

THE SYNAGOGUE AND ITS ARCHITECTURE

Fifth Century B.C.---Eighteenth Century A.D.

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Honors Thesis

Fine Arts

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*done for
Harry Wolfson*

PREFACE

For many centuries the idea of Jewish art was considered impossible in view of the Second Commandment, which forbids "any manner of likeness, of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth." However, this view has been changing during the last century, as scholars have studied the remains of the Jewish past. On the whole, Jewish artistic development has been found to have developed within the context of the culture which surrounded the Jews. Only in the realm of ritual objects can there be said to exist any true "Jewish Art." A ritual object which had been part of Jewish life since before the Christian Era is the synagogue.

Interest in the synagogue as an artistic achievement was aroused in the middle of the nineteenth century, when archaeologists unearthed the remains of Palestinian synagogues from the early centuries of the present era. Although only a few of these have been investigated thoroughly, the information about those few had been published widely through the channels of the Palestine Exploration Fund, the American Academy for Jewish Research, and other organizations interested in Biblical and Palestinian research. The only books devoted to antique synagogues which have been published in English are written by E.L.Sukenik, upon whose detailed analyses of a few important structures I have largely depended. An important work by Kohl and Watzinger is available only in German.

The only antique synagogue outside of Palestine about which there is extensive material is that of Dura-Europos, which was discovered in 1932. All the information about it had been published by M.I. Rostovtzeff and Yale University; and Rahel Wischnitzer's publication, dealing chiefly with the interpretation of the wall paintings, completes the information about this amazing synagogue.

After leaving the period of antique synagogues, the available material becomes very scarce, especially material in the English language. No scholarly research has been expended on Spanish and Italian synagogues; and the scant descriptions found in guide books, as well as the allusions to them in history books, are more frustrating than informative. While in Europe during the summer of 1954, I was able to visit a few of the French and Italian synagogues; and in writing this thesis I was aided immeasurably by these personal observations.

Medieval German synagogues have been investigated thoroughly by Richard Krautheimer. His book, the only dependable authority now that most of the German synagogues have been destroyed, is in the German language. Since it is the definitive account of the subject, it is a shame that the book has not been made available in English, the more so since Professor Krautheimer is now at Vassar College and could translate the work himself.

A great deal of research was done by George Loukomski on the extraordinary synagogues of Eastern Europe. Unfortunately, however, he died before he was able to publish a

complete account of his findings and interpretations. From an occasional article by Loukomski himself or by someone who had interpreted the material which he collected, a fairly complete picture of these synagogues is available. However, his belief that the wooden synagogues of Eastern Europe were unique in the history of architecture and showed no resemblance to contemporary churches is a mistaken one. The collection of drawings and photographs which Loukomski compiled are invaluable, especially since most of the synagogues with which he was concerned were ~~was~~ destroyed during the last war, when the German ones also met with destruction.

The amazing discovery of a colony of Jews in K'ai Fung-Foo, China, aroused quite a bit of interest; and information about this community and its synagogue is quite complete, and available in English.

The great gaps of knowledge about synagogues are a serious loss to the history of Jewish art, which has few enough examples surviving, without losing these major ones. I shall endeavor in this thesis to bring together information which has long been scattered, tracing by means of a few complete examples, the history of synagogue architecture from its earliest remains to the end of the medieval period, which lasted, for the Jews, well into the eighteenth century. With this thesis as a basis, I hope in the future to accomplish further research which will fill in some of the gaps in the history of the synagogue.

I have been greatly aided in my work by several people who have been very generous to me of their time and

enthusiasm. To Professor George M.A. Hanfmann I should like to extend my deepest thanks for his aid and encouragement during my two years as his tutee. To Mrs. Hedy Schumacher I give many thanks for her help in translating so wonderfully parts of Krautheimer's Mittelalterliche Synagogen; and to Miss Betty Rudd and Mr. Luis Ellicott Iglesias for their help in translating those parts of La Iglesia Toledana which were relevant to my thesis. I should like also to thank Dr. Stephen Kayser, director of the Jewish Museum, New York, for his suggestion of the topic "Synagogue Architecture" as a possible one for my thesis, and for his encouragement and helpful suggestions. Finally, I want to thank Professor Kuhn for his generosity in letting me use his camera equipment in order to illustrate the thesis.

INTRODUCTION

The synagogue has for many centuries been the center not only of the religious life of the Jews, but also of their social, cultural, and political life. As such, it has been the aim of the Jews to embody in its construction the high, even holy, regard in which they hold the synagogue. Unfortunately, however, this aim has usually been frustrated. The uncomfortable and often perilous position of the Jews seldom allowed them to build monumental structures, though they often had the financial means to do so. For the most part, except for early Palestinian synagogues, the Jews had to be content with buildings whose exteriors were unassuming architecturally, lest they arouse the wrath of their neighbors. Upon the interior decoration was lavished the attention which could not be paid to the exterior. Usually most of this lavishness was centered in particular ritual objects; but occasionally the architecture itself was highly ornamental; and the very nature of the Jewish ritual often gave rise to unusual features of architecture or interior arrangement.

In this thesis, I shall, by means of a few examples in each area of Jewish history to the end of the medieval period, show how the Jews adapted to their peculiar ritual needs the architectural forms of their environment. Furthermore, I shall show how the architecture of the synagogue was influenced internally by changes in the cult of the Jews, and externally, by changes in the attitudes of their host environments to the Jews.

CHAPTER I
THE ORIGIN OF THE SYNAGOGUE

At the time of the beginning of the Christian era, the synagogue was already firmly established and in full power of its various functions. According to tradition, it had existed from the earliest times; and in the writings of Philo and Josephus, of the New Testament, and of the Talmud and Midrash, its foundation was attributed to Moses. Modern scholars, not content with this traditional view, have searched for evidence of the existence of the institution before the Maccabean period, and they have found in the Bible and other writings, evidence which leads them to place the origin of the synagogue during or before the sixth century before the Christian era.

Dr. Louis Finklestein¹ cited evidence to support his contention that the synagogue had its roots in prophetic institutions of the seventh century and earlier. He referred to the prayer offered by King Solomon at the dedication of his Temple² as implying that the Temple was a central synagogue, a unique house of prayer, a place for offering prayers and confessions, not the center of Israel's sacrificial system. Finklestein said that this prayer was written about the end of the seventh century; however, the emphasis on the Law, which is expressed in a later part of the prayer,³ leads me to think that this was written much later, probably after Ezra's restoration of the Law, in the fifth century. According to Finklestein, the dedication implied that its author

was acquainted with an established institution of prayer, of which the Temple was one of a larger scale. Sacrifice could not have been the only form of public worship at the time, since the main stress in the dedication is on prayer and supplication. Finklestein suggested that the institution of prayer as a form of public worship, may have originated at the time of Menasseh, when prophetic teachings were carried on secretly, in the face of the King's revival of idolatry. Immediately after Menasseh's death, there arose a generation of prophets---Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Nahum, and Huldah. These men must have held prayer services and secret meetings, during Menasseh's reign, in order to carry on the religion of Israel as it had existed before the tyrant came to power. If prayer was at first instituted because of royal persecution, it had, by the following generation, become the mode of worship in which the people had been reared.

Finklestein also cited the instance when the prophets supported the Temple priests in their condemnation of the local "bamoth," which had been offering rival sacrifices in the seventh century. There must have been some kind of religious meeting left in the countryside which the prophets supported, and since they stressed the importance of prayer in their preachings, it was probably a prayer service. Finklestein, in addition, found linguistic evidence to support his thesis. He traced the word "derash", originally meaning a prophetic oracle, and later coming to designate the communing with God which took place between a prophet and another person. Later, in Sirach (about 200 B.C.E.) and the writings

of the Tannaim (100-200 C. E.), "bet ha-midrash" meant lecture hall, coming from the biblical word "midrash", which meant a prophetic book or a lecture, expounding the written or oral law. Thus, even at the beginning of the Second Commonwealth (142 B.C.E.), "midrash" meant not only the substance of a prophetic discussion, but the place of that discussion. At this time, the prophets were dying out, and their position at the center of Jewish life was taken over by the revealed Law, which was expounded formally in the school and synagogue, along with prayer, which had been formalized. In the continuous use of the root "derash", Finklestein found support for his ideas about the origin and development of the synagogue.

Rabbi Mendel Silber⁴ also argued that the synagogue had its origin in early Biblical times; however, he believed that it was a secular, not a religious, origin. When the prophets denounced the people's ignorance and neglect of the Law, Silber found implied in their words the condemnation of non-attendance at the synagogue, which was already the place where instruction and study of the Law took place. The prophets conducted meetings for prayer and instruction, sometimes at their own homes, but probably more often in a central meeting place. Silber cited the "gate", often mentioned in the Bible as a place of meeting, as the probable origin of the synagogue. The "gate" was of secular origin, used for social, judicial,⁵ commercial,⁶ and political purposes. Silber proposed that during prophetic times, the "gate" came to be used by students and worshippers, but was still a secular place; and that

after the Temple was destroyed and there was felt a greater need for instruction and prayer, the secular character of the "gate" changed and it became a synagogue for religious functions primarily. However, much of the secular character of the "gate" remained with the institution of the synagogue. The Septuagint used the word "synagogue" to denote an "assembly," even an assembly for the purpose of rebellion; and the Talmud referred to the synagogue as the "assembly of the common people." Not only were prayer services and instruction in the law carried on in the synagogue; it also served as a lodging for guests, and a place from which community affairs were supervised and charity dispensed. Like Finklestein, Silber found linguistic evidence for his contention; since the name "synagogue" or "keneset" signified "assemblage," then its origin was surely secular and not religious; and as a secular institution, it probably existed into very ancient times.

Both Finklestein and Silber placed the origin of the synagogue in pre-exilic times. However, Finklestein did not account for its presence previous to the time of the early prophets; and he believed that it was immediately an institution for prayer and religious instruction. Silber traced its origin to a secular institution which was established even before the days of Solomon, and did not assert its character as a primarily religious institution until the sixth century, when the Temple was destroyed.

Solomon Zeitlin,⁷ like Silber, stressed the secular origin of the synagogue, citing again the meaning

"assembly." He claimed that the term "bet ha-keneset," or "house of assembly" was not used until post exilic writings, in which it had no religious meaning, but referred to any kind of gathering place, even one for wood. Zeitlin traced the synagogue's origin to meetings in which the Jews who had returned to Judaea came together from their scattered settlements, in order to settle economic and social problems. These assemblies were held in no permanent place. However, the meetings later became more regular. Monday and Thursday were set aside as "y'me keneset," "days of assembly;" and at that time court was held in the cities and the reading of the Law was instituted.

Zeitlin saw the germ of the synagogue in these assemblies. The permanent establishment of the institution he attributed to the Pharisees. In their assertion of the communal nature of the daily sacrifices made in the Temple, as opposed to the Sadducees' belief that it was the exclusive duty of the priests, the Pharisees established the responsibility of the people to attend the Temple sacrifices. Since not everyone could go to Jerusalem, the people were divided into "ma'amadoth," and their representatives went to the Temple to watch the sacrifices. However, these representatives could not absolve completely the duty of their fellows; and at the time of the Temple sacrifices, the people were supposed to assemble in their communities to read the portions of the Torah which related to the sacrifices. The frequency of assembling--twice daily, thrice on the Sabbath, and four times on Yom Kippur--led to the establishment of per-

manent places of assembly; and these became permanent institutions for reading the Law and for worship. The originally secular character of the assemblies did leave its mark, however; the Jewish masses were called the "synagogue" and their house of assembly "the people's house," since it served as a place for secular as well as religious meetings.

Zeitlin thus asserts that the synagogue as a house of prayer and Torah-reading, was established by the Pharisees. Since the Pharisees did not originate until early in the Maccabean period, Zeitlin's theory would establish that the synagogue, as it existed at the beginning of the Christian era, came into being around the middle of the second century.

However, references to the synagogue which occur in the literature of the first century of the Christian era, speak of it as a long-established institution, the center of organized Jewish social as well as religious life. An institution which played such a great part in the life of the people was surely the result of development over a long period of time. It is not very likely that the Pharisees had established it so abruptly. The service of the synagogue was already uniform and of a fixed order, and it had prayer formulas which show their antiquity by their brevity and purity of expression. The literature of the first century of the Christian era considered this uniformity to be as ancient as the institution itself. It may, therefore, have come into being during the Maccabean period; but before that there must have been a long period of variable services which culminated in the setting

down of uniform requirements. The history of Ezra and the men of the Great Synagogue fits so perfectly the idea of what this development must have been, that it is hard to see how Zeitlin failed to attribute the origin of the synagogue to that earlier period of history.

Indeed, the synagogue was rather widely known outside of Judaea, even as early as the fifth century, when it was mentioned by Thucydides and Plato. Probably the Jewish communities of Greece had synagogues at that time; and the Egyptian community of Syene (modern Aswan) definitely did. Synagogues were mentioned in a Graeco-Jewish document from the time of Ptolemy III (247-221 B.C.E.); and when in 160 B.C.E., Onias asked to build a Temple in Leontopolis, Egypt, he gave as one of his reasons, the desire to end ritual differences and controversies between the various synagogues. Since synagogues were so well established in the Diaspora, at such an early time, they must have been developing over a period of centuries; and probably they existed in Babylonia as well as other countries outside of Palestine.

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George Foote Moore wrote that the origin of the synagogue was unknown, but that its antecedents probably originated in Babylonia and other exilic lands, when the Jews gathered on the sabbath and on feast and fast days. At these gatherings they probably read from the books of the prophets, or listened to living ones, and confessed their sins, asking to be returned to God's favor. This type of gathering is easily proved to be of religious value, and it probably led to cus-

tom and the spreading to other communities. If Jews in Egypt and Greece, during the same period, had synagogues, it is not at all improbable that the Babylonian Jews also used this institution.

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Wilhelm Bacher placed the origin of the synagogue as a permanent institution in the Babylonian Exile, whence it was brought to Judaea and was developed independent of the Temple cult. The work of Ezra and the men of the Great Synagogue and their successors the Scribes in teaching the Law to the people, guided the religion in a direction which was bound to lead to the spread of synagogues. They stressed the place of religion in the domestic life of the people, and developed this domestic worship to such an extent that it became not only independent of the Temple cult, but more important than the sacrificial practices.

First of all, Ezra translated the Law into Aramaic, so that the people could understand it; and he and his successors instituted regular reading of the Law on Mondays and Thursdays, so that all the people would be educated in it. To the men of the Great Synagogue are attributed several additions to the Jewish ritual, which were in use in the synagogue at the beginning of our era, and which are still in use today. The Scribes, who followed the men of the Great Synagogue in educating the people in their religion, instituted schools for teaching more of the Law than could be learned during the synagogue service. These schools probably existed side by side with the synagogues; indeed, they have continued to do so ever since.

Moore believed that the synagogue so intelligently fulfilled its purpose, that the Pharisees must have played the leading part in its development. The Pharisees, however, were not the first to realize that the most urgent thing to do was to "inculcate and confirm religious loyalty by worship, knowledge, and habit..."¹⁰ That is precisely what the men of the Great Synagogue and the Scribes after them were doing; why then could not the synagogue have had its major development long before the Pharisees took it over as being suitable for their purposes? If Psalm 74 was written in the Maccabean times, and its reference to the "meeting places of God in the land" does refer to synagogues, then the institution was obviously widespread at that time. We know from archaeological and literary evidence that synagogues existed outside Palestine during and even long before the period. If this is so, then they probably existed in Palestine itself, before Maccabean times. Perhaps the writers of that day neglected to mention them because they were so taken for granted that they merited no attention at a time when men were concerned more about the Temple and war.

The regular reading of the Law on the Sabbath, festivals, and market days; and the studying and interpreting of it, which had been taking place for many generations before the Maccabean period, must have been taking place in the kind of institution which came to be called "synagogue." Moore and Zeitlin, in insisting that it did not reach its fulfillment as an institution until the time of the Maccabees, do not fully appreciate the accomplishments of the religious leaders who came before the Pharisees.

These leaders, from Ezra and his contemporaries of the fifth century, to the Pharisees and Scribes of the second century before the Christian era, were responsible for the development of the synagogue, which undoubtedly had its origin in many different customs, including Finklestein's prophetic prayer meetings and Silber's "gate" activities. It never became a purely religious institution; rather it functioned in a secular capacity as well, serving as a court of justice and a hostelry for out-of-town guests, being indeed the center of Jewish life in its every aspect. Thus, those who look for its origin as a purely religious institution for the purposes of prayer and Torah-reading are doomed to disappointment, since the synagogue has always been inextricable bound up with the secular as well as the religious life of the Jewish people. It grew out of both secular and religious needs; and it was satisfying those needs long before the beginning of this era, although we do not know for exactly how long.

Chapter II

ANCIENT SYNAGOGUES

At the beginning of the Christian era, the synagogue as an institution was widespread, not only throughout Judaea, but also throughout the Diaspora, wherever there was a Jewish community large enough to support it. In Jerusalem alone, in 70 C.E., according to the Talmud, there were several hundred synagogues, some of them exclusively for foreign Jews; and there was even one in the Temple precincts, for the use of the priests. Literature of the period---the New Testament, Josephus, and other historical writings---testifies to the existence of synagogues in Dora, Tiberias, Caesarea, Nazareth, and Capernaum. In the Diaspora, synagogues were to be found in Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, Rome, Carthage, and Babylonia. From the account of the travels of Paul alone, can be seen the extent to which Jewish communities were spread throughout the Mediterranean world; he preached in synagogues in Pisidia, Iconium, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, Perea, Athens, Corinth, and Salamis.

In contrast to the rather extensive literary evidence for the existence of these synagogues, the archaeological evidence is pitifully small. Egyptian archaeological remains from the third century before the Christian era are the earliest which have been found having to do with synagogues. Remains in Greece from as early as the second century before the present era, have also been found.

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However, there has been uncovered no such ancient evidence in Palestine.

The oldest synagogal evidence in Palestine is a Greek inscription from Jerusalem, which dates from the first century of the present era, before the destruction of the Second Temple in the year 70. It reads: "Theodotos, son of Vettenos, priest and archisynagogos, son of an archisynagogos, grandson of an archisynagogos, built the synagogue for the reading of the law and for the teaching of the commandments; furthermore the hospice and the chambers, and the water installation, for the lodging of needy strangers. The foundation stone thereof had been laid by his fathers, and the elders, and Simonides."¹³ From this inscription, it is clear that the synagogue was an institution of long standing, and that it occupied a central position in the life of Jews, since in it were carried on the main functions of their religion, both ceremonial and social.

Fundamental to the concept of the synagogue were certain religious requirements which had to be satisfied in the actual construction. In order to carry on the ritual, there had to be included in the synagogue an Ark in which to keep the scrolls of the Law and a Bima or platform from which the Law was to be read. Also included in the building, although of secondary importance in influencing the architectural characteristics, were the seven-branched candelabra, the most important symbol of the religion, benches for the worshippers, special seats for the elders, lamps by which the congregation could pray, and a lectern, from which the

sermon was given. Finally, in addition to the main chamber in which services were held, there was usually an adjacent courtyard in which there was placed a basin for washing hands before prayer. Beyond these ceremonial requirements, there were certain social and cultural needs which were often satisfied by the synagogue. Grouped about the courtyard, there were usually annexes which served as classrooms, assembly halls, lodgings for the synagogue officials, or rooms for guests or strangers.

The Talmud, though never setting down any definite regulations about the interior arrangement of the synagogue, did mention certain regulations which were customarily followed whenever possible. According to the Talmud, a synagogue had to be built on high ground in order to be raised above all surrounding buildings; and it had to face toward the Temple in Jerusalem, as did the congregation while at prayer. Although the Talmud never specified that the sexes should be kept separate in the synagogue, this practice was apparently a widespread tradition; and it had an important influence on the architecture of the synagogue, since almost every one of them had a special section for the women of the congregation.

The earliest archaeological remains of synagogue buildings which have been found in Palestine are from the end of the second century, or the beginning of the third century, after the Christian era. Earlier synagogues were probably destroyed in the two revolts, 66-70 A.D. and 132-5 A.D., which were suppressed by the Romans only after

great devastation. After the first revolt, the Jews were banished from Jerusalem, where the Temple lay in ruins.

Many took refuge in Galilee, which soon flourished as the cultural center of the Jewish community, now living peacefully under Roman rule. By the end of the second century, the Jews of the Mediterranean world were organized in two great communities; one of these, centered in Galilee, came to be led by the Patriarch of Tiberias, who was the spiritual head of the Jews in the Roman Empire. The Tiberias community became very powerful, and during the rules of Antoninus Pius (138-161) and Alexander Severus (193-211), the Jews were allowed once more to practice circumcision and to build synagogues, probably in accordance with current Roman policy of building and restoring temples. However, this flourishing period lasted for only a century or so, and despite a short revival of the influence of the Tiberian Patriarchate under the Empero Julian(361-3), it soon lost its power; and much of the population moved to other parts of the Empire.

Of the synagogues which were built in Galilee at the time of the Tiberian Patriarchate, the ruins of twelve have been identified. The similarity in the plan and style of these synagogues---in many cases, the almost identical form, has led archaeologists to believe that they were built during one short period, probably at the end of the second century or the beginning of the third century A.D. This would fit very well what is known of

Jewish history; since at that time the Galilean Jews were wealthy enough to build many fine structures, and they were allowed to do so.

The eleven synagogues are located in Kefr Birim (two), Meiron, Irbid, Tell Hum (Capernaum), Chorazin, Nebratein, El-Jish (two), Umm el'Amed, Safsaf.¹⁴ The area over which they extend is very small, showing how local the Jewish community must have been at the time of their construction; and the fact that no later synagogues have been found in the area, shows how short-lived was the community's affluence.


All of these synagogues were basilican in plan, with the rectangular interior divided by columns into a nave and aisles. Originally a pagan form used by the Hellenistic world for its public buildings, the basilica was used exclusively in Palestinean synagogues, extensively in those of the Diaspora ("Dispersion"), since it was very easily adapted to the many uses which the synagogues served. In addition to religious services; community assemblies, courts of justice, and educational activities took place in the synagogues of Galilee. It is probably because of this varied activity that the early synagogues did not usually have permanently placed Arks or Bimas; instead, it may be inferred that wooden ones were used, which could easily be removed when the synagogue was being used for non-sacral activities. This inference is made plausible by the archaeological evidence that two of the richest of Galileean synagogues did have permanent stone furnishings ---

an ark in the synagogue of Capernaum, a Bima in that of Chorazin. Most of these early synagogues were entered by three doors in the facade, which faced south toward Jerusalem in all but one case (Irbid). All probably had a women's gallery above the aisles, which was entered by its own stairway and door, either from the back or one of the sides of the synagogue.

The largest and richest of these synagogues was that of Tell Hum, or Capernaum,¹⁵ situated on the shores of the Lake of Galilee. It was built of white limestone which served to make it stand out from the surrounding buildings, which were built of black basalt; and it faced the lake, creating a magnificent impression from across the water. The Roman influence which pervaded ^{the Near East} ~~Syria~~ in the second and third centuries left its mark on this Galilean synagogue, in its grandiose proportions and over-elaborate ornament, and its success in securing a rich and imposing effect from a distance. No expense was spared in building this synagogue, which may have been the model for the others in Galilee.

From the ground plan (Plate I) can be seen the rectangular chamber of the synagogue, its trapezoidal courtyard on the eastern side, a small chamber on the north-west with stairs leading to its roof, and the raised terrace in front of the facade, reached by steps on both sides. The interior (Plate 2) was divided into a central nave and three surrounding aisles by a stylobate and columns which also served to support the women's gallery,

entered from the north west. At the junctions of the colonnades, double or clustered columns were used, a unique and characteristic feature of these early synagogues, which have not been found in other contemporary archaeological remains, but which may have been copied from the temples of the Semites. Along the long sides of the synagogue were double benches which accommodated some of the worshippers. Others followed the Oriental custom of sitting on the floor, perhaps on rugs or mats.

The limestone walls on the outside were divided in the first story into several fields, by pilasters with Attic bases, standing on plinths, and with capitals of fillet, ovolo, and cavetto.  These pilasters were uniform in size, but the spaces between them varied. The entablature above them was very simple, and had one of corresponding height and simplicity on the inside of the building. In contrast to the simplicity which characterized the north, east, and west facades, was the elaborate southern facade, which was divided by four pilasters into three fields, the middle one wider than the others (Plate 3). These fields contained the three entrances, with their doorposts and elaborate lintels. The doors themselves were made of two wings which were fastened by means of poles into sockets in the thresholds. The main entrance into the nave was stressed by its greater height and breadth, and by its more extensive carved ornamentation. Above this main doorway, in the second story, was an open arch covered with an iron grating, the largest

window in the synagogue. The only other window which can definitely be placed, is the small one above the arch, with its architectural decoration of columns, pediment, and fluted arc. Probably there were windows on either side of the great arch, in order to light the women's gallery; and there may have been more above the smaller entrances on the facade. Topping off the entire structure was a pointed roof which ended at the front in a "Syrian" pediment, containing an arch in the middle.

Like the other Galilean synagogues, that of Capernaum faced toward Jerusalem, its elaborate facade stressing this southern orientation. Custom required that the praying congregation also face toward Jerusalem; therefore, once inside the synagogue for purposes of worship, the people had to turn toward the doorways, lest they have their backs to the Temple. The Ark at that time was usually a simple press for the scrolls of the Law; and it was probably kept in the small storeroom which opened off the main chamber, until the time came for services. Then it would be brought to the front of the synagogue and placed before the main entrance so that in facing it, the worshippers would face Jerusalem.

In the synagogue of Capernaum, however, there was added an immovable stone Ark, unique in the Galilean synagogues. This probably came about with a stress in the sacred character of the synagogues, since now the presence of the holy scroll of the Law was constant. The Ark was placed in front of the middle door, blocking it permanently,

so that the congregation had to enter by the two smaller entrances or by a side entrance from the eastern courtyard. This change in the type of Ark used made unsatisfactory the orientation of the facade, since it resulted in blocking the main entrance. Therefore, a complete change of orientation was undertaken when the next synagogues were built.

This first stage in the development of synagogue architecture in Palestine was characterized by the emphasis on the oriented facade, and the absence of a permanent Ark or Bima. The second stage of development, which began in the fourth century and is exemplified by structures from that century and the next, solved the problem which had previously been faced by the introduction of a permanently placed ark.

The entire orientation of the synagogue was reversed; and instead of the facade being directed toward Jerusalem, the opposite wall faced it. The center of attraction was no longer the exterior of the oriented side, but the interior, into which was built a permanent niche for the Ark. This resulted in a great improvement for the ceremonial observances of the Jews; because immediately upon entering the synagogue, they were facing both the Holy Ark and the Holy City.

Synagogues from this second stage of development have been found in Beth Alpha, Hammath by Gadara, Na'Aran near Jericho, Esfia on Mount Carmel, Jericho (Tell es-Sultan) and Gerasa (Jerash).¹⁶ They were further charac-

terized by mosaic pavements which replace the flagstone floors of earlier synagogues.

One of the best preserved of this group is the
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synagogue of Beth Alpha, which is located south of the Sea of Galilee and west of the Jordan River. It was built, as usual, according to basilican plan (Plates 4 and 5), but with aisles only on the two long sides of the nave. Originally, the stone benches were built along three walls; later, more were added along the north wall and between the pillars located beside the Bima (Plate 6) which was also a later addition, probably of the late 6th cen. The pillars rose directly from the floor, without the aid of a stylobate. They supported the long sides of the women's gallery; the short side, now running along the facade, was supported by the portico which stood in front of the three entrances (Plate 7). In front of the portico was a courtyard with a basin for washing; and on the western side of the synagogue there was a small chamber from which stairs went up to the women's gallery.

In comparing the Beth Alpha synagogue to those earlier ones previously discussed, the only striking differences are the mosaic pavement, which does not lie within the scope of this discussion, the orientation of the wall opposite the entrance, and the inclusion of a niche for the Ark.

The addition of the niche caused the synagogue to have a very different character than those of Galilee had. The Ark was now permanently placed, investing the

building with a permanent sacredness. The entire interior was built to stress the southern wall; and no columns were placed along that side, lest the niche be blocked from view. Three steps led from the mosaic floor to the platform on which the Ark was placed; and the entire niche was covered with a curtain suspended between two poles which were imbedded in the first step (Plate 6). From pictorial representations in mosaics here and elsewhere, and on coins, plates, and lamps, the Ark can be reconstructed fairly accurately. It was a double-doored chest topped by a pointed gable, with the door wings divided into panels which corresponded to the shelves inside.

The change which took place in the synagogue between the second and fifth centuries, was an internal one, caused by a slight change in the cult of the Jews, and in their consideration of the character of the synagogue building, which now shared in the holiness of the Ark itself. The outside of the synagogue was not changed significantly, except that it had to be adapted to support the women's gallery in the front and to include an apse in the back. The synagogue was still a three-doored building of outstanding character, placed on high ground. As such, it joined the other early Palestinian synagogues in being an achievement of religious and artistic importance, since in these synagogues, the Jews infused with originality a form which they borrowed from their pagan environment.

Although Palestine was the center of Jewish life

in the Hellenistic world, the cosmopolitan nature of the Hellenistic States and later of the Roman Empire had a great deal of influence on the people of the provincial areas of the Empire. In the first centuries before the Christian era, many Jews were engaged in commercial activities which caused them to settle in Greece, Egypt, Syria, and other parts of the Empire. Wherever they lived, the Jews worshipped in the manner of their brethren in Palestine; and most of the Jewish communities of the Diaspora ("Dispersion") built synagogues, following the Talmudic requirement that every gathering of ten men must have a house of study and worship.

Archaeological evidence of Diaspora synagogues is much older than that of Palestinian structures. There have been found inscriptions in Egypt from the third century before the Christian era and in Greece from the second, that testify to the early existence of synagogues in those countries.¹⁸ The ruins of actual synagogue structures are scarce, but they have been found in Delos, Miletus, Priene, and Aegina in Greece,¹⁹ Hammam-Lif in North Africa (Carthage),²⁰ and Dura-Europos in Syria.²¹ All of these buildings are older than those still remaining in Palestine, and they may be characteristic of the earliest Palestinian synagogues.

Except for Priene, Hammam-Lif, and Dura-Europos, these synagogues are located near water and away from the city. This fact has led many scholars to conclude that Jewish custom favored a location near a lake or sea;

but there is not enough archaeological evidence to support this claim, especially since the synagogue at Capernaum is the only Palestinian structure which was built near a body of water.

All of these Diaspora synagogues are built according to the basilican plan; however, their division into nave and aisles, if present at all, is in every case a later addition. This seems to indicate that originally synagogues were open chambers, without special galleries for the women. These buildings are without exception oriented toward Jerusalem, though in all except the synagogues of Hammam-Lif and Duro-Europos, it is the facade which is oriented.

Whereas the synagogues of Palestine characteristically included just a main chamber of assembly and a forecourt, with perhaps a few small additional rooms, those of the Diaspora were much more extensive compounds. Surrounded as they were by a pagan civilization, the Jews of the Diaspora looked to the synagogue not only as a place of worship, study, and assembly, but as the center of their community life, their only connection with the religion of their forefathers. In fact, in Priene, Duro-Europos, and Hammam-Lif, the synagogues were physically the center of the Jewish community, lying as they did in the midst of the Jewish quarters in those cities. Because of the position of the Diaspora Jews in commercial activities, many of them travelled extensively. Therefore, the synagogues had to be built to accomodate frequent guests

who would have to seek out the Jewish community in order to carry out the obligations of their religion. This resulted in extensive additions to the synagogues, especially of guest-chambers and dining-rooms. One of the best examples of an enlarged synagogue precinct is that of Hamman-Lif (Plate 8). When compared to that of Capernaum (Plate I) one can see how the architecture of the synagogue was influenced by the difference in conditions of Jewish life in Palestine and the Diaspora.

The most outstanding of the antique Diasporan synagogues is the recently discovered structure in Dura-Europos. Although its uniqueness lies chiefly in the frescoes which decorate the walls, this synagogue is also important as an example of the adaptation to Jewish use of forms which were taken from a foreign environment. Dura was in Syria, on the Euphrates river, a caravan city lying between Baghdad and Damascus. Situated as it was on the periphery of the Hellenistic world, it received cultural impulses not only from the Syro-Hellenistic cities of Antioch and Damascus, but also from the civilizations of Mesopotamia and Macedonia. Since the year 165 of the Christian era, it had been occupied by the Romans, and was a part of the vast Roman Empire.

The synagogue itself was built adjacent to the city wall in a manner which did not distinguish it from the neighboring buildings of the city (Plate 9). Three buildings have existed on the site; the first was a private house which probably was used as a synagogue, and the

second and third were constructed for the purpose of serving as synagogues. According to an inscription, the final synagogue was built in 245 A.D.

Like many Dura buildings, it consisted of a series of rooms around a courtyard, the main chamber in the rear, and the whole screened from the street by a wall. It replaced a synagogue of the second and third century of the Christian era, and was an enlargement of the earlier plan, with easier accessibility from a main street, rather than from a back street running along the city wall (Plate 10).

The earlier synagogue consisted of a main chamber and a colonnaded courtyard which was bordered on two sides by four rooms. The main chamber originally had three doors on the eastern side, but one was eventually closed, establishing a precedent for the two doors of the newer synagogue. At first there was a central object in the floor; but this was removed when a niche was added to the western wall of the chamber. There was no provision in this earlier synagogue for the separation of the sexes; either the women stayed in an adjoining chamber which was lined with benches, or they were not allowed in the synagogue at all. All the houses surrounding the synagogue were inter-connected; so this area was probably the Jewish quarter of the city.

When the old synagogue was torn down to make way for the new one, in the year 245, one of the neigh-

boring houses was taken over to replace the chambers which were sacrificed when the synagogue was enlarged, and to gain access to a main street, so that the old entrance to the synagogue via the city wall might be abandoned. However, the entrance was still not a direct one; the synagogue had to be approached through the precinct, which did not open directly upon the street, but on an alley which led to the street. This fact, as well as the fact that the synagogue was built very inconspicuously, with no exterior feature to differentiate it from the neighboring buildings, has led to the belief that the Jews of Dura-Europus were an unpopular sect and a poor one. The belief in the poverty of the Jewish community is supported by the fact that the materials used in buildings were of poor quality---mud brick, plaster, and rubble--and parts of the interior were painted to imitate inlaid marble panels and columns, substituting for the very costly genuine materials, as well as making up for the lack of an expensive mosaic floor.

The two doors of the synagogue were on the east side; and on the west side, directed toward Jerusalem, was the niche for the Ark. This is, therefore, the earliest synagogue in which the wall opposite the entrance is oriented toward Jerusalem and contains a niche. Since the smaller synagogue which existed before that of 245 also had these characteristics, the Dura synagogue had achieved the more sophisticated orientation long before it had reached Palestine. It may be that the Palestinian syna-

gogues of the fifth century were influenced by this and other structures of the Diaspora. The synagogue of Hammam-Lif was similarly oriented. Another architectural innovation in the construction of synagogues which is found in both the Hammam-Lif and Dura synagogues is the width-wise use of the basilica (without, it must be remembered, any balconies or divisions into aisles). This horizontal axis is a common feature in the sacred buildings of Dura-Europos, a fact which probably accounts for its use in the synagogue; and the same situation may have been the case in Hammam-Lif.

In contrast to the unimposing exterior of high mud brick walls with tiny windows, the interior of the synagogue chamber (Plate 11) was exceptionally impressive, not only because of the decorative paintings, but also because of the monumental effect of the high walls. The chamber itself measured about forty-two feet "wide" and twenty-four feet "long"; and the ceiling was approximately twenty feet high. This was a common practice in Dura, where second stories were not common in the buildings; and the high ceilings resulted in cool, well-ventilated interiors.

The most unusual aspect of the interior is the presence of wall paintings on all four sides of the synagogue. These paintings, which were done between 245 and 255 A.D., represent the earliest attempt yet discovered to illustrate certain episodes of the Bible. The chief figures included in the paintings are Abraham, Isaac,

and Jacob; the twelve sons of Jacob; the two sons of Joseph; the leaders of the Exodus, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; the prophets Samuel, Elijah, and Ezekiel; Kings Saul, David, and Solomon; Queen Esther, the Persian King Ahasuerus, Mordecai, and Haman. They were done by several artists, some of whom signed their names; and several of the panels have inscriptions in Aramaic, Hebrew, or Greek. The paintings are similar to those found in the pagan temples of Dura, in their arrangement into horizontal zones and the division of one panel from another by means of ornamental bands, as well as in their general style and ethnographical character. The paintings are memory-pictures, characterized by linearity, a lack of interest in the body, two-dimensionality, frontality, arrested movement, and primitive grouping of the masses. The costumes, ornaments, ritual attributes, armaments, and architecture are also similar to representations in pagan paintings. The biblical figures represented in the synagogue are like those in other Dura paintings; however, their faces do not have the same complete uniformity and lack of character. Instead, the uniformity is broken in some by the addition of a note of spirituality, which arose from the nature of the religion whose heroes were being represented. The paintings have been interpreted by Rahel Wischnitzer as an expression of the Messianic hopes of the Dura Jews, who looked forward to a revival of the Palestinian Jewish community. Whether or not they have any precedents in synagogue decoration is not known;

however, the paintings are Jewish only as far as their content is concerned. In style, they belong to the Duran mixture of Syrian, Hellenistic, and Iranian styles.

Although most of the interior decoration was two-dimensional, the rounded niche was stressed by the only plastic ornamentation in the synagogue. It was decorated inside, towards the top, by a fluted scallop-shell and was flanked on either side by painted plaster columns which supported a rectangular arcuated facade decorated with paintings. The niche was covered by a curtain, and a canopy extended from the facade above it. In addition, it was raised above the floor of the synagogue by two steps. All around the synagogue there were benches against the walls; and the separation of the sexes, which was not effected in the earlier synagogue, was here provided for by the benches. Those for the men, extending from the niche to the north wall and along the north and east walls, had footrests. Those for the women, extending from the other side of the niche to the south wall and along the south wall to the women's doorway, are characterized by the absence of foot-rests. Additional seating space was provided on the floor, which was probably covered by rugs or mats, in the absence of a mosaic.

The two entrances to the synagogue chamber also provided for the separation of the sexes. The men entered by the main doorway, which was thirteen feet

high, built like nearly every large doorway in Dura, with its height measuring a little more than twice its width. The proportions of the doorway, its molded capitals and lintel, and its slanting jambs, were remnants of the Macedonian tradition of the city. The women's doorway was smaller, identical to the construction of the normal house doorways of Dura. Its lintel, like many others of the city, contained a rough copy of a Greek entablature.

From the main chamber of the synagogue, the two doors led to a colonnaded courtyard, a fairly common arrangement in Dura, reflecting a strong Greek tradition in the city. This arrangement is used in several large houses in the city, which have peristyle courts from which the main chambers of the house open. In fact, in the Praetorium of Dura, the main chamber is entered from the courtyard on the long side, just as it is in the synagogue. The columns of the courtyard were of proportions commonly found in Dura; and their capitals were of a widespread simple structure which reflected the tradition of those Doric columns which had first been used in the city. The columns were probably topped by a flat roof of pole, wattle, and plaster, similar to roofs which at that time were found throughout the city. The synagogue was never really completed; and in 256 A.D. it was blocked up when a mud-brick embankment was built to support the city wall which lay behind it.

Since this synagogue was so completely adapted

in architectural form, details, and materials to the customary architecture of its environment, it is hard to tell how much the Jews of Duro-Europos were following the example of synagogues in other places. Most probably they merely adapted forms which were to be seen throughout the city to their peculiar ritual needs, resulting in a building which had no peculiarities which would have attracted notice from a foreign and perhaps even hostile environment.

The Dura-Europos synagogue is thus a great contrast to the magnificent edifices of Palestine and even to the antique synagogues of Greece, which were handsome, freestanding buildings. It is perhaps one of the earliest examples of a synagogue built by Jews who were not able to build a house of worship which towered above the neighboring edifices, according to Talmudic regulation, not only because of the lack of financial means, but also because of the unfriendly attitude of their neighbors.

The changes in political, cultural and social conditions to which the Jews in the early centuries of the Christian era had to adjust influenced their use of architectural forms in building synagogues. It was possible in those areas of Palestine which were primarily Jewish and, early in the Diaspora, even in other Hellenistic states, to emphasize synagogues with magnificent exteriors which distinguished them from neighboring structures. However, after the Roman conquest, Judaism was looked upon as a foreign cult alien to the spirit of

the Empire; and it would have been impolitic for the Jews to draw attention to themselves by the magnificence of their houses of worship.

This resulted in the building of synagogues which were veritably indistinguishable from their environment, as exemplified by that of Dura-Europos; and the continuation of conditions which prohibited any advertisement of the Jewish houses of worship, proved fatal to the development of synagogue exteriors. The adaptation to Jewish needs of the basilican form used in Hellenistic public buildings was continued in the Diaspora; but the change in the political atmosphere caused the Jews to adopt more of the cultural forms of their environment in order to achieve inconspicuousness. Therefore, the basilican-formed chamber of worship became obscure and secretive in a compound of rooms and courtyards which was calculated to attract no notice.

In addition to these changes, which resulted from external pressures, the architecture of the synagogue was also influenced greatly by developments within the Jewish cult. The installation of a permanent Ark and Bima increased the hallowed character of the synagogue and resulted in the orientation of the back wall toward Jerusalem, as well as the inclusion in that wall of a niche for the Ark.

Chapter III

EUROPEAN SYNAGOGUES

1. Introduction

At the time of the fall of the Roman Empire, Jewish communities were to be found in Italy itself and throughout the provinces. The Jews had enjoyed full citizenship under the Empire; and except for infrequent persecution, they had been able to maintain relatively stable lives. However, the Catholic Church which came into power in the early Middle Ages, was not so tolerant of the Jews as the Emperors had been; and the Jews from that time until the end of the eighteenth century were subject to a fifteen-hundred year period of discrimination and persecution.

At first, the Church was the sole enemy of the Jews. Disturbed by the influence that the Jews had on the Christians with whom they came in contact, and by the frequent half-conversions to Judaism and even occasional proselytizing, the Church sought to keep Christians from Jewish influences by means of separative legislation. Christians were forbidden by the Church to intermarry with or even to be socially connected with the Jews. They were prohibited from buying certain products from the Jews. These laws were largely disregarded by the people, though the clergy tried to enforce them. Not only were the people at large friendly to the Jews, but so were the nobility. They looked with favor upon the commercial activities of the Jews, who brought wealth and fine products to their domains; and not until the seventh century did they

enforce the laws against Jewish-Christian fraternization, which the Church kept promulgating.

By the seventh century, the Church had become the state religion in most of the areas which had formerly made up the Roman Empire, and many temporal rulers came under its control. This resulted in the enforcement of the laws against the Jews; and the forced baptisms and persecutions which followed caused the Jews to flee to those areas of Northern Europe where the temporal rulers remained independent of the Church and were anxious to have the Jews as their subjects; or to Spain, where the Islamic conquest had left the Jews in an advantageous position.

2. Spain

Under the Romans and Goths the Jews of Spain had risen to be "princes and counselors in the land." They owned vineyards and olive groves and engaged in craftsmanship and mercantile activities. Although the high clergy was fanatically severe toward non-Christians as early as the fourth century, the laity was worldly and tolerant; and the Jews mingled freely with the rest of the population. In the seventh century, in Spain as in other parts of Europe, the Crown became dependent on the Church; and there followed a century of persecution of the Jews. In 711, however, Spain was invaded by the Mohammedans, and Jews and Christians were allowed by the new rulers to practice their religions in complete freedom. Spain became the most enlightened country in the Western world under the Ummaiyad court; and the Jews found themselves in the position of intermediaries between Arab and Christian

culture. They became very prosperous and once more rose to great power in the kingdom. Not only did the Jews rise to great heights in the secular life of Spain, but they experienced a great upsurge of religious activity which established Spanish Jewry as the leading influence in Jewish learning from the ninth to the thirteenth century.

In the eleventh century, the Jews once more experienced persecutions, this time at the hands of the Almohades, a fanatic Islamic sect which came from North Africa to conquer southern Spain. The Jews fled to the northern Christian kingdoms, where they were well treated by Alphonso VI and his successors, who disregarded the wishes of the popes that non-Christians be suppressed. In the north, Toledo became the outstanding Jewish community, many of its members attaining high positions in Alphonso's government.

For a century, the Jews again prospered, despite heavy taxes. They were regarded as serfs of the king, obtaining his protection by the payment of charters, taxes, and other levies. In addition, they paid special taxes to the territorial lords, municipal governments, and Church officials. The Jewish communities were independent corporations with their own jurisdiction; and each had a salaried rabbi elected by the members and confirmed by the king.

The Church was dissatisfied with the liberal treatment of the Jews, and in 1233 forced the Spanish rulers to allow the Inquisition to operate in Spain. It was not very successful, because Alphonso X of Castile, where most of the Jews were centered, looked with favor upon the Jews, many of

whom were high officials in his government. In 1265, Alphonso drew up his "Seven Part Code" in which were incorporated all the Church canons against the Jews. However, he did not put these laws into effect; and the Jews of Castile experienced a golden period of prosperity which lasted until the middle of the fourteenth century.

At the beginning of that century, the Jews of Navarre which was under French suzerainty, experienced economic oppression and horrible massacres; and in the second half of the century the position of the Castilian Jews also grew precarious. The population, incited by the Dominican inquisitors, was growing more and more opposed to the Jews; and in 1391 mob riots resulted in the massacre of fifty thousand Jews and the forced conversion of many others to Catholicism. This broke the spirit of Spanish Jewry; and although they continued to practice their religion, and even many of the "converted" Jews (Marranos) also did so, the Jews had lost the power of creativity which had kept them flourishing for five centuries. Laws were passed which reduced the Jews to poverty; and the Dominicans became very active in their attempts to convert the Jews, requiring them to attend sermons on Catholicism which were held in the synagogues.

in 1432, Jewish autonomy was restored by the Crown; however, the people hated the Jews now, especially the backsliding Marranos. In 1440 and again in 1475, the people initiated persecutions and massacres against the Marranos. The Spanish parliament pressed for the enforcement of the anti-

Jewish restrictions which had been neglected by the sovereigns. However, when Isabella and Ferdinand became rulers in the 1470's, the Jews lost their traditional protectors. The new king and queen were known as the "Catholic Sovereigns;" they set up the Inquisition anew, to a much more horrifying extent, establishing it throughout Spain as they united all the kingdoms under their central power.

Isabella and Ferdinand expelled the Jews entirely from Spain. In 1492, their property was confiscated; and they were not allowed to take anything of value from the country. In the mass exodus which followed, very few Jews were successful in resettling themselves. Those who escaped to Portugal were expelled from there in 1496; those who tried to get to North Africa either died at sea or were not allowed to disembark in ~~Almohadan~~ lands. Some of the Italian cities or provinces allowed Jews to stop in their territory; but only the Ottoman Empire really welcomed them as settlers.

Because of the waves of persecution and destruction which scourged the Jewish communities of Spain, very few of the many synagogues which once existed are still to be seen; and those which are, were saved by being converted into churches.

The synagogue was the center of Jewish activity in medieval Spain. In it were held town meetings and court hearings as well as religious services. Important Jewish communities often had several synagogues, both private and public, but there was always one which was the chief synagogue of the community. It was always the most imposing structure in the

Jewish quarter, towering high above the surrounding buildings. Its compound included other buildings necessary to Jewish communal life. On its grounds were usually built the community's social hall, its schoolhouse, and its various charitable institutions (lodgings for strangers, hospitals); and an open court in which the people could gather for gossip, celebrations, and even religious observances, was also included.

The Catholic clergy was always jealous of the rise of new synagogues, and insisted that they not exceed in height the neighboring churches. In order to build a synagogue, the king's license and local bishop's sanction were necessary. These were available only upon payment of a very considerable sum of money; but Jews were willing to pay; synagogue building became a favorite philanthropy of wealthy and powerful Jews, and they were able to dedicate magnificent structures until the end of the fourteenth century. At that time the Church seized all the synagogues of Christian Spain; and when the reign of terror (1391-1415) abated, only the smallest and least pretentious synagogue in each community was allowed to be reopened. These remained in existence for only a few years; with the expulsion of the Jews in 1492, all remaining synagogues were either destroyed or put to the use of the Church.

Two of the most beautiful Spanish synagogues still in existence are Santa Maria la Blanca and "El Transito," both located in Toledo, where the Jews prospered in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Like most of the synagogues of Spain, they were built in the Islamic style which was brought to Spain in the eighth century by Mohammedan invaders. However,

unlike Islamic mosque architecture, the synagogue axes were longitudinal instead of transversal, and the nave, if present, was higher than the aisles. These aspects of Spanish synagogue architecture were influenced by the churches of the time, which were built according to basilican or cruciform plan. The cruciform was rejected as alien to the Jewish religion; and the basilica was used without the transepts or chapels which characterized church architecture.

Santa Maria la Blanc, considered the largest and most beautiful synagogue in Spain, was built in 1260, during the reign of Alphonso X. The building was constructed, like most of the monumental Todedan buildings, of thick walls made of wide layers of bricks. The exterior was large and very plain, almost poor looking (Plate 12). Its few large windows were somewhat decorative, with their Moorish horseshoe-and-cusped-arch profiles; but the overall effect was not one of magnificence.

The interior decoration was the glory of the synagogue (Plate 13). An oblong basilica, eighty-one by sixty-three feet, it was divided into five naves by octagonal pillars topped by horseshoe arches. The middle nave was fifteen feet wide and sixty feet high, the lateral ones twelve feet wide and forty to fifty feet high. The ceiling was made of terebinth wood and was supported by coupled beams made of cedar of Lebanon. The women's gallery was on the west; and instead of being free-standing as in the synagogues of antiquity, it was built into the entrance wall; under it was the vestibule through which the main chamber was approached. The most outstanding aspect

of the interior was the beauty of the arcades (Plate 14). The lower parts of the thirty-two pillars were decorated with faience tile; and they were topped by capitals of plaster. These capitals were treated as if made of stone, very much like the treatment of plaster in the thirteenth century Grenadine architecture of the Alhambra; however, the vine and pine-cone designs of the synagogue have a three-dimensional life-like quality that shows the influence of French Gothic naturalism, which was just reaching northern Spain.

From the capitals sprang horseshoe arches, a frequent occurrence in Islamic architecture. The beauty of their shape was stressed by the absence of decorative treatment, and by the repetition of the line of the spandrils, which were decorated in arabesque rose patterns. Above the spandrils was a frieze of plaster decorated with an all-over repeat pattern of geometric motives; this type of ornamentation is a characteristic specialty of Islamic architecture and is used often in Spanish synagogues. Above the frieze was another characteristic Islamic form---an arcade of cusped arches resting on pairs of pillarets. A second elaborate frieze separated the arcade from the ceiling, which was once decorated in gold and colors.

The Ark was built against the center of the eastern wall, blocked from the view of a great part of the congregation by the arcades. However, the Spanish, or S'fardic, Jewish ritual stressed that part of the service in which the Torah was read; and the center of attraction in the synagogue was the Bima. Although no Bima has survived in the Spanish synagogues,

its usual form is known from descriptions and from a thirteenth century illumination (Plate 15), to have been that of a large raised platform of elaborately carved wood which rested on four columns.

This arrangement of Ark and Bima, as well as the location of the women's gallery, was also used in "El Transito," the synagogue built in 1366 by Samuel Abulafia, treasurer of Pedro the Cruel. Here, however, there were no columns to block the Ark from view. The interior was a rectangle sixty-nine feet long, fifty-two feet wide, and thirty-nine feet high. In typical Islamic fashion, this simplicity of bulk was contrasted with an elaborateness of decoration which gave to the synagogue its effect of magnificence (Plate 16). Three of the walls were left bare, probably to allow for the hanging of tapestries. The fourth, on the east, was highly decorative, stressing it as the most important end of the synagogue, the one facing Jerusalem. Here was located the Ark, which was topped by a crown-like canopy, approached by stairs, and flanked on either side by Hebrew inscriptions and pineapple and vine arabesques. Just as in Islamic art, the alphabet plays a large part in design; so here the Hebrew letters are used aesthetically. This decoration was in stuccoed work very much like that in the Alhambra; however, the flowers, fruits, and vines were much more naturalistic than in the Grenadine decoration, and show how strong the Gothic influence was in fourteenth century Toledo. The entire synagogue combines in its decoration aspects of Hebrew, Gothic and Moorish art, in its use of the

ritual alphabet, naturalistic stucco work, and arabesque design, as well as Islamic architectural forms.

Above the level of the Ark (Plates 17-18) running all around the interior, is a wide band of arabesque work with flowers, fruits, and vines which are very naturalistic, sometimes approaching three-dimensionality. This is located between two narrow green bands from which Hebrew letters stand out in white cement. Above these friezes are fifty-four Gothic arches cusped in Islamic style, which are embedded in the walls and rest on pairs of engaged columns which are topped by capitals of varied design. In alternate arches are placed elaborately latticed windows, narrow on the inside and broad on the outside of the synagogue. Not only does this manner of construction soften the harsh glare of the Spanish sunlight, but it also has symbolic meaning for the Jews. The windows of the Temple of Solomon were built in this way, and they were interpreted in the Talmud as symbolic of the Torah as a source of light. The ceiling of "El Transito" was very much like that of the earlier Toledan synagogue. Made of terebinth wood, it was richly decorated and was supported by double cedar beams from the forests of Lebanon.

The exterior of the synagogue (Plate 19) like that of Santa Maria la Blanca, and indeed of almost all the Toledan religious buildings (which were Catholic, not Islamic), was very plain. The large, thick brick walls, free of encumbrances, gave an impression of gloom which was a great contrast to the interior splendor of the synagogue.

In both of these buildings, the forms of the Spanish

environment were used by the Jews to endow their houses of worship with richness and beauty. The exteriors were simple, in the manner of most Toledan buildings; but the Jews were not merely following environmental style here. The Catholic Church would not have tolerated a synagogue in which the exterior was built in the florid style of the Mohammedans; and the Jews had to limit the magnificence of their synagogues to the interiors, which expressed fully the wealth of the community and the cultural stimuli which it received from Moorish Spain, its Christian environment, and the Gothic north.

3. Italy

During antiquity there was already a large community of Jews in Rome, with at least a dozen synagogues, probably of the basilica-type usually built in the Empire at that time. Despite frequent persecution and the destruction of their synagogues, the Roman Jewish community grew in number and power, and achieved complete liberty to live its own religious life. By late imperial times, Jews were settled not only in Rome, but all over southern Italy and in the large cities of Sicily and the north. Most of them lived by petty trade, but some were farmers or merchants. When the Christian Church became dominant, the Jews were made insecure by new laws and the inimical clergy. When the Church forbade Christians to patronize Jewish merchants, the Jews were thrown back upon international commerce. They resettled along the coasts and frontiers whence they could pass on to safer places in case of local persecutions, which grew frequent in those parts of the country which were under the control of the papacy. However, in the later middle

ages Italy was divided up into states, many of those rulers were independent of the papal rule. The Jews were welcomed by many of the secular rulers; and despite the disapproval of the clergy, they mingled quite freely with the laity, taking part in the scholastic life of medieval Italy as well as in commercial activities. In the Renaissance of the thirteenth century, the Jews contributed a great deal to early humanist studies by teaching Hebrew to Italian scholars, by translating Hebrew works which were of interest to the new movement; and they experienced a revival of Jewish culture which resulted in new religious poetry and advances in Talmudic learning.

Rome still had the largest Jewish community in Italy; for despite the oppressive measures which they ordered against Jews in other lands the popes realized that the income received from the Roman Jews was important for the maintenance of the Vatican's pomp and pageantry.

The disunity of the Italian states in the fifteenth century proved advantageous to the Jews of Spain; many of them found refuge in the kingdom of Naples, the independent states of Ferrara and Venice, or the Papal States and Rome.

However, the tolerance of the Jews did not last very long. Naples was taken by French and Spanish invaders who introduced the Inquisition; Venice fell into the hands of bigoted Doges who expelled and recalled the Jews time and time again, finally initiating the first forced Jewish quarter--the ghetto of 1516. The attitude of the Papal States also became bigoted. Pope Paul IV (1555-9) introduced a series of canonical restric-

tions which crippled the Jews of the papal dominions both economically and spiritually. The Jews were confined in ghettos, could exercise only the meanest occupations, and had to wear degrading yellow Jews' hats and veils. Only one synagogue was allowed to each community, no matter how large the population; and the Jews were forced annually to listen to special conversion sermons in their own synagogues.

These restrictions remained in practice until Napoleon freed the Jews from the ghetto in the first decade of the nineteenth century. For two hundred and fifty years the Italian Jews lived in overcrowded slums, in which most of the inhabitants lived in poverty, although a few members were able to attain wealth. Isolated from the outside world, their culture stagnated as the Jews spent their energies on quarrels between the various nationalities, which very seldom lived harmoniously. In Venice, where the Jews had relative freedom within their ghettos, each national group had its own synagogue. In Rome, where only one synagogue was allowed by law, the various nationalities managed to have their own houses of worship by building five of them under one roof.

The oldest Italian synagogues which still stand are from the thirteenth century, and are located in Trapani on the north-west coast of Sicily, and in Trani, in Apulia. The latter was built in 1247; and in 1290 it was converted into the Church of Saint Anne. Although very unassuming from the exterior (Plate 20) which was of porous stone, the Trani synagogue had a magnificent cupola which made the interior very impressive. It was designed by a Jew; in the thirteenth century,

the Jews were not yet confined to petty trade or to international commerce, and were free to engage in craftsmanly occupations. The synagogue was oriented toward Jerusalem in the east. It had shuttered windows, a paved floor, benches for the worshippers, and a vestibule which led into the main chamber. The building is constructed in the Romanesque style of architecture which was common to the contemporary buildings of Trani; like them, it is characterized by the simplicity of the exterior. The Jews were obviously not restricted as to the height of the synagogue; however, they did not follow the tradition of antique Italy and build a house of worship which was outstanding in its exterior qualities. Probably the Church had enough influence in Apulia to prohibit this; indeed, even the secular rulers would have considered it highly improper for the Jewish synagogue to overshadow the Christian churches of the city. The fact that the synagogue was converted to a church indicates that the clergy probably coveted it for Christian use while it was in Jewish hands, and took care to claim it when the Jews were expelled from that province, lest it meet with destruction, as was usually the case with synagogues.

Later Italian synagogues developed characteristic decorative and interior arrangements rather than the architecture of the buildings themselves. Because of police regulations they were frequently located in the upper floors of nondescript houses. The exteriors were not at all impressive, lest they incite the anger of the Church; and for the sake of anonymity, they usually were indistinguishable from the surrounding dwelling-places. In the photograph of the sixteenth century Levantine

synagogue of Venice (35mm slide No. 1), the synagogue is the small building with the arched doorway. Its gable probably raised it above its neighbors at the time of its construction, but the overcrowding in the ghetto has necessitated the addition of more stories to many of the nearby houses.

All ghetto synagogues of Italy have similar interiors. Built for the most part in the sixteenth century, many have been considerably restored at later dates. The magnificent, almost gem-like interiors are a very great contrast to the exteriors. They are usually squarish or rectangular rooms with rows of benches facing each other along the sides. The women's gallery accompanies the main room on a higher level, and an ornamental grille is furnished to keep the women out of sight. Instead of having the Bima in the middle of the floor, as was usually the case in European synagogues, an effect of balance and spaciousness was achieved by placing it against the western wall, high enough so that stairs were needed to approach it. In the ritual, the Torah was brought from the Ark to the Bima from one side and returned from the other. This necessitated two staircases to the Bima, and they were usually made a highpoint in the decoration of the synagogue (Plate 21). The Ark was not placed in an apse, but instead was built against the eastern wall (Plates 22, 23, 24).

The Ark and the Bima were often of marble and other precious materials, like the church tabernacles of the period. The entire decoration of the synagogue was influenced by the artistic spirit of Italy; in fact, Longhena, one of the most eminent architects of Venice, was commissioned in 1635 to re-

store the Spanish synagogue of that city, which had been built in 1584. This synagogue (Plates 25-6) is the most beautiful one in Venice. The rectangular interior encloses an oval-shaped balcony, giving an impression of elegance which is heightened by the arched windows, elaborate Ark, beautiful chandeliers, and ornamental ceiling. The beautiful effect of the baroque decorations may be seen in the color photographs (35mm slides No. 2 and 3) of the Levantine synagogue of Venice which is of the same period as the Spanish one.

The synagogues which were built in the sixteenth century remained in use until the Jews were emancipated in the nineteenth century. Whenever they were restored, the synagogues were decorated in current Italian style; and most of those which can be seen today are either baroque or rococo in ornamentation, though Renaissance in overall conception. The wealth of the Jewish communities, though considerably diminished by the eighteenth century, was reflected in the richness of the synagogue interiors, upon which no pains or expense were spared to make them places of aesthetic as well as religious inspiration.

4. France

Jews went to France during the Roman occupation of Gaul. When the Franks took over the territory, they treated the Jews no differently than they treated the Romans. The laity and even the lower clergy associated freely with the Jews, who were occupied in agriculture, trade, and commerce. In the sixth century, the growing strength of the Church brought repression to the Jews, especially to those in Burgundy; persecution followed in the seventh century; and in

629 the Jews were given the alternative of baptism or banishment. Most of them left the Frankish dominions; and it was not until the end of the eighth century that they were able to come back. Under Charlemagne and his son, the Jews were given the protection of the Carolingian dynasty; and they were privileged to observe their religion. The Jews received control of almost all the commerce of the land, especially in the importing and exporting of goods, and in their prosperity they erected new synagogues.

In the ninth century, however, the fanaticism of the clergy spread to the prince and the people, resulting in persecutions, banishments, and the confiscation of Jewish property. The rise of feudalism exposed the Jews to the arbitrary will of the nobles, who treated them as serfs whose sole purpose was to increase the treasuries of their domains. As serfs, the Jews were not allowed to leave; but in the tenth century conditions between the Jews and the Christians became so bitter that expulsion followed in the early decades of the eleventh centuries. Only in Provence and Languedoc were conditions favorable for the Jews. In this wealthy and cultured part of France, the Jews were equal citizens; they owned land and were engaged in all professions and trades. A flowering of Arab-Jewish culture took place among the Jews of Provence, who were the bridge between the progressive culture of the Spanish Jews and the less advanced culture of the Jews of northern Europe.

In 1229, the Church's crusade against the Albigensians brought Provence into the kingdom of France. Canonical discriminations were instituted, and the inevitable persecutions

and dispossessions followed. The fourteenth century was one of expulsion and recall, massacre and destruction. In 1394 Charles VI expelled the Jews for the last time; for a century more they were able to stay in Lyon and the few parts of Provence not under French dominion. They were never expelled from the papal dominions in and near Avignon; and a small Jewish community existed there until the nineteenth century, when almost all of the Jews left.

The only medieval synagogues which still exist in France are those of Cavailon and Carpentras, which were rebuilt in 1773 and 1741 respectively, in the style of Louis XVI. In both, the women were separated completely from the men, in the manner of northern European Jewry. A special room for the women was located under the main synagogue; here the women conducted their own service. The only connection with the men's synagogue was a hole in the ceiling which passed through to the floor in front of the Ark. The main synagogue, on the second floor, was approached by an impressive stairway; the room itself was a rectangle, with the long sides oriented west and east. The placement of the Bima in these two French synagogues is unique in Jewish history. It was situated in the center of the balcony so that the congregation, seated on benches which ran across the rooms from east to west, had to look up to the readers of the Torah. It is not known whether this arrangement was an innovation of the eighteenth century restorations or whether it was a tradition of the Provencal Jews.

The synagogue of Cavailon was built over a gate which was probably the entrance to the ghetto (25mm slide No. 4).

Its facade is of cut stone, with decorative outlines of arches on the floor above the ghetto entrance and ornamental wrought iron railings. The interior (Plate 27) is beautifully decorated with woodwork and gilding which make it look like an elegant eighteenth century salon.

The Carpentras synagogue (Plate 28) is very much the same. The exterior, however, looks more like that of the Levantine synagogue of Venice (35mm slide No. 1), and the basement contained not only the women's synagogue, but also a mikvah, or ritual bath for women.

The attitude of the clergy toward the Jews of these papal domains was always hostile; and the synagogue architecture was affected by this. In 1741 the Carpentras synagogue was rebuilt with a cupola and dome; however, the local clergy, especially those of the church located next to the synagogue, complained that, contrary to the law, it had been rebuilt on a larger scale than the older synagogue. Although the Jews defended their edifice, they lost out to the charges of the Church; and in 1745 they had to reduce the height of the synagogue to that of the one which had previously stood on the spot. In addition, they had also to block two windows in the eastern wall, which were considered by the neighboring church as an affront.

Thus, as in Spain and Italy, the Jews of France were forced to erect synagogues which would not arouse the envy of the local clergy. To compensate for the lack of distinguished exteriors, the Jews ornamented the interiors of their synagogues in the most beautiful materials available. Their houses of wor-

ship were characterized by and elegance and beauty which reflected the high culture of the French Jews as well as their wealth.

5. Central Europe

Following the lines of Roman conquest, Jewish communities were established along both sides of the Rhine during the early centuries of the Christian era. By the ninth and tenth centuries there were large Jewish centers in Cologne, Augsburg, Metz, Worms, Mayence, Prague, Magdeburg and Ratisbon. Since Jews were not allowed to own land within the feudal organization of Germany and northern France, they were left to the activities of petty trade and international commerce. Not only did the Jews themselves prosper by their commercial activities; they also increased the wealth of the society in which they lived. In the eleventh century the Jews were very much at ease in Germany, while Henry IV fought with Popes Gregory VII and Urban II. German bishops as well as the Emperor granted privileges to the Jews, and in 1090 a policy was promulgated which was very liberal to the Jews. This new policy, as well as the awakening of a spiritual interest among the Jews of Germany, seemed to promise a flourishing period of growth, very much like that experienced by the Jews of Spain.

However, the Crusades prevented any such good fortune. In the First Crusade the people who were on their way to rescue Jerusalem from the Saracen infidels found victims nearer home--- the Jews, who were not involved in the religious war and who were considered by the mob to be enemies of Christianity. In

In the summer of 1096, Jews all over northern Europe were slaughtered by a mob "army" led by Count Enricho. The clergy tried to help the Jews, but were powerless against the mob; more than ten thousand Jews were killed, and many others fled to eastern Europe. In 1103, upon the payment of heavy tribute to the Emperor and the feudal lords, the Jews were allowed to return to the cities of Germany and to re-establish their communities. Now, however, the Jews found themselves in a new position. The First Crusade had opened the East to the Christians; and there had grown up a class of Christian merchants who looked upon the Jews as commercial rivals.

In the early years of the twelfth century a Church decree prohibited Christians from engaging in money-lending. The Jews were left to carry on this activity, which was very necessary to feudal society; but they became objects of hate and social degradation because of it. In 1146, with the Second Crusade, the Jews once more became the victims of the mob, this time led by the fanatical monk Radulph. The bishops again tried to protect the Jews; but again they were unsuccessful, and the persecutions lasted until the end of the twelfth century. Whereas the persecutions of 1096 had been based upon purely religious reasons, now there were economic reasons which led the people to hate the Jews; they competed against Christian commerce and prospered in their money-lending activities. Accusations of ritual murder arose frequently, and were used as excuses to massacre entire Jewish communities. In 1191 the Third Crusade put an end to Jewry in northern France; the few remaining Jews were at the mercy of feudal

lords who treated them as chattels.

The German Jews, however, were left unscathed by the Third Crusade. The Emperor protected them, lest their valuable economic activities be lost to his empire. This began the status of German Jewry which later became a fixed legal condition. The Emperor had direct jurisdiction over the Jews; it was an act of grace on his part to save them from popular attack. In return for this benevolence, the Jews paid a fixed annual tax, or were assessed at special times--- this leading to the idea that the Emperor or territorial lord could extort "protection money" from the Jewish communities in the event of any misdemeanor, real or imagined. The thirteenth century was full of excesses against the Jews, who had been put at the mercy of the populace by Innocent III's rule of 1215 that they be made to wear a badge. The Jews were linked with the Mongol invasion of 1241 and were charged again and again with ritual murder, despite the fact that both Pope Innocent IV and Emperor Frederick II refuted the charges. In 1298 a wave of slaughter resulted in the murder of one hundred thousand Jews and the destruction of one hundred and forty Jewish communities. Excesses grew more and more common, despite the Emperor's claim that he owned the Jews and he alone could dispose of them as he wished. In 1348, the Jews were blamed for universally plotting to destroy the Christians with the bubonic plague; and a systematic extinction of the Jews was carried out by the order of city councils which had been elected by the Jew-hating populace.

In 1356 the Golden Bull, the constitution of the

German Empire, gave to the electors, both lay and spiritual, the privilege to keep Jews and tax them. The Jews were re-established and had almost thirty years of peace in Germany. However, they were enclosed in special quarters in the cities and caused the enactment of laws which kept the Jews virtual prisoners, made to work for them. Very often the debts owed to the Jews were cancelled, so that the fortunes of the Jews were very precarious; however, the Church still prevented Christians from money-lending, so the Jews were needed by the growing burgher culture.

In the 1420's a new wave of slaughter followed the linking of the Jews to the Hussite Wars (1419-1436); and excesses continued until late in the century, when the Jews were banished not only from most of the cities but also from most of the feudal domains. Small numbers of Jews were tolerated in some of the cities; but they were heavily taxed and were confined to crowded ghettos, where they were restricted to petty trade and small-scale money-lending.

Until the fifteenth century, the artistic development of the northern European Jews paralleled that of their host environment. After that, however, their isolation in ghettos divorced the Jews from contemporary cultural developments; and they clung to medieval forms even as late as the eighteenth century. The architecture of the medieval German synagogues demonstrates this very clearly. Those which were built or reconstructed in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries did not represent the latest developments in architecture; rather they kept up the forms of much earlier synagogues which had been

built in accordance with contemporary style.

The synagogue of Worms,²² destroyed in 1938, was the oldest medieval synagogue in Europe. Founded in 1034, its architectural forms were a conglomerate of construction and reconstruction dating from 1175, 1213, 1620, 1697, and 1843. (Plate 29). Originally the synagogue was a small two-aisled rectangular hall, its six cross-vaultings resting on two round pillars (Landsberger, A History of Jewish Art, page 183). This type of room became widely used in the middle of the twelfth century, for libraries, monasteries, municipal buildings, and castle halls. It was never adopted by the Church for sacred purposes; the three-aisled hall was so perfectly adapted to the needs of the Christian service and had been used for so long in church architecture that it had achieved a certain sacredness itself, and was considered the only form appropriate for a church. The use of the three-aisled plan for a profane purpose would not have been possible because of its self-contained sacredness. Therefore, the Church would have objected to the use of the three-aisled hall in Jewish synagogues, which were recognized more for their profane uses as schools and assembly halls than for their sacred purposes. Not only would the Christians have objected to the use of a church form of architecture in synagogue construction; the Jews themselves would not have tolerated it. Whereas in Spain the Jews adapted to synagogue use the architectural forms of the mosque and church, here in Germany they avoided the sacred forms of a host environment which was not so tolerant of them as was that of Spain. The three-aisled hall was symbolic of the Trinity, and

for the Jews it became as inappropriate a form as the cruciform plan. The Jews' adoption of the two-aisled hall was a very successful one; and they used this plan almost exclusively in synagogues of the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries.

In the eastern wall there was a very small niche for the Ark; and the Bima was placed in the center, between the two pillars. In the ritual of the German Jewry, prayer was subordinate to the reading and teaching of the Torah; therefore, the Bima was the center of attraction not only because of its placement in the synagogue but also because of its primary importance in the services. This importance was stressed by the arrangement of the seats of the Worms synagogue; they were placed around the synagogue, facing in toward the Bima (Plate 30); and there were even some along the eastern wall, facing away from Jerusalem.

The entrance was not in the western wall, opposite the Ark, as in the antique synagogues; rather it was in the western end of the north wall. This represented a compromise between the attraction of the Ark and the Bima; for if the importance of the Bima had completely overshadowed that of the Ark, then the logical place for the entrance would have been in the center of the side wall. From the outside, the entrance to the synagogue was very impressive. It consisted of a round arch set in a rectangular frame (Plate 31), with an archivolt which was similar to that on the portal of the Baptistery of Saint Andreas in Worms, built at the same time the synagogue was constructed. Not only could the portal be related to contemporary Worms buildings; the capitals of the two pillars

in the synagogue were carved like those in the eastern part of the Worms Cathedral and in the Baptistery of Saint Andreas.

In 1213 the first addition was made to the Worms synagogue. A women's synagogue was built next to the north-eastern wall. An irregular rectangle like the men's synagogue, this room set a precedent in two-aisled hall construction. The number of supporting pillars was diminished to a single one in the middle, which carried the weight of the four cross-vaults (Plate 32). The women sat in a circle around the room, facing the center. They were almost completely divorced from the ritual which took place in the men's synagogue; a hole in the connecting wall served to let the reader in the women's service know how the main service was progressing. In the seventeenth century reconstruction of the synagogue, the separation of the men and women was not so severe. Four small windows and a door were added as a connection between the two buildings; now the women sat facing the main synagogue, and observed the men's service, although they kept out of the sight of the men. In 1843 the final reconstruction of the synagogue broke through the barrier between the two synagogues. Two immense arched openings were cut out, and the women became more integrated in synagogue arrangement, reflecting the liberalization of Judaism in the nineteenth century, which eventually resulted in some synagogues in the men and women sitting together during services.

The portal of the women's synagogue, which was in the north wall, had a very different profile from that of the portal of the men's synagogue. The parts seemed to merge together; there was not as much of a distinction between the convex and concave parts of the archivolt. This stylistic difference re-

flected the change to the late Romanesque style of architecture in Worms; and parallels could be found in the southern portal of the Worms Cathedral and the portal of the north choir in Saint Andreas.

The windows of the synagogue were built in Romanesque style. In the men's synagogue the north windows were half-circles on the outside and pointed inside. In the late thirteenth century they were pointed on the outside as well, in accordance with Gothic influences from the environment. The windows of the women's synagogue were built with circular arches in the eastern wall and in the western wall were completely round. When the synagogue was reconstructed in 1620, after having been almost totally destroyed in a pogrom, the new forms of Renaissance and Baroque architecture which were being used in Worms were ignored by the Jews. Instead, everything was renewed as far as possible in the old forms of Romanesque or Gothic architecture. Thus, the windows were built with pointed arches; and the same kind of gabled roofs were put over the rooms. When the two rooms had originally been built, they were two separate structures; and as such each had its own roof. In this reconstruction of 1620 the rooms connected with each other, but the roofs remained separated as before.

A third addition to the body of the synagogue, made during the reconstruction of 1620, was a small annex in front of the women's synagogue. This had a vestibule and stairs on the ground floor and a community assembly hall upstairs. The entire addition was included under the roof of the women's synagogue, which was slightly enlarged. In 1624 a small one-

aisled annex known as the "Rashi Chapel" was constructed against the west wall of the men's synagogue. Its roof was originally very slanted, giving it a Gothic appearance.

In 1689 the synagogue was considerably damaged for a second time. It became a stable and then an arsenal; and when the Jews were readmitted to Worms and allowed to establish the synagogue again, they had almost to rebuild it completely. No new additions were made to the architecture; and the old forms were carefully followed. Only in rebuilding the Ark were there innovations; it was constructed with a pointed Gothic gable.

The Jews did not cling to the old forms of architecture because they preferred them to the newer styles used in Worms. They had been isolated from any but their own immediate environment for so long, that even in the seventeenth century forms which were three or four hundred years old still seemed to them to be the proper ones for their houses of worship. In addition, the Jews had for so long been excluded from the building guilds of their Christian neighbors that they were unacquainted with the new ways of construction.

The synagogue as a whole was located in a square or courtyard, isolated by it from the houses of the Jewish quarter, in which it was the most outstanding building (Plate 33). Nearby were other community buildings necessary for the Jewish congregation; a mikvah, or ritual bath, stood near the Rashi Chapel, and the schoolhouse was built close to the eastern wall of the synagogue.

Another synagogue which was built using the two-aisled

plan was that of Prague, in Bohemia (Plate 34). This synagogue, known as the "Altneuschule,"²³ was constructed in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, in the Gothic style of architecture which was used in lay and clerical buildings of the time. Originally the building stood completely isolated in the school yard of the Jewish quarter. It was constructed of a combination of broken and hewn stones and brick. Each of the lateral walls was divided into two sections; the western wall had one pointed window in each section, and the eastern wall had a circular window in each. The high, pointed roof was terminated at each end with gables which were decoratively divided into fields by salient ribs which reached beyond the line of the roof (Landsberger, page 185).

Inside (Landsberger, page 187), the room was divided into two aisles and three sections by two octagonal pillars which supported the weight of the vaults. On the walls of the interior there were half-circular engaged columns from which sprang the salient ribs of the vaulted ceilings. These engaged columns did not stand on the floor; instead they sprang from consoles set on a molding which ran around the entire synagogue. This molding not only supported the consoles; it also served as the place on which the congregation set their candles for light while studying and reading the Law. As in the synagogue at Worms, the seats were arranged so that they faced in toward the Bima, which was in the middle of the room, between the two columns. The Ark had lost out even more in importance since the twelfth century; and there was no niche included in the structure. Instead, it was placed against the eastern wall

like a moveable cabinet. In several places the interior was decorated with leaf ornaments which were very much like the decorations contained in the west portal of the Church of Saint Elizabeth in Marburg and in the Strasbourg Cathedral, which were built at the end of the thirteenth century. During this period, Prague had a close connection with the culture of eastern Germany; and the Jews were following the trend of their Christian neighbors in adopting forms of east German architecture for their own use. The "Altneuschule" was built in a style very characteristic of German Gothic architecture, with one great roof and without flying buttresses. Its doorway was built with a pointed arch according to Gothic style (Landsberger, page 186). The first annex of the "Altneuschule" was built at the end of the fourteenth century, probably after the great pogrom of 1389. It was built on the southern side of the original building, and served as the vestibule from which the congregation entered the synagogue by the door on the western end of the south wall. It consisted of a long narrow hall, topped by a pointed barrel vault. In the western wall there was a window with a round arch which was replaced in the eighteenth century by a pointed one. Originally the vestibule was entered from the east or from the north-west. Later, a southern entrance was added; and the one on the eastern side was converted into a window, although the steps were never removed.

At the end of the seventeenth century a second annex was built, on the western side of the synagogue. It probably served for a while as a women's synagogue, since it was con-

nected to the men's synagogue by means of two funnel-shaped holes, their broad ends opening to the main room. This annex was very small; it was divided into three sections, each with a small rectangular window. The middle section was covered by a barrel vault which was connected to one of the buttresses of the main building; and the other two sections were topped by cross vaults.

This annex must have proven inadequate for the women; for in the eighteenth century another annex was added for them. The new one was built along the north side of the main building, its weakly inclined roof coming just to the window sills of the men's synagogue. The windows of the annex had pointed arches breaking into the barrel vault which covered the whole room. As in the older women's synagogue, there were funnel-shaped holes connecting the room to the main synagogue. These were located about three feet from the floor level, so that the women could observe the service in the next room while sitting down.

The last addition to the synagogue was on the east side of the main building. In the last half of the eighteenth century a small windowless annex was built there, probably as a supply room.

The "Altneuschule" was not the only synagogue in Prague; but it was the most important one. As such, it stood in the center of the ghetto, separated from the neighboring houses by a school yard. Nearby were located the slaughterhouse, charity organizations, assembly-hall, mikvah, and schools of the community; altogether there was formed a compound which

was very much like those of the ancient synagogues of Hammam-Lif and Dura-Europos, for the essential needs of the Jewish community had not changed very much in the intervening centuries.

6. Eastern Europe

In the eighth and ninth centuries, Jews came to Kiev in the Ukraine from settlements north of the Black Sea which had existed since the first century of the Christian era. They lived on the land or were engaged in trading; and were protected by the Prince of Kiev against the people and the Greek Orthodox clergy. From the Ukraine many Jews migrated to Poland, where they lived in harmony with the people and the rulers. At the time of the Crusades, German Jews poured into the border areas of Poland, bringing with them a high level of culture which they imposed upon the older Jewish residents of the country. This development made the Jews the most highly cultured element in the country; and they rose to high financial and managerial positions. In 1241 the invasion of the Tartars from Russia left the country so devastated that more settlers from Germany were invited by the Polish princes to bolster the population. No religious distinction was made; and many Jews came in. This wave of immigration brought in a large middleclass element of traders and craftsman, both Jewish and Gentile; and the latter, organized in guilds, were very hostile to their Jewish competitors.

The Church was gaining in influence among the people and tried to put into effect its canonical discriminations against the Jews. However, the princes protected them, motivated by the medieval attitude that the Jews belonged to the

Crown and their business was to be rich so that they could supply the treasury with funds. In the late fourteenth century the Jews were persecuted for a few years, when the power of the rulers weakened. Since they could not depend upon the protection of the Crown against the Church, burghers, and peasants; the Jews solidified their organization for defensive purposes, and in doing so accomplished a flowering of Jewish culture which established Eastern Europe as the most important center of Jewry in the entire world. In 1551, King Sigismund Augustus granted the Jews a charter which gave them the right to administer their own affairs. From then on, Polish and Lithuanian Jewry was organized under a head rabbi who, with a central council which apportioned taxes, sent representatives to the Polish Diet, and made rules about the life and education of the Jews.

At the end of the sixteenth century the Jesuits converted the Polish rulers to Roman Catholicism and the Jews lost the protection which the rulers had afforded against the hostility of the Polish people. All sorts of laws were passed which hindered the life of the Jews and set them apart from the rest of the population, which grew to hate them more and more. In the middle of the seventeenth century more than one-hundred thousand Jews were killed in a series of massacres which broke loose during the Cossack revolution and the war between Poland and Russia. Those Jews who were left became very poor because of the taxes against them which were increased during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Prohibited for the most part from living in the large cities,

more and more of the Jews moved to rural areas, where their culture stagnated and their fortunes remained at a very low ebb.

The synagogues of Eastern Europe were the most original Jewish constructions since the period of the ancient synagogues. The generosity of the kings and gentry which lasted until the sixteenth century left the Jews free to build their houses of worship as they pleased. Free to choose the place and size of their synagogues, the Jews built magnificent edifices which often were the most elaborate structures in the neighborhood and even in the entire city.

Two types of synagogues were built by the Jews. In the cities, they were of stone; in the rural areas they were constructed of wood. Stone synagogues were built as early as the beginning of the thirteenth century; they reached their peak of architectural development in the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. From the exterior they often looked like fortresses (Landsberger, page 240), with heavy walls and special roof attics for defense in case of siege (this may have been a result of the Cossack invasions of 1648 and 1651).

These attics were often decorated with arcades topped by crown-like lacy fringes on the facade (Plate 35) showing the superficial way in which Renaissance and Baroque influences from Italy were used in Polish architecture. The entrances also often showed this addition of Italianate decoration to native forms (Plate 36).

The interior of the stone synagogues was usually cubical, and represented an advance over the two-aisled synagogues of Germany and Bohemia. The Bima became the most char-

acteristic and original part of the synagogue; in many of the eastern synagogues it supported the entire structure of the building (Plate 37). Its four pillars were usually joined by arches which formed a kind of cubical baldachin from which the vaults of the ceiling sprang. This innovation shows how profoundly the architecture of the synagogue could be influenced by a ritual need. The Bima became not only the major element in the religious service but also in the very structure of the religious building.

The rural Jewish communities of Eastern Europe could not afford to build monumental stone synagogues. Instead, they built wooden structures which were easily constructed by the cooperative efforts of the craftsmen and inhabitants of small towns. These wooden synagogues were square in plan (Plate 38), as the great stone ones were; but the lightness of the wood made unnecessary the support of the roof by the Bima. Although in some synagogues the columns of the Bima did extend to the ceiling, creating a mysterious effect as they disappeared into its darkness (Plate 39), usually the Bima was a free-standing platform crowned by a baldachin and elaborately decorated.

The lightness of the wooden construction material led to the elaboration of the vaultings; they often formed curved octagonal ceilings topped by domes and cupolas and sometimes decorated with folk-art paintings of flowers, fruits and vines combined with Hebrew verses and animal representations (Plates 40, 41, 42). The decorative elements were strongest in the Bima and the Ark, which were the most important fur-

nishings of the synagogues.

In addition to the main room of the synagogue, these wooden structures usually contained a women's synagogue, a vestibule, and a school room (Plate 38). These were not later additions as were the annexes of the synagogues in Worms and Prague. Instead, they were integrated with the construction of the main hall, and were an important aspect of the exterior harmony. In some structures the annexes were united under one roof (Landsberger, page 248); in others they had their own roofs which were combined with the main roof, to give a rich impression of upward-striving and balance (Landsberger, page 249). The step-like roofs seemed to point to an Asiatic influence, perhaps from Mongolia or China,²⁵ which

The wooden synagogues were very much like the contemporary rural churches of Eastern Europe; they were similarly constructed and had the same complicated roofs (Plates 43,44). However, the Jews avoided building steeples like those in the churches. They were content with high roofs and occasional corner towers which were like those of the Polish manor houses and castles. Perhaps the strongest influence on the wooden synagogues was from pagan temples of Eastern Europe, which had existed since the eighth or ninth centuries and were still to be seen when the Jews were building their synagogues. These temples disappeared, since they were not constructed of lasting material; but their forms were repeated in the folk-tradition of wooden archi-

ecture which adopted very few aspects of the current styles of city architecture. Thus the wooden synagogues were typical of the rural architecture of Eastern Europe; they were built by local carpenters according to traditions of wooden construction which were universally followed throughout Poland, Russia, and Lithuania.

The oldest wooden synagogues which were still in existence before World War II, were from the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century. Some of the most characteristic ones were located in Zabłudow, Gwozdziec, and Wolpa. The oldest stone synagogue which still existed was in Kazimerz, a suburb of Cracow. This one was built at the end of the fifteenth century. Others were the Rema synagogue in Cracow, 1553, the Maharshul synagogue in Lublin, 1567, and the Nachmonowicz synagogue in Lwow, 1582.

These synagogues represent the full expression of Jewish artistic impulses, since they were built in an atmosphere of freedom. One original aspect of synagogue architecture was invented during this flourishing period; but on the whole, the synagogues remained within the context of the contemporary architectural development of the environment.

Chapter IV

CHINA

An extraordinary example of the receptiveness of the Jews to the cultural stimuli of their environment can be seen in a study of the synagogue of a Chinese community.²⁶ The existence of Jews in China was unknown to the Western world until the beginning of the seventeenth century. At that time the leader of the Jesuit mission to China, Matteo Ricci, received a visitor from K'ai Fung-Foo, the capital of Honan province. This man had heard of the work of the Jesuit fathers. Noting the similarity between Christian beliefs and his own religion, he had come to seek help from Father Ricci for himself and his community. The Jesuit soon came to the realization that his guest was a Jew, since he had no knowledge of the New Testament and thought that a picture of the Madonna, Child, and St John, represented Rebekah with Jacob and Esau. Father Ricci was astounded by this fact, especially since the man was hardly distinguishable from a Chinese; and he promised to send a missionary to K'ai Fung-Foo to investigate the Jewish community.

A few years later he did send a representative, who ascertained the existence of a large Jewish community which had sunk to a poverty-stricken existence from its affluence of the past, attested to by the magnificence of the synagogue. The Jews no longer held services in the synagogue, and they were not able to read the Hebrew of their holy books. They did, however, practice circumcision, and drew the sinews from

the flesh of the animals which they ate.²⁷ Except for those two practices, they were indistinguishable from the Mohammedan population of the city; and, indeed, they had assimilated many aspects of the Islamic faith.

The elders of the Jewish community, who could remember when the synagogue had been active, wished for a revival of their cult; and they asked the Jesuits to help them repair the neglected synagogue and relearn the language and customs of their faith. Although they did buy some of the Hebrew scriptures from the synagogue, the Jesuits were unable to help the Jews extensively; and the community was almost forgotten.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, however, interest was revived when China was reopened to the West after a century and a half of relative isolation. The emancipated Jews of Europe and America were interested in helping their foreign brethren, and delegates were sent to Honan to see what could be done for the Chinese Jews. Their situation had degenerated completely; the synagogue was in ruins, the practices of circumcision and ritual slaughter had been discontinued, and the Jews were not at all interested in the rejuvenation of their community. They sold all their Hebrew writings and even the plot of ground on which was strewn the little that was left of the synagogue after most of its materials had been sold for use in other constructions in the city.

The history of the K'ai Fung-Foo Jews has since been established, chiefly by means of the inscribed stones of dedication which were erected in the synagogue compound. The Jewish community of K'ai Fung-Foo probably existed since the

Han dynasty (206 B.C.-221 A.D.), when the Israelites were engaged in the silk trade between East and West and probably established communities in Honan province, which was the termination point of the overland trade routes from the Near East. During the middle ages, many left Judaism for the sake of privileges and riches; but a new influx of Indian Jews in the tenth century strengthened the communities. According to Marco Polo's journals, the Jews had powerful commercial and political influence in the thirteenth century; and they were mentioned in the Chinese annals of 1329 and 1354, which referred to them as "T'iao-chin Chiao" or "Sinew Pluckers." The Chinese looked upon the Jewish cult as a Mohammedan sect; and the dynasty accorded it the same privileges granted to other sects, while requiring of it the same tribute.

The synagogue itself (Plate 45) was built in 1163, when seventy Jewish families were invited by the Sung Emperor to settle in Pien (modern K'ai Fung-Foo). Despite subsequent enlargements and reconstructions in 1279, 1421, 1445, 1461, c. 1480, 1512, and 1653, the forms of the synagogue were not changed significantly. Its style was that of an ordinary Chinese temple, consisting of broad, low halls built on a central axis, together with courtyards, memorial arches, pavilions, and subsidiary buildings, the whole surrounded by a wall which completed the unit. However, whereas the usual Chinese temple normally faced south, the synagogue was oriented toward Jerusalem, so that its entrance was on the east and its most sacred parts on the extreme west of the compound.

The basic material of the synagogue buildings was wood, as it was likewise the basic material in Chinese temples.

The most important parts of the structure, its supporting pillars, beams, and cornices, were of wood; and so were the frames and latticework of the walls. Decorative elements such as balustrades, pavilions, and gates were occasionally of stone, a common occurrence in constructions of the Yuan and Ming dynasties (13-17th centuries); and the roofs were covered with glazed tiles---yellow ones on the great portal, green ones on the memorial arch and the main hall.

The most striking features of the synagogue buildings, as indeed of all monumental Chinese architecture, were its rhythmic roofs with their gracefully curving eaves. They were made more striking, moreover, by the exclusion of human and animal figures which usually decorated the eaves, ridges, and finials of Chinese temples, but were alien to the Jewish religion. The main hall of the synagogue, moreover, was stressed by a double roof, quite common in China. The walls of the main hall were of secondary architectural importance. They merely filled in the spaces between the wooden frame of the building, and were probably decorated with latticework, which plays a major role in Chinese architecture. The ceiling, too, was secondary in Chinese architecture; and it may have been omitted in the synagogue interior, so that the beauty of the structural elements of beams, trusses and columns was exposed. The columns were rather large, in accordance with Chinese building practices, and had no capitals or entablatures. They were arranged in two rows, creating a three-aisled interior; and they, as well as the beams and trusses, were probably richly painted and gilded.

The interior of the synagogue (Plate 46) resembled closely the ordinary Chinese temple hall (Plate 47), not only in general form and decoration, but also in several details of furnishing. In the front of the hall was a long table which supported an incense tripod in the center and a candlestick and flower vase on each side, ceremonial objects common to all authorized Chinese temples from the Ming dynasty onward. The authorization of the synagogue by the Emperor necessitated the inclusion of a "Wan-sui" tablet of praise, which occupied an important position in the synagogue and required the construction of a large, ornamental table upon which was erected a small lacquered pavilion.

The synagogue was invested with Jewish character by ritual furniture peculiar to Judaism. Thus, the most outstanding element in the front of the synagogue was the "Chair of Moses," to which the worshippers directed their attention during the service. From this chair the Torah was read; it served, therefore, as the Bima. The Ark was in the western-most part of the hall, in a dark area known as the "Holy of Holies," after the similarly named room in the Temple of Jerusalem, in which was kept the Ark of the Covenant. This entire area of the hall was elevated, with steps leading up to it. No benches were included in the synagogue; the congregation knelt on the floor in Eastern fashion. Furthermore, the actual structure made no provision for the division of the sexes during services.

The facade of the main hall was characterized by a magnificent double roof supported by the four columns of a portico, the floor of which was raised above the level of the

courtyard. The entrance wall of the hall was divided into fields which were decorated with latticework, a typical aspect of North China temple halls (Plate 48).

In the synagogue compound, as in the main hall, were included some forms which showed complete assimilation of Chinese culture, and others which were adaptations of environmental objects to the use of the Jewish community. One of the most outstanding examples of the adoption of a Chinese form is exemplified by the erection of memorial arches or "P'ai-Lou." Such arches (Plate 49) were commonly donated to temples by Chinese families who wished to honor an illustrious person or occasion. The Jews, who had considerable wealth during the first centuries of the synagogue's existence, adopted this Chinese custom and dedicated two memorial arches, to the Chao and Ai clans.

Another major Chinese form used in the synagogue was the ancestral hall. The synagogue compound contained one hall dedicated to the Holy Patriarchs, and two small ones dedicated to the ancestors of the Chao and Li clans. In these halls, the Jews venerated their forefathers at the vernal and autumn equinoxes, in accordance with Chinese custom. However, the Jews did not set up portraits of their ancestors; rather they burned incense before symbolic cabinets.

The Jewish house of worship usually provided for the cleansing of one's hands before worship. In the K'ai Fung-Foo synagogue, however, there were bath-houses and lavatories, reflecting the influence of the Chinese religions, which required absolute cleanliness for worship in a temple. One

part of this synagogue compound which was unique in Chinese temples, and indeed, even in Jewish synagogues throughout the world, was the inclusion of a slaughterhouse in which the sinew-plucking ritual took place.

In addition to all these buildings, there were dwelling places for the officials of the synagogue, reception rooms for guests, lecture halls, and great gateways, all within the tradition of Chinese architecture as well as that of Diasporan synagogue compounds. These buildings were arranged symmetrically, joined by open courts (Plate 50) which were beautifully arranged in the tradition of Chinese landscape architecture, containing trees, vases and statues (of lions), terraces, and pavilions (Plate 51).

From this discussion of the synagogue can be seen how extensively the Jews of K'ai Fung-Foo assimilated the forms of their environment. Furthermore, the story of the community's history, especially that of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, shows how Chinese culture finally defeated Jewish culture in K'ai Fung-Foo. This was probably due to the complete isolation of the Jews from other areas of the Diaspora. After the tenth century, when Jews from India revived interest in Judaism, no new Jewish influences reached K'ai Fung-Foo; and the Jewish community there accepted more and more of the culture of its environment, until it lost its Jewish characteristics completely. This situation serves as a great contrast to that in the West, where Jewish communities kept up a flow of cultural communication which constantly revitalized the religion.

At the time the Chinese Jews were becoming completely assimilated, the Western Jews were isolated from their immediate environments by the institution of the ghetto so that they had to depend almost exclusively on their Jewish culture for their way of life.

CONCLUSION

The architecture of the synagogue did not develop, as church architecture did, within a single form. Rather its development encompassed many forms, dictated by the environment of the Jews and by the ritual of their cult.

The external form of the synagogue was determined by the political position of the Jews. Their natural desire to build monumental structures was usually thwarted, either by specific lay or clerical rules, or by the general ill will of the Christian environment. When they did have complete freedom of choice in building their synagogues, the Jews adopted for their own use forms from their environment which could uphold the dignity expected of the synagogue. In several cases, the very adoption of a particular form for use in synagogue architecture was an original and creative step; however, the Jews were not able to cultivate their own art forms in the presence of strong cultural impulses from their host environments, and they very seldom created anything which could be considered completely original. When they did, the creation sprang from a ritual need; and the only architectural invention by the Jews, the use of a single form to contain the Bima and support the ceiling vaults, was just such an invention.

The interior of the synagogue was not influenced by the political atmosphere in which the Jews found themselves, in a direct way; rather it was influenced by the financial position of the Jews, which arose from their political situation, and by the ritual requirements of their cult. The wealth

of the southern European Jews was reflected in the richly decorated interiors of their synagogues; their co-religionists in the north and northeast were not so affluent and did not furnish their synagogues with such costly materials.

The Ark and the Bima remained throughout the history of the synagogue, the two most important elements of the interior. However, changes in the ritual produced changes in these two elements. In the early centuries of the Christian era, prayer was the most important part of the Jewish services. This prayer was directed toward the Ark, the most holy part of the synagogue, and towards Jerusalem; therefore the Ark had to be placed on the side of the synagogue which faced Jerusalem. The importance of the Ark led to the inclusion of an apse in the oriented wall of the synagogue, and to the arrangement of the interior so that, if possible, the view of the Ark was not obstructed. In the medieval period of Jewish history, the primary place of prayer in the service was replaced by a stress on the teaching of the Law. Therefore, the Bima, from which the Law was read and expounded, became the primary ritual object; and its position in the synagogue overshadowed that of the Ark, which lost so much of its importance that its special niche was no longer included in the construction of the synagogue.

In most synagogues the Bima was left in its traditional position in the center, but it became larger and more ornate, and the doorway and seating arrangements were changed in order to stress its importance, at the expense of the Ark's. In a few synagogues, the Bima was equated to the Ark and digni-

fied by being placed on the wall opposite the oriented one, while the congregation was placed at a right angle which gave equal stress to both ritual objects.

The separation of the sexes was another aspect of the ritual which led to particular architectural forms. In the early centuries of this era, the separation was accomplished by having a particular part of the main chamber set aside for the women, or by building a gallery for them, above the main chamber. In the middle ages, the separation grew more strict. Where the gallery was still used, the women in it were screened from view. However, a new solution to the problem was found; the women were set aside in their own synagogue, which was connected to the men only by holes in the wall.

The women's synagogue became an addition to the main chamber of the synagogue; and as such it joined the traditional additions of schoolrooms, guest chambers, and vestibules. The architecture of the synagogue compound as a whole was influenced by these additions. In some cases they were added later than the main synagogue, in others the entire compound was conceived of and built as an architectural whole; in some cases they were attached directly to the main chamber, in others they were located nearby.

Although many of the synagogues were important artistic achievements, they were Jewish achievements only in the manner in which the architectural and decorative styles of their environments were used by the Jews to satisfy their particular ritual needs.

FOOTNOTES

1. In his article, "The Origin of the Synagogue."
2. First Kings 8; 27-30

"But will God in very truth dwell on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded!

Yet have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which Thy servant prayeth before Thee this day; that Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place whereof Thou hast said; My name shall pray toward this place. And hearken Thou to the supplication of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel, when they they shall pray toward this place; yea, hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place; and when Thou hearest, forgive."
3. First Kings 8; 56-61

"Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised; there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant.

The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us, nor forsake us; that He may incline our hearts unto Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and His statutes, and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers.

And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God day and night, that He maintain the cause of His servant, and the cause of His people Israel, as every day shall require; that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord, He is God; there is none else.

Let your heart therefore be whole with the Lord our God, to walk in His statutes, and to keep His commandments, as at this day."
4. In his thesis, "The Origin of the Synagogue."
5. Deuteronomy 21: 19

"Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;"
- Amos 5: 15

"Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish justice in the gate."
6. Second Kings 7: 1

"And Elisha said: 'Hear ye the word of the Lord; thus saith the Lord: Tomorrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.'"

7. In his article on "The Origin of the Synagogue."
8. Moore, G.F., Judaism, Part I, Chapter V, "The Synagogue."
9. In two articles, "The Synagogue," in Hastings Dictionary of the Bible and The Jewish Encyclopedia.
10. Moore, op. cit. page 286.
11. Sukenik, E.L., Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece, London, 1934, page 1.
12. Ibid.
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15. Sukenik, op. cit.
16. Goodenough, op. cit. I pp. 238-267.
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18. cf. footnote 11.
19. Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, op. cit.
20. Goodenough, op. cit. II pp. 89-100.
21. Rostovtzeff, M.I., The Excavations at Dura-Europos, New Haven, 1936.
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23. Ibid.
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25. Loukomski attributed the Asiatic appearance of the synagogues to the influence of the Khazars who lived north of the Black Sea, between the Volga and Don rivers. In 740 the Khazar king was converted to Judaism, and until the tenth century, when the Khazars were conquered by the kingdom of Russia, the Khazar rulers and many of the people were Jewish. The Jews who first went to Poland, Russia, and Lithuania came from the Khazar kingdom; and Loukomski believed that these people brought the Asiatic forms of architecture to Eastern Europe. However, it is also very possible that the influence was brought in by the Mongol invasion in the middle of the thirteenth century.
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27. Genesis 31:33.

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11. Articles:

(Abbreviations used;

PAAJR-- Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research.

PEFQS-- Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement.

TBW---- The Biblical World.

TBA----The Biblical Archaeologist.)

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