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# And I Shall Dwell Among Them: Historic Synagogues of the World

*Neil Folberg, Yom Tov Assis*

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**Neil Folberg, Yom Tov Assis : And I Shall Dwell Among Them: Historic Synagogues of the World** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised And I Shall Dwell Among Them: Historic Synagogues of the World:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Synagogue LightBy Shalom FreedmanThis book was given to me as an anniversary gift by my wife. I do not think I have ever had a better one.In his introduction Neil Folberg talks about his having tried to photograph the synagogues presented in this album as he himself has 'seen ' them. This thought made a great deal of sense to me when I looked and compared some of the photos here with my memories of the same synagogues. I had seen the Altneushuel in Prague in a depth of darkness and sadness , a grief which obscured completely its other side- the holy light and transforming beauty Folberg's photographs reveal in it.There are so many treasures in this work. I knew nothing for instance about Uzbekhi family-synagogues. Their intimacy and skill in decoration moved me. Folberg traveled through many different parts of the world, to reach some very well- known and some little - known and little- visited synagogues. He and his assistant Max Richardson brought with them an enormous amount of lighting equipment. Folger's description of how they might labor for days to achieve one perfect picture , deepened my appreciation for their enterprise.Folberg knows the world of the synagogue well, and his introductions before each major area of the world's synagogues visited add a great deal to the book. The afterword by Yom Tov Assis teaches a much about the development of the synagogue over time.I have always had a special love for synagogues.I was raised in a small but for me, especially beautiful synagogue, Shaarah Tefillah in Troy, New York. I kept wishing that Folberg had somehow years before gotten to it, and photographed before its unfortunate

demolition. Part of the poignance of this work is that Folberg does arrive at many synagogues which no longer have congregations, or which only a few people left. There is a certain sense of 'memorialization' then in his photographing them, though he does not stress this motif. His stress is on the synagogues themselves as they appear now. Here I think it is important to emphasize one central element of his work. One can think of neglected synagogues in the diaspora, as places of gloom, darkness, neglect, great physical poverty. After all most of the synagogues are much smaller places of worship than the churches or mosques of the area they are in. But Folberg so lights the synagogues that they become somehow sparkingly - up-to-date, beautifully preserved. Folberg's descriptions of his work and the synagogues are poetic and impressive. He provides a kind of travelogue of the Jewish world in his describing each of the places he comes to, and the unique character of its synagogues. All synagogues by the way share the feature of being pointed towards Jerusalem, and the Temple Mount. This book is inspiring and beautiful. I believe it belongs in every Jewish home, and in the homes of all those who would see and understand, how holiness and beauty may be made one. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A beautiful pictorial book on synagogues By Lisa MA beautiful Book! Many breath taking pictures of ancient to modern synagogues. Neil Folberg has done a lot of research and taken hundreds of pictures of old and modern synagogues. He talks about the architecture, the customs unique to each section of Europe that he visited and why the synagogues were constructed in this way. He also has some pictures of American and Canadian synagogues. Many pictures of old synagogues that are no longer in existence after WWII. Beautiful book! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Diaspora Are Unique By B. Wolinsky In every city, the Beit Knesset tells you everything about the Jewish inhabitants. Whether you're in Prague, London, Safed, Tashkent, India, New York City, or France, you take a good look inside and you can sense everything the people hoped to achieve. The problem is that many of these buildings are without a congregation. As the cities of the Galut emptied out, the places where Bnei Yisrael gathered every week are going dim, and eventually the lights will die out. But isn't that what happens in nature? Our people weren't in Central Asia by choice; we were taken there by force. The Beit Knesset in Paris, New York, Los Angeles, and Miami are there because we wanted to be there. And even those don't last forever. Throughout New York, Chicago, and Cleveland, buildings with the Magen David on the door emptied out as Jews moved out of the cities. In Paris they are emptying out as Jews flee state-tolerated violence. The title "I Shall Dwell Among Them" sums up the very notion of it; our creator is wherever we are. If one Beit Knesset dies, others will bloom. My greatest praises to Folberg for documenting these places before they disappear forever.

For nearly 2,000 years, from the year A.D. 70 until the founding of Israel in 1948, the Jewish people were without a homeland. But wherever they wandered during the great diaspora, the tradition of building synagogues continued. This magnificent book preserves the irreplaceable spiritual, architectural, and cultural significance of these structures in nearly 200 striking color photos of synagogues all over the world. Size D. Traveling exhibition.

From Library Journal This volume offers exquisite reproductions of excellent photographs of little-known synagogues around the world. In his images taken in India, Italy, the Caribbean, and the Middle East, among other places, Folberg (In a Desert Land, LJ 2/1/88) shows the immense diversity of Jewish houses of worship. Well-chosen location and detail shots demonstrate the relationship of synagogues to the cultures in which Jews found themselves, highlighting the adaptability of a people on the move. Indeed, the photographs are a visual record of the wanderings and adaptations of the Diaspora. Each building has been photographed in detail, and many of the synagogues in the book have been photographed for the first time. The essay "The Synagogue Through the Ages" complements the photographs, discussing the buildings in their cultural and social contexts. This beautiful book is recommended for lay readers and specialists alike. Martin Chasin, Adult Inst., Bridgeport, Ct. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Renowned photographer Folberg has been, primarily a landscape photographer so it was quite a challenge for him to adapt his vision and techniques to the interiors of historic synagogues. His success in capturing the beauty and grace of these cherished houses of worship is testimony as much to his talent and sensitivity as to the powerful spiritual aura of the synagogues themselves. Folberg traveled far and wide to find old, intact synagogues, and the array of architectural styles he discovered is awe inspiring. Folberg photographed synagogues in Italy, Turkey, Uzbekistan, the Caribbean, the U.S., Israel, and, most poignantly, all over Europe. Each synagogue reflects the indigenous architecture of its location, from the elaborate patterning of Turkish tile work to the clean cool stucco of the desert, to the carved wood, stained-glass windows, frescoes, and crystal chandeliers of Europe. The atmospheres range from earthy and homey to grand and showy, but every variation expresses devotion, pride, and gratitude. Although the seeds of Judaism have been forcibly dispersed all over the world, they have flourished wherever they've landed. This handsome and illuminating volume documents and celebrates that resilience and fortitude. Donna Seaman ". . . Folberg keeps up an approach [others] never reach, a tone appropriate to religious architecture books in our . . . curious age . . ." --Eve Kahn, Forward Among the phenomena Neil Folberg detected in his search for historic synagogues was that wherever Jews settled--whether in Morocco, Hungary, or the American South--the designs of their temples reflected the prevailing style of the environment. But it is the building's power to evoke spirituality that

comes across most forcefully in his photographs. " --New York Magazine