cases of violations of anti-Jewish regulations and ordinances, or "incidents" (*incidenty*, as these violations were named by the project's research team). The article outlines some of the power structures and hierarchies associated with the sociocultural significance of space that were relevant in wartime Prague. The data are based on an analysis of more than 2,400 arrest and

1 Archiv židovského muzea v Praze [Archive of the Jewish Museum in Prague], Testimony no. 0281, E. A.

2 The project was supported by the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TAČR), project TL01000366. See Michal Frankl et al., "Present and Absent: Exploring the Holocaust of Jews in Prague Using a Mobile Application", available online at: [https://austriaca.at/0xc1aa5576\\_0x003c13df.pdf](https://austriaca.at/0xc1aa5576_0x003c13df.pdf), accessed 30 March 2025.

detention protocols and criminal proceeding records for the violation of anti-Jewish orders from 1939 to 1943. Detention protocols and criminal proceeding records were filled out by police officers and officials during detention and subsequent investigation. They may include brief statements from the detainees and, in some cases, appeals. These come from the fond of the Police Directorate in Prague, held in the National Archives in Prague.<sup>3</sup> As part of the research, particular incidents were connected with the Holocaust victims' database<sup>4</sup> and placed into the city space based on the residence addresses and/or their locations. These incidents, together with the victims' database, represent a category that might help us find orientation in the spatial and social geographies of Prague during the Second World War. Last but not least, the research team examined the reasons for detention and the amounts of fines imposed, as recorded in the protocols, and these were monitored, documented, and further analysed. This unique data set was used for the MemoMapPrague, which provides insights into the microhistory of Jewish Prague during the Second World War, spatial restrictions and exclusions of the Jewish population, and Jews' interactions with other inhabitants of Prague.<sup>5</sup>

The analysed documents represent a highly problematic and deeply biased source. Rather than providing direct accounts, they reflect the administrative and ideological framework of the Protectorate's policing system. These records – detention protocols and criminal proceeding files – were filled out by police officers who were not neutral record-keepers but agents of an oppressive regime. Many of them had served in law enforcement before the occupation and continued their work under the Protectorate, now subordinated to German security forces. Their role was not merely bureaucratic: they were active participants in enforcing Nazi racial policies, including the persecution of Jews. Consequently, the documents they produced were shaped by the authorities' priorities rather than the detainees' realities.

Moreover, the content of these records was profoundly influenced by the asymmetrical power dynamic between the interrogators and the arrested individuals. Filling out a form was not a neutral act but a tool of control, shaping how detainees' narratives were framed and recorded. The detained Jewish individuals – men and women of various ages and social backgrounds – were questioned under duress, knowing that their statements could have severe consequences. Their words were filtered through the perspective of officials whose primary concern was classifying and prosecuting, not documenting the truth. Given the already precarious situation of Jews under Nazi rule, when economic and labour restrictions had left many destitute, even minor infractions could lead to devastating penalties. The procedural absurdity of these investigations was evident: Jews were criminalised not for actual crimes but for their mere existence within a system designed to exclude and persecute them.

3 Národní archiv Praha [National Archives in Prague] (NA), Policejní ředitelství Praha II [Police Directorate II in Prague] (PDP), 1941–1950.

4 The database was created by the Terezín Initiative Institute in collaboration with the Jewish Museum in Prague and the Terezín Memorial. Since 2001, the web portal provides the public with documents relating to Nazi racial persecution and genocide in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and it includes a database of victims as well as digitised archival documents from the National Archives. Database of Victims, <https://www.holocaust.cz/en/database-of-victims/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

5 MemoMap <https://www.ehri-project.eu/ehri-and-masaryk-institute-new-web-application-memogis-prague>, accessed 30 March 2025; <https://memomap.cz/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

## Mapping Exclusion

In the summer of 1939, German and Czech authorities in the Protectorate introduced measures that laid the foundation for the persecution of Jews. On 21 June, the Regulation on Jewish Property allowed Germany to seize Jewish property and applied the Nuremberg Laws' definition of a Jew. In July, the Germans set up the Central Office for Jewish Emigration (*Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung*) in Prague, aiming to oversee the forced migration of Jews and manage their assets. The Jewish Religious Community was tasked with relocating Jews to Prague for emigration, though this process was bureaucratic and burdensome. Lastly, in August, the Interior Ministry issued a directive to separate Jews from non-Jews in public spaces, encouraging local authorities to enforce bans, leading to a patchwork of restrictions across the Protectorate. By the winter of 1939 and 1940, these restrictions were increasingly standardised.<sup>6</sup> During the Second World War, many places gradually changed their character and purpose (not only) for the Jewish inhabitants of Prague. The project team located and traced these places. By a decree from September 1941, authorities typically converted synagogues into storehouses for confiscated Jewish property. Dozens of other sites underwent similar transformations. Officials repurposed prayer houses, buildings, and apartments as storage facilities for seized Jewish assets, managed by the newly established *Treuhandstelle*, which oversaw already confiscated property. Other public spaces also changed: authorities banned Jews from entering the Vltava embankments and city parks, while repurposing Jewish cemeteries as public greenery instead. Many places took on new functions – at least for one part of the population.<sup>7</sup>

This article aims to highlight places in Prague that, for various reasons, were under the close scrutiny of the Nazi authorities and experienced a higher frequency of anti-Jewish incidents compared to other parts of the city. These were areas where the need to demonstrate power and control was more intense – from the time the anti-Jewish regulations came into effect until the end of the deportations of Prague's Jewish population. These spatial reconfigurations can be further understood through the concept of public space.

In its narrowest definition, public space is intended to serve as a setting for social interaction. However, as the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre suggests, public space is not a singular entity but rather a complex of overlapping spheres, each shaped by different forces and actors. One such sphere is the representation of power, embodied in space as designed and imposed by the state, urban planners, architects, and technocrats. This form of space often reflects control, regulation, and authority – characteristics clearly visible in Nazi interventions within the urban fabric of wartime Prague.

6 Benjamin Frommer, "The Holocaust in Bohemia and Moravia", in *Prague and Beyond: The History of the Jews in the Bohemian Lands*, eds. Kateřina Čapková and Hillel Kieval (Pennsylvania 2025), 196–234, here 206–207.

7 For more about the topic, see *ibid.*; Benjamin Frommer, "Zurück ins Ghetto (und ins Dorf): Ausweisung und Umsiedlung der jüdischen Bevölkerung im nationalsozialistischen Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren", in *Delugiert und ghettoisiert: Jüdinnen und Juden vor der Deportation*, eds. Christine Schindler and Wolfgang Schellenbacher (Vienna: Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes, 2022), 21–38; Wolf Gruner, *Die Judenverfolgung in Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren* (Göttingen 2016). See also: Guy Miron, "Lately, Almost Constantly, Everything Seems Small to Me": The Lived Space of German Jews under the Nazi Regime, *Jewish Social Studies* 20, no. 1 (2013): 121–149; Guy Miron, *Space and Time under Persecution. The German-Jewish Experience in the Third Reich* (Chicago and London, 2023); Chad Bryant, *Prague in Black. Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism* (Cambridge 2009).

Another important dimension is the lived and symbolic space created through daily routines, social interactions, and the shared experiences of urban life. This is the realm that shapes how a city is collectively imagined – a process Lefebvre describes as people making places their own by assigning them specific meanings and functions, such as streets, public buildings, monuments, or parks.<sup>8</sup> Finally, there is a functional sphere, which captures the practical ways in which residents inhabit and move through the city. By viewing these altered sites through Lefebvre's framework, we can better understand how public space was not only materially transformed during the Nazi occupation, but also how its symbolic and functional dimensions were forcibly redefined for a significant segment of the population.

Immediately after the Nazi occupation, the occupiers – together with collaborating local authorities – systematically redefined public space in Prague. These changes became apparent in the city's urban planning, architecture, and everyday use. What had previously served as a setting for social interaction, collective experience, and civic identity was transformed into a tool of exclusion and control. For a significant part of the population – particularly Jews and Czech nationals – public space became a terrain of marginalisation and surveillance. The German authorities, supported by Nazi urban planners and architects, implemented a broad strategy of ethnic homogenisation, typical of radical nationalist regimes. This strategy relied on three main instruments: assimilation, forced displacement, and physical extermination. In practice, these goals were advanced through the transfer of capital assets, the Aryanisation of Jewish property, and the settlement of ethnic Germans in strategic areas of Czech territory.

Urban planning and architecture became active agents of these policies. German urban planners proposed a radical transformation of Prague into a “Führer city” – a symbolic and administrative centre of the Reich. They planned new urban axes, monumental administrative buildings, and spatial reorganisations that followed the ideological principles of the Third Reich. These changes were not abstract: they directly targeted the multicultural Czech-German-Jewish fabric of the city.<sup>9</sup> German architectural and urban planners supported this process; the German dominance was endorsed by “visualising elements of Germanisation”.<sup>10</sup> Germanisation also took place on a visual-symbolic level. The authorities systematically erased Czech national symbols from the public space and replaced them with German ones. German street names began to appear before their Czech equivalents or fully replaced them. Statues, signs, and other markers of Czech identity were removed or renamed to align with Nazi ideology. Through these spatial and symbolic interventions, the occupiers imposed a new public order that sought to erase existing identities and assert German dominance.<sup>11</sup>

Hand in hand with Nazi urban planning and restructuring, the Nazi authorities implemented new anti-Jewish laws and, little by little, projected their policy onto the public space. From 1939, the number of anti-Jewish orders and regulations increased

8 Jaime Iregui, “Veřejný prostor” [Public Space], in *Atlas transformace* [Atlas of Transformation] (Prague 2009), 767–768; Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford 1991), 68–168.

9 Miloš Hořejší, *Protektorátní Praha jako německé město: Nacistický urbanismus a Plánovací komise pro hlavní město Prahu* [Protectorate Prague as a German City: Nazi Urbanism and the Planning Commission for the Capital City of Prague] (Prague 2013), 20.

10 *Ibid.*, 20.

11 Bryant, *Prague in Black*, 67–76. For example, a famous boulevard in Staré Město (the Old Town), Pařížská (Paris) Street, was changed to Nürnberger Street. Vítězné Square in the Dejvice district was renamed Wehrmacht Square, and Wilsonova Street leading to the central train station was named after the composer Richard Wagner.

significantly, based initially on the order regulating encounters between the Jewish and non-Jewish populations in public life. Several other measures restricting the Jewish population were derived from that order in the whole territory of the Protectorate. From then on, Jews were gradually forbidden to enter city public spaces freely – including cafés, restaurants, parks, town spas, shops, libraries, Vltava riverbanks, cinemas and theatres, hospitals, and poorhouses. The newly emerging “Jewish map” gradually limited Jews in space.<sup>12</sup>

One of the key areas within Holocaust studies is the geography of the Holocaust, which understands the genocide as a spatially grounded event – deeply embedded in specific locations, temporal frameworks, and territorial dynamics. Territoriality, in this context, is viewed as a manifestation of social power, facilitating processes of exclusion, relocation, concentration, and displacement. This systematic spatial reorganisation has increasingly become the subject of critical scholarly analysis. What emerged from these practices was a spatial framework of oppression – driven by ideological, racial, and economic imperatives, explicitly formulated in policy and materially implemented across multiple dimensions of human experience.<sup>13</sup> Thus, power is not just exercised through laws and actions but is embedded in spatial practices. The spaces of the Holocaust, such as ghettos, camps, and segregated areas, were actively constructed to enforce racial and ideological control, making them integral to the functioning of Nazi policies.

The focus of the study is not on the concrete places but their interconnection with territorial ideas and practices such as *Lebensraum* – its urban and architectural planning, distinguishing Aryan and non-Aryan spaces, and the transformation of non-Aryan spaces to Aryan ones. As Tim Creswell has emphasised, the “[e]ffect of space is not simply a geographical matter. It always intersects with sociocultural expectations.”<sup>14</sup> Creswell’s theory of space shows that space is not just a passive setting but an active site where racial, ethnic, and cultural ideologies intersect with geographic boundaries. In the case of the Holocaust, the spaces where persecution occurred were not randomly selected but were strategically chosen to reflect and enforce a social order based on racial discrimination and dominance.

The places where anti-Jewish persecutions happened, where all the incidents happened with higher frequency, show a relationship between space and sociocultural power and can be traceable based on class and racial criteria. “(...) [A]uthority connects a particular place with a particular meaning to strengthen and ideological position” – that is, to regulate space in a way that frames any deviation or alternative use as a transgression.<sup>15</sup> Lefebvre’s perception of space helps explain how the Nazis constructed spaces not just for physical containment but as expressions of social and political ideologies. The spaces created under the Nazi regime were not simply geographic locations but were deliberately shaped to reinforce the racialised ideologies that justified the marginalisation, persecution, and eventual annihilation of the Jews.

As Creswell further points out, space and place are used to structure a normative landscape; through space and place, we perceive what is right, just, and appropriate.

12 The term was used by Helena Petrův, *Zákonné bezpráví, Židé v Protektorátu Čechy a Morava* [Legal Injustice, Jews in the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia] (Prague 2011), 206. See also: Hana Kubátová and Jan Láníček, *The Jew in Czech and Slovak Imagination, 1938–1989: Antisemitism, the Holocaust, and Zionism* (Leiden and Boston 2018), 48; Gruner, *Die Judenverfolgung in Protektorat*; and Frommer, “The Holocaust in Bohemia and Moravia”.

13 Anne Kelly Knowles, Tim Cole, and Alberto Giordano, eds., *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Indiana 2014), 43.

14 Tim Creswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis and London 1996), 8.

15 *Ibid.*, 9.

We gain better a orientation about ourselves in society. The organisation and use of public space were integral to creating a “normative” landscape under the Nazi regime. The exclusion and segregation of Jews from public space were not just about controlling their movements but about structuring a social order that defined who was included and who was excluded. This spatial organisation helped normalise racial hierarchies and reinforced the cultural narrative of Aryan superiority.

Since the value and meaning of any space are created, reproduced, and defended by an authority, the space must be protected by the authority from heresy. Such “normative space” illustrates how the physical spaces of oppression were not only instruments of social control but also reinforced the regime’s ideological and moral authority. The constructed spaces such as ghettos, concentration camps, and exclusion zones were not simply places of suffering but also representations of the Nazi state’s power to define what was “normal” and what was “deviant”.

From this perspective, one can examine Prague during the Protectorate, the frequency and placing of particular incidents, and the city’s urban planning. The geographic layout of the Protectorate, where certain incidents occurred in specific locations, highlights how space was strategically used to reinforce the ideological goals of the Nazi regime. The urban planning in Prague during this time was designed to physically segregate Jews from the broader population and to establish symbolic boundaries between “Aryan” and “non-Aryan” spaces.<sup>16</sup>

Since transgression serves to foreground the mapping of ideology onto space and place, it is necessary to interconnect social marginality, resistance, and the shaping of otherness. In this context, transgression is not just the act of breaking laws but also the contestation of the spatial boundaries imposed by the regime. Jewish resistance often took the form of rejecting or subverting the spatial orders that sought to marginalise them, and these acts of resistance were crucial in challenging the physical and symbolic boundaries which the Nazis sought to impose. From this point of view, those who became socially marginalised and ostracised and their re-anchoring in the social structure and geographies of the Nazi occupation and the wartime social conflict can tell us something about the newly established “normality”. The process of marginalising Jews and segregating them in specific spaces helped to create a “new normal”, where exclusion and dehumanisation became institutionalised. The physical transformation of urban spaces into places of confinement and segregation was key to reinforcing this social order and establishing the new norms that justified racial exclusion.

Suppose that the dominant group determines the rules of the use and the meaning of public space and excludes and segregates Jews from it with greater or lesser intensity in different areas. In that case, it sends a clear message about the functioning of public space to national, ethnic, and religious groups of the Protectorate – Germans, Czechs, and Jews.<sup>17</sup> The way in which public space was used to exclude Jews sent a clear message to the different groups within the Protectorate about their status in the social hierarchy. The creation of boundaries around Jews, whether physical (e.g. ghettos) or symbolic (e.g. racial laws), helped communicate who was considered part of the “national community” and who was relegated to the status of “other”.

An extensive examination of the matter entails numerous factors, including the various motivations of Jewish inhabitants for visiting specific locations. These may include trips to grocery stores, where goods might have been more accessible for

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 9.

Jews, as well as visits to cafes, where there was a higher likelihood of Jews being served despite prohibitions. These narratives encompass tangible human experiences – instances when the burdens of daily life became intolerable, and defying anti-Jewish regulations became a means to preserve dignity, if only momentarily. “Nothing was allowed”, as vividly described in the aforementioned firsthand account of life under Nazi restrictions, with individuals being forbidden from entering public spaces, meeting others, or even using public transport freely. Acts of resistance – however small – became vital for maintaining a sense of normalcy and humanity amidst the overwhelming oppressive measures.

Furthermore, co-moving into shared apartments is traceable only with difficulty. Nonetheless, the centrally organised resettlement of Prague’s Jewish population – especially from the periphery into the historical centre, such as Josefov, the Old Town, and later the New Town and Vinohrady – significantly altered the demographic and spatial patterns of Jewish life during the Second World War. This process, led by the Central Office for Jewish Emigration and executed by the Jewish Religious Community under duress, often meant that Jews were relocated into overcrowded, substandard housing, severing ties with their original neighbourhoods and support networks. While such developments may have been visible in the plans of German urban administrators, this study leaves these broader demographic variables aside. Instead, it focuses on the most apparent and direct spatial dynamics relevant to understanding the geography of these incidents. Lastly, it introduces several individual perspectives that reveal how those affected perceived and navigated the reshaped urban space.<sup>18</sup>

### Drafting “Jewish Prague”: The Spatiality of Jewish Life and Its Representations

By the time of the industrial revolution, Prague already exhibited a distinct spatial organisation, with the “governmental” and administrative core concentrated on the left bank of the Vltava River and the commercial and trade-oriented hub on the right bank. Outside the historic city walls, there were traditional agricultural villages, such as Libeň, Bubny, Holešovice, Bubeneč, and Dejvice. These areas were gradually transformed through industrialisation as factories were established in these areas. This led to a physical expansion of the city towards the outskirts, notably into Karlín and Smíchov.

However, the modernisation and urbanisation of Prague encompassed more than just industrial development. A key factor was the process of centralisation and the expansion of administrative functions, which were necessary to manage the growing complexity of an urban society. As Prague’s population increased and the economy diversified, there was a corresponding need for better governance, infrastructure planning, and public services. These developments were facilitated by the removal of the old city walls in the second half of the nineteenth century, which allowed previously peripheral areas to be integrated into the city’s urban fabric.

Urban planning became more deliberate, with new boulevards, squares, and civic institutions reflecting modern principles of hygiene, transportation, and public life. The construction of apartment blocks not only in new districts like Vinohrady but also in older areas such as Staré Město and Nové Město replaced earlier, often me-

<sup>18</sup> Frommer, “The Holocaust in Bohemia and Moravia,” 196–234.

dieval, urban structures. Public transport systems, including horse-drawn and later electric trams, enabled greater mobility and contributed to the spatial reorganisation of the city.

At the same time, the social landscape of Prague became more stratified. While districts like Vinohrady were designed as orderly residential quarters for the upper middle class – with amenities such as parks, cafés, and theatres – other neighbourhoods such as Žižkov and Holešovice developed into dense working-class areas, characterised by smaller apartments and proximity to industrial sites. These neighbourhoods often lacked sufficient infrastructure and public services, which underscored the growing socioeconomic divide within the city.<sup>19</sup>

In sum, Prague's transformation during the nineteenth century was shaped not only by industrialisation but also by interrelated processes of modernisation, including administrative centralisation, urban planning, infrastructure development, and social differentiation. These forces collectively reshaped the city's physical structure and the daily lives of its inhabitants, laying the foundations for the modern metropolis.

Since the second middle of the nineteenth century, Josefov – Prague's Jewish Town – underwent several turbulent transformations. However, it was above all after 1848, following the abolition of the Familiants Laws and the legal emancipation of Jews, that massive migration from rural areas to Prague significantly reshaped the topography of Jewish settlement in the city. While isolated cases of Jewish property acquisition existed prior to 1848 – often through Christian intermediaries – the major demographic and spatial changes occurred only in the wake of full civic rights, which enabled Jews to settle more freely and purchase real estate across Prague. “Especially after 1859, with the introduction of legislation for freedom of movement, Prague Jews sought escape from the physical as well as the figurative ghetto. Josefstadt, numbering 5,929 Jews (95 per cent of the population) in 1843, 4,798 (45 per cent) in 1880, and 2,198 (24 per cent) in 1900, with its narrow overcrowded streets and old housing, became a ghetto in the sense of a slum, shared with the Prague poor regardless of religion.”<sup>20</sup> As Cathleen Giustino has described, “[e]mancipation from the ghetto allowed wealthier Jews to move to more salubrious, comfortable parts of Prague; poorer Jews stayed in the former ghetto's built space, where they were joined by a great number of impoverished Christians. By 1890, Josefov had become the city's slum and was regularly referred to as ‘the quarter of the poor’, and the majority of its residence were Christians.”<sup>21</sup> Between 1893 and 1917, the whole district underwent through redevelopment – *asanace* – transforming Josefov into a fashionable and lucrative area. Josefov was not the only rebuilt district at that time, an inevitable transformation affected the other city parts too – like Staré Město, Nové Město, and Podskalí – as part of a broader modernisation strategy aimed at constructing profitable and hygienic housing.<sup>22</sup>

19 Martin Ouředníček, “Sociálně prostorová struktura industriální Prahy” [Socio-Spatial Structure of Industrial Prague], in *Krajina jako historické jeviště: k počtům Evy Semotanové* (Prague 2012), 263–283, [http://www.historygis.cz/sites/default/files/8\\_ourednicek\\_m\\_2012\\_socialne\\_prostorova\\_struktura\\_industrialni\\_prahy\\_in\\_chodejovska\\_e\\_simunek\\_r\\_eds\\_krajina\\_jako\\_historicke\\_jeviste.pdf](http://www.historygis.cz/sites/default/files/8_ourednicek_m_2012_socialne_prostorova_struktura_industrialni_prahy_in_chodejovska_e_simunek_r_eds_krajina_jako_historicke_jeviste.pdf), accessed 30 March 2025.

20 Michal Frankl, Martina Niedhammer, and Ines Koeltzsch, “Contested Equality: Jews in the Bohemian Lands, 1861–1917”, in *Prague and Beyond*, 120–156, here 126–127.

21 Cathleen M Giustino, *Tearing Down Prague's Jewish Town: Ghetto Clearance and the Legacy of Middle-Class Ethnic Politics around 1900* (New York 2003), 255.

22 Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague 1861–1914* (West Lafayette, 2006). For more about the clearance reconstruction of the Prague Jewish Ghetto, see Giustino, *Tearing Down Prague's Jewish Town*; Alfons Adam, *Unsichtbare Mauern, Die Deutschen in der Prager Gesellschaft zwischen Abkapselung und Interaktion* (1918–1938/9) (Essen, 2013), 104–106; Frankl, Niedhammer, and Koeltzsch, “Contested Equality: Jews in the Bohemian Lands, 1861–1917”, 120–156.



By the early twentieth century, Prague experienced an intense migration of workers, clerks, businesspeople, industrialists, and merchants. The middle and upper-middle classes settled mostly in the downtown areas – Nové Město, Josefov, Staré Město, and Vinohrady – and partially also in the new progressive urban areas – Smíchov, Karlín, Letná, and Bubeneč.<sup>23</sup> Like many other European metropolises, Prague's city centre represented a lucrative living place due to its quality and symbolic historical value. In the course of the First Republic of Czechoslovakia, the Dejvice, Bubeneč, and Střešovice districts quickly developed into desirable modern residential zones.<sup>24</sup> Migration to Prague intensified in the 1930s, reaching 15,000 to 19,000 people annually, mainly workers and public sector employees. The total number of inhabitants had exceeded one million already in 1939.<sup>25</sup>

Alongside the city inhabitants' diverse demographic and socioeconomic structure, national heterogeneity was quite characteristic for Prague too. The numerically significant minorities were the Jews and the Germans. The largest concentration of Germans, over 20 per cent, was in the Nové Město and Vinohrady districts, especially in the new residential areas behind the National Museum.<sup>26</sup> The Jewish population was mostly affiliated with the German language. However, since the fin de siècle, Prague Jews gradually changed their German language affiliation to the Czech one. As Gary B. Cohen points out, it is challenging to determine the exact composition of the German and Czech Jewish populations. At the turn of the century, Jews from the wealthiest area of Prague in Nové Město tended to have German nationality, while in the poorest quarters, such as Josefov and Holešovice, the Jewish population tended rather to have Czech nationality.<sup>27</sup> The German majority among the Jewish population was settled in wealthy urban districts, primarily due to their economic interests and cultural, political, and social preferences. However, this binary distinction between "German" and "Czech" Jews oversimplifies the complex and fluid nature of Jewish identities in Prague. As Kateřina Čapková demonstrates in her monograph *Czechs, Germans, Jews?: National Identity and the Jews of Bohemia*, many Jews navigated multiple identities, often embracing both the German and Czech cultures simultaneously. This bilingualism and biculturalism was not merely a transitional phase but represented a stable state for many individuals, reflecting a pragmatic approach to the multicultural environment of Prague. Official statistics of the late Habsburg Empire and Czechoslovakia often failed to capture this fluidity, as they were not designed to document multiple affiliations or bilingualism.<sup>28</sup>

Other parts of the city with traditionally strong and prosperous German and German Jewish communities included the area around St. Jindřich Church, which neighbored Václavské náměstí (Wenceslas Square/Wenzelsplatz), the street Na Příkopě (Am Graben), and the Lower New Town, particularly the area of Na Poříčí (Porschitz). This area hosted the most important German cultural institutions, bank

23 Ibid.

24 Oufedníček, "Sociálně prostorová struktura industriální Prahy"; Adam, *Unsichtbare Mauern*, 104–106.

25 Ibid., 273.

26 Adam, *Unsichtbare Mauern*, 109.

27 For more details, see Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival*, 76.

28 Kateřina Čapková, *Czechs, Germans, Jews?: National Identity and the Jews of Bohemia* (New York: 2012). In her work *Geteilte Kulturen*, Ines Koeltzsch further elaborates on this theme by examining the everyday interactions and shared cultural spaces among Czechs, Germans, and Jews in Prague. She illustrates how cultural and social exchanges in urban spaces contributed to the formation of hybrid identities, challenging the notion of fixed national categories. Ines Koeltzsch, *Geteilte Kulturen: Eine Geschichte der tschechisch-jüdisch-deutschen Beziehungen in Prag, 1918–1938* (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2012).

houses, fancy shops, cafés, and new residential dwellings. There was the German House Casino, the central organ of German culture in Prague and an umbrella organisation for German liberal free associations;<sup>29</sup> the Urania adult education centre; and the editorial offices of German daily newspapers.<sup>30</sup> Even though Prague's German population gradually decreased, these areas preserved their German character until the Second World War.

The integration of Jews, patterns of population migration, and the restructuring of city districts highlight the intricate relationship between urban topography and identity formation. The spatial distribution of Jewish communities in Prague cannot be solely understood through the lens of socioeconomic status or linguistic affiliation. Instead, it reflects a dynamic interplay of personal choices, cultural interactions, and historical contingencies that shaped the multifaceted identities of Prague's Jewish inhabitants. Gentrification, nationalisation, and the power struggle between German and Czech nationals became integral to this spatial project. It was apparent in public space in the abovementioned places, in architecture, and in national symbols. Czechs, Germans, and Jews living together underwent an economic, cultural, ethnic, and national transformation of the places that gradually began to be symbolically perceived as sites of national consciousness. This shift was evident in changes to urban terminology – for example, the former Horse Market was renamed Václavské náměstí. On a symbolic level, Ferdinand Avenue came to represent a cultural divide: while the German Theatre stood on one side, the Czech National Theatre was built on the opposite end. These spaces became sites of “voluntary segregation”, as Czechs and Germans used them to express their identities during Sunday walks and other public occasions. Besides the sharply defined territorial distinctions, other areas beyond the purview of national boundaries represented territories of mutual interconnection.<sup>31</sup> Social norms and expectations often reinforced this segregation, leading to the separation of both groups in various aspects of their lives. Such areas can thus be seen as examples of spatiality and territoriality.

The dynamic component of demographic events and changes went hand in hand with Prague's urban and architectural development. In the 1930s, Prague also had to face an economic crisis. The “emergency colonies” built for the poorest inhabitants of Prague, as well as apartment buildings for workers, contrasted with the luxury quarters for the social elites. However, this development did not significantly affect existing national maps of the city. German and Jewish minorities resided in the downtown area, while the wider city centre was primarily inhabited by middle and higher-middle-class individuals, clerks, and factory owners. Specific districts within the city aligned with the social, demographic, and ethnic makeup of their residents. Overall, the Jewish community in Prague was well integrated and actively participated in commerce, industry, and trade. The professional structure of the Jewish population was similar to previous decades. Jews worked as physicians, lawyers, and business owners. Most Jews belonged to the well-educated, middle, or upper-middle classes. The occupational profile of Jews was similar to those of Jews

29 Ibid., 80–81; Scott Spector, *Prague Territories National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka's Fin de Siècle* (Berkeley: 2000), 7.

30 Adam, *Unsichtbare Mauern*, 109.

31 Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival*, 93–104, 93. See also Richard Biegel, “Václavské náměstí a zrození pražské ‘city’ na počátku 20. Století” [Wenceslas Square and the Birth of Prague ‘City’ in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century], *Stoletá Praha* 35, no. 2, (2019): 86–113, and Ines Koeltzsch, *Geteilte Kulturen*, 253–332.

in Germany and Austria.<sup>32</sup> Similarly to Berlin, Vienna, and other European cities, Jews were settled in various districts of Prague, including suburban areas. This urban trend of Prague's Jewish and German population had several causes. The city centre's depopulation resulted from the growing importance of the new commercial centre in Nové Město. The increasing attractiveness of the new and more extensive modern centres of Vinohrady and Žižkov also lured many residents from other districts.<sup>33</sup>

According to the statistician Antonín Boháč, in the 1920s, the Prague districts with the highest concentrations of Jewish residents included the Josefov (Prague V), where Jews made up 47 per cent of the population, as well as Staré Město, Nové Město, and Vinohrady, each with a Jewish population exceeding 20 per cent. Although Josefov had the highest relative proportion of Jewish inhabitants, it was a small and spatially limited quarter. As a result, the majority of Prague's Jewish population resided outside of Josefov, primarily in the adjacent and expanding urban districts. The German nationals were concentrated in similar localities, only slightly further away from the historical downtown – that is, in Nové Město, Vinohrady, and Smíchov (over 15 per cent). The German and/or Jewish population was more numerous in the city centre and represented a relatively solid and stable economic and social class. This corresponds to the overall social differentiation of the population of Prague, which, unlike many other European metropolises, did not undergo the stage of urban centre proletarianisation.<sup>34</sup>

Based on the 1930 census, Prague's total Jewish population – referred to as “Israelites” in Czechoslovak statistics in order to distinguish religious affiliation from national categories – was 35,435, constituting 4.2 per cent of the city's population. The census terminology can be misleading, as the categorisation of nationality before 1918 was based on the language of daily use (*Umgangssprache*), and after 1918 on the mother tongue or declared ethnic origin. These categories were interpreted as indicators of “nationality”, yet they did not necessarily reflect actual national identity or self-perception. Many individuals were compelled to choose one category even though their cultural or ethnic identity might have been more complex. In the same year, 50.9 per cent of Prague Jews were registered as Czechoslovak nationals, 22.8 per cent as German nationals, and 22.7 per cent as Jewish nationals. Almost half of Czechoslovak Jews (46.4 per cent) were settled in Prague.<sup>35</sup>

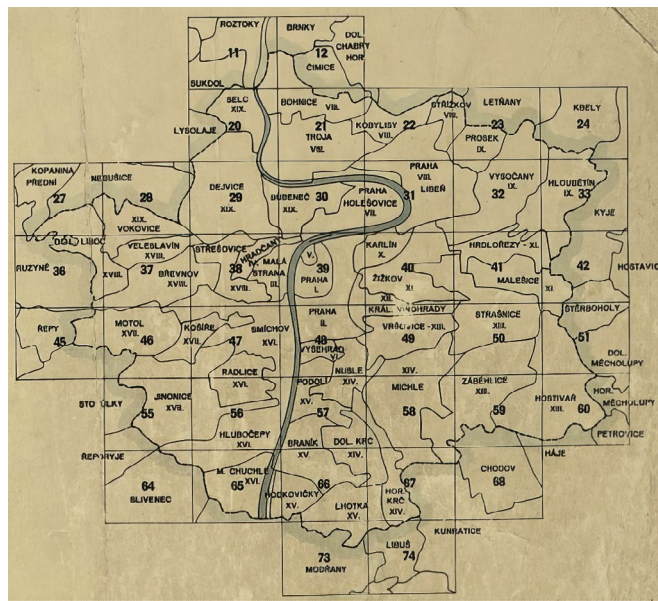
Although the number of Jews of Czechoslovak nationality was increasing, a large part of the Jewish population of Prague spoke German. Jews were scattered throughout the whole city. The traditional settlement areas of the German-speaking and Jewish populations were located in districts I to VII, that is, in the inner city.

32 Jana Vobecká, *Demographic Avant-garde. Jews in Bohemia Between the Enlightenment and Shoah* (Budapest and New York: 2013), 152–153.

33 Ouředníček, *Sociálně prostorová*, 275–277.

34 Koeltzsch, *Geteilte Kulturen*, 66.

35 *Ibid.*, 68–69.



Plan of the city of Prague and its surroundings (1938).<sup>36</sup>

The 1930 census recorded the number of Jewish and non-Jewish German nationals in the districts of Prague as follows:<sup>37</sup>

#### Topographical Distribution of the Population in Prague by District (1930)

Prague District	Total (N) (N=100)	Czecho-slovaks N / %	Germans N / %	Jews (Nationality) N / %	Jews (Religion) N / %	Foreigners N / %
I–VII	206,867	180,308 / 87.2	19,352 / 9.4	3,914 / 1.9	16,668 / 8.1	5,421 / 2.6
I	30,481	25,749 / 84.5	3,083 / 10.1	1,206 / 4.0	4,988 / 16.4	967 / 3.2
II	78,121	66,358 / 85.0	8,952 / 11.5	1,201 / 3.4	7,060 / 9.0	2,617 / 3.4
III	21,218	18,627 / 87.8	2,015 / 9.5	71 / 0.3	292 / 1.4	496 / 2.3
IV	9,100	7,986 / 87.8	937 / 10.3	17 / 0.2	145 / 1.6	112 / 1.2
V	3,497	2,539 / 72.6	561 / 16.0	345 / 9.9	1,373 / 39.3	131 / 3.8
VI	5,308	5,141 / 96.9	73 / 1.4	32 / 0.6	60 / 1.1	93 / 1.8
VII	59,150	53,908 / 91.1	4,091 / 6.9	714 / 1.2	2,771 / 4.7	1,005 / 1.7
VIII	54,395	52,174 / 95.9	1,592 / 2.9	237 / 0.4	951 / 1.7	695 / 1.3
IX	26,721	26,039 / 97.4	425 / 1.6	39 / 0.1	231 / 0.9	356 / 1.3
X	24,002	21,166 / 88.2	1,899 / 7.9	504 / 2.1	2,211 / 9.2	400 / 1.7
XI	97,819	94,069 / 96.2	2,593 / 2.7	421 / 0.4	2,216 / 2.3	1,216 / 1.2
XII	95,497	83,988 / 87.9	7,919 / 8.3	1,634 / 1.7	7,048 / 7.4	3,170 / 3.3
XIII	68,283	64,880 / 95.0	1,834 / 2.7	247 / 0.4	1,032 / 1.5	1,361 / 2.0
XIV	74,099	71,548 / 96.7	1,197 / 1.6	284 / 0.4	808 / 1.1	1,527 / 2.0
XV	16,919	16,349 / 96.6	384 / 2.3	31 / 1.8	138 / 0.8	229 / 1.4
XVI	69,705	64,833 / 93.0	3,752 / 5.4	352 / 0.5	1,565 / 2.2	1,228 / 1.8
XVII	23,673	22,920 / 96.8	345 / 1.5	31 / 0.1	157 / 0.6	280 / 1.2
XVIII	29,140	28,094 / 96.4	609 / 2.1	46 / 0.2	303 / 1.0	450 / 1.5
XIX	61,695	55,718 / 90.3	3,918 / 6.4	490 / 0.8	2,04 / 3.3	1,900 / 3.1
Bubeneč	30,514	26,799 / 87.8	2,440 / 8.0	314 / 1.0	1,428 / 4.7	1,245 / 4.1

<sup>36</sup> Orientační plán hlavního města Prahy s okolím (1938) [Plan of the city of Prague and its surroundings is available on webpage of the Municipal Library of Prague (1938)], accessed 2 April 2025, <https://web2.mlp.cz/mapa1938/klad.php>.

<sup>37</sup> Koeltzsch, *Geteilte Kulturen*, 361.

## Reshaping Prague: Spatial Transformation under National Socialism

After establishing the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, the urban landscape underwent significant transformations, particularly for the Jewish community. When examining the locations where Jews faced heightened persecution, it is crucial to consider the city's traditional "German territories", which have historical significance in the tensions between Germans and Czechs, as previously discussed. However, other factors within the urban environment likely influenced these dynamics. It is important to consider the city centre's bustling areas and traffic hubs, along with the national and social reflections of space.

During the Second World War, the trams were a necessary means of transport for Prague, as buses were cancelled due to the lack of petrol. Leveraging Prague's well-established tram network from the interwar period, trams became the city's primary mode of public transportation due to their reliance on electricity, which was more readily available during wartime. Although Prague's public transport was restricted to Jews by order, it is still interesting to look at the frequency of incidents in the areas of the main tram lines. These naturally crossed the city's significant economic, banking, and commercial arteries.

Since 1938, the No. 1 had been the main tram line of the city centre, leading from Vypich to Čechovo náměstí. In 1940, the route was slightly modified and led from Vypich to Třída Krále Jiřího. Another tram line leading to the city centre was circular line No. 2, starting and ending at Flora. Other tram lines connected the wider centre or outskirts of the city and crossed the city centre. And, as already mentioned, anti-Jewish regulations were strongly represented at several exposed locations. Among other restrictions, Jews were forbidden from entering Václavské náměstí on certain days, as well as and the Vltava embankment, city parks, and the streets around the Crop Exchange near St. Henry's Church during its period of operation.

All the incidents can be considered in light of the percentage of the Jewish population in particular districts and, at the same time, with regard to the area of interest of the Nazis. Thus, the routes of the main tram lines that crossed the city centre were the streets of the former promenades, both originally Czech on the lower part of Václavské náměstí and Národní třída, and the former German promenade on Příkopy and Můstek. That is, the so-called Golden Cross (central traffic and urban crossroad) were among the most exposed places. As adumbrated above, thanks to modernisation and unusual construction activities, Václavské náměstí – the headquarters of the whole area – became the dominant feature of multiethnic Prague. Czech and German nationals visibly struggled for dominance there in the nineteenth century, and the place came under the scrutiny of the German authorities again during the Second World War. Monumental new buildings with shops, businesses and offices, arcades, cinemas, theatres, cafés, bars, restaurants, and buffets (*automaty*), became a symbol of prosperity. This process was stopped by the German occupation and its effort to reinterpret national symbols, characters, and urban spaces.<sup>38</sup> Alongside Václavské náměstí, no less eminent was the area around the street Na Příkopě with its bank houses and business centres. Therefore, it was unsurprising that incidents at these places occurred much more frequently and were often based on denunciations made by fellow citizens.

In addition to the city centre, the Nazis were also interested in the Vinohrady district with its sizeable German-speaking minority. At the same time, Vinohrady rep-

<sup>38</sup> Koeltzsch, *Geteilte Kulturen*, 256–288.

resented a modern district where several thousand new apartments were to be built for the newly arrived German population.<sup>39</sup> However, in contrast to Bubeneč, the representation of the Jewish population in Vinohrady was significantly higher, at 9.2 per cent.

Furthermore, it is interesting to highlight the plans and sites of interest of the German Planning Commission for the Capital City of Prague and its Surroundings (*Planungskommission für die Hauptstadt Prag und Umgebung*). While this topic goes beyond the scope of this article, it may point to several places where the persecution of Jews was more frequent and, therefore, to potential future research. For example, the areas from which the Jewish population was first evicted or moved into shared apartments could be a subject of further study.

The commission divided Prague into several areas, focusing on the city centre and urban greenery for aesthetic, social, and hygienic reasons. In practice, formerly industrial or workers' districts of the city were to be radically reconstructed. These included the districts of Žižkov, Libeň, and Vysočany.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, there was a plan to settle incoming German officials, members of the Wehrmacht, SS, teachers, and other newcomers to appropriate areas. Lucrative districts of Prague were in the spotlight; enclosed settlement colonies were to be established for German citizens, and Jewish and Czech populations were to be displaced. Appropriate natural and hygienic conditions were found in Střešovice, Petřín, Bubeneč, Baba, and Holešovice, and the German population was relatively strong in these districts already.<sup>41</sup> After all, housing and urban greenery were part of the Nazi ideology *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil). As indicated above, the most lucrative parts of the city centre and the broader centre were Staré Město, Nové Město, Josefov after clearance reconstruction, and the newly constructed apartment buildings in Vinohrady. Residential areas in Dejvice, Holešovice, Bubny, and Střešovice had a prestige for German urban planners too. The share of the Jewish population was less than five per cent there, while the German population was already relatively high. In addition, these areas were strategically located around the city's main arteries.<sup>42</sup>

The plan to create exclusively German districts in the occupied Prague territories with traditional German settlements and partly based on the newly arrived German military, police, and administrative units, was also a part of the effort to demonstrate the strength and superiority of Nazi Germany. As an integral part of such a manifestation of power – whether it was for the Czech inhabitants, the German minority of Prague, or directed beyond regional borders – the persecution of the empire's enemies, including the Jewish population, was part of the project. Another integral part of the plan was transforming public space and limiting its use, at least for some parts of the population. It is apparent in the number and placement of incidents, that is, the reasons for the detention and persecution of Jews.<sup>43</sup>

39 Hořejší, *Protektorátní Praha*, 161.

40 Ibid., 156.

41 Ibid., 161.

42 An example of the importance of this can be seen in the Jizera project, which sought to bring better drinking water to lucrative neighbourhoods. See Jaroslav Jásek, "Chutnější pitná voda pro 'lepší lidi'" [Tastier Drinking Water for "Better People"], in *Evropská velkoměsta za druhé světové války. Každodennost okupovaného velkoměsta, Praha 1939–1945 v evropském srovnání* [European Cities during World War II. Everyday Life of an Occupied City. 1939–1845 Prague in European Comparison] (Prague 2007), 103–109.

43 Olga Fejtová and Václav Ledvinka, eds., *Evropská velkoměsta za druhé světové války. Každodennost okupovaného velkoměsta, Praha 1939–1945 v evropském srovnání* [European Cities during World War II. Everyday Life of an Occupied City. 1939–1845 Prague in European Comparison] (Prague 2007).

One of the personalities dealing with the Germanisation of Prague was the newly appointed mayor of Prague and historian, Josef Pfitzner, who participated in creating the two-track administration to dominate the Czech space. Among his first steps to reorganise the administration of the city was his discrediting of Czech officials and provoking of attacks on the Czech opposition.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, streets were renamed and their bilingual designation was mentioned, which was inaugurated in the Dejvice district in April 1940. Pfitzner presented his concept of a German Prague in his book *Das tausendjährige Prag*, in which he examined the ideological subjugation of the city's Czech population.<sup>45</sup> In addition, he focused on discrediting historical figures associated with Czech nationalism, and on the removal of symbols of the Czech nation from public space. Pfitzner also concentrated on the consistent ideological retraining and testing of Prague guides in the spirit of Nazi ideology. Part of this German propaganda was an order to the Prague Monuments Office to have the statue of Moses removed from Pařížská (Nürnberger) Street at the expense of the Jewish Religious Community, as well as the monument to Rabbi Löw from Mariánské Square.<sup>46</sup> It was also significant for Nazi propaganda that the 1944 Prague guidebook stated that the Old-New Synagogue from the thirteenth century, together with the Jewish town hall and the Jewish cemetery, represented the only remains of the former Jewish town without any other historical information.<sup>47</sup>

### Incidents – Violations of Anti-Jewish Regulations Within the Territory of Prague

Based on documents from the Police Directorate in Prague which are held in the National Archives in the Czech capital, one of the most common incidents was the missing letter “J” in an ID card, which appeared in more than 500 protocols and criminal proceedings. Then there was missing or hiding a Jewish star, which appeared in



Frequency of Incidents in Prague.

44 Vojtěch Šustek, “Nacistická kariéra sudetoněmeckého historika” [Nazi Career of Sudeten German Historian], in Josef Pfitzner a protektorátní Praha v letech 1939–1945 [Josef Pfitzner and Protectorate Prague in 1939–1945], vol. 1, eds, Alena Mišková and Vojtěch Šustek (Prague: 2000), 8–38.

45 Josef Pfitzner, *Das tausendjährige Prag* (Bayreuth: 1940).

46 *Ibid.*, 14–15.

47 *Grosser Führer der Hauptstadt Prag und Umgebung* (Berlin: 1944), 76.

more than 190 cases. Following these were shopping outside the time set up for Jews (more than 130 cases), arrests for visiting cafés, restaurants, and dance parties (more than 80 cases), and arrests for staying in the Vltava embankments and passing through it (more than 70 cases). Among the numerous incidents were also the non-submission of driving licenses, dwelling at train stations, walking through parks, and visiting theatres or cinemas, offences which were recorded in several dozens of cases.

I will now focus on the spatial frequency of incidents in particular districts where the percentage of the Jewish population was higher. The address of the incident can be monitored in records of individual detentions or criminal proceedings; if not specified, the incident is located based on the individual's permanent address.

### Missing letter “J” in ID cards

The most frequent incident was the arrest for the missing letter “J” on ID cards, punished in more than 500 cases. The duty of marking ID cards with the letter “J” was based on the decree of the Reich Protector Office from January 1940. The fine was in the range of 1,000 to 3,000 K (Crowns) or five to ten days in prison. The actual amount of the fine often depended on the discretion of the police officer. However, in many cases, the fines were roughly equivalent to an average monthly salary during the Protectorate, though the exact amount varied by year. The fines were usually too high for the Jews, whose food rations were lower than those of the non-Jewish population. Although we can only speculate whether it was a pragmatic or economic decision, Jews often chose prison for several days rather than paying a fine: keeping cash was a rational choice during the Second World War.

A violation of this measure was often discovered at police offices when people applied for new identification documents. In May 1941, seventy-five-year-old Albert Winternitz applied for residence registration and a new ID. Since his documents were not marked with the letter “J”, the police inspector punished him with a 1,000 K fine or five days in prison, where he eventually served his sentence since the fine was too high for him. Winternitz was murdered in Treblinka in October 1942.<sup>48</sup>

Jews usually found out about the regulation at the office; sometimes, the offence was discovered during a police street control. In many cases, we can find broader detention contexts in the protocols. In the criminal proceeding records, we can find dozens of protocols of many older people who did not leave their homes anymore due to health issues. That was the case of seventy-eight-year-old Anna Wernerová, who applied for her ID to be marked with the letter “J” in September 1941, unaware that her ID was supposed to be marked already. As mentioned in the protocol, she was poor, unable to walk without help, and supported by her son. At the time, she was waiting for a free place in a Jewish senior citizen's home in Prague. Despite all these facts, she was punished with a fine of 1,000 K or seven days in prison. Wernerová was deported to Theresienstadt in July 1942 and subsequently to Treblinka, where she was murdered.<sup>49</sup>

In another criminal proceeding record, we can find the story of Regina Machlupová, aged seventy-six, who went to the police station to register for residence in October 1941. As her ID was not marked with the letter “J”, she was punished with a fine of 2,000 K or seven days in prison. “(...) I still stay at home, and (...) I didn't know

48 NA, PDP (1941–1950), “Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Winternitz Albert”, 16 May 1941.

49 NA, PDP (1941–1950), “Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Wernerová Anna”, V 2457/2, 9 September 1941.



that I'm obliged to take care of supplementing my ID with a designation of Jewish origin. Otherwise, I wouldn't pass the register to list to the doorman for registration."<sup>50</sup> She appealed unsuccessfully and paid the total fine despite her serious health issues. As apparent from the appeal protocol, she was treated for cancer. Machlupová was deported to Theresienstadt in July 1942, where she passed away a few months later.<sup>51</sup>

#### Number of Incidents in Selected Prague Districts<sup>52</sup>

Prague district	Jewish share of total population as a percentage	Number of incidents
Prague XII – Vinohrady	9.2	166
Prague II – Nové město	9	139
Prague I – Josefov	16	68

A higher frequency of this offence can be observed in Prague's VIII and X districts, where there were almost fifty cases recorded. There were also similar cases in the Dejvice, Bubny, and Holešovice districts. In district V, Josefov, where the population was 40 per cent Jewish, there were even only thirteen cases recorded.

#### Non-wearing and Hiding of a Jewish Star

In September 1941, a new order of the Reich Protector in Bohemia and Moravia was passed, announcing that the Jews were not allowed to appear in public without a Jewish star which must be "(...) visibly worn on the left breast side of the clothing".<sup>53</sup> Jews were often persecuted for covering the star or if it had insufficient stitching. The incidents often occurred based on denunciations.

Even wearing the Jewish star on the wrong side was a reason for punishment, as is evident from the detention protocol of Sylvio Klein, who was arrested in March 1942 for "sewing a Jewish Star on the right instead of the left side". On the protocol, we can read that the star was sewn by his mother on the wrong side by mistake. Unfortunately, this mistake was noticed by a police officer in Hybernská Street. At that time, Klein was eighteen years old. He was deported to Theresienstadt in May 1942, and in February 1943 to Auschwitz, where he was murdered.<sup>54</sup>

Jan Beinkoles was persecuted in Jindřiška Street in March 1942 because he "was walking down the sidewalk with a dirty Jewish Star sewn at the corners only". He was deported to Theresienstadt in July 1942, and from there to Auschwitz in December 1943, where he was murdered at the age of twenty-eight.<sup>55</sup>

50 NA, PDP (1941–1950), "Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Machlupová Regina", M 308/16, 6 November 1941.

51 NA, PDP (1941–1950), "Odvolání proti trestnímu nálezu [Appeal against a criminal conviction]: Machlupová Regina", M 308/16, 7 November 1941.

52 The table includes only that districts that are most relevant for the scope of this study. A more comprehensive overview, including temporal patterns, can be accessed via the timeline on the online MemoMap, <https://memomap.cz/>, 2 April 2025.

53 *Verordnungsblatt des Reichsprotectors in Böhmen und Mähren* (12 September 1941), <https://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex-day?aid=bum&datum=19410912&seite=1&zoom=33>, accessed 30 March 2025.

54 NA, PDP (1941–1950), "Protokol o zadržení [Detention Protocol]: Sylvio Klein", K 2096/9, 28 March 1942; <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/376730-klein-sylvio-silvia-nezpracovano/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

55 NA, PDP (1941–1950), "Protokol o zadržení [Detention Protocol]: Jan Beinkoles", B 1019/19, 22 March 1942, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/405447-beinkoles-jan-nezpracovano/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

In April 1941, Valerie Weissová was punished with a fine of 1,000 K or five days in prison for covering a Jewish star in a tram. She was denounced by Josef Povýšil, for whom Jewish passengers did not vacate a seat even the tram was overcrowded. Weissová allegedly only waved her hand in response to Povýšil's complaint over the seat and covered her star with a scarf. In reaction to the accusation, she stated in the protocol that "I thought there were free seats in the wagon. The witness didn't speak to me at all. I cleaned my nose; therefore, I was holding a tissue. It is not true that I was covering the star."<sup>56</sup> Weissová paid the fine. She was deported to Theresienstadt in January 1942, and in September 1943 to Auschwitz, where she was murdered at the age of fifty-four.<sup>57</sup>

In contrast to incidents regarding the missing letter "J", arrests for not wearing or covering a Jewish star, punished in at least 195 cases, can be traced quite well based on the addresses of particular incidents. Details about the detention and criminal procedure can also be found in the protocols.

Prague district	Jewish share of total population as a percentage	Number of incidents
Prague II	9	142
Prague XII	9.2	38
Prague I	16	27

The highest incidence was in District II, where Jews were most often detained on Václavské náměstí (21 cases), in Jindřišská Street (15 cases), and Na Poříčí (11 cases). Several cases of the arrests of individuals were recorded in the streets U Půjčovny, Berlínská třída (today Revoluční), Třída Richarda Wagnera (today Wilsonova Street), and Na Příkopě, and on the square called Petřské náměstí.

Many incidents also in District XII – Vinohrady, especially in Vinohradská Street (10 cases). In District I there were in 27 cases. In none of the other districts was the incidence of the violation of the order significant: there were 5 cases in District V – Josefov, 7 each in districts VII and VIII, and 9 in District XIX.

Again, the results do not correspond to the percentage of the Jewish population in particular districts. However, the places with a higher frequency of incidence were connected to the conflict about public space. Czech and German nationals had struggled over these areas since the nineteenth century, and the new Nazi supremacy of power began to manifest itself on a symbolic level as these areas represented important city crossroads.

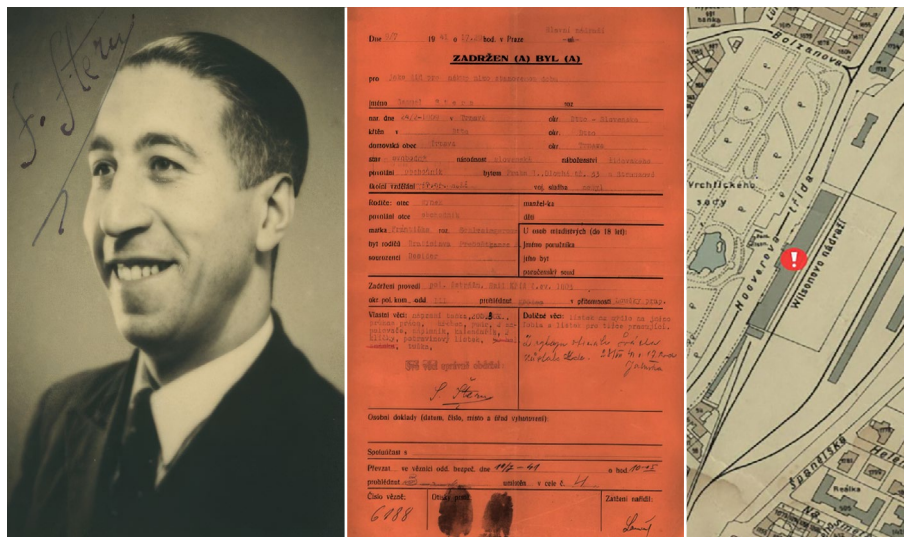
### Shopping Hours for the Jews

On 9 July 1940, the regulation of shopping hours for the Jews was imposed following the policy of contact restriction between the Jewish and Aryan populations. In Prague, shopping hours were set from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. However, in 1941, these were changed to 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Individual shops were obliged to display an information board with Jewish shopping hours and a ban

<sup>56</sup> NA, PDP (1941-1950), "Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Valerie Weissová", V 1974/7, 21 November 1941; available online at: <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/364747-weissova-valerie-nezpracovano/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid; <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/133573-valerie-weissova/Weissova>, accessed 30 March 2025.

on Jews entering outside of these hours. Jews were usually not allowed to shop in the morning in order to prevent them from buying any fresh products.<sup>58</sup> Space, place, and, now even more explicitly, time, were used to structure a normative landscape and reinforce an ideological stance.



**ID photo of Samuel Stern (NA, PDP, 1941–1950, S 5984/3 [Stern Samuel]).**  
**Detention Protocol of Samuel Stern (NA, PDP, 1941–1950, S 5984/3 [Stern Samuel]).**  
**Location of the incident as displayed on MemoMap Prague.**

In July 1941, Samuel Stern, aged thirty-two, was arrested at the Hlavní nádraží (Main Train Station) in Prague for buying cigarettes after 5:00 pm. He stated in the protocol that “I apologise for the fact, I was standing in the line, and it was after five o’clock before it was my turn”.<sup>59</sup> He was sentenced with a fine of 5,000 K or fourteen days in prison. Since the amount of the fine was extraordinarily high and he was poor, as he stated in the protocol, he went to jail. Stern was deported to Theresienstadt in April 1942; two days later, he was deported to Zamošć, where he was murdered.<sup>60</sup>

A disproportionate amount of punishments is apparent from the criminal record proceeding of the spouses Jetty and Evžen Šternlicht, who were punished with a fine 100 K or two days in prison each for buying oranges at the shop in Na Můstku Street in March 1941.<sup>61</sup>

In December 1941, Bernard Brenner bought a newspaper outside the shopping hours for Jews. The relevant protocol states that “[w]hen the tobacco shop clerk, obeying the order, refused to give him the newspaper, he threw the money at the shop window, took the newspaper in a truly cheeky Jewish way, and he wanted to leave”. He was

58 “Restriction of Shopping Hours for Jews in Aryan Shops”, <https://www.holocaust.cz/dejiny/soa/zide-v-ceskych-zemich-a-konecne-reseni-zidovske-otazky/ghetto-bez-zdi/protizidovske-zakony-a-narizeni/protizidovska-narizeni-omezujici-vstup-a-pobyt-na-verejnych-mistech/omezeni-nakupni-doby-pro-zidy-v-arijskych-obchodech/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

59 NA, PDP (1941–1950), “Protokol o zadržení [Detention Protocol]: Samuel Stern”, S 5984/3”, 9 July 1941, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/401933-stern-samuel-nezpracovano/>, 30 March 2025.

60 Samuel Stern, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/127515-samuel-stern/>, 30 March 2025.

61 NA, PDP (1941–1950), “Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of Criminal Proceedings]: Evžen Sternlicht”, S 6000/2, 22 March 1941, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/402140-sternlicht-evzen-nezpracovano/>, accessed 30 March 2025. The couple was deported to Theresienstadt in December 1941, and from there to Riga in January 1942 where they were murdered. <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/127577-evzen-sternlicht/>; <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/127581-jetty-sternlichtova/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

arrested and sentenced with a fine of 5,000 K or fourteen days in prison; he paid the fine.<sup>62</sup> Bernard Brenner died at the age of seventy-four in Theresienstadt.<sup>63</sup>

About 136 protocols concerning the violation of shopping hours are preserved in the National Archives.

Prague district	Jewish share of total population as a percentage	Number of incidents
Prague II	9	74
Prague I	16	39
Prague XII	9.2	19

The penalty for this incident was imposed in 74 cases in District II, mostly at Hlavní nádraží (21 cases) and in Na Poříčí (12 cases), as well as in Jindřišská Street and at Hybernské nádraží.

It was followed by 39 cases in District I, with a slightly higher frequency of 6 cases in Ovocný trh (Fruit Market). There were other incidents scattered all around District I. In District XII – Vinohrady, there were 19 cases, and 11 in District V.

### Other Incidents

Among other violations of the anti-Jewish orders were the arrests for visiting cafés and restaurants. According to the decree of the Police Directorate of 14 August 1939, Jews were not allowed to enter cafés, restaurants, and sweet shops. Owners had to mark their shops with the German-Czech inscription “*Juden nicht zugänglich – Židům nepřístupno*”. Jews were only allowed to visit places that had a separate part for Jewish customers.<sup>64</sup>

In August 1941, Max Wiener was punished for visiting the Burger Sweet Shop in Vodickova Street. According to the protocol, his visit exceeded the time allocated for Jews by one minute. He was punished with a fine of 1,000 K or five days in prison: he paid the fine.<sup>65</sup> Wiener was deported to Theresienstadt in November 1942. He was murdered in Auschwitz in September 1944 at the age of forty-two.<sup>66</sup>

In a protocol from December 1940, we can read details about the arrest of seventy-five-year-old Adolf Benda, who visited a restaurant where he drank tea to get warmer. He stated in the protocol that the restaurant owner was his friend and unaware of Benda's Jewish origin. He was punished with a fine of 3,000 K or fourteen days in prison.<sup>67</sup>

62 NA, PDP (1941–1950), “Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Bernard Brenner”, B 2960/11, 7 December 1941, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/409703-brenner-bernard-nezpracovano/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

63 Bernard Brenner, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/79316-bernard-brenner/> accessed 30 March 2025.

64 “Omezení styku nežidovského a židovského obyvatelstva ve veřejném životě [Restriction of Contact between Non-Jews and Jews in Public Life]”, 14 August 1939, <https://www.holocaust.cz/dejiny/soa/zide-v-ceskych-zemich-a-konecne-reseni-zidovske-otazky/ghetto-bez-zdi/protizidovske-zakony-a-narizeni/protizidovska-narizeni-omezujici-vstup-a-pobyt-na-verejnych-mistech/omezeni-styku-nezidovskeho-a-zidovskeho-obyvatelstva-ve-verejnem-zivote/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

65 NA, PDP (1941–1950), “Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of Criminal Proceedings]: Max Wiener”, V 3381/1, 1 August 1941, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/366028-wiener-max-nezpracovano/>, 30 March 2025.

66 Max Wiener, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/134399-max-wiener/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

67 NA, PDP (1941–1950), “Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Adolf Benda”, B 1191/3, 16 December 1940, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/406008-benda-adolf-nezpracovano/>, 30 March 2025.

Benda was deported to Theresienstadt in February 1942. In October 1942 he was deported to Treblinka, where he was murdered.<sup>68</sup>

Frequent violations of this regulation occurred in the popular garden restaurant Šatovka in district Dejvice – V Šárceckém údolí. As is evident from several criminal records, the restaurant was well known among the Jewish population as a place offering a separate non-Aryan room. However, the restaurant became a thorn in the eye for the Czech fascists' movement. In August 1940, in their journal *Vlajka* (The Flag), an article reported on a police raid on the restaurant: “[t]he tenant of the restaurant was happy with the way the business was doing. She didn't mind at all that, by order, Jews were not allowed to stay in (...) For their comfort, 'intimate separate rooms' were also set up. Many Jewish gourmets brought girls to this successful restaurant, but mostly Aryan girls.”<sup>69</sup> The author further writes about the impudence of the Jews who “(...) occupied a nearby wooded hill, where it looked like in the Promised Land”.<sup>70</sup> It was supposed to be the reason that the police organised the raid and as a consequence arrested about forty Jews.

In August 1940, Elsa Weidbergová was sentenced to a fine of 500 K or three days in prison for visiting Šatovka, where she wanted to play bridge with her friends. As she mentioned in the protocol, she saw the inscription “For non-Aryans” on a tree. In November 1942, Weidbergová was deported to Theresienstadt, and in September 1943 to Auschwitz, where she was murdered aged forty-five.<sup>71</sup>

The fact that the possibility of visiting the Šatovka restaurant was confusing for the Jewish population also confirms Karel Frankl's testimony. As he stated, he visited the restaurant in June 1940, although he was aware that the restaurant was not marked as accessible to Jews. “Neither was there an inscription ‘Židům nepřístupno – Juden nicht Zugänglich’ and Mr. Klinger, as well as flyers distributed at the Jewish religious community, confirmed to me that the restaurant is accessible to the Jews”, he stated in the protocol. He also mentioned in his appeal that he had asked the restaurant's owner, Ms. Uhlířová, to confirm whether the restaurant was open to Jews. Uhlířová confirmed that she had already obtained permission to open the non-Aryan section, but since she had received the approval a day earlier she had not yet marked the restaurant.<sup>72</sup> The amount of the fine was the same as in the previous case. Frankl was twenty-one years old when he was deported to Terezín in July 1942; two months later, he was deported to Raasiku, where he was murdered.<sup>73</sup>

These orders were most often violated again in District II, where there about 40 cases. The highest frequency was on Václavské náměstí (13 cases). In District I there were 22 cases. A higher frequency also occurred in District XIX due to the fashionable Šatovka restaurant, where the order was violated in 22 cases.

In District XII – Vinohrady, there were 15 cases recorded. However, we can only speculate on the reasons for the visits to particular restaurants and cafés. Still, the

68 Adolf Benda, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/76541-adolf-benda/>, 30 March 2025.

69 NA, Ministerstvo zahraničních věcí [Ministry of Foreign Affairs], Va I, K. 2322, sign. n 7, “Vlajka” [Flag], 30 August 1940, 30, P.r., “Policejní razie na Židy v Šárce – 40 židů předvedeno – četní židé vykoupáni v potoku [Police Raid on Jews in Šárka – 40 Jews Brought in Police – Many Jews Bathed in the Stream]”.

70 Ibid.

71 NA, PDP (1941–1950), “Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Eliška Weidbergová”, V 1581/9, 19 July 1940, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/362819-weidbergova-eliska-nezpracovano/>, accessed 30 March 2025; Eliška Weidbergová, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/131937-eliska-weidbergova/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

72 NA, PDP (1941–1950), “Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Karel Frankl”, F 1423/1, 19 December 1941, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/116051-frankl-karel-trestni-rizeni/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

73 Karel Frankl, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/85555-karel-frankl/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

frequency of these incidents could correspond to the popularity of certain Prague cafés among the Jewish population, who visited them despite the prohibition.

Another cluster of incidents concerned Jews who lingered on the Vltava River embankment. From July 1941, Jews were not allowed to be on the Vltava River embankment in the section from the Railway Bridge at Smíchov to the Hlávka Bridge. The fine ranged from 10 K to 5,000 K or from twelve hours to fourteen days in prison.<sup>74</sup> Based on the preserved protocols, one of the locations where violations of the order were most frequently recorded was Švehlovo nábřeží (Švehla Embankment, today Nábřeží Ludvíka Svobody/Ludvík Svoboda Embankment) in District II, where the order was violated in about 70 cases. Due to its location, the site was undoubtedly in the police officers' scope for the same reason as the places mentioned above.

In February 1942, Pavel König stated in a protocol that he was on the Švehla Embankment on his way back from Veletržní palác (Exhibition Palace)<sup>75</sup> when accompanying his sick uncle to the assembly point for transportation. He further stated that he knew about the prohibition order, but he thought they could at least cross the embankment. Pavel König was sentenced to a fine of 2,000 K. He was deported to Theresienstadt in July 1942, where he passed away aged forty.<sup>76</sup> As evident in many protocols, the requirements of the regulation – and how to properly comply with them – were often unclear and confusing.

In September 1941, Šalomon Seidemann was also sentenced to a fine of 2,000 K, or six days in prison, for walking on the Švehla Embankment. The absurdity of the order and punishment was underlined by police officer Rudolf Pěkný, who stated in the protocol that he saw the defendant on the embankment walking normally: "I can't say he was looking or browsing around, or walking aimlessly."<sup>77</sup> Seidman was deported ten months later to Theresienstadt where he died at the age of seventy-eight.<sup>78</sup>

The last cluster I will focus on is situated in District II: the incidents involving entry to the Crop Exchange (Plodinová burza) and surrounding streets at the time of the market. The decree from December 1940 clearly defined streets where entry was prohibited: Panská, Nekázanka, Senovážná, and Dlážděná streets, part of Jindřišská Street from Panská to Dlážděná, and the western part of Senovážné Square. The punishment was the same as in the case of the previous order.<sup>79</sup> The Jews were forbidden from attending the exchange to prevent them from accessing agricultural products. The areas under strict control were Jindřišská Street (27 cases), Senovážné Square (30 cases), and Nekázanka, Panská, and Hybernská streets. The German population had lived in those streets since the pre-war period. As stated in most of the protocols, the detained persons forgot that it was an exchange day. We can often read that they were walking home or working on assignments.

74 "Zákaz prodlévání Židů na březích Vltavy v Praze [Ban on Jews Lingered on the Vltava River Banks in Prague]", <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/121141-zakaz-prodlévani-zidu-na-brezich-vltavy-v-praze/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

75 NA, PDP (1941–1950), "Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Pavel König", K 3665/7, 2 February 1942, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/379871-k-nig-pavel-nezpracovano/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

76 Pavel König, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/99919-pavel-k-nig/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

77 NA, PDP (1941–1950), "Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Šalomon Seidman", S 947/4, 27 September 1941, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/404748-seidemann-salomon-nezpracovano/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

78 Šalomon Seidmann, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/123518-salomon-seidmann/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

79 "Zákaz vstupu na plodinovou burzu v Praze [Ban on Entry to the Crop Exchange in Prague]", <https://www.holocaust.cz/dejiny/soa/zide-v-ceskych-zemich-a-konecne-reseni-zidovske-otazky/ghetto-bez-zdi/protizidovske-zakony-a-narizeni/protizidovska-narizeni-omezujici-vstup-a-pobyt-na-verejnych-mistech/zakaz-vstupu-na-plodinovou-burzu-v-praze/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

In October 1941, Alfred Weiner was fined in Senovážné Square for violating the ban. He stated in the protocol that he was aware of the order but thought that he was not in the western part of the square. "I live by driving vegetables from Senovážné Square to Radice. I have been waiting here since 7:30 a.m. until my carriage is loaded with vegetables (...). I have nothing to do with crop exchange."<sup>80</sup> Alfred Weiner was punished with a fine of 2,000 K or seven days in prison; he paid the fine. In April 1942 he was deported to Theresienstadt, and in May 1944 to Auschwitz, where he was murdered when he was sixty-five years old.<sup>81</sup>

### Conclusion: Data Interpretation

This article has focused on the spatial impact of anti-Jewish regulations in Prague under the Protectorate, indicating how these measures affected not only the Jewish population but also the wider urban society. Rather than just analysing the incidents themselves, the study has outlined how space was actively shaped, policed, and re-signified through the implementation of anti-Jewish laws. These laws conveyed a clear message about the boundaries of belonging and exclusion, which became materially embedded in the everyday experience of urban life.

Tim Cresswell's concept of transgression, introduced at the beginning of the article, provides a theoretical lens through which we can understand how normative orders are spatialised and how violations of these orders reveal the ideological frameworks that structure them. In the context of Nazi occupation, space in Prague was not merely a backdrop but also an active medium through which power relations were exercised and contested.

Power relations do not simply act upon space – they are also produced by it. Certain urban areas became instruments of control, where the systematic enforcement of anti-Jewish regulations sought to transform their meaning. The selection of specific locations for surveillance, exclusion, or forced absence underscores how the regime used space to naturalise its ideological goals.

The spatial dimension demonstrates and affirms the power of place in hegemonic struggles. Behaviour is shaped by the specific qualities of places selected by dominant powers to redefine their meaning. The place always plays a role in the construction of ideology and the discourse surrounding it. The significance of a place is thus not fixed but constructed through specific power-driven narratives that present themselves as norms or standards of normality.<sup>82</sup> In this context, the enforcement of anti-Jewish norms in Prague can be seen as a project of spatial normalisation – transforming certain sites into spaces of exclusion, control, and ideological significance. This article has argued that the space itself played a constructive role in the implementation of anti-Jewish ideology and should be analysed as both a product and a producer of power. Thus, certain places in Prague were supposed to change their meaning through systematic control over compliance with anti-Jewish regulations.

As evidenced by the protocols and records of criminal proceedings, these incidents were monitored with higher frequency in places where the German popula-

80 NA, PDP (1941–1950), "Protokol trestního řízení [Protocol of criminal proceedings]: Alfred Weiner, V 1752/2, 14 October 1941, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-dokumentu/dokument/363523-weiner-alfred-nezpracovano/>, 30 March 2025.

81 Alfred Weiner, <https://www.holocaust.cz/databaze-obeti/obeti/132622-alfred-weiner/>, accessed 30 March 2025.

82 Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place*, 60.

tion was traditionally stronger and where national clashes were more apparent due to their fundamental or/and symbolic importance. Demonstrations of power and ideological struggles for the meaning of place were significant regarding prosperous places, businesses, traffic, and public transport crossroads. Václavské náměstí, the Na Příkopěch, and Na Poříčí streets, and the area around St. Jindřich Church had been areas of interest, power, and demonstrations of the dominance of Czech and German nationals since the nineteenth century. German urban planners also focused on other prosperous localities, such as the districts of Vinohrady, Dejvice, and Bubeneč. Nazi ideological discourse gave new meaning to the places which German nationals had previously struggled for. Their focus on the Jewish population resulted from the antisemitic character of the “Third Reich”. At the same time, the Jews became an instrument of Aryanisation and a demonstration of the Germanisation of public space for the Czechs.

The number of incidents recorded in each district does not necessarily correspond to the number of Jewish residents living there at the time. A case in point is District V – Josefov. While Josefov had once been the core of Jewish life in Prague, by the early twentieth century it had largely lost this role and became more of a symbolic and historical centre. Following the clearance and redevelopment of the area, its Jewish population significantly declined, and everyday Jewish life shifted to other districts of the city. Only under National Socialist rule were Jews again forcibly concentrated in the city centre, particularly in the former ghetto of Josefov and the Old Town – a development aptly described by Frommer as a return to „the former (and now again) ghetto“.<sup>83</sup> Thus, the relatively lower number of incidents in Josefov compared to its symbolic status may reflect the fact that, unlike other parts of the city, the display of power and control was not as intensely manifested in this historically Jewish space until it was repurposed by the regime.

The number of protocols and records of criminal proceedings concerning the violations of anti-Jewish regulations is not necessarily lower in districts with a lower Jewish population. Therefore, the question remains whether the Nazis had any ambitions to control and “struggle” for the apparently Jewish area before the start of the planned deportations of the Jewish inhabitants. However, another district with a high frequency of incidence was District Vinohrady, where the Jewish population was quite strong. On the other hand, since the Districts of Dejvice and Bubeneč, were in the interest of the German urban planners, the number of incidents was relatively high even though the Jews consisted about five per cent of the population. At this point, it is also important to emphasise that the number of incidents began to decrease immediately with the onset of deportations in the fall of 1941.

This topic deserves further deep investigation, particularly concerning the issues of the forced migration of the Jewish inhabitants of Prague, and the question of the overall migration of the Jewish population during the period of the Protectorate. From the given documents, we can observe the changes of address changes during that period. Furthermore, another avenue for future research could be the role of the Czech population and the Czech police in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. As is evident in many protocols, incidents of violations of anti-Jewish regulations were often based on denunciations, and the names of the informers are this known to us. The amount of fines and penalties remain debatable too. However, location remains a decisive factor for understanding many incidents in Prague during the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

<sup>83</sup> See Frommer, “The Holocaust in Bohemia and Moravia”, 212.



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**Daniela Bartáková** works at the Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences, where she is involved in the Czech node of the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI-CZ). She previously worked on the project "Felix Weltsch, Jindřich Kohn, and the Intellectual History of Interwar Czechoslovakia". She teaches Modern Jewish History at CET Prague.

Email: [bartakova@mua.cas.cz](mailto:bartakova@mua.cas.cz)

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