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978-1-107-64998-9 - 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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32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107649989

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First published 2011

Reprinted 2012

First paperback edition 2014

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Rowe, Nina.

The Jew, the cathedral, and the medieval city : Synagoga and Ecclesia in the thirteenth century / Nina Rowe.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-19744-1 (hardback)

1. Ecclesia (Christian art) 2. Synagoga (Christian art) 3. Sculpture, Medieval – Themes, motives. 4. Art and society – Europe – History – To 1500. 5. Judaism – Relations – Christianity – History – To 1500. 6. Christianity and other religions – Judaism – History – To 1500. I. Title.

NB1910.R69 2010

734'.25–dc22 2010034219

ISBN 978-0-521-19744-1 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-64998-9 Paperback

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∞ For Glenn and Ezra

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It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to thank the many institutions, colleagues, friends, and family members who supported me through the process of researching and writing this book. Without the encouragement of so many, the project never would have been completed. I am primarily grateful to the advisers who guided this study in its original form as my Ph.D. dissertation at Northwestern University (2002). Sandra Hindman was a staunch advocate, who offered confidence and camaraderie as I strove to work out my arguments. Karl Werckmeister first suggested the topic to me and challenged me over the years to pursue my analysis with conviction and boldness. Larry Silver and Robert Lerner provided counsel at crucial moments in the development of the project. Support from the DAAD, the Leo Baeck Institute, and the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture made initial research possible. The book took its current form during the year 2007–08 when I was a Sylvan C. Coleman and Pamela Coleman Memorial Fellow at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. No scholar could wish for a more collegial and stimulating environment in which to probe and test new ideas. At the Met I am particularly grateful to Peter Barnet, Barbara Boehm, Helen Evans, Melanie Holcomb, Marcie Karp, Charles Little, Leslie Bussis Tait, and Nancy Wu. Support for reproductions in this book was provided by the Medieval Academy of America, Fordham University's Deans of Arts and Sciences, and the Fordham Ames Fund for Junior Faculty.

I appreciate the scholars I encountered in the course of my research abroad who were receptive to my new ideas on well-studied monuments. Particular recognition is due to Bruno Decrock (*Missions pour le Ministère de la Culture, France*), Cécile Dupeux (*Directrice, Musée de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame, Strasbourg*), Achim Hubel (*Prof. Dr. für Denkmalpflege, Otto Friedrich Universität, Bamberg*), Gerd Mentgen (*P.D. Dr., Arye Maimon-Institut, Universität, Trier*), and Freddy Raphaël (*Prof. de Sociologie, Université Marc Bloch, Strasbourg*). I have benefited greatly from assistance with Hebrew from Irit Ziffer and with Latin from Susanne Hafner, Matthew McGowan, and Stefano Mula. Tom Jones, Susanna McFadden, Torsten Reimann, and Mary Shepard helped me acquire photographs. Other colleagues

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 Acknowledgments

and friends both inside and outside the academy inspired me and provided guidance and perspective. I am happy to thank Natalie Adamson, Julian and Sylvia Ander, David Areford, Wendy Bellion, Kristin Bergen, Kim Bowes, James Boyce, Louisa Burnham, William Clark, Maria Di Pasquale, Susan Dudash, Martha Easton, Mary Erler, Gregory Foster-Rice, Eliza Garrison, Matthew Gelbart, Dorothy Glass, Michael Golec, Gerry Guest, Andrée Hayum, Anne D. Hedeman, Kathryn Heleniak, Gretchen Helfrich, Joan Holladay, Colum Hourihane, Jo Anna Isaak, Jacqueline Jung, Maryanne Kowaleski, Sherry Lindquist, Sara Lipton, Katherine Little, Barbara Mundy, Stephen Perkinson, Liz Phair, Jenny Pollack, Maria Ruvoldt, Elizabeth Sears, Kathryn Smith, Liz Spikol, Claudia Swan, Christine Verzar, Laura Weigert, and Bronwen Wilson. Janine Mileaf has been a steadfast ally, from summer camp through life in academia. Elizabeth (Libby) Parker and Mitchell Merback both read this book in draft form in its entirety, and both offered exceptionally incisive critiques and suggestions. My text has benefited markedly from their interventions and those of Cambridge University Press's anonymous readers. I am also grateful to Beatrice Rehl, my editor at Cambridge, for taking an interest in this project to begin with and to Holly Johnson for her careful work in this book's production.

The greatest thanks of all, though, are due to my family. They have lived with me living with this project for many years and I am touched by their enduring curiosity about and enthusiasm for my work. David, Alaina, and Felix Sloo win the prize for fascinating relations. Connie Hendler is a loving chum I am honored to have as a mother-in-law. My sister, Claudia Rowe, has been champion and sounding board for decades, and her family, Dan, Gabriel, and Maiselle Kearney, bring me more joy than they could possibly know. My parents, Joyce and Gerry Rowe, have believed in me during difficult times and cheered me on in good ones. Their love and support have gotten me to the point I am at today. Finally, I dedicate this book to my husband, Glenn Hendler, and to our son, Ezra. Glenn came into my life as I was completing the dissertation on which this study is based; Ezra entered our lives as I finished the book you hold in your hands. At these two moments, luck was on my side.



An earlier version of Chapter 4 appeared as "Synagoga Tumbles, a Rider Triumphs: Clerical Viewers and the Fürstenportal of Bamberg Cathedral," *Gesta* 45, no. 1 (2006): 15–42. An earlier version of Chapter 5 appeared as "Idealization and Subjection at the South Façade of Strasbourg Cathedral," in *Beyond the Yellow Badge: Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in Medieval and Early Modern Visual Culture*, ed. Mitchell Merback (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 179–202. Biblical quotations are from the Douay-Rheims version.

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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