construed by Christian scholars as conforming to the Ezekielian model, or else as describing a distinct earlier iteration of the Temple[15]. Even as Hebraism took center stage in Early Modern Biblical scholarship, the Talmudic temple descriptions were either ignored, or else confined to self-contained studies of rabbinic culture (such as that of Constantijn L'Empereur)[16]. French Benedictine Antoine Augustin Calmetôs ***Dictionary of the Holy Bible***, although published decades after Leonôs ***Retrato,*** sheds light on the traditional Christian attitude toward the historicity of the Talmudic temple model. Calmet highlights the disparate arrangement of the temple precincts in Ezekiel and the Talmud. Having noted the disparity, he concludes that the Talmudic modelôs authenticity is dubious at best as ñneither the Talmudists nor the Rabbins are of antiquity or authority sufficientò to provide an accurate description of the Temple[17]. In this climate of seventeenth-century Talmudic skepticism, Leonôs Talmudic reconstruction of the Temple would have been quite contentious. Thus, Laura Liebman categorizes the ***Retrato*** as ñforming a corrective dialogueò with earlier Christian representations[18].

However, as Offenburg points out, the ***Retrato*** is not exclusively rabbinic. Leon does cite scripture alongside rabbinic material in his written reconstruction of the Temple[19]. Furthermore, it would be a mistake to conclude that Leonôs promotion of the Talmudic model means that he ñrejected Ezekiel as a source for the templeò[20]. Leon relied heavily on Ezekiel in his reconstruction of the temple. That much is clear from the hebrew edition of the ***Retrato***, ***Tabnit***

Scroll,ò Historical Perspectives: From the Hasmoneans to Bar Kokhba in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls, ed. David Govð Ď

Goudeau. ***Ezekiel for Solomon,*** pp. 107-8.

[16] ibid, 96.

[17] Calmet. ***Dictionary of the Holy Bible***, pp. 24.

Leibman. ***Messianism, Secrecy, and Mysticism,*** p. 62.

[19] Offenberg. ñJacob Judah Leon Temploôs Broadsheet.ò

Morrison. ***Isaac Newton and the Temple of Solomon,*** p. 97.

scriptural basis for the Talmudic modelôs Womensô Precinct (fig. 1)[28]. Another architectural discrepancy between the standard interpretation of Ezekiel and the Talmudic model that Leon must resolve in order to root

a figure grasping a measuring rod and cord[33]. This figure most likely represents the identically equipped angelic being that guides the prophet Ezekiel through the Temple in the Biblical narrative[34]. As if to confirm his identity, the figure as he is depicted in the earlier portrait stands underneath a legend featuring a verse from Ezekiel (43:12)[35]. Leonôs rabbinically validating exegesis of scripture is not limited to Ezekiel. As previously mentioned, Leon cites I Kings, II Chronicles, and other Biblical accounts of the Jerusalem Temple in his reconstruction of the Talmudic model[36]. Although these scantier descriptions less frequently blatantly contradict the Talmudic model, there is one notable discrepancy between the Temple as described in II Chronicles and in Tractate Middoth. While the Talmud marks the height of the Sanctuaryôs porch at one hundred cubits, II Chronicles sets it at one hundred and twenty cubits[37]. Leon resolves this discrepancy by asserting that the porch described in Chronicles is in it of itself only one hundred cubits high, while its ornamental roof adds an extra twenty cubits to its height. He further asserts that this roof also adorns the Talmudic model. Thus, Leon establishes II Chronicles as the source for the height of the Talmudic model[38]. As for the dimensions provided for the Sanctuary in I Kings and II Chronicles, they result in a structure that is much smaller than the grand Sanctuary as described in Middoth[39]. Leon resolves this discrepancy by asserting that the scantier temple descriptions of I Kings and II Chronicles do not do justice to the full scale of Solomonôs Temple, whose expanded measurements are preserved in Tractate Middoth[40]. Thus, Leon validates I Kings and II Chronicles as the suitable scriptural sources for the Talmudic model. All in all,

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Tractate MiddÖe
Leon. ***Tabnit Hekhal*** [Hebrew], 2.21.176, 2.26.246 ***and references to*** II Chronicles ***ad loc.***
I Kings 6; II Chronicles 3.
Leon. ***Tabnit Hekhal*** [Hebrew], 2.22.196 n. 2

Leonôs creative reinterpretation of scripture is designed to enable the rooting of the Talmudic temple model in scripture.

As previously noted, Leon was far from the first rabbinic scholar to contend with the apparent discrepancies between the Biblical temple models and the Talmudic model. However, whereas his predecessors resolve these discrepancies by asserting that the varying temple descriptions correspond to varying historical iterations of the Temple, Leon insists that all the varying Biblical descriptions in fact conform to the Talmudic model of the Temple[41]. There are instances[42] when Leon acknowledges architectural differences between the First and Second Temple, however, these instances are specifically singled out[43]. Otherwise, as previously demonstrated, Leon treats the Biblical and Talmudic accounts as if they are describing the same building[44]. As for elements of the Temple utterly unique to the Biblical descriptions, Leon will import those elements into his Talmudic model as if they are part and parcel of the rabbinic tradition. Examples of such elements include the sanctuaryôs Narrowing Windows, the Spiral Stairs, the Trickling Waters, and the Solomonic Sea of I Kings[45]. The classa

Rather, the added Biblical and classical elements adorn Leonôs Talmudic model like historical credentials, bolstering the authority of the rabbinic tradition by associating it with more widely accepted historical materia. By the end of Leonôs wonderfully creative ***Retrato,*** Josephus has become part and parcel of the rabbinic tradition, Ezekiel and Middoth have been construed as describing the same building, and the Talmudic model of the Jerusalem Temple has been thoroughly rooted in Scripture.

The Spanish text of the ***Retrato*** indicates primarily a Jewish audience of Spanish & Portuguese extraction. Leonôs Christian readers would have to avail themselves of either the Latin, Dutch, or French editions (1642-3) of the ***Retrato,*** as a Spanish text would have been less accessible to them[47]. As for the Hebrew edition (1650), it was probably prepared for a rabbinic audience[48]. However, former ***conversos*** newly returned to Judaism would possess little to no knowledge of Latin and Hebrew, and would be much more familiar with Spanish. Therefore, the ***Retrato*** was most likely composed in Spanish ñto benefit the members of [his] nation who, for the most part, lack an understanding of the Hebrew languageò[49]. Thus, Leibman typifies the audience of Leonôs ***Retrato*** as ñ***converso***ò. As for Leonôs own ***converso*** origins, they remain elusive[50]. Simon Schama suggests he was born near Coimbra or Amsterdam, while Jacob Zwarts insists that he was born in Hamburg[51]. What is known is that Leon (n®e Lea») was of Spanish & Portuguese extraction[52]. However, he arrived with his parents in Northern Europe by 1605, when

by his own reckoning he would have been an infant[53]. Leon would have no memory of life under Catholic rule or the inquisition. Furthermore, he would have had a thoroughly rabbinic-Jewish upbringing, studying under the tutelage of Isaac Uziel[54]. Nevertheless, it would be rash to conclude that Leon was thoroughly disconnected from his former ***converso*** heritage. If he did not personally experience any sense of tension between his identity as a member of the ***Naçao*** and as a rabbinic Jew, then he certainly had to contend with such tensions as they manifested among his pupils and congregants in Middleburg, and Amsterdam. Asides from being a schoolmaster at the Ets Haim academy (having replaced ben Israel upon the latterôs dismissal) and an ñassistant Rabbi,ò ***Rubi*** Leon likely served as a ***dayan*** (rabbinical judge), meaning he was well steeped in the communal affairs of the ***kahal.*** Needless to say, Leon was heavily involved in the education of recently arrived former ***conversos*** in Middleburg and Amsterdam[55]. Thus, Leon would have been intimately familiar with the types of frustrations expressed by former ***conversos*** as they encountered the rabbinic tradition for the first time.

The first former ***converso*** to voice those frustrations in a systematic way was Uriel da Costa. In 1614, da Costa arrived in Hamburg with his brother, eager to begin his life as an open Jew. However, it appears that da Costa was put off by the what he calls the ***"tradição de boca,"*** that is, the rabbinic tradition[56]. Da Costaôs public dissemination of his critiques of rabbinic tradition culminated in his excommunication, humiliating ceremonial reconciliation with the Amsterdam community, and eventual suicide[57]. Da Costa is often grouped together with the more famous Spanish & Portuguese heterodox thinker, Baruch Spinoza[58]. Indeed Miriam Bodian

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[illegible]

[illegible] Menasseh ben Israelôs Thesouro dos Dinim,ò p. 342.

paints da Costa as a sort of humanist philosopher by asserting that his critiques fundamentally express the radical notion ñthat an individual, through the exercise of reason, had the right to challenge the authenticity of a religious tradition purportedly based on revelation.ò[59] However, even Bodian identifies ñthe Oral Lawò to be the specific object of da Costaôs critiques.[60] Thus, it might be too broad of a generalization to qualify both da Costa and Spinoza as systematic critics of Biblical and religious tradition[61]. Only later in life, as ñexperience and years clarified many thingsò for da Costa did he experience a ñchange in judgmentò which provoked him to conclude

between the Biblical law and rabbinic tradition. The letter, as summed up in de Modenaôs fiery response ***Magen VeṢina*** and in the introduction to da Costaôs recently unearthed opus ***Exame das Tradicioes Pharasias,*** presents several instances of rabbinic traditions that blatantly contradict the text of the Hebrew Bible[67]. For example: while the text of the Bible explicitly prescribes lex talionis in the case of an óeye for an eyeô, the rabbinic tradition only entitles the injured party to monetary compensation. In light of this discrepancy, the bibliocentric da Costa prefers the Biblical text over rabbinic tradition. Da Costa argues that while lex talionis serves as a powerful

Moses in order to inculcate Jewish practice among former ***conversos***[76]**.** Moreno-Goldschmidt charecterizes Mannasseh ben Israelôs ***Thesouro dos Dinim*** as partly dedicated to addressing the dissonance between scripture and rabbinic law[77]. In the ***Thesouro,*** the Bible features as the most prominent source of authority cited by ben Israel. The ***halachic*** manuel includes more than a hundred Biblical references rooting rabbinic practices in the text of the Bible[78]. For example: ben Israel roots the rabbinic Jewish method of ritual slaughter in scripture by interpreting the verse ñand you shall slaughter...as I have commanded theeò as indicating that God orally transmitted the correct procedure for ritual slaughter to the ancient sages[79]. Similarly, he defends the strict rabbinic Jewish sabbath restrictions by asserting that the ambiguity of the Biblical injunction against conducting ñlaborò on sabbath indicates that God must have orally clarified for the ancient sages what constitutes ñlaborò[80]. Neither of these scriptural expositions were originally developed by ben Israel (in fact, they appear in the Talmud[81]). However, the fact that ben Israel goes out of his way to present them in a practical ***halachic*** manual designed for the layman suggests that he is mindful of critiques leveled against the ***halacha*** by rabinnic skepticists[82].

In addressing Uriel da Costaôs critiques of the rabbinic tradition, Leone de Modena dedicates the major part of his responsum ***Magen VeṢina*** to rooting the rabbinic tradition in scripture, thereby endeavoring to resolve the perceived dissonance between the ówrittenô (Biblical) and óoralô (rabbinic) law. In ***Magen VeṢina,*** De Modena quite vociferously insists that

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ibid.

[77] ibid.

ibid.

Moreno-Goldschmidt. ñMenasseh ben Israelôs Thesouro dos Dinim,ò p. 347; Menasseh ben Israel. ***Thesouro dos Dinim***, Part IV, 4:1; Deuteronomy 12:21.

Moreno-Goldschmidt. ñMenasseh ben Israelôs Thesouro dos Dinim,ò p. 347; Menasseh ben Israel. ***Thesouro dos Dinim***, Part III, 43:1.

[81] ***E.g.*** Tractate Hullin 28a; Tractate Shabbat 177b.

Moreno-Goldschmidt. ñMenasseh ben Israelôs Thesouro dos Dinim,ò p. 347-8.

seventeenth century. Owing to the Western Sepharadic Diasporaôs unique circumstances, rabbis and communal leaders such as Leon, ben Israel, and de Modena had to adapt their teachings to appeal to the Catholic upbringing of the New Jews. In Leonôs case, the rooting of the Talmudic temple in the Bible necessitated the creative reinterpretation of scripture. Ironically, it should be noted that Leon may have actually hit upon the Talmudic sagesô own interpretation of Biblical temple narratives: while the Talmud makes a great fuss over ritual aspects in Ezekiel that contradict the rabbinic tradition, no reference is made of the architectural dissonance between the Ezekielian and Talmudic models[91]. This fact combined with references to Ezekiel found in Tractate Middoth and the asserted divine origin of the Talmudic plan might indicate that the Talmudic sages may have assumed that the temple described in Ezekiel ***does*** in fact correspond to the Talmudic Model[92]. Regardless, Leonôs aim in rooting the Talmudic temple in scripture was in large part to appeal to the bibliocentric outlook of Spanish & Portuguese Jewry.

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[91] ***see*** Tractate Menahot 45a-b.
e.g. Tractate Middoth 4:1; ***and see*** n. 12.

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