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Joseph Shatzmiller

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Joseph Shatzmiller : Cultural Exchange: Jews, Christians, and Art in the Medieval Marketplace (Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cultural Exchange: Jews, Christians, and Art in the Medieval Marketplace (Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Commerce of Cultural interchangeBy CuriousA quite interesting exploration of the interaction of Christians with Jews. It touches lightly on Islam and the Jewish community as well. Similar to *Convivencia* by Vivian Mann, which deals more with the Art as a comparative endpoint or the work by Dobbs, et al, *The Arts of Intimacy*, that extends into Literature and history a bit more, this work is complementary, as if viewed from an entirely different direction. This work deals with the opportunities for cultural contact outside of the Art world itself. It deals with acquisitions or loans of Church materials or Christian art work which may have informed the taste of local Jewish communities or patrons and the assistance opportunities that may be seen to have been created for work shared by differing artists from differing communities. It is well worth addition to the works cited in that regard.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Astonishingly vivid evocation of the Middle AgesBy P. SternThis book is a triumph of historical recreation. Like an artist working in mosaic, Schatzmiller has assembled a vast number of tesserae that together make up a portrait of the economic and artistic relations between Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages. I originally thought that the book would focus on stylistic borrowings from Christian art by Jewish artists and craftsmen. While Shatzmiller does address this topic, he also covers many more fascinating areas -- such as the taking in by Jewish pawnbrokers of Christian religious items, the evolution of Jewish prohibitions on depicting the human figure, and the hiring of Christian artists to work on Jewish artworks (and vice versa). Shatzmiller's book requires some patience because he tends to bring individual manuscripts to the forefront of his analysis (frequently citing the location of archival collections and even call numbers in his text); however, those who stick with his careful analysis will be rewarded with subtle and revealing glimpses into the complex cultural interaction that characterized medieval life. I particularly liked Shatzmiller's illuminating distinction between the harsh theory and the somewhat more moderate practice of Christian doctrine relating to the Jews -- what he terms the "bark" versus the "bite" (p. 151). This is a notion that ought to have wide applicability in the study of minority-majority relations everywhere. Shatzmiller's book reminded me of the wonderful work of Ruth Mellinkoff -- although she is more interested in iconography rather than trading and cross-cultural influences. But both authors display the same sensitivity to detail, expert judgment, and creative ability to make connections between disparate ideas. I highly recommend this book and thank Shatzmiller for excavating so many hidden details of the past. There are more than the usual number of typographical errors in this book, but given the complexity of the sources, I guess we can't criticize Princeton U. Press too much!

Demonstrating that similarities between Jewish and Christian art in the Middle Ages were more than coincidental, *Cultural Exchange* meticulously combines a wide range of sources to show how Jews and Christians exchanged artistic and material culture. Joseph Shatzmiller focuses on communities in northern Europe, Iberia, and other Mediterranean societies where Jews and Christians coexisted for centuries, and he synthesizes the most current research to describe the daily encounters that enabled both societies to appreciate common artistic values. Detailing the transmission of cultural sensibilities in the medieval money market and the world of Jewish money lenders, this book examines objects pawned by peasants and humble citizens, sacred relics exchanged by the clergy as security for loans, and aesthetic goods given up by the Christian well-to-do who required financial assistance. The work also explores frescoes and decorations likely painted by non-Jews in medieval and early modern Jewish homes located in Germanic lands, and the ways in which Jews hired Christian artists and craftsmen to decorate Hebrew prayer books and create liturgical objects. Conversely, Christians frequently hired Jewish craftsmen to produce liturgical objects used in Christian churches. With rich archival documentation, *Cultural Exchange* sheds light on the social and economic history of the creation of Jewish and Christian art, and expands the general understanding of cultural exchange in brand-new ways. Some images inside the book are unavailable due to digital copyright restrictions.

"Clearly, this book is only the beginning of a series of works dedicated to the study of material links between medieval Jewish and Christian communities and of the interdependence they unveil. And we can only hope that its successors will keep up the high standards of writing and methodological expertise established in *Cultural Exchange* by Joseph Shatzmiller."--Andor Kelenhegyi, *European of History*

From the Back Cover"*Cultural Exchange* shows that Jews adopted many aspects of Christian art in works made for them. The book's arguments shine through and the exploration of cross-fertilization, most particularly the frescoes and decorations discovered in medieval and early modern Jewish houses in Swiss and German lands, is a tour de force. This important and creative book brings fresh information and insights to bear on fundamental issues of cross-cultural interaction."--William Chester Jordan, Princeton University

"This valuable book supports the view that medieval Jews in northern Europe, Iberia, and other Mediterranean societies were open to the style and iconography of their Christian neighbors, despite the protest of Jewish and Christian authorities. While other books on medieval Jewish economic activity, religious customs, and illuminated Hebrew manuscripts have made this case, no other book provides a comprehensive state of the field for researchers and general readers alike."--Ivan G. Marcus, Yale University

About the AuthorJoseph Shatzmiller is the Smart Family Professor of Judaic Studies at Duke University. He is the author of *Shylock Reconsidered* and *Jews,*

