



## Moorish Style: Orientalism, the Jews, and Synagogue Architecture

Ivan Davidson Kalmar

**T**he Jerusalem Street synagogue is located in uptown Prague, away from the hustle and bustle of the touristy Jewish Town. Still, on Saturday mornings a few stray tourists find their way to the prayer room up the unlit stairs, making sure there is a quorum. This time there is a couple from England and a young Israeli of Libyan origin. They are shown around the darkened sanctuary. The dim light filtering in through the horseshoe-shaped windows reveals some of the plentiful arabesques that cover everything in sight, including the organ at the back. In the exotic shape of the pillars and the arches, the art historian might detect Arabic and Iranian influence. The English couple asks if this was a Sephardic synagogue. The Israeli is reminded, he says, of synagogues back in Libya.

Nearly a hundred years ago, in a different world, Rabbi Aladar Deutsch spoke at the dedication ceremony here. In attendance were the viceroy of Bohemia, the mayor, the police chief and other high city officials, the president of the commodities exchange and the secretary of the bourse, as well as "numerous industrialists, wholesale traders, lawyers, representatives of the Press, etc."<sup>1</sup> A female coloratura led the organ and the mixed choir in a wrenching rendition of "Hallelujah." One of the rabbis present lit the eternal light. Soon a swarm of white-clad boys and girls strewing anemone blossoms began their march down the aisle. The women smiled at them from above, seated atop the galleries held up by colonnades of wavy arches reminiscent of the fabled mosques and palaces of the East. The blazing colors of the

richly painted interior added to the atmosphere of Oriental splendor. "Pure Moorish style," an enthusiastic journalist qualified it.<sup>2</sup> The boys and girls ascended the staircase to the altar platform and took their places along the sides. They were followed by synagogue dignitaries carrying Torah scrolls, which they placed in the Ark. The organ continued to play. Then the architect spoke, followed by Rabbi Deutsch. His presentation gave way to a military cantor, who intoned the prayer for the emperor. Finally, a rousing rendition of the national anthem concluded the happy occasion. Just before lunch, on September 16, 1906, the "His Majesty Emperor Francis Joseph I Jubilee Temple" of Prague was consecrated as a House of God.

Deutsch's temple was a rather late example of the "Moorish-style synagogue," an architectural phenomenon that began in Germany in the 1830s and was popular throughout much of Jewry until about the outbreak of World War I. The pillars inside the major Berlin and Dresden synagogues were copied from the famed Alhambra. Fabulous white onion-bulb domes, recalling the Taj Mahal, dominate the four corners of the Israelite Temple of Turin. The Plum Street Temple in Cincinnati has two enormous minarets, numerous domes, and a "donkey-back" entrance arch typical of many famous mosques. There are dozens more such exotic synagogues in Europe and America. There were more before.

The English visitors and the Libyan-Israeli were wrong. Moorish-style synagogues were not built for Sephardim but for Ashkenazim. Very few—and it seems none until the late 1870s—were meant to make any reference at all to the Jews of Muslim Spain. The style is called "Moorish" because Moorish architecture, and especially the Alhambra of Granada, dominated the image that early-nineteenth-century Europeans had of Islamic architecture as a whole. To them (though they were capable of making finer distinctions if they had to), a Muslim was a Muslim. As one art historian put it: "'Moorish style' is a Western concept and in its widest sense denotes a style derived from Islamic design elements found in countries ranging from Spain, in the West, to Mogul India, in the East."<sup>3</sup>

It was also once called the "Mahometan," "Arabian," or "Saracen" style. ("Byzantine" was also sometimes carelessly included under the same heading.) To avoid overidentification with Moorish Spain, some recent writers have preferred the term "Moorish-Islamic"<sup>4</sup> or, simply, "Islamic."<sup>5</sup>

If today not a few tour guides, art historians, and local chroniclers read into these synagogues a Sephardic reference, it may be because, looking back through the veil of decades of Arab-Jewish strife, "the



Golden Age of the Jews" in Spain is the only positive Muslim-Jewish connection that still makes sense. Such a connection did indeed exist in the consciousness of modernizing Ashkenazic Jewry, as Ismar Schorsch has powerfully demonstrated.<sup>6</sup> But the object of our study is, to use Umberto Eco's terms, the *intentio operis* of the Moorish-style synagogues, rather than the *intentio lectoris* of their visitors today.<sup>7</sup> If we are to unearth the intentions of the architects and their clients, then we must base ourselves on contemporary textual and architectural evidence. And that points to a feeling of "Semitic" or "Oriental" pride among the Jews that had little if anything to do with the glories of Sepharad. References to medieval Sephardic synagogues appear only in the last decades of the nineteenth century, when the Moorish-style synagogue was possibly past its heyday. Even then, we shall see, references to Muslim Spain and its Jews are embedded in broader references to the Orient (i.e. the world of Islam) as a whole.

Harold Hammer-Schenk, whose work has dealt in more detail than anyone else's with the synagogues of Germany, recognized the Oriental reference as primary. This puzzled him, because he took it for granted that the Jews, desirous of being accepted by the gentiles, would not want to be associated with the alien and presumably inferior Orient.<sup>8</sup> Schorsch, in his otherwise excellent article, works with the same assumption. He attempts to solve Hammer-Schenk's "problem" by suggesting that the "appeal of Moorish architecture for the emancipated synagogue derived from its Spanish connection."<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, Schorsch fails to address the mass of textual evidence that had made Hammer-Schenk conclude it was the supposed Oriental connection that contemporaries made explicit. Similarly, he ignores the finding of another specialist, Carol H. Krinsky, who explicitly rejected the "Spanish connection" as a motivating factor for most Moorish-style synagogue architects.<sup>10</sup> Further evidence that the Sephardic example was at best ancillary to the "Arabian" and broadly Oriental one will be given below.

In fact, Hammer-Schenk's "problem" is a spurious one. There would be a genuine problem if emancipating Ashkenazic Jews did mind being considered "Oriental." But they did not mind—not always and not everywhere. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, many Jews confidently asserted their "Oriental" origins and their "Oriental" race. (In Europe, "Oriental" to this day means primarily Middle and Near Eastern.) In this context, association with the Jews of Muslim Spain had a fine cachet, but so did association with the Muslims themselves.



Benjamin Disraeli wrote with excitement about the Jews whom he described, in his novel *Tancred*, as “Arabs without horses.” A full six years before the Comte de Gobineau’s *Essay on the Inequality of Races* (1853–55), the hero of *Tancred* declared that “race is all.” The Jewish-Arabian race was obviously a fine stock. In *Tancred*, Disraeli stated that God has ever only revealed himself to an Arab, meaning no doubt that Moses and Jesus were Arabs, as well as Muhammad.

In Germany, the most strident example was Moses Hess. In *Rome and Jerusalem: The Last Nationality Question* (1862), Hess claimed that “The race struggle is primary; the class struggle is secondary.”<sup>11</sup> Hess was Marx’s collaborator on the *Neue rheinische Zeitung*. To Marx, of course, the class struggle was absolutely primary, and Hess’s dictum might in fact have been a reply to Marx (or was Marx replying to him?). Those who battled in Hess’s “race struggle” were the Aryans and the Semites. Hess’s “Rome” and “Jerusalem” were mere metaphors for these two “races.” Yet when the Italian *risorgimento* politician, David Levi, spoke (some 20 years later) of the fight between Rome and Jerusalem, he meant an actual event in ancient history. It was, he said, the struggle of “a handful of men who in the name of nationality opposed their existence against the entire Roman world.”<sup>12</sup>

Levi’s discourse, like Hess’s, is permeated with binary oppositions like the following: “The Occident investigates, experiments, decomposes and recomposes matter in order to discover its laws. The Orient, as a historian says, is the anxious work of humanity managing its God.”<sup>13</sup>

A radical division of the world into an East and a West, such as Levi’s, defines what we call *orientalism*. The expressions of Oriental or Semitic pride that have just been quoted are examples of orientalism. The term has in recent decades acquired a pejorative sense because of Edward Said’s insightful, ground-breaking study.<sup>14</sup> Said described orientalism as a “discourse” that favored Western domination. Said’s richly nuanced argument has, unfortunately, been vulgarized by many of his followers into an interpretation of orientalism as a single-minded, transparently hostile ideology.<sup>15</sup> In this article, such an interpretation is avoided; instead, we see orientalism as a complex and contradictory phenomenon in which multiple voice are heard. There was the racist and ethnocentric voice justifying imperialism, which was overtly hostile. However, there were also other voices that were intended to be complimentary to the East: the romantic voice critical of rationality, the anti-modern voice critical of “progress,” the misogynous voice justifying male sexual domination. The “positive,” admiring sorts of orientalism were articulated in the context of the disparaging, “negative” ones,



and vice versa. And the language of orientalism was spoken by both "Occidentals" and "Orientals."

[72] During the period when Moorish-style synagogues were built, the Jews were considered by others and by themselves as the Orientals of the West. They hoped to make Orientalist idealizations of themselves prevail over the Orientalist vituperations. Rather than rejecting the East-West dichotomy, and the rhetoric of race, they bought into it. They hoped that they could convince the public of the nobility of their Oriental blood—and sometimes they did. The Moorish-style synagogue was an expression of their quest.

Jewish  
Social  
Studies

### Architectural Characteristics

The journalist who said that Rabbi Deutsch's synagogue in Prague was in "pure Moorish style" was exaggerating. Moorish style could never be pure. No architect ever aimed to recreate on Western soil an actual Oriental palace or mosque (let alone one of the famous "Oriental" synagogues such as those of medieval Spain). The ground plan, structural engineering, and important stylistic elements always reflected contemporary Western tastes and practices. What was Islamic was mainly decorative. The only structural element adapted from the "Orient" were perhaps the slender pillars with floral and vegetal capitals. And these, too, were often made of iron, using the latest Western methods of construction.

To refer to the eclectic character of a synagogue, writers often use impressionistic epithets like Moorish-Byzantine or Moorish-Romanesque. These can be helpful so long as it is remembered that *all* Moorish-style synagogues are eclectic; the "hyphenated" synagogues are as Moorish as they come. Many buildings combined Moorish and Renaissance, Moorish and Romanesque, or Moorish and Gothic.<sup>16</sup> Later, art nouveau features became visible, including at Deutsch's Jerusalem Street temple.

The gross features of the Moorish synagogue followed those of church architecture. The "minarets" that graced the exterior, for example, were typically a pair located exactly where church steeples would be. Although some temples more boldly featured four towers, one in each corner of the roof, none imitated the majority of mosques, which feature just one minaret. The interior of the synagogue was identical to a church in its overall layout. It is true that a transept, which would result in a cross-shaped ground plan, was generally avoided. The Ark of the Covenant, too, was typically placed at the Eastern wall in confor-



mity with Jewish tradition, so that there was seldom a choir. But such changes to the medieval plan had also been made in most non-Anglican Protestant churches, because they, like the synagogues, did not need the space used in Catholic churches for side altars and perambulations.

Because the Moorish style of a synagogue is only one part of its architectural and ornamental features, it follows that some buildings are more Moorish and others are less, depending on the number and prominence of their Moorish features. In terms of the synagogue exterior, a reasonable suggestion might be to classify as Moorish only buildings that show one or both of the following features:

- A stone parapet with ornamental crenellations taken from, or inspired by, Islamic examples;
- Horseshoe windows and/or doors.

*In the proper context*, in addition, the following features can be read as Moorish:

- One or more domes, often inspired by some Eastern model like the Taj Mahal;
- Towers evoking (usually very vaguely) a minaret;
- Horizontal bands in two alternating colors, typically yellow and red, made of brick or alternating brick and stone;
- A glazed octagonal medallion in the facade, where the rosary window would be in a church.

In the interior, the Moorish-style synagogue may display:

- Rich polychrome decoration following contemporary design books often inspired by the Alhambra;
- An Ark of the Covenant decorated with a cornice with Orientalist crenellations similar or identical to those on the external parapet.

In both the exterior and the interior, including the Ark, there may be:

- Arches with multiple, often horseshoe-shaped, lobes;
- Slender pillars with floral capitals inspired by the Alhambra.<sup>17</sup>

Different architectural and decorative features characterized different periods of Moorish synagogue building. The polychrome interior with multilobed arches has been closest to *de rigueur* from the start, the orientalist crenellations since the 1850s, and the horseshoe arch from the 1860s (though there are isolated earlier examples of each).



The Moorish style was not invented for synagogues. By the time the first Moorish-style synagogue was built, European architects had built mock mosques in aristocratic pleasure gardens, fantastic Orientalist exhibition halls at the immensely popular international exhibitions, and a number of pleasure residences in an Orientalist style. The best known among the latter was the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, completed in 1815 as a residence for the Prince Regent, adding to the already completed “Mahometan”-style stables for his Arabian horses. The Pavilion was Mogul-inspired on the outside and largely Chinese on the inside, visually illustrating the unity that the “Orient” represented to Europeans at the time.

All such buildings had, in spite of varying degrees of earnestness in their claim of exoticism, an air of carefree amusement. Beyond architecture, Orientalist entertainments included the opera. Mozart’s *Magic Flute* features a scary Moor, and his *Abduction from the Seraglio* and *The Goose of Cairo*, like Rossini’s *Il Turco in Italia* and *La Italiana in Alghieri*, all feature classic buffoons in the form of Muslim characters (though some also present more admirable Muslims). Their somewhat more plebeian equivalents were the “exotic” magicians, flame-eaters, harem dancers, horse trainers, and “fakirs” that enthralled fair-goers and circus patrons. Moorish-style buildings often housed permanent exhibits of exotic animals; in Cologne, there were architectural similarities between the zoo and the Glockengasse synagogue.

The synagogue provides the lone example of Moorish architecture in the West that is completely free of any associations with “fun.” Unlike zoo animals or the Japanese printmakers at an international exhibition, the Jews praying in a Moorish-style synagogue were not there to display themselves to others. Although the idea of building synagogues in an exotic “Oriental” style was the brainchild of gentile well-wishers, after a period of resistance many Jewish communities embraced it with great earnestness.

### **The Broader Social and Architectural Context**

The appearance of the first Moorish-style synagogues happened in the context of intensive church building in the early nineteenth century. In England, few churches were built during the decades around 1800. But in 1818, Parliament felt compelled to vote £1 million for building new churches. Similar measures were voted a number of times in the next 20 years or so. It was still only the privileged and those who could hope to join them who voted. They placed great trust in morality—or,

better, respectability. To the bourgeois, respectable behavior legitimated their social standing, in their own eyes and hopefully in those of others. In the growing working class and the threatening masses of unemployed individuals whom Marx called *Lumpenproletariat* ("a proletariat of bums"), respectable behavior would, it was hoped, instill respect for social order. Education was one project that would spread respectability among the masses; religious practice was another.

To underscore the leading role of religion in society, imposing new churches were built in prominent locations. (One reason for choosing the Gothic style was that its vertical projection made a church visible from a long distance.) Redesigned urban centers, new areas created by growing urbanization, and—especially in the New World—new towns, had to feature a centrally located church or churches.

The Jews of central and western Europe and America, more solidly middle class than others, could sympathize with this aim of religiously based respectability. Just as they had embraced education enthusiastically, the Jews wished to appear respectable in terms of their religious practice. To that end, it made sense to build large synagogues in conspicuous places, where they would join as equals the local church or churches in advertising, in mortar and stone, the civic virtues of religion.

Gentile dignitaries were proudly invited to the consecration ceremony: Prince Bismarck was among the guests opening the New Synagogue of Berlin in 1866. Their presence certified to the Jews that they were now accepted as a legitimate religion along with the Christian denominations. They thought, often prematurely, to have put behind them the days when the *shul* had to be a little house with a yard entrance, looking no different from its secular neighbors.

But if synagogues could now be as large and as visible as churches, should they look like churches, too? As revealed in Heinrich Hübsch's famous 1828 pamphlet, "In What Style Shall We Build?," choice of style was a prime concern for nineteenth-century architects. Many believed that different styles suited different purposes. The "pagan" architecture of classic Greece and Rome, and its reincarnation in the Renaissance, were thought to be fine models for civic buildings. For churches, the Christian-invented styles, Gothic and Romanesque, were considered more suitable. Furthermore, the Gothic was seen by many as a Catholic style, whereas the Romanesque was said to reflect the early, uncorrupted church that inspired Protestants. This did not seem to prevent Protestants, especially in Anglican England, from building Gothic-style churches. But in Protestant parts of Germany, it meant that churches were more often neo-Romanesque.

[75]

*Moorish Style*



Ivan Davidson  
Kalmar



Gothic and Romanesque synagogues were not unusual, but a number of building authorities, architects, and Jewish communities believed that a Christian style was inappropriate for the Jews.<sup>18</sup> When the grand duke of Anhalt-Dessau had a synagogue built in his gardens at Wörlitz (1789–90), its design was a “pagan” one: it resembled a Temple of Vespa.

The classic style was also chosen for two other early examples of a conspicuous synagogue in modern Ashkenazic Europe: one in Karlsruhe, completed in 1798, and the other in Óbuda (Alt-Ofen, now part of Budapest), in 1820–21. In addition to its classicist features, the Karlsruhe synagogue featured two, tall, Egyptian-style pylons flanking its gate, and in Óbuda four obelisks rose from the reader's stand. These experiments in Egyptian style had represented the first attempts to decorate synagogues in an Oriental manner. Its elements are also seen in Munich (1826) and as far away as Hobart, Tasmania (1843). But the massive angularity of the Egyptian style, which harmonized well with the classicist fashion of the late eighteenth century, was losing its appeal by the 1830s, along with a gradual decline in the Egyptomania that had been encouraged by archeological discoveries and Napoleon's expedition to the Nile. The romantics preferred the less disciplined medieval styles to the angular features of ancient architecture, Western and Oriental. The Oriental equivalent for the Gothic and Romanesque that they admired was the Moorish style: curvacious, ornamental, and dating to about the same period. So as romanticism gained in visibility, it was to be the Moorish style, not the Egyptian, that encoded the Oriental character of the Jews. The switch was rationalized by a gentile Romantic architect, author, and intellectual like Hugo von Schuchardt by the popular hypothesis that, as he put it, the Israelites' buildings in ancient Palestine probably “took on the character of their neighbors, the Arabs.” Schuchardt thought this to be proven by the nature of archeological finds in Palestine. At any rate, he added, the “Egyptian style does not appear to be suitable for a synagogue but rather would only remind the Israelites of the saddest period in their history,” when they were captives in Pharaoh's land.<sup>19</sup>

### *Jews as an Oriental Race*

The beginnings of the Moorish-style synagogue reflected the views of enlightened gentiles about the Jewish religion and people. True, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, few gentiles doubted that the Jews were, with honorable exceptions, dedicated to enriching themselves in whatever ways possible, and preferably away



from the public light. However, many “enlightened” thinkers and rulers blamed not the Jews but the way that gentiles had treated them. Given better treatment, they believed, the Jews would improve themselves and perhaps rise to the glory of the days of David and Solomon. Because these ladies and gentlemen considered the Jews to be an “Oriental people,” it seemed logical to them that the House of God in which Orientals worshipped should reflect the erstwhile brilliance of the Orient. Their view of the Jews paralleled their view of the Muslims of their own day: both were thought to have declined from better days, and both were thought capable of rising to their former greatness under, of course, the guidance of enlightened Christians.

Time and time again, the architects of synagogues point to the Oriental origins of the Jewish people as the motivation for choosing the Moorish style. Gottfried Semper, when building the Dresden temple (1838–1840), based its decoration, as his art historian son was to recall, on the “Oriental origin” of his clients:

In spite of the simplicity of his means, Semper was able to lend a high degree of character and monumentality to this building, in that he gave the exterior an earnest Romanesque stylization, while in the interior he used a rich and ornamental design, which was appropriate to the . . . Oriental origin of the Jewish race [*Stamm*].<sup>20</sup>

Otto Simonson justified, in a similar way, his decision to build a Moorish-style exterior as well as interior in Leipzig. Note that it is not the Holy Land but the entire “Orient” that this Jewish architect identifies as the ancestral land of his people:

The Moorish style seems to me the most characteristic. Jewry hangs on with indestructible piety to its heritage, customs, and usages. The organization of its religious practice and, in short, its entire existence lives in reminiscences on its motherland, the Orient.<sup>21</sup>

Such examples can be multiplied at great length. The reference to “Oriental origins” dominated discourse about Moorish-style synagogues, and it was only within the context of that discourse that a member of the Turin community, G. Guastalla, came up (apparently for the first time and as late as 1884) with the idea of relating the style to Jewish life in Muslim Spain. He wrote,

[T]he most celebrated rabbis adopted into the ancestral doctrine that which was produced by the Arabs, transmitting it unaltered to [nourish] the heritage of the civilization of the late Middle Ages, and there they



raised for their own religious practices temples using the same style as those famous religious and secular buildings of Córdoba, Seville, and Granada that have survived to our own day, a style that, besides, was also in harmony with their artistic genius and their temperament; seeing that it [was a style that] derived from the Orient, where their race had its origin.<sup>22</sup>

What is remarkable here is how Guastalla privileges not the original Sephardic achievement but the way Spanish Jews assimilated the civilization of the Arabs in harmony with their common racial heritage.

### *The "Temple of Solomon"*

Guastalla preceded these remarks with some comments that were typical for most nineteenth-century writers discussing synagogue style. He declared that a synagogue should be modeled on the Temple in Jerusalem. And, like other writers on the subject, Guastalla added that the difficulty in reaching that goal was to determine just what the Temple had looked like.

Because there was no detailed account of the style of the Temple, it was the practice throughout the nineteenth century to imagine that it reflected what was then known of the building art of Israel's neighbors—and hence, of the larger Oriental world surrounding the Jewish homeland. Eduard Bürklein, who designed a Moorish-style synagogue in Heidenheim in 1849, justified in rather unflattering terms his choice of an Oriental style by arguing that the Jews had never developed an original form of art but had always, including in the case of the Temple, adapted the art of their neighbors. In "one word," he concluded, "they would have built in Oriental style."<sup>23</sup>

More influential—as well as more clearly expressed—was the thinking of Ludwig Förster, who succeeded in making a positive connection between the Oriental identity of the Jews with the need to use the Temple as a model for synagogues. In giving the background to his groundbreaking design for the Vienna-Leopoldstadt synagogue (1853–58), he explained:

It is known to be a difficult task indeed to build an Israelite Temple in a form required by the religion and suitable for its practice, and at the same time corresponding, at least in its essential features, to the hallowed ideal of all temples, the Temple of Solomon. It is doubly difficult insofar as [the building's] external architecture is concerned, for the existing records cannot nearly provide us with a reliable picture; and those Houses of God that belong to a later time either lack any

distinct style or carry features that are in their inner being entirely alien to the Israelite religion.

In my humble opinion, the right way, given the circumstances, is to choose, when building an Israelite Temple, those architectural forms that have been used by Oriental ethnic groups that are related to the Israelite people, and in particular the Arabs.<sup>24</sup>

[79]

*Moorish Style*



Ivan Davidson  
Kalmar

Linking the need to emulate the Arabs with the desire to refer to the Temple, Förster expressed the belief that Arabic architecture was in fact in large measure influenced by—the Temple.<sup>25</sup> He illustrated this in his comments on some of the detail of the Leopoldstadt temple's interior:

The columns at the corners of the central nave are crowned in the facade with lanterns, and should recall the pillars in Solomon's Temple, about which it is written, "and he built two columns before the Temple, one on the right and the other on the left; the one on the right was called Jachin and the one on the left Boaz."<sup>26</sup>

Now the custom, he wrote, "dating to the earliest of times, to erect such columns in front of temples, has passed into Arabic architecture, and we find such in the form of Minarets (light towers) among the Orientals in general."<sup>27</sup>

The comment, of course, shows the architect's ignorance of Islamic architecture. He adds that his "lanterns, filled with light at night, should invite the believers to worship." Förster thought that the minaret was a light tower used to announce services in the mosque, and that the same function would be fulfilled by his lanterns.

## Early History: A Gentile-Jewish Dialogue

Accurate or not, the concept of the Temple of Solomon as the product of an Oriental people and built in an Oriental style was a major object of speculative thought for the gentiles. It took a while for it to be the same for significant numbers of Jews. When the first Moorish-style synagogues were built, the Jews were only beginning to emerge, if ever more powerfully, as interlocutors in the great secular and religious debates of the age.

It is possible that the horseshoe windows on Prague's Grossenhof Synagogue date to the rebuilding after the fire of 1754.<sup>28</sup> But a more unequivocal beginning was made only much later, in the 1830s, in the erstwhile Kingdom of Bavaria.<sup>29</sup> Here the important architect Friedrich



von Gärtner appears to have been involved in a plan to build several synagogues in Moorish style.<sup>30</sup> The first may have been the one at Ingenheim, built between 1830 and 1832.<sup>31</sup> It was followed by Binswangen in 1835, Kirchheimbolanden in 1836, and Speyer in 1837.

The small Palatine community of Ingenheim may have been the first place where the authorities actually managed to build a Moorish-style synagogue, but it was not the first where they tried. The Jews were often less than enthusiastic and rejected plans to encode their exotic origins in the form of prominently displayed Houses of God. A good example is Kassel, where the Jews had to fight off gentile designs for their synagogue well before the idea of an Orientalist structure even arose. One idea, proposed either in 1776 or in 1781, was to build a temple that had the circular form of the Pantheon in Rome and displayed classicist ornamentation and the inscription "D.O.M."—an abbreviation for "Dei Optimo Maximo" but also a homonym in German for "dome," a cathedral or temple.<sup>32</sup> Subsequently, the Kassel Jews refused several Egyptian-style proposals and finally, in 1834, one in Moorish style, by the court architect Julius Eugen Ruhl, who might have been influenced by what was just beginning to happen in Bavaria.

A Dr. Pinhas, the leader of the community, protested that Oriental styles in general, and specifically the Temple as a model, were not suitable for Jewish worship because the Jewish people had passed the longest period of their history in the West, not the East.<sup>33</sup> His message was clear: do not marginalize us as aliens, for we have become one with yourselves. He was vehemently supported by the Kassel Jewish architect, Albert Rosengarten.

The Kassel story, however, is not to be read as a suggestion that all Jews were opposed to the Moorish style. Oriental self-identity no doubt appealed to many of them as early as the late eighteenth century. Gotthold Lessing's play *Nathan the Wise* (1779) was passionately espoused by generations of German Jews as the symbol of German respect for themselves. Nathan was clearly an Oriental; his camels plied the desert with their cargo of splendid Oriental riches, and he was both moral and financial adviser to the famed Saladin.

Lessing was a Freemason. This was not a coincidence. The Deist beliefs of Freemasonry led some of its practitioners to open the doors of their lodges to the Jews. Indeed, the Masonic lodges became, in the late eighteenth century, the first social forum in which Jews and gentiles could meet as equals. It is true that permission for Jews to adhere was often given only grudgingly, or, as was the case with many German lodges, never. But the fact that some lodges did welcome Jews

was surely of the greatest significance for the latter's absorption into secular society.

According to one credible account cited by Jacob Katz, the entire leadership of the Frankfurt Jewish community were members of the Morgenröthe lodge until 1830, and the situation was not much different thereafter.<sup>34</sup> In other cities, too, Katz maintains, the Jewish Masons were a decisive influence.

The popularity of Freemasonry among forward-looking Jews as well as among the general public was probably directly responsible for the Moorish-style temple. In Förster's discussion of the columns Jachin and Boaz, there is more than immediately meets the eye. Jachin and Boaz happen to be crucial elements of Freemason myth and ritual. Freemasons regard Hiram of Tyre, the Phoenician who was said to be the Temple's architect under King Solomon, as the grand "wise man" of Freemasonry—part Homer, part Moses, part Jesus. (In comparison to Solomon's Temple, its reconstruction under Herod has been of little interest to the Masons.) As told in the Bible, Hiram "set up the columns at the portico of the great Hall; he set up one column on the right and named it Jachin, and he set up the other column on the left and named it Boaz."<sup>35</sup> He placed in them, so say the Masons, secret documents detailing "ancient wisdom" as well as the *shamir* (magic tool), with which the Temple was allegedly built. In reminiscence, in the Masonic "temples" of the Old Rite, two columns are marked as Jachin and Boaz, respectively. David Levi, the nineteenth-century writer and leader of the *risorgimento*, included in his *Il Profeta o La Passione di un Popolo* a scene where different parts of the Temple, including the columns Jachin and Boaz, speak in verse to impart their wisdom to a novice. Depictions of the columns frequently appear on ritual plates and aprons owned by Freemasons from the eighteenth century on.

As any reasonable student of Masonic history knows, the freemason lodges were, with some exceptions, far from the secretive conspiracies that their enemies made them out to be. Masonic ideas drew on a bank of occult "knowledge" with roots at least in the Renaissance, an array of esoteric traditions associated in part with the Kabbalah, and similar "sacred knowledge" of the Jews.<sup>36</sup> These continued to have a widespread influence on the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century imagination, both in and outside of the lodges. This is part of the reason why Mozart's *Magic Flute*, which is deliberate Masonic propaganda, was able to draw crowds. Although Mozart was a Mason, there is little evidence that he visited the lodge any more frequently than someone like George Washington, known to have been a very casual Mason. The commonly held belief that most of the French National Assembly on

[81]

*Moorish Style*

●  
Ivan Davidson  
Kalmar



the eve of the Revolution were Masons is probably exaggerated. But even if it is not, it does not point to any revolutionary conspiracy. Membership in a lodge did not necessarily mean dedication to its less-than-well-kept secrets, and even less did it mean participation in some underground political plot. What the frequency of Masonic membership does prove is the extent of attraction to Masonic lore at the time. Some people were active Masons, others dabbled with Freemasonry, and most were curious bystanders, but everyone knew about and was fascinated by the Brotherhood. One of the things they found fascinating was the lore surrounding the supposed mysteries of the Holy Temple.

Both Masons and liberal Jews (like liberal Protestants) called their meeting place a "temple." On a trip to Hamburg in the 1840s, Heinrich Heine quipped:

The Jews, again, may be divided  
Into distinctive Parties two;  
The Old go to the Synagogue,  
To the Temple go the New.<sup>37</sup>

The Hamburg "Temple" that Heine referred to was constructed in 1842. It included a Moorish-style cornice inside a building with largely Gothic features. Its rabbi, Gotthold Salomon, made the most of the ambiguity of its informal name, "The Second Temple." Literally, the name was a reference to the fact that this was the second building meant to serve the local Reform congregation. Yet there was a subtext that Salomon brought into the open as he repeated, like a refrain, the prophet's promise regarding Herod's Temple, "Greater shall be the glory of this last House than that of the first."<sup>38</sup> The rabbi suggested that "this, brothers, could also become the truth about our Second Temple."<sup>39</sup> The temple of the "New" Jews of the West would respect, but also improve upon, the Oriental temple of old.

At the stone-laying ceremony, the choir offered a hymn specially composed for the occasion. "East and West, bound in beauty," it sang, "*Ost und Westen / schön verbunden*."<sup>40</sup> It was this "beautiful" union that at least the early Moorish-style temples were meant to symbolize. The Ingenheim building combined horseshoe-shaped openings with a stair-shaped domestic-Gothic roof reminiscent of the Altneuschul in Prague. The Altneuschul was considered to be, along with the synagogue at Worms, the prime example of a "German" medieval synagogue.<sup>41</sup> The symbolic union of the Gothic roof with the "Oriental"

gate and windows represented the synthesis of German and Oriental identity that modernizing, liberal, German-speaking Jews strove for.

The first example of extensive Moorish-style features in a synagogue located in a major city was the temple at Dresden (built 1838–40). Gottfried Semper, a rebellious student of von Gärtner’s, decorated the entire interior of the synagogue in what he called “Moorish-Byzantine” style. Semper appears to have had an elaborate set of allegorical meanings in mind,<sup>42</sup> but all that remains on record is his remark that the interior of the dome was painted blue with golden sun rays, in order to recall the “seventh heaven of the Old Testament.”<sup>43</sup> Incidentally, “seventh heaven” is not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. It is an esoteric concept that Semper may have associated with the Jews because of the prominence quasi-kabbalistic concepts play in Masonic lore.

The first city synagogue that was intended to be unmistakably Moorish inside and out was probably the synagogue of Mainz—back in the Palatinate—begun in 1844 but not completed before 1853. A year later, in 1854, the foundation stone was laid for the Leipzig synagogue designed by Otto Simonson. Contrary to legend, Simonson’s temple had little influence on subsequent synagogue building.<sup>44</sup> The famous dome of the New Temple in Berlin (on Oranienburg Street, built 1859–66) is clearly influenced by the Royal Pavilion in Brighton; little here points to an influence from Leipzig or, for that matter, to any other Moorish-style temple that was already standing. What an architect knew of the Moorish style at this time would have come more from secular examples than from the few synagogues in the style that were already in existence.

The Dresden interior may have had some influence on Förster’s Viennese synagogue (built 1853–58) and on his Dohány Street synagogue in Budapest (built 1854–59). It was Förster’s work that provided the most effective example for the veritable avalanche of Moorish synagogue building that followed between the 1860s and the 1880s.

The Leopoldstadt (Tempelgasse) synagogue was completed as much as three years after Leipzig, but it was begun a year before the latter. It has a three-part facade, with a taller middle section. Such a design is clearly rooted in local architectural traditions, but the Temple of Jerusalem, too, was believed to have this type of front. To create an “Oriental” impression that would be convincing enough to his contemporaries, Förster added a number of slender towers, both on the facade and along the sides of the building, separated by a dense stone cornice with “Oriental” crenellations. This solution was to become classic in Moorish synagogue building, although the series of small ornamental

[83]

*Moorish Style*

●  
Ivan Davidson  
Kalmar



towers could be replaced by two tall, imposing domed shafts, as on Förster's Budapest masterpiece. Another influential feature of the exterior was a large, octagonal, Islamic-style medallion opening in the facade, replacing the rosary window of a church. The interior of each Förster synagogue featured abundant multilobed arches and a busy polychrome finish.

At the completion ceremony of the Viennese temple, Rabbi Adolf Jellinek laid a "completion stone" that, he said, came "from Zion's holy and divinely consecrated soil, and was dug up from the land of an Israelite, the Israelite Raja Don Perez."<sup>45</sup> He praised Förster's divinely given talent, artistic gifts, and scientific knowledge. Soon Förster's work was imitated throughout the Habsburg Empire and in Jewish communities with roots in its realms. Förster's influence is palpable in the "Spanish Synagogue" of Prague (built 1867–68),<sup>46</sup> the Choral Temple of Bucharest (built 1864–68), the synagogue of Písek (now Czech Republic, built 1872) or even that of Giessen in Germany (built 1878). The tall towers of the Budapest Temple have been said to have inspired James Keys Wilson, the architect of the Plum Street Temple in Cincinnati (built 1863–68), to build the two giant minarets for which his work has been best known.<sup>47</sup> (Others claim that the towers were inspired by the Friday Mosque at Isfahan.)<sup>48</sup> The Vienna temple was probably also on the mind of Leopold Eidlitz, the Prague-born architect who built the Moorish-style abode of New York's congregation Emanu-El in 1868—funded, it has been said, largely by the local Freemasons.<sup>49</sup>

### The Heyday of Moorish Style

Having established itself in the major Jewish centers of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the United States by the 1870s, the Moorish-style synagogue was so widely and, for the most part, enthusiastically accepted by Jews and gentiles that it became the prime choice for liberal Ashkenazim almost everywhere. It was also chosen by some forward-looking Orthodox Jews. What mattered was not so much religious philosophy as the extent to which a Jew took part in secular life and engaged with gentiles around the moral, religious, intellectual, and political issues of the time. The distinction was encoded by the notorious German terms *Ostjuden* and *Westjuden*. Western Jews were said to be modern; Eastern Jews, backward. "Eastern" meant "east European." ("Eastern Europe," at that time, was thought to begin farther east than today, with the northeastern Austro-Hungarian prov-

inces of Galicia and Bukowina. This left Breslau, Prague, and Budapest firmly in the homeland of the “Western Jew.”)

The distinction between “Eastern” and “Western” Jews was, of course, misleading. Even in Russia there were so-called assimilated Jews whose attitudes matched, *mutatis mutandis*, those of the more westerly Jews, and in the West there were pockets of irredentist traditionalists, both immigrant and native-born. Westjuden and Ostjuden referred not so much to geography as to the degree of dialogue with gentile ways of life and thought.

Because the discourse of orientalism was one that originated outside the Jewish communities, it was the worldly Westjuden who responded to it, whereas the Ostjuden kept their distance. This explains why Moorish-style synagogues were built only by the most westward-looking Jewish communities in Russia—in places like Odessa and St. Petersburg—and rarely if ever in the so-called Pale of Settlement, where most Jews lived. It also explains why most Moorish-style synagogues show at least some of the typical signs of nineteenth-century religious reforms: the reader’s stand is near the Ark facing the congregation, there is an organ, and there may be stained-glass windows and/or a pulpit. Most Westjuden communities were dominated by relatively liberal elements, even if they did not necessarily accept the label “Reform.” Many “Western” Orthodox, though familiar with Orientalist discourses about the Jews, were opposed to them, in part simply out of a general distrust of innovation and of gentile ideas.

Still, some Orthodox Jews embraced the Moorish style. Perhaps they shared the hope that Moorish-style buildings would gain the Jews respect, or, perhaps once Moorish-style synagogues were common, everyone came to think of them as simply “Jewish.” In Baltimore, for example, the German-Jewish congregation, worshipping in a classicist synagogue, was becoming increasingly liberal, causing the more Orthodox members to leave and found congregation Chizuk Amuno. It was the Orthodox splinter group that hired a German-American architect to build them a new synagogue. Henry Burge designed a fine Moorish-style building, completed in 1876.

From the 1870s on, a large number of Moorish-style synagogues were built in almost every center of Jewish life in America. Their inventory is far from complete, but we can estimate that it would include a hundred or more buildings, many of them no longer standing. The East Coast and the Midwest have many examples. One might also randomly mention a small selection of the less predictable locations: Wilmington, North Carolina; Portland, Oregon; Albany, Georgia; Bloomington, Illinois; Easton, Pennsylvania; El Paso and Houston,



Texas; Kansas City, Missouri; Port Gibson, Mississippi; and Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee.

[86] German-speaking immigrants, including rabbis, were also conspicuous in Britain. It was in part under their influence that many Moorish-style synagogues were built there, starting in the 1870s. Among these were the Upper Berkley Street synagogue of London (1870), the Prince's Road synagogue of Liverpool (1874), and the Garnethill synagogue of Glasgow (1877).

Jewish  
Social  
Studies

In Italy, the first Moorish-style synagogue in the Lombard town of Vercelli was built in 1874–78 by a local gentile architect, Giuseppe Locarni. A more successful Vercelli-born architect, Marco Treves, who was Jewish, contributed to that project, and he was also, it seems, the principal force in the design of the Florence temple, finished in 1882.<sup>50</sup> (The only other Italian synagogue in Moorish style was that of Turin, completed in 1884—unless one includes Fiume, which is now Rijeka, Croatia, and whose synagogue was completed in 1895.)

Treves was actually a holdout against the Moorish style; the Vercelli community built the synagogue in Moorish style against his advice.<sup>51</sup> In Florence, he and two colleagues designed a large neo-Renaissance synagogue. However, their plans were blocked by the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno in 1872, who felt that

[A]s every nation has stamped its own history on [its] monuments, and most of all its religious monuments, so a building with the said function must manifest at first sight so effectively a marked character that it recalls the dates and the places that are of most interest for this religion, and a character such as cannot be confounded with the religious or secular monuments of other nations and religions.<sup>52</sup>

Unlike four decades before, when the Kassel community objected to a still new and untried Moorish style, this time there was little room for protest. The Accademia had done its research and discovered that what they preached “has been practiced already, in the modern period, in many cities of Europe.”<sup>53</sup> The weight of recent tradition, in other words, was behind them. The Jewish community was grateful to the Accademia for its suggestions and compelled its architects to follow them. They, in turn, seemed to have been happy enough to oblige.

The first mushrooming of Moorish-style synagogues—from about 1855 to about 1880—took place during a time that “Western” Jews considered to be one of great promise. It was entirely in keeping with the spirit of other such occasions when Jellinek, dedicating Förster’s



Viennese synagogue, likened its rise to that of the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision and thanked "the God of my fathers, who changes the times."<sup>54</sup> Because at the economic, judicial, and to some extent even the political levels, the Jews had never had it so good. To optimists, it might sometimes appear that they were being accepted socially as well, and perhaps even admired as the Oriental race foundational to Christian civilization. Not only were Jewish authors fashionable but also—it seemed—were the Jews themselves to some extent, especially if, continuing the tradition harking back to Lessing and his contemporaries, they could be presented as wise Orientals. Benjamin Disraeli's *David Alroy* made quite a splash. But works by gentiles like George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* also presented ostensibly positive Jewish characters as Orientals and were even more eagerly consumed.<sup>55</sup> By building Orientalist synagogues, the Jews hoped to appeal to a certain exotic cachet they seemed to hold for many gentiles.

Of course, evidence of progress in gentile-Jewish relations was far from unequivocal. Many prominent and ordinary Jews felt that baptism was the price they had to pay for social and economic advancement, in a context where in several German and Italian states the Jews lost the rights Napoleon had given them. Still, for the most part "Western Jews" remained optimistic, perhaps even unaware of the extent of the backlash brewing against them.

Judged by today's standards of civility, the open anti-Jewish attacks that some public speakers, journalists, and cartoonists allowed themselves were unbearably rude. Yet it appears that many people felt at least under some compunction not to express their worst sentiments, at least not directly to the Jews. Behind the relatively civil tone of the Florentine Accademia's letter, for example, was a heated private debate in which one incensed academic exhorted his colleagues to "tell the truth" to the Jews. He demanded that the project be unconditionally rejected as inadequate to the "sublime idea of a Temple dedicated to God, even if one belonging to the Israelite religion."<sup>56</sup> That the professors decided to keep such sentiments to themselves helped Florentine Jews feel better about the way their gentile compatriots regarded them. But it only goes to prove that there was some truth in what Richard Wagner had said when, in his anti-Jewish pamphlet *Judenthum in der Musik* (1850), he claimed that he was only saying out loud what everyone else thought.

Wagner's ranting could be relatively easily dismissed because it did not, at least at first, lead to any organized anti-Jewish movement, any more than the less vitriolic but nevertheless damning "expert" opin-



ions of the highly respected French Orientalist scholar, Ernest Renan. Renan believed that the Semites lacked imagination, “naturalism,” and the inclination to mythology. Therefore, he argued, the Semitic character was incompatible with the European spirit.<sup>57</sup> The fact that he later half-heartedly exempted the contemporary European Jews did not help. Many Jews, probably correctly, read Renan’s work as an attack on themselves. Some of the numerous and influential Jewish Orientalists raised their voice in protest; most notable among these were H. Steinthal and Daniel Chwolson.<sup>58</sup>

### The Challenge of Antisemitism

It was only when anti-Jewish discourse was coupled with organized agitation that its threat became obvious. This happened with the outbreak of the so-called Berlin *Antisemitismusstreit* (dispute about antisemitism) in 1879. In that year, the historian Heinrich von Treitschke joined the Prussian court preacher Alfred Stöcker in the first popular, organized backlash against the economic and cultural advances made by the Jews. The hate campaign spread and intensified. In France, an anti-Jewish smear campaign blamed Jews for the financial irregularities surrounding the bankruptcy of the French Panama Canal project in 1889. The notorious Dreyfus Affair, which lasted with long interruptions from 1894 to 1906, came on the tail of a series of such “scandals” and was a slap in the face of those who hoped for peaceful coexistence among Jew and gentile.

Jews who espoused romantic semitism had acted in the mistaken belief that the Orientalist fashion expressed a genuine admiration for the East. However, as Edward Said has demonstrated, the essence of orientalism was to define an Other that was to be excluded and dominated. In this respect, orientalism was—and this is something not discussed by Said—essentially the same when it addressed the Arab, the Indian, or the European Jew. In all cases, it idealized a distinctive “Oriental” human type different from that of the (“real”) European. The “Oriental,” though often romanticized, was seen as too different from the “Occidental” to merit basic political rights. For colonized peoples, such rights included independence; for the Jews, they meant principally access to careers in the army, the professions, and government. Such careers, it was pointed out, required a full appreciation of Western concepts of learning, fairness, and loyalty. The antisemites argued that such occidental concepts were congenitally alien to the

Jews. More damagingly, they called for the exclusion of the Jews from many of the professions. This was particularly threatening to a Jewish population that had based much of its economic advance on education.

[89]

By the 1880s, antisemites routinely used the epithets “Oriental” and “Asiatic” to stress that the Jews were aliens from another part of the world. (Treitschke called Heinrich Graetz, his main opponent, “a foreigner on the soil of his ‘accidental country of birth,’ an Oriental who neither understands nor wants to understand our People.”)<sup>59</sup> It was during this period that certain antisemites began to object to the Oriental style in synagogues.

*Moorish Style*



Ivan Davidson  
Kalmar

In 1881, the German Orientalist scholar Paul de Lagarde commented on the New Synagogue of Berlin by attacking the Jews:

[Their] alien nature is stressed every day and in the most striking fashion by the Jews—who nevertheless wish to be made equal to Germans—through the style of their synagogue. What is the sense of raising claims to be called an honorary German and yet building the holiest site that one possesses in Moorish style, so as to never ever let anyone forget that one is a Semite, an Asiatic, a foreigner?<sup>60</sup>

At last, the debate about Jews as Orientals showed its exclusionist potential. Weary of the connotations of the Moorish style that they themselves supported so enthusiastically just a little while before, German-speaking Jews began to look for alternatives. This improved the job prospects of architects who opposed the Moorish style, and none more than those of Edwin Oppler, a Jew, whose early work dates to the 1860s. Oppler’s social agenda was entirely clear. “The German Jew in the German State must,” he fumed, “build in the German style” (which, to him, was the Romanesque).<sup>61</sup>

Still, the Moorish style more than held its own. Indeed, the period between 1880 and 1914—which we may regard as the late period in the history of the Moorish-style synagogue—witnessed perhaps the greatest proliferation of Moorish-style synagogues. Lipót Baumhorn of Budapest built dozens of them in Greater Hungary, ranging from what is today the Slovene Rijeka (1895) and the Serbian Zrijanin (1896) to the Rumanian Braşov (1901). In Hungary proper, his 1930 synagogue at Gyöngyös (codesigned with György Somogyi) still shows definite Moorish-style features.

Elsewhere, the synagogue of St. Petersburg was completed in 1893. There was the large synagogue of Sophia, Bulgaria (built in 1909, a rare



Sephardic example). Across the ocean, in the United States, Moorish-style synagogue building continued unabated (e.g. Eldridge Street, New York, 1887; Helena, Montana, 1891; and Denver, Colorado, 1899). In many—perhaps even in most—cases, this was simply because of inertia; in others, congregations geographically removed from Germany and France may not have suffered the full impact of the anti-Oriental rhetoric of the antisemites. But Moorish-style synagogues continued to be built in Germany as well (Lorsch, 1885; Kaiserlautern, 1886; Pforzheim, 1893; Aschaffenburg, 1893; Wolfenbüttel, 1893; Hamburg, 1895; and Bonn-Poppelsdorf, 1902). In Austria, the “Turkish” synagogue of 1887 might be attributed to nostalgia on the part of its Sephardic Balkan Jewish community, though it was built every bit like a splendid Reform synagogue in Moorish style. But that could hardly be said of Wilhelm Stiassny’s “Polish Synagogue” of 1893. The synagogue completed in 1924 in Vienna-Hietzing by the American architect Arthur Gruenberger is one of the latest examples of an Orientalist synagogue anywhere.

In such cases, there is no doubt that the choice of the Moorish style was made deliberately and in the face of criticism from its opponents. It reflected the wish by some Jews not to abandon the Orientalist perception of themselves but rather to assert it with renewed passion. Many of the Zionists, in particular, proclaimed their Oriental separateness with pride. There was a “Semitic” stream in Zionism, whose chief ideological spokesman was Martin Buber. The clearest outline of Buber’s orientalism came in a 1912 speech: “The great complex of Oriental nations,” he argued, including the Chinese and Indians as well as the Semites, “can be shown to be one entity.”<sup>62</sup> The psychological characteristics of such nations are those of the “motor type” and contrast with the characteristics of the “sensory type,” typified by the peoples of the West.

Buber’s ideas were hardly unique. His friend Gershom Scholem, the famous scholar of Jewish mysticism, grew up in a home where the idea that Jews were Orientals was most familiar. A 1904 photograph from Scholem’s childhood shows the family’s children performing a play written by their mother, entitled “Ex oriente lux.” Scholem’s siblings are dressed as an Arab, a Chinese, and a Jew, respectively, while Gershom (then Gerhard Arthur) sports the dress of a Hindu.<sup>63</sup> Many artists, such as Ephraim Lilien, created visual art with an Orientalist influence (Lilien’s Palestinian Jew wears a striped tunic and ploughs with a camel). European Zionists sold postcards of kibbutz members protected by Arabic headwear while working in the fields.<sup>64</sup>

The ideals of Orientalist Zionism and of Moorish-style synagogue architecture were joined in the work of the highly respected Viennese architect and Jewish community leader Wilhelm Stiassny. Born in Pressburg (now the Slovak capital, Bratislava) in 1842 as the son of a wealthy businessman, Stiassny in time became one of Vienna's most sought-after architects and, as a city councillor, a major figure in late-nineteenth-century urban design.

*Moorish Style*



Ivan Davidson  
Kalmar

Stiassny's oeuvre is not sufficiently known. Apart from synagogues in neo-Romanesque style, he did design at the very least the Moorish-style synagogues of Čáslav (1899),<sup>65</sup> of Leopoldgasse, Vienna (the "Polish synagogue," 1892–93), of Gablonz (now Jablonec nad Nisou, Czech Republic; started in 1892 but apparently only finished in 1922),<sup>66</sup> and of Malacky (now Slovakia, 1886–87). He was also responsible for the Jerusalem Street synagogue in Prague, and it was he who, as the temple's architect, joined Rabbi Deutsch in addressing the dedication gathering I referred to at the beginning of this article.

Stiassny's correspondence reveals his superb connections. He visited and corresponded with some of the city's aristocracy. His contacts also give evidence of his continuous interest in the Orient and "exotic lands" in general, such as the letters from an Austrian consul looking after the country's interest at the building of the Suez Canal or from an ambitious African explorer.<sup>67</sup>

Stiassny had a fine relationship with the Rothschilds. In 1878 he built the family mausoleum in Vienna. By then he had been responsible for the Rothschild Hospital in Vienna (1870–75) and its Oriental equivalent, the Rothschild Hospital in Izmir, Turkey, then better known as Smyrna.

Among Stiassny's closer acquaintances was Ignaz Goldziher (1850–1921), who has often been thought of as the period's greatest Orientalist scholar and a reluctant secretary of the Budapest community, resident in Förster's grand Moorish-style edifice.<sup>68</sup> Stiassny had in his childhood also known Goldziher's teacher, the baptized Hungarian Jew Hermann (Arminius) Vambéry,<sup>69</sup> who has been described as "the most famous Orientalist that our Monarchy had."<sup>70</sup>

But Stiassny's most impressive contact may have been Theodor Herzl, recognized as the founder of modern political Zionism. "On the basis of documents made available to me," wrote a Viennese journalist, "it was Baurat Stiassny that first ignited the Zionist idea in Herzl, while the latter at first, by far more practically minded, preferred another land for the realization of his Jewish State."<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately, the docu-



ments referred to by the author, Klothilde Benedikt, have not been preserved, nor has, it seems, any correspondence between Stiasny and Herzl.

It is clear that Stiasny was an ardent Zionist. He was the founder and president of the Jüdischer Kolonisations-Verein in Wien. This organization published, in 1909, a booklet containing Stiasny's blueprint for Zionist settlement.<sup>72</sup> Here the architect combines all of his life-long interests: in urban planning, in the Orient, and in the future of the Jewish people.

His design for a Jewish settlement is essentially a typical "green suburb" transplanted to the Orient. He dreamed that it would be constructed "on the basis of all the experience that has been gathered in communal activity in the great cities of Europe during the past 30 years. . . . No house without a garden, no street without trees, no square without a garden area and fountains. . . . In all, the principle of the development is the completely free-standing house."<sup>73</sup> Yet this was, in Stiasny's eyes, with all its European provenance, an Oriental city. The city's bazaar, an "endless row of arcades," stocks beautiful artifacts made of gold, silver, and other precious metals. The wares originate mostly "in the Orient, in Mesopotamia, Persia, Afghanistan, in Tibet and Kashmir, in the East Indies and the Indian archipelago."<sup>74</sup> Here is "not 'a garden city' but 'a city in a garden,' similar to the jewel of Syria, the crown of Lebanon, Dimeshk esh-Shamu, the royal city of Damascus!"<sup>75</sup>

Stiasny had enough confidence to imagine that his colony would become the major city in the Jewish homeland, a sort of an autonomous city-state under Turkish suzerainty. It was to support its own artists and even to have its own university.

Given his connections to the Rothschilds, Stiasny was perhaps not overly optimistic in hoping that they and others would help. His pamphlet closes with the hope that a "high-placed personality" would become the protector of the project.<sup>76</sup> Unfortunately, the architect died a year later, and his rather detailed plans were never carried out. (Some of what he claims to be his original ideas—possibly with some exaggeration—did nevertheless materialize, such as focusing on oranges and olive trees in the Holy Land rather than on the Rothschilds' initial project, wine.)

In our context, the project's most interesting feature was *where* it was imagined to be. It may well have been very close to fabled Damascus, because Stiasny entitled his pamphlet *The Establishment of a Colony in the Holy Land or in One of Its Neighboring Regions*. Let us remember that this was written by the architect who allegedly dissuaded Herzl from

settling the Jews in "another country," perhaps Argentina or Uganda. Stiassny's acceptance of a "neighboring region" as a settlement option was not motivated by "practical" advantages alone, such as one might see in the Ugandan project. He evidently believed that the Jews, as Orientals, would be returning *home* no matter where in the Middle East they went.

It is doubtful that such thinking would have impressed Herzl, who promised that the Jews settling in Palestine "will constitute a bulwark against Asia, serving as guardians of culture against barbarism."<sup>77</sup> But Stiassny was not at all unique in seeing Zionism as a movement to become Oriental again rather than to fend off the threat of the East. David Ben-Gurion, who while living in Istanbul posed for the photographer wearing a fez, declared that the "significance of Zionism is that we are, once again, becoming an Oriental people."<sup>78</sup>

### *Aladar Deutsch*

If he ever brought it up with Rabbi Deutsch, Stiassny would most likely have found his orientalism enthusiastically applauded. In the Deutsch file at the Jewish Museum of Prague are two chapters from an unpublished manuscript whose anti-West, anti-Aryan tone surpasses anything ever seen in press. The fight between the East and West had, the manuscript says, already begun. The "smallest of the fighters proved himself the strongest. He had enough spirit to quickly see through the hollowness and the weakness of Western culture, . . . and he organized the resistance to it." The identification of this unnamed "fighter" is difficult, but in the next passage the author clearly speaks of the Zionists, whom he sees as the vanguard of a great Oriental revolt:

A small fragment of the old Orient had given its old virtues, which had never decayed, a new life, in order to sweep away the Lie. The Orient is moving, it is beginning the fight with a small maneuver against the falseness of the West. . . . It is beginning to wake up, it will carry out its renaissance and reconquer what Esau of the West had snatched away from it; in order among other things to cleanse its soul of the influence of the mentally and spiritually wasted, to make "Ex oriente lux!" once more the truth. . . . The Orient as the old site of spiritually infused semitism [*Semitentum*] will, recognizing the spiritual emptiness and cowardice of the Aryan so-called culture, force back the Aryan where he belongs.<sup>79</sup>

That this fight is not exclusively that of the Jews is made clear in the next paragraph, which demands "the unification of the whole Family





of Sem and the preservation of the purity of their cultures and principles."<sup>80</sup>

[94] Jewish Social Studies It is not known if the manuscript is by Deutsch, but he seems to have kept it carefully, with his sermons and addresses. He, like most "Semitic" Zionists, may have been a lot less extreme and confrontational than the manuscript's author. But it is true that the rabbi, whose doctorate was on three ancient Syrian songs,<sup>81</sup> was most fond of rhetoric glorifying the ancient Jewish descent line. In the secular Gymnasium where he taught religion to Jewish students, he liked to wax eloquent about the glories of "our fathers" in the Land of Israel.<sup>82</sup> In his sermons, Deutsch typically referred to the patriarchs as *Stammväter*. *Stamm*, which also means "stem," refers to a group of related individuals with, so to speak, a common family tree: in different contexts it can mean a brood, a clan, a tribe, a nation, a race. *Stammväter* means "fathers of the Stamm."

Deutsch's intense Jewish nationalism sometimes colored even his theology. On one Sabbath before Passover, Deutsch's sermon dealt with the mezuzah. Traditionally the little receptacle with a tiny scroll is affixed to each door in a Jewish house to enjoin all who come in to love God "with all your heart and all your might." Deutsch, however, gave the mezuzah a different interpretation, which focused not on those who pass through but on those who pass *by* the house. He said the mezuzah was there so that "those who pass by should know that the inhabitants of the houses belong to the oldest civilized nation, which celebrated a festival of freedom before any other in history."<sup>83</sup>

If not traditional, however, this interpretation did reflect well the intent of the liberal Jews who affix a mezuzah only to their entrance door in order to advertise their Jewishness to the neighborhood. Deutsch thought of the Jerusalem Street Synagogue itself as a kind of mezuzah, attracting the attention of the passersby to the presence of a great "nation": "The interesting Moorish style forms an effective contrast to the other buildings surrounding it, and the facade, glimmering as if covered in colorful jewelry, forces all passersby to give it their attention."<sup>84</sup>

\* \* \*

Ostentatious display of Jewishness was in fact a typical motivation of communities that built large synagogues, enjoying the freedom to do so after centuries of enforced architectural modesty. When Berlin's liberal Jews built their flagship Oranienburger Street temple, they decided to interrupt its construction as it dawned on them that its dome would not be very visible from the street. They made the archi-

tect go back to the drawing board and move the dome up front, in order that "right here at the street front already, the character and function of the building be decisively developed."<sup>85</sup> As Primo Levi said about the grand synagogue planned by the Jews of Turin, the "Israelite Temple" was meant to be "an outsized exclamation mark."<sup>86</sup> So was every outlandish, richly adorned, and deliberately "loud" Moorish synagogue.

[95]

*Moorish Style*



Ivan Davidson  
Kalmar

## Notes

I gratefully acknowledge the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada through various grant programs administered by the Department of Anthropology and Victoria College, University of Toronto. Among the many other individuals who aided parts of the research (but cannot be held accountable for its shortcomings) were research assistant Sharon Graham and colleagues and friends Barbara Anselmi, Jan Ederer, Rudolf Klein, Paul Mendes-Flohr, Derek Penslar, Aleksandr Putík, Hermann Simon, Marcella Simoni, Hannah Suess, Zsuzsanna Toronyi, Giuseppe Veltri, and Hartwig Wiedebach. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

- 1 *Bohemia* (Prague), Sept. 17, 1906.
- 2 *Bohemia*, Sept. 16, 1906.
- 3 Miles Danby, *Moorish Style* (London, 1995), 14.
- 4 Carol H. Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), 81–85.
- 5 Hannelore Künzl, *Islamische Stilelemente im Synagogenbau des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main, 1984).
- 6 Ismar Schorsch, "The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 34 (1989): 47–66.
- 7 Umberto Eco, "Interpretation of History," in Umberto Eco with Richard Rorty, Jonathan Culler, and Christine Brooke-Rose, *Interpretation and Over-interpretation*, ed. Stefan Collini (Cambridge, Engl., 1992), 25.
- 8 Harold Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland: Geschichte einer Baugattung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert (1780–1933)* (Hamburg, 1981), 1: 251–301.
- 9 Schorsch, "The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy," 57.
- 10 Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe*, 84–85.
- 11 Moses Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem: Die letzte Nationalitätsfrage; Briefe und Noten* (Prague, n.d. [1862]), 211 [epilogue, sec. V].
- 12 David Levi, *Il Profeta, o La Passione di un Popolo. I. L'Oriente* (Torino, 1884), xxiv.
- 13 *Ibid.*, viii.
- 14 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1979).



- 15 The *-ism* in the word "orientalism" is now routinely interpreted to signify animosity to the referent named by its root, so that orientalism evokes "racism" and "sexism" rather than "multiculturalism" or "feminism," where the same suffix expresses a positive attitude.
- 16 More precisely, neo-Renaissance, neo-Romanesque, and neo-Gothic. I am leaving out the "neo-" prefix for simplicity's sake.
- 17 Frequently these pillars are inspired by one of Owen Jones's works, such as his *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra* (London, 1845).
- 18 A tradition, in writing about synagogues, is to claim that the Gothic was rejected in favor of the Romanesque by synagogue architects who felt that the former was more "Christian" than the latter. In fact, a number of Gothic-style synagogues were built in the nineteenth century. Albert Rosengarten, it is true, preferred Romanesque-style synagogues, but his opposition to the Gothic was founded largely in general architectural considerations. He did state the commonly held view that the Gothic was suitable for Catholics, whereas the Romanesque suited both Protestants and Jews. See Albert Rosengarten, *A Handbook of Architectural Styles* (London, 1880), 482.
- 19 Schuchardt's written opinion on the Kassel synagogue proposals (1830s) is reproduced in Rudolf Hallo, *Geschichte der jüdischen Gemeinde Kassel unter Berücksichtigung der Hessen-Kasseler Gesamtjudenheit* (Kassel, 1931), 52.
- 20 Hans Semper, *Gottfried Semper: Ein Bild Seines Lebens und Wirkens. Mit Benützung der Familienpapiere* (Berlin, 1880), 14.
- 21 Otto Simonson, "Der Neue Tempel in Leipzig," *Architektonisches Album* 2 (Berlin, 1858), 3.
- 22 G. Guastalla, Feb. 1884, published by request of the Jewish community. Quoted in Simonetta Jona Treves, "Dalla comessa ad Alessandro Antonelli, attraverso la crisi dei rapporti fra Università Israelitica e progettista, al nuovo progetto di Enrico Petti," in *Architettura judaica in Italia: Ebraismo, sito, memoria dei luoghi*, Rosalia La Franca, ed. (Palermo, 1994), 398–99. Krinsky (*Synagogues of Europe*, 85) thinks that the Russian gentile critic V. V. Stassov was first to suggest a connection to Spain in an essay published in 1889 but perhaps written in the 1870s.
- 23 Eduard Bürklein, "Synagoge in Heidenheim," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (1854): 390. The 1849 date for the synagogue is tentative; see Harold Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 2: 607 n. 622.
- 24 Ludwig Förster, "Das israelitische Bethaus in der Wiener Vorstadt Leopoldstadt," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (1859): 14.
- 25 This was unlikely to have been an original belief. The same year that Förster wrote his memo, *The Jewish Chronicle and*

- Hebrew Observer* (Dec. 16, 1859, p. 7) reported that the new synagogue in Odessa was "constructed in the Arabian style, as that most cognate to the supposed architecture of the temple of Solomon."
- 26 Förster, "Das israelitische Bethaus," 14.
- 27 Ibid., 15.
- 28 Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 1: 256.
- 29 The Copenhagen synagogue (1831–33) is ignored here, though it might be argued that the crenellations at the top of its Ark are Moorish style (they might also be read, in the context of a predominantly classicist building with Egyptian-style elements, as Greek-inspired).
- 30 The suggestion that there was an organized effort to build such synagogues comes from Bernhard Kukatzki, personal communication.
- 31 Harold Hammer-Schenk, "Die Architektur der Synagoge von 1780 bis 1933," in *Die Architektur der Synagoge* (Stuttgart, 1988), 80, 259–61.
- 32 Hallo, *Geschichte der jüdischen Gemeinde Kassel*, 22.
- 33 Pinhas's memorandum is reproduced in Hallo, *Geschichte der jüdischen Gemeinde Kassel*, 55–56. See also Michael A. Meyer, "How Awesome Is This Place!": The Reconceptualisation of the Synagogue in Nineteenth-Century Germany," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 41 (1996): 57–58.
- 34 Jacob Katz, *Jews and Freemasons in Europe, 1723–1939* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), 255.
- 35 1 Kings 7:21, as translated in *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures. The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text* (Philadelphia, 1988). See also 2 Chronicles 3:17.
- 36 The Rosicrucian "movement," for example, showed many features of later Freemasonry, including its Orientalist imagery and consideration for the supposed secret arts of the Jews. See Frances A. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London, 1972).
- 37 "Die Juden teilen sich wieder ein / In zwei verschiedene Parteien; / Die Alten gehn in die Synagog', / Und in den Tempel die Neuen" (Heinrich Heine, *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen* [1844], ch. 22).
- 38 Haggai 2:9.
- 39 Gotthold Salomon, *Die Herrlichkeit des zweiten Tempels (Haggai 2, v. 9), eine bei der Einweihung des neuerbaueten Israel. Gotteshauses am 5. Sept. 1844 (am 21. Elul 5604) gehaltene Predigt* (Hamburg, 1844), 9.
- 40 Pamphlet quoted by Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe*, 298.
- 41 See Edwin Oppler, affidavit regarding the Hannover synagogue, quoted by Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 1: 206.
- 42 Semper, *Gottfried Semper*, 14.
- 43 Gottfried Semper, "Die Synagoge in Dresden," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (1847), 127.
- 44 Hammer-Schenk, "Die Architektur," 204, categorically denies any such influence.
- 45 Adolf Jellinek, *Zwei Reden zur Schlusssteinlegung und zur*



- Einweihung des neuen israelitischen Tempels in der Leopoldstadt am 18. Mai und 15. Juni 1858* (Vienna, 1858), 4.
- 46 For a history of the "Spanish Synagogue" (originally known as the "Israelite Temple" with no reference to Spain), see Ivan Kalmar, "Origins of the 'Spanish Synagogue' of Prague," *Judaica Bohemiae* 35 (1999): 158–209.
- 47 Ruth Wischnitzer, *The Architecture of the European Synagogue* (Philadelphia, 1964), 207.
- 48 John Sweetman, *The Oriental Obsession: Islamic Inspiration in British and American Art and Architecture* (Cambridge, Engl., 1988), 236.
- 49 Sheldon Levitt, Lynn Milstone, and Sidney T. Tenenbaum, *Treasures of a People: The Synagogues of Canada* (Toronto, 1985), 36.
- 50 Rosella Bottini Treves, *Il Tempio Israelitico di Vercelli, Storia di un Progetto* (privately published, n.d.), extract from *Bollettino Storico Vercellese* 2 (1995).
- 51 Bottini Treves (*Il Tempio*, 9) quotes from a letter by Marco Treves, dated Oct. 21, 1872, in which he, having criticized the Moorish style, attributes its use at Vercelli to the local architect.
- 52 "Voto sul Progetto di un Tempio pel culto Israelitico," Reale Accademia delle Arti del Disegno in Firenze to Università Israelitica di Firenze, Dec. 5, 1872, Archives of the Jewish Community of Florence.
- 53 Ibid. *Atti della 1<sup>a</sup> Classe dell' Accademia delle Belle Arti di Firenze* (Book 4, archives of the Accademia delle Belle Arti) record the session of Nov. 23, 1872, in which Prof. Emilio De Fabris was entrusted with researching the current state of synagogue architecture in Europe.
- 54 Jellinek, *Zwei Reden*, 4.
- 55 Patrick Brantlinger, "Nations and Novels: Disraeli, George Eliot, and Orientalism," *Victorian Studies* 35 (1992): 255–75.
- 56 *Atti della 1<sup>a</sup> Classe dell' Accademia delle Belle Arti di Firenze* (Book 4), interventions of Felice Francolini during the session of Nov. 23 and Dec. 3, 1872.
- 57 Among Renan's early pronouncements on the Semitic character was his "Nouvelles considérations sur le caractère général des peuples sémitiques, et en particulier sur leur tendance au monothéisme," published in the *Journal Asiatique* in 1859. See also Renan's letter to Max Müller, Paris, May 8, 1860 (Ernest Renan, *Correspondance, 1846–1876* [Paris, 1926], 1: 166–69).
- 58 H. Steinthal, "Zur Charakteristik der semitischen Völker" (1860), reprinted in H. Steinthal, *Über Juden und Judentum, Vorträge und Aufsätze, herausgegeben von Gustav Karpeles* (Berlin, 1906), 91–104. Daniel Chwolson, *Die semitischen Völker. Versuch einer Charakteristik* (Berlin, 1877), which reproduced an 1871 lecture series.
- 59 Heinrich von Treitschke, "Herr Graetz und sein Judenthum," in *Der Berliner Antisemitismusstreit*, 2d ed., Walter Boehlich, ed. (Frankfurt am Main, 1965), 45.
- 60 Paul Anton de Lagarde, "Die Stellung der Religions-

- gesellschaften im Staate" (Feb. 1881), included in his *Deutsche Schriften, Gesamtausgabe letzter Hand* (Göttingen, 1886).
- 61 Edwin Oppler, affidavit regarding the Hannover synagogue, quoted by Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 1: 206.
- 62 Martin Buber, "The Spirit of the Orient and Judaism," in *Vom Judentum; ein Sammelbuch*, Verein Jüdischer Hochschüler Bar Kochba in Prag, ed. (Leipzig, 1913), translation in Martin Buber, *On Judaism*, ed. Nahum N. Glazer (New York, 1967), 56.
- 63 The photograph has been reproduced in Paul Mendes-Flohr, *Divided Passions* (Detroit, 1991), 110.
- 64 A number of such postcards are on file at the Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem.
- 65 Stiasny's authorship and the date of construction can be confirmed by the minutes of the Čáslav community executive preserved in the archives of the Jewish Museum of Prague, and by press reports such as the one in the *Israelitische Gemeindezeitung* (Prague), Sept. 1, 1899.
- 66 Hugo Gold, ed., *Die Juden und Judengemeinden Böhmens in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Ein Sammelwerk* (Brno, 1934).
- 67 The greater part of Stiasny's correspondence is at the Jewish Museum of the City of Vienna. Other letters may be found in the Schwadron Collection, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem.
- 68 Some correspondence between Stiasny and Goldziher is in the Schwadron Collection at the Jewish National and University Library archives, Jerusalem, Ms.Var. 466.
- 69 Hermann Vambéry to Wilhelm Stiasny, Nov. 26, 1909, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.
- 70 Vambéry obituary, *Neue Freie Presse*, Sept. 15, 1913.
- 71 Klothilde Benedikt, "Erinnerungen an Theodor Herzl," *Neues Wiener Journal*, May 26, 1918.
- 72 Wilhelm Stiasny, *Anlage einer Kolonie in Heiligen Lande oder in einem seiner Nebenländer* (Vienna, 1909).
- 73 Ibid., 38–39.
- 74 Ibid., 44–45.
- 75 Ibid., 38.
- 76 Ibid., 53.
- 77 Theodor Herzl, *Der Judenstaat* (1896), reprinted in *Wenn ihr wollt, ist es kein Märchen. Altneuland / Der Judenstaat*, ed. Julius Schoeps (Kronberg/Ts., 1978), 213. Herzl saw little contradiction in making this sentence follow one where he implores "His Majesty the Sultan" to "give us" Palestine and promises to "settle entirely the finances of Turkey."
- 78 The literature for "To the East," an exhibition of Israeli orientalist art at the Israel Museum in 1998, used Ben-Gurion's 1926 pronouncement and the preceding quote by Herzl as examples of the complex attitude to the Orient by the Zionist movement and, later, Israeli society.
- 79 Manuscript, Jewish Museum of Prague, Deutsch archive, chap. 9, 144.
- 80 Ibid.

[99]

*Moorish Style*



Ivan Davidson  
Kalmar



- 81 His diploma, issued on Jan. 30, 1895, in Bern, gives his dissertation title as "Edition dreier syrischen Lieder nach einer Handschrift der Berliner Königlichen Bybliothek" (Jewish Museum of Prague, Deutsch archive).
- 82 František R. Kraus, "Odešel patriarcha . . . můj starý učitel," *Věstník židovské náboženské obce* (Prague) 9 (Sept. 1949): 101.
- 83 Deutsch sermon on Shabbat Ha-Gadol Tirtsah, Jewish Museum of Prague, Deutsch archive.
- 84 Aladar Deutsch, *Die Zigeiner-, Grossenhof- und Neusynagoge in Prag. Denkschrift herausgegeben anlässlich der Erbauung des aus diesem Gotteshäusern hervorgegangenen Kaiser Franz Josef Jubiläum-Tempels* (Prague, 1907), 68.
- 85 G. Knoblauch and F. Hollin, *Die Neue Synagoge in Berlin. Entworfen und ausgeführt von Eduard Knoblauch. Vollendet von August Stüler* (Berlin, 1867); reprinted with an introduction by Heinz Galinski and an essay by Hermann Simon (Berlin, 1992).
- 86 Primo Levi, "Prefazione," in *Ebrei a Torino. Ricerche per il centenario della sinagoga 1884–1984*, anon. ed. (Turin, 1984), 13. Levi was speaking about the "Mole Antoniano," the fantastic Turin landmark that combines classicist and Orientalist, though not necessarily Moorish style, elements. The community was forced to sell it while still incomplete, and it has since been used for secular purposes.

## Contributors

[180]  
Jewish  
Social  
Studies

TODD M. ENDELMAN is William Haber Professor of Modern Jewish History at the University of Michigan. He is the author of *The Jews of Georgian England* (1979), *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History* (1990), and *The Jews of Modern Britain* (2001). He is currently at work on a history of conversion and other forms of radical assimilation in modern Jewish history in Europe and America.

IVAN KALMAR teaches in the Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, and is the author of *The Trotskys, Freuds, and Woody Allens: Portraits of a Culture* (1994). Currently he is working on a book about Orientalism and the Jews.

BEREL LANG is Professor of Humanities at Trinity College. His recent books include *The Future of the Holocaust, Race and Racism in Theory and Practice*, and *Holocaust Representation: Art Within the Limits of History and Ethics*. He is Senior Scholar in Residence at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington during the 2001–02 academic year.

ELI LEDERHENDLER is Associate Professor at the Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and he is the incumbent of the Stephen S. Wise Chair in American Jewish History and Institutions.

MARCUS MOSELEY, who has taught at Oxford, Harvard, and New York University, has written a study of Jewish autobiography in Eastern Europe that will be published by Stanford University Press.

PETER NOVICK is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Chicago.

RAANAN REIN is Associate Professor in the Department of History of Tel Aviv University, Director of its Institute of Latin American History and Culture, and editor of the journal *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe*. He is the author of numerous books and articles published in English, Hebrew, and Spanish.

DAN STONE is Lecturer in Twentieth-Century European History at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is the editor of *Theoretical*