

The Dhimmi

Jews and Christians under Islam

Bat Ye'or

With a Preface by
Jacques Ellul

Translated from the French by
DAVID MAISEL (Author's text) PAUL FENTON (Document section)
and
DAVID LITTMAN



Rutherford • Madison • Teaneck
Fairleigh Dickinson University Press
London and Toronto: Associated University Presses

First published as *LE DHIMMI: Profil de l'opprimé en Orient et en Afrique du Nord depuis la conquête arabe* (335 pages), by Editions Anthropos, Paris, 1980.

Revised and enlarged English edition.

© Bat Ye'or 1985, including translation copyright.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission from the publisher, except for the quotation of brief passages in criticism.

Associated University Presses
440 Forsgate Drive
Cranbury, NJ 08512

Associated University Presses
25 Sicilian Avenue
London WC1A 2QH, England

Associated University Presses
2133 Royal Windsor Drive
Unit 1
Mississauga, Ontario
Canada L5J 1K5

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Bat Ye'or.
The Dhimmi.

Translation of: *Le dhimmi*.

Bibliography: p.

Includes indexes.

1. Dhimmi. 2. Islamic Empire—Ethnic relations.
3. Arab countries—Ethnic relations. I. Title.

DS36.9.D47B3813 1985 909'.097671 84-47749

ISBN 0-8386-3233-5 (cloth)

ISBN 0-8386-3262-9 (paperback)

THIRD PRINTING

Printed in the United States of America

Contents

Acknowledgments	17
Author's Note	19
Abbreviations	21
Illustrations	23
Preface by Jacques Ellul	25
Introduction	35

PART ONE

1	HISTORICAL OUTLINE	43
	Origins of the Dhimma	47
2	ASPECTS OF THE DHIMMI CONDITION	51
	Conquest and Annexation of Territories	51
	Discriminatory Taxes	52
	<i>a) Kharaj</i>	52
	<i>b) Jizya</i>	53
	<i>c) Other Taxes (avariz: irregular taxes)</i>	54
	Public Administration	55
	Inequality before the Law: Invalidity of the Dhimmi's Oath	56
	Religion	57
	<i>a) Places of Worship</i>	57
	<i>b) Liturgy</i>	59
	<i>c) Persecutions and Forced Conversions</i>	60
	Segregation and Humiliation	62
	Process of Colonization	67
3	FOREIGN PROTECTION	78
	Commercial and Political Protections	80
	Interfaith Relations	86
	Factors of Political Manipulation	88
	Economic and Religious Rivalries	91
	Nationalism	93
4	EMANCIPATION	98
	Muslim Reaction	105
	From Emancipation to National Independence	107

PART TWO

5	JIHAD AND DHIMMA: MODERN FORMULATIONS	113
	The Jihad against Israel	114
	The Palestinian Dhimma	118
	Arab Nationalism and Dhimmi Condition	119
	Arab Umma, and Dhimmi State: Israel—the Ideological Conflict	122
	Opprobrium as a Necessity	124
	Production of Hatred	125
6	THE DHIMMI ARCHETYPE IN MODERN ARAB NATIONALISM	127
	Archetype and Condition	127
	The Dhimmi Archetype in the Arab-Palestinian Consciousness	130
	Toleration or Oppression?	131
	Fundamentalism	133
	Present and Future: a Challenge	137
7	PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS: THE DEGRADATION AND NOBILITY OF THE OPPRESSED	140
	The Super-Ego of the Dominating Group	140
	Alienation of the Dhimmi	141
	The Dhimmi Syndrome	143
	Exclusion of the Dhimmis from History	144
	Oriental Zionism	146
	The Existential Significance of the Dhimmis' Condition	150
	Community Ties	153
	Messianic Expectations	154
	Epilogue	156

DOCUMENTS

I

JURISTS' TEXTS

1.	Jihad	161
	(Ibn Abi Zayd al-Qayrawani, Ibn Khaldun)	
2.	Conquest	162
	<i>Peace treaty between Habib b. Muslama and the Christians of Tiflis (Georgia, circa 653)</i>	162
	<i>The conquest of Christian Armenia</i>	163
	<i>The conquest of Christian Egypt</i>	163
	<i>Umar b. al-Khattab's letter to Sa'd b. Abu Wakkas, the conqueror of as-Sawad (Iraq)</i>	164
	<i>How the land and the inhabitants of as-Sawad should be considered</i>	164
	(al-Baladhuri)	164

3. Fate of the Annexed Territories and Conquered Peoples	165
<i>Umar b. al-Khattab (634–644) replies to the Muslims who demand the sharing out of the lands of Iraq and Syria (-Palestine) amongst the conquerors</i>	165
<i>The people of the countries of war and the bedouin who converted to preserve their lands and possessions</i>	165
<i>Difference between tithed land and kharaj land</i>	167
<i>Concerning the costume and appearance of the tributaries</i>	169
<i>Letter from Umar to Abu Ubayda after the conquest of Syria and Palestine</i>	170
<i>Battle procedures</i>	170
(i Abu Yusuf)	
4. Dhimmi Taxation and its Usage	172
<i>Booty</i>	172
<i>Fay</i>	173
(i Ibn Taymiyya)	
5. Jizya and Kharaj (11th century)	175
<i>Poll tax and land tax</i>	175
(i al-Mawardi)	
6. Expulsion of the Natives from State Administration	180
<i>Traditions concerning the caliph Umar b. al-Khattab (634-644)</i>	180
<i>Some of the conquerors' regulations in Syria-Palestine</i>	181
<i>Caliph Umar b. Abd al-'Aziz (717–720) to the imperial governors</i>	182
(i Ghazi b. al-Wasiti)	
7. Constraints on Dhimmis	183
<i>Churches</i>	185
<i>Poll-tax</i>	185
(i Ibn Naqqash)	
8. Decree of Caliph al-Mutawakkil (850)	186
(i al-Tabari)	
9. Zoomorphic Discriminatory Badges (9th century)	187
(i al-Maliki)	
10. Dhimmis' Servitudes in Seville (circa 1100)	187
(i Ibn Abdun)	
11. The Jizya's Meaning: Edict of Caliph al-Amir bi-Akham Illah (1101–1130)	188
(i Ibn Naqqash)	
12. Forced Conversions in the Maghreb	189
(i al-Marrakushi)	
13. Prestige and Honour Forbidden to Jews and Christians (circa 1220)	190
(i Ibn al-Fuwati)	
14. Dhimmis in the Maghreb and Egypt (1301)	192
(i Ibn Naqqash)	
15. Synagogues and Churches	194
(i Ibn Taymiyya)	
16. Places of Worship, Clothes, and Behavior of Dhimmis	196

<i>Distinctive clothing</i> (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya)	196
17. Dismissal of Christian Officials in Egypt (1419) (Ibn Taghribirdi)	198
18. Contempt and Praise for Dhimmis (Ibn Askar)	199
<i>Jewish dietary laws</i> (al-Jili)	200
<i>Silence and protection of dhimmis (16th century)</i> (ash-Sha'arani)	200
19. The Manner of Collecting the Jizya (al-Maghili, al-Adawi)	201
20. Traditions and Attitudes towards Dhimmis (18th century) (al-Damanhuri)	202

II

ASPECTS OF THE DHIMMIS' EXISTENCE

As Observed

ORIENT

21. Baghdad <i>A description by Obadyah the Norman proselyte (Johannes), born in Oppido, southern Italy, a priest converted to Judaism (1102)</i> (Obadyah)	205
22. A Courageous Copt in Twelfth Century Egypt (Ibn Naqqash)	206
23. The Copt's Testimony Refused (Ghazi b. al-Wasiti)	207
24. Conversion of Christians (Egypt) (Ghazi b. al-Wasiti)	207
25. A Jewish Vizier in Baghdad (1290) <i>Muslim censorship of the dhimmis</i> (Ghazi b. al-Wasiti)	209 210
26. Copts Claim Egypt as their Land (14th century) (al-Asnawi)	211
27. Account of a Danish traveller (1761) <i>In Cairo</i> <i>In Yemen</i> <i>Linguistic discrimination</i> (Niebuhr)	212 212 213 213
28. Christians in Syria-Palestine (18th century) <i>Rivalries between communities</i> <i>The European merchants of Cairo in 1785</i> <i>Behavioral distortions resulting from oppression</i> (Volney)	214 215 216 217

29. On the Way to Jerusalem (1807) (Ali Bey)	218
30. Jews and Samaritans in Palestine (1816) (Buckingham)	220
31. Visit to the Jews of Hebron (1836) (Stephens)	222
32. Improved Conditions in Syria-Palestine (1836) <i>Judiciary system</i> (Campbell)	224 224
33. A Visit to Israel's Holy Places (1839) <i>The chances of evangelisation in Palestine</i> (Bonar, M'Cheyne)	225 226
34. The Prince of Wales Visits Hebron (1862) (Wilson)	227

THE ERA OF EMANCIPATION

35. Nineteenth Century Ottoman Palestine <i>Obstacles to dhimmi emancipation in Palestine</i> (Finn)	228 234
36. Abduction of Christian Children; Weakness of Governor (Aleppo 1842) (FO)	241
37. Riots and Massacres in Aleppo (1850) (FO)	242
38. Muslims, Orthodox Christians and Protestants in Nablus (1853) (FO)	244
39. Expulsion of Protestants from Nablus (1856) (FO) <i>Appeal of Jerusalem Protestants</i> (FO)	246 249
40. Impunity of the Ulama in Palestine (FO)	251
41. Christians in Jerusalem (1858) (PP)	252
42. Expulsion of Christian Villagers near Nablus (1858) (PP)	253
43. Report on the Christians in Aleppo (1859) (FO)	254
44. Slaughter of Christians at Hasbeya and Rasheya (June 1860) (FO)	257
45. Massacre of Christians in Damascus (July 1860) <i>Memorandum</i> (PP)	259 259
46. Situation of the Christians throughout Syria (1860) (FO)	270

47. Refusal to Condemn Murderers (FO)	271
48. Causes of the Massacres (Syria, 1860) (FO)	272
49. Responsibility of Muslim Notables (FO)	274
50. Exodus of Christians from Damascus (FO)	276
<i>Abduction of Christian women by warring Bedouin</i> (FO)	278
51. Frustrated Christians Seek Revenge against Damascus Jews (1860)	278
<i>The Heads of the Jewish community at Damascus to Sir Moses Montefiore</i> (PP)	279
52. Armenians in Armenia (1869) <i>Extinction of the dhimmi peasantry</i> (PP)	281 283
53. Obstacles to Christian Emancipation (1870) (PP)	289
54. Disturbances on Mt. Carmel (1877) (PP)	290

MAGHREB

55. Jews and Converts in Morocco (circa 1790) <i>Discrimination after conversion</i> (Lemprière)	291 291
56. Sultan's Agents and Courtiers (circa 1790) (Romanelli)	291
57. Dehumanisation of the Dhimmi in Tunisia (1800) (Frank)	292
58. Sack of the Jewish Quarter of Fez (1820) (an-Nasiri)	293
59. The Dhimma in Algeria and Morocco (early 19th century)	294
<i>Revolt of the dhimmis</i>	295
<i>The dhimma and the payment of the jizya in 1815</i>	296
<i>Discriminatory dress</i>	297
<i>Messianism</i>	298
<i>Christians reside in Jewish quarter</i>	298
<i>Collective reprisals during a rebellion at Algiers (1804)</i> (Barton Lord)	298
60. Change of Reign in Algiers (early 19th century) (Broughton)	299
61. Jews of Algiers before the French Conquest (1825) (Shaler)	300
62. Emancipation in Algeria and Dhimmi Notables (Campbell)	303

63. The Sultan of Morocco Defines Jewish Rights (1841) (Sultan Mulay Abd ar-Rahman)	304
64. Vestmental Discrimination in Morocco (1850) (Godard)	305
65. Defenceless Dhimmis of Morocco (19th century) (Brooke, Leared, Bonsal)	305
66. Restrictions of Movement and Residence <i>Morocco (1789)</i>	308
(Lemprière)	308
<i>Christians are no longer insulted in Tunis (1835)</i>	309
(Russell)	
67. Impurity of Infidels in Morocco (1789 and 1889) (Lemprière, Leared)	309
68. Purity of Arab Land	309
<i>At Kerwan</i>	309
<i>At Sfax</i>	309
(Hesse-Wartegg)	
<i>At Shellah (Morocco) in 1890</i>	310
<i>At Fez</i>	310
(Kerr)	
<i>In Yemen</i>	310
(Wyman Bury)	
69. Economic Importance of the Dhimmis and their Exploitation	310
(Lemprière, Brooke, Leared)	
<i>In Egypt</i>	311
(Paton)	
70. Servitudes in the Maghreb (1870) (Hesse-Wartegg)	312
71. Wages in Marrakesh (1876)	313
<i>Dhimmi notables—instruments of the rulers—and the oppressed</i>	315
(Halévy)	
72. Oppressors and Dhimmis in Marrakesh (1876) (Halévy)	316
73. Refusal to Emancipate the Dhimmis in Morocco (Crawford, Leared)	317
74. Unpunished Crime (1880) (Jewish Chronicle, Miguerez)	319
75. The Dhimmi as Parasite (Trotter)	320
76. The Dhimmi as Scapegoat (Stutfield)	323
77. Influence of International Opinion (Bonsal)	324
78. The Sultan of Morocco Protects the Jews	325
<i>Edict forbidding the persecution of the Jews at Demnat (1884)</i>	325
(Leven)	
<i>Letter to the Caid of Marrakesh (1892)</i>	326
(Sultan Mulay Hassan)	

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 79. Payment of the Jizya in Marrakesh (1894)
(AIU) | 327 |
| 80. A Court Dhimmi in Morocco (1906)
(Slouschz) | 327 |
| 81. Jews, Berbers, and Arabs (Libya, 1906)
(Slouschz) | 328 |
| 82. Expropriation in Tripolitania (Libya, 1908)
(Slouschz) | 329 |

PERSIA

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 83. Forced conversions of Greek Christians and Jews
(1843-45)
(Wolff) | 330 |
| 84. Forced Converts and the Condition of Jews (1850)
<i>The situation of Persian Jews</i>
(Benjamin) | 331
333 |
| 85. Servitudes in Persia
(Leven) | 336 |
| 86. Official Edicts of Protection (1875 and 1897)
(Leven, <i>Shah Muzaffar ad-Din</i>) | 337 |
| 87. The Descendants of Forced Converts (1929)
(Sémach) | 338 |

ARABIA

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 88. Expulsion of the Jews from San'a (Yemen, 1666)
(Ibn ar-Rijal) | 339 |
| 89. Toleration at Maskat (1828)
(Wellsted) | 340 |
| 90. Edict Promulgated by the Imam Yahya of Yemen (1905)
(Sémach) | 340 |
| 91. Behavioral Distortions Resulting from Oppression
(Yemen, 1910)
(Sémach) | 341 |
| 92. Yemen (1914)
(Wyman Bury) | 344 |
| 93. On the Arabian Coast (1947)
(Meulen) | 344 |

III

ASPECTS OF THE DHIMMIS' EXISTENCE

As Experienced

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 94. Forced Conversions and Degradation (12th century)
<i>Under the Almohads (Spain and the Maghreb)</i>
(Ibn Aqnin) | 346
346 |
| <i>In Yemen (ca. 1200)</i>
(Maimonides) | 351 |

95. Palestinian Jew Seeks Refuge in Christian Spain (1291) (Isaac b. Samuel of Acre)	352
96. The Bread of Tears (1600) (Samuel b. Ishaq Uceda of Safed)	354
97. Life in the Mellah of Fez (1610–1613) (Serero)	355
98. Elegy of a Persian Jewish Poet (17th century) <i>During the forced conversions under Abbas II (1641–1666)</i> (Hizkiya)	359 359
99. Trial and Sufferings in Yemen (1666): Two Versions of History	361
<i>The version of the victims</i>	361
<i>The version of the oppressors</i> (Se'adyah ha-Levi, Ibn al-Wazir)	363
100. Description of the Status of Non-Muslims in Palestine (1700) (Gedaliah of Siemiatyce)	364
101. Reign of Terror in Fez (1790–1792) (Ibn Attar)	366
102. Jews of Afghanistan and the Forced Conversions in Meshed (1839) (Gorgi)	369
103. Jews of Palestine before 1847 (Reischer)	371
104. Jews of Baghdad (1877) (Bekhor-Husayn)	372
105. Jews of Morocco (1888) (Ben Shimon)	373
106. Jews of Tunis (1888) (Fellah)	375
107. Return of the Exiles to Zion	376
<i>Dhimmi from Yemen (1881–1910)</i> (Anon., Lucciana, Sémach)	376
<i>Arrivals from Urfa, in the region of Upper Mesopotamia</i> (1896)	377
<i>Daily life in Yemen (about 1945)</i>	380
108. Expulsion of Jews from the Holy Land (1892–1896)	382
<i>Jerusalem</i>	382
(Ben Oliel)	
<i>The Hauran</i>	384
(Angel)	
109. Muslim Colonization of Palestine (1875–1885) (Oliphant)	385

IV

MODERN PERIOD

110. The Mufti of Jerusalem and the Nazis (1943–1944) (Pearlman)	389
---	-----

111. The Palestinian Dhimma (Fatah Yearbook, 1968)	390
112. Jihad in Modern Times (1968)	390
<i>The definition of jihad</i>	390
<i>The cause for which jihad is legislated</i> (Ghoshah)	391
<i>Opening speech</i> (Khalid, al-Dibani)	392
<i>Various grades of jihad</i>	395
<i>Bringing the war to an end</i> (Zahra)	395
113. Khomeini on Government, Jihad and Impurity	396
<i>Impurity of the Infidel</i> (Khomeini)	396
114. Arafat on Religious Brotherhood and Jihad	397
115. Egyptian Copts Appeal to President Sadat (1972)	399
116. Lebanon: Statements by Archbishop Ignace Mubarak (1947) and Bashir Gemayel (1982)	402
Bibliography	407
—Books and Articles Mentioned in the Text, Notes, or Documents	407
Muslim Historians and Theologians mentioned in this study: a Selected List	419
British Secretaries of State, Ambassadors, Consuls, Vice-Consuls and Agents: a Selected List	421
Index A (Persons, Peoples, Tribes, Institutions)	424
Index B (Places)	432
Index C (Selected Arab and Turkish Technical Terms)	437
Index D (General)	439

The Dhimmi

Jews and Christians under Islam

BAT YE'OR



This book is recognized as indispensable for a full understanding of the complexities of the Middle East conflicts. The author analyzes the historical realities of the *dhimmi* peoples, i.e., the non-Arab and non-Muslim communities subjected to Muslim domination after the conquest of their homelands. Separating fact from myth in an extensive analysis of the history and destiny of these populations, Bat Ye'or also provides a large number of documents from different periods and regions, many of which have not been published before.

In the seventh century, the Arabs began their conquest of the world to the cry of *Jihad*. This was the start of an extraordinary epic, which brought vast regions of the Orient, Africa and Europe, and their diverse populations, under the rule of Islam. The Jews and Christians who refused conversion to Islam were governed by their victors according to a specific legal system, the *DHIMMA*. A knowledge of the *Jihad*-War, its aims and regulations will enable the contemporary Western observer to understand an essential aspect of the current Middle East imbroglio.

From the Preface by Jacques Ellul: "This is a very important book, for it deals with one of the most sensitive problems of our time. . . . Bat Ye'or's book ought to be read as a work of current interest.

"I consider this study to be very honest. . . . *The Dhimmi* contains a rich selection of source material, makes a correct use of documents, and displays a concern to place each situation in its proper historical context. . . . I regard it as exemplary and significant. . . . It is a source of enlightenment for our time."

LC 84-47749 Printed in the U.S.A.

About the Author

BAT YE'OR, born in Egypt and now living in Switzerland, has written a number of articles on non-Muslim minorities and a historical study of Egyptian Jewry, published in French (1971) and in an enlarged Hebrew edition (1974) with a preface by the late Prof. H. Z. Hirschberg.

The Dhimmi, a translation of the 1980 French edition (*Le Dhimmi*), has been updated and the documentary section has been substantially enlarged, particularly with regard to the Christians of Syria and Lebanon during the nineteenth century.

European Acclaim for *Le Dhimmi*

"Both the layman and the specialist will find this stimulating work an indispensable source-book and guide."—*Wiener Library Bulletin* (London)

"A unique reference book in this field."—*Le Monde* (Paris)

"A scientifically irrefutable book on the subject of the oppressed within the Arab-Muslim civilization."—*Le Monde* (Paris)

"A very useful and stimulating work."—*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (London)

Fairleigh Dickinson University Press
London and Toronto: Associated University Presses