

The Temple of Jerusalem:
From Moses to the Messiah

The Brill Reference Library of Judaism

Editors

Alan J. Avery-Peck (College of the Holy Cross)

William Scott Green (University of Miami)

Editorial Board

David Aaron (Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of
Religion, Cincinnati)

Herbert Basser (Queen's University)

Bruce D. Chilton (Bard College)

José Faur (Netanya College)

Neil Gillman (Jewish Theological Seminary of America)

Mayer I. Gruber (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev)

Ithamar Gruenwald (Tel Aviv University)

Maurice-Ruben Hayoun (University of Strasbourg and
Hochschule fuer Juedische Studien, Heidelberg)

Arkady Kovelman (Moscow State University)

David Kraemer (Jewish Theological Seminary of America)

Baruch A. Levine (New York University)

Alan Nadler (Drew University)

Jacob Neusner (Bard College)

Maren Niehoff (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Gary G. Porton (University of Illinois)

Aviezer Ravitzky (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Dov Schwartz (Bar Ilan University)

Gunter Stemberger (University of Vienna)

Michael E. Stone (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Elliot Wolfson (New York University)

VOLUME 29

The Temple of Jerusalem: From Moses to the Messiah

In Honor of Professor Louis H. Feldman

Edited by

Steven Fine

The Center for Israel Studies
Yeshiva University



BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2011

Compiled by the Faculty Action Network

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Temple of Jerusalem : from Moses to the Messiah : in honor of Professor Louis H. Feldman / edited by Steven Fine.

p. cm. — (The Brill reference library of Judaism ; v. 29)

“This volume is the product of the inaugural conference of the Yeshiva University Center for Israel Studies which took place on May 11–12, 2008”—Preface.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-90-04-19253-9 (hardback : alk. paper) 1. Temple of Jerusalem (Jerusalem)—Congresses. I. Fine, Steven. II. Feldman, Louis H. III. Center for Israel Studies (Yeshiva University) IV. Title. V. Series.

BM655.T45 2011

296.4'91—dc22

2010045612

ISSN 1571-5000

ISBN 978 90 04 19253 9

Copyright 2011 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.
Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Hotei Publishing,
IDC Publishers, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers and VSP.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA.
Fees are subject to change.

CONTENTS

Preface	ix
<i>Steven Fine, Yeshiva University</i>	
Words of Celebration	xiii
<i>Richard M. Joel, Yeshiva University</i>	
1. Inauguration of the Tabernacle Service at Sinai	1
<i>Gary A. Anderson, University of Notre Dame</i>	
2. God as Refuge and Temple as Refuge in the Psalms	17
<i>Shalom E. Holtz, Yeshiva University</i>	
3. “See, I Have Called by the <i>Renowned</i> Name of Bezalel, Son of Uri...”: Josephus’ Portrayal of the Biblical “Architect” ...	27
<i>Steven Fine, Yeshiva University</i>	
4. The Temple Scroll: A Utopian Temple Plan for Second Temple Times	45
<i>Lawrence H. Schiffman, New York University</i>	
5. From Toleration to Destruction: Roman Policy and the Jewish Temple	57
<i>Miriam Ben Zeev, Ben Gurion University</i>	
6. Notes on the Virtual Reconstruction of the Herodian Period Temple and Courtyards	69
<i>Joshua Schwartz and Yehoshua Peleg, Bar-Ilan University</i>	
7. Envisioning the Sanctuaries of Israel—The Academic and Creative Process of Archaeological Model Making	91
<i>Leen Ritmeyer, Trinity Southwest University</i>	
8. Construction, Destruction, and Reconstruction: The Temple in <i>Pesiqta Rabbati</i>	105
<i>Rivka Ulmer, Bucknell University</i>	

9. The Mosaic Tabernacle as the Only Legitimate Sanctuary: The Biblical Tabernacle in Samaritanism	125
<i>Reinhard Pummer, University of Ottawa</i>	
10. Why Is There No Zoroastrian Central Temple?: A Thought Experiment	151
<i>Yaakov Elman, Yeshiva University</i>	
11. Rival Claims: Christians, Muslims, and the Jerusalem Holy Places	171
<i>Frank E. Peters, New York University</i>	
12. Imagining the Temple in Late Medieval Spanish Altarpieces	183
<i>Vivian B. Mann, Jewish Theological Seminary</i>	
13. Images of the Temple in <i>Sefer ha-Bahir</i>	199
<i>Jonathan V. Dauber, Yeshiva University</i>	
14. Interpreting “The Resting of the <i>Shekhinah</i> ”: Exegetical Implications of the Theological Debate among Maimonides, Nahmanides, and <i>Sefer ha-Hinnukh</i>	237
<i>Mordechai Z. Cohen, Yeshiva University</i>	
15. Remembering the Temple: Commemoration and Catastrophe in Ashkenazi Culture	275
<i>Jacob J. Schacter, Yeshiva University</i>	
16. Some Trends in Temple Studies from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment	303
<i>Matt Goldish, The Ohio State University</i>	
17. “Jerusalem Rebuilt”: The Temple in the Fin-de-siècle Zionist Imagination	329
<i>Jess Olson, Yeshiva University</i>	
18. Avi Yonah’s Model of Second Temple Jerusalem and the Development of Israeli Visual Culture	349
<i>Maya Balakirsky Katz, Touro College</i>	

19. Jerusalem during the First and Second Temple Periods: Recent Excavations and Discoveries on and near the Temple Mount	365
<i>Ann E. Killebrew, The Pennsylvania State University</i>	
20. Digging the Temple Mount: Archaeology and the Arab-Israeli Conflict from the British Mandate to the Present	387
<i>Robert O. Freedman, The Johns Hopkins University</i>	
Index	401

PREFACE

One who never saw the Temple of Herod has never seen a beautiful building.

—Babylonian Talmud, Baba Batra 4a

This claim for the beauty of Herod’s temple resonates throughout Jewish and Roman literature of antiquity, from Josephus to the Talmud, from Tacitus to Cassius Dio. For the rabbis to make this claim is nonetheless quite intriguing. The temple that Herod the Great rebuilt in Jerusalem was surrounded with suspicion from the very first, with many Jews fearing that once Herod took down the Hasmonean temple, he might never rebuild it. These fears were, it turns out, unfounded. Herod did rebuild the temple, and in record time. He designed it according to the highest architectural standards of his day. The architectural identity of the temple was part and parcel of the massive imperial construction projects initiated by Herod’s patron, Augustus, in Rome and across the empire. Herod’s “beautiful” building was most like a temple to the deified emperor, and on a scale appropriate to a client king who was soon called not just “Herod” but “Herod the Great.”

The destruction of Herod’s “one temple for the one God,” (as Josephus describes it) in 70 CE was perhaps the most significant “tipping point” in the long history of the Jewish people and its search of the Divine. Temple worship was essential to Jewish identity from hoary biblical antiquity, from the Tabernacle in the desert to Solomon’s Temple and the temple that was rebuilt under Persian imperial sponsorship and continually under construction—both physically and conceptually—until it was destroyed by Titus in the summer of 70 CE. From that day to the present, Jews—at least some Jews—continued to think about, imagine, and pray for the rebuilding of the Temple and the messianic advent its reconstruction would signify. Along the way, Samaritans, bearing their own unique and very ancient traditions, and their own holy mountain, would, like Jews, ponder the Tabernacle, and await its messianic return. Christians too developed deep concern for the Temple, and the *Haram al-Sharif* is today the site of Islam’s third most holy site, the Al Aqsa mosque.

For readers of this volume, none of this is new. What is exciting, however, is the extent to which recent research across disciplines has added to our understanding of this most complex phenomenon. The essays collected here reflect the ongoing scholarly concern with the Temple of Jerusalem, across the ages and disciplines. This volume is the product of the inaugural conference of the Yeshiva University Center for Israel Studies which took place on May 11–12, 2008. The Center for Israel Studies, established in 2007, nurtures excellence in interdisciplinary scholarship and the teaching of Israel throughout history and across disciplines, with a keen focus upon both the *longue durée* and the modern state. The Center for Israel Studies supports research, conferences, publications, museum exhibitions, public programs and educational opportunities that enhance awareness and study of Israel in all of its complexities.

It is my pleasant duty to thank the many people who have made this collection possible, beginning with the authors themselves. The manuscript was prepared for submission by a team of Yeshiva University undergraduate and graduate students. I thank Michael Cinnamon, David Danzig, Simcha Gross, Gila Kletenik, Joseph Offenbacher, Jackie Rosenswieg, Anna Socher, Matthew Williams, and especially James Nikraftar, who led the student team. As always, I am pleased to thank the people at E. J. Brill for their professionalism and kindness in bringing this volume to press. Finally, the Center for Israel Studies is the brainchild of Richard M. Joel, the president of Yeshiva University and Morton Lowengrub, our Vice President for Academic Affairs. I have been most fortunate to guide and form the Center for Israel Studies since its inception, and am gratified to present this, the first academic publication of the Center.

This volume, like the conference upon which it is based, is dedicated to Professor Louis H. Feldman, the Abraham Wouk Family Professor of Classics and Literature at Yeshiva University. Professor Feldman is completing his fifty-fourth year as a member of the Yeshiva faculty, an astonishingly long career during which he has taken the role of mentor to generations of our students. To this day, Professor Feldman's influence and personal charisma animate our campus, as they do his classroom. With that, Professor Feldman is the doyen of all scholars of the Second Temple period, the undisputed world authority on the writings of Flavius Josephus. This volume is a small token of

the respect and affection in which the faculty, students and community of Yeshiva University hold Professor Louis H. Feldman, a true *gavra rabba be-Yisrael*.

Steven Fine
New York City
Israel Independence Day, 5770
April 20, 2010

WORDS OF CELEBRATION

Richard M. Joel
President, Yeshiva University

It is my honor to join in this celebration of Professor Louis H. Feldman. Professor Feldman has taught at Yeshiva University since 1955, when the renowned scholar of Philo of Alexandria, Jewish thinker and second president of Yeshiva University, Samuel Belkin, brought this newly minted Harvard-trained classicist to our campus. A skilled academic “talent scout,” Belkin could see even then that the young Louis Feldman was destined to be a great scholar. As a classicist and as a traditional Jew, Louis was brought to Washington Heights to exemplify and teach the careful “synthesis” between traditional Judaism and western culture that Yeshiva so prizes, a synthesis whose origins Belkin traced back to Greco-Roman antiquity.

More than half a century later, we can appreciate the richness of Professor Feldman’s contributions to Yeshiva University and to the world of scholarship. His writings on Judaism under Greece and Rome include numerous monographs, hundreds of articles and translations of enduring and foundational value. Professor Feldman has single handedly moved the great Jewish historian Josephus from the periphery of scholarly interest to the very center of that discussion. The titles of his recent monographs, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (1993), *Josephus’s Interpretation of the Bible* (1999), *Remember Amalek!: Vengeance, Zealotry, and Group Destruction in the Bible According to Philo, Pseudo-Philo, and Josephus* (2004) and *Judaism and Hellenism Reconsidered* (2006), evoke the range of Professor Feldman’s interests.

But Professor Feldman’s legacy expands far beyond his written word. As president of Yeshiva, I am privileged to observe and meet almost daily with Louis’ greatest achievement, his students. Louis Feldman has built his career around mentoring students, bringing to the task an inimitable passion for teaching which is only matched by his knowledge, his keen wit and the playful glimmer in his eye. Professor Feldman’s students are among the most prominent scholars of ancient Judaism in the world. It is less known that they also number among the most prominent rabbis, lawyers, judges, economists, doctors, social

workers and teachers as well. At every turn, I meet yet another *hasid* of “Professor Feldman,” each with his own endearing “Louis story.” Astonishingly, while many of these students are well past retirement age, Professor Feldman’s newest crop of acolytes are Yeshiva College freshmen.

I am especially excited that the celebration of Louis Feldman recorded in this volume documents the inaugural conference of Yeshiva University’s Center for Israel Studies, *The Temple of Jerusalem: From Moses to the Messiah*. The Center for Israel Studies, established in 2007, is an expression of the longstanding relationship between Yeshiva University and the land and state of Israel—in all of its richness and complexity. I thank the director of our center, Professor Steven Fine, for organizing this project, and am especially proud that our undergraduate and graduate students were brought in to the editing process and helped to bring this volume to press.

The rabbis of old held that mentorship is the highest level of teaching, and a prerequisite to substantive learning. For more than half a century, Louis Feldman has been the “mentor” to generations of students and readers around the globe. Congratulations, Louis! We all await your next study, and your students await you in class.

IMAGINING THE TEMPLE IN LATE MEDIEVAL SPANISH ALTARPIECES

Vivian B. Mann
Jewish Theological Seminary

Introduction

In the multi-cultural society of the Iberian peninsula during the fourteenth- and fifteenth centuries, religious art was created not only by members of the faith community it was intended to serve, but its production could be the work of artists of another faith. These joint efforts were, in part, the result of Jewish and Christian artists working together in ateliers that produced both altarpieces as well as Latin and Hebrew manuscripts. In 1941, Millard Meiss was the first to draw attention to the existence of an atelier headed by Ferrer Bassa (d. 1348) that produced two types of artwork, *retablos* (altarpieces), like that in the Morgan Library, and manuscripts, for example, Part 2 of the *Anglo-Catalan Psalter* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, lat. 8846), which negated the usual assumption that workshops specialized in only one genre.¹ Subsequently, additional manuscripts were ascribed to the same workshop, among them a Hebrew *Moreh Nevukhim* (Guide to the Perplexed) of Moses Maimonides whose colophon dates 1348 (Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliothek, cod. hebr. XXXVI).² A *Book of Hours* painted

¹ Millard Meiss, "Italian Style in Catalonia and a Fourteenth-Century Catalan Workshop," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 4(1941), 45–87. Meiss associated the following manuscripts with the workshop of the Master of St. Mark now attributed to Ferrer Bassa: a *Decretum Gratiani* (British Library, Add. Ms 14274–5), a compilation of legal documents known as the *Llibre Verd* (Barcelona: Municipal Archives), Pedro IV's *Coronation Order of the Kings of Aragon* (Madrid: Museo Lazar Galdiano, ms. R.14,425) and a Missal from Ripoll (Barcelona: Archives of the Crown, Ms. 112), in addition to another *retablo* and wall paintings. For a recent study of the Bassa workshop, see Rosa Alcoy i Pedrós, *L'Art Gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura I. De l'inici a l'italianisme* (Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2005), 146–70.

² Francis Wormald, "Afterthoughts on the Stockholm Exhibition," *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift*, 22(1953), 75–84; Gabrielle Sed-Rajna has ascribed the following Hebrew manuscript to the same workshop: *Medical Treatises* (Bibliothèque nationale, Ms. hébreu 1203), (Gabrielle Sed-Rajna, "Hebrew Manuscripts of Fourteenth-Century Catalonia and the Workshop of the Master of St. Mark," *Jewish Art*, 18[1992], 117–28).

between 1338 and 1342 for Mary of Navarre, first wife of Pedro IV (Biblioteca Marciana, Ms. Lat. I), suggests an earlier date for some of the manuscripts.

The production of the Bassa workshop demonstrates that Christians illuminated the pages of Hebrew manuscripts; at the same time documentary and other evidence indicate that Jews and conversos produced altarpieces for Christians. The archives of Saragossa, for example, yield interesting information on Abraham de Salinas, a painter of that city who was commissioned by La Seo Cathedral 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 Saragossa was one of two Jewish communities spared these attacks.³ 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 San Mateo and another devoted to St. 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 of the history 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.

This paper concentrates on architectural representations in one of the art forms created by both Jews and Christians: the altarpiece or *retablo*. This form of painting came into widespread use as the result of a ruling by the Lateran Council of 1215 that worshippers should be able to view the Transubstantiation, the moment during the mass when the wafer is believed to become the body of Jesus. To allow congregants to view the Elevation of the Host, paintings were moved behind the altar table and were, therefore, known as *retablos*, literally, works behind the table. The economic success enjoyed by the Kingdom of Aragon in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries allowed for the creation of large, multi-paneled and expensive altarpieces by renowned artists, even in the parish churches of small villages. Due to

³ Asunción Blasco Martínez, "Pintores y Orfebres Judios en Zaragoza (Siglo XIV)," *Aragon en la Edad Media*, 8(1989), 113–31.

its large size, the iconography of the *retablo* became extremely complex, and came to include many subjects that required Jewish figures and subjects drawn from the Hebrew Bible.

As a result of both medieval church doctrine (that the Jews of any era were witnesses to the early history of the Church)⁴ and the close association of Jews and Christians in the small towns of medieval Aragon, the panel painters who worked in situ used local Jews as models for the figures on altarpieces. An example is an Exodus from Egypt, once part of an altarpiece in Banyoles painted in 1480.^{4a} The composition, with its triangular space separating the Israelites from the drowning Egyptians at lower right, has a long history and is found in works of art as early as the fourth century.⁵ Some of the Jews of Banyoles who appear in the guise of fleeing Israelites may be associated with archival records. One of their leaders, Bonjuà Cabrit, was a doctor-surgeon to the royal house of Catalonia.⁶ He may be the man wearing a *tallit* (prayer shawl) at the head of the procession. His cloak marks him as a Jew in accord with dress regulations that were promulgated by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 and reiterated in the laws of various Spanish kings including Alfonso X (1252–1284), whose law code was adopted in all of Spain by the second half of the fourteenth century.⁷ In 1412, Juan II required both Jewish and

⁴ This doctrine is attributed to St. Augustine, who wrote that “if they were not dispersed through the whole world with their scriptures, the Church would lack their testimonies concerning those prophecies fulfilled in our Messiah.” (quoted in Solomon Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century*. Volume II. 1254–1314, ed. Kenneth R. Stow (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 25 n. 5.

^{4a} For an image of the Exodus, see Vivian B. Mann, ed., *Uneasy Communion. Jews, Christians and Altarpieces of Medieval Spain* (London: D. Giles Ltd., 2010), fig. 45.

⁵ This composition for the Crossing of the Red Sea appears as early as the fourth-century Via Latina Catacomb and on a mosaic in St. Maria Maggiore dated 432–40. (For illustrations, see Henry N. Claman, *Jewish Images in the Christian Church. Art as the Mirror of the Jewish-Christian Conflict 200–1250 CE* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000), figs. 2–4 and Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Early Christian Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1961), fig. 128. The subject appears among the earlier frescoes from the Synagogue in Dura-Europos, but the composition is somewhat different.

⁶ Bonjuà Cabrit 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 Wills in Mediterranean Spain 1250–1350* [Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1996], 64).

⁷ For the ruling of the Lateran Council, see Solomon Grayzel, ed. and trans., *The Church and the Jews in the Thirteenth Century*. Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1933), 308–09, no. X. For the wording of Alfonso’s code, see Jonathan Ray, *The Sephardic Frontier. The Reconquista and the Jewish Community in Medieval Iberia* (Ithaca:

Muslim men to let their hair and beard grow without trimming.⁸ The purpose of these requirements was to distinguish between Christians and Jews and to prevent sexual relations between them. The deep red of Cabrit's robes link him to a woman in red further back in the procession, whose hair is wrapped in a cloth with an ornament at top front. This type of headdress identifies Jewish women in both Jewish and Christian art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.⁹

I would like to make one more point before proceeding to the main topic of this paper, and that is the veracity of details found in medieval paintings, both miniatures in manuscripts and paintings intended to be hung on the wall. This point was made by the late Richard Ettinghausen in discussing Islamic miniatures of the medieval period. He wrote: "Close attention is paid in the... paintings of Hariri's *Maqqamat* to details of quotidian existence in the multifaceted Arab mercantile society... The unusually detailed vignettes... inform us better than those in any other medium about contemporary life in the Arab world."¹⁰ I would posit that the same may be said of the depictions of Jews and their environment in the altarpieces of Aragon and in related miniatures in *haggadot* produced during the fourteenth century in Barcelona and its surroundings. I have already written on the explicit depiction of the dress of Jewish men and women in both media;¹¹ this essay discusses depictions of the Temple and the Jewish quarters on

Cornell University Press, 2006), 163 and for a history of clothing restrictions, see Ray, 156–64.

⁸ Elliot Horowitz, "Al Mashma'ut ha-zakan bekehilot yisroel," *Pa'amim*, 59(1994), 133–34 (Hebrew).

⁹ Women wearing the same headdress appear 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, Or. 2884). For illustrations, see Cecil Roth, *Facsimile of the Sarajevo Haggadah* (Belgrade: Beogradski Izdavač-Grafički Zavod, 1975), and Bezalel Narkiss, *Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts in the British Isles. A Catalogue Raisonné* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), Pl. LI, fig. 188.

Women with the same headdress appear on a *retablo* panel of the Massacre of the Innocents dated 1390–1400, now in the Saragossa Museum, and the same headgear is worn by a group of women on a fourteenth-century capital in the cloister of Barcelona Cathedral. (For the *retablo*, see Miguel Ángel Motis Dolader, *Hebraica aragonalia. El legado judío en Aragón*, Vol. 2 (Saragossa: Palacio de Sastago—Diputación de Zaragoza, 2004), 155. For the capital, see Elena Romero, ed., *La Vida Judía en Sefarad* (Toledo: Julio Soto Impresor, 1991), 60.

¹⁰ Richard Ettinghausen, Oleg Grabar and Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, *Islamic Art and Architecture 650–1250* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 260.

¹¹ Vivian B. Mann, "The Jewish Woman in Medieval Art," *La mujer en la cultura Judía medieval. Actas Congresos transpyrenalia*, ed. Miguel Ángel Motis Dolader (Jaca: Ayuntamiento de Jaca, 2004), 83–100.

Aragonese altarpieces and suggests that their appearance was rooted in local architecture which was invested with symbolic value.

*Depictions of Architecture Associated with Jews in
Aragonese Altarpieces*

Of the types of architecture associated with Jewish life in the Kingdom of Aragon, the most common form still existing is the arcuated gate to the *judería*, the Jewish quarter, that can be found in many cities.¹² This defining structure is used to indicate the locus of an episode from fourth-century Christian history, 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, on an altarpiece painted on the theme of the True Cross by Miguel Jiménez and Martín Bernat in 1485–1487 for the Parish Church of Santa Cruz de Blesa in Teruel (fig. 1). The scene is staged on fifteenth-century Jewish turf, just inside the arcuated gate to a *judería*, while the house behind is based on the architecture of Jewish houses like those still extant in Besalú. In this painting, by virtue of the subject matter, the *judería* symbolizes the land of the Jews, the Holy Land.

In contrast to the numerous extant gates to Jewish quarters, there are relatively few complete medieval synagogues to be found in Spain, aside from the well-known ones in Toledo and Cordoba, and the significant remains of a synagogue found in Lorca in 2003.¹³ A few medieval buildings have tentatively been identified as belonging to former synagogues, the church of San Antonio Abad in Híjar, for example, but it has not yet been excavated.¹⁴ In Catalyud, the facade

¹² For examples of arcuated gates to the *juderías* of Aragon, see Motis Dolader, *Hebraica Aragonalia*, 20; *idem*, *Aragón Sefarad* (Saragossa, Imprenta Félix Arilla, 2004), 317; Pancracio Celdrán Gomáriz, *Red de Juderías de España* (n.p.: Ediciones Alymar, 2005), 57, 167.

¹³ The literature on the Toledan and Cordoba synagogues is well-known. For a summary bibliography see Jerrilynn D. Dodds, “Mudejar Tradition and the Synagogues of Medieval Spain: Cultural Identity and Cultural Hegemony,” *Convivencia. Jews, Muslims and Christians in Medieval Spain*, eds. Vivian B. Mann, Thomas L. Glick, and Jerrilynn D. Dodds (New York: George Braziller, 1992), 131. On the Lorca synagogue, see Miguel Angel Espinosa Villegas, “La Sinagoga,” *Lorca. Luces de Sefarad*, eds. Angel Iniesta Sanmartín et al. (Murcia: Industrias Gráficas Libecom, SA, 2009), 48–77.

¹⁴ For the synagogue of Híjar, see Motis Dolader, *Hebraica Aragonalia*, 370.



Figure 1: Miguel Jiménez (a. 1466–1505) and Martín Bernart (a. 1469–1493). *Interrogation of a Jew*. Altarpiece of Santa Cruz, 1485–1487. Oil on panel. Museo de Saragossa.

of a synagogue remains that features two entrances, one for men and the other for women.¹⁵ To supplement these meager architectural remains, we must turn to the *retablos* on which synagogues served as surrogates for the Temple.

The following scenes found on Aragonese *retablos* took place in the Temple: Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, serving as a priest; the High Priest Expelling Joachim and Anna from the Temple; The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, sometimes represented as his Circumcision, which is the most commonly depicted Temple narrative; and Jesus Speaking to the Doctors, i.e. the sages. Yet, an examination of the architecture in which these events take place shows it to be Gothic, as in the Presentation of Jesus in the *retablo* of San Salvador in Ejea de los Caballeros, whose “Temple” has columns with stylized foliate capitals that support rib vaulting.^{15a} Two biforium windows complete the impression of a late medieval building, rather than a depiction of an antique Temple. This painted sanctuary is striking for its furnishings, both those that are absent and what is prominently present. There are no signs that the building is a church, no crucifixes on the walls, no altarpieces with holy scenes. Instead the “altar” table is occupied by a very large cylindrical wooden case, too large to be a church vessel but the right size to be a *tik*, a container for the Torah scroll, an appurtenance of medieval synagogues first mentioned in texts of the eleventh century.¹⁶ The same comments could be made about the majority of buildings that are “Temples” on the *retablos*. They are Gothic buildings that are sometimes a combination of nave-like spaces and apses or simply rectangular buildings, as in this Expulsion of Joachim and Anna from the Temple (fig. 2). There are two noteworthy details in this scene. One is the the *zunmar* or rope belt worn by Joachim that was required of *dhimmi* (protected) populations living under Muslim rule as a means of sartorial differentiation denoting their special status. The second detail is the decoration of the *tik* with a scarf or cloth, a practice still followed in Sephardi and Middle Eastern congregations where the textile is used to follow the text or to show it reverence.

¹⁵ For Catalyud, see Motis Dolader, *Hebraica Aragonalia*, 30.

^{15a} For an image of the Ejea altarpiece, see Mann, *Uneasy Communion*, fig. 38.

¹⁶ Shlomo Dov Goiten, “The Synagogue Building and its Furnishings according to the Records of the Cairo Geniza,” *Eretz Israel*, 7(1964), 81–97 (Hebrew).



Figure 2: Workshop of Blasco de Grañen. *The Expulsion of Joachim and Anna from the Temple*. *Retablo de la Virgen con el Niño*. ca. 1435–1445. Tempera on panel. Parish Church of Nostra Señora del Rosario. Villarroya del Campo (Saragossa).



Figure 3: Domingo Ram (a. 1464–1507) *The Annunciation to Zacharias*. *Saint John the Baptist with Scenes from His Life*. Aragon, last third of the 15th Century. Tempera on wood, gold ground. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 1925 (25.120.669).

Another Temple scene, the Annunciation to the High Priest in the Holy of Holies, appears as the first scene on an altarpiece devoted to episodes from the life of John the Baptist (fig. 3). The High Priest or *kohen gadol* is Zacharias, soon to be the father of the saint. He wears bells at the hem of his tunic, and the *ziz* or breastplate atop his *miznefet*, his headgear. A chain attached to his foot is held by another priest outside the *kodesh k'dashim*, the Holy of Holies, for rescue in case Zacharias fainted or died in performance of the day's rites. This detail is first recorded in the *Zohar*, written in Spain in the thirteenth century, just two centuries before its appearance in this altarpiece. The Holy of Holies is set off by a doorway. Within it is an altar-shaped table on which sits a *tik* that was not a feature of the Jerusalem Temple, but a medieval synagogue furnishing. An intriguing detail is the paneled door behind the men which acts to define their separate space, whose shape is difficult to discern. In contrast, in another scene on the altarpiece, John the Baptist preaches to both men and a woman in an interior that is clearly described. John stands in an apse joined to the nave of a church that is defined by its succession of arches. Clearly, the architectural spaces of these two scenes were designed to echo one another, the clarity of the church superseding the uncertain design of the Temple, the broken and cracked floor of the latter hinting at its imminent destruction.

In a scene of the Circumcision of Jesus in the Temple now in the Hispanic Society, Jesus stands on the altar (fig. 4). Most remarkable are the two items of Jewish ceremonial art nearby, a *kos* or goblet and a circumcision knife whose curved blade is hinged to its protective cover. This particular type of circumcision knife is known from various countries of the Sephardi diaspora: for example, Italy and the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷ The presence of other Jewish ceremonial art in addition to the Torah case reinforces the notion that the building depicted is a synagogue; still the offering of two birds held by Joseph, the offering of a post partum woman, indicates that the building also represents the Temple. In a variant version of the scene from the Convent of San

¹⁷ Yehuda Bialer, *Jewish Life in Art and Tradition* (Jerusalem: Heichal Shlomo, 1980), fig. 50; Esther Juhasz, *Sephardi Jews of the Ottoman Empire* (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 1989), figs. 51 and 52.



Figure 4: Anonymous. *The Circumcision of Jesus from the Altarpiece of the Virgin and Child*. Castile, ca. 1450–1499. Tempera on Panel. The Hispanic Society of America (A 1/6).

Francisco in Tarazona, a similar knife is used and the officiating priest wears a *tallit* with fringes.¹⁸

On the predella of an altarpiece dedicated to St. Anne, the Virgin and St. Michael (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 88.3.82), Jesus has ascended a staircase that is part of a *minbar* (fig. 5), the term used for the elevated chair of the reader of the Qur'an in a mosque and used in medieval rabbinic literature for the raised platform from which the Torah was read in the synagogue and from which sermons were delivered.¹⁹ Behind him is the reader's desk and the facade of the Torah ark.

¹⁸ Motis Dolader, *Hebraica aragonalia*, Vol. 2, 153.

¹⁹ Shlomo Dov Goitein, "Anbol—Bimah shel Bet K'nneset," *Eretz Israel*, 6(1961), 163 (Hebrew). For a surviving Spanish *minbar* of the twelfth century, see Jerrilynn D. Dodds, ed., *Al-Andalus. The Art of Islamic of Spain* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), no. 115.

Depictions of a Torah case atop a raised reader's desk appear in two *haggadot*: the Barcelona and the Sassoon in scenes of the service in the synagogue that preceded the seder.²⁰

Recent excavations in Lorca prove the accuracy of the synagogue architecture painted on *retablos*. In 2003, the considerable remains of a synagogue were found near the local fortress. They consist of a vestibule leading to a rectangular hall whose perimeter is surrounded by stone benches. The ruins of the Torah ark are on one of the short ends and the center of the hall is filled with the vestiges of the reader's desk that was reached by a flight of steps.²¹ A painted version of this synagogue type appears in the *retablo* panel now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, where the scene is enlivened by Jewish worshippers seated along the walls and in a parallel row of seats,²² while Mary and Joseph watch Jesus ascend the steps of the *minbar* (fig. 5). The space is illuminated by glass "mosque" lamps and, in a case of art imitating life, a large cache of glass shards from "mosque" lamps were found beneath the *teivah* at Lorca and reconstructed.²³

Another synagogue furnishing appears in a scene of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple from Anento in the province of Saragossa.²⁴ It is a painted and gilt leather hanging behind the altar. These wall hangings known as *corame* were similar to tapestries in that they were prestigious and expensive decorations that also had the practical purpose of preventing drafts and adding a luxurious furnishing to a space. The making of *corame* was the specialty of Jewish craftsmen. With the expulsion of 1492, Jewish artists brought their craft to Italy where decorated leather hangings soon became a popular and prestigious art form.²⁵ *Corame* hung and still hang in Sephardi synagogues of the diaspora: in the Scuola Spagnola of Venice, and inside the Torah ark in Bevis Marks, London. This *retablo* allows us to see that the use of *corame* in synagogues is a tradition that began in Spain.

²⁰ For the Barcelona image see Bezalel Narkiss, *Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts in the British Isles. A Catalogue Raisonné*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), Pt. 2, Pl. LXIII.

²¹ See above n. 13.

²² The men's seating in parallel rows facing the center of the building is an arrangement of seats that persists in Sephardi synagogues to this day.

²³ Juan García Sandoval, "El resplandor de las lámparas de vidrio de la sinagoga de lorca. Estudio tipológico," *Lorca. Luces de Sefarad*, 259–304.

²⁴ Motis Dolader, *Aragón Sefarad*, 113.

²⁵ Letter from Fiorenza Scalia, Director of the Museo Bardini, Florence, 1988. On *corami* in Italy see Fiorenza Scalia, "L'arte dei corami. Apunti per una ricerca lessicale," *Convegno Nazionale sui lessici tecnici del sei e settecento* (Florence, 1980).



Figure 5: Anonymous. *Christ among the Doctors*. Catalonia, early 15th century. Tempera and gold on wood. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam (32.100.123).

The one exception to the modeling of the Temple on local synagogues is a scene of the Circumcision of Jesus from an altarpiece in Palencia, in which all the figures stand in a hexagonal structure with a domed roof.²⁶ Medieval circular or polygonal structures were thought to imitate the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the most important Christian building in Jerusalem.

When the Jews of Spain evoked the Temple in their pictorial art, specifically in their Bibles, they did so by representing the implements of the Holy Sanctuary in Jerusalem on a single or double-page spread. The significance of these furnishings was underscored by the verses surrounding their representation, which linked them to the hope that the Temple would be rebuilt.²⁷ The building was absent from the Bibles in which these compositions appear; an emphasis on Temple ritual and symbols superseded the representation of their architectural home. This Jewish model could not work for a Christian art, which needed to express the roots of Christianity in Judaism and its supersession of the older religion. Only by depicting its holy persons in Jewish architectural settings, either performing Jewish rites or abrogating them, could the origins of Christianity be expressed pictorially. For Christian artists of medieval Spain, and for Jewish artists who worked for Christian patrons, the local synagogue became the emblematic Jewish space for events dating to the lifetime of Jesus and early saints.

Synagogue architecture in medieval Spain was little different from that of mosques or churches, as attested to by documents recording the conversion of the sacred building of one religion into that of another: synagogues like the El Transito in Toledo became churches, especially at times of persecutions, and mosques became synagogues after the reconquest of Seville. That a building depicted in a *retablo* was a synagogue depended on its furnishings: foremost among them, the *tik*, which always appears on an altar table, never in an ark, since for Christian patrons the altar was the focus of sacred space; second, the *minbar*, the raised reader's desk that is related to the raised reader's chair in mosques, a legacy of Muslim rule; third, Jewish ceremonial objects or Hebrew books that appear in many scenes, for example, Jesus among the Doctors, and Saints Preaching in the Syna-

²⁶ For an image of the panel see Isidro Bango Torviso, *Memoria de Sefarad* (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Acción Cultural Exterior, 2002), no. 235.

²⁷ Joseph Gutmann, *Hebrew Manuscript Painting* (New York: George Braziller, 1978), 50.

gogue. Finally, there was the appearance of prestigious decorations, *corame*.

The medieval Christian identification of contemporaneous synagogues with the Temple in Jerusalem is eloquently expressed in a description written by Brother Diego de Espés at the time of the destruction of the principal synagogue of Saragossa.

In the year 1559, [the Jesuits] acquired a building contiguous to their college that had been a synagogue of the Jews...It was a three-aisled temple, although small, with pillars; the side naves were somewhat lower, the central nave was taller.... At the southern end was an altar on the wall with raised mosaic and in the north was a large, painted candelabrum with seven lights and also a small pulpit for readings and ceremonies. On the sides, there were six small doors to enter the synagogue or for other ceremonies...and on one side there was a large entrance.... High on the walls, the entire synagogue had large painted and blue Hebrew letters forming inscriptions from the Psalms of David or texts from some Prophets, appropriate metaphors of their Temple.²⁸

Brother Diego's description hints at a basic reason for the Christian identification of the medieval Spanish synagogue with the Temple in addition to their tendency to see Jews of their own time as equivalent to those alive at the time of Jesus, and the space of the *juderia* as symbolic of the Holy Land. Brother Diego mentions two characteristics of the Saragossa synagogue that Jews themselves interpreted as transforming a synagogue into a *mikdash me'at*: the presence of a menorah and the decoration of the walls with biblical verses referring to the Holy Sanctuary. Medieval Spanish authorities like Maimonides and Jacob ben Asher wrote: "And in the synagogue, we place the menorah...in remembrance of the Temple menorah." (*Hilkhot Hanukkah* 671:6).

In the close quarters of the medieval towns and cities of Aragon, where Jews and Christians mingled daily and the Jewish population of a town like Ejea was 270 out of a total numbering only in the 100's, economic and social interchange between Christians, Jews, and Muslims was intense. The Muslims who laid tiles in churches and synagogues and the Jews who painted altarpieces for churches could

²⁸ Códice ms. de la Academia de la Historia, Vol. III, fols. 423r.-424r. Published in Gonzalo M. Borrá Gualis, "El Mudéjar y la Expresión artística de las minorías confessionales en Aragón: Mezquitas y Sinagogas," *Aragón Sefarad*, ed. Motis Dolader, 390. Author's translation.

not but have exchanged ideas about what was appropriate for the decoration of the Other's house of worship and the meaning of its architecture. The Jews' own view of the synagogue as a small Temple, a *mikdash me'at*,²⁹ a play on the name of the Temple, *Beit ha-Mikdash*, must have been an influential factor in its depiction in Christian art as a surrogate for the Jerusalem Sanctuary.

²⁹ The dedicatory inscription of the Cordoba Synagogue of 1314–1315 refers to the building as a “small sanctuary.”