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# Arabs Of The Jewish Faith: The Civilizing Mission In Colonial Algeria (Jewish Cultures Of The World)



## Synopsis

Exploring how Algerian Jews responded to and appropriated France's newly conceived "civilizing mission" in the mid-nineteenth century, *Arabs of the Jewish Faith* shows that the ideology, while rooted in French Revolutionary ideals of regeneration, enlightenment, and emancipation, actually developed as a strategic response to the challenges of controlling the unruly and highly diverse populations of Algeria's coastal cities. [↗](#)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Schreier is a beautiful storyteller, writes in crystalline prose, and presents original and carefully researched historical arguments. He paints a brilliant picture of Algerian Jewries that is far more nuanced than that provided by other sources. His book offers scholars of Algerian/North African/Middle East histories who do not work on Jews a way to understand, situate, and engage this subject." (Sarah Abrevaya Stein History Department, UCLA)"In this remarkable book, Schreier argues convincingly that Algerian Jews helped to shape the civilizing mission in colonial Algeria. By means of a nuanced and sophisticated analysis Schreier brings the Jews out of the shadows of the wings and places them at the center of the colonial stage, thus adding greatly to our understanding of the dynamics of race and ethnicity as well as the civilizing ideologies of the early decades of French colonization in Algeria." (Patricia Lorcin History Department, University of Minnesota)"By crossing the boundaries that have conventionally separated French, Algerian and Jewish history, *Arabs of the Jewish Faith* brilliantly illuminates the struggles and transformations of Algeria's Jewish

minority but also the ways in which France's 'civilizing mission' impacted both the colonies and the metropole." (Zachary Lockman author of *Contending Visions of the Middle East*) "A well-researched book." (Jewish Book World 2011-09-01) "Schreier concisely studies France's colonizing mission of Algerian Jewry from 1830 to the Crémieux Decree of 1870. His very well written and researched narrative describes the complex, differentiated economic, social, and demographic significance of the widespread Jewish community." (Choice 2011-06-01)

JOSHUA SCHREIER is an assistant professor of history at Vassar College.

*Arabs of the Jewish Faith* is a superb book about Jews in Algeria from the French conquest in 1840 to 1870, related to contemporary and historical events in France. This book proves once and for all that Arabs were not and are not anti-semitic. It also explains the French attitude toward Moslems and the burqa. For people looking for an accurate understanding the middle east, *Arabs of the Jewish Faith* is a good place to begin. The high price and lack of a paperback is a clear sign that the important things this book has to say should not become too widespread lest the myth of Arab hatred of the Jews suffer a lethal blow. Buy a copy and pass it around.

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