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978-0-521-19744-1 - The Jew, the Cathedral, and the Medieval City: Synagoga and Ecclesia in the Thirteenth Century

Nina Rowe

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The Jew, the Cathedral, and the Medieval City



In the thirteenth century, sculptures of Synagoga and Ecclesia – paired female personifications of the Synagogue defeated and the Church triumphant – became a favored motif on cathedral façades in France and Germany. Throughout the centuries leading up to this era, the Jews of northern Europe prospered financially and intellectually, a trend that ran counter to the long-standing Christian conception of Jews as relics of the prehistory of the Church. In *The Jew, the Cathedral, and the Medieval City*, Nina Rowe examines the sculptures as defining elements in the urban Jewish–Christian encounter. She locates the roots of the Synagoga–Ecclesia motif in antiquity and explores the public manifestations of the theme at the cathedrals of Reims, Bamberg, and Strasbourg, considering each example in relation to local politics and culture. Ultimately, she demonstrates that royal and ecclesiastical policies to restrain the religious, social, and economic lives of Jews in the early thirteenth century found a material analog in lovely renderings of a downtrodden Synagoga placed in the public arena of the city square.

Nina Rowe is an associate professor of art history at Fordham University. She coauthored (with Sandra Hindman, Michael Camille, and Rowan Watson) *Manuscript Illumination in the Modern Age: Recovery and Reconstruction* and coedited (with David Areford) *Excavating the Medieval Image: Manuscripts, Artists, Audiences – Essays in Honor of Sandra Hindman*. She has published articles in the journals *Gesta* and *Studies in Iconography*, as well as in various edited volumes.

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THE JEW, THE
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Synagoga and Ecclesia in the
Thirteenth Century

NINA ROWE

Fordham University



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For Glenn and Ezra

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 Abbreviations

CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
MGH Const.	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum (Legum Sectio IV)
MGH SS	Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores
MGH SSRM	Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum
PL	Patrologia Latina