

INTRODUCTION

Shifting Perspectives

In 1785, the journal *Berlinische Monatschrift* published a short essay that revolutionized aesthetic theory. The work of art, it contends, comprises a whole that is absolutely complete in itself. That is to say, in contrast to the mechanical arts, works of fine art serve no external purpose; rather, each is guided solely by an inner purposiveness. Five years before Immanuel Kant's Third Critique, then, this succinct essay posits the first radical concept of aesthetic autonomy.

The author of this essay, Karl Philipp Moritz, was at the time a twenty-eight-year-old writer, editor, and teacher living in Berlin. By the time of his death eight years later, he had produced a highly innovative and eclectic body of work, including his best-known text, the "psychological novel" *Anton Reiser*; the novels *Andreas Hartknopf: Eine Allegorie* (Andreas Hartknopf: An Allegory) and *Andreas Hartknopfs Predigerjahre* (Andreas Hartknopf's Preacher Years), revered by the romantic author Jean Paul as well as by the modernist Arno Schmidt;¹ the first journal of empirical psychology in Germany; important books on the German language, on

1. Jean Paul numbered the *Hartknopf* novels among the so-called *Schoos-Bücher* (lap-books) that he knew by heart. See Jean Paul's letter to Moritz's brother Johann Christian Conrad Moritz of October 30, 1795, in *Jean Pauls Sämtliche Werke*, 3.2:124. In a radio feature in 1956, on the occasion of the two-hundred-year anniversary of Moritz's birth, Arno Schmidt made an impassioned case for reprinting these novels, for "ingenious books are not so richly abundant in our Germany that one can frivolously allow even a single one of them to go out of print!" ("Die Schreckensmänner," 390).

prosody, and on style; a popular narrative of his travels in England; a classical mythology that is considered “the point of departure for all contemporary studies of myth”;² and several further treatises on aesthetics, written during and after his two-year Italian journey, foremost among them the essay “Über die bildende Nachahmung des Schönen” (On the Formative Imitation of the Beautiful). This treatise develops the concept of aesthetic autonomy introduced in the essay of 1785 and has become widely known through the lengthy excerpt included by Goethe in his *Italian Journey*. It was among the foundational texts of Weimar classicism and was pivotal for the development of early romanticism.

The classicist bent of Moritz’s later writings notwithstanding, I wish to argue that his work is best regarded as presenting a seminal description of modernity. Following the social thought of Max Weber, I regard modernity as the differentiation of society into a multiplicity of “value spheres.” As conceived by Weber, these spheres include religion, science, politics, economy, and art, each of which is guided by its own rationality, that is, its own “*internal and lawful autonomy*.”³ Moritz’s concept of the inner purposiveness of the artwork provides a model for understanding the autonomy of modern value spheres in general, or what he calls *menschliche Einrichtungen* (*Schriften*, 50), and what I shall refer to as institutions. Apart from the work of art and the mythological narrative, which Moritz views in similar terms, this study focuses on three institutions that figure prominently in his writings: those of education, politics, and individuality. For Moritz, each of these institutions, like the work of art, forms a whole that is complete in itself.

The image of the sphere allows Weber to visualize autonomy; Moritz conceives of *Einrichtungen*—a term that already carries a strong spatial valence⁴—in even more pronounced spatial terms. In several instances, the autonomous spaces he describes, such as the edifice of the state, are metaphorical. Frequently, though, they comprise actual, material spaces, such as the frame that isolates a picture from its environment; the natural history cabinet through which the child learns to order things in a rational manner; the public buildings and squares in which a polity assembles; or the domestic space that houses individuality. Taken together, his analyses of these and related spaces, both metaphorical and material, comprise an early topography of modernity.

This topography is distinguished by the lack of a single vantage point from which a synthesis between the various institutions can be established. It anticipates instead what Weber terms “the irreconcilability of the ultimately *possible* standpoints

2. Todorov, *Theories of the Symbol*, 163.

3. *From Max Weber*, 328 (original emphasis). Weber’s term is *Eigengesetzlichkeit*. See Weber, “Zwischenbetrachtung,” 541.

4. Johann Christoph Adelung’s late eighteenth-century dictionary defines the verb *einrichten* as follows: “1. To arrange (*richten*) in a room.... 2. To set in the proper direction (*Richtung*).” The definition of *Einrichtung* given in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm’s *Deutsches Wörterbuch* points in the direction of institution: “2) *institutio, ordo*: the *einrichtung* of the house, of the business.”

toward life, and hence the inability to bring their struggle to a final conclusion.”⁵ At different points in his work, Moritz elevates particular institutions to the status of an ultimate end. According to his aesthetic treatise of 1785, the true appreciation of a work of art requires the sacrifice of individuality.⁶ A year later, however, in an untitled essay published in the inaugural issue of his journal, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, he presents the work of art not as an ultimate end, but rather as the means to the higher purpose of ennobling the human mind.⁷ This same essay demands that the *individual* be regarded as a noble being constituting an autonomous whole, even at the expense of the state, which treats the individual as merely a subordinate part of its own greater whole.⁸ Two years later, however, his treatise on the formative imitation of the beautiful maintains that each citizen must be useful to the state, while the state itself, as a complete whole, need not be useful to anything outside itself.⁹ In short, like the figures in his novels and travel narratives, who constantly move from one place to another for the sake of acquiring a new point of view (see fig. 1), Moritz shifts vantage points throughout his work, adopting conflicting “institutional” perspectives that resist a higher synthesis.¹⁰

An essay that Moritz entitled “Gesichtspunkt” (Point of View, 1786) presents a concise reflection on the inevitability of this continual perspectival shift. Human beings, he argues, possess an instinctive tendency toward truth, just as spiders have an instinct to position themselves in the center of their web (*Schriften*, 10). But our tendency to move in the direction of “the right point of view” merely results in a proliferation of mutually incompatible perspectives: “There is probably no art, no science, for example, that has not been made, in someone’s mind, into the purpose [*Zweck*] of everything else.—A competition can thus now arise among the various intellects on earth—in that one person always finds a better point of view from which to view things than another person” (11). Moritz’s thought itself enacts this

5. For greater accuracy, I have adapted Gerth and Mills’s translation of Weber, “Science as a Vocation,” in *From Max Weber*, 152 (original emphasis). For the original German, see Weber, “Wissenschaft als Beruf,” 608.

6. “In that instant, we sacrifice our individual, limited existence to a kind of higher existence” (*Schriften*, 5).

7. “We thus now have a fixed point of view to which we can relate everything—the ennobling and refining of works of fine art are only of value insofar as the human mind can be ennobled and refined by regarding these works of art” (*Schriften*, 16).

8. “The individual human being must never be regarded merely as a *useful* being, but at the same time as a *noble* one that has its unique value in itself, even if the entire edifice of the state constitution, of which he is a part, were to collapse around him” (*Schriften*, 16; original emphasis).

9. “Thus every citizen of a state must have a certain relation to the state, or be useful to the state; but the state itself, insofar as it constitutes a whole in itself, need not have any further relation to anything outside itself, and thus need not be of any further use” (*Schriften*, 71).

10. In an essay in *Die Zeit* entitled “10 Gründe, Karl Philipp Moritz zu lesen” that celebrates the contradictory currents in Moritz’s work, Benedikt Erenz cleverly reads Jean Paul’s characterization of Moritz as a *Grenz-Genie* (borderline genius) as meaning “a genius at border-crossing” (ein Genie der Grenzüberschreitung). Erenz’s gloss applies perfectly to Moritz’s constant movement between institutions.



Figure 1. Title-page engraving by Harry John Penning in Part 3 of *Anton Reiser*. The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

multiplication of points of view; again and again, he changes perspectives, positioning now one institution, now another as the central vantage point from which all others are to be regarded.

Moritz's conception of institutions reveals that they bear within themselves a further possibility of change: surprisingly, precisely as spatial constructs, they are not static, but rather are open to transformation. This is Anton Reiser's insight in the passage I have chosen as an epigraph. As a young boy, Reiser's greatest delight lies in a curious game that Moritz himself reportedly loved to play: building an entire city out of paper houses, and then setting it on fire.¹¹ When one night, in Reiser's hometown, a real house catches fire, he secretly wishes that the fire will

11. Johann Christian Conrad Moritz gives another detailed description of this game to Jean Paul in his letter of August 22, 1795, counting the game among his brother's "eccentricities" (*Sonderbarkeiten*). He suggests that Moritz, "like a child," continued to play this game for hours at a time, even into his adult years. See Eybisch, *Anton Reiser*, 273.

continue burning, not out of *schadenfreude*, but rather out of “an obscure premonition of great changes, emigrations, and revolutions, in which all things would assume a very different shape and the previous uniformity would end” (Moritz, *Werke*, 1:105).¹² For Moritz, not merely the city and the home, but all institutions are spaces that are open to radical change. To use a key term that recurs throughout his work, each comprises a *Spielraum*—a word commonly used to denote latitude or scope, and that literally means “play-space”—that can be destroyed, as well as reconstituted in different ways. Moritz is thus not only one of the earliest thinkers to articulate the autonomy of modern institutions, but also among the first to present their history as one of recurring crisis.

Moritz’s institutional theory departs, in both senses of the word, from that of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who conceives of modern life in terms of strict confinement within society’s institutions. Early in his treatise, *Emile, or On Education* (1762), Rousseau vividly portrays this state of affairs: “All our wisdom consists in servile prejudices. All our practices are only subjection, impediment, and constraint. Civil man is born, lives and dies in slavery. At his birth he is sewed in swaddling clothes; at his death he is nailed in a coffin. So long as he keeps his human shape, he is enchained by our institutions” (42–43). The extreme spatial constraint depicted in the images of the swaddling clothes and the sealed coffin highlights the stifling confinement that, in Rousseau’s view, marks institutions generally. He characterizes this confinement as absolute: it encompasses our entire wisdom, our entire practice, and spans our whole lives, from birth to death. Nevertheless, he famously posits two forms of freedom situated beyond the confines of modern society: the “natural freedom” of the state of nature, and the “civic freedom” of an ideal political state grounded in the general will of its citizenry. Rousseau envisions various routes to achieving one or both forms of freedom: revolution; an emancipatory education; and the individual’s retreat into solitude.¹³

Moritz, who revered Rousseau (and particularly *Emile*), inherited from him a keen consciousness of the constraints of institutions. He makes these constraints especially tangible in his depiction of societal spaces in *Anton Reiser*, such as in his visceral description of a claustrophobic “drying room”—“the semi-subterranean hole into which one entered more by crawling than by walking” (*Werke*, 1:144)—where the twelve-year-old Anton is forced to work nights during his apprenticeship to a hatmaker. While sharpening Moritz’s critical sensibility for institutional constraints, Rousseau’s work also whetted Moritz’s desire for what his psychological novel terms “limitless freedom” (*Werke*, 1:421). However, such unrestricted freedom

12. Throughout this study, I have drawn on the outstanding translation of *Anton Reiser* by Ritchie Robertson in my own translations of Moritz’s novel, altering it where necessary for emphasis and accuracy.

13. For an illuminating discussion of these three emancipatory paths, see chapters 2 and 3 in Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. Starobinski argues that Rousseau privileges the retreat into solitude as a way of overcoming society’s obstructions.

exists for Moritz at an infinite remove. In contrast to Rousseau's utopian thought, grounded in the Archimedean points of nature and the general will, Moritz underscores the freedom that is realizable within the bounds of society: to move between the conflicting perspectives afforded by society's institutions, and to set each of these institutions in motion by radically transforming them.

Rousseau, too, conceives of the possibility of extreme change, notoriously prognosticating in *Emile*: "We are approaching a state of crisis and the age of revolutions. . . . All that men have made, men can destroy" (194). In *Critique and Crisis*, the intellectual historian Reinhart Koselleck reads this assertion as a key expression of a powerful trajectory of Enlightenment thought that culminated in the French Revolution: the effort to abolish the boundary (as theorized by Thomas Hobbes in *Leviathan*) between the public institution of the state and the private realm of moral principles by occupying the space of the political with a moral order (158–86). The notion of crisis implicit in Moritz's work is different; it involves a decisive transformation of institutional structures, whereby "all things would assume a very different shape," but not the dissolution of the boundaries that separate them.

If Moritz's work both draws on and reconceptualizes Rousseau's approach to institutions, it also both prefigures and challenges contemporary theories of institutions. Michel Foucault's portrayal in *Discipline and Punish* of the "disciplinary institutions" (173) that emerged in the eighteenth century—including the clinic, the factory, the military camp, the modern school, and the prison—resonates particularly strongly with Moritz's work. Like Moritz, Foucault is keenly attentive to the spatial structure of institutions, most famously in his discussion of Bentham's Panopticon. In two crucial respects, however, Moritz offers a different take on institutions. First, where Foucault's "complete and austere institutions" (231) leave no room for resistance, Moritz stresses that institutions are in fact capable of being transfigured, despite the coercive power they exercise. Secondly, where Foucault underscores the homology between seemingly disparate institutions, Moritz instead emphasizes their heterogeneity: while they are structured in similar ways, institutions are centered on different, and often conflicting, ends.

This recognition of irreconcilable heterogeneity also places Moritz's conception of institutions at variance with that of Jürgen Habermas. Following Weber, Habermas depicts modernity as a process, well under way by the end of the eighteenth century, whereby science, politics, morality, art, religion, and law each become increasingly rationalized and "institutionally differentiated."¹⁴ However, Habermas goes well beyond Weber in further characterizing modernity as an as-yet "incomplete project" aimed at integrating these institutions with one another and with what he terms the "lifeworld," or the practice of everyday life from which they

14. Habermas, *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 19.

have become estranged.¹⁵ Modern history, as Habermas sees it, is littered with failed attempts at such a synthesis. In particular, he points to efforts—from Schiller’s aesthetics to romanticism to the avant-garde movements of the twentieth century—to sublimate (*aufheben*) the institution of art and thereby catalyze a reconciliation. Habermas contends, though, that these attempts at sublation have merely reified the very institution of art that they seek to overcome.¹⁶ In developing the theory of a communicative reason that “circumscribes the universe of a common form of life,” he attempts to establish a more effective way of reconciling “the diremptions of modernity,” and thereby of completing what he regards as modernity’s overarching project.¹⁷

Though Moritz’s work envisions the prospect of a grand totality, it ultimately resists its gravitational pull. To be sure, the aesthetic treatises he published during and following his Italian journey (1786–88) conceive of art as an effort to transcend our confines and to encompass the most absolute of wholes, “the one, true totality” (*Schriften*, 73; *das einzige, wahre Ganze*). However, he simultaneously reveals that this project is bound to remain forever incomplete. The artist, he contends, can never succeed in circumscribing the sublime whole within the finite boundaries of the work of art; the most he can accomplish is to indicate, within the artwork itself, its incommensurability in relation to this absolute whole. As he asserts in *Fragmente aus dem Tagebuch eines Geistersehers* (Fragments from the Journal of a Ghost-Seer, 1787), “The great totality is not for us” (*Werke*, 1:729; *Das große Ganze ist nicht für uns*). In emphasizing his view of the unattainability of such a totality and the irreconcilability of modern institutions, my study shows Moritz’s work to be in tension with Habermas’s teleological treatment of modernity. Similarly, my study departs from a dominant current in Moritz scholarship that regards his writings on art as presenting an “aesthetic theodicy,” or as offering “aesthetic solutions” to modernity’s contradictions.¹⁸

With its recognition of the irreducible differentiation of institutions, Moritz’s thought instead anticipates key features of the social theory of one of Habermas’s most incisive critics, Niklas Luhmann. Luhmann conceives of modern society as a system that is comprised of a number of autonomous—or, in his preferred

15. Habermas, “Die Moderne—ein unvollendetes Projekt,” 453. Habermas’s essay is based on the somewhat shorter address that he delivered upon being given the Adorno Prize, which has been translated under the title “Modernity versus Postmodernity.”

16. Habermas, “Die Moderne—ein unvollendetes Projekt,” 457–60. See also his “Modernity versus Postmodernity,” 9–11.

17. Habermas, *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 324, 85.

18. See especially Saine’s insightful and influential study, *Die ästhetische Theodizee*. See also Allkemper’s *Ästhetische Lösungen*; the chapter on Moritz’s aesthetics in Dumont’s *German Ideology*; and the chapter on Moritz in Fohrmann’s *Schiffbruch mit Strandrecht*. Dumont reads Moritz’s “Über die bildende Nachahmung des Schönen” as a “dramatic theodicy” that foreshadows the Hegelian project of *Aufhebung* (75). Fohrmann similarly maintains that, for Moritz, “all paradoxes that determine the problematic of modern subjectivity are now to be sublated in the beautiful” (86).

designation, “autopoietic”—subsystems that have evolved through functional differentiation. These subsystems operate by drawing distinctions that are uniquely theirs—for instance, between what is beautiful and what is not, or between what is true and what is false. Absent from Luhmann’s description of modern society is any putative “unifying perspective” from which these different ways of observing the world can be synthesized into a “final unity.”¹⁹ As a result, he contends that modern society offers “no common (correct, objective) approach to a pre-existing world.”²⁰ This formulation recalls the perspectivism that is described by Moritz in his essay on point of view and that is brought into play throughout his work. At the same time, however, Moritz’s perspectivism remains distinct from that theorized by Luhmann in that it does not entirely supersede an ontology premised on a correct approach to the world; it instead assumes a “right point of view,” but one that is always beyond the horizon, perpetually deferred through every attempt to attain it.

A further significant distinction between Luhmann’s and Moritz’s views concerns the spatial constitution of modern institutions. According to Luhmann, social and psychic systems do not have “material borders in *space*,” as do biological systems; their borders are “not material artifacts, but instead are forms with two sides.”²¹ Moritz’s work, by contrast, helps us recognize the essential role played by spatial structures in the foundation, operation, and transformation of institutions. In so doing, his writings point toward the assertion of space in the social theory of Anthony Giddens, Edward W. Soja, Derek Gregory, and many other contemporary thinkers associated with the so-called spatial turn.²² These theorists have sought to counteract what Soja describes as the “virtual annihilation of space by time in critical social thought and discourse” in the wake of nineteenth-century historicism (*Postmodern Geographies*, 31). In carrying out this program, however, they tend to overlook contributions to the theory of societal space that antedate the twentieth century.²³ My study hopes to contribute to a greater historical consciousness within the current spatial turn by examining the work of one of the keenest

19. Luhmann, *Theories of Distinction*, 89; Luhmann, *Observations on Modernity*, 11.

20. Luhmann, *Observations on Modernity*, 10.

21. Luhmann, *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft*, 1:45 (original emphasis). Fritz Breithaupt’s incisive reflections on modern history (or history as it has been understood since the eighteenth century) as fundamentally a history of institutions similarly conceive of “institutions as mental constructs and not material realities.” Breithaupt, “Anonymous Forces of History,” 159.

22. See, e.g., Giddens, *Constitution of Society*; Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*; and Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*. The literature on the “spatial turn” is large and growing. Useful recent overviews include the volumes *Thinking Space*, ed. Crang and Thrift; and *Spatial Turn*, ed. Döring and Thielmann.

23. Thus, it is revealing that the volume *Thinking Space* groups the chapters on the spatial theories of Walter Benjamin, Georg Simmel, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Ludwig Wittgenstein under the heading “Ur-texts and starting points.”

observers and theorists of modern institutional spaces as they arose already in the eighteenth century.²⁴

Each of the following chapters examines Moritz's analysis of the spaces that structure a particular institution. I begin in chapter 1 with the space of the artwork, in particular the literary work of art. I argue that Moritz, in an engagement with Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (The Sorrows of Young Werther) extending over many years, advances a theory of the artwork as a self-enclosed space. He does so in response to the modern experience of time as perpetual change, as expressed in Goethe's vision of the transformative instant, or *Augenblick*. The work of art, conceived in terms of spatial closure, offers a refuge from modernity's incessant upheaval; Moritz's corresponding reading of Goethe's novel in effect freezes the transformative instant of time as the central point in the space of the novel. But his understanding of art itself transforms over time, shifting from a protoformalist aesthetics toward an aesthetics of artistic production, one that emphasizes the artist's intimation of the eternal whole of nature in the fleeting instants before the creation of the work. This sense of eternal totality, he shows, is paradoxically ephemeral and at once stimulates and defies artistic representation. What he ultimately holds to be exemplary about Goethe's novel is its attempt to draw a verbal contour around nature's sublime whole, and its simultaneous acknowledgment of the impossibility of succeeding in this task. Artistic production, as Moritz conceives it, turns out to be an open-ended process, one that cannot find closure within the boundaries of any given work of art.

In chapter 2, I turn to a space that is closely analogous to that of the work of art, namely the space of mythology as construed in Moritz's *Götterlehre oder Mythologische Dichtungen der Alten* (Doctrine of the Gods or Mythological Fictions of the Ancients). Here, too, Moritz develops an aesthetics of containment, albeit one that aims to contain not the transformative instant, but rather the chaotic imagination. I contend that Moritz's mythological theory, too, arises out of his intense engagement with Goethe's work. In particular, it constitutes a profound reflection on Goethe's turn to an aesthetics grounded in the classical virtue of calm (*Ruhe*), as embodied in Goethe's revision of *Iphigenie auf Tauris* (Iphigenia in Tauris). Moritz's conception of the self-contained artwork, as articulated in his *Versuch einer deutschen Prosodie* (Attempt at a German Prosody), underlies this turn to classicism. But if Goethe already expresses skepticism about whether the classical project can be completed, Moritz's *Götterlehre* shows why: in the very act of containing itself in classical creations such as Greek mythology, or in neoclassical works such as *Iphigenie*, the imagination also paradoxically sets itself free. That is to say, in Moritz's terms, the classical work of art simultaneously comprises a

24. In the German context, two fascinating recent studies that advance such a historical consciousness within the current discourse of space in the humanities and social sciences are Tang's *Geographic Imagination of Modernity* and Purdy's *On the Ruins of Babel*.

Ruheplatz, a place where the imagination attains containment and rest, and a *Spielraum*, a space for its boundless play.

Chapters 3 and 4 move from the spaces of art and myth to those of cognition and education. I argue that Moritz's *Versuch einer kleinen praktischen Kinderlogik* (Attempt at a Small, Practical Children's Logic) intervenes sharply in an epistemological and pedagogical tradition extending from Descartes, Locke, and Rousseau to the educational reform movement of Philanthropism. The Philanthropists advocate a method of teaching that would promote a natural order of cognitive development and liberate the child from the confines of textual and verbal authority. Moritz radically questions the possibility of this emancipatory project, showing that all cognition takes place within prefabricated spaces—whether understood metaphorically, as the space of language, or in a more literal fashion, as the space of teaching devices, such as the natural history cabinet, or of the house, where children learn how to order the objects of the surrounding world. Cognitive freedom or mobility lies not in transcending these spaces altogether; rather, it lies in the possibility that these spaces, as *Spielräume*, can be destroyed and rebuilt in alternate configurations.

Chapter 5 traces a similar dynamic at work in Moritz's analysis of political spaces in *Reisen eines Deutschen in England im Jahre 1782* (A German's Travels in England in the Year 1782) and in his political theory in the *Kinderlogik*. The *Reisen* sharply contrasts England's politics of popular participation with the exclusivity and subordination characteristic of Prussian absolutism. At the same time, though, it exposes rigid hierarchical structures that subtend representative government in England, focusing on how these structures are spatially articulated in the House of Commons. The *Kinderlogik* pushes these critical observations further, employing an extended architectural metaphor to suggest that political stratification does not simply result from limited electoral representation; rather, it is inherent in the system of representation, and constitutive of statehood as such. As with absolute cognitive freedom, Moritz does not ultimately hold absolute political freedom to be attainable. Nevertheless, he affirms the possibility of transforming the hierarchical architecture of the state, in a never-ending search for a common political space to which all members of the state have full and equal access.

Chapter 6, the final chapter, moves from the public space of the political to the private space of the self, as conceived in Moritz's *Magazin zur Erfahrungsseelenkunde* (Magazine of Empirical Psychology). I argue that he develops two competing models of the self, each structured around the metaphor of pressure. The first model is that of the expressive self, whose character imprints itself on the world. The second is that of the impressionable self, which takes shape through the impressions it receives from its environment. But Moritz encounters a problem in attempting to substantiate either model: neither the expressions of the first hypothetical self nor the impressions of the second can be directly observed. Ultimately, he shows the self

to be a “black box” that, in eluding empirical observation, occasions the drafting and erasure of one theoretical model after another.

From the spaces of art and mythology to those of education, politics, and the self, Moritz’s thought is continually on the move. Though he conceives of these institutions in terms of space, they are not therefore static, but rather constantly open to change. His perspectival shifts from one institution to another, and his insight into the process of institutional transformation, are the subject of this book, and together they make Moritz one of the most modern thinkers of the eighteenth century.

