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Beyond Europe
North African Jewish Communities and the Holocaust

A thorough study of modern Jewish history must be positioned within the context of the Second World War. In the case of North Africa, the anti-Semitic policies from Vichy France and Fascist Italy are often viewed as a pathway to Nazi genocide. However, this analysis will distinguish between Nazism in North Africa and the colonial empires of Vichy France and Fascist Italy. Weaving together pre-colonial and imperial narratives from North Africa while also analyzing Jewish experiences in the turbulent wake of World War II, this work will endeavor to widen the field of scholarship for modern Jewish historians. Through exploring the history of North African Jewish communities, the goal is to provoke new ways of thinking about the Holocaust and facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the War's influence on global Jewish identity.

Throughout this process it remains critically important to remember the numerous theaters of operations and the vast number of sources that provide comments on Adolf Hitler's desire to liquidate and eliminate Jewish populations beyond Europe. This work not only offers the rare chance to expand the academic study of the Holocaust but also reveals the complicated and nuanced history of anti-Semitism in North Africa. Furthermore, this survey will bring together quantitative evidence, survivor testimony, and recent scholarship to synthesize and identify the Shoah's importance in relation to the broader movements of Zionism and Arab-Nationalism in North Africa.

Thankfully, in more recent years, scholars of modern Jewish history have increasingly drawn attention to lesser-known aspects of the Holocaust. Unsurprisingly, Israel boasts several

organizations dedicated to the study of North African Jewish history. Among these groups, Israel's Documentation Center of North African Jews during World War Two opened in 2006, and hosts seminars to raise public awareness about the experiences of North African Jews in the Second World War. These seminars include research covering communities before the war, Jewish memory, and the legacies of Nazi-occupation.[1] This approach to modern Jewish history is important because it creates an insightful, pragmatic, and an international understanding of the Holocaust as a global program rather than a localized phenomenon.

In rendering a complete picture of the German war effort in the Maghreb, this work will draw on survivor accounts from across Jewish communities in North Africa. This project will explore testimony from survivors of slave labor camps and those who lived through deportation to concentration camps in Europe. In more recent decades the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, and USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive have recorded several interviews with North African Holocaust survivors from the 1990 to the 2010's. Through revisiting these interviews, this research will help bridge the historic gap between personal narratives and the academic interpretations of Jewish survival in North Africa before, during, and after the Second World War.

Despite the harsh winter of 1941, German forces were knocking on the gates of Moscow. At that time, Nazi high command was still in the process of consolidating their vast network of death trains, reserve police-battalions, and concentration camps. Organized in January 1942, Nazi leadership gathered in Southwest Berlin at the Wannsee Conference to synchronize and coordinate the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question." Historians regularly identify the Wannsee Conference

[1] Some of the recent seminar titles include: "Insights & Interpretations, WWII in North Africa: Dealing with the War and its Memory," January 26, 2020. "Aspects of the Study of North African Jews in World War II", Seminar Day, November 26, 2019. "Muslims Assisting Jews in the Holocaust," July 23, 2019. https://northafricanjews-ww2.org.il/en.

as conclusive evidence that the Nazis planned to carry out the Holocaust in Europe.[2] Accordingly, famed Holocaust scholar Raul Hilberg's, *The Destruction of the European Jews* contends that the Conference's objective function was to consolidate Nazi designs in the targeting and elimination of only European Jews.[3] Meanwhile, the vague and unspecified targeting of North African Jewish populations remains a point of contention among scholars of the Holocaust. Literature from professor of North African Jewish history, Michel Abitbol, and German historian Peter Longerich point to how the Nazi's quoted a figure of 700,000 Jews in unoccupied France which signified the Nazi's intention to target the Jews in French colonial territories including North Africa. Other notable scholars of the Holocaust dispute the Nazi's intentions to enforce the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" in North Africa citing that, "the figure of seven hundred thousand refers only to the Jews in southern France and does not include the Jews of North Africa."[4] Consequently, this work will seek to resolve the historical debate over the Wannsee Conference and whether the Nazi regime intended to implement the 'Final Solution' merely in Europe or instead, to include the Jewish populations in North Africa.

Traversing eastward across the North African coastline, Nazi-Arab relations in the early years of Hitler's regime can accurately be described as virtually non-existent. The first mentions of German interest in Northern Africa originates around 1933 when Hitler pledged his support for

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[2] While commenting on the historical debate whether the Holocaust targeted Jewish populations in North Africa, Dan Michman's work primarily brings attention to Reinhard Heydrich's maneuvering at the Wannsee Conference to assert his own direct control over the 'Final Solution'. Dan Michman, "Were the Jews of North Africa Included in the Practical Planning for the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question'?" In *Mass Violence in Nazi-Occupied Europe*, edited by Kay Alex J. and Stahel David, (Bloomington, Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press, 2018), 61, 69.

[3] Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961).

[4] Michman, "Were the Jews of North Africa Included in the Practical Planning for the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question'?," 62-3.

German Jewish migration to Palestine in relation to the recently signed Balfour Declaration.[5] In the years to follow, the Germans' often clear that their foreign policy distinguished between the Arabs of the Near East and the Arabs of North Africa. Regarding the initial Nazi policy on territory west of Egypt, the NSDAP held no desire to encourage Arab nationalism in North Africa.[6] Following the establishment of French and Italian colonies, the extent of Germany's diplomatic ties with the Maghreb ended at their deferral to Italian and French colonial possessions. Seemingly, Hitler's deferment to French imperial interests and his pledged support for Italian colonial possessions would augment Nazi Germany's future conquest over Europe.[7] Once more, Hitler went on to regularly state and submit to a policy that the Mediterranean was in Mussolini's sphere of influence and that Italy would be slated to gain control over the Mediterranean basin once the Axis achieved victory in Europe.

In September 1940, the Italians launched military offensives into Egypt marking the start of the War in North Africa. Suffering a string of military defeats to the British Commonwealth and Free French, Hitler's Italian comrades desperately requested German reinforcements. An innocuous vulnerability to German plans for European domination, the Italians' dismal performance in North Africa still signified a loose threat to ultimate German victory. Even though the German intervention in North Africa poised to bring the Holocaust to Jewish communities across the Maghreb, Hitler's motivations to assist Mussolini in North Africa initially stemmed from delivering the necessary military reinforcements to defeat the Allies in Northern Africa. In a

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[5] Haavara Agreement (1933) between Nazi German Government and German Zionist Jews regarding emigration of German Jews to Palestine.

[6] Lionel Gossman. "Plotting for Nazi Germany: Oppenheim's Role in the Middle East Policy of the Third Reich." In *The Passion of Max Von Oppenheim: Archaeology and Intrigue in the Middle East from Wilhelm II to Hitler* (Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2013), 238-9.

[7] Gossman, "Plotting for Nazi Germany," 242.

surprising move, Hitler dispatched the respected and famed General, Erwin Rommel to stabilize and coordinate the German's military intervention in North Africa.[8] Sensing another opportunity to undermine the British and garner support from local Arab leaders, the Nazis altered their previous tactics and started to direct the Vichy French and Italian Fascists to reassure self-determination for Arabs if they supported the anti-British and anti-Jewish war-effort in North Africa. Regardless of whether they supported the Nazi mission in North Africa. In truth, the Germans held no intentions of providing self-determination or independence for the native populations of North Africa.[9] During the War, Nazi propaganda often played on identity politics to promote Arab ethnic superiority, which in turn fostered antisemitism and anti-Western sentiments within the Arab populations.[10]

North African Jewish communities soon found themselves at a crossroads between Fascism, Arab nationalism, and European anti-Semitism. For centuries, Jews in North Africa held varying relationships with their neighbors whereby some lived amongst Muslims and Christians, others resided in mostly Jewish communities. Hebrew populations from Egypt to Morocco acted as unofficial intermediaries between European settlers and Arab societies. Now, caught in the midst of a volatile conflict, these Jewish "middlemen" communities existed in a quasi-state of limbo wherein they were not considered fully Arab nor fully European.[11] Similar to the rise of

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[8] An article describes Rommel's' knowledge of Nazi plans to target and eliminate North African Jewish populations: Jan Friedmann. "World War II: New Research Taints Image of Desert Fox Rommel." *Spiegel Online International*. May 23, 2007. https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/world-war-ii-new-research-taints-image-of-desert-fox-rommel-a-484510.html.

[9] Gossman, "Plotting for Nazi Germany," 249-50.

[10] Jeffrey Herf, "Nazi Germany's Propaganda Aimed at Arabs and Muslims During World War II and the Holocaust: Old Themes, New Archival Findings." *Central European History* 42, 4, 2009: 709.

[11] Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 19-20.

anti-Semitism in Europe, Hitler's example guided anti-Jewish policies in North Africa under French and Italian authorities. At first, the anti-Jewish measures enacted under Vichy French and Italian colonial empires attempted to pacify the Arab populations who objected to the preferential treatment of North African Jews received as the favored ethnic group across the Maghreb. Alternatively, the subsequent treatment of Jewish communities by the Germans would entail disenfranchisement, forced detention, enslaved labor, and eventually a policy of extermination.

Before the Nazis, and even before the French landed in Morocco, Jews resided in North Africa for thousands of years. When confronted with the choice of converting to Christianity or leaving Spain, Sidney Chriqui's Sephardic ancestors, along with the majority of Spanish Jews, faced exiled from Spain and the Chriqui family settled across the Barbary Coast. In an interview with the USC Shoah Foundation, now Israeli and Moroccan citizen, Sidney Chriqui recalls Moroccan-Jewish history and speaks about his time before the war as a young Jewish man in Casablanca. In the case of Morocco, it was difficult for the Chriqui family because like most Jewish refugees, they did not receive a warm welcome from the native Arab population. Similarly, around Tangiers, Rabat, and Casablanca, the newcomers also encountered a vastly different religious and socio-cultural environment in the indigenous Jewish populations of Morocco.[12] Under various Sultans there were periods of intense violence against the Jews but also peaceful co-existence with the Arabs. Slowly over time, the Sephardim became Moroccan citizens and a mutual respect developed between Moroccan Arabs and their Jewish neighbors.[13]

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[12] A nomadic, ultra-religious sect of the Moroccan population, the indigenous Jewish Population was more Arab than African. During the colonial period, they would fall under jurisdiction of the Sultan as opposed to French citizenship like their more European counterparts. Gmach, Jacqueline. Interview with Sidney Chriqui. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. June 1, 2015.

[13] Jacqueline Gmach, Interview with Sidney Chriqui. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. June 1, 2015.

In the context of North Africa before the war, the French colonial system consisted of a Muslim religious majority and a minority of Jewish communities. Native North African Arabs were often frustrated by the system that allowed Jews to become French citizens in Morocco and France's open acceptance of the Zionist movement. Meanwhile, the French authorities frequently refused and punished Arabs in French colonies who supported Arab independence.[14] When the War started in Europe, France issued a memorandum banning Moroccan Jews from the French Military and they were also ineligible for the French Muslim conscription.[15] Restricted from joining the military, Moroccan Jews wanted to prove their patriotism and pledged their support against Nazi Germany in other forms of financial and material assistance to the French authorities.[16] With the fall of France in 1941 and rise of the Vichy regime, their donations and patriotism would prove to be in vain.

In the wake of German military offensives into Poland and France, anti-Semitism crept into Moroccan society after an exodus of Jews from Europe caused a dramatic spike in Jewish emigration into Morocco. Unfortunately, a contentious relationship formed between European Jewish refugees, Moroccan Jews, Moslem communities, and the French colonialists, whereby the installation of Petain's Vichy regime accelerated the establishment of anti-Jewish restrictions in Morocco. Placating the local Arab population, the Vichy government effectively revoked French citizenship from Jewish-Moroccans and relegated them to second-class citizenship. Acting on instruction from the Germans, Petain's Vichy-occupation prohibited nearly all Jewish participation in public life through restricting Moroccan Jews from serving in the government, barring them

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[14] Jonathan Wyrtzen, "Negotiating Morocco's Jewish Question," in *Making Morocco: Colonial Intervention and the Politics of Identity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 193.

[15] Wyrtzen, "Negotiating Morocco's Jewish Question," 203.

[16] Over 1,300 Moroccan Jews signed up for the French Forces in 1939, however they were ineligible because of the recent anti-Jewish policies enacted by France. Wyrtzen, "Negotiating Morocco's Jewish Question," 214.

from becoming lawyers or doctors, and placing a ban on Jewish enrollment in French or Moroccan universities. Throughout the Vichy era, and under the control of the SS and Gestapo, the Petain regime also targeted foreign Jews living in Morocco for deportation to concentration camps in Europe.[17]

The Vichy laws of 4 October 1940 provided that "foreign nationals of the Jewish race" in Morocco would be detained in "special concentration camps."[18] Although the numbers are still disputed, Michael Laskier's work, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century: The Jews of Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria*, describes the "precarious" situation for Judaism in Morocco. cites evidence for twelve camps, and how the Jews reportedly suffered from harsh conditions, their fate was better off than their Tunisian Jewish counterparts. Nevertheless, Vichy restrictions imposed in Morocco included severe limitations on Jews' professions and schooling. There were forced relocation to the *mellahs* (the Moroccan "ghettos") in some but by no means all communities, as well as land expropriation, financial extortions, exclusion from public office, and other restrictions. The situation improved only after 3 June 1943, when Charles de Gaulle was able to suspend Vichy Government and reinstate the democratic republic of France."[19]

Anti-Jewish policies were set to reach new heights in Morocco through a recently created movement referred to as 'purify France.' During the summer of 1942, the Vichy French version of the Nazi SS, the Service d'Ordre Légionnaire (SOL), arrived in strength. Scheduled to take place in mid-November, the SOL was slated to carry out additional deportations and internments,

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[17] Some Moroccan Jews fled to Spanish controlled Morocco where, counter to the Nazi's insistence, Franco did not discriminate, persecute, or deport the Jewish population.

[18] Michael Laskier, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century: The Jews of Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria,* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 65-6.

[19] Seth Ward, "Introduction," in Horace Robertson, *The Holocaust in North Africa (Revisited)*, International Sephardic Journal 11, no. 2 (February 2016). https://silo.tips/download/the-holocaust-in-north-africa-revisited#

but they were prevented because of the Anglo-American invasion.[20] In early November 1942, Operation Torch landed thousands of Anglo-American reinforcements who quickly routed the nominal Vichy resistance.[21] In the aftermath of Vichy surrender and German retreat, the Jews of Morocco were reinstated as French citizens and cautiously started to reenter Moroccan society.

Regrettably, the post-War era accelerated the already tumultuous relationship between Moroccan Arabs and the Israeli nationalists. Moroccan Muslim-Jewish unity was further strained by the presence of international Jewish relief organizations and the absence of domestic or foreign assistance for the local Arab population who also suffered during the war. The questioning of Jewish loyalty to Morocco created a social distinction between ethnic Moroccan Jews and international Jews living in Morocco. Making the situation worse, the Sultan Mohammed V, treated Moroccan Jews preferentially and disavowed 'other Jews' who increasingly supported the creation of Israel. Despite the Sultans' measures and appeals for the Jewish-Moroccan unity, Moroccan Jews also continued to support the creation of Israel and the Israeli's War for Independence. The outspoken Zionist movement led to vicious Arab pogroms on Jewish residences and businesses in parts of Morocco. These incidents eroded the last vestiges of trust between the Morocco Jewish community and the French administration, who the Jews blamed for failing to prevent the Arab led anti-Semitic attacks. Following in a similar trend across North Africa, once Morocco received its independence from European colonialism, the vast majority of Jews in Morocco emigrated to Europe, North America, and Israel in the 1950s and 1960s.[22]

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[20] The "purify France" campaign was scheduled to commence the day after Americans landed in Morocco. Wyrtzen, "Negotiating Morocco's Jewish Question," 209.

[21] Over three hundred Algerian Jews opted to join the resistance. They provided intelligence for American General Mark Clark's landing force and actively participated in the Allied landings around Algiers. A force of approximately 375 partisans managed to help capture the city of Algiers and neutralize 11,000 Vichy soldiers and thousands of SOL legionnaires. Michael Laskier, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century,* 72-3.

[22] Wyrtzen, "Negotiating Morocco's Jewish Question," 217-18.

Owning to the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany, Jews who lived in Morocco during World War II became eligible for compensation, since they suffered under the Fascist Vichy Administration.[23] Later by 2011, the German government finally recognized that Moroccan Jews were eligible for reparations.[24]

Compared to their Moroccan counterparts, the Vichy in Algeria rigorously applied anti-Jewish decrees and the situation for Algerian Jews worsened daily. Even though they enjoyed French citizenship under the Crémieux decree of 1870, and a nonconsequential relationship with the native Arabs, Vichy inspired anti-Jewish measures would spawn unprecedented attacks on Algerian Jews. In early October of 1940, Jews in Algeria experienced racial segregation and by March 1941, the Vichy administration established a Special Department for the Control of the Jewish Problem to enact and enforce anti-Jewish legislation.[25] Under the auspices of "controlling the Jewish problem," Algerian Jews were forced to wear a mark of identification, stripped of their French citizenship rights, and subjected to education quotas, even in primary schools.[26] In the midst of the 1940s, the Vichy government enacted additional statutes to prohibit Algerian Jewish political involvement and confiscated Jewish property to eliminate Jewish influence in the national economy.[27] Finally, Vichy authorities collaborated with the Nazis to deport French Jews living in Algeria to concentration camps in occupied-Europe.

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[23] Isaac Jack Lévy and Rosemary Lévy Zumwalt, "Jews from North Africa and Libya, the Invisible Jews," in, *The Sephardim in the Holocaust: A Forgotten People* (The University of Alabama Press, 2020), 155.

[24] Gil Stern Shefler, "Berlin to pay Moroccan Jews who suffered under Vichy," *Jerusalem Post*, April 27, 2011.https://www.jpost.com/jewish-world/jewish-news/berlin-to-pay-moroccan-jews-who-suffered-under-vichy

[25] Sheryl Ochayon writes, "Algeria was the only one of the three North African territories where a 'Special Department for the Control of the Jewish Problem' was created, whose function was specifically to apply the Jewish statutes. As a result, the restrictions on the Jews were much more vigorously enforced in Algeria than in Morocco and Tunisia." Sheryl S. Ochayon, "The Jews of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia," *Yad Vashem*, World Holocaust Remembrance Center, https://www.yadvashem.org/articles/general/the-jews-of-algeria-morocco-and-tunisia.html.

[26] Ochayon, "The Jews of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia."

Undeniably, Vichy anti-Semitism still contained some humanity, which differed sharply from the Nazi's racial genocide. When the Vichy regime stalled in severity of Jewish persecution, the Nazis were there to step in. During the Nazis' brief time in Algeria, they forced roughly 2,000 Algerian Jews into German-built labor and concentration camps. Inmates were forced into slave labor conditions, often involved in strenuous construction, they would usually work for ten hours every day.[28] Retreating Germans disassembled the camps before moving the War into Tunisia and the Allies liberated Algeria in mid-November 1942.

Unfortunately, Algerian Jews would not be truly 'liberated' until the summer of 1943, when France eliminated anti-Jewish laws and reinstated the Jews of Algeria as French citizens. Consequently, even though some Algerian Jews joined the movement for National Independence from the French Empire, most Algerian Jews favored France, out of loyalty to the Republic which emancipated them. Later, the Postcolonial Algerian State made some final appeals to Jewish communities to remain, but around 99% of the roughly 160,000 Algerian Jews leaving the country, with 85% emigrating to France and roughly 15% or 25,000 Algerian Jews, moved to Israel.[29] The modern Algerian government recognizes victims of the Holocaust because some Jews fought for Algerian National Independence, additionally, in 2018, Germany also publicly recognized nearly 25,000 Holocaust victims; all descendants from Algerian Jews who suffered at the hands of the

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[27] Michael Laskier, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century,* 71.

[28] Continued, "They were poorly fed and housed, and lived in terrible sanitary conditions. Tortures and atrocities were inflicted by the guards for the slightest breach of the rules; the internees were not treated as human beings. Many died from beatings; even more died from outbreaks of typhus or just from exhaustion and hunger." Ochayon, "The Jews of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia," *Yad Vashem*, World Holocaust Remembrance Center, https://www.yadvashem.org/articles/general/the-jews-of-algeria-morocco-and-tunisia.html.

[29] ANU Museum of the Jewish People, https://dbs.anumuseum.org.il/skn/en/c6/e120965/Place/Algeria and, "Community in Algeria," World Jewish Congress, January 2018, www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities/DZ.

Nazis. Algeria and Germany's contemporary acknowledgment of the atrocities in North Africa symbolizes a victory for victims of the 'Final Solution.'[30]

Wedged between Algeria and Libya, Tunisia fell to the French in 1881. With a sizable Jewish Community in Tunis, the pre-war environment can be characterized by a relatively peaceful co-existence between the French and Arab populations.[31] Traders, craftsmen, money lenders, middlemen between Arab-Tunisian markets and French goods and vice versa, thus following in the larger trend for the Jewish communities across North Africa. Even the diversity and unity of Tunisian society was evident in the vast array of languages including Hebrew, Arabic, and French. The duration spent under French rule proved to be advantageous for Tunisian Jews, some even enjoyed a moderate level of freedom under the Tunisian Bey or King Muhammad VIII al-Amin. Tunisians, and moreover North African Jewish communities, heard or read limited news from Europe. In some cases, the lack of information meant that in some cases the local Tunisians were not unaware of the new restrictions placed on Jews in Tunisia.[32] Unbeknownst to some, in 1942, the Tunisian Jewish community was subjected to additional Vichy anti-Semitic legislation that seized Jewish property, barred Tunisian Jews from French citizenship, higher education, and practically all mainstream professions.[33] With roughly 75,000 Jews residing in Tunisia around

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[30] "Jews who lived in Algeria between July 1940 and November 1942, and who suffered at the hands of the Nazis, will be eligible for compensation in the form of a one-time payment of €2,556 ($3,180) … which the German government will begin paying out in July." Stuart Winer, "In First, Germany to Compensate 25,000 Algerian Jewish Holocaust Survivors," *Times of Israel*, February 5, 2018. https://www.timesofisrael.com/in-first-germany-to-compensate-25000-algerian-jewish-holocaust-survivors/.

[31] The largest Jewish community resided in Tunis, as the Capital of Tunisia the city holds a significant position as the population center for commerce and culture in the nation.

[32] Mark Cohen. Interview with Professor Lucette Valensi. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. November 14, 2017.

[33] Jews were excluded from the following professions: banker, money changer, canvasser, intermediary in transactions…advertising agent, real estate, capital loan agent, broker, forester, publisher, director, manager, copywriter, every type of job in the film industry from producer to scriptwriter…or administrator of any enterprise

1941, this painted a large target for the impending Nazi occupation. By 1942, the Reich's new priority was to sustain a bridgehead in Tunisia and keep the Anglo-American forces divided.[34] Subsequently, when the Germans arrived in November 1942, they collected tens of thousands of Algerian Jews into forced labor camps to construct defensive fortifications around Tunis and the port of Bizerte.[35]

Before the intense fighting in the desert, Tunisians interacted with the Germans on an infrequent basis. Jewish Survivor and descendent of a French soldier who landed in 1881, Roger Abitbol recounts how by the time the Holocaust reached Tunisia, "Germans did not have something against the population because they only took the Jewish people for a labor force." Later during the war, Roger, and his brother, along with another six hundred Tunisian-Jews, were forced to march for four days from Tunis to the Subaytilah Internment Camp. In his interview, Roger recalls a moment he will never forget while on the forced march to the camp; the local Arab populations who were not hostile with the Jews before the arrival of the Germans, now cursed and spit at the Jews who were being marched to the Camp outside of Tunis. Referring to the anti-Semitism he experienced from local Arab populations around Tunis, Roger comments that, "Everything was going out of their hearts."[36] Under joint Italian-Vichy occupation, the Germans organized labor camps and used Jewish slave labor to build and repair roads, airports, naval ports,

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connected with radio broadcasting." Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War,* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989, 71-2.

[34] "Wehrmacht in Tunisia", *Weapons and Warfare, History and Hardware of Warfare*. October 1, 2016. https://weaponsandwarfare.com/2016/10/01/wehrmacht-in-tunisia/.

[35] "Approximately 2,000 Algerian Jews were put into labor and concentration camps throughout Algeria, including the camps at Bedeau and Djelfa." https://www.yadvashem.org/articles/general/the-jews-of-algeria-morocco-and-tunisia.html.

[36] Interview with Roger Abitbol. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. March 31, 1993.

and railroads.[37] In her testimony with the USC Shoah Foundation, Lucette Valensi recounts how several Jewish inmates were killed during allied bombardment of German held areas where the Jews were often assigned as forced laborers.[38] Although, the camps in Tunisia were coordinated and established by the Germans, the Nazis employed Italians as guards who often treated the interned Jews with less violence and animosity.

During the Nazi-occupation of North Africa, the hand-picked Lieutenant Walter Rauff, commander of SS operations in Vichy-Tunisia.[39] Using identical tactics from his time in Nazi-occupied Europe, Rauff's *Einsatzkommando Tunis* prosecuted a similar campaign of terror against the local Tunisian Jewish population. From November 1942 to May 1943, the Germans were responsible for the deaths of over 2,500 Tunisian Jews. Even though it was a small number of Jews who died in labor camps, the fact remains that the very presence of Germans caused Jewish deaths.[40] Otherwise, it should also be noted from Michael Laskier's work, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century*, locals claimed that the SS was constructing a kiln outside Tunis in order to begin implementing the 'Final Solution' in Tunisia. Other eyewitnesses go further and argue that

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[37] There was a meeting between SS Commander Walter Rauff and the Wehrmacht where they agreed to use Jewish forced laborers to fortify the German defensive positions. Subsequently, *Einsatzkommando Tunis* remained in North Africa for roughly five months. During the Nazi-occupation, Rauff's unit was, "busy registering Jews, exploiting them, terrorizing them, and forcing them to comprehensive forced labor for the Axis powers. Even if mass murder did not happen, Rauff and the rest of the German occupation hierarchy set up a true reign of terror." Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Martin Cüppers, "Elimination of the Jewish National Home in Palestine: The Einsatzkommando of the Panzer Army Africa, 1942", *Yad Vashem Studies*, 35, 1 (2007): 24.

[38] Mark Cohen. Interview with Professor Lucette Valensi. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. November 14, 2017.

[39] "This unit was scheduled to take part in upcoming joint operations by German and Italian divisions pressing eastward in North Africa…The unit consisted of seven SS officers and seventeen non-commissioned officers and men, and was initially slated to be deployed in Egypt." Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Martin Cüppers, "Elimination of the Jewish National Home in Palestine: The Einsatzkommando of the Panzer Army Africa, 1942", *Yad Vashem Studies*, 35, 1 (2007): 2.

[40] A great deal suffered from Allied bombing and strafing, but also exhaustion and starvation in a network of SS forced labor camps. Jan Friedmann. "World War II: New Research Taints Image of Desert Fox Rommel". *Spiegel Online International*. 23 May 2007. https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/world-war-ii-new-research-taints-image-of-desert-fox-rommel-a-484510.html.

the SS unit was, "preparing gas chambers near Kairouan," however, the German withdrawal meant they were never completed, and the Germans dismantled and abandoned the site.[41] In other extreme cases, the Nazis' deported several hundred European and Tunisian Jews to concentration camps in Europe, a fate shared by other European or outspoken North African Jews.[42] And although the Jews of Tunisia did not face total annihilation, they were subjected to harsh treatment by the returning French, who arrested and imprisoned Tunisian Jews under the suspicion of collaborating with the Nazis.

Because the German occupation of Tunisia lasted less than a year, plans to implement the 'Final Solution' never came to fruition.[43] Even further, no official laws or regulations prevented Tunisians from hosting Jews. Thus, Yad Vashem Righteous Among Nations commission concluded that "in the absence of risk, Tunisians are not eligible for designation as 'Righteous Among the Nations.' Additionally, in her article, "Site of Amnesia," Yvonne Golan explains how a gap exists between the experience of North African Jews in the Holocaust and the global representation and recognition of the Holocaust. Specifically, her argument attributes the focus of Holocaust representation to the fact that post-War documentary footage of the Shoah and the video

[41] Both French and Arab sources confirm this account of German's operations around Kairouan. Laskier, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century*, 75-6.

[42] Holocaust survivor and British citizen Joseph Labi, born in 1928, in Benghazi, Libya. When the Germans entered in Libya in late 1941, Jews with allied citizenship were rounded up and deported. Alongside his entire family, Joseph was first sent to Giado Concentration camp outside Tripoli. Jews with Allied citizenship were then transferred to Northern Italy before being sent to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. After a successful prisoner-exchange deal between the British and Germans, Joseph was moved to France in March 1945, and from there he made his way to Spain and back to Libya. On his arrival in Benghazi, Joseph encountered soldiers from the British Army's Jewish Brigade who suggested that Joseph accompany them to Eretz, Israel. After he was smuggled into Israel, Joseph worked on several kibbutzim and volunteered to fight in Israel's War of Independence. Online Torchlighter Film Archive, *Yad Vashem*, Video Testimonies Resource Center, Holocaust Survivor Testimony: Joseph Labi, May 4, 2016. https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/video-testimonies.html.

[43] The Claims Conference created the "Hardship Fund" in 1980 for Jews forced to relocate from the Soviet Bloc, roughly 2,600 Euros paid for each claim. In 2005, the German government agreed to include Holocaust survivors incarcerated for at least six months in certain labor camps in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia.

testimony used during Nuremberg trials focused on the Nazis' crimes in Europe. Furthermore, the experiences of Jews from Tunisia, and by-in-large these North African Jewish communities, received insufficient academic and public attention due to the international production of art, theater, film, and television that primarily depicted Ashkenazi or European Jewry.[44]

The wider religious heritage of North African Jewish communities' ranges from the Ashkenazi to Sephardic populations, with populations able to trace their origins from Spain and the Pale of Settlement. Nevertheless, the Jews from Libya are unique in that they can trace their lineage back to Roman Tripolitania and Greece's Cyrenaica. After the Romans, Libyan Jews fostered communities and political status under Ottoman rule until the Italo-Turkish war in the early 1900s. Over-extended and routed in the Italo-Turkish war, the Ottoman Empire's control over Libya ended in 1912 and the Turks ceded control of Libya to Italy. Initially, Libyan Jews celebrated the removal of Turkish authority and opulence while fascist agricultural colonialization quickly replaced any hopes for Libyan or Jewish emancipation.[45]

This earlier Italian colonial period is marked by a shaky coexistence between Jewish-Italian and Arab communities. Initially, Italian policies towards the Libyan Jewish population sought to assimilate and Europeanize the North African Jews and turn them into supporters of the Italian colonial system.[46] Correspondingly, during Mussolini's reign, the Italian people were protective over the Jews in the occupied territories.[47] Naturally, Fascist Italy's allegiance with Nazi Germany

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[44] Yvonne Kozlovsky-Golan, "Site of Amnesia: The Absence of North African Jewry in Visual Depictions of the Experience of World War II." *Jewish Film & New Media* 2, no. 2 (2014): 155-8.

[45] Eileen Ryan, "Violence and the Politics of Prestige: The Fascist Turn in Colonial Libya," *Modern Italy* 20, no. 2 (2015): 127.

[46] Piera Rossetto, "'We Were all Italian!': The construction of a 'sense of Italianness' among Jews from Libya (1920s–1960s)," *History and Anthropology*, 2021.

[47] Later during the War, "Jews from other countries took refuge in Italy, and those in the concentration camps in Italy were well treated." Lévy and Zumwalt, "Jews from North Africa and Libya, the Invisible Jews," 163.

quickly turned the Arabs against the Jews of Libya. The situation for the Jewish populace in Libya quickly deteriorated after Mussolini enacted the Manifesto of Race (Leggi per la Difesa della Razza) published on July 14, 1938, this 'manifesto' arranged the Fascist Italian racial laws of October 1938.[48] The more formalized, 'Italian Racial Laws' stripped Libyan Jews of Italian citizenship and moreover cast the Jews as the source of Libyan social problems and economic deficiencies. What started out as a warm welcome from the Libyan Jewish Community to the new Italian occupying powers, soon turned into a complex relationship where there was no lack of tension, conflict, humiliation, and persecution. Born in Benghazi in 1921, Yosef Daduch recalls, "how the Italian Fascists put a Star of David on the houses of the Jews in Benghazi in April 1940. The Fascists, Daduch continue, "took over the streets, assassinated, raped, all around, all they could do . . . all over Libya."[49] The presence of Italian Fascists in Libya, while violent, only represented a fraction of the carnage yet to befall the Jews of Libya.

With Italian forces struggling to cope with Allied offensives in the Libyan desert, Hitler deployed General Erwin Rommel to command the newly minted German *Afrika Korps* in a counter to Allied advances. British journalists described the conflict as, "The War without Hate," with both sides claiming adherence to the Geneva conventions on and off the battlefield. In truth, Rommel's men hunted down, imprisoned, and deported North African Jews in the name of the National Socialist State.[50] Undermining the myth of how the War in North Africa was somehow a

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[48] "The Fascists applied these anti-Jewish measures in spite of the Libyan Governor-General, Italo Balbo's wishes to the contrary." Maurice M. Roumani, "First, Libya's Jews Were Deported. Then the S.S. Stepped In," *Haaretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*, February 8, 2020, https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-first-libya-s-jews-were-deported-then-the-s-s-stepped-in-1.8504840.

[49] Lévy and Zumwalt, "Jews from North Africa and Libya, the Invisible Jews," 164-5.

[50] In another example, *Afrika Korps* units expelled over 2,000 Libyan Jews into the desert where roughly 400 would die from exposure in makeshift internment camps. Mark Felton, "Afrika Korps War Crimes – The 'War Without Hate' Myth," *YouTube Video*, February 15, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjhgyZ6TNic&t=163s

'respectable conflict,' a report from May 12th 1942, on the, "Jewish Question in Libya" states that, "there is no doubt that, when the time comes, the Jewish question will also be solved in Tripolitania."[51] The Nazis' redeployed Walter Rauff to lead an element twenty-four SS officers and men in Libya which would rely heavily on Rommel's *Afrika Korps*. Deployed to Tobruk in June of 1942, Rauff's *Einsatzgruppen Afrika* followed behind the line of German advance to extend the Holocaust from Europe to Egypt, and on to Palestine if Rommel were to succeed in the Maghreb. Rommel's capture of Benghazi proved this theory, *Einsatzgruppen Afrika* and members of *Afrika Korps* murdered 67 Jewish civilians, ransacked Jewish business and homes, as well as enslaved Libyan Jews to build defensive positions for Rommel's *Afrika Korps*. With Germans occupying most of the country, they persistently gathered Jews in cities like Benghazi or Tobruk and thousands would be sent into squalid desert camps such as the Babuk (BuqBuq) camp, the Sidi Azaz camp, or the Giado (Jadu) concentration camp.[52]

Once the Germans occupied Libya in 1942, the Nazis forced over 2,500 Libyan Jews into Giado concentration camp. Survivors described conditions as horrendous, with deliberate starvation, rampant disease, and physical abuse. Jewish Survivor, Haim Arbiv arrived with his family at the Giado camp in 1942, each family received a small amount of living space inside an overcrowded shack. He recalls the lack of water and food, and he remembers people dying every day in the camp. British forces liberated the Giado Camp in January of 1943, finding that out of 2,600 inmates, 600 had perished. Additionally, life at the Babuk Libyan concentration camp was captured in an interview with Jewish Survivor Viktor Rekah, he recounts his memory of the Babuk

[51] Walter Rauff to the German Embassy in Rome, May 12, 1942, *Yad Vashem Archive*, Jerusalem, 2213.

[52] For more information on the camps in Italian-Occupied Libya, see: Megargee, Geoffrey P., Joseph R. White, and Mel Hecker, eds. "Italian-Occupied North Africa," in *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945, Vol. III: Camps and Ghettos under European Regimes Aligned with Nazi Germany* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2018), 527–30.

camp. The Germans started to deport young men and their families to the concentration camp to work on the roads, build trenches. Rekah explained that in, "1942 while Rommel was still there. During the attack of Rommel against Montgomery. They had to build trenches. During this time, the people were badly treated. There was the plague, typhus in the camps. . . There were people who could not go along anymore, and they died. Until Montgomery came and conquered this part of Libya [in Benghazi]. He liberated those camps."[53] By the end of 1942, hundreds of Libyan Jews would succumb to malnutrition, disease, and exhaustion.[54]

Ultimately, the War in North Africa would come to completely redefine Libya. Initially, Fascist colonization betrayed the hopes of Jewish populations in Libya, then Nazism ignited a powder-keg of antisemitism, and finally British occupation failed to anticipate or dampen the conflict between Arab Nationalism and Jewish emancipation.[55] In the chaotic aftermath of War, Libyan Jews often found themselves exposed to violent and repressive measures against their religion and their property.[56] Because of the post-War pogroms, Jews prepared for the arduous journey in the *Aliyah*. As was shown in this period, Arab nationalists unleased ferocious and unprovoked attacks on Jewish businesses and populations in major cities like Tripoli and Benghazi.[57] By 1949 roughly 2,000 Jews from Benghazi and the rest of Cyrenaica liquidated their

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[53] Lévy and Zumwalt, "Jews from North Africa and Libya, the Invisible Jews," 166.

[54] Online Torchlighter Film Archive, *Yad Vashem*, *Video Testimonies Resource Center*, Holocaust Survivor Testimony: Haim Arbiv, May 4, 2016. https://www.yadvashem.org/remembrance/torchlighters.html.

[55] Rosario Milano, "Italia e Libia. Un Secolo Di Relazioni Controverse," *Nuova Rivista Storica* 100, no. 3 (September 2016): 1121-22.

[56] Jacqueline Shields, "Jewish Refugees in Arab Countries, Libya," Jewish Virtual Library, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jewish-refugees-from-arab-countries#libya.

[57] David Meghnagi, "Libyan Jews between Memory and History," in *Jewish Libya: Memory and Identity in Text and Image*, edited by Jacques Roumani, David Meghnagi, and Judith Roumani (Syracuse University Press, 2018), 248.

businesses and left for their departure to Israel.[58] In terms of the post-war implications for Libyan-Jewish communities, Maurice Roumani's, *The Jews of Libya: Coexistence, Persecution, Resettlement* offers possibly the most complete assessment of their experiences. Chronicling anti-Semitism, Zionism, and North African Jewish migration to Israel in the wake of World War II, Roumani reveals, "The *aliyah* of Libyan Jews was one of the first waves of immigration after the State of Israel was established in 1948. Although by comparison it was the smallest Jewish communities in North Africa (36,000 compared to 105,000 in Tunisia, 140,000 in Algeria, and 265,000 in Morocco), in less than three years, 94% of the Libyan Jewish community had already resettled in Israel."[59]

Libya is recognized as one of the first Arab nations to achieve independence from European colonialism in 1951. Alternatively, the memory of the Holocaust in Libya persisted long after the departure of imperialism. To this day, Jewish survivors of the Holocaust from Libya continue their efforts to obtain reparations for those Libyan victims in North African concentration camps.[60] In his struggle for recognition and restitution with the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Jewish survivor Yosef Daduch cites how the Germans paid reparations to the Ashkenazi of Eastern Europe when contextualizing his own claims for reparations for Sephardic, Libyan Jews. In his quest for recognition, Daduch contacted a German delegate of the United Restitution Organization who revisited Germany's archives and libraries. The German delegate discovered

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[58] Shmuel Spector and Geoffrey Wigoder. "Benghazi," in T*he Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust. A-J.* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 111.

[59] Maurice Roumani, *The Jews of Libya: Coexistence, Persecution, Resettlement* (Sussex Academic Press, 2008), 156.

[60] "Instructive testimony as to what happened to Libyan Jewry is found in Marco Carmel's documentary, *A [Matter] of Time* (2005), an Israeli film about the Holocaust of North African Jewry."
Kozlovsky-Golan, "Site of Amnesia: The Absence of North African Jewry in Visual Depictions of the Experience of World War II," 162-3, 174-5.

that the German ambassador of Tripoli sent a letter to the German ambassador in Italy. The letter dated sometime in 1942 confirmed that the Germans deported Jews of Italian nationality to Jarboujr Concentration Camp. The letter also confirmed how the Nazis targeted Jews from Tripolitania and the Jews from Cyrenaica. Representative of a much broader victory, Yosef Daduch successfully made a case to the German Government and they recognized and paid out compensation to Libyan widows and elderly survivors.[61]

Across the border of Libya, a dramatic shift for Zionism and the British ensued in Egypt. An outspoken supporter of Zionism, in the years leading up to War in North Africa, Winston Churchill abided by the Balfour Declaration and Palestinian quotas for Jewish emigration. North African Jewish communities did not rush for a mass exodus to Palestine because of the relatively stable socioeconomic and political conditions for the Jews in North Africa. However, this status-quo was ruptured by the Second World War and thousands of Jewish refugees arrived from Europe.[62] The outbreak of war spawned a wave of anti-Semitic publications and anti-Zionist propaganda arriving the doorsteps of the Jewish communities in Cairo and Alexandria. In the wake of Vichy and Italian anti-Semitic decrees as well as aware of Fascism and National Socialism, Egyptian Jews threw their support behind the British forces battling the Axis across North Africa. In contrast, the Nazis failed in their appeals to anti-British and anti-Jewish sentiment in the conservative parts of Egyptian society.[63]

Even though Egypt is not considered part of the Maghreb, the potential Nazi-occupation for Egypt, and the potential extermination of Egyptian Jews, is evidenced in other German-

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[61] Lévy and Zumwalt, "Jews from North Africa and Libya, the Invisible Jews," 168-70.

[62] Michael Laskier, *The Jews of Egypt 1920-1970: In the Midst of Zionism, Anti-Semitism, and the Middle East Conflict* (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 12, 49.

[63] Gossman, "Plotting for Nazi Germany," 261-2.

controlled regions in North Africa. Thoroughly documented and tasked to Walter Rauff of *Einsatzgruppen* Egypt, the Nazi-occupation of Egypt intended to facilitate the liquidation of Middle Eastern Jewish populations.[64] Although slated for Egypt, Walter Rauff's *Einsatzkommando* unit would go on to conduct a ruthless campaign against the Jews in Tunisia and later in Northern Italy.[65] Undoubtably, the critical victory by British General Bernard Montgomery at El Alamein, and Erwin Rommel's subsequent retreat to Italy, prevented Hitler from carrying out the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question' in Egypt, and more broadly, in North Africa.

While there was a World War taking place, there was also another war of attrition against the world's Jewish populations. Scholars of the Holocaust still debate whether the Wannsee Conference, or more broadly, the Holocaust should be regarded only through the lens of European Jews or rather to include global Jewish populations. Nevertheless, what is clear from the story of North Africa during the War is how Nazi Germany adapted their original plans to compensate for specific geo-political restrictions and undeniably sought to destroy North African Jewish populations. Moreover, the ephemeral Nazi-occupation of North Africa offers stunning details regarding their objectives to eliminate international Jewish populations.[66] Perhaps best surmised

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[64] Michman, "Were the Jews of North Africa Included in the Practical Planning for the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question'?," 70.

[65] One of the early engineers of the mobile gas chamber units in German cities, a founding member of the *Einsatzgruppen* in Greece, Eastern Europe, and Russia, Walter Rauff surrendered to American forces in Italy after a stand-off between his SS unit and Italian Partisans. He successfully escaped from an American POW camp and went on to serve as a military advisor to Syrian President Husni al-Za'im when Syrian forces fought against Israel. Then Rauff worked for the Federal Intelligence Service of West Germany before fleeing to South America. Rauff managed to evade a few assassinations attempts by the Mossad, and he ended up serving in some capacity as a military advisor to Chile's dictator, Augusto Pinochet. In the end, Walter Rauff passed away from lung cancer in 1984.

[66] November 1942 witnessed the launch of Operation Torch. The first Anglo-American Forces to reach the Western shores of North Africa landed against weak Vichy Resistance in Morocco and Algeria. With General George Patton Jr. eastward offensives, the Americans started a pincer movement with Bernard Montgomery's British Forces

by World War II historian Gerhard Weinberg, "A critical difference between the Holocaust and all other genocides is that it was intended to be worldwide and not limited to a specific portion of the globe." Invariably, study of the Holocaust should not be limited to Europe, even Weinberg goes on to conclude that, "the Allied forces saved two-thirds of the world's Jews from the fate intended for them."[67] Consequently, within the broader study of modern Jewish history, examining North African Jewish communities under the Nazi-occupation is fundamental to adequately conceptualizing the Holocaust as a global event. In order to adequately conceptualize the Holocaust's international effects, one must view North African Jewish communities under the Nazi-occupation as fundamental within the broader study of modern Jewish history.

In the wake of the Second World War, Arab-Jewish relations in North Africa were in a state of crisis. Although American combat operations in North Africa lasted for less than a year, the war's toppling of colonial associations stirred both Zionist and Arab nationalism. Whether a reaction to Jewish survival, their reinstatement as French citizens, or most likely, the Jewish collective support for the establishment of Israel, Jewish communities once at war with Fascism were now confronted by another menace, Arab resentment. Following the abrogation of all racial discriminatory legislation in North Africa, Jewish Post-War reconstruction in North Africa was hampered by modern anti-Semitic pogroms.[68] The prevalence of anti-Semitism, particularly in North Africa, meant that any support for Zionism held the risk of damaging the already precarious relationship between North African Arabs and Jews. Additionally, the presence of thousands of

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pushing Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps west across Libya and Tunisia. Allied forces successfully defended North Africa from Nazi-occupation and the last German and Italian forces evacuated in early May 1943.

[67] Gerhard L. Weinberg, "Ignored and Misunderstood Aspects of the Holocaust," *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques* 39, no. 2 (2013): 9.

[68] Laskier, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century,* 56-7, 91-102, 124.

European-Jewish refugees symbolized a change in North African anti-Semitism.[69] A broader 'denazification' process in North Africa failed because Western democratic values failed to dislodge Arab anti-Semitism inflamed by the propaganda from Vichy France, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany. Regarding post-war Arab attitudes about the Jews, Adolf Hitler succeeded in dehumanizing the Jews of North Africa. North African Jewish communities reacted to Arab-led pogroms with astonishment. Unable to demonstrate or unwilling to prove their loyalty once again, most North African Jews preferred emigration to the United States, Europe, or Israel.

Different motivations for Israeli, Arab, or European citizenship played out across the Maghreb. In Moroccan communities, tensions and violence erupted between Muslim populations seeking autonomy from the French and Jewish groups aligned with France as citizens. In Algeria Zionist movements pushed back against French reluctance to abolish second-class citizenship for Jews. After Tunisian independence, an emerging social division amongst Arab and Jewish Tunisians saw a once vibrant community that boasted roughly 105,000 shrink to less than 20,000. Meanwhile, Jewish communities in Libya felt betrayed by the Italian imperialists as well as the lack of support and recognition from the Allied nations. Attempting to fill the void created by the war's destruction, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) provided substantial financial assistance and employment opportunities for shattered North African Jewish communities. Along with the JDC, Jewish Allied soldiers participated in the liberation of Nazi-occupied North Africa and the presence of both these entities inspired survivors of the Holocaust to emigrate and fight for the establishment of Israel. Eventually, the desire to secure a State for the Jewish People corresponded with North African Jewish communities wider exposure to Zionism in the post-War environment.

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[69] Richard Breitman, "The Allied War Effort and the Jews, 1942-1943." *Journal of Contemporary History* 20, no. 1, (1985): 152.

Even though the war acted as conduit for Vichy French and Fascist Italian anti-Jewish measures enacted in the Maghreb, the War inspired Zionist sentiment throughout North African Jewish communities. Wartime developments afforded Zionist organizations a prime opportunity to significantly expand their activity in North Africa. Representatives of Israel sought to exploit the increased appeal, particularly from the youth, of Jewish nationalism within a population that had become disillusioned with French assimilation and Vichy's anti-Semitism.[70] In relation to the establishment of Israel, the rise of anti-Semitism across North Africa inspired Maghrebi Jews to join the fight for a Jewish homeland. The number of North African Jewish immigrants to Israel rose steadily between 1948 to 1951, with 45,400 from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, 8,800 from Egypt, and 31,000 from Libya. Later, the links between Israel and North Africa would continue to grow during the 1950s when vast numbers of North African Jews emigrated to Israel.[71]

Across the Northern Tip of Africa, the Holocaust was seen, heard, and felt by a minority of Israelites. One lingering division arrives from the erudite study of Sephardim and Ashkenazim representation in Holocaust scholarship. Considering the brief but sprawling nature of the conflict in North Africa, it has become increasingly difficult to weave together historical narratives from five different countries. Because there are unique circumstances within each country, this work attempts to identify similarities across the episodes of attempted genocide in North Africa. As a consequence of revisiting this period of Jewish persecution in North Africa, the implications for this research go far beyond just the Sephardim's plight in the Maghreb. Expelled Sephardic Jews from the Spanish Inquisition also constituted new communities in the Balkan countries of Albania,

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[70] Wyrtzen, "Negotiating Morocco's Jewish Question", 210.

[71] "During the period between 1955 and 1957, most (62%) immigrants came from North African countries." Jonathan Kaplan, "The Mass Migration to Israel of the 1950s," *My Jewish Learning,* ND. https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-mass-migration-of-the-1950s/.

Yugoslavia and Northern Greece as well as Italy, Rhodes Island, Bulgaria.[72] The perceived 'over-representation' of the Ashkenazim experiences in the Holocaust has driven a philosophical wedge in academia over how to best represent the totality of Nazi crimes.[73] Regarding the breadth and indiscriminatory nature of the Holocaust, it remains critically important to maintain a pragmatic stance when conducting research on victims of the Shoah. In the end, there is both a clear paper trail and consistent line of historical testimony which supports the theory that the Nazi Party clearly intended to destroy European Jews and North African Jewish Communities as well as international Judaism.

Modern diplomatic relations with Israel may offer another avenue to compare the effects of Nazism in North Africa. Considering the five nations: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt: there are casual connections regarding the time lapse between the presence of Nazism, the decolonization of North Africa, and these countries subsequent decisions to recognize Israel. After the first Camp David Accords, Egypt established the first diplomatic mission in 1979, followed most recently by Morocco in 2020. Whereas Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia have not maintained or operated a diplomatic mission with Israel. Should the lapse in recognition of Israel be attributed to the legacies of Nazism wherein German forces occupied the three central North African nations for the longest intervals. While this argument does not seek a simplification of the complex nature of international relations, rather it concludes with proposing a new approach to reflect on the relationship between independent North African Nations and their recognition of the State of Israel.

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[72] "Sephardi Jews During the Holocaust," *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, Washington DC, https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/sephardi-jews-during-the-holocaust.

[73] Henry Abramson, "A Double Occlusion: Sephardim and the Holocaust," in *Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewry: From the Golden Age of Spain to Modern Times*, edited by Zion Zohar, (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 285-299.

Over the course of this research, the initial objective sought a broad reconsideration of the Holocaust in North Africa. In turn, this investigation developed into a deeper analysis regarding the true impact of the 'Final Solution' in North Africa. The original mission to offer a review of modern North African Jewish history gave way to a new understanding that the Holocaust was a dynamic and fluid system which adapted to colonial restrictions and military circumstances across the Maghreb. While the categorization of German atrocities provides vital information behind the Nazi killing machine, the broader value of this work lies within the examination of the Holocaust's global implications and the metamorphic effects on North African Jewish populations. Moreover, the turbulent years of Arab nationalism and the establishment of the State of Israel represent troubled epilogues in the narratives of these societies.

The overwhelming majority of historical documents show that the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question' was a multifarious assortment of actions taken against global Jewish communities meant to culminate in the systematic destruction of European Jewry. The erratic and flexible application of the 'Final Solution' is exemplified by the examples from North African Jews who experienced the Nazi's anti-Jewish policies through economic deprivation, physical abuse, deportations, and murder. This microcosm of the Holocaust, while not as fatal as the destruction of European Jewry, nonetheless represents a fundamental episode in the study of modern Jewish history and culture.

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