



Symposium on Swedish Synagogue Architecture (1795–1870) and the Cultural Milieu of the Early Jewish Immigrants to Sweden

April 19, 2021 (via zoom)

Organized by the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies at Lund University, the University of Potsdam, and the Institute of Jewish Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow.

Please register with us online in advance of the event.
<http://bit.ly/2021-04-19>.



Program

NB: All times are in CET (GMT+1)

- 9.00–9.10 **Introduction**
Karin Hedner Zetterholm and Katharina Keim, Lund University
- 9.10–9.40 **Jewish Sacred Architecture in the Nordic Countries 1684-1939: Pitfalls, challenges and possibilities**
Daniel Leviathan, Lund University
- 9.40–10.10 **The History of the Synagogue Building at Själagårdsgatan 19, Stockholm**
Yael Fried, The Jewish Museum of Stockholm
- 10.10–10.30 **Break**
- 10.30–11.00 **The Early Jewish Immigration to Sweden**
Carl Henrik Carlsson, The Hugo Valentin Centre, Department of History, Uppsala University
- 11.00–11.30 **Synagogue Architecture in Northern German Lands in Baroque and Neoclassicism**
Mirko Przysławik, Bet Tfila – Research Unit for Jewish Architecture in Europe, Technische Universität Braunschweig
- 11.30–13.00 **Lunch break**
- 13.00–13.30 **Quoting the Origin: On Migrant Identities in European Synagogue Architecture**
Ilia Rodov, Bar Ilan University
- 13.30–14.00 **Domed Four-Pier Synagogues in Ruthenia, Podolia, and Volhynia**
Sergey R. Kravtsov, Center for Jewish Art, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- 14.00–14.30 **Break**
- 14.30–15.00 **How to build a synagogue in a European City: The Case of St. Petersburg**
Vladimir Levin, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- 15.00–15.30 **“The Façade cannot be as Satisfactory and Monumental as [a] New Building”: Abandoning the Converted Synagogue in Stockholm in the 1860s**
Maja Hultman, Centre for European Research and Department of Historical Studies at University of Gothenburg/Centre for Business History in Stockholm
- 15.30–16.00 **Break**
- 16.00–17.00 **Roundtable Discussion led by Marek Tuszewicki**



Symposium organizers:

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Abstracts

Jewish Sacred Architecture in the Nordic Countries 1684-1939: Pitfalls, challenges and possibilities.
Daniel Leviathan, Lund University

The idea of this presentation is to present the main idea for my PhD-dissertation, which will focus on an in-depth inquiry and survey of the synagogues in the Nordic countries, that is, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland, between 1684-1939. To date, there exists no comprehensive survey or study about the synagogues in the Nordic countries, neither on a national level nor in a wider perspective, which this study aims to change. I'm currently in the early stages of broadly surveying the material, both in terms of the number of synagogues as well as what primary and secondary sources are available. Furthermore, I'm currently trying to narrow down definitions (such as the questions of synagogue vs stiebel/stiebelech vs minyan) and what research questions should guide my inquiry and survey. As such, I would be glad to hear your input, comments and suggestions, to push this study in a good and clear direction from the very start.

The History of the Synagogue Building at Själagårdsgatan 19, Stockholm
Yael Fried, The Jewish Museum of Stockholm

The building that is now the Jewish museum has a history that goes back to the 15th century. It has housed various organizations and activities since, such as a merchants' guild, an auction house, the Seamen's mission, a police station, a Sami cultural center, offices, and of course, a synagogue and seat of "the Jewish nation." This was the center for Stockholm's Jewish life during the years 1795 to 1870. This relatively short period can be divided into three phases, during which the building changed form to better suit the needs of the community. This pertains to both the size and shape of the rooms, as well as the use of the interior furnishings and other related spaces. With rediscovered documents and recent antiquarian restoration work, we now have a more complete picture of what the synagogue might have looked like during the various phases, and why changes were undertaken.



The Early Jewish Immigration to Sweden

Carl Henrik Carlsson, The Hugo Valentin Centre, Department of History, Uppsala University

Aaron Isaac from Bützow in Mecklenburg arrived in Stockholm in 1774 and in 1775 he was allowed to settle in the city and establish a synagogue. Jews had lived in Sweden earlier, but only temporarily, unless they were baptized. The Judereglemente (Jewish ordinance) of 1782 gave Jews permissions to live only in the cities of Stockholm, Göteborg (Gothenburg) and Norrköping. Jews also settled in Karlskrona, thanks to a private initiative, and in Marstrand, which was a free port during the period 1775–1794. This paper will provide a general description of Jewish immigration to Sweden up until 1870, when the number of Jews in the country had reached 1836.

Synagogue Architecture in Northern German Lands in Baroque and Neoclassicism

Mirko Przystawik, Bet Tfila – Research Unit for Jewish Architecture in Europe, Technische Universität Braunschweig

The merchant Aaron Isaac was the first Jew to arrive in Stockholm in 1774. In the following year, King Gustav III granted him the right to settle here, to work, and even to practice his faith. With the formation of a minyan, a prayer hall was established in the building at Själagårdsgatan 19. The talk explores the question of the extent to which Stockholm's newly forming congregation brought architectural ideas for their new place of worship from their Brandenburg-Prussian homeland. Based on specific buildings, the architecture and design of baroque and neoclassic synagogues in northern Germany will be analyzed and discussed with regard to a possible German-Swedish transfer of knowledge.

Quoting the Origin: On Migrant Identities in European Synagogue Architecture

Ilia Rodov, Bar Ilan University

In the synagogue at 19 Själagårdsgatan in Stockholm, the four pillars amidst the prayer hall are reminiscent of the four-pillar bimahs of east-European synagogues. The proposed presentation surveys medieval and modern quotations (and chains of quotations) of a venerated European synagogue or a group of synagogues in other synagogues. Synagogues quoted building plans. Thus, the double-nave adopted in the twelfth-century Worms Synagogue was copied through ages: from thirteenth-century Regensburg and Prague to late fifteenth-century Krakow. Synagogues quoted spatial arrangements. The Amsterdam Esnoga synagogue was reproduced in London and then in the Dutch American colonies. Synagogues quoted structural components, mainly the Torah ark and bimah. The model was as a rule a venerated synagogue of an influential community. The model's reproduction was often done by the migrants to proclaim their roots in the parental community, or by provincial Jews in order to claim a share in the prestige of a metropolitan Jewish community. The decisions of the patrons and designers of what to copy or ignore reveal the degree and form of the migrant community's integration in the new place.



Domed Four-Pier Synagogues in Ruthenia, Podolia, and Volhynia

Sergey R. Kravtsov, Center for Jewish Art, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

By now, researchers paid little attention to a particular type of “great” synagogues, which emerged in the eighteenth-century Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and remained in use until the late nineteenth century. This type of masonry synagogues departed from the so-called bimah-support and nine-bay schemes of the previous period. The new type most probably started with the “great” synagogues in Galician Brody or Zbarazh in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. It features four interior piers of the prayer hall, which support an elevated – yet hidden in the roof construction – cupola over the central bimah. The synagogues in Podolian Rașcov and Bessarabian Soroca followed this pattern already in the eighteenth century, as probably did the Volhynian synagogue in Izyaslav. The Volhynian synagogues in Kremenets and Berestechko employed it as late as 1803–39 and 1827–79. I will discuss this pattern’s architectural features, decoration, possible meaning, significations, and relationship to the eighteenth-century types of wooden synagogues.

How to build a synagogue in a European City: The Case of St. Petersburg

Vladimir Levin, Hebrew University

The paper will discuss an architectural dialogue between the capital of the Russian Empire and its Jewish community, which centered on the erection of the Great Synagogue and other communal edifices. It will show how the Jewish community attempted to make its political statements using the means of architecture and how those statements were disputed or accepted by the city, both administratively and architecturally.

The Façade cannot be as Satisfactory and Monumental as [a] New Building: Abandoning the Converted Synagogue in Stockholm in the 1860s

Maja Hultman, Centre for European Research and Department of Historical Studies at University of Gothenburg/Centre for Business History in Stockholm

This paper aims to analyse the process leading up to the construction of the Great Synagogue in Stockholm, inaugurated in 1870. In line with previous conceptualisations of the modern synagogue, I examine the building within its larger urban context: it was not only a religious centre, but also a topographical marker of Jewishness and an architectural window allowing non-Jews to gaze into and reflect upon Jewish presence in the city. Using the architectural method ‘building biography’, I will unpack the cultural, social, geographical and religious aspects that influenced the location and design of the new synagogue. In light of this work, I can assess the reasons behind the Jewish community’s move from their former synagogue in Old Town, ultimately arguing that the 75-years old synagogue’s lack of representational and constructional potential evoked the need for a new sacred place.

