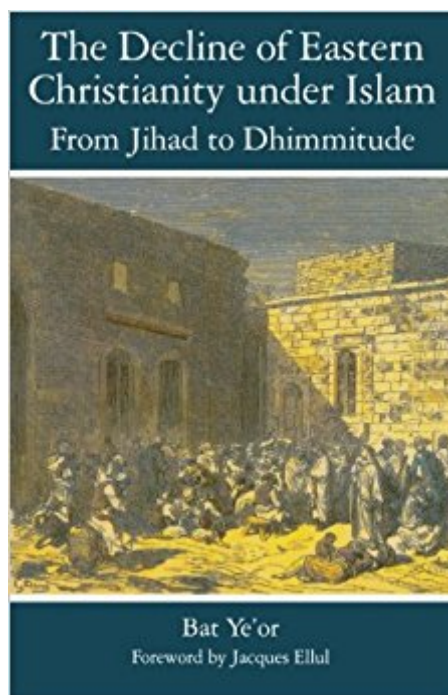




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# The Decline Of Eastern Christianity Under Islam: From Jihad To Dhimmitude: Seventh-Twentieth Century



## Synopsis

In this study, Bat Ye'or gives an analysis of the dogma and strategies of jihad, offering a vast panorama of the history of the Jews and Christians under the rule of Islam. A pioneer in a virgin field of research for which she has coined the term "dhimmitude," the author has included a documentary section illuminating the process of Eastern Christianity's Islamization. In two waves of Islamic expansion, the Christian and Jewish populations of the Mediterranean regions and Mesopotamia, who had developed the most prestigious civilizations, were conquered by jihad. Millions of Christians from Spain, Egypt, Syria, Greece, and Armenia; Latins and Slavs from southern and central Europe; as well as Jews, were henceforth governed by the shari'ah (Islamic law). A knowledge of this historical background is essential in order to understand contemporary events.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Ye'or's books on dhimmitude and jihad have an essential place in the ecumenical world. (James E. Biechler, Journal of Ecumenical Studies (Philadelphia) Journal of Ecumenical Studies)[I]t must be allowed that behind Muslim thinking was the distinction between dar al-islam and dar al-harb; and while this may have had little effect on the actual course of events, it seems to have been present in the background. It is at this point that the basic question raised by Bat Ye'or's book "the condition of the Peoples of the Book under Muslim rule" ties up with contemporary problems. It is of the utmost importance that Muslim

jurists should consider whether such treatment of non-Muslims is in accordance with the Shari'ah or contrary to it. More generally, does the Shari'ah allow Muslims to live peaceably with non-Muslims in the *Jahannam* world or must they regard it as *dar al-harb*? To have an answer to these questions may be a matter of urgency in a few years time. (William Montgomery Watt, *Journal of Semitic Studies* (London)) It seems likely that in the new century of clashing civilizations there will either be heightened conflict or a breakthrough to something like the beginnings of a dialogue. A good place to start is to understand the history that brought us where we are, and to that end I warmly recommend a careful and critical reading of Bat Ye'or's *The Decline of Eastern Christianity under Islam*. (Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, *First Things*)

Bat Ye'or is a recognized specialist on the dhimmis and "dhimmitude."

Good book.

gr8

This book is groundbreaking. Needs to be read by anyone interested in current events

Everyone in the West should read this valuable, informative book. The Muslims are not among us because they want to live free. They are here for conquest, and colonization. Nothing has changed in the Muslim mindset; they hate us and yearn for the moment when they can do to us what their forefathers did to Eastern Christians. Don't be fooled by Islamic deceit. Genocide is never far from the Muslim mind.

This book is a well researched look at the attitudes of what is becoming one of the world's most influential religions. In particular the attitudes and rules towards non-Muslims. It dispels the 1850s' myths of tolerant Islam and shows the events leading up to the European self defence expeditions called the Crusades. Bat Ye'or is the world's foremost authority on what is regarded as a taboo subject, namely that non-western societies are not just capable of aggression and atrocities, but can enshrine them in political and religious doctrine. Read in conjunction with "Sharia for non-Muslims" and "The Third Choice, Islam, dhimmitude and Freedom" by Mark Durie this book paints a concise picture of exactly what the Crusaders were fighting, and why we need to understand this.

The author's learning, decency, and humanity are obvious, and the story she tells is fascinating (and horrible). (One also should mention her courage.) Sadly, the translation appears to be the work of someone whose grasp of English idiom is flawed in the extreme. The reader is constantly having to translate the text into English from "English." It's like trying to bicycle on a mountain road covered with big cobbles and the occasional pile of boulders.

The book not only analyse data but also provide historical facts regarding the decline of Christianity under the Islamic rule. Very well researched and evidenced.

This is an outstanding book that gives in great detail the process through which the Christian Middle East was conquered, pillaged and subjugated as *dhimmi* by Arabian Islamic invaders, and how its largely Christian peoples were massacred, enslaved, and forced over time either to accept Islam --- or to accept permanent degradation, humiliation and impoverishment. Beginning in the 7th century in ever-expanding conquered lands that came to be known as the Islamic empire, non-Muslims were governed by the so-called Pact of Umar, under which they were purportedly "protected" from aggression. In reality, they were annually extorted of an onerous "head tax" and forced to become subservient to and debased by Islamic laws. In exchange Islamic rulers granted them the "freedom" to continue practicing their faith --- but among other things, denied them the right to own land or homes, ring church bells, build new churches (or have any taller than mosques), repair existing churches without official approval, ride on horses --- go outdoors without distinctly colored clothes or rags identifying them as non-Muslims. No wonder then, as Bat Ye'or demonstrates with a vast collection of well-documented historical details, within an amazingly short time, Middle Eastern Christianity declined to a state of near extinction. Moreover, Bat Ye'or shows in great detail that all this occurred over 1,000 years before the Jewish people created the modern state of Israel. In fact, since Rome's first century destruction of Jerusalem, and Rome's 4th century conversion to Christianity after the reforms of the *Emperor Constantine*, Israel hosted a large Christian population in addition to Jewish natives who had returned from exile or settled in Judea, Samaria and the southern region abutting the Red Sea. In any case, Bat Ye'or carefully delineates the history that led to the current situation --- in which, for example, Egypt's *besieged Coptic Christian* community comprises but 10% of its population (despite the number of *Coptic monuments*), and remains very much oppressed and in fear. Similarly, Iraq's *Assyrian* and *Chaldean Christians* are as fearful and oppressed in liberated Iraq as they were during the chaos

and the genocide of Christians that followed World War I, in both Iraq and Turkey. Bat Ye'or does focus for the most part on the 7th through 16th centuries, but she does also touch upon the dhimmitude --- utter degradation and, as it were, social enslavement --- of the relative handful of Christians who remained in the Middle East into the 20th century. This book is an excellent introduction to Middle East history for any and all readers. However, it may be especially poignant for Eastern Christians prone to blaming the sorry condition of their people on Israel's 1948 establishment --- as was a Syrian Orthodox gentleman whom I had the pleasure to meet some years ago at a friend's Gregorian Christmas celebration on January 7. His family in its entirety had completely absorbed Muslim anti-Israel propaganda, and he was fascinated to learn that such a history as this existed. I recommend this book highly, along with Bat Ye'or's many other important scholarly writings on Islam --- including its history and its effect on current events. --- Alyssa A. Lappen

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