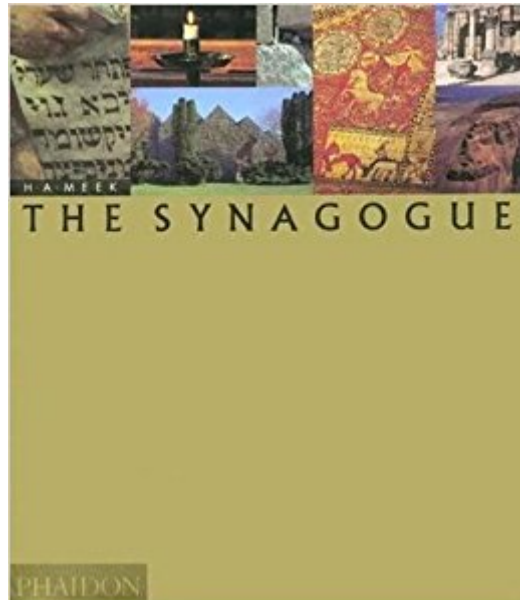




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The Synagogue



Synopsis

Synagogues, their history and decoration, represent an illuminating record of the cultural and artistic history of the Jewish people. As a focal point for community life as well as a spiritual centre, the synagogue has both a symbolic and a practical significance. From its origins in the Tabernacle, through the exuberant Venetian synagogues of the Renaissance, to the often stark simplicity of modern buildings, Harold Meek examines the fascinating story of the building that remains central to every Jewish community. His spirited narrative shows the diverse ways in which a vast array of cultural influences have merged to produce a rich and coherent heritage in the fields of architecture and decoration. A meticulously researched and magnificently illustrated tome, *The Synagogue* combines spiritual and aesthetic sensitivity with a passion for human creativity, producing an erudite and accessible introduction not just for the scholar, but for anybody with an interest in the subject.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

More than a gloriously illustrated celebration of the Jewish synagogue, this stirring album charts Jewish history, culture and worship through the prism of Jews' houses of worship. Beginning with Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, completed in 950 BCE, British architectural historian Meek surveys early synagogues of the Greco-Roman world, ornate Islamic-style temples built under Moslem rule in Spain, Renaissance and Baroque prayer-houses of Venice and Padua. We visit the Great Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam (1671-75), spiritual center of western Sephardim, the extraordinary wooden temples of Poland, built as early as 1642 (all torched by the Germans in WWII), Marc Chagall's stained-glass windows depicting the Twelve Tribes of Israel in a Jerusalem

synagogue and modernist temples in the U.S. designed by Walter Gropius, Philip Johnson and Frank Lloyd Wright. More than 200 prints, architectural drawings, paintings and photographs, most in color, complement an informal text to evoke the synagogue as a reservoir of spiritual strength and renewal. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"A delicious book. Meek has an ear for the engaging anecdote and an eye for the glorious edifice or architectural detail."-Newsday "This well-designed work will serve as a splendid gift book, suitable for the bar or bat mitzvah. The colour photography is indeed beautiful. Its superb design and visual appeal should render The Synagogue a great success."-Jewish Book World

Clearly the author, both a Jew and an Architect, has presented his take on a rather complex area. Similar works have been written that have differing subject buildings. One from France, by D. Jurasse for Adam Biro has quite a bit more of French Synagogues including those of Provence and perhaps some better photography for some entries. There are areas that I would rather have seen discussed in a bit more detail in either of these works, including Synagogues of the New World outside of the United States (Caribbean, South American, Canadian). Most of these works may not be major architectural feats, but do stand to some degree of scrutiny in addressing local cultural idioms in perhaps the best ways that the creators could achieve, given the local resources. At least a brief summary of these might have been nice.

An informative, beautiful book on the traditional Jewish house of worship. Well worth the time and money. Thank you.

This book contains chapters explaining in brief the historical basis of the religion, the history to the present of the structures, and the nature of the architecture. There is an explanation of the geometry involved and its importance and many of the pictures demonstrate the aspect of this. The pictures are beautiful and often fill most of the page. The book is heavy, though I would not call it oversized. I love that Dr. Meek is described as not overly pious. It also is described on the front flap as a book that will inspire and fascinate both Jews and Gentiles alike.

A Beautiful book that explores the great diversity of Synagogues throughout the ages and across the world. From the most modern to the smallest and the largest. From wood synagogues in eastern Europe, to the great temple of Florence(which I lived next door to) this is simply a wonderful book

and will make a great gift or a great coffee table read. The pictures are amazing with many photos and short text dedicated to virtually hundreds of temples across the world, some of which are no longer in use or no longer exist.

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Bevis Marks Synagogue 1701-2001 (Survey of the Jewish built heritage in the United Kingdom & Ireland)
Funny, It Doesn't Sound Jewish: How Yiddish Songs and Synagogue Melodies Influenced Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Hollywood (SUNY Series in Modern Jewish Literature and Culture)
Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue (The Guilford Family Therapy Series)
The Synagogue How to Get More out of Being Jewish Even If:: A. You Are Not Sure You Believe in God, B. You Think Going to Synagogue Is a Waste of Time, C. You Think ... Hated Hebrew School, or E. All of the Above! My People's Prayer Book Vol 8: Kabbalat ShabbatÂ (Welcoming Shabbat in the Synagogue)

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