

Prologue

The “Golden Age” of Jewish-Muslim Relations: Myth and Reality

Mark R. Cohen

In the nineteenth century there was nearly universal consensus that Jews in the Islamic Middle Ages—taking al-Andalus, or Muslim Spain, as the model—lived in a “Golden Age” of Jewish-Muslim harmony,¹ an interfaith utopia of tolerance and *convivencia*.² It was thought that Jews mingled freely and comfortably with Muslims, immersed in Arabic-Islamic culture, including the language, poetry, philosophy, science, medicine, and the study of Scripture—a society, furthermore, in which Jews could and many did ascend to the pinnacles of political power in Muslim government. This idealized picture went beyond Spain to encompass the entire Muslim world, from Baghdad to Cordova, and extended over the long centuries, bracketed by the Islamic conquests at one end and the era of Moses Maimonides (1138–1204) at the other.

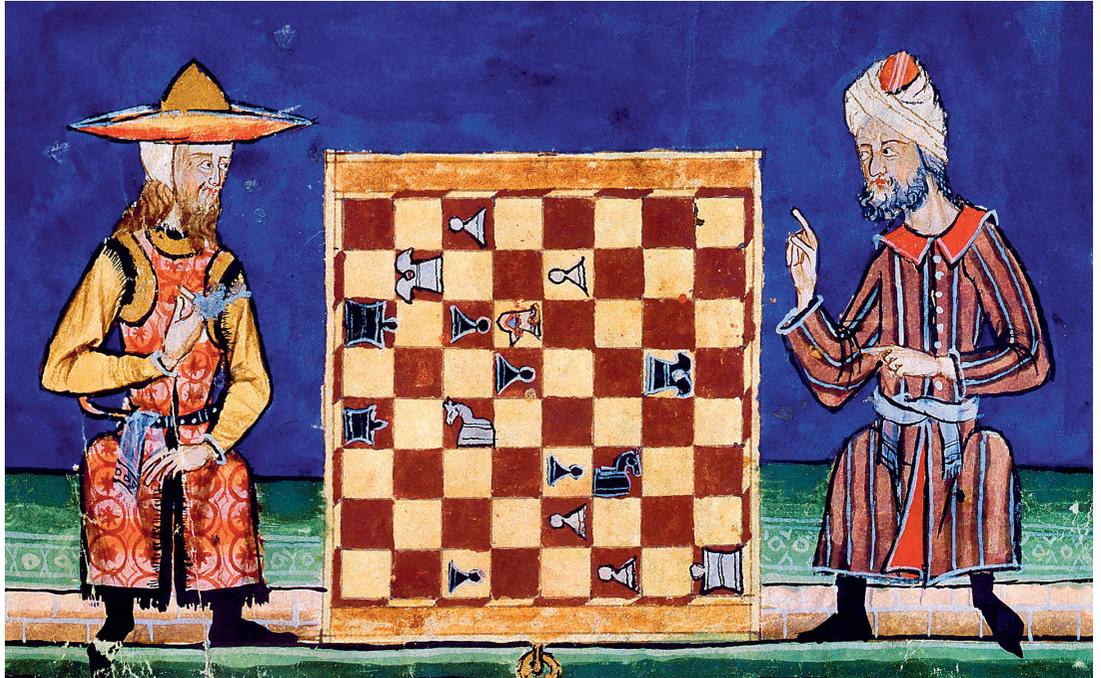
The idea stemmed in the first instance from disappointment felt by central European Jewish historians as Emancipation-era promises of political and cultural equality remained unfulfilled. They exploited the tolerance they ascribed to Islam to chastise their Christian neighbors for failing to rise to the standards set by non-Christian society hundreds of years earlier.³

The interfaith utopia was to a certain extent a myth; it ignored, or left unmentioned, the legal inferiority of the Jews and periodic outbursts of violence. Yet, when compared to the gloomier history of Jews in the medieval Ashkenazic world of Northern Europe and late medieval Spain, and the far more frequent and severe persecution in those regions, it contained a very large kernel of truth.

The image of the Golden Age remained dominant among scholars and in the general public throughout the nineteenth century, as Jews in Europe confronted a new, virulent strain of political anti-Semitism, reinforcing a much older feeling of alienation and persecution in Christian lands. It endured well into the twentieth century, as the flames of Jew hatred burned ever brighter in Europe, culminating in the Holocaust.

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This scene, depicting a Jew and a Muslim, is often used to illustrate the golden age of interfaith relations in Al-Andalus. *El Libro de los Juegos*, commissioned by Alphonse X of Castile, thirteenth century. Madrid, Escorial Library, fol. 63 recto.

In the twentieth century, Muslims appropriated the Jewish myth of the interfaith utopia as a weapon against Zionism and the State of Israel. They expressed this both in political broadsides and in books and articles about Jews or about non-Muslims in general in the Middle Ages. The leitmotif of these writings is Islamic “tolerance” (Arabic *samāha* or *tasāmuh*), often contrasted with the persecutions of medieval Christian society. Characteristically, these writings soft-pedal the legal inferiority of the Jews and gloss over, or ignore, episodes of violence that call the harmony into question.⁴

The response on the Jewish side has been to turn the idea of the Golden Age utopia on its head.⁵ Muhammad, the revisionists insist, was bent on extirpating the Jews from the very beginning. The Qur’an and other early Islamic sources are packed with anti-Jewish, even anti-Semitic, venom. And, rather than protecting the Jews, Islam persecuted them relentlessly, often as badly as medieval Christendom. This undisguised rejoinder to Arab/Muslim exploitation of the old Jewish depiction of interfaith harmony constitutes a “counter-myth of Islamic persecution.” Adapting the famous coinage of historian Salomon W. Baron, who labeled historiography about medieval Jews living under Christendom a “lachrymose conception of Jewish history,”⁶ we may call this a “neo-lachrymose conception of Jewish-Arab history.”⁷ It

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has taken hold in many circles and has flourished in the soil of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The chief proponent of the “neo-lachrymose school,” Bat Ye’or, pseudonym for Gisele Littman, has made famous the term “dhimmitude” to describe all the humiliating restrictions imposed by Islam on Jews and Christians in Muslim-Arab lands since the rise of Islam.⁸

The highly politicized debate, exacerbated by the worldwide fear of Islamism and by the Islamophobia following the attack by radical Muslims on the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001, makes the questions that underlie this book all the more controversial, but, at the same time, all the more begging for dispassionate inquiry.

Jewish-Muslim relations: The comparative perspective

The most useful way to understand Jewish-Muslim relations in the Middle Ages is to compare the Muslim world with the Christian world of Northern Europe. The choice of Northern Europe is dictated by the fact that there relations between Jews and Christians, reasonably tolerable in the early Middle Ages, declined precipitously later on to become the worst in Europe, leading the way in persecuting and ultimately expelling the Jews from Christian society. By choosing this case to compare with the Islamic world, one is able to isolate the specific factors determining how Jews were treated by the majority of society. In this way, this comparative study also constructs a paradigm that can be used to explain Jewish-gentile relations in pre-modern times in general.

If Islam seems to have been more tolerant than Christendom, this is true only in a qualified sense. In the Middle Ages, tolerance, in the modern, liberal meaning of full equality, was not considered to be a virtue to be emulated. Monotheistic religions were by nature mutually *intolerant*. Adherents of the religion in power considered it their right and duty to treat the others as inferiors rejected by God, and, in extreme cases, to treat them harshly, even to encourage them (in some cases by force) to abandon their faith in favor of the faith of the rulers. Though the religious minorities (Jews living under Christian rule; Jews and Christians living under Muslim rule) were hardly happy with their second-class status and legal inferiority, let alone the occasional persecutions, for the most part they accepted their inequality and subordination with resignation. As long as they were allowed to live in security and practice their religion without interference—this was “toleration” in the medieval sense of the word—they were generally content. For them, as for their masters, the hierarchical relationship between chosen religion and rejected religion, between superior and inferior, between governing and governed, was part of the natural order of things. The subjugated people may have dreamed of a reversal of the hierarchy, in history or in the messianic era, but for the time being, generally speaking, they bore their fate with a certain amount of equanimity.

The paradigm

The paradigm that results from this comparative approach delineates five inter-related factors that explain why anti-Jewish violence was so much less prevalent in the Islamic world than in Northern Europe. Violence was related, in the first instance, to the primacy of religious exclusivity. Historically, religious exclusivity characterized both Islam and Christianity. But anti-Jewish violence was more pronounced in Christendom because innate religious antagonism, present from the first decades of Christianity, was combined with other erosive forces. The second component of the paradigm is legal status; namely, the evolution of a special law for the Jews and a system of baronial or monarchical possessory rights—though varied in character and uneven in its application in different times and places—that could be manipulated in an arbitrary manner. This law frequently clashed with its competitor, papal policy, and the Jews were frequently caught in the middle. The third element concerns the economic circumstances that excluded the Jews from the most respected walks of life.

Religious exclusivity, a special, arbitrary legal status, and economic marginalization interacted with another adverse factor, the fourth element of the paradigm: social exclusion, which steadily robbed the Jews of their rank in the hierarchical social order. Last, the gradual replacement of the ethnic pluralism of Germanic society of the early Middle Ages by a medieval type of “nationalism,” paralleling the spread of Catholic religious exclusivity to the masses and the rise of the crusading spirit in the eleventh century, contributed to the enhancement of the Jew’s “otherness” and to his eventual exclusion from most of western Christendom by the end of the fifteenth century. Before that, the Jews survived among Christians—were “tolerated” in a manner of speaking—in part because they performed useful economic services for Christian rulers, such as importing precious spices and other goods from the East and paying taxes from the proceeds of commerce and moneylending; and in part because of a doctrine of Saint Augustine that proclaimed that the Jews played an important role in Christian salvation history as a fossil religion: witnesses, by their abjugated state, to the triumph of Christianity, bearers of the Old Testament, and ultimately by their conversion to Christianity at the time of the Second Coming of Christ.

► See article by John Tolan, p. 145.

In the Islamic world, the erosive factors described above were less severe. Religious exclusivity was modulated by the multiplicity of non-Muslim religions, primarily Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrian. The Qur’an itself, for all its harsh language referring to Christians and Jews, contains the nucleus of a kind of religious pluralism.⁹ A Qur’anic verse, “there is no compulsion in religion” (Sura 2:256), was understood to mean that the non-Muslims were not to be forcibly converted. Moreover, as venerated “People of the Book” (*Ahl al-Kitab*), Jews and Christians were allowed to live securely in their autonomous communities and to develop: they were not fossils. Legally speaking, Jews shared with other non-Muslims the status of *dhimmīs*, or

► See article by Mark R. Cohen, pp. 58-71.

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▶ See Counterpoint, The Pact of ‘Umar, pp. 72-73. “protected people.” In return for security, freedom of religion, and communal autonomy, they were obligated by the Qur’an to pay an annual poll tax. They were also subject, in theory, to regulations prescribed in the so-called Pact of ‘Umar and kindred documents, which imposed limitations on their conduct. New houses of worship were not to be built and old ones could not be repaired. They were to act humbly in the presence of Muslims. In their liturgical practice they had to honor the preeminence of Islam. They were further required to differentiate themselves from Muslims by their clothing and by eschewing symbols of honor. Other restrictions excluded them from positions of authority in Muslim government.

The Muslim pragmatism

De facto, however, these discriminatory regulations, most of them originating outside Islam, were largely honored in the breach, often with the tacit approval of Muslim rulers. The rules limiting the free practice of religion were frequently overridden in practice by the more pragmatic policy of the conquest treaties, which protected houses of worship and guaranteed freedom of religion. The discriminatory

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restrictions were likely adopted by Christian converts to Islam serving in Muslim government who wished not to be confused with their former coreligionists.¹⁰ Many of the rules of differentiation, it has recently been shown by the historian Milka Levy-Rubin, imitated discriminatory practices in Sasanian society aimed against the lowest class of Zoroastrian

society.¹¹ Whether they originated in Byzantine or in Sasanian practice, however, many of these foreign practices conflicted with the pragmatic spirit of “live and let live” of early Islam and so could often be overlooked or ignored in the day-to-day realities of Muslim and non-Muslim coexistence.

This coexistence is particularly evident in economic life. Jews were not limited to a small range of pursuits isolated from the rest of the population in deplored professions like moneylending, as in Europe. They worked as craftsmen, pharmacists, and physicians; as craftsmen in textiles, in glassmaking, and in jewelry; as retailers in the marketplace specializing in a whole host of products, including foodstuffs; in long-distance commerce, as government functionaries; and in many other walks of life. In these endeavors, Muslims and Jews (and also Christians) manifested “loyalties of category,” to use terminology coined by historian Roy Mottahedeh, that straddled the Muslim and non-Muslim divide and mitigated the discrimination inherent to the ever-present religious hierarchy.¹²

In the Islamic marketplace, there existed a substantial degree of interdenominational cooperation. Jews mixed freely with their Muslim counterparts, even forming part-

nerships, with a minimum of friction. Jews lent money to Muslims, but the reverse was also true. When, after about the twelfth century, Jewish economic circumstances declined, this was not a confessional phenomenon alone, but one that Jews shared with the Muslim majority, though as a minority group they naturally experienced greater hardship.

Speaking in social-anthropological terms—and this provides an important corrective to the view that Islam is fundamentally oppressive, if not persecutory—the rules of the Pact of ‘Umar and other restrictions served as a means to create and preserve a “natural” hierarchy, in the sense that it characterizes most religious societies in premodern times. In the Islamic hierarchy, everyone had a rank, including non-Muslims, who occupied a low rank, to be sure, but a secure rank nonetheless. Jews occupied a permanent niche within the hierarchical social order of

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Islam, and, though marginalized, they were not ostracized or expelled. The original and long-lasting ethnic and religious pluralism of Islamic society encouraged a certain tolerance of diversity. The diffusion of hostility among two and in many places three “infidel” religions helped mitigate the Jews’ “otherness” and prevent the emergence of the irrational hatred we call anti-Semitism. As humiliating as the restrictions in the Pact of ‘Umar were (when successfully enforced), Jews and other non-Muslim People of the Book seem to have grudgingly accepted them because they guaranteed their security, and because they, especially the religious leaders, wished to maintain a separate identity for their own communities.¹³ In such an atmosphere, Jews—and not just the philosophers and the physicians among them—fraternized with Muslims on a regular basis with a minimum of hostility. This sociability constituted an essential ingredient in the cultural interchange between Jews and Arabs in the high Middle Ages.

For all these reasons, the Jews of Islam had substantial confidence in the *dhimma* system. If they kept a low profile and paid their annual poll tax, they could expect to be protected and to be free from economic discrimination—not to be forcefully converted to Islam, massacred, or expelled. To be sure, the system occasionally broke down. A ruler, goaded by pious Islamic clerics, might crack down on the *dhimmīs* for ignoring the regulations of the Pact of ‘Umar. But serious persecutions were exceptional. The most infamous one occurred in the mid-twelfth century, when the fanatical Muslim Berber Almohads, the “Islamists” of their time, destroyed entire Jewish communities in North Africa and Spain, and forced thousands of Jews and Christians to accept Islam, even as they imposed their own stringent form of Islam upon impious Muslims. Also notorious, because of the rare preservation of detailed Islamic and Christian sources, was the destruction of houses of worship and forced conversions ordered by the “mad” caliph al-Hakim in Egypt and Palestine at the beginning of the eleventh century. Violent, too, was the assassination in 1066 of the

► See Nota bene, al-Hakim, pp. 106-107.

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► See article
by Mark
R. Cohen,
pp. 546-553.

“haughty” Jewish vizier Joseph ibn Naghrela, successor of his more illustrious father as head of the Jewish community in the Muslim principality of Granada, Spain, and the subsequent “pogrom” against the Jewish quarter of the city, with great loss of life. The incident was apparently triggered by an Arabic poet who wrote a poem in which he called the Jews “apes and pigs,” quoting a Qur’anic motif (e.g., Qur’an 5:60) and excoriating the Jews for violating the code of humility vis-à-vis Islam. Exceptional as it was in targeting the Jews per se, the sorry episode is regularly cited by proponents of the “neo-lachrymose conception of Jewish-Arab history” as a typical example of Islamic anti-Semitism.¹⁴

During these rare episodes, Jews felt the impact of violence no less than the Ashkenazic Jews of Europe, but they did not preserve them as part of a collective memory of suffering the way their Ashkenazic brethren did. They recognized these as temporary lapses of the *dhimma* arrangement and trusted that forced conversions, a violation of Qur’anic law, would be reversed after the initial zealotry faded. Doubtless this is one factor among others that explains why Jews in Islamic lands under threat favored “superficial conversion” (like the Islamic *taqiyya* recommended for Muslims faced with persecution for heretical beliefs) over martyrdom, unlike their self-immolating Ashkenazic brethren, who had little hope of being officially allowed to return to Judaism after their baptism. In this respect the Jews of Islamic Spain and other places in the medieval Islamic world where occasional acts of intolerance threatened Jewish life anticipated the response of Jews in Christian Spain—the so-called Marranos—who converted to Catholicism rather than accept a martyr’s death during and after the pogroms of 1391.¹⁵

Judeo-Arabic culture

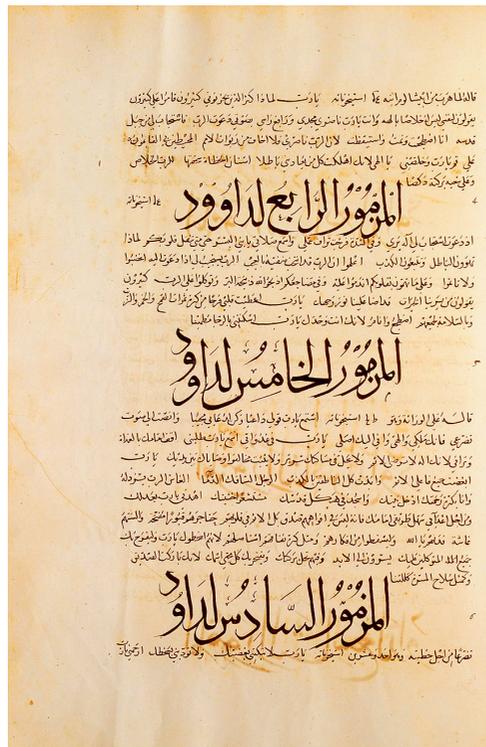
► See article
by Marina
Rustow,
pp. 75-98 and
Part IV, p. 653
and following.

The paradigm summarized here helps explain not only Muslim-Jewish coexistence but also why Jews were so open to Arab-Islamic culture. Other contributions to this book will describe this in detail. Here I shall limit myself to a few general comparative observations.

For the Jews in the Middle East and Spain, Arabic was the key to an entirely new way of thinking. There, too, Jews abandoned Aramaic for the new language, but Arabic functioned both as the language of high culture *and* the common tongue of both Jews and Arabs in everyday exchange. It was at the same time linguistically akin to Aramaic and Hebrew, with morphological forms and cognates that facilitated transcribing Arabic into Hebrew letters and reading it—the form of Arabic we call Judeo-Arabic. Assimilating Arabic was even less of a “leap” for the indigenous Aramaic-speaking Jews of the Middle East than it was for Jewish immigrants to Europe making the transition from Aramaic to European vernaculars. Furthermore, Arabic, the language of the Islamic faith, like the faith itself, was less repugnant and less threatening to the Jews than the language and doctrine of the Christian Church.

By the tenth century, therefore, some two and a half centuries after the rise of Islam, Jews had made a total and largely effortless transition from Aramaic to Arabic and now used Arabic, not only in daily speech but for nearly everything they wrote. This prepared them to share lock, stock, and barrel in the high culture of Islamic society. Islam came into contact with the science, medicine, and philosophy of the Greco-Roman world centuries earlier than European Christendom. Translated early on into Arabic, these works gave rise to what the German scholar Adam Mez famously called "Die Renaissance des Islams."¹⁶ Jews of the Fertile Crescent, the heartland of the Islamic Empire and the first center of the new Arabic science, medicine, and philosophy, had both access to and interest in the translated texts read by Muslim intellectuals. This facilitated the cultural *convivencia* of the Judeo-Arabic world, which began in the eastern Islamic domains and spread to the Muslim West. It led to Jewish adoption of philosophy, science, and medicine—philosophy serving as a handmaiden of religious truths, as it did for Islamic philosophers themselves.

► See Chapter IV of Part IV.



The Bible translated into Arabic by Saadia Gaon in the tenth century. Egyptian manuscript copy, first pages of the book Psalms, 1584–85. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. or., Arabic 1, fol. 232 and 233 verso.

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The Arabic and Islamic “renaissance” laid the groundwork for other Jewish cultural innovations. The Bible was translated into Arabic. Hebrew as a language began to be studied “scientifically,” so to speak, using linguistic tools in vogue among Arab grammarians. But nearly everything Jews wrote they wrote in Arabic, and this was not limited to philosophy, for which Hebrew entirely lacked a vocabulary. Poetry, the major exception, was composed in Hebrew, but it, too, bore the stamp of Arabic culture.

Arabic poets prided themselves in writing in the language of their Holy Scripture, the Qur’an, believing Arabic to be the most beautiful of all languages. Jews followed suit by choosing biblical Hebrew for their poetry, asserting the wonderment and uniqueness of the language of their own scripture. The social setting for this new poetry also followed the Arabic model. The poems were recited and sung in gardens, like the gardens of the caliph’s palace or of private homes, the physical setting for Arabic poetry. Jews continued to compose religious poetry for the synagogue, but it, too, employed biblical Hebrew and Arabic meter, and borrowed themes from Islamic pietistic thought.¹⁷ Poetry in the Arabic mode, and the way of living that accompanied it, led many Hebrew poets, especially in their later years, to question the frivolities of their youth.¹⁸ Judah Halevi represents the most extreme example of this rejection of the Golden Age; toward the end of his life he abandoned his native Spain and embarked on a pious pilgrimage to the Holy Land.¹⁹

» See Nota bene, Saadia Gaon, pp. 758-761.

One of the greatest rabbis of the Middle Ages, Saadia Gaon (d. 942), rightly called the “father” of Judeo-Arabic culture, wrote poetry. He served as head of the great yeshiva located in Baghdad, one of the two most important religious centers for Jews throughout the Islamic domains. He composed the first comprehensive Jewish prayer book, writing the directions for the worshipper in Arabic (the prayers, of course, remained in their original Hebrew) and including poems of his own. Saadia also compiled monographs on Jewish law in Arabic, as did other *geonim*, or heads of the yeshiva. Even the supposedly sacrosanct realm of Jewish law was not immune to Islamic influence. In fact, in the works of some scholars, the entire structure of Jewish legal discourse was altered in accordance with Islamic categories, while some of the content of Islamic law influenced Jewish legal thought as well.²⁰ Saadia was also a pioneer in applying Greco-Arabic rational philosophic categories to Jewish thought in a systematic way, adopting current methods from Islamic theologians.²¹ Maimonides (1138–1204), the acme of Judeo-Arabic philosophy, strove to make Judaism compatible with neo-Aristotelian philosophy.²²

» See article by Phillip Ackerman Lieberman, pp. 683-693.

Other religious developments within Judaism also drew inspiration from Islam. The Karaite movement—the first oppositional movement in Judaism since the ascendancy of the Talmudic rabbinic scholars in late antiquity over the Sadducees—arose in the eastern Islamic world at just about the same time and in the same place that Shi‘ism began to flourish, in opposition to the dominant Sunni “orthodoxy.”²³ Later on, Sufi pietism exerted a powerful influence on Jewish religious thought and prac-

tice as early as the eleventh century in Spain and then, beginning in the early thirteenth century, in Egypt. Abraham, the son of Maimonides (d. 1237), was a “Jewish Sufi,” as were his descendants, the leaders of the Jewish community in Egypt, for several more generations.²⁴

► See article by Elisha Russ-Fishbane, pp. 856-864.

The Arabic language gave Jews entrance to the corridors of Muslim power and made possible the remarkable careers of such luminaries as Samuel ha-Nagid ibn Naghrela in the eleventh century, head of the Jewish community, poet, Talmudist, and vizier of Granada (the father of the Jewish vizier assassinated in 1066), as well as scores of other Jewish denizens of Islamic courts, many of whom occupy pages in Islamic chronicles. Other dignitaries, as well as merchants, less well known because they did not leave books behind, but whose quotidian lives are described in minute detail in the documents of the Cairo Geniza, are no less important as Jewish exemplars of the Jewish-Muslim coexistence that reigned for several centuries during the Islamic high Middle Ages. For such illustrious figures in the Jewish elite, those centuries were indeed a Golden Age.

► See Nota bene, Samuel ibn Naghrela, pp. 132-133.

► See Nota bene, The Cairo Geniza, pp. 99-101.

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1. Much of the first part of this essay relies on my book *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984; new edition with new introduction and afterword, 2008). Much of the second part draws on my article “The ‘Convivencia’ of Jews and Muslims in the High Middle Ages,” in *The Meeting of Civilizations: Muslim, Christian, and Jewish*, ed. Moshe Ma’oz (Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2009), 54–65.
 2. For a discussion of the debate over *convivencia* and its corollary, the tension between tolerance and intolerance in Spanish history, of which the Jewish thesis was a part, see Alex Novikoff, “Between Tolerance and Intolerance in Medieval Spain: An Historiographic Enigma,” *Medieval Encounters* 11 (2005): 7–36.
 3. This insight was first expressed, as far as I know, by Bernard Lewis in his essay “The Pro-Islamic Jews,” *Judaism* 17 (1968): 402: “The myth was invented by Jews in 19th century Europe as a reproach to Christians—and taken up by Muslims in our time as a reproach to Jews.”
 4. See the representative sample of books in Arabic and other languages by Arabs and others treating the subject of the Jews of Islam, often apologetically, mentioned in the notes in chapter 1 of my *Under Crescent and Cross*.
 5. The clarion call of danger from Muslim exploitation of the myth of Islamic tolerance was sounded in an essay by British historian Cecil Roth in the Zionist Organization of America’s *New Palestine* (October 4, 1946), and in the British Zionist *Jewish Forum* in the same month. The essay was virtually forgotten until it was reprinted by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), in the “Myths and Facts” supplement to its *Near East Report*, shortly after the Six-Day War of June 1967. Coincidentally, at exactly the same time as the Roth essay (September 1967), a more conciliatory article appeared in the magazine the *Jewish Spectator*, by Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, entitled “Toward Jewish-Muslim Dialogue.”
 6. See his “Ghetto and Emancipation,” *Menorah Journal* 14, no. 6 (June 1928): 515–26, at the end; reprinted in the *Menorah Treasury: Harvest of Half a Century*, ed. Leo W. Swartz (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1964), 59–63.
 7. Mark R. Cohen, “The Neo-Lachrymose Conception of Jewish-Arab History,” *Tikkun* (May/June, 1991): 55–60; also “Islam and the Jews: Myth, Counter-Myth, History,” *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 38 (1986): 125–37; and *Under Crescent and Cross*, chapter 1.
 8. Of her many books, *Le Dhimmi: Profil de l’opprimé en Orient et en Afrique de Nord depuis la conquête arabe* (Paris: Anthropos, 1980) is representative.
 9. For a thoughtful discussion of Islam’s pluralistic approach to religion, grounded in the Qur’an, see Abdulaziz Sachedina, *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). See also Heribert Busse, *Islam, Judaism, and Christianity: Theological and Historical Affiliations* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1998), 33–35. Part 4 of my *Under Crescent and Cross* discusses sociological factors underlying this Islamic pluralism.

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10. This is the view of Antoine Fattal, *Le statut légal des non-Musulmans en pays d'Islam* (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1958), 67.
11. On the Byzantine origins of stipulations in Islamic law, see A. Fattal, *Le statut légal des non-Musulmans en pays d'Islam*. On the Sasanian roots, see Milka Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire: From Surrender to Coexistence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), chapter 5.
12. See Roy P. Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 108–15; Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, 246.
13. See Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, chapter 6, and, regarding frequent non-Muslim recourse to Islamic religious courts, Uriel I. Simonsohn, *A Common Justice: The Legal Allegiance of Christians and Jews under Early Islam* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).
14. Among the many discussions of this episode is Moshe Perlmann, “Eleventh-Century Andalusian Authors on the Jews of Granada,” *Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research* 18 (1948–1949): 843–61. The poem is handily accessible in Bernard Lewis’s translation in Olivia Remie Constable, ed., *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Sources* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 96–99; excerpts from the main Arabic and Jewish sources about the event, translated by Amin T. Tibi and Gerson D. Cohen, respectively, are also found there. The Hebrew source, like the Arabic chronicle and the Arabic poem, share the view that Joseph acted high-handedly while in office.
15. For a discussion of persecutions of Jews under Islam, see *Under Crescent and Cross*, chapter 10.
16. Adam Mez, *Die Renaissance des Islams* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1922). The book has been translated into many languages.
17. This later phenomenon is discussed thoroughly by Raymond P. Scheindlin in *The Song of the Distant Dove: Judah Halevi’s Pilgrimage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). The corpus of fifty-five Geniza documents relating to Halevi was published, with a long commentary by Moshe Gil and Ezra Fleischer, *Yehudah ha-Levi u-vene bugo: 55 te’udot min ha-Genizah* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 2001).
18. Ross Brann, *The Compunctious Poet: Cultural Ambiguity and Hebrew Poetry in Muslim Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).
19. Raymond Scheindlin, *The Song of the Distant Dove*. The more common view, that Halevi was a “proto-Zionist,” is forcefully reiterated in a recent biography by Hillel Halkin, *Yehuda Halevi* (New York: Schocken, 2010).
20. The influence of formal features of Islamic law on Judaism has been the subject of much scholarship, while the most important work on the influence of the *content* of Islamic law on the Jewish legists has been dominated by the fruitful investigations of Gideon Libson, for example, “Islamic Influence on Medieval Jewish Law? Sepher ha-’Arevut (Book of Surety) of Rav Shmuel ben Hofni Gaon and Its Relationship to Islamic Law,” *Studia Islamica* 73 (1990): 5–23, and his *Jewish and Islamic Law: A Comparative Study of Custom during the Gaonic Period* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).
21. A succinct introduction to Jewish philosophy in the Muslim world is found in Daniel H. Frank and Oliver Leaman, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Jewish Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
22. Of the many works about Maimonides and his works, see, recently, Joel L. Kraemer, *Maimonides: The Life and World of One of Civilization’s Greatest Minds* (New York: Doubleday, 2008).
23. An excellent overview of the “Karaites problem” in Jewish historiography is Meira Polliack, “Medieval Karaism,” in Martin Goodman, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), chapter 12. A refined treatment of the relations between Karaites and Rabbanites, particularly as reflected in the documents of the Cairo Geniza, is contained in Marina Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community: The Jews of the Fatimid Caliphate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008).
24. The foremost scholar of the Sufi phenomenon in Judaism is Paul Fenton. See his chapter, “Judaism and Sufism,” in Daniel H. Frank and Oliver Leaman, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Jewish Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).