

JEWES AND ALTARPIECES IN MEDIEVAL SPAIN

— Vivian B. Mann

INTRODUCTION



At first glance, the title of this essay may seem to be an oxymoron, but the realities of Jewish life under Christian rule in late medieval Spain were subtle and complicated, even allowing Jews a role in the production of church art. This essay focuses on art as a means of illuminating relationships between Christians and Jews in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Historians continue to discuss whether the *convivencia* that characterized the earlier Islamic rule on the Iberian Peninsula continued after the Christian Reconquest, the massacres following the Black Death in 1348 and, especially, after the persecutions of 1391 that initiated a traumatic period lasting until 1416. One view is that the later centuries of Jewish life on the Peninsula were largely a period of decline that culminated in the Expulsion from Spain in 1492 and the Expulsion from Portugal four years later. As David Nirenberg has written, “Violence was a central and systematic aspect of the coexistence of the majority and minorities of medieval Spain.”²⁶ Other, recent literature emphasizes the continuities in Jewish life before and after the period 1391–1416 that witnessed the death of approximately one-third of the Jewish population and the conversion of another third to one half.²⁷ As Mark Meyerson has noted, in Valencia and the Crown of Aragon, the horrific events of 1391 were sudden and unexpected; only in Castile can they be seen as the product of prolonged anti-Jewish activity.²⁸ Still the 1391 pogroms were preceded by attacks on Jews during Holy Week, for example those of 1331 in Girona.²⁹

Nearly twenty years ago Thomas Glick defined *convivencia* as “coexistence, but... [with] connotations of mutual interpenetration and creative influence, even as it also embraces...

26. Pere Serra, Guerau Genet, and Lluís Borrassà
Altarpiece of the Virgin of Santes Creus
1403–11
Tempera and gilding on wood
216 × 135 in.
Monastery of Santes Creus, Tarragona

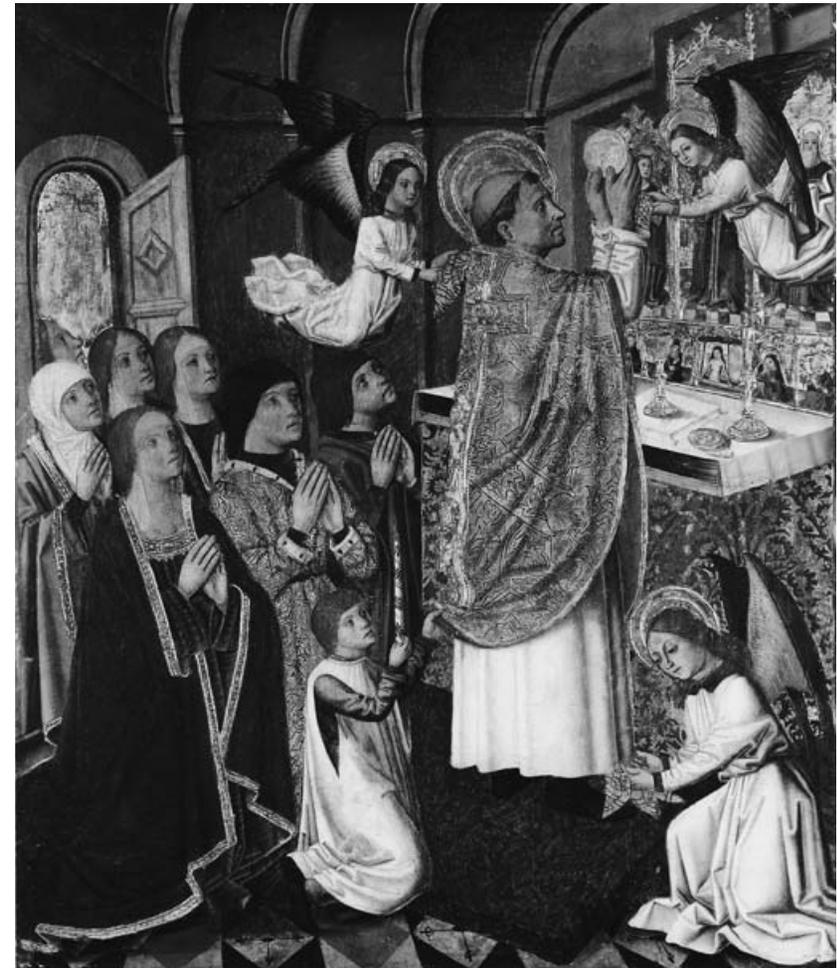


mutual friction, rivalry and suspicion.²⁵ His definition is still considered applicable to the relations between Christians and Jews in late medieval Spain.⁶ The study of art produced in the last centuries of Jewish residence on the Peninsula may nuance our understanding of this *convivencia*.

None of the historians concerned with the nature of Jewish-Christian coexistence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries have analyzed the art of the period and the history of its production as a source for understanding relationships between Christians and Jews, or as evidence for knowledge of one another's religion. Despite the fact that Jews worked as artists for Christians, which suggests they were knowledgeable about Christian history and beliefs, and that Christian artists demonstrated an intimate knowledge of Jewish life by setting scenes from the Gospels and Christian lore within Jewish architectural and ceremonial contexts, the implications of these artistic themes have been ignored.⁷ The failure to exploit this historical source may be due to a lack of knowledge of the art-historical methodologies necessary to an understanding of medieval works of art, which are more than a product of the artist's imagination. The modern model of an artist who creates sculpture or painting according to his own ideas and design and then seeks a buyer for the finished piece could not be further removed from that of his medieval counterpart whose patrons, either individuals or institutions, initiated the production of a work, and specified its subject, constituent materials, and even its composition in detailed contracts. Consider for example this 1483 contract written for a painter, Pere Cabanes, who was to create an altarpiece in a Valencian funerary chapel:

First, in the center, the image of the most glorious Virgin Mary that is [the same as the image of Mary] in the *retablo mayor* of the Cathedral of Valencia... and at the side...there is to be the image of Saint Augustine robed, I say robed with the chasuble and dalmatic and with ornaments in the dalmatic and on the shirt, all brocaded in fine gold...with the church in his hand, and from his hand should issue rays of gold...in addition it is agreed that the image of Saint Catherine Martyr is to be dressed with a beautiful ceremonial mantle, of beautiful folds, all brocaded in gold, the field of green, and the skirt below is to be of fine gold brocade on a carmine ground, and with its beautiful borders of garnishings of fine gold, and with the gold chain around her neck, and gold crown in her hair.⁸

This extract from the contract demonstrates the patron's role in choosing the subject of the altarpiece, its composition—that is the placement of the figures—and the manner in which they were to be represented. Again and again, the use of gold is stressed, an indication of the importance of this costly material. The contract further indicates how a medieval work was embedded in a tradition of representation linked to its subject matter, as when the text demands that the Virgin be based on the depiction of the same figure in the main altarpiece in the cathedral of Valencia.⁹



27. Anonymous
Scenes from the Life of Saint Martin
The Mass of Saint Martin
ca. 1401–99
Tempera on panel
44 x 37 in.
The Hispanic Society of America, New York (A9/1)



The existence of detailed contracts and traditional compositions did not prevent an artist from being innovative, however, introducing new elements that reflected contemporary concerns.²⁸ In fact, the innovations in a work that diverge from the conventional model are “red flags” calling attention to new content, although only a thorough knowledge of the available models allows the art historian to perceive what is innovative. When elements such as clothing, architectural settings, or the physiognomy of figures can be matched against contemporary textual descriptions, surviving buildings or objects, and comparative visual representations, the conclusion may be reached that painted scenes mirrored the reality before the artist’s eyes, as Richard Ettinghausen noted in discussing Islamic miniatures: “Manuscripts inform us better than...any other medium about contemporary daily life in the Arab world.”²⁹ The same is true of *retablos* according to Carmen Lacarra Ducay.³⁰

Painters of altarpieces may have been compelled to introduce new subjects or contemporary details because of a change in form that was created in Spain around the second quarter of the fourteenth century. Acting to implement the ruling of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 requiring congregants to see the moment of Transubstantiation during mass, the churches moved their paintings off the altar to a position behind it (figure 27). The *retablos*, as they came to be called, were thereby freed from the spatial constraints of ordinary altarpieces, and grew in size, often reaching the height of the church vaults as at Teruel and Ejea de los Caballeros. This new art form allowed for many more panels and subjects surrounding the central depictions of saints or holy figures. The artists responsible for creating *retablos* were challenged to provide more complex iconographic programs than before, and the manner in which they met this challenge forms part of the present discussion.

Of course, the added scenes included Christian subjects, some of which necessarily involved Jewish characters, for example the Expulsion of Joachim and Anna—the parents of Mary—from the Temple on an altarpiece painted by the workshop of Blasco de Grañén between 1435 and 1445 (figure 28).³¹ The expanded corpus also encompassed episodes from the Hebrew Bible, such as scenes of the Creation of the World, the Crossing of the Red Sea, and depictions of Jewish worthies like Kings David and Solomon and the Prophets (figure 29). Themes from the Apocrypha also took pictorial form, for example the conversion of Anianus,



28. Workshop of Blasco de Grañén
Altarpiece of the Virgin and Child
Expulsion of Joachim and Anna from the Temple (detail)
1435–45
Tempera on wood
47 1/4 × 29 1/4 in.
Parish church of Nuestra Señora del Rosario, Villarroya de Campo

29. Miguel Jiménez and Martín Bernat
Altarpiece of the True Cross
The Prophets Malachi, David and Ezekiel
1485–87
Oil on panel
61 × 45 in.
Museo de Zaragoza, Zaragoza

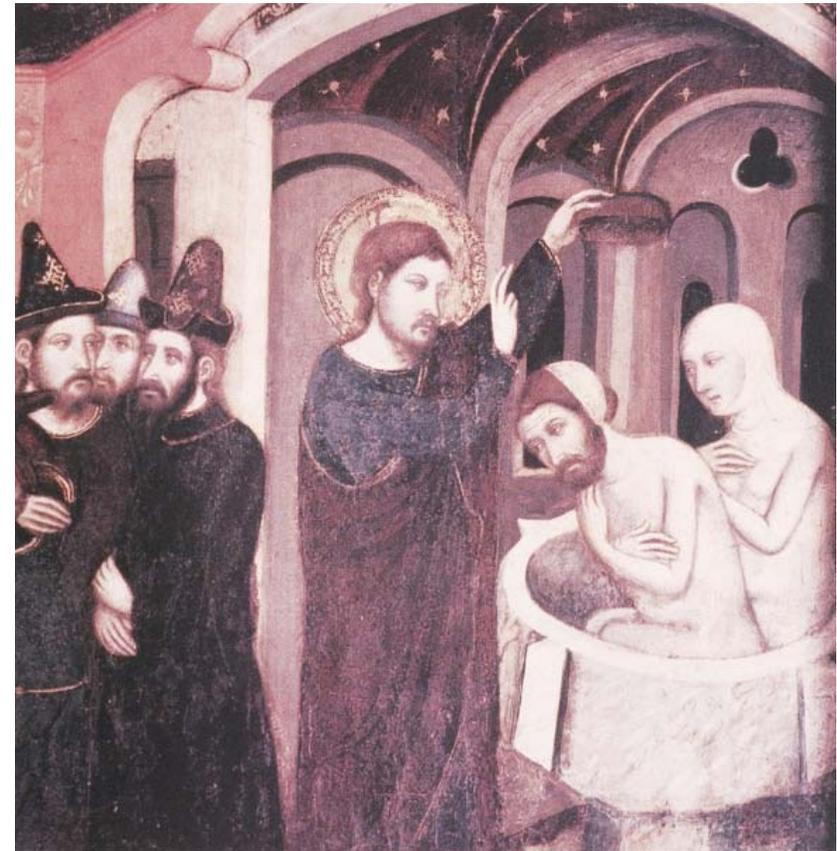


30. Arnau Bassa
 Altarpiece of Saint Mark and Anianus
 of Shoemaker's Stall
 1346
 Oil on panel
 89 x 94 in.
 Cathedral of Manresa, Catalonia

who became Saint Mark's successor as bishop of Alexandria ca. 61 C.E. According to the apocryphal Acts of Saint Mark, as the saint entered Alexandria his sandal strap broke and he sought a shoemaker to mend it. He found Anianus who pierced his own hand while mending the sandal.¹⁴ The shoemaker cried out in pain to the One God, prompting Mark to heal Anianus' wound and then to preach to him and his family. Many of the listeners wear the pointed hats common to representations of medieval Jews of western Europe, but unusual in Spain. Anianus and his wife were then baptized.

All three episodes are portrayed on a *retablo* by Arnau Bassa. His depiction of the story emphasizes Anianus' profession as a shoemaker by placing him within an atelier that includes two other cobblers; their wares are spread out before them. This detailed history of Saint Mark's encounter with Anianus is explained by the role of the Shoemakers' Guild of Barcelona in commissioning the altarpiece in 1346–7; Saint Mark was their patron saint.¹⁵ The role of the patrons is emphasized by the pattern of shoes on the robes of Anianus as he is consecrated as a bishop by Saint Mark in the central panel and by the carved shoes on the vertical frames that divide the *retablo* into three zones. Interestingly, the shoemakers shown in the first episode seem to be all Jews, recognizable by their beards and their red hair, long considered a sign of evil (figure 30).¹⁶ Their depictions are a reflection of the large number of Jews engaged in shoemaking in medieval Spain, and represent an instance of transposing events from the life of Jesus and the saints to the period when the altarpiece was painted.¹⁷ The scene showing Anianus and his wife being baptized also had contemporary relevance, since the pogroms accompanying the Black Death of 1348,¹⁸ which occurred while the altarpiece was in process, led to the conversion of Jews such as Anianus (figure 31).¹⁹ His baptism referenced contemporaneous conversions and exemplifies another category of altarpiece subjects involving Jewish figures—scenes of religious conflict between Jews and Christians.²⁰ Other such subjects are conversionist sermons, disputations, and the Host Libel.

In the thirteenth century, anti-Jewish libels involving young boys became widespread in Spain. The Host Libel, the charge that Jews desecrated the host by stabbing it, thereby symbolically killing the Christian god, developed in the late thirteenth century and appeared on Spanish altarpieces around the time of the Black Death, 1349–50, for which the Jews were blamed.²¹ Two *retablos* from the monastery of Vallbona de les Monges created at that time show various scenes of host desecration: the host is stabbed; it is placed in a pot of boiling liquid; Jews are punished by being burned alive or they are converted.²² Slightly later, 1363–70, is the more elaborate narrative on an altarpiece of the Virgin painted by the Serra atelier, a family workshop whose principals were Jaume (ca. 1358–90) and Pere (ca. 1360–1407) (figure 32).²³ The main predella scene, centrally placed, is the Last Supper; scenes of desecration are at both sides. At left, a Jew with red hair who is also dressed in red throws a wafer into the sea (figure 33). A more detailed sequence of events unfolds at right. A



31. Arnau Bassa
Altarpiece of Saint Mark and Anianus
Saint Mark Baptizing Anianus and his Wife (detail)
1346
Oil on panel
Cathedral of Manresa, Catalonia

86 Christian woman presents a host to a Jewish man. He reappears in the main space piercing the host with a knife; blood streams forth. Simultaneously, a host that was thrown in a vat of boiling liquid is transformed into the Child. A Jewish woman identified by her distinctive headdress watches with emotion and restrains a young boy in the foreground whose gestures draw attention to the scene. Presumably, their actions express recognition of the truth of Transubstantiation, a major step on the road to conversion. At far right a woman who was originally Jewish as seen by her red hair receives communion from a cleric. The conversion of Jews is likewise a component of the written Host Libel narratives.²⁴

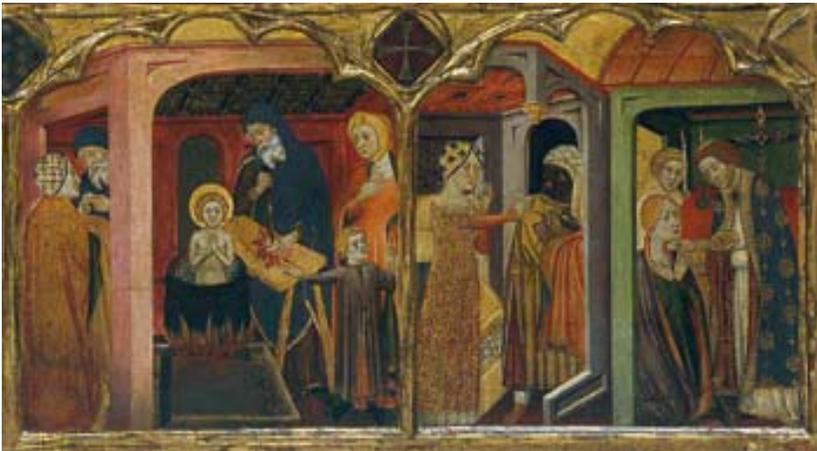
Another scene expressing the uneasy relationship between Jews and Christians in the late Middle Ages is "A Disputation between Moses and Saint Peter," a panel from the predella of an altarpiece dedicated to the Mother of God painted for the monastery of Santes Creus by Pere Serra, Guerau Gener, and Lluís Borrassà in the early fifteenth century (figure 10).²⁵ The subject is based on actual debates between church prelates and rabbis in which Jews were forced to participate. Two of the most important disputations occurred in Barcelona in 1263 between the convert Pablo Christiani and the esteemed scholar, Moses ben Nahman (Nahmanides) and in Tortosa in 1413.

JEWISH ARTISTS WORKING FOR CHRISTIANS

Research in the archives of the Crown of Aragon has revealed the names of Jewish artists engaged in a variety of métiers.²⁶ Perhaps the most interesting for an essay devoted to *retablos* is the information on Abraham de Salinas, a painter in Saragossa who was commissioned by the cathedral of San Salvador (known as La Seo) to paint a *retablo* on the Life of the Virgin in 1393, just two years after the worst pogroms in Spanish history, although it must be noted that the Jewish community of Saragossa was one of two spared these attacks. Bonafós Abenxueu, a Jewish silversmith, contracted to provide the frame. Later, Abraham created two other *retablos* for the church of San Felipe in Saragossa, one on the Life of Saint Matthew and another devoted to Saint John the Baptist. He also painted a *retablo* for the parochial church of La Puebla de Alborton in the province of Saragossa, and a second altarpiece for the same church with six scenes depicting the story of the Annunciation to Mary. That Abraham de Salinas was given the commissions just mentioned, including repeat commissions from the same churches, testifies both to the fact that he was esteemed as a painter, and that he was able to produce various Christological themes that satisfied his patrons. Recently, Robert Chazan analyzed Hebrew polemical literature and concluded that Jewish polemicists knew Christian religious literature and utilized that knowledge in their arguments with Christian debaters.²⁷ Abraham's commissions suggest that the same was true for Jewish artists. They must have had sufficient visual models like those cited in the Cabanes contract, or a model book on Christian iconography, or they may have known a Christian textual source.



32. Pere Serra
Altarpiece of the Virgin
1362–75
Tempera on panel
135 × 128 in.
Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona
MNAC/MAC 15916



33. Pere Serra
Altarpiece of the Virgin
Predella with scenes of the Blood and Host Labels (detail)
1362–75
Tempera on panel
Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona
MNAC/MAC.15916

Bonafós Abenxueu, who made the frame for the La Seo altarpiece, was a silversmith, one of the many Jewish silversmiths of Saragossa who were numerous enough to support their own synagogue.³⁸ Confraternities of artists and craftsmen, both Jewish and Christian, organized to protect their religious concerns and for mutual support in areas of social welfare, were more numerous in Aragon than elsewhere in Christian Spain, and most Jewish confraternities were in Aragon, particularly in Saragossa.³⁹ The earliest recorded silversmith in Morella, Aragon, was the Jew Mose Alafoydar, nicknamed “the Jewish silversmith” in documents of 1334–35.⁴⁰ Mose had two brothers, Salomon and Caquo, who were also silversmiths. The Santalineia family of silversmiths who flourished in Morella during the second half of the century were *conversos*. In fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Morvedre (Aragon), silversmiths were the foremost artists in the Jewish community; indeed their work was so highly esteemed that they established branch workshops in other locales to which they regularly traveled, and apprentices from other cities came to study with them.⁴¹ The prominence of Jews in silversmithing may be a legacy from their roles in areas previously under Muslim rule, since the *badith*, the religious traditions of Islam, viewed metalworking as degrading and left it to Jews. Their knowledge of the forms of church vessels could have been acquired during the times that church silver was pawned with Jews or from works given to them as models for new commissions. In 1380 the sister of the bishop of Tarazona and the sacristan of the church in Borja pawned a silver cross, a reliquary, a censer, and an incense vessel with its ladle of silver with the Jew Yuçe Francés.⁴²

Just as silversmiths became *conversos*, so did painters of altarpieces. Born and educated in the Jewish community, they later converted to Christianity, taking their Jewish educations with them. Among them were an uncle and nephew, Guillén and Juan de Levi, whose family name indicates a Jewish origin.⁴³ Nothing is known of Guillén until the 1380s when he is listed as a painter. Juan is undocumented until 1388 when he is named Guillén's heir. The lack of early records may be another indication of Jewish origins. Juan de Levi created a *retablo* for the tomb of the bishops of Tarazona, Pedro and Fernando Pérez Calvillo, brothers who succeeded one another in office. The existing biographical information on the Pérez Calvillo brothers begins only at the point of their service to the Church, which raises the possibility that they, too, were converts.⁴⁴ The brothers owned many houses in the Jewish quarter of Tarazona, the rents from which were used for the rebuilding of the cathedral. It is well known that *conversos* often had dealings with one another, and a similar sense of fraternity may have led Bishop Fernando to commission the altarpiece for his brother's tomb from Juan de Levi in 1408.

In the church of Rubielos de Mora is a *retablo* dated ca. 1420 that seems related to those of the de Levi atelier. The proportions of the panels and the Gothic framing devices are similar to those of the Tarazona altarpiece and the palette appears similar, for example the use of red clay earth in outdoor scenes.⁴⁵ The facial type of Jesus in the scene among the Doctors at Rubielos (figure 34) is similar to that of Saint Prudentius preaching in Calahorra (figure 35).

Both have pudgy faces, arched eyebrows, small eyes and mouths, features that appear to sit on the surface rather than emerging from the planes of the face. Their idealization contrasts with the Jewish figures in the scene of Christ among the Doctors, whose faces are individualized by features such as large noses, and whose purple robes signify their potential status as penitents.³⁶ All sit in a contemporary Gothic building. The Jews hold books with accurately formed Hebrew letters (figure 36), which is not surprising if the painter was connected with the de Leví atelier. The *sottobanco*—the lowest register of the altarpiece at the viewers' eye level—is devoted to the depiction of twelve Hebrew prophets, an unusually large number on one *retablo* and a reflection of the significance of prophetic writings in Christian attempts to convince Jews to convert (figure 37).

In addition to painting *retablos*, Juan de Leví was also known for fabricating glass and his uncle, Guillén, produced paintings on clear and colored glass; for example, glass with the figures of the kings of Armenia, Norway, Bosnia and others.³⁷ Guillén was also a painter on panel and documents record a *retablo* of his as well as portraits of nobility. Nicolás and Bonanat Zahortiga who worked in the first quarter of the fifteenth century were also *converso* painters of *retablos*.³⁸ With continuing study in the Spanish archives more names of Jewish artists will probably emerge, although establishing a link to actual works may be difficult.



Fig. 34

34. Gonzal Petis
Altarpiece of Christ and the Virgin
Christ among the Doctors (detail)
ca. 1420
Tempera and gilding on wood
Parish church of Rubielos de Mora

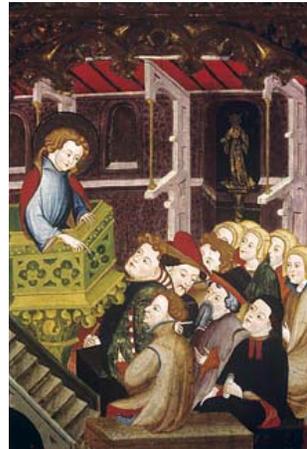


Fig. 35

35. Juan de Leví
Altarpiece in the Pérez Calvillo chapel in Tarazona
Saint Prudentius Preaching in Calahorra (detail)
1403–8
Tempera and gilding on wood
Cathedral of Tarazona, Tarazona

All of the artists discussed above can be identified as Jewish from their names or personal histories. The inclusion of correctly written Hebrew inscriptions in a *retablo* scene definitely indicates the participation of a Jewish or *converso* artist or scribe. A striking example is the Disputation between Moses and Saint Peter mentioned earlier, which was probably inspired by the *Dialogi* or *Dialogues* written by the *converso* Petrus Alfonsi in the early twelfth century (figure 10). The great popularity of the *Dialogi* is indicated by the fifty-six manuscript copies that date prior to the advent of printing.³⁹ Alfonsi's text is patterned on classical dialogues, as were most polemical tracts written in the Middle Ages, since this literary genre allowed authors to present claim and counterclaim in an easily understandable format.⁴⁰ Its subject is the relative merits of Judaism versus Christianity. The choice of protagonists symbolized the two phases of Petrus Alfonsi's life. He was Moses before conversion and Peter afterwards. Saint Peter's empty scroll indicates the artist's ignorance of Latin, but that he was knowledgeable about Hebrew is shown by the Commandments inscribed on Moses' tablets.

There are Hebrew inscriptions on other *retablos*. One decorates the tomb of Jesus on a panel of a Pietà in Daroca painted ca. 1470 by Bartolomé de Cárdenas known as "el Bermejo".⁴¹ The inscription is clear but not perfectly written. Still it can be translated "Through his death, he made an end to death." Interestingly, Hebrew letters occur on other works by Bermejo, for example, on the canopy over Mary's bed in a Dormition, and on the tomb of a Resurrection dated 1468–71.⁴² In contrast, other artists producing scenes requiring Hebrew texts painted pseudo-letters, for example on Saint Stephen Preaching in a Synagogue, a fourteenth-century *retablo* by Jaume Serra (figure 50).⁴³ The prayer books held by the Jewish worshippers are inscribed with gibberish.

Bartolomé de Cárdenas' use of Hebrew letters becomes even more striking when one considers his incorporation of Jewish genre elements into his paintings for the Church. One is a Jew on horseback depicted to the left of the Virgin's head in a Pietà of 1490 in the Museo Diocesano of Barcelona.⁴⁴ Another is men with *pe'ot* (side locks), which cover an area that men were forbidden by Jewish law to shave.⁴⁵ The repeated inclusions of Jewish script and details in his art may indicate that Cárdenas was of *converso* stock.

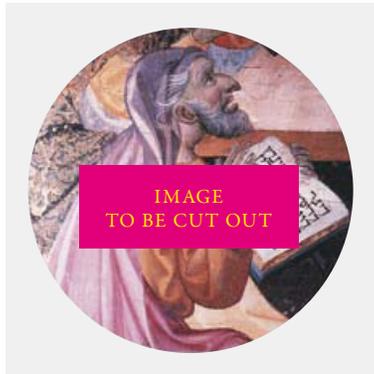
Another inter-religious relationship involved a Christian patron hiring a Jew to oversee the production of a work of art. In 1422 Don Guzman, Master of the Order of Calatrava, commissioned a new translation of the Hebrew Bible into Castilian from Rabbi Moses of Arragel, which became known as *La Biblia de Alba* (Madrid, Palacio de Liria, no. 399).⁴⁶ Don Guzman wished the text to be accompanied by a commentary and illustrations, but the rabbi was reluctant to violate what he understood to be the biblical prohibition against images. In response, Don Guzman agreed to hire several illuminators from Toledo and to provide them with a model manuscript from the cathedral. In all, Don Guzman wrote to the rabbi three times and amended his commission until Rabbi Moses agreed to participate in the translation project. The *Biblia de Alba*'s prefatory text tells the history of the commis-

sion and is testimony both to the use of models in the production of medieval art, and to the persistence of Christian–Jewish dialogue, *convivencia*, in the century of the Expulsion.

To sum up what has been outlined so far, there were Jewish and *converso* artists living in Spain in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries who worked for the Church and produced what has always been termed Christian art. That it was Christian in concept and use is certainly true, but in the multiethnic society of medieval Spain, the artist could be of another faith.

CHRISTIAN ARTISTS DEPICTING JEWISH LIFE

In a similar fashion, Christian artists portrayed Jewish life with an astonishing fidelity, but always within a Christian context. If Jewish characters were required for a scene from Christian history, the artist cast his Jewish contemporaries in the roles of their ancestors who lived at the time of Jesus and the Apostles, recalling Saint Augustine’s view that Jews were witnesses to the veracity of the Old and New Testaments.⁴⁷ The small size of cities and towns whose churches commissioned large altarpieces from major artists, like Ejea de los Caballeros and Rubielos de Mora, were places where Jews formed a significant portion of the population and were easily accessible as models for paintings. Representations of contemporary reality infiltrated scenes set in the distant past like episodes from the Life of Jesus and the early saints that were placed around the central image of the holy figure to whom an altarpiece was dedicated. For example, late medieval Jews appear in a Presentation of Jesus in the Temple,



36. Gonçal Peris
Altarpiece of Christ and the Virgin
Christ among the Doctors (detail)
ca. 1420
Tempera and gilding on wood
Parish church of Rubielos de Mora



part of the *retablo* in the church of San Salvador in Ejea de los Caballeros painted by Blasco de Grañén from ca. 1440 until his death in 1459 (figure 38).⁴⁸

In the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple from Ejea, the primary Christian figures of Jesus and Mary are idealized in their form and dress and crowned by circular haloes whose shape symbolizes perfection. The Jewish figures of the narrative, Joseph and the High Priest, possessed of a lesser degree of holiness, wear cusped haloes above faces that are individualized, portrait-like and different from the ethereal, blemish-free figures of Jesus and Mary. The Jews’ appearance also reflects discriminatory regulations enacted by the kings of Aragon after the Lateran Council of 1215 that were intended to prevent sexual relations between Jews and Christians by marking the non-Christian.⁴⁹ The Law Code of Alfonso X of Castile (1252–84), which was later adopted in all of Spain in 1348, elaborates on this point:

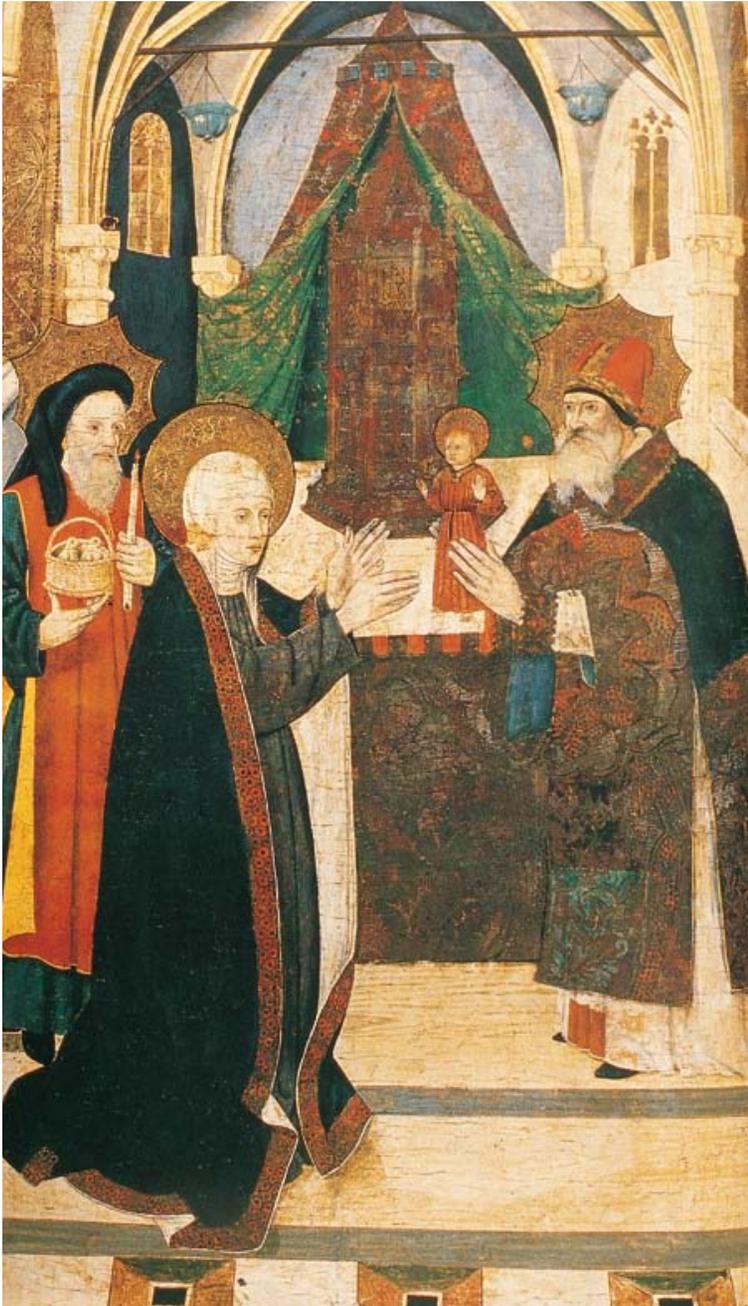
Many crimes and outrageous things occur between Christians and Jews because they live together in cities, and dress alike; and in order to avoid the offenses and evils which take place for this reason, we deem it proper and we order that all Jews, male and female, living in our dominions shall bear some distinguishing mark upon their heads so that people may plainly recognize a Jew, or a Jewess.

King James I of Aragon decreed in 1263 that his Jewish subjects wear a dark cloak out of doors emblazoned with a rotulus and, in 1412, Jews and Muslims were prohibited from trimming their hair and beards so that unkempt hair became a compulsory sign of alterity. Wild hair was a sign that also marked heretics in the *Bible Moralisée*, the large picture Bibles written and illuminated in the first half of the thirteenth century for the kings of France. Jews were often conflated with heretics.⁵⁰ The imposition of these restrictions provoked the following response from the Spanish Jew Solomon Alami (1370–1420):

We have suffered measure for measure. Because we adopted their dress, they dressed us in different vestments so that we would seem to be strangers among them, and because we shortened the corners of our hair and bears, they forced us to let our hair grow as if we were plunged into deep mourning.⁵¹

The presence of recognizable Jews in Christological scenes served to underscore the Christianity of holy figures, much as black figures in exotic clothes emphasized the European character

37. Gonçal Peris
Altarpiece of Christ and the Virgin
Predella with prophets
ca. 1420
Tempera and gilding on wood
Parish church of Rubielos de Mora



of those who sat for portraits during the Renaissance.⁵² The differences in the clothing or appearance of the Jews also reinforced their Otherness.

That these regulations were necessary suggests the visual homogeneity of the Spanish population, a homogeneity that required artificial means of differentiation.⁵³ In other words, Jews and Christians looked very much alike. On the Iberian Peninsula, sartorial differentiation had first been instituted by the Muslim rulers of Al-Andalus to signify the subordinate status of *dhimmi* or protected minorities, peoples who had a sacred text.⁵⁴ Some articles of dress required by the Muslims, such as the *zumar*, a rope belt, appear in the later Christian art of Aragon, for example, in the scene of the Expulsion of Joachim and Anna from the Temple discussed earlier (figure 28). The designation of clothing as a symbol of minority status was part of a general medieval view of dress as denoting class or occupation. Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass describe medieval and Renaissance clothing as material mnemonics.⁵⁵ Clothes signified an individual's place in society, and were not "fashion" in the contemporary sense of the term. Livery, for example, marked an individual as in the service of another, more powerful person. The dingy clothing and wild hair of Jews were signs of their exclusion from Christian society and of their defeat by a victorious Christianity.

The presence in the Ejea Presentation of Jesus in the Temple of these discriminatory markers are a contemporary intrusion into the subject, as is the setting of the scene in a Gothic building whose representation includes detailed pier capitals and a triforium. That the building is not a church but a synagogue is indicated by the Torah case or *tik* that is on the altar. A cylindrical case of wood or silver to hold a Torah scroll upright in the synagogue first came into use in the eleventh century in the Maghreb, at the same time that the Koran box became a feature of mosques.⁵⁶ It was used in Spain until the Expulsion, alternatively with textile coverings (mantles) for the Torah scroll. That the case was understood as a Jewish appurtenance is explicit in a 1515 scene of Christ among the Doctors on the main altarpiece in the royal monastery de Santa María de Sijena.⁵⁷ There the case is shown partially open revealing two round-topped Tablets of the Law with five lines of "writing" on each, corresponding to the Ten Commandments. Another detail of the Ejea panel, Joseph's basket with two doves, the post-partum Temple offering of a woman of modest means, indicates that the architecture is meant to be understood as the Temple, although its form reflects contemporary synagogues. In other words, if the Jews of the late Middle Ages could be construed as representatives of Jews alive during the early history of the Church, by the same reasoning the contemporary Jewish house of worship could serve as a stand-in for the Temple of antiquity. In a Presentation of Jesus in the Hispanic Society of New York, further contemporaneous details are included: a curved circumcision knife and a beaker to hold wine blessed after the actual circumcision (figure 40).⁵⁸

In fact, all scenes on the *retablos* that were supposed to have taken place in the Temple are shown in synagogue spaces: the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (sometimes represented as his Circumcision), the most commonly depicted Temple narrative; Christ among

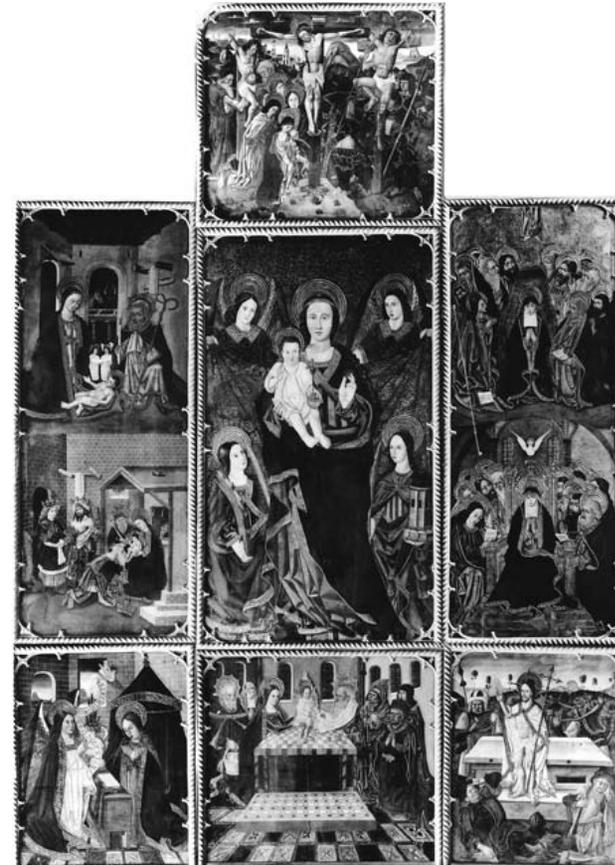
38. Blasco de Grañén
Main altarpiece of Christ the Savior
Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (detail)
Tempera on wood
San Salvador, Ejea de los Caballeros

the Doctors; the Annunciation to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist; and the Expulsion of Joachim and Anna from the Temple. All of these scenes are staged in Gothic buildings that are sometimes a combination of nave-like spaces and apses or are simply rectangular halls as in the Expulsion of Joachim and Anna. One *retablo* includes another detail, an outside staircase leading to a second storey;⁵⁹ presumably the balcony for women that is found in the Cordoba synagogue, El Tránsito in Toledo, in the Hajar synagogue and at Lorca. The identification of the painted buildings depends on the placement of the *tik* on the altar and the absence of any Christian accoutrements such as a cross. In the Expulsion of Joachim and Anna, a noteworthy detail of the *tik* is its decoration with a scarf or cloth, a custom still practiced in the Sephardi diaspora and also by eastern Jewish communities today.

The scene of the Annunciation to Zacharias while he is serving in the Temple appears on *retablos* dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. According to Christian lore, Zacharias was an ordinary Temple priest, but on an altarpiece in The Cloisters, he acts as the High Priest in the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year. His garb is a mix of that worn by all priests, for example the headdress and linen belt, but with the addition of elements from the High Priest's regalia such as the pendant bells and pomegranates along the hem. Another extraordinary detail of this scene that indicates Zacharias is acting as the High Priest is the rope wound around his leg and held by a priest who stands outside the Holy of Holies. The rope allowed the High Priest's body to be removed in the event that he died in the Divine presence for not having performed his duties correctly. The service depicted in this extremely detailed and particularized scene is based on the talmudic tractate, Yoma. Yet, as in other *retablo* depictions of the Temple, there is a Torah case on the altar, which is a synagogue appurtenance. The wealth of the detail from Jewish lore suggests that the artist, Domingo Ram (ca. 1464–1507), came from a *converso* background or had a Jewish assistant.

Excavations near the fortress in Lorca in 2003 prove the accuracy of the synagogue architecture painted on some *retablos*. The remains of the Lorca synagogue consist of a vestibule leading to a rectangular hall whose perimeter is surrounded by stone benches.⁶⁰ The ruins of the Torah ark are on one of the short ends and the center of the hall is filled with the remains of the reader's desk or *teivab* that was reached by a flight of steps. A painted version of this synagogue type appears on a *retablo* panel now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, where the scene is enlivened by Jewish worshippers seated along the walls and by Mary and Joseph watching Jesus ascend the steps of the *teivab* (figure 42). The space is illuminated by glass "mosque" lamps and, in a case of life imitating art, a large cache of glass shards from "mosque" lamps was found beneath the *teivab* at Lorca and reconstructed.⁶¹

The substitution of "modern" synagogue buildings for the ancient Temple may be attributable to the fact that the actual appearance of the Temple was unknown to medieval men and women.⁶² Or the substitution may have been encouraged by a common Jewish usage that terms the synagogue a "small sanctuary" (*mikdash me'at*), a play on the name of



39. Anonymous
Altarpiece of the Virgin and Child
Castile, 1450–99
The Hispanic Society of America, New York (A1)



the Temple in Jerusalem, the *beit ha-mikdash*. In medieval Spain, the phrase is used in the Hebrew dedicatory inscription of the Cordoba synagogue:

Isaac Mehab, son of the honorable Ephraim, has completed this lesser sanctuary (*mikdash me'at*) and he built it in the year 75 [1314–1315] as a temporary abode. Hasten, O God, to rebuild Jerusalem.⁶⁵

The impact of the term “lesser sanctuary” is emphasized by Isaac Mehab’s characterization of the synagogue as a temporary abode, accompanied by his prayer that the true House of God, the Jerusalem Temple, will soon be rebuilt.

The one exception to the modeling of the Temple on local synagogues is a scene of the Presentation of Jesus on an altarpiece in Palencia, in which all the figures stand in an hexagonal structure with a domed roof.⁶⁴ Medieval circular or polygonal structures were thought to imitate the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the most important Christian building in Jerusalem.⁶⁵

Of the architecture associated with Jewish life in the Kingdom of Aragon, the most common form still standing is the arcuated gate to the *juderia*, the Jewish quarter. The use of this defining structure to situate an episode from fourth-century Christian history within the ambience of late fifteenth-century Jewish life is evident in a portrayal of Saint Helena in the Holy Land questioning Judas, a Jew who claimed to have knowledge of the burial spot of the True Cross (figure 43). The scene is part of an altarpiece devoted to the True Cross by Miguel Jiménez and Martín Bernat painted in 1485–87 for the parish church of Santa Cruz de Blesa in Teruel. The scene is staged on local Jewish turf, just inside the arcuated gate to an Aragonese *juderia*, while the house behind is based on the architecture of Jewish houses still existing in former Jewish quarters. In this painting, the *juderia* symbolizes the land of the Jews, the Holy Land.

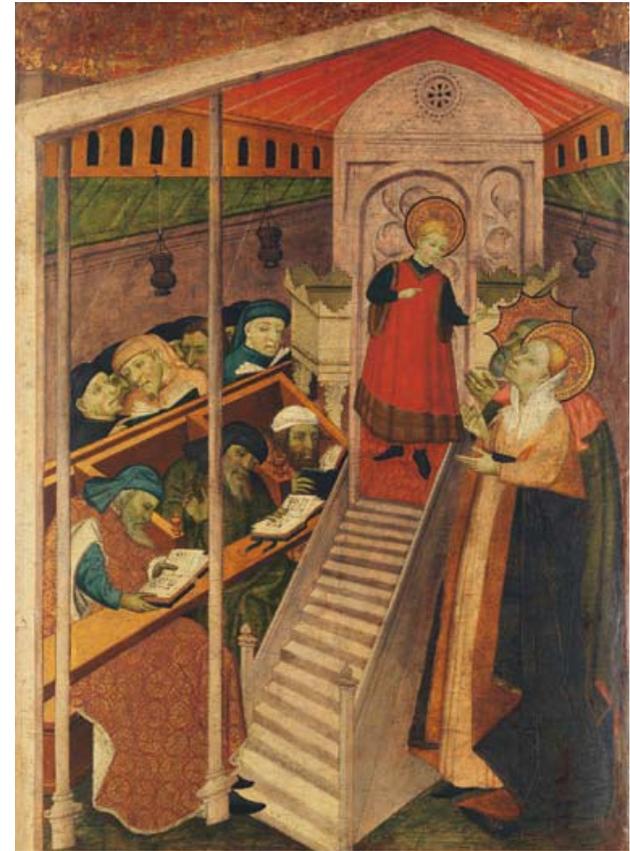
The scene of Saint Helena is remarkable for its representation of fifteenth-century dress. The Jew Judas is dressed in the dark cloak mandated by the decree of Peter III of Aragon in 1263; his hair and beard grow wild because of the decree of 1412. But Helena and her ladies are dressed in rich silks and jewels. She wears a red gown with ermine cuffs and hem, a brocade cloak of silk and gold threads, and an elaborate crown. The lady directly behind her wears a headdress with pearls. In the high Middle Ages, scarlet cloth gave status to the wearer and was reserved for the elite, while silk brocade was a mark of royalty.⁶⁶ Various sources indicate that wealthy Jews were able to wear clothing similar to the robes of royalty depicted on the altarpieces. In 1268 a Jew from Játiva bought his wife an exemption from the dress regulations which specifically allowed her to wear scarlet and “snow white” clothes. According to the sumptuary laws passed at a meeting of Castilian Jews convened at Valladolid in 1432:⁶⁷

No woman unless unmarried or a bride in the first year of her marriage shall wear costly dresses of gold-cloth, or olive-colored material (a Chinese silk) or fine linen or silk, or of fine wool. Neither shall they wear on their dresses trimming of velvet

40. Anonymous
Altarpiece of the Virgin and Child
The Circumcision of Christ
Castile, 1450–99
37 × 41 in.
The Hispanic Society of America, New York (A116)



41. Domingos Ram
Altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist with Scenes from his Life
Annunciation to Zacharias
1464-1507
Tempera on wood
59 1/2 x 28 1/2 in.
The Cloisters, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
MMA 25.120.929



42. Anonymous
Christ among the Doctors
Early fifteenth century
Tempera and gold on wood
44 x 30 in.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
MMA 32.100.123



or brocade or olive-colored cloth. Nor shall they wear a golden brooch nor one of pearls, nor a string of pearls on the forehead, nor dresses with trains on the ground more than one third of a *vana* in measure, nor fringed Moorish garments, nor coats with high collars, nor cloth of high reddish color, nor a skirt of *bermeia* thread... nor shall they make wide sleeves on the Moorish garments of more than two palms in width, but they may wear jewelry like silver brooches and silver belts provided that there is not more than four ounces of silver on any of them.

Although not identified as such in the sumptuary laws, the bridal costumes described are similar to the royal dress of Helena and her courtiers. In contrast, the Jewish women in the open windows in the background of the scene wear subdued dresses and headgear. The artist created a single, nuanced facial type and then used it for all four women, but varied their dresses, which have different necklines and trim and are of differently colored textiles. Emphasis is given to the rendering of the white silk sleeves that appear to be a separate garment worn together with the women's gowns, like those described in the sumptuary laws.

Despite the rich details on these panels, there is an air of tension to the confrontation between Helena and Judas that is generated by the sober expressions of all figures. As a result, the depiction of the Christian Queen Helena interrogating the Jew, Judas, may have been intended to represent the activities of the Inquisition, established in Aragon in the second half of the thirteenth century.

In the case of Jewish women's dress, we are fortunate to have representations in other works of art to corroborate what is known from the *retablos*. Prior to the late medieval examples that are the subject of this chapter, the number of Jews depicted in Spanish art was small and nearly all were male.⁶⁸ During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, however, Jewish women were depicted in both Jewish and Christian art.

In Jewish art, women appear in some ten illuminated haggadot (or service books for Passover) that were created in Barcelona and its environs between 1300 and 1360. These manuscripts contain an illuminated text of the Seder, the home ceremony for Passover, and some include a prefatory series of biblical and genre scenes. In the Seder scene of the Sarajevo Haggadah (Sarajevo, National Museum) and in that of the manuscript known as the Sister of the Golden Haggadah (London, British Library, Ms. Or. 2884, fol. 18r) (figure 4.4), the women wear elaborate pleated head coverings with a raised flower-like element in the center of the forehead. Otherwise their indoor dress is nondescript, essentially the flowing robes that hide the body in much Gothic art. In depictions of the synagogue service that preceded the Seder, both men and women wear the long, hooded cloaks that were required dress out of doors (e.g. London, British Library, Barcelona Haggadah, Add. 14761, fol. 65v).⁶⁹

The identification of Jewish women in Christian art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries depends on their clothing and the narrative context in which they are seen, since they lacked the identifying beards of Jewish men and their hair was generally covered.

43. Miguel Jiménez and Martín Bernat
Altarpiece of the True Cross
Saint Helena Interrogating Judas (detail)
1485–87
Oil on panel
77 × 45 × 5 in.
Museo de Zaragoza, Zaragoza

One of the scenes from the Hebrew Bible, an Exodus from Egypt included in the *retablo* of Saint Bernard and the Guardian Angel of 1462–82 (Barcelona, Museu de la Catedral), is the work of a painter from the atelier of Jaume Huguet (figure 45).⁷² The panel preserves the traditional v-shaped composition in which the drowning Egyptians appear in a lower corner, while the Israelites stride along the Red Sea, a composition that appeared in early Christian art.⁷³ A manuscript or copy book may have been the means by which this iconography was transmitted from Rome to medieval Spain. Although composed traditionally, the Israelites are represented as contemporary Jews. The painter took great care to individualize the faces of the Israelites and to vary their dress. The foremost Jewish figures, Moses and Aaron, are thought to be portraits of the leading Jewish residents of Banyoles where the *retablo* first hung. The figure guided by the Guardian Angel is tentatively identified as Bonjuà Cabrit, who was doctor-surgeon to the Royal House of Barcelona.⁷⁴ He wears a striped garment over his head, probably a *tallit* or prayer shawl and a gold-bordered cloak, and carries a codex with him. Above the scene of the Exodus is a panel representing a parallel event, the Guardian Angel leading Lot, his wife and daughters out of Sodom.⁷⁴ The wife, wearing a white tunic that foreshadows her fate, turns back toward the city. The same angel redeems Lot's family and the Israelites of Egypt.

An identical headdress to that worn in the Exodus scene appears in Christian sculptures and on altarpieces to identify Jewish women, suggesting that this headdress was considered distinctive. It appears, for example, on a *retablo* panel of the Massacre of the Innocents dated 1390–1400, now in the Museo de Zaragoza,⁷⁵ and worn by a group of women on a fourteenth-century capital in the cloister of Barcelona cathedral.⁷⁶

OTHER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN ARTISTS

The relationship between the iconography of the haggadot manuscripts and that of the altarpieces, which goes beyond the matter of dress, is key to understanding another facet of the relationship between Christian and Jewish artists in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Spain.

We have examined evidence that Jewish artists worked to produce Christian art, specifically works of silver and altarpieces, and that Christian artists were knowledgeable about Jewish life, which they depicted on *retablos* when appropriate to the subject matter. This common knowledge was due, at least in part, to ateliers that included both Christians and Jews. A responsum of Maimonides (Cordoba 1138–1204 Cairo) indicates that mixed workshops existed as early as the twelfth century in North Africa:

44. Anonymous
Sister of the Golden Haggadah
Seder scene
ca. 1350
Ink, gouache, and gold on parchment
9 × 8 in.
British Library, London
Ms. Or. 2884, fol. 18r





45. Workshop of Jaume Huguet
Altarpiece of Saint Bernard and the Guardian Angel
Exodus from Egypt (detail)
1462–82
Tempera on wood
Museo Diocesano, Barcelona

What does our Master say with regard to partners in a workshop, some being Jews and some Muslims, exercising the same craft. The partners have agreed between themselves that the [gains made on] Friday should go the Jews and those made on Saturday to the Muslims. The implements of the workshop are held in partnership; the crafts exercised are in one case goldsmithing, in another the making of glass.⁷⁷ Maimonides allowed the arrangement as long as the Jewish craftsmen did not benefit from revenues earned on Saturday. Although the text is not specific, the Jew was in all likelihood the goldsmith, as the *badith* (Muslim legal traditions) viewed these professions as unclean, better left to the *dhimmis*, the Jews. Another mixed shop mentioned in a Geniza document was that of a Jewish silk weaver who employed Muslims, a Jew, and a Jewish convert to Islam.⁷⁸

That inter-religious ateliers also existed in Spain was first suggested by the renowned art historian Millard Meiss. In 1941 Meiss published an article in which he linked a *retablo* dedicated to Saint Mark, now in the Morgan Library, New York (figure 46) to several manuscripts,⁷⁹ including Peter IV the Ceremonious's *Ceremonial de la consagración y coronación de los reyes y reinas de Aragón* (Madrid, Museo Lázaro Galdiano). On the basis of their similarity in style Meiss argued that the altarpiece and the manuscript were produced by artists working in the same atelier.⁸⁰ A few years later, Francis Wormald added a Hebrew translation of Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed* (figure 9) to the manuscripts produced in the same atelier on the basis of its figure style and decorative motifs, thereby establishing the participation of both Jews and Christians in one workshop that produced manuscripts for both religious communities.⁸¹ One result of the inter-religious character of this workshop is that both Christian and Jewish models must have been available, since a miniature of the Maimonides manuscript is based on a Byzantine composition of the four Evangelist symbols.⁸² The simultaneous presence of the same creatures in Jewish lore (Ezekiel 1) must have facilitated the transfer of the composition to Maimonides' *Guide*. At the very least, Meiss and Wormald proved that Hebrew scribes provided manuscripts for the same illuminators who decorated Christian texts. The chief illuminator is now identified as Ferrer Bassa (d. 1348).⁸³ The fact that this atelier created both small-scale works of art (the manuscript miniatures) and large-scale altarpieces allows us to draw connections between both types of works.

The existence of the San Marco atelier is of great significance when considering the genesis of the illuminated haggadot produced in Spain during the second and third quarters of the fourteenth century. These haggadot have always been viewed as a unique phenomenon within Spanish Jewish art, whose origins in the second quarter of the fourteenth century have never been satisfactorily explained.⁸⁴ When the biblical and genre scenes, however, are viewed in the context of the altarpieces, and their style is considered, the place of the haggadot within Spanish art becomes more apparent.

An early haggadah, a late thirteenth-century "Hispano-Moresque" manuscript in the British Library (figure 1) is related stylistically to scenes from the Life of Christ on a



46. Workshop of Ferrer Bassa
 Altarpiece of Saint Mark
 Fourteenth century
 Paint on wood
 22 1/2 x 44 1/4 in.
 The Morgan Library, New York
 AZ071

fragmentary late thirteenth-century altarpiece in *The Cloisters* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 55.62 a, b and 1977.94) and to similar *retablos* (figure 47). In these works, the scenes are set in architectural frames, often of deep red, above which are rubrics indicating the content of the scene (Latin on the altarpiece; Hebrew in the haggadah). The languages of these rubrics, assuming they served as instructions to the artists, indicate that both Jewish and Christian artists were active.⁸⁵ The action takes place below against blank backgrounds, with only the minimal props required by the narrative. Terracotta red and ochre are the dominant colors on both works, and they appear saturated rather than shaded. Throughout, the size of key figures such as Jesus or Moses and Aaron, or even the baker of *matzot* (the unleavened bread for Passover), is enlarged to indicate a subject's importance. Still, differences between the two works indicate that different artists were responsible for the haggadah and the *retablo*. Although the heads and hands of the figures of both works are outlined, rather than modeled, the painter of the Christian scenes often added a small circle of red paint to indicate a protruding cheek and furnished his figures with eyebrows, details absent on the haggadah figures. As is typical of the art of this period, figures are slim and drapery hides the body in both works, but the cloaks of the altarpiece figures are slightly more detailed, with a white highlight along the edge of the material. The haggadah and the *retablo* fragments in *The Cloisters* belong to a group of altarpieces whose style has been termed "linear Gothic," nearly all of them dated to the first half of the fourteenth century.⁸⁶

The most lavish Passover manuscript of the period, the Golden Haggadah in the British Library (Add. 27210), can be dated to around 1320 on the basis of its figure style which is similar to that of the *Usages de Paris* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. lat. 4670) and like the Latin work was produced in Barcelona or Lérida (figure 48). The iconography of the Creation scenes and other stylistic elements may be linked to similar scenes on a second *retablo* in *The Cloisters*, one dedicated to Saint Andrew (Metropolitan Museum, 25.120.257) (figure 49). Five scenes of the Creation story appear in the Golden Haggadah: Adam Naming the Animals in its own frame and the remaining four occupying a single frame of the four-frame scheme used on the miniature pages. The sequence reads chronologically from right to left, the direction in which Hebrew is read: Adam Naming the Animals (Gen. 2: 20), the Creation of Eve (Gen. 2:21–22), the Temptation of Eve (Gen. 3:1–5), the Man and his Wife with Loincloths (Gen. 3:7) and God (in the guise of an Angel) Reproaching Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:16–18). In the second, composite frame, the figure of Eve is shown tempted by the Serpent and simultaneously covering herself with a loincloth, while Adam both covers himself and raises his head as the angel reproaches him.⁸⁷ The rubric for the second frame refers only to the third episode: "Adam and his Wife were Naked." The *retablo* originally included seven Creation scenes, but the location of the last three is unknown. With one exception, each of the altarpiece scenes is given its own pictorial space: God Creates the Creatures of the Waters and the Birds (Day 5; Gen. 1:20–23), the Creation of Man (Day 6; Gen. 1:26–27), God Casts



47. Anonymous
 Scenes from the Life of Christ
 Spanish, thirteenth century
 Tempera on wood
 (a) 42 × 15 × 1 in.
 (b) 42 × 17 × 1 in.
 (c) 59 × 10 1/2 in.
 Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection (55.62a,b) (1977.94)

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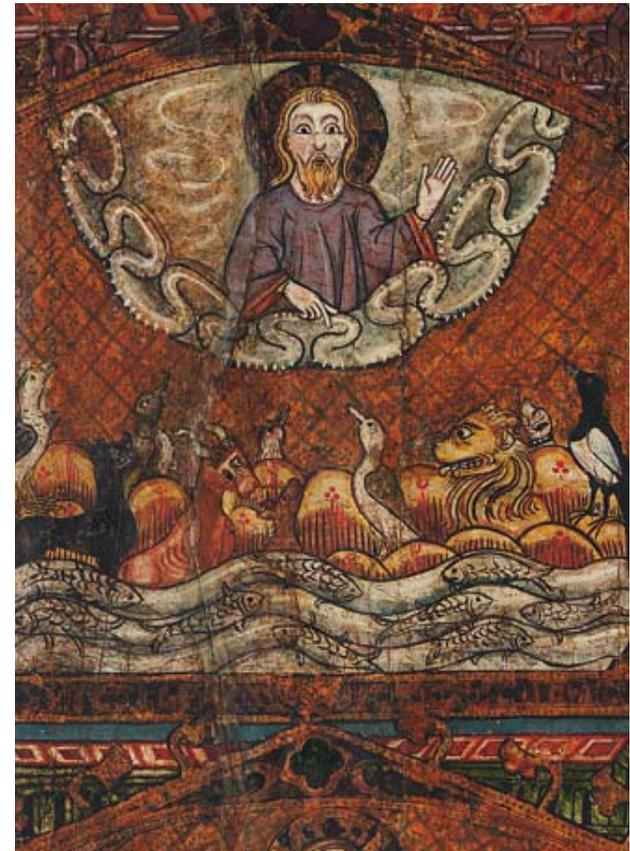
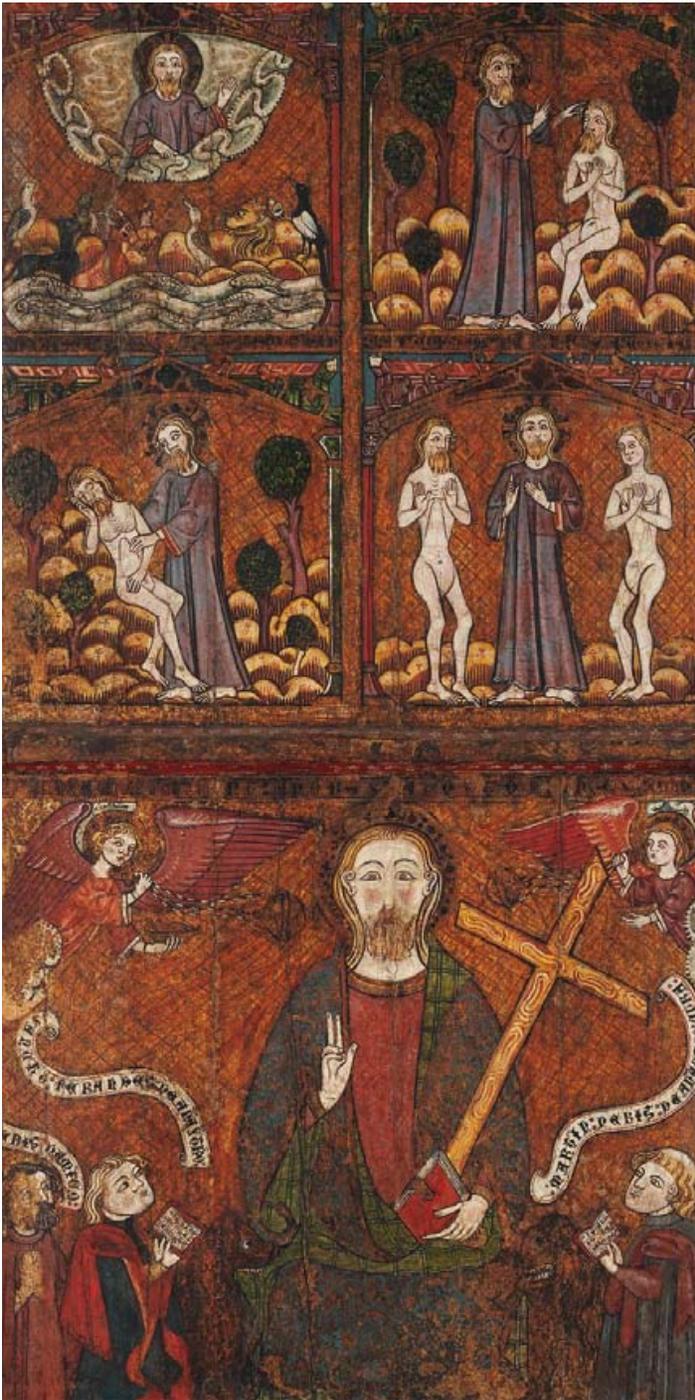
a Deep Sleep on Adam (Gen. 2:21), God Presents Eve to Adam (Gen. 2:22), God Commands Adam and Eve not to Eat from the Tree of Knowledge (Gen. 2:16–17), the Temptation and Reproach (Gen. 3:1–6; 11), and the Expulsion (Gen. 3:24). All of these *retablo* and haggadah scenes are set against gold diapered backgrounds with the foregrounds made up of landscape elements: earth and stylized trees. The patches of earth on the *retablo* are composed of stylized forms stacked up against one another, while in the haggadah the landscape is a continuous, shaded mass. On the altarpiece, God dominates through his size or his appearance in a mandorla; in the haggadah scenes he is absent. Despite differences in the figure style between the haggadah and the altarpiece—the *retablo* figures are more linear—there are striking similarities between the two works, in particular their devotion of considerable space to the story of Creation and their emphasis on a few important figures in scenes set against a diapered gold background and anchored to a foreground of earth and stylized trees.

The Creation of Adam and Eve and the Fall was a popular theme in medieval Spanish art. In a Commentary on the Apocalypse of Beatus of Liebana dated 1000 is a Temptation with Eve at right and both figures covering their genitals with leaves.⁸⁸ Five scenes from the Creation of Adam through the Expulsion appear in silver-gilt reliefs on the reliquary shrine of Saint Isidoro dated 1063;⁸⁹ A much more extensive cycle appears on a cloister frieze of the cathedral of Girona dated before 1150: God Creating Adam, the Creation of Eve, God Warning Adam and Eve about the Tree of Knowledge, and a Temptation that repeats the iconography in the Beatus manuscript.⁹⁰ What is remarkable about this series is that God is an elderly bearded man, without a halo. Christian symbolism is lacking. The story of Adam and Eve was also painted on church walls and in manuscripts.⁹¹ One mural in the Capilla de la Vera Cruz de Maderuelo (Segovia) from the third quarter of the twelfth century includes a composite Temptation/ Man and his Wife with Loincloths, the iconography of which is identical to that on the Saint Andrew *retablo* in The Cloisters.⁹² An extensive biblical cycle was also painted in the chapter house of the convent of Sigena (Huesca) ca. 1230. The scenes included the Creation of Adam, the Creation of Eve, God Pointing to the Tree of Knowledge, the Temptation, and the Expulsion followed by later biblical subjects such as Moses Receiving the Tablets of the Law and the Anointing of David as King.

One image on the Saint Andrew altarpiece, a combination of the Creation of the Creatures of the Waters and the Birds on Day 5 with the Creation of the Beasts and Cattle on Day 6, may be related to the same scene in another haggadah manuscript, that found in Sarajevo.⁹³ In both images, the creatures of the water are seen swimming, while above them are birds, cattle, and wild animals. The role of God in the haggadah Creation scene is symbolized by a cone of gold rays that emanates from the heavens and falls on the earth. On the *retablo*, God is anthropomorphic and ensconced in heavenly clouds.⁹⁴ The image of the second day when the earth was separated from the firmament is shown in a similar way in the Sarajevo Haggadah (figure 13) and in the Harburg Pamplona Bible, a manuscript commissioned by King Sancho

48. Anonymous
The Golden Haggadah
Creation scenes
ca. 1320
Ink, gouache, and gilding on parchment
9 × 8 in.
British Library, London
Ms. Add. 27210, fol. 2v





49. Anonymous
 Altarpiece of Saint Andrew from Añastro
 Late fourteenth century
 Tempera on wood; punched and dispersed; gold ground
 78 1/4 x 39 1/2 in.
 The Cloisters, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
 MMA 25.120.257

the Strong of Navarre (1194–1234).⁹⁵ Another parallel between the Pamplona Bibles and the haggadot occurs in the scene of the Crossing of the Red Sea in which the water is depicted as a series of bands.⁹⁶ These interlocking relationships between art created under Christian auspices and the haggadot suggest an area of artistic interchange in addition to the work of Jewish artists for the Church and the depiction of Jews by Christian artists.

ART ON CONVIVENCIA

In this essay, we have examined the art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in the Crown of Aragon as a means of understanding Jewish–Christian relations prior to the Expulsion. What has emerged is that the artists (and patrons) of the two religious groups had profound knowledge of each other's religious praxis, so much so that Christians represented Jewish life with fidelity and Jews produced art that was inspired by Christianity. In fact, Jews and Christians produced each other's art; Christian *retablos* were painted by Jews, church silver was made by Jewish silversmiths, and Hebrew manuscripts like Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed* were illuminated by Christians. In the practice of art, *convivencia* certainly reigned.

The profound knowledge of Jewish beliefs and customs evident in the altarpieces could have been the result of the employment of Jewish artists or *conversos* on a project, but it also could have been due to the small size of villages like Ejea whose parish churches commissioned *retablos* from major artists. In small towns and cities, the mingling of Jewish, Christian, and even Muslim residents was inevitable. At the time Blasco de Grañén painted its altarpiece, Ejea was home to some 250 Jews out of a total population of a thousand.⁹⁷ In addition, Jewish scholars became knowledgeable about Christian lore as a result their own interest or out of the need to counter the claims made by church spokesmen, often *conversos*, in disputations and conversionist sermons. They voluntarily attended sermons in churches and cathedrals,⁹⁸ where they could have been exposed to scenes from the Hebrew Bible on altarpieces and on sculpture. Christians attended sermons in *synagogues* out of their own curiosity, and their firsthand experience of Jewish houses of worship could serve as models for scenes on *retablos*. All the ways that Christians and Jews mixed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, for business, as doctors attending patients, as workers and servants in each other's homes, as artists and artisans, and as colleagues exploring intellectual issues, allowed exposure to each other's way of life and art.

But, we must also ask: What was the effect of the art created during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries on its viewers? Surviving Jewish art from Spain largely consists of manuscripts, although recent excavations have brought to light more ceremonial objects and visual culture.⁹⁹ Most of the illuminated manuscripts are Bibles and haggadot, although other genres such as philosophical and scientific treatises also exist. Ten of the

haggadot have figurative compositions, but these manuscripts were an art form that was enjoyed privately in the Middle Ages.

The opposite is true of the Christian *retablos*. Altarpieces are definitely works of public art meant to teach, to inspire, and to invest the Church with grandeur.¹⁰⁰ The artists' practice of populating scenes from the Gospels and the Lives of the Saints with figures that appear to be modeled on local Jews, who are dressed in costumes visible in the course of daily life, and whose unkempt hair and beards were the result of royal edicts, must have had an effect on worshippers standing before large and impressive altarpieces. These depictions branded contemporary Jewry with the guilt of their ancestors who tormented Christ and the martyrs of the Church.¹⁰¹ The portrayals were reminders of the Christian doctrine that the Jews of any age were equivalent to those alive during the early centuries of the Church. Jews were witnesses to the truth of Christianity and were, therefore, allowed to survive; still they embodied the guilt of their ancestors.

The negative message of historical scenes was compounded by representations of contemporary arenas of conflict between Jews and Christians. We have discussed representations of a disputation and of forced baptisms. The two altarpieces from the Cistercian monastery of Vallbona de les Monges painted in 1349–50 with their scenes of the Desecration of the Host were expressions of anti-Judaism linking the Black Death to Jewish transgressions.¹⁰²

Another arena of conflict was the conversionist sermon that became a popular tactic of Christians seeking to convert Jews after 1242 when James I of Aragon and other secular rulers permitted the mendicant orders to preach in *synagogues*.¹⁰³ Scenes of conversionist sermons appear on altarpieces dedicated to Saint Stephen, who was known as a zealous preacher and died in Jerusalem ca. 35 C.E. A *retablo* by Jaume Serra (figure 50) of ca. 1385 shows Saint Stephen in a Gothic building that might be a church or a *synagogue*, flanked by Jewish men who are reacting to his sermon (figure 51). Interestingly, given the placement of the representation on an altarpiece, the Jews are shown reacting in diverse ways to what they have heard. An elderly man in the right foreground holds his Bible or prayer book up to the saint and appears to be arguing with Stephen. Behind him is a man who covers his ears in order not to hear blasphemy, and between the two is a man tearing up his Hebrew book having been convinced by the saint to abandon Judaism. The same actions are repeated by the Jews standing at left. Similar responses are depicted in a scene of Christ among the Doctors on a contemporaneous *retablo* by Lluís Borrassà.¹⁰⁴ Jews are known to have attended Christian sermons out of intellectual curiosity and the opposite was also true, Christians sometimes going to listen to sermons delivered in *synagogues*,¹⁰⁵ but in the scenes examined here the participants were not acting out of free will; rather they were participating in a compulsory event designed to convert them.

There are two unusual renderings of the Miracle of the Loaves and the Fishes that express a reconciliation between Jews and Christians, albeit in a Christian context. On



Fig. 49



Fig. 51

the altarpiece of San Salvador in Ejea de los Caballeros painted by Blasco de Grañén and Martín Soria between 1454 and 1476 (figure 52) and on the altarpiece of the Transfiguration painted by Bernat Martorell between 1445 and 1452, the stream of people approaching Jesus is made up of both Christians and Jews, the Jewish men identifiable by their dark cloaks and untrimmed hair and beards. This treatment of the subject reflects the teachings of Abbot Joachim of Fiore (ca. 1135–1202), who saw a future in which Jews and Christians would join as one flock.⁵⁰ On another *retablo* painted by Martorell ca. 1435–45 on the theme of Saint John the Baptist, two scenes on the right present Christians and Jews acting together.⁵¹ Both

50. Jaume Serra
Altarpiece of Saint Stephen from the church of Santa Maria de Gualter
ca. 1385
Tempera on panel
Museu Nacional d' Art de Catalunya, Barcelona
MNAC/MAC.9874

51. Jaume Serra
Altarpiece of Saint Stephen from the church of Santa Maria de Gualter
Saint Stephen Preaching in the Synagogue (detail)

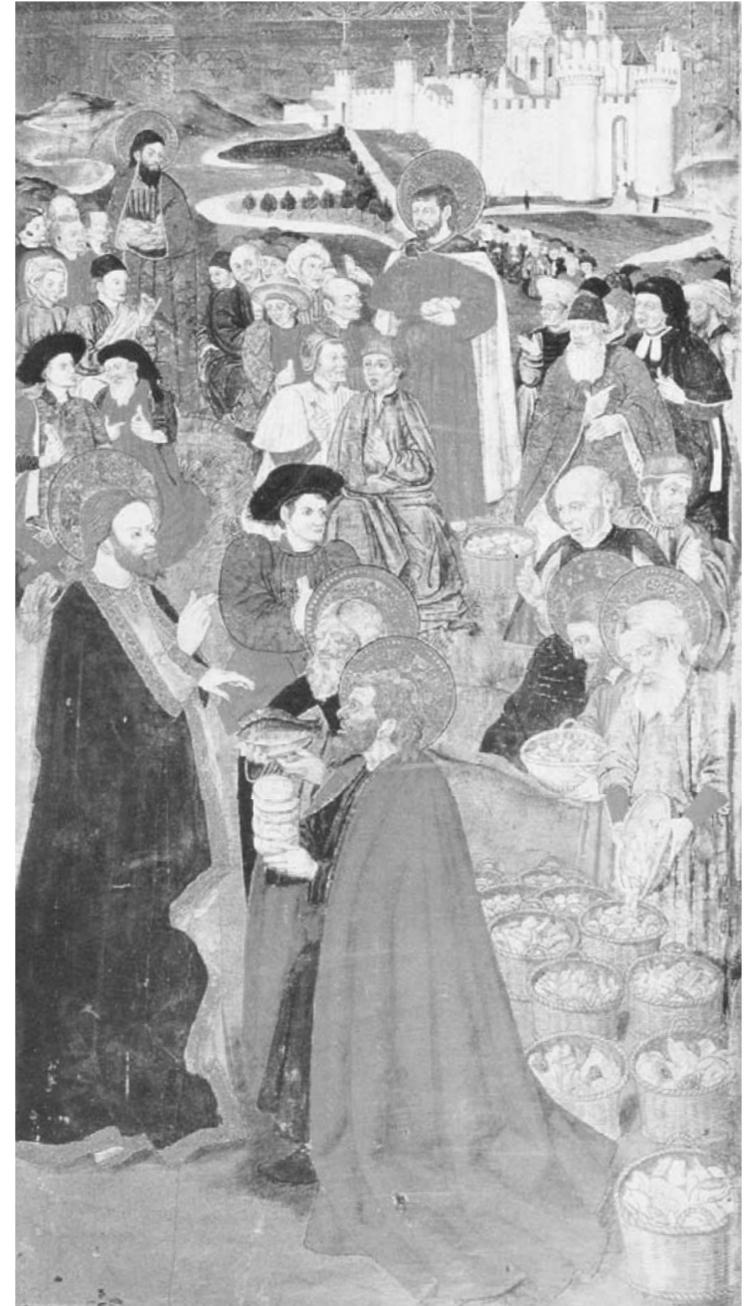
122 Christian and Jewish women attend Anna in a scene of the birth of the saint. Below, Saint John preaches to a mixed group of Jews and Christians.

Joachim of Fiore was perhaps the first theorist of incremental progress ending in a “mutually beneficial union of Christians and Jews.”¹⁰⁸ His ideas were disseminated throughout western Europe via the books of his followers, among whom were Arnold of Villanova, influential in Spain in the early years of the fourteenth century, and the Franciscan monk Francesc Eiximenis, born in Girona in 1327, who served Peter the Ceremonious of Aragon (1336–87) and other members of the royal family.¹⁰⁹ Eiximenis’ writings that spread Joachite ideology throughout Spain were written in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. The Franciscan expanded Joachim’s philosophy to include the concept that the “saints” of the Old Testament would be venerated along with those of the New: that is Saint Abraham, Saint David, Saint Isaiah and others.¹¹⁰ The altarpiece scenes discussed above may be a reflection of this syncretist vision, as may the many portraits of Israelite kings and prophets on the *retablos*, although the prophets served a dual role as venerated holy figures and as predictors of the coming of Jesus as the messiah.

The record of Jewish life on the altarpieces of Aragon is a precious one. Manuscripts were the only art form Jews were allowed to take with them into exile in 1492 and the few genre scenes they contain yield only a partial glimpse of Jewish life. The figures that inhabit the miniatures showing the preparations and celebration of Passover in the *haggadot* are largely stereotypical. But the larger scale of the altarpieces and the superior skill of the artists afford us actual, particularized portraits of Jews living in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as well as details of their dress and surroundings. Some of the paintings include Jewish figures as part of the daily life of medieval Aragon, like the shoemakers of the Manresa *retablo*, or the Jew on horseback depicted behind the Virgin Mary in a *Pietà* by Bartolomé de Cárdenas of 1490.¹¹¹ A similar rider is shown leaving a city on an altarpiece in Palma de Mallorca.¹¹² Their inclusion on the *retablos* exemplifies the social interaction that characterized Iberian society, and which has been termed *convivencia*.¹¹³

There is, however, another way to view the art we have been studying. Michael Camille has written that an innovation of Gothic artists was to see the past, the present and the future as unfolding in the present, with the present being the “real” time of the image.¹¹⁴ Characters from the biblical past were shown as if existing in the present, just as the Jews in Spanish art represented their distant forebears, and synagogues were equated with the Jerusalem Temple. This approach was possible because medieval man did not see a gulf between himself and the time of Jesus and the saints. In fact popular religious texts encouraged people to visualize themselves as present at major events in Jesus’ life, just as Jews are enjoined, to this day, to view themselves as participating in the Exodus from Egypt at the Passover Seder. This state of mind was an avenue for the integration of Jews into Christian life, which was sometimes beneficial, but too often detrimental.

52. Workshop of Blasco de Grañén and Martín Soria
Main altarpiece of Christ the Savior
Miracle of the Loaves and the Fishes (detail)
ca. 1441–87
Tempera on wood
63 7/8 × 34 1/2 in.
San Salvador, Ejea de los Caballeros



ENDNOTES

- 1 David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence. Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 9.
- 2 On the traumatic events of 1391–1416, see Benjamin Gampel, "A Letter to a Wayward Teacher. The Transformations of Sephardi Culture in Christian Iberia," in *Culture of the Jews. A New History*, ed. David Biale (New York: Schocken Books, 2002), 230–38. For a discussion of continuities, see Jonathan Elukin, *Living Together. Living Apart. Rethinking Jewish-Christian Relations in the Middle Ages* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007), 112–14 and Mark D. Meyerson, *A Jewish Renaissance in Fifteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), 4–12.
- 3 Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, 38–39.
- 4 Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 20–43.
- 5 Thomas F. Glick, "An Introductory Note," in *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims and Christians in Medieval Spain*, ed. Vivian B. Mann, et al. (New York: The Jewish Museum and George Braziller, 1992), 1–9.
- 6 Elukin, *Living Together*, 355–38.
- 7 See, for example, a discussion of medieval Jews' knowledge of Christianity in Robert Chazan, *Fashioning Jewish Identity in Medieval Western Christendom* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 32–4–59. Chazan confines his discussion to the evidence of polemical literature. See also Ram Ben-Shalom, "Between Official and Private Dispute: The Case of Christian Spain and Provence in the Late Middle Ages," *AJS Review* 27:1 (2003), 23–72. Ben-Shalom discusses not only conversionist sermons and the well-known disputations at Barcelona and Tortosa, but also the various types of disputes which took place between Jews and Christians, some of them on a friendly plane.
- 8 Judith Berg Sobré, *Behind the Altar Table. The Development of the Painted Retablo in Spain, 1300–1500* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986), 36–37.
- 9 An example of a similarly specific contract, written by leaders of the Jewish community of Arles some fifty years earlier, concerns a silver-gilt crown for the Torah scroll commissioned in March 1439 from the silversmith Robin Asard of Avignon. The Jewish patrons in Arles seem to have had no hesitation in hiring a Christian silversmith, despite the availability of numerous Jewish silversmiths in Aragon whose territory included Provence at the time of the commission. The contract reads in part:
On March 24 1439, the Jews Massip, Durant, Bonselhor de Argenteries, Bonjules de Beaucaire, and Montac Bonhils, buyers of the synagogue of the Jews of Arles, ordered from Master Robin Asard, silversmith of Avignon, a crown for the Scroll of the Law. This one will have six towers with pillars at the angles, and a portal between the pillars, made like a masonry edifice. The upper border of the crown will be decorated above the portals with crenellations and loopholes, and the pillars and towers will likewise be decorated. On each of the pillars indicated above, there will be the head of a lion from which a silver chain will emerge. This chain will terminate into three tips, each furnished with a small round silver bell or clochette.
- For the complete text see Vivian B. Mann, *Jewish Texts on the Visual Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 111–14.

- 10 Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention. On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 107–8.
- 11 Richard Ettinghausen, Oleg Grabar, and Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, *Islamic Art and Architecture 650–1250* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 260.
- 12 Carmen Lacarra Ducay, "Estampas de la vida cotidiana durante el siglo XV a través de la pintura gótica babiloniana," *VI Encuentros de Estudios Babilonios*, Catalunya y Comarca (2008), 381, 384–5, 112–14 and Mark D. Meyerson, *A Jewish Renaissance in Fifteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), 4–12.
- 13 An unusual feature of the first encounter between Jesus and Anianus is the shoemaker's threatening gesture with his awl on the retablo. This aspect of the narrative may have migrated from another legendary encounter between Jesus and a shoemaker known as "The Wandering Jew," which first became popular in the early thirteenth century. (Jean-Claude Schmitt, "La genèse médiévale de la légende et de l'icongraphie du Juif errant," *Un témoin du temps* [Paris: Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme, 2003], 147–73.)
- 14 Another work commissioned by the Barcelona Guild of Shoemakers for the cathedral chapel of San Martin is today in the Louvre (R.F. 1967–6). It is an antependium with the Flagellation of Jesus. A single shoe in high relief appears on either side of the painting, echoing the shoes on the retablo.
- 15 Jews with red hair occur frequently on the fifteenth-century *retablos* of Mallorca and Palma de Mallorca. See Tina Sabater, *La pintura mallorquina del siglo XV* (Edicions UIB, 2002), 149, fig. 30; 153, fig. 40; 103, fig. 372. On the symbolism of red hair, see Ruth Mellinkoff, "Juda's Red Hair and the Jews," *Journal of Jewish Art* 9 (1982), 31–46.
- 16 Sara Lipton has noted a similar, but more limited transformation in the meaning of symbols depending on their historic context. A Scroll of the Law in the hands of God refers to the events at Sinai, but when scrolls are in the hands of contemporarily dressed Jewish figures, they may represent the Torah in the synagogue. (Sara Lipton, *Images of Intolerance. The Representation of Jews and Judaism in the Bible Moralised* [Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1999], 62.)
- 17 For an account of the baptisms resulting from the pogroms of 1391 and the situation of *conversos*, see Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, 22–24; 34–41.
- 18 For an image of the scene see p. 85.
- 19 A similar baptism scene appears on a fifteenth-century *retablo* in the Museo Diocesano in Huesca. (Miguel Angel Moti Dolader, *Aragon Sefarad* [Saragossa: Félix Arilla, 2005], 236).
- 20 On the history of the libel see Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales. The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 1 ff.
- 21 Maria Madero Moneo, *La pintura sobre tabla del género lineal. Frontales, laterales de altar y retablos en el reino de Mallorca y los condados catalanes* [Memoria Artium 3]. [Barcelona: Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2005], 176–84; Alcoy i Pedrós, *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura I. De l'inici a l'italianisme* (Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2005) 127–29.

- 22 M. Rosa Manote i Civilles et al., *Gothic Art Guide* (Barcelona: Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, 2000), 83–85; Alcoy i Pedrós, *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura I*, 233.
- 24 Elukin, *Living Together. Living Apart*, 68. A chronicle of the libel dated 1290 includes the incident depicted here. The man's wife and child view the assault on the host and promptly convert to Christianity. (Solomon Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century. Vol. II, 1252–1214*, ed. Kenneth R. Stow [New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, and Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1959], 198.)
- 25 Francesc Ruri y Quesada, ed., *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura II. El corrent internacional* (Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2005), 44–45. The disputation scene is incorrectly labeled as a depiction of "Prophets."
- 26 Asunción Blasco Martínez, "Pintores y orfebres judios en Zaragoza (siglo XIV)," *Aragon en la Edad Media* 8 (1989), 113–31.
- 27 See above, n. 7.
- 28 Blasco Martínez, "Pintores y orfebres judios en Zaragoza," 120. The Jewish weavers' guild of Calatayud likewise had their own synagogue. (Mark Wischnitzer, *A History of Jewish Crafts and Guilds* [New York: Jonathan David, 1965], 109.)
- 29 Yom Tov Assis, ed., *The Jews in the Crown of Aragon. Regesta of the Cartas Reales in the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón. Part II: 1238–1493* [Jerusalem: Academem, 1995], vii. See Miguel Angel Moti Dolader, *Los judios en Aragón en la Edad Media (siglos XIII–XV)* (Saragossa: Caja de Ahorros de la Inmaculada de Aragón, 1990), 151–60 for an analysis of Jewish artisanal trades and their integration into the Aragonese economy.
- 30 Nuriá de Dalmaes i Balañá, "Aproximación a la orfebrería moréllana," in *La memoria daurada. Obradors de Morella s. XIII–XVI* (6. p. Piñero digital, 2000?), 120.
- 31 Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, 110, 129–31.
- 32 Archivo Capitular de Tarazona, Protocolo de Lázaro de Larraz, 198, fol. 20v–21r. For papal denunciations of pawnshop church vessels with Jews, see Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 62–64.
- 33 For the evidence of the Levite's Jewish origins see José María Sanz Artibueña, "Guillén y Juan de Levi pintores de retablos," *Sefarad* 4 (1944), 75–93. For a negative opinion, see Blasco Martínez, "Pintores y orfebres judios," 119. *Retablo de Juan de Levi y su restauración. Capilla de los Pérez Calvello. Catedral de Tarazona* (Saragossa: Félix Arilla, 1984), 30, n. 10.
- 34 *Retablo de Juan de Levi y su restauración*, 11.
- 35 *Retablo de Juan de Levi y su restauración*, 37.
- 36 On the depiction of Jews on medieval Spanish altarpieces, see Carmen Lacarra Ducay, "Representaciones de judios en la pintura gótica aragonesa: siglos XIII al XV," *Boletín Museo e Instituto Camón Aznar* XCIX (2007), 235–38. On purple robes signifying potential penitents, see Laura Jacoby, Review of Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona, *The Urrer's Heart: Giotto, Enrico Scrovegni and the Arena Chapel in Padua* (University Park, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).
- 37 P. Fernando de Mendoza, "Con los judios de Estelle," *Principe de Viana* 12 (1911), 244.
- 38 José María Azcárate, *Arte gótico en España* (Madrid: Ediciones Giscardo, 2007), 143; Berg Sobré, *Behind the Altar Table*, 49 *passim*. F. Olivier Bayle, *Bonnaty y Nicolás Zabarriga y la pintura del siglo XV* (Saragossa: Ayuntamiento de Zaragoza, Comisión de Cultura, 1978).

- 39 José González Luis, "Der 'Dialogus' des Petrus Alfonsi, ein polemisch-apologischer Traktat," *Jewish Studies in a New Europe* (Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel and the Kongelige Bibliotek, 1998), 302.
- 40 Chazan, *Fashioning Jewish Identity*, 331.
- 41 See Judith Berg-Sobré, *Bartolomé de Cárdenas "El Bermejo." Itinerant Painter in the Crown of Aragon* (San Francisco, London, and Bethesda: International Scholars Publications 1998), 74–77, fig. 16 for a discussion of the artist's use of Hebrew, which suggests *converso* origins.
- 42 Berg-Sobré, *Bartolomé de Cárdenas "El Bermejo"*, 70–79, fig. 16.
- 43 Alcoy i Pedrós, *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura I*, 275–77.
- 44 Joan Sureda i Pons, ed., *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura III. Darreres manifestacions*. (Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2006), 218–20.
- 45 Berg-Sobré, *Bartolomé de Cárdenas "El Bermejo"*, 226, fig. 19.
- 46 A facsimile of the Alba Bible has been published accompanied by essays on the manuscript: Moses of Arrage, trans. *La Biblia de Alba*, ed. Jeremy Schoffeld (Madrid: Fundación Amigos de Sefarad, 1992); see there the older bibliography. Also, Carl-Otto Nordström, *The Duke of Alba's Castilian Bible. A Study of the Rubricated Features of the Miniatures* (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1967) for a study of the iconography of the miniatures.
- 47 Chazan, *Fashioning Jewish Identity*, 65.
- 48 On the Eja *retablo* see Carmen Lacarra Ducay, *Blasco de Gràhen, pintor de retablos (1422–1459)* (Saragossa: Institución "Fernando el Católico," 2004), 44–90; eadem, "Retablo de San Salvador. Eje de los Caballeros," in *Joyas de un Patrimonio* (Saragossa: Diputación de Zaragoza, et al., 1990), 12–79. Some of the costs of the Eja altarpiece were financed by a loan from Faym Baco, a Jew of Albalat de Cíncea. (Archivo Parroquial de Ejea, Sección Pergaminos, s/n. Ejea, 19 de febrero de 1472; Lacarra Ducay, *Blasco de Gràhen*, 48–50.)
- 49 The purpose of the laws prescribing specific clothing was both to prevent sexual relations between Christians and Jews by clarifying the appearance of the latter and to assert royal control. For a discussion of clothing restrictions, see Jonathan Ray, *The Sephardic Frontier. The Reconquista and the Jewish Community in Medieval Iberia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 156–64.
- 50 Lipton, *Images of Intolerance*, 86–87.
- 51 Solomon Alami, *Éggrer HaMusar [Treatise on Moral Behavior]*. The mention of deep mourning refers to the Jewish prohibition against shaving and haircutting while in mourning for a close relative.
- 52 Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallibrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 54–55.
- 53 Janina M. Safran, "Identity and Differentiation in Ninth-Century Al-Andalus," *Speculum* 76 (2001), 582.
- 54 Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross. The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 63–64; Safran, "Identity and Differentiation," 582–83. In the mid-ninth century, the Abbasid caliph al-Muwawakkil specified a *zumar* made of rope or cord, as well as a head (*aylasan*) and a conical cap (*qalansuwa*) as required dress for minorities. The caliph's stipulation that the *zumar* be made of rope or cord marked a turning point in the meaning of the hair. Once a badge of honor, its material requirements transformed the *zumar* into a sign of degradation, of second class status.
- 55 Jones and Stallibrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 54–55.

- 56 Vivian B. Mann, "The Covered Gospels, the Torah Case and the Qur'an Box," in *Art and Ceremony in Jewish Life. Essays in the History of Jewish Art* (London: Pindar Press, 2005), 177–94.
- 57 D. Dimas Fernández-Galiano, ed., *Aragón. Reino y Corona* (Saragossa: Tipolínca, 2000), no. 71.
- 58 This altarpiece is unpublished.
- 59 Alcey i Pedrós, *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura I*, 189, a scene of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple on a *retablo* now in the Walters Art Museum.
- 60 Miquel Angel Espinosa Villegas, "La sinagoga," in *Lorca. Luces de Sefarad*, ed. Angel Iniesta Sanmartín et al. (Murcia: Industrias Gráficas Libecom, 2009), 48–77.
- 61 Juan García Sandoval, "El resplandor de las lámparas de vidrio de la sinagoga de Lorca. Estudio tipológico," in *Lorca. Luces de Sefarad*, 259–304.
- 62 Walter Cahn, "Solomonic Elements in Romanesque Art," in *The Temple of Solomon. Archaeological Fact and Medieval Tradition in Christian, Islamic and Jewish Art*, ed. Joseph Gutmann (Missoula, Mont.: Scholar's Press, 1976), 58.
- 63 For the Hebrew original, see Mann et al., *Convernesia*, 216.
- 64 For a reproduction, see Juan José Martín González, ed., *Las edades del hombre. El arte en la iglesia de Castilla y León* (Salamanca: Europa Artes Gráficas, 1988), 97.
- 65 Robert Ousterhout, "Meaning and Architecture: A Medieval View," *Reflections* 2, 1 (1984), 37.
- 66 Françoise Piponnier and Perrine Mane, *Dress in the Middle Ages*, trans. Caroline Beamish (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), 16, 20.
- 67 In 1456 the Jewish community of Morvedre passed sumptuary laws regulating Jewish women's dress and the amount of jewelry that could be worn in order to prevent ostentatious display that might lead to an increase in taxes. (Meyserson, *Jewish Renaissance*, 89.)
- 68 A singular exception is a twelfth-century mural in the cathedral of Tarazona showing a Jewish man and woman wearing cloaks emblazoned with the rotulus.
- 69 For an illustration see Bezalel Narkiss et al., *Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts in the British Isles. Volume One: The Spanish and Portuguese Manuscripts* (Oxford and Jerusalem, 1982), pl. LXXIII. For a reformulation of the law requiring Jews and Moors to wear long robes over their cloaks enacted in 1412, see Rubens, *A History of Jewish Costume* 89–90.
- 70 Joan Molina i Figueras, "Al voltant de Jaume Huguet," in *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura III. Darreres manifestacions* (Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2006), 142–43.
- 71 For the composition on the Via Latina fresco, see Kurt Weitzmann, *The Age of Spirituality. Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to the Seventh Century* (New York: New York and Princeton: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Princeton University Press, 1979), fig. 43; on the mosaic in Sta. Maria Maggiore, see Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Early Christian Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1966), fig. 159.
- 72 Bonjuà Cabré is cited in legal records as possessing a copy of Avicenna that was stolen from Meir of Figueras, the son of a deceased physician. (Robert I. Burns, *Jews in the Notarial Culture. Latinate Will in Mediterranean Spain 1250–1550* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1996), 64.)
- 73 Her headdress is similar to that worn by the mistress of the household in the Seder scenes of the Sarajevo Haggadah and the

- Sister of the Golden Haggadah. See fig. 11 in Cecil Roth, *The Sarajevo Haggadah* (Belgrade: Beogradski Izdavač-Grafički Zavod, 1976). Knowledge of this headdress had even spread to Germany by the beginning of the fifteenth century. In a scene of the Birth of Mary on the Buxtehuder Altar, Master Bertram painted the woman serving Elizabeth wearing a headdress with chin strap and circular element atop her head. Jürgen Wittstock, ed., *Aus dem Alltag der mittelalterlichen Stadt. Hefte des Focke Museums*, no. 63 (1981), 166, fig. 73.
- 74 J. M. Martí Bonet, *La catedral de Barcelona* (Barcelona: Editorial Escudo de Oro and Arxiu Diocesà de Barcelona, n.d.), 119.
- 75 Alfredo Romero Santamaría, ed., *Hebraica aragonesa. El legado judío en Aragón* (Saragossa: Palacio de Sastago–Diputación de Zaragoza, 2002), vol. 1, 155.
- 76 For the capital, see Elena Romero, ed., *La vida judía en Sefarad* (Toledo: Julio Soto Impresor, 1991), 60. Until early in the twentieth century, the Jewish women of Salonica wore headdresses whose constituent elements were similar to those depicted in Spanish art, but whose proportions were somewhat different. (BatSheva Goldman-Ida, "The Sephardic Woman's Head-Dress," in *From Hebraic to Diaspora. Studies in Sephardic History and Culture*, ed. Yedida K. Stillman and Norman A. Stillman (Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill, 1999), 525–50.
- 77 S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society. The Jewish Communities of the World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza. Vol. 2: The Community* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1999), 296; see also Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, 95–96.
- 78 Goitein, *Mediterranean Society. Vol. 1: Economic Foundations*, 297.
- 79 Millard Meiss, "Italian Style in Catalonia and a Fourteenth-Century Catalan Workshop," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 4 (1941), 45–87.
- 80 Meiss saw a stylistic relationship between the Saint Mark altarpiece in the Morgan Library and the Saint Mark triptych in Mantua, but his conclusion was disputed by C. Post Meiss, "Italian Style in Catalonia," 69; C. Post, *A History of Spanish Painting*, vol. IX, pt. 2 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), 243.
- 81 Francis Wormald, "Afterthoughts on the Stockholm Exhibition," *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* (1935), 75–84. Others have attributed additional Hebrew manuscripts to the same atelier: Gabrielle Sed Rajna, "Hebrew Manuscripts of Fourteenth-Century Catalonia and the Workshop of the Master of Saint Mark," *Jewish Art*, 18 (1992), 117–18; Dalia-Ruth Halperin, "A Jew Among Us: The Catalan Micrographer Malzor Artist and the Ferrer Bassa Atelier," *Art Journal*, 3(2007), 19–30.
- 82 Alcey i Pedrós, *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura I*, 162.
- 83 Alcey i Pedrós, *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura I*, 146–70. Recently, S. Shalev-Eyni published evidence that a Jewish scribe worked in a scriptorium on Lake Constance that produced both Hebrew and Latin manuscripts in the first decades of the fourteenth century (*Jews Among Christians. A Hebrew School of Illumination* [London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2009]).
- 84 For a recent iconographic study of six of the manuscripts, see Katrin Kogman-Appel, *Illuminated Haggadah from Medieval Spain. Biblical Imagery and the Passover Holiday* (University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).
- 85 That they were not titles for the finished miniatures is indicated by the discrepancies between the texts and the subjects depicted.

- 86 The architectural frame and drapery style of the Cloisters' *retablo* panels are particularly close to those of the *frontale* (altar frontal) of Santa Perpetua de Mogoda of the first or second quarter of the fourteenth century (Barcelona, Museo Diocesano, Inv. MDB/400). See Melero Monco, *La pintura sobre tabla del gòtic lineal*, 72–79.
- 87 This composition, Adam and Eve hiding their genitals with leaves and standing on either side of the Tree of Knowledge around which the serpent coils, is known as early as the fourth century and ca. 1000 in Spanish art. (See an engraved bowl in Jeffrey Spier et al., *Picturing the Bible. The Earliest Christian Art* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007], fig. 4).
- 88 Metropolitan Museum of Art, *The Art of Medieval Spain A.D. 500–1200* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), no. 81.
- 89 Pedro de Palol and Max Hirmer, *Early Medieval Art in Spain* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1966), pl. XX, and figs. 72–73.
- 90 For all the scenes, see Josep Calzada i Oliveras, *Die Kathedrale von Girona*, and ed. (Barcelona: Escudo de Oro, 1988), 16. In the first decade of the twelfth century, a tapestry devoted to the theme of the Creation (museum of Girona cathedral) included two scenes of Adam and Eve: Adam Naming the Animals and the Creation of Eve. (Palol and Hirmer, *Early Medieval Art in Spain*, pl. XXXV.)
- 91 For example a Bible from the monastery of San Pedro de Cardèña in Burgos, ca. 1175 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Art of Medieval Spain*, no. 152).
- 92 Palol and Hirmer, *Early Medieval Art in Spain*, pls. XL and XLI. Adam and Eve also appear in frescoes from San Martín de Secours (Barcelona) and from Vic (Barcelona), both dating from the late eleventh to early twelfth century. (Palol and Hirmer, *Early Medieval Art in Spain*, pl. XXVI.)
- 93 Roth, *Sarajevo Haggadah*.
- 94 In the early twelfth-century Creation Tapestry in Girona cathedral, the fifth day is similarly depicted, at bottom are the creatures of the water, above the birds craning their heads toward Jesus enthroned at center. Missing are the wild animals in the zone of the birds that appear in both the haggadah and the *retablos* scene.
- 95 François Boucher, *The Pamplona Bibles* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970), pl. 3. The two scenes of Adam and Eve in the manuscript are not comparable to those under discussion here.
- 96 Boucher, *Pamplona Bibles*, pl. 118; Narkiss et al., *Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts in the British Isles*, fig. 294.
- 97 Motz Daloz, *Los judíos en Aragón*, 52.
- 98 Ben-Shalom, "Between Official and Private Dispute."
- 99 For examples of newly excavated ceremonial art and visual culture, see Bango Torviso, *Memoria de Sefarad*, pp. 111–29 and *Lorca. Luces de Sefarad*, ed. Angel Iniesta Sanmartín et al., pp. 372–85.
- 100 Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention*, 106.
- 101 Elukin, *Living Together. Living Apart*, 4.
- 102 Carmen Muñoz Párraga, "Los judíos en Aragón. Del mundo del Medievo al del Renacimiento," in *Encrucijada de Culturas* (Saragossa: Tipolínca, 2008), 104.
- 103 Chazan, *Fashioning Jewish Identity*, 115.
- 104 Romero, *La vida judía en Sefarad*, 74.
- 105 Ben-Shalom, "Between Official and Private Dispute," 30, 35.
- 106 Robert E. Lerner, *The Feast of Saint Abraham. Medieval Millenarianism and the Jews* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 1.

- 107 For an illustration see Ruiz i Quesada, ed., *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura III*, 239.
- 108 Lerner, *Feast of Saint Abraham*, 19 and 24.
- 109 Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages. A Study in Joachimism* (Notre Dame, Ind. and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), 221.
- 110 Lerner, *Feast of Saint Abraham*, 110.
- 111 Martí Bonet, *La catedral de Barcelona*, 111.
- 112 Montserrat Blanch, *El arte gòtic en España* (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 1972), 116.
- 113 Ray, *Sephardic Frontier*, 174.
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