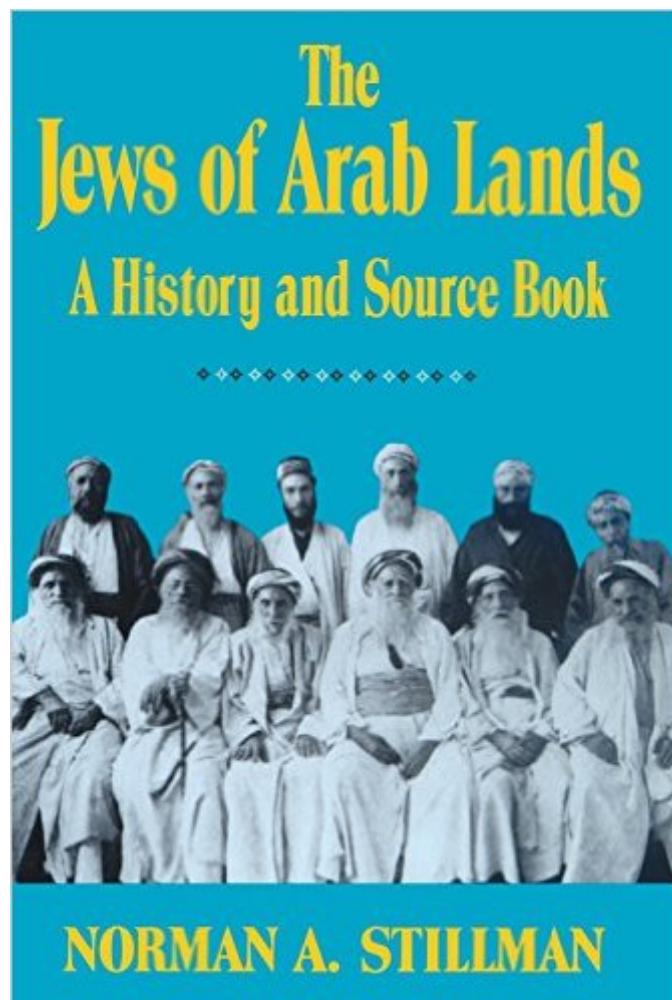


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Jews Of Arab Lands: A History And Source Book



Synopsis

Norman Stillman has produced a comprehensive and articulate history of the turbulent and complex relationships in the Middle East that brilliantly captures the people and the history.

Book Information

Paperback: 474 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #290,444 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #220 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Middle East #271 inÂ Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Jewish #292 inÂ Books > History > World > Religious > Judaism

Customer Reviews

Stillman gives a concise, yet thorough history of the Jews in Arab Lands. While he covers over eleven (11) century's of Jewish History, he touches on the important events and figures that shaped attitudes to the Jewish populations from Spain to Iran. The second half of the book is dedicated to the sources which he draws from to paint the picture of Jewish life throughout those lands. If you are looking for a general overview, I would recommend his work. While his writing is clear, at times the sources are not translated well enough for a fluid read.

Of all the great Jewish minds of the last millenium, few have paralleled that of Moses Maimonides. Until the present generation of scholars, however, little research has been done to delve into the world of Sephardi and Eastern Jewry which gave rise to such a brilliant intellect. Professor Stillman has translated and presented precious resources from the Cairo Genizah, the most significant find in the history of Medieval Jewish History, to give modern scholars the clearest picture possible of Jewish life in medieval and early modern Arab society.

This is a classic sourcebook on the title subject. It's full of a wealth of info. It's a four-star, though, instead of five because it doesn't have good summaries like JR Marcus

(http://www..com/gp/product/087820217X/ref=cm_cr_ryp_prd_ttl_sol_0) for example. Still, if you need info on Jews in in Arabia, I highly recommend this book.

This is one of the most important books, for it is both history and documentary, of the Jews of Arab lands in modern times. The first hundred pages are a history of Jews in the Arab world. It begins in the 7th century with the conquests of Islam and then describes the ascendancy, decline and persecutions that followed. It tells of the Sephardim and also of the persecutions by the Almohads which destroyed, albeit temporarily, North African Jewry. The documentary history forms more than two thirds of the book and is what makes this a virtual museum to the history of these Jewish communities. It begins with the time of Mohammed and the first Jewish converts and persecutions of Jews in Arabia. Documents show how Jizya, the special discrimination tax that Jews were forced to pay for their 'protection' to Muslim leaders. Other documents show how the Caliphs intervened in the appointment of Jewish leaders or arbitrated in disputes between Karaite and Rabbinical Jews. One document from 1198 tells the story of the forced conversion of the Jews of Aden by the Muslim rulers. One document from Egypt deals with whether a Jewish female prostitute may donate money to buy a Torah scroll. The last documents are the most harrowing and deal with the coming of Europeans and Blood Libels in the late 19th century. An amazing source book and a must have for anyone interested in the true history of the Middle East, one that also deals with minorities like Jews who once were an important part of the fabric of that part of the world. Seth J. Frantzman

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