Sacred Spaces

The development of Jewish places of worship from
the Tabernacle of Moses to present day synagogues

by

Chan Mun Yee

HT004005J

Submitted to the Department of Architecture
on 14th December 2001 in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

Abstract

The synagogue is one of the oldest religious institutions in the history of Mankind. This paper examines how a synagogue’s exterior might change au courant but its internal layout remained virtually unchanged throughout history due to its strong affinity with Judaism and its communal religious rituals. This is despite the Jews being dispersed to all corners of the earth due to anti-Semitic activities (pogroms) or otherwise. Their tenacity is matched by their relentless preservation of traditions, which led to their constructing of a synagogue once they prospered in a new homeland. Followers of the ancient faith today still assemble in synagogues to read the Talmud, to pray, and to form community with one another and with their God.

Dissertation Supervisor: Mrs Chan Yew Lih

Title: Associate Professor