

nes Fach, so daß weitere Überlegungen einer systematischen Darbietung der Projekte nicht nötig sind.

Fazit: *work in progress* festzustellen, ist im Fach Kunstgeschichte nahezu unmöglich, wenn man von Magister- und Doktorarbeiten absieht. Der Blick über die Fachgrenzen zu Unternehmungen anderer Fächer oder in Bulletins spezialisierter Institutionen hilft nur partiell weiter und ist sehr mühsam. Unserem Fach fehlt ein Instrument, mit dem es möglich ist, sich schnell einen Überblick über laufende Projekte zu verschaffen. Deswegen soll hierüber im Journal für Kunstgeschichte ab dem kommenden Jahr berichtet werden, und wir laden alle ein, uns ihre Projekte zur Veröffentlichung zu melden (vgl. dazu die Meldeformulare am Ende des Heftes).

JÜRGEN KRÜGER
Universität Karlsruhe

Gabrielle Sed-Rajna, Ziva Amishai-Maisels, Dominique Jarrassé, Rudolf Klein, Ronny Reich: Die Jüdische Kunst (*Große Epochen der Weltkunst, Ars Antiqua Supplementband*). Aus dem Französischen (Paris: Editio – Éditions Citadelles & Mazenod 1995) von Peter Wild und Ute Wikenhauser. Freiburg: Herder 1997; 636 S., 798 Abb., 272 farbige Taf.; ISBN 3-451-26350-5; DM 390,- (English edition: New York, Harry N. Abrams 1997)

The voluminous *Die Jüdische Kunst*, an outcome of international cooperation between five distinguished scholars under the leadership of Gabrielle Sed-Rajna, marks one hundred years of Jewish art research. The first scholarly monograph ever devoted to a Jewish work of art, the so-called Haggadah of Sarajevo, an illuminated Hebrew manuscript from fourteenth century Spain, was published in 1898 in Vienna.¹ At the time, the concerted efforts of a prominent art historian (Julius von Schlosser), a collector and connoisseur of Jewish ceremonial objects (David Kaufmann) and an orientalist (David Heinrich Müller) were joined together to elucidate one manuscript. Today, we have a comprehensive history of Jewish art, with the main text written by three authors (Gabrielle Sed-Rajna, responsible for the larger part, Dominique

¹ *David Kaufmann, Julius von Schlosser, David Heinrich Müller: Die Haggadah von Sarajevo. Eine spanisch-jüdische Bilderhandschrift des Mittelalters*; 2 vols., Vienna 1898. Of course, isolated manifestations of interest in Jewish monuments are documented much earlier: Winckelmann called attention to the achievements of Jewish art of the biblical period already in the eighteenth century (1764), while Louis Félicien de Saulcy, French archaeologist and general consul in Jerusalem, produced, by the middle of the nineteenth century, a work devoted to biblical archaeology but entitled „Histoire de l'art judaïque“. However, the two volumes on the Sarajevo Haggadah marked the transition from isolated displays of interest in Jewish archaeology and art to scientific research and publication. For recent reviews of Jewish art history see: Joseph Gutman: Jewish Art and Jewish Studies, in: Shaye J. D. Cohen and Edward L. Greenstein, eds.: *The State of Jewish Studies*; Detroit 1990, pp.193-211; id.: Is there a Jewish Art?, in: C. Moore, ed.: *The Visual Dimension: Aspects of Jewish Art*; Boulder, Colorado, 1993, pp. 1-19; Shalom Sabar, The Development of the Study of Jewish Art, in: *Mahanaim* 11, 1995, pp. 264-75 (in Hebrew).

Jarrassé, for synagogue architecture, and Ziva Amishai-Maisels, for modern art), joined by Ronnie Reich and Rudolf Klein for the synagogue documentation.

The jubilee date of appearance, as well as its comprehensiveness, make the book under review a milestone in Jewish art research. The declared scope (p.12) is to outline the identity of Jewish art, demonstrating its existence and continuity, not on the basis of continuity of style, the nineteenth century premise, doomed to failure from the outset in view of the longevity (three thousand years) and wide geographical distribution (four continents) of Jewish art, but on the basis of its continuous connection with the history of the Jewish people. The book was conceived as a documentation of „all works of art that accompanied the history of the Jewish people“, through visual material and written commentary, mirroring not only the monuments and facts, but also the main methodical approaches in use during recent decades of research. The main question posed to the reviewer is how far does the work reflect the present research level on Jewish art and what precisely is its own position: Is it oriented more to the past of the field or does it contain, through its wide range of knowledge and material, the seeds of further developments?

A comprehensive history of the kind postulated here, which naturally strives to be the mirror of knowledge in the field at a given time, is inescapably outdated on completion. Only a few months after the appearance of the original French edition, the spectacular floor mosaic of the synagogue in Sepphoris was published². Dated to the fifth century and introducing unusual details into a highly articulated decoration programme, popular among early Byzantine synagogues in Palestine, the Sepphoris mosaic represents an important clue for the interpretation of this programme and the reconstruction of the social and religious background that led to its formation. Conveniently situated, from a chronological point of view, between Hammath Tiberias and Beth Alpha, the Sepphoris mosaic contributes considerably to understanding the creation process of one of the most basic and authentic iconographical programmes known in Jewish art. Sed-Rajna's discussion of Galilean and Judean floor mosaic decoration (pp.129-136) would certainly have been enriched by the inclusion of Sepphoris. The same is true for the medieval synagogue in Regensburg, to which Dominique Jarrassé gave half a sentence on page 167 and which was subsequently discovered by chance in the pedestrian zone of the Bavarian city of Regensburg, fully excavated, and recently published³.

Another field where research took a crucial new turn in the time that elapsed between the French and German editions of our book is Sephardic manuscript illumination. The respective chapter by Sed-Rajna (pp. 223-26) is faithfully moulded

² Ze'ev Weiss and Ehud Netzer: *Promise and Redemption. A Synagogue Mosaic from Sepphoris*; Jerusalem 1996.

³ Silvia Codreanu-Windauer: *Romanische Synagoge und Goldschatz. Erste Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen am Neupfarrplatz*, in: *Regensburger Almanach*; Regensburg 1997; Silvia Codreanu-Windauer and Stefan Ebeling: *Die mittelalterliche Synagoge Regensburgs*, in: *Monumental. Festschrift für Michael Petzet* (Arbeitshefte der Bayerischen Landesamtes für Denkmalpflege, 100); Munich 1998, pp. 449-464.

according to the famous „theory of continuity“, arguing the existence of an uninterrupted link between the decoration of ancient Jewish art in the Near East and the late medieval Hebrew bibles from Spain⁴. Within this concept Christian manuscripts play the role of vehicles from non extant, allegedly earlier Jewish sources to late medieval Hebrew manuscripts⁵. Two recent articles by Katrin Kogman-Appel⁶ convincingly modify this approach by enlarging the circle of relevant comparisons and introducing a more differentiated and nuanced picture of Jewish-Christian artistic interrelations taking place in much narrower periods of time than those postulated by previous research.

Significant changes capable of influencing our view of Jewish art in general have taken place during or shortly after the publication of the book under review not only in archaeology and art historical research, but also in contemporary Jewish art and architecture. A completely new kind of symbiosis between art and architecture, which may be labelled as Jewish from every possible point of view, is taking shape: the Jewish museum. The two buildings by Daniel Liebeskind, one in Berlin (The Jewish Museum), the other in Osnabrück (The Felix Nussbaum – Museum) are but two examples of a contemporary tendency not even mentioned here. *Die Jüdische Kunst* completely excludes Jewish secular architecture, making a semi-exception for sepulchral art, which gets less than two pages (pp. 180-82).

Another major problem objectively faced by any book of these dimensions is the impossibility of presenting its topic (or topics) in context. The textual and photographic presentation are here of course concentrated on Jewish art and although the authors refer to relevant non-Jewish schools and even, sporadically, to specific non-Jewish examples, these references are not supported by bibliographical notes or visual documentation. As a result, a somewhat distorted view is offered to the reader, the view of an art that, as one is constantly being told, has a backbone of continuity, which however one fails to see, since so many links are missing. A better docu-

⁴ Cecil Roth: Jewish Antecedents of Christian Art, in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 16, 1953, pp. 24ff, esp. pp. 37-41; Joseph Gutman: When the Kingdom Comes. Messianic Themes in Medieval Jewish Art, in: *Art Journal* 27, 1967/68, pp. 168-175; Carl-Otto Nordström: Some Miniatures in Hebrew Bibles, in: *Synthronon. Art et archéologie à la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age*; Paris 1968, pp. 89-105; Ursula Schubert: The Continuation of Ancient Jewish Art in the Middle Ages, in: C. Moore, ed.: *The Visual Dimension: Aspects of Jewish Art*, Boulder 1993, pp.25-46.

⁵ This problematic is treated throughout the book according to older notions, even in cases where newer scholarly literature on particular topics was available long before publication. Especially noteworthy is the ignoring of *John Lowden: The Octateuchs. A Study in Byzantine Manuscript Illustration*; Pennsylvania State University Press 1992, who demonstrated that this type of Byzantine manuscript is not earlier than the eleventh century, and is thus unable to represent early Jewish iconography, as postulated by traditional Jewish art history and repeated by Sed-Rajna (pp. 22 and 134).

⁶ Katrin Kogman-Appel: Der Exoduszyklus der Sarajevo-Haggada: Bemerkungen zur Arbeitsweise spätmittelalterlicher jüdischer Illuminatoren und ihrem Umgang mit Vorlagen, in: *Gesta* 35, 1996, pp. 111-127; *Katrin Kogman-Appel: The Sephardic Picture Cycles and the Rabbinic Tradition: Continuity and Innovation in Jewish Iconography*, in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 60, 1997, pp. 451-481. A book by Katrin Kogman-Appel on Sephardic manuscript illumination is due to be published by Peter Lang.

mentation of each significant period or school of Jewish art, including parallels (even in the shape of small black and white photographs and/or bibliographical references) presenting works from neighbouring cultures and religions, would have offered a more balanced and accessible presentation. The specificity of Jewish art would have been more effectively and convincingly emphasized, by operating with the main tools of art historical research: comparative iconography and style. Instead, the book is conceived rather like an illustrated history of the Jewish people; the intimate connection between Jewish history and Jewish art becomes the main criterion for the definition of Jewish art. This approach is particularly disturbing in the first chapter, on ancient art. History prevails here, with no clear delimitation between information gathered from written sources on certain monuments and extant works of art, between the historical Tabernacle and the Temple and their later pictorial representations. The system of references to monuments as figure numbers in the margins, with no direct integration or even presentation in the text, increases the confusion, due to the contrast between the wealth of biblical and historical information and the lack of existing monuments.

The only exception to the historical approach is the last and most challenging chapter of the book, that on modern Jewish art, or, as Ziva Amishai-Maisels prefers to put it, on „Jewish artists from the eighteenth century to the present day“. This chapter, by far the most complex, shows what the whole book could have been: comprehensive without being an inventory, particularistic without losing the context, concretely descriptive without neglecting the reconstruction of an inner development, anchored in the historical and social background without letting it take the foreground, which is consistently reserved to the artists and their works. Each sub chapter is suitably introduced and summed up, the reader is informed about the methods employed and the reasons for the choice made (p. 333); the logic of the exposition can be followed. The author makes it clear why she preferred to outline the roots of modern Jewish art by means of several prominent artists, each standing for a representative choice of attitudes to the surrounding non-Jewish world and their Jewishness during the Enlightenment and Emancipation periods. As for the richer twentieth century, and to be able to catch the essence of modern Jewish art, she concentrated on major problems and processes faced by Jewish artists, following the two directions outlined by the famous dialogue between Vladimir Stasov and Mark Antokolskij on the foundation of a Jewish national art and corresponding to the two basic concepts of the possibility of a Jewish art: 1. continuation of Jewish culture in the Diaspora, where emancipated Jews could live close to their cultural roots, updating them (Chagall being here the most prominent representative); 2. renaissance of Jewish life in Palestine (Boris Schatz, a student of Antokolskij and the founder of the „Bezalel“ Academy of Arts in Jerusalem).

Amishai-Maisels outlines a complex and coherent picture of modern Jewish art, containing many and varied expressions of Jewish identity (or of means to hide Jewish identity), incited by given historical and social factors. As in the ancient and medieval periods, the content, the symbols and the iconography are obviously

Jewish, usually expressed in the available international styles. The Jewish repertoire of images, updated and used to express contemporary messages, is represented in this chapter by a diversity of topics including biblical imagery (Jakob Steinhardt, „Prophet Jeremiah“ from 1912-13, fig. 565); quotations from the archaeology of the Holy Land (Mordechai Ardon, „Venus from Beersheba“ from 1962 or Yitzhak Danziger, „Nimrod“ from 1939, fig. 571); depictions of typical Jewish feasts or figures located in a shtetl (Jakob Steinhardt, „Before Shabat“ from 1919, fig. 566), in Palestine (Reuven Rubin, „The Dancers from Meron“, 1926, fig. 563), or in modern America (Larry Rivers, „Painting of a Barmitzva-Photo“, 1961, fig. 597); the use of national and religious symbols, such as the menorah and the shofar (Ben Shahn, wall mosaic „Shofar and Menorah“ in a synagogue in Nashville, Tennessee, 1958, fig. 577), or the map of Eretz Israel (Michael Druks, „Israel Pattern“, 1971, fig. 604).

At times, Jewish artists made such intensive and specific use of a certain style, that it became a mode of expressing their Jewishness (as, for example, the affectation of a naive style by Reuven Rubin, as a metaphor for new beginnings in Israel, or by Marc Chagall, to mark his Jewish roots). At other times, Jewish artists hide behind a style (the same as they might hide behind a new name), as did Naum Gabo (Pevsner), Sonia Terk (Stern) Delaunay, Man Ray (Emanuel Radnitzky), Tristan Tzara (Sami Rosenstock) or Marcel Janco before the Second World War, to name only a few among all those discussed, who found a refuge in and left their mark on different branches of abstract art (esp. 342-44).

The reader will also find in this chapter comprehensive and enlightening resumé's of two branches of Jewish art that are only recently being treated in modern art research: holocaust art (Ziva Amishai-Maisels is the author of a monumental monograph on the subject⁷), dealing with the manifold effects of the holocaust on Jewish art up to contemporary expressions by a young generation of artists such as Jocheved Weinfeld; and modern art in Israel (which is intensively studied and taught at the Hebrew University), updated to the most recent artistic reactions to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

With a well kept balance between the outlining of a general but also personal and original picture of modern and contemporary Jewish art with its most important and representative ramifications, and detailed discussions on key works and artists, this chapter might interest both scholars and lay persons. With its wealth of information and photographic documentation, *Die Jüdische Kunst* as a whole would certainly appeal to a large public, although several passages and aspects suggest that the book oscillates between possible categories of readers. Quotations from research literature indicated only by the names of the scholars responsible for this or that opinion, without being backed up by bibliographical references (not even in the respective bibliographical section at the end of the volume), remain cryptic for the lay reader,⁸ while the lengthy discussion of the Dura-Europos synagogue frescoes

⁷ *Ziva Amishai-Maisels: Depiction and Interpretation: The Influence of the Holocaust on the Visual Arts*; Oxford 1993.

⁸ As, for example, the mention of Herbert L. Kessler on p. 22.

(pp.114-128), often dealt with in the research literature, is redundant for the specialist. The bibliographical list and index, which could have bridged the two categories, are unsatisfactory, the first being cut up in too many categories not directly related to the chapter division of the book, the second being superficial and inconsistent. Certain omissions, puzzling for the student, become misleading for the lay reader rightly expecting a balanced introduction to the field. The synagogue documentation strikingly illustrates this shortcoming. The synagogue of Dura-Europos (pp. 553-568) and the forty synagogues of Palestine (pp. 537-552) exhaust the section on ancient synagogues. One wonders what about Sardis? In the section „Synagogues from the Middle Ages to the present“, Germany is represented by the nineteenth century synagogue in the Oranienburger Street in Berlin. Do not Worms and Speyer fit the label „The most important synagogues“?

Using the book is made very difficult by the strange distribution of the illustrations. Since several plates are mentioned together in the margins, finding them in a book of this size makes one lose the context. Also, the cutting up of related topics by the division of the illustrations between the more or less chronological chapters and the end of the book, where one also finds the captions, separately, is a hindrance to the reader who would like to get an impression of the topic by looking at the illustrations together with the information on them.

Finally a word on the German translation, which is generally more than satisfactory. The translators obviously encountered some difficulties with the technical terms, the most disturbing being the inconsistent, misleading translation of the ark of the covenant (Bundeslade), constantly confused with the torah ark of the synagogue (Thora-Schrank): on pages 130-31 „Thora-Schrank“, „Bundeslade“, and „Schrank-Lade“ (sic) are used to designate the representation in the Hammath Tiberias floor mosaic, while on page 133 „Bundeslade“ is used for the torah niche of the sixth century synagogue in Beth Alpha!

In spite of its various shortcomings, *Die Jüdische Kunst* is a beautiful and useful book. Beyond the wealth of information and the generous illustrative material, the book is an important contribution to outlining the position adopted by present-day art historical research in Jewish art. Faithfully, although indirectly and perhaps unintentionally, it shows the borders between the real challenges and difficulties posed by the material itself and its actual state of preservation and documentation, and those invented by motivated art historians. Thus, the book implicitly indicates the white spots on the Jewish art research map and the paths of Jewish art historical research and publication for the near future. It shows that the time of scholarly, serious resumé's has not yet come, more work on specific aspects being required. But *Die Jüdische Kunst* demonstrates the massive existence of Jewish art to all those who, in the opinion of the main author, still need a confirmation of the fact.

BIANCA KÜHNEL
Hebrew University
Jerusalem