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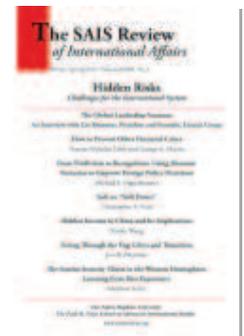
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## Demographic Islamization: Non-Muslims in Muslim Countries

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# Demographic Islamization: Non-Muslims in Muslim Countries

*Philippe Fargues*

One hundred million non-Muslims are presently living in Muslim countries, i.e. countries with a Muslim demographic majority. Muslim countries comprise three quarters of the world's 1.26 billion Muslims. Most of them have an overwhelming Muslim majority<sup>1</sup> (see table, p. 106) and Islam as a state religion.<sup>2</sup> Non-Muslim communities in Muslim countries are shrinking, in relative size and in some places in absolute numbers. These communities are affected by a process of Islamization, understood as an increase in the percentage of Muslims.

Islam being the latest of the great religions, its expansion took place at the expense of the preceding ones. Four, and only four, processes have led to Islamization in the demographic meaning of the word:<sup>3</sup> conversion to Islam, differences in birth and/or death rates between Muslim and non-Muslim segments of the population, replacement of non-Muslims by Muslims through migration, and intermarriage, which automatically gives birth to a Muslim second generation.

This article focuses on non-Muslims living in the central part of the Muslim world, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), where they form 4.4 percent of the total population.<sup>4</sup> It argues first that this is a period of rapid Islamization, and second that the present decrease in the proportion of non-Muslims is not the result of coercion or intolerance by dominant Islam as much as of intermarriage, a sign of the openness of these communities to their Muslim environment, and of international migration, a sign of their openness to the outside world.

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### Pre-Islamic or Post-Islamic Minorities?

The religious minorities living in Muslim countries date back either to pre-Islamic or to colonial times, a nuance that affects today's inter-communal relations. On the eve of the Muslim conquest, most MENA peoples were Christian, with Jewish communities scattered throughout the region and a sizeable Zoroastrian population in Persia. Their conversion to Islam, mainly under economic constraint, is thought to have played the largest role in the region's Islamization. It has been a slow process which took several centuries after the moment a territory was conquered by a Muslim army.<sup>5</sup> By comparison, invasions by Muslim tribes (Arab or Turkish) never involved large numbers and were a much smaller cause of Islamization despite their importance in various narratives. In today's MENA countries, non-Muslim minorities are thus descended from People of the Book who had resisted abjuration of their faith; most of them are not ethnically distinct from Muslims. They have behind them a long past of *dhimmi(s)*,<sup>6</sup> a status of protection by and subjection to Muslim rule, which excluded them from the military and imposed them a poll tax (*jizya*). The status of *dhimmi* was abolished only in the nineteenth century by the Ottomans and the Qajars. Now that almost all Jews have left MENA Muslim countries as a result of the creation of Israel in 1948, only Christian minorities remain there, with a few exceptions.<sup>7</sup>

Along the periphery of MENA, in Indonesia and Africa south of the Sahara, religions have a different history. Islam arrived there centuries after its establishment in MENA, but Christianity was nonexistent and the population belonged to other religions. Since Islam only recognized People of the Book, such populations passing under a Muslim power generally had to convert to Islam en masse. Christianity only appeared later, in the wake of European missionaries and colonizers, and beyond the territory of Islam. It recruited believers among people of traditional beliefs, not among Muslims. Muslims and Christians were then lumped together when the Europeans carved new states out of traditional territories. In some cases, this colonial linkage remains a pretext for distrust. In addition, these Christian communities do not have the same long acquaintance with Muslims as do those whose ancestors lived for fourteen centuries under Islamic rule.

Sudan combines the two histories. The North had been

Christianized as early as the sixth century, before the birth of Islam. Its Islamization took almost a thousand years, but it was thorough; no Christian community of any significant size remained after the seventeenth century. The South was animist; only in the wake of the Egyptian army in the nineteenth century did Muslim northern Sudanese merchants come there. Since those merchants used the region as a reserve of slaves, they avoided converting its population to Islam, which would have dictated their enfranchisement. After the British colonized Sudan, Protestant missionaries introduced Christianity in the South.

### **The Ottoman Empire: Or, the Golden Age for Christian Demography**

Islamization has not been continuous, but rather marked by several breaks.<sup>8</sup> The first stage of Islamization, consisting mainly of conversions, ended with the Crusades. When the Ottomans conquered the Arab Middle East in 1517, that is, after 850 years of Muslim rule, only 7 percent of its inhabitants remained non-Muslim, according to the population records of 1570-90.<sup>9</sup> Then a noticeable resurgence of Christianity occurred under their rule. By the time the Ottoman Empire collapsed in the First World War, the proportion of Christians had reached 20 percent in Turkey and the Fertile Crescent, even 33 percent in the “Greater Syria” of Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine.<sup>10</sup> It then declined again under the new nation-states; Christianity suddenly disappeared from Turkey and was sharply eroded in the Arab Middle East. Arab Christians are presently found in six countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine), where they form 6.1 percent of the total population, the same low proportion as at the beginning of Ottoman rule. But contrary to the trend reversal that happened at that time, Christians and other non-Muslim communities now seem fated to continue their demographic decline.

In order to understand the causes of the present decline, it is useful to recall those of the earlier resurgence. Before conquering Syria and Egypt, the Ottomans had reigned over a mostly European and Christian Empire. In the Balkans and in Istanbul, they had devised a new system, the *millet*, for the coexistence of religions, which they simply extended to their newly seized Arab provinces. As *millet*, a term usually translated as “nations,”<sup>11</sup> the main non-Muslim communities were given legal recognition. In their private lives—marriage, inheritance, and education—Christians and Jews were no longer direct

<b>Muslims and Non-Muslims in Muslim Countries</b>				
Country	Mid-Year Population 2000 (millions)			% Non-Muslim
	Total	Muslim	Non-Muslim	
<i>Middle East and North Africa</i>				
Algeria	31.2	31.2	0.0	0.1
Bahrain	0.6	0.5	0.1	15.0
Egypt	68.4	64.6	3.7	5.5
Iran	65.6	65.0	0.6	0.9
Iraq	22.7	22.0	0.7	3.0
Jordan	5.0	4.8	0.2	3.6
Kuwait	2.0	2.0	0.0	1.0
Lebanon	3.6	2.1	1.5	42.6
Libya	5.1	5.1	0.0	0.8
Morocco	30.1	30.0	0.1	0.3
Oman	2.5	2.5	0.0	0.1
Palestine	3.2	3.1	0.1	2.6
Qatar	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0
Saudi Arabia	22.0	22.0	0.0	0.0
Sudan	35.1	25.6	9.5	27.0
Syria	16.3	15.3	1.0	6.4
Tunisia	9.6	9.6	0.0	0.0
Turkey	65.7	65.5	0.1	0.2
United Arab Emirates	2.4	2.1	0.3	11.4
Yemen	17.5	17.5	0.0	0.0
Sub-total MENA	409.2	391.2	18.0	4.4
<i>Asia other than MENA</i>				
Afghanistan	25.9	25.8	0.1	0.2
Bangladesh	129.2	111.9	17.3	13.4
Brunei	0.3	0.2	0.1	35.8
Indonesia	224.8	196.0	28.8	12.8

<b>Non-Muslims in Muslim Countries (Cont'd)</b>				
Kazakstan	16.7	9.2	7.5	45.0
Kyrgyzstan	4.7	3.7	1.0	22.0
Malaysia	21.8	11.5	10.3	47.1
Pakistan	141.6	136.8	4.7	3.3
Tajikistan	6.4	6.1	0.3	5.0
Turkmenistan	4.5	4.2	0.4	8.0
Uzbekistan	24.8	22.8	2.0	8.0
Sub-toal Asian Muslim Countries	600.7	523.3	72.4	12.0
<i>Africa other than MENA</i>				
Comoros	0.6	0.6	0.0	1.0
Djibouti	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0
Gambia	1.4	1.2	0.2	15.2
Guinea	7.5	5.2	2.3	31.0
Mali	10.7	8.2	2.5	23.5
Mauritania	2.7	2.6	0.0	1.0
Niger	10.1	8.8	1.2	12.2
Senegal	10.0	9.4	0.6	6.2
Somalia	7.3	7.2	0.0	0.2
Sub-total African Muslim Countries	50.6	43.6	6.9	14.4
Total Muslim Countries	1060.4	963.1	97.3	9.2
Non-Muslim Countries	5019.7	301.1	4718.7	94.0
World Total	6080.1	1264.2	4816.0	79.2

Sources: Total population figures:

<http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idbacc.html>

Non-Muslims: Courbage & Fargues (1992) or McDowall (1997)

subjects of the Sultan. Instead they were now subject to an authority from their own religion, to whom Istanbul delegated power in matters pertaining to personal status. Non-Muslim communities were thus made stable components of a multi-religious society.

The poll tax imposed on non-Muslim subjects since the very birth of Islam, which in the past had been a strong economic motive for converting to Islam, was gradually reduced until it was finally abolished by the *tanzîmât*, the legal reforms adopted in the nineteenth century under the pressure of the Great Powers. Consequently, conversions became exceptional, limited to cases of intermarriages. Intermarriage itself also became rare. Over time, Christian and Jewish populations had clustered into territories where most of the population was of their own religion. The *de facto* separation between communities, even within districts of the same town, limited inter-communal social contacts and hence opportunities for intermarriage. The end of conversions and the rarity of intermarriage ended the very long first stage of Islamization.

In addition, communal separation fostered demographic differentials. Different birth and death rates developed in different communities, resulting in contrasting rates of demographic growth. On average, Christians had a lower mortality rate than Muslims. Religious geography was in their favor: Christians were mostly concentrated along the Mediterranean coast and in large cities open to Western influence, notably on public health. Modern schooling reached the bulk of the Christian communities before the Muslim ones, and earlier access to knowledge was decisive in their earlier mortality decline. There were no such differentials in Egypt, where the Coptic Christians, like the Muslims, were concentrated in rural areas and had not developed contacts with the West.<sup>12</sup> As a result, the proportion of Copts in the population of Egypt did not change significantly under the Ottomans.

Migrations also shaped the communal geography under the Ottomans. The convergence of Christians from Anatolia, Iraq, and Syria, toward Aleppo, the principal city of northern Syria; the territorial expansion of the Maronite Christians in Mount-Lebanon after the sectarian fights among the Druze, a dissenting sect with a syncretic doctrine who separated from Islam in the eleventh century; the settlement of Syrian Christians in Egypt; the movement toward Beirut first from Damascus and central Syria and then from all provinces of the Empire—all of these population shifts strengthened non-Muslim communities in places of arrival, while weakening them

in places of departure. The first long-distance emigration from the region started in this period. Maronite Christians began leaving the most densely populated parts of Lebanon, depleting the demography of the Maronites but stimulating their economic prosperity and enlarging their networks around the world.

### **Islamization in the Era of Nation-States**

Non-Muslims living in MENA Muslim states declined demographically throughout the twentieth century.<sup>13</sup> Admittedly, it is difficult to find reliable estimates of losses and current size for most communities. Data collection and the publication of figures on religion are sensitive issues in the new nation-states, since communal diversity has often been viewed as a potential challenge to the unity of the nation. Churches thus provide most estimates of Christian population, but they are not based on actual population censuses. In countries where religion is recorded in official censuses, their data often conflicts with church numbers.

The case of Copts, who form the largest Christian Arab community, is typical. Coptic authorities usually claim that the Copts represent 10 to 20 percent of the population of Egypt, that is, between six and twelve million individuals.<sup>14</sup> This accords with the estimates of a number of intellectuals, both Christian and Muslim. But population censuses—Egypt is one of the rare countries that continues to record religion in its censuses—provide much lower figures: 3,313,419 Christians at the last one (1996), representing just 5.6 percent of Egypt's total population. Critics allege this statistic to be false, either at the top, because the government would manipulate the results of the census, or at the bottom, because many Christians would declare themselves Muslims in order to conform to their Muslim environment. However, it seems that the government data is correct.<sup>15</sup> First, the graph formed by ten Egyptian censuses over the century from 1897 to 1996 is perfectly regular despite changes in the attitude of political forces and society toward Christians. Second, the censuses are perfectly consistent with another source: the records of births, marriages, and deaths, in which Christians are very unlikely to hide their true religion, since these events are occasions of important religious rites.

Nation-states have provided an ideological and institutional framework that favored resumed Islamization. The dissolution of communities into one single new national identity and the ensuing

banishment of community-based loyalties has bred lurking unrest among some religious minorities and increased their propensity to emigrate. In a few, but far-reaching cases, the escalation of intolerance, repression, and irredentism precipitated forced migrations. Apart from free and forced migration, the nation-building process was accompanied by the creation of institutions favoring inter-communal mixing, and therefore Islamization, through intermarriage.

### **Emigration, Forced or Free**

Forced displacements of entire populations reached an unprecedented scale in the twentieth century, in the Middle East as in other parts of the world. They began with the brutal disappearance of Turkish Christianity, when Armenian Christians were massacred and others deported in 1915-16, followed by the deportation of the Greek Orthodox in 1924. In a few years, the Young Turks' nationalism and Kemal Atatürk's secularism had paradoxically brought about a Muslim homogeneity that the Islamic regime of the Ottoman Sultans had never tried to establish. Later, the creation of Israel provoked an exodus of the vast majority of the Palestinians. The Armenian and Palestinian refugees settled in several Arab countries, but made the greatest impact on the religious composition of the population in Lebanon. Those who were Christian could obtain Lebanese citizenship, but most of those who were Muslim could not.<sup>16</sup> Immigration thus increased simultaneously the Christian part of the Lebanese citizenry and the Muslim part of the resident population.

Two other waves of international migrations related to political developments have since reshaped the map of religious minorities. Soon after the creation of Israel in 1948, the vast majority of the Jews in the *Machrek*<sup>17</sup> and Turkey left for the new country;<sup>18</sup> and upon the independence of Tunisia and Morocco in 1956 and Algeria in 1962, most Europeans and the local Jewish communities departed.<sup>19</sup> For the first time in history, all of the Maghreb became emptied of any sizeable non-Muslim minority. For the first time also, Judaism became almost absent from the Arab world.

The latest case of large-scale forced migration affecting religious minorities took place within the boundaries of a single country: Sudan. Apart from a few years, since independence in 1956 Sudan has been torn by a civil war pitting the Muslim North against the Christian and animist South that has resulted in a death toll estimated at two million people since 1983. In addition, when Southern rebels

took up arms against the imposition of *shariah* by President Nimeiri, millions were displaced in the country or sought asylum abroad. Though General al-Bashir, who took power in 1989, granted the Southern states a non-shariah legal system in 1991, the situation of non-Muslims did not really improve. Those non-Muslims who live in the north are still subject to shariah law.

Sudan is not the only country where shariah has been recently imposed on non-Muslims and provoked emigration. In Iran, most Christians are Orthodox Armenians whose ancestors embraced Christianity 1,700 years ago. Gorun Babian, their prelate, says: "In Isfahan, the Armenian community has been accepted by the local population and they looked upon us as brothers, as part of the Islamic Asian culture and history." However, since shariah was reinstated and the dhimmi status restored<sup>20</sup> by Khomeini in 1979, the Armenian community is reported to have lost by emigration more than half the 300,000 members it counted at the eve of the Islamic revolution. The same is true for the Jews; their community, the largest in the Middle East outside Israel, has dwindled from 80,000 to only some 30,000 individuals. Economic reasons, in particular the unavailability of jobs and the preference usually given to Muslim applicants, are the main motives for leaving.

Comparable developments can be observed outside MENA. In Nigeria, a secular country where Muslims make up just under one half of the population, eight northern states introduced shariah in 2000, despite condemnation from President Obasanjo that this was unconstitutional. In Kaduna state, where half of the population is Christian, the introduction of shariah provoked riots in which more than 1,000 people were killed.

Apart from the state, society can play a role in the feeling of discomfort that may induce members of religious minorities to emigrate. In Egypt, for example, Christians share a long history with Muslims and readily claim a common identity with them. Makram Ebeid, a Coptic nationalist leader in the interwar years, liked to say that "Christianity is my religion, but Islam is my culture." In 1996, an eminent Egyptian Muslim sociologist scheduled an international conference on minorities in the Arab world. The state banned it, and

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Love now plays the same role in Islamization that coercion played in the past.

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the conference was finally convened on Cyprus. Egypt's Copts fully endorsed the state's argument that "Copts are not a minority, but a full component of Egyptian society; religion is a private affair." Egypt's Christians nonetheless fell some insecurity, dating to 1957 when Nasser's government issued a decree enforcing the teaching of Islam as a basic subject in the curricula, including in Christian schools, and then seized the Coptic educational endowments. Despite the generally secular orientation of Egypt's governments after the Nasserite Revolution, these policies provoked the first sectarian riots in Egypt since the end of the Crusades. Repetitive confrontations began in 1979. Some of them have been very bloody, like the one in the village of Al-Kosheh where twenty-one Copts died over the New Year in 1999-2000. What has become a "real fear among Christians in Egypt" is attributed by the sociologist Saad Ed-Din Ibrahim to local Islamic extremists, but also to the failure of the state to fully include the Copts in the mainstream of public life.<sup>21</sup>

One should not, however, conclude that unrest is the rule among non-Muslim communities nor that unrest is the only cause of their emigration and subsequent demographic erosion. Several minorities seem in harmony with their Muslim environment.<sup>22</sup> In Syria the Greek Orthodox (500,000 to 600,000 individuals), who keep the memory of the sack of Constantinople in 1204 by the Crusaders, never identified with Western Christianity. Some of their community's greatest leaders devoted themselves to Arab nationalism. In Iraq, ethnic conflicts are between Muslims (Kurds and Arabs, Sunnis and Shiites), while the Chaldean Christians (like Minister of Foreign Affairs Tarik Aziz) voice their Arab identity despite the formal unification of their church with Rome since the eighteenth century.<sup>23</sup> In Palestine, those Christians who still live in the West Bank (some 50,000 in Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Bethlehem) fully support Palestinian nationalist goals. Lebanon presents a peculiar situation. Although its demographic majority is now Muslim, the country is basically pluralistic, and no community can claim to predominate.<sup>24</sup> Christian Maronites, who held the highest office (the state presidency) when Lebanon was created from the French mandate in 1943, keep it even now, though they have lost the first place in the demography.

Such communities have emigrated at much higher rates than their Muslim fellow citizens, but they were not necessarily subject to discrimination by Muslims. Rather, their choice was economic: as with most modern migrants, they were leaving on an individual basis, in search of job or fortune. They rapidly wove worldwide networks that

in turn made emigration more appealing to their relatives or former neighbors. Emigration of Eastern Christians to the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Oceania weakened the demographic weight of their communities in Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt, but at the same time boosted their group welfare and gave them a role in building a more interconnected world.

### **Silent Demographic Losses**

Except for cases of massive population displacement, it has been the silent and progressive forces of differing birth and death rates that have most radically altered the religious composition of the MENA population. Thanks to their greater access to education, wealth, and the West, Christians have kept the lead in the demographic transition. Having been the first to reduce their death rates, which had increased their proportion in the population, they were also the first to limit their birth rates, which now helps to diminish their proportion of the population. Fertility differentials according to religion did not last for more than two or three decades (from the 1960s to the 1980s), but due to their magnitude they produced large differences in demographic momentum.

In Lebanon, the resulting change in the relative size of the communities became a matter of political concern. Positions of power gained by Christians in the first stage of the demographic transition, when access to resources and population growth were working in parallel, became contested in the second stage when they trended in opposite directions. Differential demography was at stake in the civil war (1975-90), and it weighed on the 1989 Taif Agreement, which for the first time instituted parity between Christians and Muslims in the parliament.

Fertility decline has been associated with an increased educational investment in children. When investment in education became a common choice among members of certain communities but not others, it diminished the relative demographic weight of the former and thus the share of political power they could claim based on the size of their population. Two different outcomes were possible. The first is dissociation between economic and political power, the former increasing while the later decreases. For example, Greek Catholics in Lebanon are less represented in Parliament than they are on the boards of universities, firms, or banks. The second is erosion of the political legitimacy of the community, since political

representation gradually loses its basis of demographic proportionality. This is what happened with the Maronites. In a representative democracy, when the fertility transition is accompanied by a divorce of demographic growth from economic power, the process favors the rotation of communal majorities, to the advantage of those who are economic losers.

The last mechanism of Islamization, intermarriage, is probably destined to take the lead in the post-demographic transition period. By law, mixed marriages can only yield Muslim children. Two rules produce this result: first, a child always receives the religion of his father, and second, a Muslim man can marry a non-Muslim woman without her converting to Islam, but a Muslim woman can only marry a Muslim man, implying that a Christian man desiring to marry a Muslim woman has to convert to Islam before the marriage. As a consequence, some Muslim children are born with one presently or formerly non-Muslim parent, while non-Muslim children cannot have a Muslim parent. If intermarriage is the sign of social integration of minorities in their Muslim environment, then integration also produces their demographic erosion.

Divorce can also become a reason for conversion. Eastern Christian churches do not accept divorce, while Islam recognizes a man's right to divorce his wife. A Christian man intending to divorce will first convert to Islam. If a Christian woman wants to divorce, her conversion to Islam will also produce the desired result: her marriage becomes illegal because the husband is not Muslim and is thus annulled. In Egypt, marriages and divorces are thought to account for most of the 12,000 to 15,000 conversions to Islam said to take place annually.<sup>25</sup>

**T**he change from the Empire framework to the nation-state one has changed identities and consequently perceptions of otherness, as well as institutional settings. The claim of homogeneity has replaced the separation of religious communities. In some places and at some moments, intolerance towards religious minorities has produced exodus, but in most cases coexistence has been preserved. Coexistence does not mean uniformity of conditions. Due to a particular socioeconomic background and openness to the outside world, most Christian communities have had an earlier demographic transition and a higher propensity to emigrate than their Muslim fellow citizens. Their demography has dwindled. The days of large migration or fertility differentials according to religion are now over.

Does this mean that non-Muslim minorities have already reached their very low ebb, demographically speaking? Probably not. With the promotion of homogeneity, many places where social contact takes place have lost their communal character. This has largely happened in schools, universities, companies, public services—that is, in many of the places where people are likely to meet their future spouse (now that families have less say in arranging marriages). In coffee shops and family homes across the country, Egyptians sat spellbound every night in the fall of 2000 by a television series about a Christian woman who marries a Muslim man, a soap opera designed to evoke the serenity of inter-communal relations. Some of the viewers were relieved and worried at the same time, though, because they knew that the heroine would have Muslim children. Love was now playing the same role in the continuing process of Islamization that coercion played in the remote past.

### **Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> 898 million Muslims are nationals of a country where Muslims form more than 85 percent of the population.

<sup>2</sup> The terms “Islam” and “Muslim” are used in this article with their original (Arabic) meaning of respectively a religion, and a person having Islam as a religion by birth or by conversion, whatever the level of his/her religious practices or beliefs. “Islamic” (derived from Arabic “Islâmi”) applies to an object related to Islam. “Islamist” and “Islamism” are Western neologisms which are not used here.

<sup>3</sup> Philippe Fargues, “The Arab Christians of the Middle East: A Demographic Perspective,” in A. Pacini, ed., *Christian Communities in the Arab Middle East* (Oxford and New York: Carendon Press, 1998), pp. 48-66.

<sup>4</sup> MENA comprises eighteen million non-Muslims out of 409 million nationals, but only 8.5 million out of 374 million, i.e. 2.3% of the total population, if Sudan is not included.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel C. Dennett Jr., *Conversion and the Poll Tax in Early Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950); Nehemia Levtzion, “Toward a Comparative Study of Islamization,” in Nehemia Levtzion, ed., *Conversion to Islam* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1979).

<sup>6</sup> On the status of dhimmi, see Antoine Fattal, *Le Statut légal des non-musulmans en pays d’Islam* (Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1958).

<sup>7</sup> The Jews of Morocco (30,000) and Turkey (20,000), and three communities of Iran—Baha’is (300,000, out of 5 million worldwide), Zoroastrians (45,000), and Jews (25,000)—are the only sizeable non-Christian national minorities left in the region.

<sup>8</sup> Youssef Courbage and Philippe Fargues, *Christians and Jews Under Islam* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997).

<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Adnan Bakhit, “The Christian Population of the Province of Damascus in the Sixteenth Century,” in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, *Christians and Jews*, op. cit.; Ömer Lûfi Barkan, “Research on Ottoman Fiscal Surveys,” in M.A. Cook, ed., *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East from the Rise of Islam to the*

*Present Day* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd ed., 1978).

<sup>10</sup> Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914, Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

<sup>11</sup> On millet, see Kemal Karpat, "Millets and Nationality: The Roots of the Incongruity of Nation and State in the Post-Ottoman era," in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, *Christians and Jews*, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Political Situation of the Copts, 1578-1923," in *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Censuses and surveys provide the following proportions of Christians, in selected countries of the Middle East.

Egypt: 1927: 8.3; 1937: 8.2; 1947: 7.9; 1960: 7.3; 1966: 6.7; 1976: 6.2; 1986: 5.9; 1996: 5.6;

Lebanon: 1956: 54.7; 1998: 42.6;

Turkey: 1881: 20.6; 1906: 19.9; 1914: 19.1; 1927: 2.5; 1935: 1.9; 1945: 1.5; 1955: 1.1; 1965: 0.8; 1991: 0.2;

Syria: 1948: 14.1; 1960: 7.9.

<sup>14</sup> Over-estimates are reproduced without discussion in most sources, whether international (for example, Minority Rights Group International gives 5.5-8 million Copts in the 1990s, some 10-15 percent) or national (Ibrahim gives 10 percent). See Saad Ed-Din Ibrahim, *Meditations on the Question of Minorities* (Cairo: Ibn Khaldun Center, 1992).

<sup>15</sup> Maurice Martin, "Statistiques chrétiennes d'Égypte," *Travaux et Jours* no. 24, 1967, pp. 65-75; Courbage and Fargues, *Christians and Jews*, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> With the exception of the Kurds fleeing Iraq and Turkey.

<sup>17</sup> Historically, the eastern part of the Arab world (from Egypt to Iraq), as opposed to the western Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya).

<sup>18</sup> In 1948, large Jewish communities were living in Iraq (120,000), Egypt (67,000), Yemen (51,000), and Syria (31,000). In Turkey in 1945, their number was 77,000.

<sup>19</sup> The size of the Jewish community was 265,000 in Morocco, 130,000 in Algeria, and 74,000 in Tunisia.

<sup>20</sup> Except for military obligations, where the regulations of dhimmi are still applicable to non-Muslims.

<sup>21</sup> Saad Ed-Din Ibrahim, *Meditations on the Questions of Minorities*, op. cit.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph Maïla, "The Arab Christians: From the Eastern Question to the Recent Political Situation of the Minorities," in A. Pacini, ed., *Christian Communities in the Arab Middle East*, op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> Yusuf Habbi, "Christians in Iraq," in *ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> One could argue that Lebanon serves as a resonating chamber for tensions in a region that is predominantly Muslim.

<sup>25</sup> According to a Christian oral (and unverifiable) source.