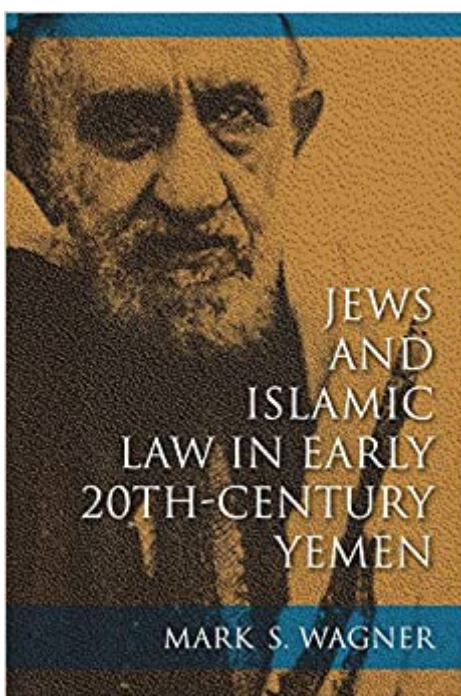


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# Jews And Islamic Law In Early 20th-Century Yemen (Indiana Series In Sephardi And Mizrahi Studies)



## Synopsis

In early 20th-century Yemen, a sizable Jewish population was subject to sumptuary laws and social restrictions. Jews regularly came into contact with Islamic courts and Muslim jurists, by choice and by necessity, became embroiled in the most intimate details of their Jewish neighbors' lives. Mark S. Wagner draws on autobiographical writings to study the careers of three Jewish intermediaries who used their knowledge of Islamic law to manipulate the shari'ah for their own benefit and for the good of their community. The result is a fresh perspective on the place of religious minorities in Muslim societies.

## Book Information

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"A fascinating study indispensable to students and libraries interested in the tentative relationship between Muslims and Jews in the Middle East." *AJL Reviews* "Jews and Islamic Law in early 20th-century Yemen offers an important theoretical and methodological contribution to the study of minorities and marginal groups." *Antropologia* "Jews and Islamic Law in Early 20th-century Yemen provides us with rich material, heretofore unavailable in English, and Wagner uses this material to deepen our understanding of Muslim-Jewish relations in Yemen and the place of non-Muslims in Islamic law." *Islamic Law and Society* "During the early twentieth century, Yemeni Jews operated within a legal structure that defined them as dhimmi, that is, non-Muslims living as a protected population under the sovereignty of an Islamic state... Wagner's work deepens our understanding of Muslim-Jewish relations in Yemen and the place of

non-Muslims in Islamic law in general." *New Books in Jewish Studies*"In beautiful prose, Mark Wagner explores the complex contours of Yemen's sharia-based juridical system, considering how individual Yemeni Jewish women and men navigated this legal order and the larger social orbit of Yemeni society. Moving ably between Arabic and Hebrew sources, and between rich case studies and weighty conceptual questions, *Jews and Islamic Law in Early 20th-Century Yemen* will be prized by scholars of Jewish Studies and Middle East Studies alike for its erudition, clarity, and originality." *Sarah Abrevaya Stein, UCLA*"Mark S. Wagner has made an important and original contribution to the growing body of academic studies on Yemenite Jewish history and culture... Although the book's theme is how Jews negotiated life in a traditional Muslim society in which the Sharia was theoretically the overarching governing framework, Wagner also offers fascinating insights into the complexities of daily social, economic, and political life in Yemen." *AJS Reviews*"A highly readable and intriguing work.... Wagner brings to life individuals whose personal records give us an entrance into a world that is no more." *Lawrence Rosen, Princeton University*"[A]rticulate[s] brilliantly the complexity of Jewish-Muslim interaction through a series of fascinating and hitherto unexplored court cases and scholars. Wagner convincingly illustrates that these two religious communities were far from being mutually exclusive, but rather were enmeshed in each other's lives in the most remarkable and unexpected ways, and in a real sense mutually constitutive." *Bernard Haykel, Princeton University*"*Jews and Islamic Law in Early 20th-Century Yemen*... is a monograph that draws on literature studies, Islamic legal studies, history and anthropology. Students and scholars from all these fields as well as Yemeni studies in general will find this a rich and well written book." *Arabian Humanities*

Mark S. Wagner is Associate Professor of Arabic at Louisiana State University and author of *Like Joseph in Beauty: Yemeni Vernacular Poetry and Arab-Jewish Symbiosis*.

Excellent book

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