

A History of Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the Middle East

Across centuries, the Islamic Middle East hosted large populations of Christians and Jews in addition to Muslims. Today, this diversity is mostly absent. In this book, Heather J. Sharkey examines the history that Muslims, Christians, and Jews once shared against the shifting backdrop of state policies. Focusing on the Ottoman Middle East before World War I, Sharkey offers a vivid and lively analysis of everyday social contacts, dress, music, food, bathing, and more, as they brought people together or pushed them apart. Historically, Islamic traditions of statecraft and law, which the Ottoman Empire maintained and adapted, treated Christians and Jews as protected subordinates to Muslims while prescribing limits to social mixing. Sharkey shows how, amid the pivotal changes of the modern era, efforts to simultaneously preserve and dismantle these hierarchies heightened tensions along religious lines and set the stage for the twentieth-century Middle East.

Heather J. Sharkey is an associate professor in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania. She is the author of *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (2003) and *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire* (2008).

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
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University of Pennsylvania



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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521769372

DOI : 10.1017/9781139028455

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First published 2017

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-76937-2 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-18687-2 Paperback

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[More Information](#)

For Ravi, Aruna, and Vijay

Contents

<i>Illustrations</i>	page x
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xiii
1 Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the Middle East	1
2 The Islamic Foundations of Intercommunal Relations	27
3 The Ottoman Experience	64
4 The Ottoman Empire in an Age of Reform: From Sultan Mahmud II to the End of the Tanzimat Era, 1808–1876	115
5 The Pivotal Era of Abdulhamid II, 1876–1909	179
6 Coming Together, Moving Apart: Ottoman Muslims, Christians, and Jews at the Turn of the Century	243
Epilogue	301
<i>Bibliography</i>	325
<i>Index</i>	361

Illustrations

Cover image “Intérieur de la porte de Jaffa,” by Felix Bonfils, albumen photograph, post-1898. Courtesy of the Library at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania. The Lenkin Family Collection of Photography.

- 1 *Massacres d’Arménie: Arméniens égorgés à Ak-Hissar*, c. 1895–96, by Chocolaterie d’Aiguebelle (Drôme, France). Chromolithographic chocolate card. Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania Libraries. Caption on reverse states that the image depicts Armenians massacred by Circassians in the market at Ak-Hissar, in the Vilayet of Ismidt, on October 3, 1895 page 5
- 2 “Guard turc à la porte de St. Sepulchre” (Turkish Guard at the Gate of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem), c. 1885–1901, Bonfils Collection, Image Number 165914. Courtesy of the Penn Museum 9
- 3 *Napoleon in Egypt*, 1867–68. Oil on wood panel, 35.8 × 25.0 cm. Princeton University Art Museum. Museum purchase, John Maclean Magie, Class of 1892, and Gertrude Magie Fund, 1953–78 13
- 4 The Palmer Cup, wine goblet with Arabic inscription, Islamic, c. 1200–1250. Museum Number WB.53. ©The Trustees of the British Museum 43
- 5 *Marriage Contract of Zein, Daughter of R. Aaron Ha-Mumheh (The Expert)*, Fustat, Egypt, c. 1080–1114. Judeo-Arabic manuscript on parchment. Courtesy of the Library at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania. Cairo Genizah Collection, Halper 333 45

Illustrations	xi
6 “Chorbadgi en cérémonie” (Janissary colonel in ceremonial dress), watercolor painting on paper, 1790. Museum Number 1974,0617,0.12.1.85. ©The Trustees of the British Museum	68
7 Vermeer, Johannes (1632–75). <i>A Maid Asleep</i> . 1656–57. Oil on canvas, 34 1/2 × 30 1/8 in. (87.6 × 76.5 cm). Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913 (14.40.611). The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image copyright ©The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY	71
8 Opaque watercolor and ink on paper showing a Bekci, or Ottoman night watchman, carrying a club and a lantern, including pink and yellow tulip cut-outs on either side. Folio from an album titled “A briefe relation of the Turckes, their kings, Emperors, or Grandsigneurs, their conquests, religion, customes, habbits, etc,” Istanbul, 1618. Museum Number 1974,0617,0.13.32. ©The Trustees of the British Museum	90
9 Nineteenth-century bath clogs, wood with leather strap covered in metallic thread, Ottoman Empire. Museum Number 2013,6008.1.a-b. ©The Trustees of the British Museum	92
10 Excavations of the Nippur Temple Court, photograph by John Henry Haynes, 1893. Image Number 185157. Courtesy of the Penn Museum	120
11 “Femmes juives en costume de sortie” (Jewish women in outdoor clothes), c. 1876–85, Bonfils Collection, Image Number 165856. Courtesy of the Penn Museum	133
12 <i>At the Mosque Door</i> , oil painting by Osman Hamdi Bey, 1891, Image Number 184892. Courtesy of the Penn Museum	195
13 “Cawas et employé du consulat de France” (Guard and employee at the French consulate), c. 1885–1901, Bonfils Collection, Image Number 165926. Courtesy of the Penn Museum	214
14 <i>Students, imperial military middle school</i> , Halep [Aleppo], c. 1890–93. Albumen photographic print by Abdullah Frères. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Abdul Hamid II Collection	226
15 <i>Interior of the Imperial Fez Factory</i> , c. 1890–1983. Albumen photographic print by Abdullah Frères.	

xii	Illustrations	
	Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Abdul Hamid II Collection	244
16	“Jeune arménienne” (Young Armenian woman), c. 1876–85, Zangaki Brothers Collection, Image Number 291176. Courtesy of the Penn Museum	275
17	<i>Armenian Widows, with Children, Turkey</i> , near Adana, April or May 1909. Glass negative by Bain News Service. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. George Grantham Bain Collection	280
18	Oud, North African, twentieth century (signed Casablanca, 1944, Hassan Ben Bou Chaïb), Yale University Collection of Musical Instruments, Gift of Theodore Woolsey Heermance. Accession No. 4550. Photography credit: Alex Contreras	309
19	Bath clogs, wood with velvet and silver metal, nineteenth century. Museum Number 2013,6033.2.a-b. © The Trustees of the British Museum. The curator’s comments in the British Museum’s online catalogue trace these clogs to an Armenian woman whose family settled in Aleppo, Syria, after 1915 and whose grandmother had received them for her wedding trousseau	312
20	“Ferblantier juif à Jerusalem” (Jewish tinsmith in Jerusalem), c. 1876–85, Bonfils Collection, Image Number 165858. Courtesy of the Penn Museum	315
21	Glazed ceramic dish fragment, Islamic, Egypt, c. 700–1299 AD. Object Number 29-140-11. Courtesy of the Penn Museum	320

Acknowledgments

Writing this book has entailed a process of “un-learning” that has been nearly as significant as the process of learning anew. When I was an undergraduate in a history class at Yale, I read Bernard Lewis’s book *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*. Naïve, I came away convinced that the Ottoman Tanzimat decrees of 1839 and 1856 had “declared” religious equality – that the sultan had made equality happen by fiat. By the time I was a PhD student at Princeton, I realized that the changes of the nineteenth century had been much more protracted, partial, and complicated. And yet, there was no book that described this process. By writing this book, now with my students at the University of Pennsylvania in mind, I have tried to explain how religious communities worked in practice in the Ottoman Empire, while tracing the relationship between official state policies, popular attitudes, and daily life as it unfolded among people on the ground. I have also tried to write in clear language, while approaching a delicate subject with sympathy. I hope that this volume, which covers up to World War I, will enable a broad range of readers to appreciate more fully the cultural foundations for twentieth and early twenty-first-century Middle Eastern states and societies.

I have many thanks to convey. Thanks, first, to my students at the University of Pennsylvania, who in 2004 inspired me to offer the mixed undergraduate and graduate-student seminar, “Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Relations in the Modern Middle East,” which launched this book. In Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, students read draft chapters in two seminars, and their enthusiastic reactions propelled me into the final stretches of writing.

Just as decisive was a collaborative project that began in 2004 with three colleagues from the Penn Libraries: Arthur Kiron (curator of Judaica collections), William Kopycki (then Middle East Studies librarian), and Debra Bucher (then Religious Studies librarian). They helped me to develop a research portal on the web for students conducting independent research on the history of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish relations.

xiv Acknowledgments

A small grant from a program at Penn called PRRUCS – the Program for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society (which was supported, in turn, by the Pew Charitable Trusts) – boosted this effort. William Kopycki subsequently left Penn to head the Library of Congress’s field office in Cairo, Debra Bucher left for Vassar College, but Arthur Kiron (thankfully!) stayed. Arthur offered unstinting support in my efforts to connect Muslim, Christian, and Jewish histories via scholarship and teaching.

Marigold Acland, former Middle East acquisitions editor of Cambridge University Press, saw the website for my seminar and invited me to write this book. Shortly afterward, Eugene Rogan read my proposal and helped me to strengthen it. Eugene also gave encouragement and sage advice chapter by chapter – and for this, I remain profoundly grateful. Maria Marsh at Cambridge offered upbeat support and de facto “pep talks” by email. The anonymous referees offered valuable insights, both for the initial proposal and for the final clearance review. John O. Voll, who later identified himself as one of these referees, has been an informal behind-the-scenes mentor since my graduate school days, and I am very grateful.

Bernard Heyberger welcomed me as a visiting professor at the Institut d’études de l’Islam et des sociétés du monde musulman (IISMM) of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris during the 2012–13 year. I therefore had the pleasure and privilege of writing a large part of this book in Paris. The talk that I gave in Bernard’s seminar, which he offers annually on “the historical anthropology of Christians in the Islamic world,” proved critical to sharpening the ideas in this book. Critical, too, were multiple conversations with Bernard, who has become a friend. I am indebted, more broadly, to the government of France, which provided the funds that enabled my Parisian sojourn, and to other scholars in France who made my stay congenial, especially Chantal Verdeil, Elena Vezzadini, Iris Seri-Hersch, and Barbara Casciarri.

The Penn Humanities Forum (PHF) also gave me a boost. I presented the first chapter of the book at the forum in Spring 2010, during the theme year on “Connections” led by Wendy Steiner and Peter Conn. As a discussant of my first draft chapter, Jeffrey Green offered insights and suggestions that helped to clear my path moving forward. At the University of Pennsylvania, another major turning point came in Summer 2015, when I joined the Faculty Writing Retreat jointly sponsored by Penn’s School of Arts and Sciences and Graduate School of Education. From nine to five for one week in June, the retreat glued me to a chair in a rooftop lounge with a view of Philadelphia’s skyline, and enabled me to focus with colleagues who were similarly grappling with writing. In Spring 2016, Penn’s School of Arts and Sciences awarded me

a teaching leave to finish the manuscript along with a small grant from the Dean's Weiler Fund.

Many others read and gave critical feedback on portions of the draft. Those who read chapters include Kathleen Cann, Ellen Fleischmann, Betty S. Anderson, T. R. and Jaya Balasubramanian, Richard Sharkey, Mina Khalil, and Daniel Cheely. Alon Tam gave especially detailed and helpful feedback on the entire manuscript. Alessandro ("Alex") Pezzati in the Penn Museum archives, David Giovacchini (Penn's late Middle East studies librarian), Bruce Nielsen (Judaica Public Services Librarian at the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies), and John Pollack (Library Specialist in the Kislak Center, Rare Books and Manuscripts division) helped me to gain access to Penn's special collections. Colleagues at the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center, Vanderbilt Divinity School, and Yale invited me to give guest lectures on the book – opportunities that elicited constructive feedback from audiences. Friends and relatives motivated me by asking at regular intervals about the book's progress. Debi Hoffman and the Hoffman family of Aspen, Antoine Chambaz and *la famille* Chambaz of Paris, and Phil Nelson (who was in the throes of writing his own book, on biological physics) fall into this category. So do my parents-in-law, T. R. and Jaya Balasubramanian, who cheered me along the way.

I have never met Helen Sword of the University of Auckland, but want to thank her, anyway. Her book *Stylish Academic Writing* (Harvard University Press, 2012) and her online tool called "The Writer's Diet" pushed me to prune my drafts. "The Writer's Diet" made me compete against myself, to shrink my verbiage from the occasionally "flabby" to "fit and thin," or even – joy! – to "lean."

Others helped me in the final stages of the manuscript's preparation. I am grateful to Claire Sissen and James Gregory at Cambridge University Press; Siva Prakash Chandrasekaran at Newgen in Madras; and Kathleen Paparchontis. Others helped me to secure illustrations for this book: Beatriz Waters, at British Museum Images; Susan E. Thompson, curator of the Yale University Collection of Musical Instruments; Cathryn L. Goodwin at Princeton University Art Museum; and Robbi Siegel at Art Resource, Inc. Alex Pezzati, again, was especially helpful in providing me with access to archived photographic collections in the Penn Museum.

I owe thanks, too, to many places – especially libraries and cafés – which gave me room to think, read, write, and most of all rewrite, with the reassuring hum of other people doing stuff in the background. Congenial libraries included those of the Aspen Center for Physics in Bethe Hall, with its view of aspen leaves swaying in the breeze; Pitkin County Library, also in Aspen, with its tempting collection of novels on

xvi Acknowledgments

the second floor; the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics in Kohn Hall, with its views of the sunny Santa Barbara coastline; and the Fondation Maison des sciences de l'homme, overlooking the Quai de la Gare and the drizzle of Paris. The congeniality of certain cafés was equally critical. Thanks to several Philadelphia venues, above all, Good Karma (both the 10th Street and Walnut Bridge locations); Lovers and Madmen, later the Green Line Café (36th Street); Volo (Manayunk), and Starbucks (Manayunk). Ink! (Aspen) was a site of revision and inspiration. I feel the greatest café debt, however, to Coffee Cat on Anacapa Street in Santa Barbara, which is where I had my final epiphany: the moment when the end of the book appeared before me. Finally, among places that hosted me, I have especially warm memories of the second floor of Rotonde 12 of the Résidence Jussieu, and to the desk that gave me a bird's-eye view of the Institut du Monde Arabe and the Seine.

My children, Ravi and Aruna, grew from toddlers to teens during the time that it took me to conceive, write, and finish the book. They made life dash, with every day a privilege.

Throughout this time my husband, Vijay, remained my steady sidekick, sounding board, valued critic, cheerleader, and cajoler extraordinaire. I dedicate the book to the three of them, with boundless love and thanks.