Remembering the Departure of Moroccan Jews

by

Nakita Simona Valerio

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ABSTRACT

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"Remembering the Departure of Moroccan Jews"

Before the end of the Second World War, Morocco's Jewish community numbered approximately 240,000 people and was one of the largest and oldest populations of Jews in the Arab-Muslim world. Between 1948 and 1968, the vast majority of the Jewish population left the country. As a narrative, the plotline of their departure seems straight-forward: a large group of people who came to see themselves as belonging to one another lived in Morocco and then, over a period of two decades, almost all of them left. It is the question of *why* they left which gives rise to a multiplicity of competing memories, expressed in three main theatres: the historiography, the testimonies of émigrés themselves, and popular performative media. The main question this thesis answers is how the causality of the departure of Moroccan Jews is remembered in these three domains, as well as how they reference and respond to one another, and why this is the case. This thesis shows that, across these domains, there are seven main narrative forms about the departure and that each of these forms is, most importantly, accompanied by a prelude and a post-script which inform the basic narrative of the cause of the departure in different ways. By examining who remembers what, according to the discursive, ideological environments in which these memories are formed, as well as what is diminished or silenced in each of these memories, this study contributes to a growing body of research on the effect of the contemporary moment on historical memory and popular commemoration.

PREFACE

This thesis is an original work by Nakita Simona Valerio. No part of this thesis has been published.

Why do you want to enter? Simon Levy asked outside the entrance of the Casablanca Jewish Museum he founded and directed as of 1997. An armed Moroccan military officer stood close by, listening to our conversation. When I replied that I wanted to see the Moroccan Jewish artifacts inside, he seemed surprised, and gestured to the hijab covering my head. He said, *it is not often that we have your people visiting the museum* before waving for me to follow him inside. Five years later, I was sitting in Levy's old office with the new museum director, Zhor Rehihil, who took over primary curatorship after Levy's death. We were talking about my research project and dropping names of historians doing work on the departure. I was explaining my interest in the silences of its memory, particularly the anxieties brought on by the Holocaust and a host of other issues largely absent from both Jewish and Muslim memories. *The Holocaust had nothing to do with Morocco*, she protested. I let her finish without agreeing or disagreeing, wrapping up our conversation with a promise to keep in touch and update her when my work was completed. As she was walking me out, she looked at my hijab and said, *you know, that headscarf will make your research very difficult. Trust, in this field, is a complicated thing.*

It was only in wading through the multivocal, emotionally-charged and often painful memories of the departure that I would come to recognize the truth of her observation and how my own work might come to be perceived because of my identity. All I have to offer is my participation. All I am able to do is take each voice in the turbulence of remembering and listen to them equally.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

O Allah, I repudiate my will and power and seek refuge in Your Will and Power for You are the Powerful.
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I am also grateful for Dr. Judy Garber for her insights on my work and her presence as the external on my committee. Additionally, the instruction of and discourse with Drs. Willi Braun, David Marples, Mojtaba Mahdavi, John-Paul Himka, David Kahane, Janice Williamson and John Kitchen have also proven monumental in shaping my academic worldview and my approach to historical studies. The assistance of Dr. Adam Kemezis with the SSHRC application as well as organizing my program with Dr. Margriet Haagsma was also indispensable. Thanks as well to Dr. Selina Stewart for her expertise in chairing my defence. Having a department I feel safe and supported in has been absolutely priceless. I have to also extend boundless gratitude for language instruction and tutoring to Dr. Mai Hussein and instructor James White, and to Stas Mureyko and Amna Hussain for their assistance with Hebrew. The incredible support staff in the Department of History and Classics including Lydia Dugbazah, Lia Watkin, and Shufen Edmonstone also made this experience as straightforward as possible and I thank them for their continuous help and support.

Elisabeth Hill, Rachael Lawless, Rita Maria Neyer, Amandah Van Merlin, Shaun McKinnon, and Anup Atwal were the best peers for which one could hope. Your friendship and intellectual discourse made this endeavour far less solitary and far more enriched than it could have been otherwise.

Two friends and mentors who must not go unmentioned are, Dr. Youssef Wahby and Mustafa Farooq who, each in their own way, have helped inspire me to be the person I am today. Particularly in the span of completing this degree, their guidance, mentorship and kindness has had a profoundly deep effect on how I have cultivated my sense of personal character and have navigated my ethical position in society.

All of this would have been completely impossible without the support of my family, as well as many dear friends who acted as strong rocks upon which I stood when things got especially difficult. My husband, Bassam Mahfoud, was one of my greatest supports and an exceptional help throughout this entire process – a process which would have been impossible without him. My mother and grandmother, in particular, and a circle of extremely powerful women around me have helped uplift and shape me. I am forever grateful to all of you for believing in me and for your love, patience and kindness.

Lastly, I give thanks for Lina, my little sunshine, for making my life forever worth living and being an endless source of brilliance, beauty and love. Without you, I might find myself in an ocean of despair. May Allah always bless you and keep us close, now and in the Hereafter.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SKETCHES: INTRODUCTION

"On est partis parce que c'était la grande vague." – Margot, native of Marrakech living in Montreal[1]

"A *souk* without Jews is like bread without salt." – Moroccan proverb[2]

"Break them, they are Kikes. Break them."
– French commander at Ain Beni Mathar concentration camp for Jews in the Moroccan Sahara[3]

"…the galaxy or constellation of events upon which the present study concentrates is itself a mosaic of perpetually interacting forms that have undergone kaleidoscopic transformation."
– Marshall McLuhan[4]

Before the end of the Second World War, Morocco's Jewish community numbered approximately 240,000 (out of 8 million people) and was one of the largest and oldest populations of Jews in the Arab-Muslim world. This might seem relatively small, but this population was concentrated in urban centers while a large part of the Muslim population remained rural. Thus, the visible proportion of Jews was quite high in the towns and cities, in addition to prominence achieved by virtue of significant involvement in commercial enterprises, the government bureaucracy and other key socio-political positions. In 1947, the population of Marrakesh alone was at least 35% Jewish – something unthinkable for the inhabitants of the city today – and was even higher in places like Fez and Essaouira. Jewish people, their religious practices and their heritage have permeated the Moroccan social and political fabric and had done so for centuries, their presence predating the arrival of Islam and Arabs. It was, however, between 1948 and 1968, that the vast majority of the Jewish population left the country for Israel, France, or Canada. Today, fewer than 3,000 Jews remain in Morocco and their relations with the Muslim majority are primarily strained or non-existent.

As a narrative, the plotline of the departure is straight-forward: a large group of people who came to see themselves as belonging to one another lived in Morocco and then, over a

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[1] Cohen, Yolande, Martin Messika and Sara Cohen Fournier. "Les mots d'une migration postcoloniale dans les récits de Juifs montréalais," in *RHAF*, Vol. 69: 1-2, Summer-Autumn, 2015, pp.49-74.
[2] Boum, Aomar. *Memories of Absence: How Muslims Remember Jews in Morocco*. Stanford University Press: Bloomington, 2013.
[3] Oliel, Jacob. *Les Camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939-1944.* Editions du Lys, 2005.
[4] McLuhan, Marshall. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1962.

period of two decades, almost all of them left.[5] It is the question of *why* they left – the causality behind their departure – which gives rise to a multiplicity of competing memories. These memories are expressed in three main theatres: the historiography, the testimonies of émigrés themselves, and popular performative media. The main question this project seeks to answer is how the causality of the departure of Moroccan Jews is remembered in these three domains, as well as how they reference and respond to one another. By virtue of how and when these resources were developed, this project will ultimately be a history of the memory of the departure in the last two decades.

While examining the themes that emerge from these memories and an understanding of some of the reasons why the departure is remembered in these ways, some of the major silences in these memories also come to light. By looking at who remembers what and according to the discursive, ideological environments in which these memories are formed, I also come to ask what is diminished or silenced in each of those memories. Since memories are never formed in isolation from the present or from future imaginaries, I also examine how these memories affect and are effected by their contemporary, geopolitical climate and

[5] Interviewees offering testimonials, popular media sources, reporters, and even historians writing about the departure have sometimes opted to use the term Exodus when referring to the departure. This is problematic for me for several reasons. It invokes reference to a narrative that assumes inevitable exile, persecution, and deliverance. As we will see, the notion of persecution of Jews in Morocco is contested and the notion of "deliverance" from persecution for people who come to identify as Mizrahim in Israel is also only present in certain discourses. Additionally, at least part of the purpose of this project is to bring into question the inevitability of the departure, something which is oft-repeated without serious consideration and which is implied by invoking the Exodus grammar. I will be using the term departure throughout this project to refer to when Moroccan Jews left because it is free of any such connotations. Sometimes, the term emigration will be used when referring to individual movement, particularly when interviewees themselves use it. Both departure and emigration, however, might imply a willingness to leave on the part of the émigrés themselves which, as we will see, is not always clearly the case. Because I personally refrain from asking questions about *motivations* for leaving, I understand the term departure to simply be referring to the movement of a group of people who would come to self-identify as belonging to one another. I will refer to this group as Moroccan Jews except when regionalities or local particularities are necessary to elaborate on. Readers should note that I do not refer to this group as *Morocco's* Jews because this implies that Jews belonged to Morocco but were not *of* it. This complex and diverse group of people understood themselves as belonging to one another largely because of the departure – primarily through their Jewishness and origins in Arab-Muslim lands, and sometimes, if they went to Israel, as Mizrahim (much later). There are times where the ambiguous term "Arab Jews" is used by interviewees or in sources and, while I understand that this term arose in a specific Israeli discourse and that it would later disappear and be replaced by the category of Mizrahim, I tend to refrain from said terminology because it is anachronistic, erases the Amazigh identity of many Moroccan Jews, and assumes a homogenous experience with other Jews from Arab-Muslim lands. Generally speaking, when I refer to Moroccan Jews as Mizrahim, it is only when individuals or groups refer to themselves as such, which is almost exclusively in the context of their presence in Israel. See: Shohat, Ella Habiba, "The Invention of Mizrahim" in *Journal of Palestine Studies*. Vol 29:1. 1999: pp. 5-20.

historical context. This exercise offers insight not only into the nature of the departure and memory itself but also opens up avenues of future research that are far wider and more meaningful than if we examine the historiography, ethnographic testimonials or cultural representations of the departure in isolation from one another.

There are seven main narrative forms about the departure which can be found in the three domains: that European Zionists caused it, that Moroccan Arab-Muslims caused it, that Jews wanted to leave (usually parsed as the long-term longings for The Land of Israel that were made possible after the State was founded), that it is just something that happens, that the economy played a role, that family priorities dominated motivations, and finally, various combinations of the first six forms.

While there are many combinations and variants of these narratives, each of them is also accompanied by a prelude and a post-script – i.e., memories of what life was like in Morocco before the departure and what happened to people after they left. Both the prelude and the post-script inform the basic narrative of the cause of the departure itself in different ways. Preludes tend to take up more narrative space than post-scripts because they set the stage for the moment of rupture, especially with narratives that either blame Moroccan Muslims or European Zionists. The memories of life in Morocco before the departure tend to conform to what Mark Cohen has called the myth of interfaith utopia and the countermyth of the neo-Lachrymose conception.[6] In the case of the myth, the interfaith utopia is a grammatical form which hinges on the land of Islam being a peaceful haven for Jews, while diminishing, ignoring or completely dismissing violence endured by Jews under Muslim rule. These narratives almost always make comparisons between the plight of Jews under Muslim rule and the atrocities endured in the land of Christians (or secular Europe) from before 1492 to Auschwitz.[7] They often, but not always, tend to highlight how the idyllic social landscape of Morocco was irrevocably destroyed after the penetration of European Zionism in various ways. In the case of the counter-myth, these memories put forth a picture of departure which foregrounds horrific violence perpetrated by Muslims against Jews as part of a long tradition of degradation, humiliation and violent oppression endured under an "innately persecutory

[6] See: Cohen, Mark. *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*. Princeton University Press: Princeton & Oxford. 1994.
[7] Cohen, pp 4-6.

Islam."[8] Although Cohen is writing about these scripts in the contemporary scholarship of the medieval period, we will see that they clearly persist in contemporary historical and popular memory about more recent historical events. As David Nirenberg succinctly describes this phenomenon, "whatever their persuasion, the methods of all the historians interested in Muslim-Jewish relations have always been more or less the same. Some sift through archives, accumulating examples of peaceful coexistence; others look for grim evidence of persecution and enmity"[9] – and I would argue that this is not limited to historians studying the departure but becomes exaggerated exponentially in the popular media about it. Post-scripts dominate in specific discursive environments, especially Israel, and especially when narratives involve the testimonials of the children of émigrés. These people are divided from the departure by a generation and are actively combining the stories of their parents within the parameters of the social mindscape of Israeli society and its education system. In these cases, the cause of the departure might take up less narrative space, but the post-script serves to justify the event nonetheless, even if retroactively.

Between the 1980s and the first decade of the millennium, historians who have worked on the question of why Jews left tend to adopt a traditional historical method, looking at some regional comparisons, internal socio-economic pressures and internal discourses of identity. They do this using archival resources such as newspaper articles, rabbinical responsa, personal writing and journals, Jewish organization and governmental records, and so forth. While there is much division among historians as to the main impetus for the Jews' mass departure from Morocco, the theories tend to revolve around the impact of ethno-religious

[8] Cohen, pp 9-12.

[9] See: Nirenberg, David. "What Can Medieval Spain Teach Us About Muslim-Jewish Relations?" *CCAR Journal: A Reform Jewish Quarterly* (Summer, 2002) pp 18.

nationalism[10] and the effect of European Zionism[11] in fracturing a presumed Muslim-Jewish coexistence. The degree to which nationalist discourses and European Zionism are either internal or external to Morocco varies, but it can be said that the context most historians are examining is decidedly narrowed to Morocco alone. Historians talk about the impact of international Jewish organizations in motivating Moroccan Jews to undertake *Aliyah* and permanent settlement in Israel, inclusion or exclusion in Moroccan nationalist narratives, and other local factors that seem to have placed Moroccan Jews in an impossible situation of deciding whether to stay or leave their homeland behind. Absent from these explanations are stories of persecution and violence perpetrated by Muslims against Jews, as well as the broader context of the departure in terms of global affairs, particularly the colonial influences

[10] Boum, Aomar. "From "Little Jerusalems" to the Promised Land: Zionism, Moroccan nationalism and rural Jewish emigration" in *The Journal of North African Studies*. Vol. 15:1. 2010. Pp 51-69; Boum, Aomar *Memories of Absence How Muslims Remember Jews in Morocco*. Stanford University Press: Stanford. 2013. Baïda, Jamaâ, "The Emigration of Moroccan Jews, 1948-56" in *Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa*. Gottreich and Schroeter, eds. Indiana University Press: Bloomington. 2011; Ben-Layashi, Samir and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman. "Myth, History and Realpolitik: Morocco and Its Jewish Community" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*. Vol. 9:1. 2010. Pp. 89-106. Bin-Nun, Yigal, "The Disputes Regarding the Jewish Emigration from Morocco 1956-1961" in *Jews and Muslims in the Islamic World*. Eds. Bernard Dov Cooperman and Zvi Zohar, University of Maryland Press: Bethedesa, 2013; Laskier, Michael, "The Instability of Moroccan Jewry and the Moroccan Press in the First Decade after Independence" in *Jewish History*, 1:1, Spring 1986; Atrakchi, Dalil. "The Moroccan Nationalist Movement and Its Attitude towards Jews and Zionism" in *The Divergence of Judaism and Islam: Interdependence, Modernity, and Political Turmoil*, Yaacov Lev and Michael Laskier, eds. University of Florida Press: Gainesville. 2011.

[11] Laskier, Michael, "Zionism and the Jewish Communities of Morocco 1956-1962" in *Studies in Zionism*, Vol 6:1, 1985: pp119-138; Laskier, Michael "Jewish Emigration from Morocco to Israel: Government Policies and the Position of International Jewish Organizations, 1948-56,"in *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol 25:3, July 1989; Laskier, Michael. "The Evolution of Zionist Activity in the Jewish Communities of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria: 1897–1947" in *Studies in Studies in Zionism*, 4:2, 1983, p 205-236; Yehuda, Zvi. "The place of Aliyah in Moroccan Jewry's conception of Zionism" in *Studies in Zionism*, Vol 6:2, 1985, pp 199-210; Tsur, Yaron, "The Religious Factor in the Encounter Between Zionism and the Rural Atlas Jews" in *Zionism and Religion*, 1998. pp 312-329; Bar Asher, Shalom. "The Jews of North Africa and the Land of Israel in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: The Reversal in Attitude Toward *Aliyah* from 1770 to 1860" in *The Land of Israel: Jewish Perspectives*, Lawrence Hoffman, ed. University of Notre Dame Press: Notre Dame. 1986, pp 297-315; Shokeid, Moshe. *Three Jewish Journeys: Through an Anthropologist's Lens.* Academic Studies Press: Brighton. 2009: p 80-95; Segev, Shmuel. *Operation 'Yakhin': The Immigration of Moroccan Jews to Israel*, Defence Ministry Publications: Tel Aviv, 1984; Laskier, Michael "The Politics of Emigration: The Mossad's Zionist Underground in Morocco" in *Israel and the Maghreb: From Statehood to Oslo*, Michael Laskier, University of Florida Press: Gainesville, 2004, pp 70-128; Bin-Nun, Yigal. "The Contribution of World Jewish Organizations to the Establishment of Rights for Jews in Morocco (1956-1961)" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, Vol.9:2, July 2010, pp 251 – 274.

over Muslim-Jewish relations[12] and the lived realities of Jews in European and Arab-Muslim contexts outside Morocco.[13]

Beyond the lack of a broader context in examining the departure, what also appears as one of the most surprising trends to emerge in the historiography is the lack of overlap between the discursive camps, with each placing one impetus for departure over another. While this kind of binary thinking might be expected in individual testimonies and popular memories, its dominant presence in the historiography is less so and is largely the result of how the departure has been discussed among historians to date. It should be noted that despite the fact that the departure occupies a massive share of the space allocated to Moroccan historical studies, there is not a single book written about the departure and virtually all that has been written about it is published in book chapters and peer-reviewed articles. This limits what can be said about the departure and rebuttals to those arguments to a short number of pages. It is also worth noting that while some historians occupy both camps in the historiography – nationalist exclusion or Zionist enticement – depending on which reasoning they use at different points in their careers, ultimately one hypothesis always emerges in a hierarchy of motivations and is given primacy over the others at any given time. This discomfort with multivocality is the result of seeking a single answer to the question of "why," even when asking it of a complex and diverse population, and it is based on the unnecessary presumption that there needs to be a single answer. Perhaps most alarmingly, the

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[12] In this case, colonial influence is understood not only as the intrusive third voice in Muslim-Jewish relations of the French colonizer, but also that of the European Zionist who displaced and exploited both The Arab in Palestine and so-called "Arab Jews" alike. The general context of French rule and Zionist influence during the whole period is relegated to background noise, foregrounded by the Moroccan Muslim-Jewish drama at play. In actuality, these parties exacerbated or created divisions between Moroccan Muslims and Jews by instigating, perpetuating or encouraging violence – violence which is almost completely absent in the historiography and ethnographic interviews but which dominates popular memory. The colonial powers are also the context against which Moroccan independence movements developed an identity-based ethno-nationalism that excluded Jews – a point almost completely unmentioned by the many historians who cite inclusion-failure as the main impetus to leave. The notion of an intrusive colonial voice comes from: Nirenberg, David. "What Can Medieval Spain Teach Us About Muslim-Jewish Relations?" *CCAR Journal: A Reform Jewish Quarterly* (Summer, 2002) pp 17-36.

[13] The Vichy French Anti-Semitic laws and concentration camps which housed Jews and political dissidents in the Maghrebi Sahara during the Second World War (and continued to be operated by the Americans for a year after the Torch landings in 1942), the lack of security and trust in French colonial authorities particularly in the aftermath of the Holocaust, the rigorous cultural colonization of Moroccan Jews by both the French Europeans, French Jews and other Ashkenazim, structural limitations imposed on Moroccan Jewish mobility and the context of violence in and expulsions from other Arab-Muslim countries are rarely included in answering the question of why they left. See: Oliel, Jacob. *Les Camps de Vichy: Maghreb Sahara 1939-1944*. Les Éditions Du Lys, une division de HTTT Inc: Montreal. 2005.

univocality and simplicity of historical narratives makes the work of historians appear as not much more than sophisticated versions of popular memories. Without a conscious awareness of one's own discursive environment and how it comes to bear on writing the history of the departure and without a conscious effort to give voice to what is actually a complex mix of competing Jewish, Muslim, Zionist, colonial and elite motivations for departure, historical narratives centred on the question of "why" can seem to or can be made to divide along irreconcilable political lines that are drawn in the present and which reflect what the historian or the individuals and groups using their work require them to reflect.

Of additional importance for me is the sense of inevitability[14] in the departure that arises in the historical tallying game of trying to determine who or what is to blame, particularly when the only parties taken to account are Moroccan Muslims and Moroccan Jews who were both largely uninvolved in developing the mechanisms of departure. Inevitability, in the historiography and elsewhere, is understood as an event being unavoidable, without planning or forethought, something that happened *to* people and that implies that historical movements or cataclysmic events arise spontaneously and even organically. Subscribing to the sense that the departure is "just something that happened," rather than understanding it as a purposeful, calculated project which either manufactured or took advantage of particular complex historical variables at different, more salient opportunities over the two decades of departure, results in an analytical loss.[15]

The notion of being overtaken or engulfed by an inescapable historical wave is further reflected in more recent research by ethnographers interviewing Jews who remained in Morocco but lived during the departure[16], or Jews who emigrated to Canada and Israel.[17]

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[14] Among those authors who propose the departure to have been inevitable, and therefore unavoidable, are Samir Ben-Layashi, Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, Michael Laskier and Yaron Tsur. Other direct testimonies from Moroccan Jewish émigrés express similar sentiments.

[15] A provocative example of the scholarly counter-approach to a series of historical events that are continuously made to appear as an irrational wave of religious fervour is found in Christopher Tyerman's *How to Plan a Crusade: Reason and Religious War in the Middle Ages*. Penguin Books UK. 2015.

[16] Levy, André, "Notes on Jewish-Muslim Relationships: Revisiting the Vanishing Moroccan Jewish Community" in *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol 18:3, 2003, pp 365-397; Levy, André, "Center and Diaspora: Jews in late-20th-Century Morocco" in *City and Society,* Vol 8:2, 2001, pp 245-270. And Levy, André *Return to Casablanca: Jews, Muslims and an Israeli Anthropologist*. University of Chicago Press: Chicago. 2015.

[17] Cohen, Yolande and Martin Messika, "Sharing and Unsharing Memories of Jews of Moroccan Origin in Montréal and Paris Compared", *in Memory and Forgetting among Jews from the Arab-Muslim Countries*. *Contested Narratives of a Shared Past,* eds. Emanuela Trevisan Semi, Piera Rossetto, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC*, n.4 November 2012; Cohen, Yolande "The Migrations of Moroccan Jews to Montreal: Memory,

These researchers have looked at the question of why Jews left with the hope that asking them directly might elicit some clear answers. Interviewees often cite family or economic reasons for their monumental departure (or for remaining) and tend to skip over the details of their dangerous journeys, distilling the prelude of life in Morocco before they left and discussing the post-script: how things have been since they left. They are also largely unaware of their own "history" so to speak, meaning that many of the higher-level narratives reasoned out by historians that I have traced above are all but absent from their testimonies.

Perhaps most noticeable about these resources is the tendency, on the part of the ethnographers, to parse these testimonials as literal evidence of why Jews left, rather than being reflective of grammatical preferences or narrative scripts that have arisen in the last decade to give voice to the stories of Jews under Muslim rule among émigrés in Israel and Canada.[18] Taking these testimonies literally also means that we miss the possibility that their narrative forms are signs of manufactured consent from hegemonic discourses on these subjects – something inculcated in Moroccan Jews by fully-invested colonial entities in order to understand, make sense of, and manage their own departure. Or, sometimes, in order to stomach the trauma of departure[19] by offering a sense of agency over one's own future to the point that both the trauma and the limited construction of one's choices are either not recognized or not remembered.[20] That Moroccan Jewish émigrés who now live in Israel and

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(Oral) History and Historical Narrative" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies,* Vol 10:2, July 2011: pp 245-262; Semi, Emanuela Trevisan. "Double Trauma and Manifold Narratives: Jews' and Muslims' Representations of the Departure of Moroccan Jews in the 1950s and 19s60s" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*. Vol 9:1, March 2010: pp 107-125; Cohen, Yolande, Martin Messika and Sara Cohen Fournier. "Les mots d'une migration postcoloniale dans les récits de Juifs montréalais," in *RHAF*, Vol. 69: 1-2, Summer-Autumn, 2015, pp.49-74.

[18] These narrative scripts, or myth and counter-myth, are described in the work of Mark Cohen and will be discussed at length throughout this project. See: Cohen, Mark. *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*. Princeton University Press: Princeton & Oxford. 1994.

[19] See also: Ben-Layashi, Samir. "The 1948 *Mallah* of Casablanca: viewing Moroccan (trans)national Sentiments through Juvenile Trauma" in *The Journal of North African Studies*. Vol 19:4, 2014, pp. 587-601.

[20] It should be noted here that I am not implying a false consciousness about trauma in that what is remembered represents some kind of purposeful falsification, but rather that there is a certain unconsciousness about the construction and therefore limitations of one's own social position. For Georg Lukacs, the condition of the individual "is given as a definite structural relation, a definite formal nexus which appears to govern the whole of life." (Lukacs, 60) While, for him, consciousness or unconsciousness is class-based and its illusions are in no sense arbitrary because "it is simply the intellectual reflex of the objective economic structure," we can move beyond simplistic Marxian formations and put forth the notion that certain groupings of Jews had certain kinds of constructed group un/consciousness based not only on the greater economic structure, but the social, racial and colonial structures they were immersed in as well. Lukacs, Georg. "History and Class Consciousness" in *An Anthology of Western*

Canada go so far as to remember their departure as both part of a continuous cycle of Exodus narratives[21] *and* in the timeless certainty of anti-Semitism and forever-impending persecution does not actually signify that the departure was inescapable – only that this is how it was rationalized (and continues to be rationalized) for the people who needed to comprehend it. By overlooking the fact that these testimonials also may contain traces of larger and more powerful elite narrative preferences, the opportunity to examine these resources, with the hope of determining how Jewish émigrés in Canada and Israel were made to accept their departure, is lost. Additionally, by failing to understand what is at stake for the people who remember the departure, the opportunity to translate the meaning they imbue their memories with, in order to create understanding and ultimately, heal trauma together is missed.

Marxism. Roger S. Gotlieb, ed. Oxford University Press: Oxford & New York. 1989. See also: Cohen, Messika and Cohen Fournier, 2015.

[21] Ibid, Cohen, Messika and Cohen Fournier, 2015.

In the realm of popular memory, an emerging number of news articles, opinion pieces, blogs,[22] online forums,[23] and documentary films[24] have been published in recent years which

[22] Gilbert, Lela. "The 'Nakba' of Morocco's Jews." *The Jerusalem Post*. April 28, 2010. http://www.jpost.com/printarticle.aspx?id=174196; Dery, Jeremy. "The Moroccan Jewish Journey and Exodus." *The Times of Israel*. January 9, 2014. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://blog.timesofisrael.com/the-moroccan-jewish-journey-and-exodus/; Shmulovich, Michel. "Glimpsing Jewish Memories amid the Mellahs of Morocco." *The Times of Israel.* March 9, 2014. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.timesofisrael.com/the-mellahs-of-morocco/; Greenfeter, Yael. "This Week in Haaretz: 1961 The Egoz Sinks, Killing Moroccan Jewish Immigrants to Israel." *Haaretz*. January 13, 2011. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/features/this-week-in-haaretz-1961-the-egoz-sinks-killing-moroccan-jewish-immigrants-to-israel-1.336721; Multiple authors, "Migration of Moroccan Jews to Israel." *Wikipedia.org*. Accessed: March 27, 2017. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Migration_of_Moroccan_Jews_to_Israel; JTA. "Moroccan Islamists Protest Screening of Film on Jewish Exodus." *Haaretz*. February 7, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/news/moroccan-islamists-protest-screening-of-film-on-jewish-exodus-1.502069; Sellers, George. "An Interview with D.R. Cowles." *Maisonneuve: A Quarterly of Arts, Opinion and Ideas*. November 18, 2002. Accessed April 4, 2017. https://maissonneuve.org/article/2002/11/18/interview-dr-cowles-part-i/; Aharoni, Ada. "The Displacement of Jews From Arab Countries: Jewish Exodus from Muslim Land, 1948-1972." Accessed April 4, 2017. http://chelm.freeyellow.com/displacement.html#12; Times of Israel Staff. "Israel Marks exodus of Jews from Arab Countries." *The Times of Israel*. November 30, 2015. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-marks-exodus-of-jews-from-arab-countries; Katz, Jonathan. "1 Thing Moroccans Want All Jews to Know." *Forward*. March 29, 2015. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://forward.co/opinion/217638/1-thing-moroccans-want-all-jews-to-know/; Howe, Marvine. "Homeland Attracts Some Morocco Jews." *The New York Times*. April 18, 1979. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/1979/04/18/archives/homeland-archives-some-morocco-jews-encouraged-by-kings-stand-they.html?_r=0; Gressel, Madeline, Zoe Lake, Siyi Chen, Kelsey Doyle and Khadija Boukharfane. "In Morocco, Muslims and Jews side-by-side but for how long?" *PBS Newshour.* July 29, 2015. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/morocco-muslims-jews-study-side-side/; Chtatou, Mohamed. "Moroccan Jews' Departure to Israel Regretted in Morocco." *A Brave African World: The African Exponent.* January 10, 2017. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://www.africanexponent.com/blogs/braveafrica/4528-moroccan-jews-departure-to-israel-regretted-in-morocco; Schemm, Paul. "Morocco film searches out Jews who left for Israel." *The Times of Israel*. February 26, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://www.timesofisrael.com/morocco-film-searches-out-jews-who-left-for-israel/; Gerlitz, Ron. "Why Morocco can be a model for Jewish-Arab Partnership." *+972*. April 19, 2016. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://972mag.com/morocco-a-model-for-jewish-arav-partnership/118649/; User Bataween, *Point of No Return Blog*. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/; Julius, Lyn. "When the Jews Sheltered the Sultan's Lions." *The Jewish News*. April 16, 2012. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://blog.timesofisrael.com/when-the-jews-sheltered-with-the-sultans-lions/; Anson, Daphne. "Solica Hatchouel, Jewish Martyr in Old Morocco." *Daphne Anson blog*. August 6, 2011. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://daphneanson.blogspot.ca/2011/08/solica-hatchouel-jewish-martyr-in-old.html; Bensoussan, David. "Why the Jews left their Arab lands." *Asia Times Online*. December 11, 2013. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/MID-03-111213.html; Rehmat, "Why Jews left Morocco?" *Rehmat's World* (blog). November 13, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://rehmat1.com/2013/11/13/why-jews-left-morocco/; Sourgo, Youssef. "Study Reveals 'Truth' behind Moroccan Jews' Migration Wave to Israel." *Morocco World News*. October 19, 2013. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2013/10/109273/study-reveals-truth-behind-moroccan-jews-migration-wave-to-israel/; Andraus, Zuhair. "Bihath isra'eli yakshuf: Al mossad qutl al yehud bil Maghreb wa'gharq wafenah lilmahajireen lita'leeb al ra'ee al 'aam al 'aalmee dodd al mumlakah wa'ijbar al malik 'ala alsamah lihum bilhijarah." *Al Quds, Al Arabi*. London, UK. October 18, 2013. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=94253; Kabilo Gilad. "The Tragedy of the 'Egoz' and the story of Moroccan Jewry's return to Israel" in *The Jerusalem Post*. January 26, 2017. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://www.jpost.com/printarticle.aspx?id=479589;

[23] Boum, Aomar. "'The Virtual Genizah': Emerging North African Jewish and Muslim Identities Online" in *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. Vol. 46, 2014. pp597 – 601. Forum examples include: Mawuli,

dominate the internet and popular media spaces by which large masses of people easily access and acquire information about the departure and put their memories into complex performative public spaces.

These popular memories offer us a great opportunity to watch narratives and grammars[25] in action, show reflective insight into how the departure is remembered outside of the academic purview, and allow us to examine its power there as well. By examining texts such as these, we can access what Aomar Boum calls the patchwork of ideologies and cultural texts which culminate in "internet hypertextuality," a multidimensional space in which social memory and historical threads blend and coalesce to generate meanings which reflect and entrench certain discourses of power.[26] The selectively informed nature of these mediums, when taken in their totality, allow us to examine how historical events and scholarly ideas about them are used to polarize along political lines with the intention of justifying present conditions, particularly as they relate to the needs of state actors in Israel and Morocco. Perhaps most importantly, they also show how popular rememberings of the departure are heavily invested in and have rhetorical persuasion for prescribing the future – at least partially accounting for why it has become such a disproportionately large site of memory within a relatively peripheral area of historical study.

It should be noted that popular memories tend to simplify, exaggerate and sometimes react in opposition to the narratives of both the dominant historiography and ethnographies.

"Morocco Jews" *Black History Forums*. June 24, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://blackhistoryforums.com/threads/morocco-jews.35; Best Answer, "Moroccan Jews immigration to Israel please help?" *Yahoo Answers.* December 18, 2012. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20121218184923AAtmRVr; Best Answer, "How many Jews came from Iraq, Egypt, Yemen and Morocco?" *Yahoo Answers*. November 19, 2007. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20071119105911AAboikQ;

[24] Kosansky, Oren and Aomar Boum, "The 'Jewish Question' in Postcolonial Moroccan Cinema" in *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. Vol 44, 2012. pp 421-442.

[25] Memory grammars are those common memory formulae found across cultural patterns and systems. These grammars tend to be generative in that they carry with them a host of common images that arise when particular memories are invoked. They tend also to serve the ideology of dominant political powers but, as noted by Ehud Ben Zvi, they can be appropriated and reshaped into motifs at the service of local cultural/ideological resistance. For examples of this elsewhere, see: Ben Zvi, Ehud. "Exploring Jerusalem as a Site of Memory in the Late Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods" in *Memory and the City in Ancient Israel*. Diane Edelman and Ehud Ben Zvi, eds. Eisenbrauns: Indiana. 2014, pp 197 – 217. Other terms used for these in this thesis are scripts, discourses and myths.

[26] Boum, Aomar, "Scripting the Shoah: The Holocaust in Moroccan Official and Public Discourses" Lecture at the University of Minnesota. April 11, 2013. Accessed February 10, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_UmOLQxxZk 35:26

One group of sources again upholds the myth of interfaith utopia by focusing on extensive narrative preludes of a long-term coexistence that was unspoiled until the departure "just happened," or occurred because of familial and economic reasons. Sometimes these sources go far beyond these hyper-particular reasons for departure and call for an examination into what they perceive to be a Zionist conspiracy to steal Jews from an idyllic Morocco. The post-scripts of these narratives sometimes point to poor living conditions or socio-economic marginalization of Moroccan Jews in Israel as proof that they should never have left, or were tricked into leaving.

The second, much larger, pool of sources dominates the English-language internet and, often, in response to the myth of coexistence, puts forth the countermyth of neo-Lachrymose conception. This countermyth foregrounds what authors perceive to be the long-term oppression of Jews and horrific violence perpetrated by Muslims against them in Morocco. These sources might also point to the influence of European Zionists in orchestrating the departure but these actions are often parsed in terms of *rescuing* Jews from their Muslim oppressors. In the post-script of these memories, the innate magnetism of The Land of Israel is centered, in light of long-term Jewish longings to make *Aliyah* which only became possible when the State of Israel was founded.

Additionally, a third but related group of memories is found, which centres on the narrative of dual persecution by Muslims and European Zionists against Moroccan Jews. This group of memories is largely derived of non-Moroccan, "Arab" Israeli Jewish sources which are based in Western countries outside of Israel. They combine multiple narrative forms that have, in other groups, appeared to be antithetical, but which gain rhetorical persuasion according to their discursive environment. They argue that long-term oppression and violence perpetrated by Muslims *and* homicidal European Zionist plots drove Moroccan Jews to Israel – a land that they had always belonged to. It is only in the post-script, on arrival in Israel, that the "promise" of The Land is diminished as émigrés and their descendants endure a second oppression under Ashkenazi dominance and exploitation. It should be noted that these non-Moroccan "Arab" Jewish authors tend to argue for a broader context of *all* Jewish departures from Arab-Muslim countries in the general period of the Moroccan departure. They collapse the experiences of Jews from Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Iran and other Arab-Muslim countries into a

single narrative under the category of Mizrahim.[27] This narrative form primarily occurs in second generation émigré children, all of whom diminish Palestinian suffering while voicing their own. Despite being critical of the marginalization endured by Mizrahim in Israel and being outside the country itself, these authors tend to be Israeli ultranationalists arguing for recognition and change within Israel. This tendency comes as no surprise to someone like Cohen who notes that the generational divide that results in the mobilization of the Lachrymose countermyth is usually an attempt for "Oriental Jews to differentiate themselves from the Arabs," particularly in light of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.[28]

In examining how the departure of Moroccan Jews is remembered by historians, émigrés and in popular culture, my purpose with this thesis is three-fold: firstly, I hope to offer a history of the memory of the departure in approximately the last two decades. Secondly, I hope to show that moving beyond the historiography into other realms of remembering can illuminate troubling silences in the work of historians on the departure to date. By focusing only on which narratives exist to be built upon in the historiography, complexity, nuance and reflexivity are lost in the academic discourse, especially the ability to discern which stories scholars are blind to by virtue of their own discursive assumptions and formations. As a result, historians can unintentionally perpetuate what come to be seen (and dismissed) as myths about idyllic coexistence in Morocco – something which becomes readily apparent only by examining what is important to émigrés and popular memory. That is not to say that these silences in the historiography are intentional, nor are the cultural representations of the departure which counter the myth of interfaith utopia necessarily historically "accurate" in their use of sources or prelude narrations. However, in overlooking, dismissing, or ignoring instances of Muslim violence against Moroccan Jews, historians miss the opportunity to examine that violence up-close, including its colonial context. Further, they run the risk of perpetuating denial which no amount of reasoning can excuse and from which, the hope of moving forward together (in Morocco and Israel) dies. Thirdly, in recognizing these problems with the historiography in light of narrative silences from all memory domains, historians can open up critical areas of future historical research.

[27] See footnote 5.
[28] Cohen, p 13.

This project will follow the same general process involved in constructing mosaics. First, I will develop the overarching form – the theoretical framework– in which my research and analysis will be organized. The form is immersed in the literature of memory studies,[29] speaking to gaps in the theoretical discourse (as a case study) as well as acknowledging broader questions about history as a discipline and memory within it. I will also rely heavily on critical theorists,[30] some of whom can be categorized as post-colonial, to justify a deeper

[29] Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective* Memory. Coser Lewis, ed, trans. University of Chicago Press: Chicago. 1992; Casey, Edward. *Remembering.* Indiana University Press: Bloomington & Indianapolis. 1987. Rossington, Michael and Anne Whitehead, *Theories of Memory: A* Reader. John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 2007. Boyer, Pascal, "What are Memories for?" in Boyer, Pascal and James Wertsch. Eds, *Memory in Mind and Culture*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2009, pp 1-30; Williams, Helen and Martin Conway, "Networks of Autobiographical Memory" in Boyer, Pascal and James Wertsch. Eds, *Memory in Mind and Culture*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2009, pp 33-61; Schacter, Daniel, "Specificity of Memory: Implications for Individual and Collective Remembering" in Boyer, Pascal and James Wertsch. Eds, *Memory in Mind and Culture*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2009, pp 83-111; Wertsch, James, "Collective Memory" in Boyer, Pascal and James Wertsch. Eds, *Memory in Mind and Culture*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2009., pp 117-137; Pennebaker, James and Amy Gonzales, "Making History – Social and Psychological Processes Underlying Collective Memory" in Boyer, Pascal and James Wertsch. Eds, *Memory in Mind and Culture*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2009, pp 171-193; Apfelbaum, Erika, "Halbwachs and the Social Properties of Memory" in *Memory and Histories, Theories and Debates*, Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz, eds. Fordham University Press: New York. 2010, pp 77-92; Freeman, Mark, "Telling Stories: Memory and Narrative" in in *Memory and Histories, Theories and Debates*, Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz, eds. Fordham University Press: New York. 2010, p 263-277; Hage, Ghassan, "Migration, Food, Memory and Home-Building" in *Memory and Histories, Theories and Debates*, Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz, eds. Fordham University Press: New York. 2010, p 416-427; Pennebaker, James, and Becky Banasik, "On the Creation and Maintenance of Collective Memories: History as Social Psychology" in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rimes, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: New Jersey, 1997, pp. 3-20; Rime, Bernard and Veronique Christophe, "How Individual Emotional Episodes Feed Collective Memory" in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rimes, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; New Jersey, 1997, pp 131-146; Paez, Dario, Nekane Basabe and Jose Luis Gonzalez, "Social Processes and Collective Memory: A Cross-Cultural Approach to Remembering Political Events" in in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rimes, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: New Jersey, 1997, pp 147-174; Belleli, Guglielmo and Mirella Amatelli, "Nostalgia, Immigration and Collective Memory" in in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rimes, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: New Jersey, 1997, pp 209-220; Iniguez, Lupicino, Jose Valencia and Felix Vasquez, " The Construction of Remembering and Forgetfulness" in in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rimes, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: New Jersey, 1997, pp 237-252; Baumeister, Roy and Stephen Hastings, "Distortions of Collective Memory: How Groups Flatter and Deceive Themselves" in in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rimes, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey. 1997, pp 277-293; Assmann, Jan, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2011; White, Hayden, *The Content of the Form*. John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore. 1987.

[30] Relevant authors include: Edward Said (*Orientalism*, 1978; *Power, Politics and Culture*, 2002) Talal Asad (*Formations of the Secular,* 2003; *Is Critique Secular*? 2009), David Nirenberg (*Communities of Violence,* 1996; *Neighboring Faiths*, 2014; *Anti-Judaism*, 2013) Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (*Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 1972); Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979; Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge.* Tavistock: London, 1972. Cohen, Mark. *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*. Princeton University Press: Princeton & Oxford. 1994.

look at the genealogies which give life to the competing ideologies at play in remembering this historical episode.

Once the form is built I will then assemble the tesserae or memories about the departure within it. I will examine why each sample matters in the politics of contested remembering, how each sample is constructed logically within the memory-scape of its own author or participants, and where convergences and divergences occur between them. My method of placement when assembling these memories in the form will be structured only by how they are typically categorized - as personal memories, popular memories, and histories. The arrangement of these tesserae will follow from an understanding of the power-to-illuminate of constellation in historical discourse. Constellation,[31] here, is understood as a "travelling concept"[32] or "a juxtaposed rather than integrated cluster of changing elements that resist reduction to a common denominator, essential core, or generative first principle."[33]
The juxtaposition and continuous interaction of these memories leaves something to be desired. The acknowledgement of human beings as story-telling, memory-saturated creatures[34] carries with it the double acknowledgment that for as much as we put into our memories, there is just as much, if not more, left out. The spaces between memories, their silences, tell us a lot about the dynamic of the memories that are developed and why. In this way, we cannot imagine tesserae as carrying a shape unto themselves, but rather that they are fluid and continuously formed by the shifting spaces between them. The mosaic of remembering and forgetting is therefore kaleidoscopic. In the concluding chapter, I will gesture towards silences that emerge around the existing memories, why they are of

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[31] Benjamin, Walter. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. Verso: London. 2009; Giedion, S. *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*. Oxford University Press: New York, 1948; McLuhan, M. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: the making of typographic man*. University of Toronto Press: Toronto. 1962; Friesen, Norm. "Wandering Star: The Image of the Constellation in Benjamin, Giedion, and McLuhan," available online here: https://goo.gl/6Hsj00

[32] Bal, Mieke. *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*. U of Toronto Press: Toronto. 2012, p13.

[33] Martin Jay, *Adorno*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge MA. 1984. p 14 -15.

[34] Freeman, Mark, "Telling Stories: Memory and Narrative" in in *Memory and Histories, Theories and Debates*, Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz, eds. Fordham University Press: New York. 2010, p 263-277; White, Hayden, *The Content of the Form*. John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore. 1987; Bloch, Maurice. "Why Religion is Nothing Special but is Central," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* (2008), 2055-2061; McCutcheon, Russell. "Myth" in *Guide to the Study of Religion*. Willi Braun and Russell McCutcheon, eds. Cassell: London. 2000. James Wertsch has famously written: "we are storytelling animals." (*Voices of Collective Remembering*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2002)

fundamental importance for historians and how they must be addressed through future archival work in writing new histories of the departure.

FORM: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

"Memory is never shaped in a vacuum; the motives of memory are never pure."
– James E. Young[35]

"Genealogies are a way of working back from our present to the contingencies that have come together to give us our certainties."
–Talal Asad[36]

This chapter outlines the theoretical assumptions at play throughout this project. First, memories are basic cognitive units by which we collectively build fluid worlds of certainty through narrative form. Approaching the past through the lens of memory studies shifts the emphasis of history from trying to prove what happened to understanding how "what happened" is construed and remembered. We do this because neither the historical agent nor the historian is capable of being fully "objective" in their remembering of a historical event, even while operating at completely different levels of scope and understanding. As such, uncovering how "what happened" is remembered will always be an intellectual exercise that is interdisciplinary and multivocal. And finally, memory is a tool by which we build systems of power as a reflex of what memories do[37], and therefore, how historical events are remembered has very real ramifications for relationships in the present moment.

This theoretical framework dominates the method for soliciting resources used in this project and ultimately structures the questions that are asked of them. It also draws attention to a lingering anxiety with multivocality in the vocation of history and a continuing tendency, among some historians, to singularly narrate a history rather than assembling a complex picture of kaleidoscopic, interwoven and entangled memories of historical contingencies, of which none usually has primacy over the others. Perhaps more than these important outcomes, by using this case study of the Jewish departure from Morocco to draw out the connection of memories to power, we can better understand four important dynamics constantly in question in memory study discussions: 1) how the perceived gulfs between individual memories, collective memories, and histories are negotiated through social action; 2) how particular grammars are invoked to ensure successful memory transmission and

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[35] Young, James Edward. *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1993: p 2.
[36] Asad, Talal. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford University Press: Stanford. 2003: pp 16.
[37] The question of what memories are for versus what they do will be taken up below.

collectivization; 3) how this process prescribes and entrenches the dominance of particular identity formations that groups cling to; and 4) how critical memory studies make space for the understanding of self-referential, self-legitimating rationality and rationalization within a social mind-scape.[38] A consistent by-product of this interior rationality is the maintenance of dominant groups' worldviews and therefore, their power.

The scholar who recognizes histories as memories also recognizes herself as an agent of either hegemonic[39] power or the unsettling of that power via the destabilization of the presumptive facades that power builds for itself. In the course of this project, I hope to adopt the position of the latter, treading carefully, while recognizing that crystallization necessitates some violence. Freedom from that is an infinite process of the critique of claims to power through remembering, rather than an end to ultimately be achieved.

Memory and Cognitive Function

In *Remembering*, Edward Casey aptly describes individual memory as conjecture from inductive or deductive knowledge, an outcome of unconscious reasoning procedures.[40] One of the implicit cognitive processes leading to the formation of memory is better known as the inherence heuristic, which gives us an idea of some of the ways in which memory leads people to explain phenomenal stimuli and its observed patterns in terms that essentialize their constituents.[41] This process almost always takes the form of narrative with researchers observing that, while being tied to our ability to "identify and exploit the predictable aspects of a complex environment," the inherence heuristic rests on making quick assumptions and

[38] I first encountered the term "social mind-scape in the work of Ehud Ben Zvi. See: Ben Zvi, Ehud. "Remembering Pre-Israelite Jerusalem in Late Persian Yehud: Mnemonic Preferences, Memories and Social Imagination," in *Urban Dreams and Realities in Antiquity: Remains and Representations of the Ancient City,* Adam Kemezis (ed.), Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2014: pp 429. The term itself comes from the following text: Zerubavel, Eviatar. *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology.* Harvard University Press: Cambridge & London, 2009.

[39] It should be noted that the term hegemony is not used in the conventional Gramscian sense of imperial (state) dominance via cultural hegemony (the dictating of social norms and structures to establish the primary worldview). In my use, hegemony runs along a sliding scale of human relationships including the state ruling classes over elite subjects, or transnational corporations over global markets, right down to community or familial relationships which are in constant negotiation for dominance. This understanding of hegemony is critical to gather from the outset as it affects how we think of relational power dynamics later in this chapter.

[40] Casey, Edward. *Remembering.* Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987, p 23.

[41] Cimpian, Andrei and Erika Salomon. "The Inherence Heuristic: An Intuitive Means of Making Sense of the World and a Potential Precursor to Psychological Essentialism" in *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, Vol 37, 2014, pp 461-527.

inferences which require cognitive sequential leaps.[42] These inferences combine with others to form complex memory narratives in order to make sense *about* the world around us in terms of patterns that come to be seen as both stable and inevitable.[43] Individual memory, thus, takes shape as a process of filtration and negotiation to both structure the phenomenal world we are stimulated by, while also coming to structure the ways in which we are stimulated by it.

It would be improper, however, to actually accept that these essential narratives in the form of memory are either static or data only, which the term tesserae in my introduction implies. Rather, samples of memory have a living, breathing fluidity[44] that take on a variety of forms: from a momentary memory of a "one word thing"[45] to imagistic memories, from present memories in the moment of remembering to banal habitual memories,[46] from emplaced memories to future memories.[47] For Casey, memories are made up of the following traits: they have to be recovered (meaning actively remembered); they are both encapsulated and expanded in terms of their mental organization and according to context; they are persistent in their pastness, even as the past is prolonged into the present; and they give the impression of actuality in that the rememberer believes that they represent what happened and are "complete".[48] On a secondary level, Casey echoes that individual memories are said to often follow a narrative structure, as well as carrying with them a schematicalness (meaning an ambiguous presentation) and a sense of ruminescence, meaning the mood or emotional state of remembering itself.[49] Autobiographical memories are another research area which help in understanding how individual human beings locate, essentialize, or orient their sense of self by combining episodic memories with general knowledge about their own lives.[50] Key features of memorability that go into the development of individual memories include their affectivity, their uniqueness, that they are actively rehearsed, that they are associated with

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[42] Cimpian, Ibid.
[43] Cimpian Ibid 465
[44] Casey, Ibid. p2
[45] Casey Ibid p 28
[46] Casey, Ibid p 31
[47] Casey Ibid. p 35 and 63.
[48] Ibid 39
[49] Casey, Ibid, p 41-45.
[50] Williams, Helen and Martin Conway, "Networks of Autobiographical Memories" in *Memory in Mind and Culture*, Pascal Boyer and James Wertsch, eds. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2009, pp 33-61.

changes to beliefs, behaviour and adaptive periods, and finally, that they are critical for identity building.[51]

Insights into the operations of individual memory are critical for understanding the mechanisms by which human beings immediately navigate and narrate the world around them. However, the social construction of memory cannot be overlooked and will be taken up in the next section.

Collective Memory

The hallmark scholars associated with collective memory are Maurice Halbwachs and Jan Assmann, each of whom put forth a social framework of memory that complicates (and, in some ways, dispenses with) the individual psychological understanding of memory. For both Halbwachs and Assmann, so-called individual memory is saturated in and articulated through emotive language cues,[52] while living and surviving through communication.[53] The reliance on both communication and affect for memory to survive and transmit testifies to its sociality by virtue of the fact that its meaning must be shared.[54] This meaning is also continuously negotiated and understood within one's competing social groupings – many of which can

[51] Pennebaker, James W. and Becky Banasik. "On the Creation and Maintenance of Collective Memories: History as Social Psychology" in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rime, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: New Jersey. 1997, pp 4-5.

[52] Halbwachs p 51, see also: Apfelbaum, Erika. "Halbwachs and the Social Properties of Memory" in *Memory, Histories, Theories, Debates,"* Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz, eds. Fordham University Press: New York, pp 77 - 92. Apfelbaum reiterates that "language serves as the vehicle connecting collective memory to individual memory, but it is itself limited to what it can express to the extent that it is socially constructed shaped by the collectivity, its norms and its representations." (88)

[53] Assmann p 23

[54] See: de Certeau, Michel. "What We Do When We Believe" in *On Signs*. Marshall Blonsky, ed. Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore. 1985. pp. 129-202; and Christophe, Veronique, "How Individual Emotional Episodes Feed Collective Memory" in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rime, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: New Jersey. 1997, p 131-146. For de Certeau, *belief* (which I interpret as being the postulation and articulation of a particular memory) relies on a transactional relationship with other human beings, externalizing belief and its meanings to a shared interpretive space. Christophe notes that the interiority of a private emotional experience often, if not exclusively, relies on social sharing because "the compulsion to communicate emotional experiences serves not only an intrapersonal need (for meaning, perspective, closure, etc.) but also an interpersonal need for news."(143) The need for news can be understood as its own social orientation, but in order for this to even occur, memory is invocated "in a socially shared language… by the person who experienced it." (133)

overlap or contradict one another according to the social circumstances by which particular identity formations appear to crystallize.[55] As Ehud Ben Zvi puts it,

> To a large extent one may say that all groups are mnemonic communities, that is, groups shaped around a set of widely shared memories of the past that help to make sense of the group, or in other words, that provide it with an identity and ability to socially reproduce itself.[56]

Memory is collective because its contents are social, people use social referential points to remember, and people remember by sharing memories and remembering together, in addition to the implied sociality of language through shared meaning.[57]

Though we may individually construct autobiographical memories in narrative form, which gives us a sense of personal continuity of the self and even our social groupings, the direction of influence over memory is not necessarily exclusively from the individual to society. The argument can be made that this process is multidirectional, helping us to understand how individual memories are both structured by collective memories and serve to structure them. Reproducing the past, for Halbwachs is a kind of "dreamlike activity"[58] by which present narrative grammars pervade the act of remembering – itself facilitated by the imagination which "remains under the influence of the present social milieu… [where] modern societies penetrate and insinuate themselves more deeply into their members because of the multiplicity and complexity of relations of all kinds with which they envelop their member." [59] Halbwachs argues that our individual memories give "us the *illusion* of living [individually] in the midst of groups which do not imprison us, which impose themselves on us only so far and so long as we accept them."[60] He goes on to largely dismiss our ability to overcome this imprisonment at the individual level because of our social construction. We may not be ready to accept that the construction of the individual socially thus does away with him entirely, however, as Assmann clearly articulates, the term collective memory "should not be read as a metaphor, because while the group itself does not "have" a memory, it

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[55] Apfelbaum argues that recollections are the active selections and reconstructions of our past based on multiple group affiliations over time, which each have their own collective memories. They are the "frame[s] within which (or against which) individuals try to make sense of their personal experiences." (85)

[56] Ben Zvi, pp 428.

[57] Paez, Dario, Nekane Basabe and Jose Luis Gonzalez. "Social Processes and Collective Memory: A Cross-Cultural Approach to Remembering Political Events" in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rime, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: New Jersey. 1997, pp 155.

[58] Halbwachs, p 48

[59] Ibid p 49

[60] Ibid p 50, emphasis added.

determines the [individual] memory of its members."[61] For Assmann, the individual remains but "the fact that only individuals can have a memory because of their neurological equipment makes no difference to the dependence of their memories on the social frame."[62] The subject is constructed and dominated by collective memory.

Memory, as it were, then, is collective and social. In fact, many, if not all, of the characteristics of individual memory can easily be mapped onto the collective. Just as we cannot think of individual memory as static data, so too can collective memory "no longer be imagined as something imposed, rigid or timeless."[63] The perpetually negotiated[64] multidirectionality of memory, however, may be its least important aspect. Rather, the narrative form that memory takes has crucial implications for how we understand its relationship to power and what effect this has on human relationships.

Memory and Power

As mentioned, memory is assumed to be both multiple, social, and an intrinsic part of our cognitive apparatus – not only one method by which we build, understand and engage with our worlds, but *the* method. By taking the vernacular or language of memory into other related realms, we can expand and nuance our understanding of what it is and what it does by giving us wider access to important critical theorists who may not be using that particular wording. Narrative, scripts and discourse have only tangentially been connected to memory but are suffused with alternate ways of understanding it to help illuminate its mechanisms and relationship to power.

In "The Construction of Remembering and Forgetfulness," Iniguez, Valencia, and Vazquez examine the remembering of social events as both normative and prescriptive,

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[61] Assmann p 22; This sentiment was echoed by Paez, Basabe and Gonzalez. Ultimately, they argue that there may be no group mind, but memory is still social and collective. ("Social Processes", p 152). I prefer to use the term "social mindscape" in the tradition of Ben Zvi. See footnote 32.

[62] Assmann p 33

[63] Niven, Bill and Stefan Berger. "Introduction" in *Writing the History of Memory*. Stefan Berger and Bill Niven, eds. Bloomsbury: London & New York, pp.1-24.

[64] As Niven and Berger go on to beautifully encapsulate, collective memory "represents a constantly shifting and fragile consensus, dependent for the form it takes at any given time upon the relative power and interaction of a number of different memory contingents." (11)

involving a semantic ordering, and "the proposal of a narrative in a dialectic of argument."[65] In the act of remembering, the past becomes an object of the present and through recounting, discourses are brought into question and a sense of sequencing takes over, immersing it in narrative form and ultimately doing violence to a "clear taste for disorder and jumble" that is typical of memory.[66] The relationship between individual, collective memory and narrative construction are so closely intertwined as to be virtually indecipherable. One would be mistaken, however, in thinking of narrative in purely verbal or written communicative forms. Objects, monuments, landscapes and soundscapes are also saturated with memory and narrative – nodes "among others in a topographical matrix that orients the rememberer and creates meaning both in the land and our recollections."[67]

Remembering and its narrations are innately human acts; there may be a pure, untouched reality behind these realit*ies* but our ability to access it is at best questionable and probably null. Narrative sequencing comes to form where the act of remembering and recounting come to influence the memory itself. As Casey puts it,

> I cannot effect the remembering proper and the re-remembering simultaneously: either I remember myself remembering yesterday or I remember the memory that I remembered at that time.[68]

Memory serves to be structured by, as well as serves to structure, narratives which themselves become memories.[69]

What could be the purpose of all of this? Scholars of memory tend to be divided on how to answer this question based on what they seek to examine: either what memories are for or

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[65] Iniguez, Lupicinio, Jose Valencia and Felix Vazquez, "The Construction of Remembering and Forgetfulness" in *Collective Memory of Political Events*, James Pennebaker, Dario Paez and Bernard Rime, eds. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: New Jersey. 1997, pp 238.

[66] Ibid, Iniguez pp 239

[67] Young, James E. "The Texture of Memory" in *Theories of Memory: A Reader*, Michael Rossington and Anne Whitehead, eds. John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 2007, pp 183.

[68] Casey, p 28

[69] See: Bruner, Jerome, "Life as Narrative" in *Social Research*, Vol. 54: 1, Spring 1987, pp 11-32; Bruner, Jerome. "The Narrative Construction of Reality" in *Critical Inquiry*, Vol 18:1, Autumn 1991, pp1-21; White, Hayden. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore and London, 1987; White, Hayden and Frank E. Manuel. *Theories of History*. William Andrews Clark Memorial Library: Los Angeles, 1978; Mink, Louis, "Narrative Form as a Cognitive Instrument" in *The Writing of History*, Robert Canary and Henry Kozcki, eds. University of Wisconsin Press: Madison, 1978, pp 129 -150; Scholes, Robert. "Language, Narrative and Anti-Narrative" in *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 7:1, Autumn 1980, pp 204-212; Scholes, Robert, James Phenlan, Robert Kellogg. *The Nature of Narrative*. Oxford University Press, 2006; Ricoeur, Paul. *Time and Narrative, Vol. 3.*University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1985; MacIntyre, Alasdair, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. University of Notre Dame Press: Notre Dame. 2007 (3rd Edition); Hinchman, Lewis P. and Sandra Hinchman, eds. *Memory, Identity and Community: The Idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences*. State University of New York Press: New York, 1997.

what memories do. The question of what memories are for is a necessary one and is provocatively taken up by Francis Landy in his chapter entitled "Notes Towards a Poetics of Memory in Ancient Israel."[70] He speculates that rather than just being a tool of identity formation to give a person or a group meaning, memories establish both continuities and discontinuities with the past in a "fixed" canon which can then claim (albeit arbitrary and tenuous) authority to guard against the ever-whipping winds of existential angst and the fear of death. But can memory be said to have a purpose at all? I am not satisfied with Landy's answer for two reasons. Firstly, it implies a certain future memory of death (since the one who remembers has not yet experienced death) which they necessarily bind to anxiety – a grammar which is not universal. Secondly, Landy's assertion implies that we have a choice in whether or not we imprint memories in narrative form and use these stories to build our worlds out of the fear of death. As we have seen, memory and narrative as cognitive functions of the mind are not a matter of choice. We may be in charge of the content, but even this, to a large degree, is not necessarily at the forefront of our minds and how we perceive and choose are all parts of our construction. All that can be said is that we do this. Why this happens in this particularly human way, I could not say without appealing to supernatural theories ("because we were *created* this way") or evolutionary theories ("because we *evolved* that way").

For me, studying the departure according to the theoretical frame of memory studies is important because it allows scholars to examine the human subject, its groupings and how people make sense of events that happen. While we may be unable to adequately answer certain ontological questions about the nature of being or existence, we can certainly engage in epistemological study or the study of individuals or groups as they arise in the worlds that they build through memory and narrative. While this approach may seem to result in merely descriptive analyses at its core, the result is actually a scholarly understanding of historical agents on their own rational terms, while the scholar engages in generating their own economies of significance by studying those in the past or the present in which they are subsumed. As such, I am less interested in asking what memories are *for* and more interested in understanding what they *do.*[71]

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[70] Landy, Francis. "Notes towards a Poetics of Memory in Ancient Israel," in *Remembering and Forgetting in Early Second Temple Judah.* Ehud Ben-Zvi and C. Levin, eds. Tubingen: Mohr Seibeck, 2012.

[71] See: Ben Zvi, Ehud. "Total Exile, Empty Land and the General Intellectual Discourse in Yehud," in E. Ben Zvi and Christoph Levin (eds.), T*he Concept of Exile in Ancient Israel and its Historical Contexts* Berlin/New York: de Gruyter,

If we take Russell McCutcheon at his word and accept that memories[72] are better understood "as a technique or strategy"[73], an "active process" to achieve some end, whether or not that end is fully foreseeable or conscious, what, then, are memories in the business of doing? What ends are achieved by memory? Are memories only a form of cognitive traction for social orientation? What reflexively results from their outcomes of identity-building and social reproduction? Some scholars have described memory as being called upon to provide a usable past (rather than negating it in the Hegelian sense),[74] and as a habit related to societal hierarchies and the maintenance of power.[75] It is my assertion that memories go beyond the maintenance of power but are actually a source of it. According to McCutcheon and others, memories are in the business of "making particular and contingent worldviews appear ubiquitous and absolute – "master signifier[s] that authorize and reproduce a specific worldview."[76] How is this accomplished? Authority, dominance and power are obtained by dictating and maintaining a particular worldview because this process relies on the creation of *knowledge,* even if this process of creation is nearly invisible. As Michel Foucault puts it,

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2010, 155-68; and *New Perspectives on Old Testament Prophecy and History*, Rannfrid Thelle, Terj Stordalen and Mervyn E.J Richardson, eds. Brill: Boston. 2015; and Boyer, Pascal. "What are memories for?" in *Memory in Mind and Culture*, Pascal Boyer and James Wertsch, eds. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2009, pp 3-33. Ehud Ben Zvi's work on the role of memory in identity formation and memory-scape building is an important part of this discussion. Additionally, Pascal Boyer argues that memories are part of a cognitive evolutionary function of the mind in order for the past to affect an organism through "its consequences for present circumstances." (3) They also concur that memories constitute the self – "a representation of distinctive personhood through particular 'facts' owned by the person." (7) Memory, in this sense, is understood as a tool for a kind of mental time travel in which future contingencies are predicted and vigilance is maintained against "constant threats on the stability of [intersocial] cooperation." (15) I want to push it even further to argue that, within the question of what memories do, a broader and more pervasive world-building is at stake.

[72] McCutcheon, Russell. "Myth" in *Guide to the Study of Religion*. Willi Braun and Russell. McCutcheon, eds. Cassell: London. 2000. McCutcheon here is referring to myth, which I take to be a synonym of both narrative and memory. In the chapter entitled "Myth" in *Guide to the Study of Religion*, Russell McCutcheon outlines how there have been many definitions surrounding the term *myth* but that these can more or less be classified under the following two categories: widely shared (but false) beliefs, and fictional stories told to explain common (but mysterious) everyday occurrences. (190) These classifications of myth carry modernist judgments with them, assuming that there is a "reality-as-it-is" which myths are misrepresenting and, as a result of being simply incorrect, are relatively innocuous. However, as McCutcheon aptly points out, myth is much more suspicious than is first perceived and in fact, is in the business of manufacturing realit*ies*.

[73] Ibid. McCutcheon, pp 199.

[74] See: Zamora, Lois Parkinson. *The Usable Past: The Imagination of History in Recent Fictions of the Americas*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 1997.

[75] See: Connerton, Paul. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 1989.

[76] McCutcheon, Russell. "Myth" in *Guide to the Study of Religion*. Willi Braun and Russell. McCutcheon, eds. Cassell: London. 2000, pp 192 and p 205. See footnote 35.

> Knowledge linked to power not only assumes the authority of 'the truth' but has the power to make itself true. All knowledge, once applied in the real world, has effects, and in that sense at least, 'becomes true.' Knowledge, once used to regulate the conduct of others, entails constraint, regulation and the disciplining of practice. Thus, 'there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations.[77]]

Perhaps a graduation from the terms memory and narrative to the term discourse will further illuminate how the production of knowledge through memory is generative of power. Stuart Hall notes that the first original shift in understanding introduced by Foucault is the move from language to discourse as a system of representation.[78] Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language and practice, constructing the topic while defining and producing our objects of understanding. It appears epistemically across textual sources and in institutional societal sites (of memory). When these sites and samples work in the same style and to support a similar strategy, they are assumed to be in *discursive formation*[79] - or of the same social mindscape. This is not to say, necessarily, that nothing exists outside of narrative memory or discourse – only that we can only have knowledge of those things if they have meaning, which is the persuasion of discourse.[80] To reiterate a point I made about memory earlier in Foucauldian terms, since we can only have knowledge of something if it is meaningful, it is not the thing-in-itself (or some untouched historical event or space) that produces knowledge, but the discourse – the rationality of the social mindscape in which it is produced.[81]

Memory Studies and History

Scholars working in memory studies tend to ask a different set of questions than one might come to expect in more traditional historical methods and while the interdisciplinary nature of history is shifting, the questions asked in this project are primarily grounded in the traditions of memory studies. There is an implicit understanding in memory studies that the particular frames under which historians operate both construct what data is sought and how it is used,

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[77] Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979. p 27

[78] Hall, Stuart. "The Work of Representation" in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Stuart Hall, ed. Sage: London.1997, p 74

[79] Hall, Ibid. p 75.

[80] Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge.* Tavistock: London, 1972.

[81] Ibid. Foucault, *Archaeology*

thus affecting what kinds of histories can be written. As Halbwachs puts it, our memories are reconstructed "under the pressure of society"[82] – something which is engaged with and complements one's work, rather than being an acknowledged fault. Even deeper than this, there is also an understanding that historical data are themselves saturated with memory, memory grammars, and the internal rationalizations within a mindscape at the time of its creation. While there might be individual memory of an event or "fact," that memory is informed by shared meaning[83] regardless of whether or not the group is aware of it. Historical narratives (that is to say, carefully constructed memories of the past) are, therefore, not neutral. They cannot be, as they invoke discourses in order to assure their own future continuity[84] as deliberate tools of dominant powers or, more desirably, they work to challenge and critique them. As such, history can be understood as the social memory of a very particular group of people who identify with one another through a shared language. Hayden White argued in *Metahistory* that we must "treat the historical work as what it most manifestly is: a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse."[85] Ultimately, as Halbwachs ruminates, "one cannot in fact think about the events of one's past without discoursing on them."[86] Thus, the historical agent is not objective in their memories and the scholar is not separate from her study and production of them. The frames of operation for historical data and the study of history are as infinite as the available sites and samples of memory, as well as the number of scholars analyzing them.

Comfort in the face of this saturated and necessarily turbulent narration in which the scholar herself is fully invested is another key feature that typically distinguishes memory studies from a more traditional understanding of history. For those in memory studies, the center of gravity is not found in trying to suss out a singular narrative of "what happened," but rather, orbits around trying to determine how people *remember* what happened, how they use

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[82] Halbwachs, p 51
[83] Ibid, Halbwachs p 53
[84] Iniguez, p 240
[85] White, Hayden. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in 19th Century Europe*. Baltimore and London, 1975: p. xi. See also: White, Hayden. "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact" in *The Writing of History*, Robert Canary and Henry Kozcki, eds. University of Wisconsin Press: Madison, 1978, pp 41-62.
[86] Halbwachs, p 53 The idea of discoursing "on" or rather *through* memories was built on above in my discussion of what memories (myths, narratives, discourses) do.

those memories to construct their present moment and potential futures, and why. There are no accidents in memory, even ones which are factually "wrong."

However inadequate the question of why Morocco's Jews left might be, in trying to answer it historians help by painting a contextual background upon which personal rituals of meaning and expressions of affect are both developed and performed. At the same time, historical actors and contemporary thinkers who tend to be less concerned with broader historical trends can offer smaller group perspectives and rationalizations that enrich these broader narratives. For these reasons, the methods used in obtaining resources for analysis in this thesis are intentionally fluid and open, and they proceed from a desire to refrain from ranking one type of (re)source above another. [87] Ultimately, there is something to learn from every resource, particularly when we, ourselves, are less interested in historical verification of an event and are more interested in what those events mean to contemporary actors. Intergenerational testimonies of émigrés and their descendants, popular memories of the departure, and the scholarly narratives based on archival research which comprise this topic's historiography, all have the potential to reveal unique insights into the grammars invoked in order to remember, particularly as they relate to the present milieu. These grammars complement each other to fill in source-material gaps and help to complicate the view of a historical event that, if left univocal or one-dimensional, runs a greater risk of being abused for polemical purposes (conscious or otherwise).

Of further importance, as I have mentioned, when memories are assembled, patterns emerge which not only signify characteristic assumptions of the discourses under which they are formed, which we might otherwise be unaware of, but it can also be assumed that there are spaces between them in which historical memories (those of agents remembering in the past, as opposed to those remembering that past now) are left out. These silences are more difficult to uncover if we discriminate about which resources are considered valuable and especially if they contradict the established historiography. By looking at the memory of the departure, we begin to gesture towards silences in the memories of why Jews left and, therefore the way forward for future studies.

[87] In saying this, I want to be clear that I am not denigrating the hard work of historians. In fact, I include my own humble work on the subject in the category of memory as well. In this way, it needs to be reiterated that, for me, memory as a category applied to the work of historians is not intended as an insult.

Remembering and Resistance

The theoretical frame and method used in this project are also formed by the impetus to critique as a method of resistance to both hegemonic social construction and the power derived of that domination. Casey casually asks, "Is there freedom in remembering?"[88] to which I respond: in remembering, yes; in memory, no. When we come to acknowledge that remembering appears to crystallize into memory samples and sites,[89] we must recognize that certain values are being posited in them and they are being posited as normative. It is also, irrevocably, incomplete for as much as we remember, there is even more that we forget both purposefully and by design. In the active process of remembering – through the assembling and analysis of both memory samples and their silences – we better understand the constructed certainty by which memory and its narratives give birth to knowledge and power. Tracing the historical conditions for the emergence of these certainties, their genealogy helps to outline the contours of the discourse under which memories, and the people constructed in them, are formed. Further, if we understand discourses, and their formations when memories that are developed under them work together, as a colonization of the subject or even a group of subjects, we can characterize critique as resistance in the form of decolonization[90], as long as it is perpetual and collective. It is worth reiterating here that the scale of hegemonic domination is sliding. Despite this less-orthodox understanding of colonization, I am also using decolonization in the more commonly understood sense of dismantling both politico-economic and cultural colonialism which pervades and shapes both the memory of the departure and those who are remembering.

Further, it is also important to note that the work of one scholar on a particular subject area is insufficient for the complete unsettling of discursive assumptions. Firstly, complete unsettling as a viable end, and often described as stative freedom, is an illusion. Secondly, and directly related, not only will one scholar be producing memories through every crystallized analysis that then generates certain economies of significance according to their social mindscape (which are further in need of critique), but it is also clear that capturing the

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[88] Casey, p 18

[89] Even if we reject that crystallization actually occurs because all sites and samples of memory have a living fluidity by virtue of our constant interpretation and interaction with them, the narrative of crystallization still has persuasive power.

[90] Meaning an identification of and critique of the narratives which go into our social fabrication.

complexities and intricacies of a particular set of memories and their silences is too much for one scholar to bear alone, nor could they if they wanted to. Scholars are bound by their own social mindscape which shapes how they are able to acquire materials and analyze them. Working together with scholars from different academic contexts while examining how these narratives play out in areas outside of scholarly discourse, individually and collectively, helps us to fill narrative voids.

Remembering, as it were, is necessarily a collective and perpetual process – active freedom that resists reduction to a state implying a posited value to be negated or a narrative memory generative of power and thus domination. In resistance through remembering, one not only negates the particular exceptional rationality of social mindscapes in which discourses fabricate us and our social groupings, but a respect for difference (which can be defined as changes in the persuasive meaning of memories according to the social mindscape in which they are interpreted) also emerges as a possibility. This respect for difference within some limits (primarily of translation) implies intellectual rootlessness, or at the very least, an attitude which aims towards it.[91] In a world in which our minds collect social memories that necessarily do violence to the individual, and both the totality and multivocality of existence, intellectual rootlessness is one position we can take to reduce the harm our memories inflict on the fluidity of human beings and the relationships between them.

[91] Elsewhere, I have called this attitude an ascetic or diasporic sensibility, following in the footsteps of the Boyarin brothers and Daniel Colucciello Barber. See: Boyarin, Daniel and Jonathan Boyarin. *Powers of Diaspora: Two Essays on the Relevance of Jewish Culture*. University of Minnesota: Minneapolis, 2002; Barber, Daniel C. *On Diaspora: Christianity, Religion and Secularity.* Cascade Books: Eugene, Oregon. 2011.

TESSERAE: MEMORIES OF DEPARTURE

[A historical event] cannot be understood in its totality without looking at how people perceive it in the modern period. – Aomar Boum[92]

The lotus-eaters did not enchant you with the honey taste of forgetfulness. They safely slipped from their myth while you and your kind entered the labyrinth unprepared. You know exactly what you left behind: a past, not recorded…
– Mahmoud Darwish, *In the Presence of Absence*[93]

All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever.
– Genesis 13:15

The Jewish departure from Morocco continues to captivate groups of scholars, thinkers, artists and audiences disproportionately larger than its intellectual space in the field of history would initially suggest. The departure sits on the periphery of two already peripheral fields of study: Moroccan studies (which remain outside the main European schools) and Jewish studies (which have been dominated by the Shoah and studies of Ashkenazim). Thus, the mindspace afforded to the departure as a subject of study in a highly niche area, and the incredible diversity of memories accumulated around it as a site of memory, is worth examining.

In this chapter, I will offer a summary and critique of the historiography on the departure in order to determine narrative trends that have emerged among historians around the question of why Moroccan Jews left. I will engage with the primary issue I have with these sources, which is that they are too simplistic and insist on giving one causal reason for the departure above all others. I will then examine more recent research conducted by anthropologists and historical ethnographers interviewing Jews who remained in Morocco but lived during the departure, or Jews who emigrated to Canada and Israel, with the hope that asking them why they left directly might elicit clearer answers about their motivations. I will examine the narratives that tend to arise in the domain of testimonials in light of the methodologies employed by these researchers. By critiquing the ways their testimonials are used and interpreted to arrive at these narratives, I will necessarily propose other ways of using and interpreting their data. Lastly, I will explore the narrative trends in memories of the departure

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[92] Boum, Aomar, "Scripting the Shoah: The Holocaust in Moroccan Official and Public Discourses" Lecture at the University of Minnesota. April 11, 2013. Accessed February 10, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_UmOLQxxZk

[93] Darwish, Mahmoud. *In the Presence of Absence*. Sinan Antoon, trans. Archipelago Books: 2011: pp 65.

through sources which I classify as popular media. Throughout the chapter, I will develop a picture of the discursive ideological environments of each of these types of memories in order to understand how their narrative forms arise in the ways that they do and their persuasive power in light of the present conditions and future imaginaries in which their authors find themselves. I will also point out important areas of convergence and divergence between these domains and within them.

It should be noted that the vast majority of the resources solicited for this project are found in the English or French languages or are in Hebrew and *Darija*[94] but are accompanied by English language translations. The reasons for primarily focusing on English-language resources are manifold. The English language provides a shared, contested space by which competing memories can interact with one another. These interactions are decidedly public and external because of the international use of English, whereas other languages such as Arabic or Hebrew tend to draw boundaries of limited interaction because of global linguistic patterns. Secondly, this means that the memories studied here are decidedly performative. Those who craft narratives of the departure in English are doing so with the expectation that they will be accessible, read, and responded to by particular global audiences. It can therefore be assumed that many of these memories are shaped with particular goals in mind and that they will be read by "outsiders" to their linguistic home community. It is expected and assumed that memories cultivated in more insular languages would result in different narrative forms and future research might develop around comparing those sources with performative, English ones.

A constant theme in the historiography, ethnographies and cultural representations seeking to determine motivations for why Jews left Morocco is a tendency and desire to not only give a singular motivation primacy, but to paint all Moroccan Jews as homogenously holding that motivation first and foremost. While one might expect this in popular memory sources, the fact that this tendency also appears in the historiography is important. When I might use the phrase "Jewish motivation," it is a reflection of how the authors or émigrés themselves speak, rather than what I take to be the lived reality. Lived reality is understood to imply that multiple overlapping and contradictory motivations were developed or

[94] Darija refers to the Moroccan Arabic dialect. There are regional variations within Morocco; however, for the most part, these regional variations can be understood by people all across the country.

manufactured and combined with particular historical contingencies to succeed in inspiring the departure of multiple groups which came to put their Jewishness at the forefront of their identities.[95] The sentiment of Jewishness coming to the fore as a result of the departure itself is expressed in a Qasida to Mahmoud Darwish written by Moroccan Jewish poet and émigré Sami Shalom Chetrit: "Write it down. I was born Jewish out of your death. The death of the Arab in me." [96]

What is collectively remembered by these individuals and small groups is not only indicative of the grammatical preferences which go into the shaping of those memories, but assembling what is remembered in a constellating manner[97] also sets us up to better understand what is not remembered, which will be explored, in brief, in the next chapter. When taken together, both remembering and forgetting give us a better sense of the richness of past events while they teach us about the present and future concerns of those who form these memories to understand their past. This enables us to develop a foundation from which reconciliation between fractured groups can begin to take place in the future, if desired. In other words, we must assemble what people believe about the departure in order to translate these beliefs for others with the hope of bringing them into conversation with one another.

Why They Left: Historiographical Trends

Historical accounts of the departure almost exclusively revolve around questions of determining causality for the departure which then center on two main narrative forms: one being that Moroccan Muslim nationalists failed to include Moroccan Jews in ethno-religio-nationalist independence movements and the other that Moroccan Jews decided to make sacralised *Aliyah* to Israel because they were persuaded by external, European Zionist propaganda.[98] For the most part, these arguments also rest on a presumed coexistence

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[95] See footnote 5.

[96] Chetrit, Sami Shalom. "A Mural with No Wall: A Qasida for Mahmoud Darwish" *Jews: Poems – Translations from Hebrew.* Cervena Barva Press: Somerville Massachusetts. Accessed April 19, 2017. *www.spdbooks.org/Content/Site106/FilesSamples/9780692336281.pdf*

[97] It should be noted, somewhat surprisingly, that an entire book on the departure of Morocco's Jews has yet to be written. One motivation of this project is thus a drawing together some of the existing threads about the departure and pushing to expand on them while gesturing to future research areas.

[98] As will become clear below, regional difference between Jews, as well as differences in education and socio-economic status are rarely expanded on in these histories. As such, it is not always clear which Jews historians are talking about.

between Muslims and Jews with these factors leading to their rupture. While this approach lends itself well to confirming individual and group agency as arbiters of historical change, the assumed prelude of interfaith utopia ignites a search for Jewish motivations which hinge on the idea that Jews would need to *choose* to leave. Another underlying implication of this approach is that Muslims were responsible for keeping Moroccan Jews in the country and are therefore to blame for failing to do so, either by adopting inclusive political rhetoric or failing to stop Zionists from influencing them. Many of these points speak more to scholarly anxieties about Muslim-Jewish relations in their particular contexts and our contemporary moment than anything else.

Nationalist-Inclusion Failure

The first of these narratives tends to focus on the alleged failures of Moroccan nationalists to incorporate the majority of Moroccan Jews into the narrative of the nation. This failure is often blamed on the exclusionary rhetoric around pan-Arabism and Muslim identity which arose in the late 1950s. While this later focus is important, it tends to overlook the historical, pre-Independence origins of Moroccan ethno-religious nationalism. This causes blind acceptance of the implicit teleology that such nationalism is the invariable (and even appropriate) response to colonialism. It also neglects the fact that over half of the Jews who would leave were already gone by the time the independence movement gained any moment or was successful. While voices of Moroccan independence and nationalism were being raised prior to the end of French colonialism,[99] the road to independence was not inevitable and was not even the original aim of Moroccan nationalists. Additionally, while there is much evidence showing some Muslim and Jewish cooperation against French domination[100] and anti-Semitism,[101] historians who tend to argue for inclusion-failure narratives claim that it was

[99] I refrain from using the euphemism Protectorate because it obfuscates the true nature of the French colonial project in Morocco.

[100] As I will show below, Jews were Moroccan nationalists too. Laskier, Michael. "Jewish Emigration from Morocco to Israel: Government Policies and the Position of International Jewish Organizations, 1948-56,"in *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol 25:3, July 1989; page 339); Laskier, Michael, "Zionism and the Jewish Communities of Morocco 1956-1962" in *Studies in Zionism*, Vol 6:1, 1985: p 121.

[101] See: Boum, Aomar. "Partners in Anti-Semitism: Muslims and Jews Respond to Nazism in French North African Colonies, 1936-1940" in *The Journal of North African Studies.* Vol 19:4, pp 554-570 – Here, anti-Semitism refers to French prejudice against both Muslims and Jews. Elsewhere, when speaking of discrimination against Jews only, I will refer to it as Judeophobia or anti-Jewishness. For my rationale on this distinction, I quote the following text: AbdulKadir, Abubakar Sadiq, "An Analytical and Comparative Study of Jews in the Qur'an in Two West African

simply not enough to only have a section of elite Jews engaging with nationalist discourse on a small scale when compared with the rest of the excluded masses.

There is little, if any, evidence that lends insight into how so-called "common" Jews felt about Moroccan nationalism. What research does exist, such as that of Aomar Boum, tends to focus on *southern* Moroccan Jewry,[102] revolving around recent interviews with Jews who remained or Muslims who remember when Jews were leaving. Not only is there an assortment of methodological concerns with Boum's work,[103] there is an important point that also remains unmentioned: southern Jewish alienation is less about the fact that they were Jewish, strictly speaking. The south of Morocco as a whole was alienated from the nationalism of northern and, especially urban, coastal Morocco. This had a lot to do with economic and cultural differences, along with the fact that the populations in that region were mainly comprised of demographics which failed (from their perspective) to fit into pan-Arab identity formations, being primarily Amazigh, Saharawi and Black African.[104]

Tafsirs," MA (Semitic Languages and Cultures). [Unpublished]: University of Johannesburg. Retrieved from https://ujdigispace.uj.ac.za (April 12, 2016). "The concept of anti-Semitism does not really fit the description of this subject since being Semite does not apply to Jews alone but also includes Christians, Muslims and others who are Arabs…A Semite is a member of any of a number of peoples of ancient southwestern Asia including the Akkadians, Phoenicians, Hebrews and Arabs…It could also be argued that anti-Semitism is a modern construct. The present framing of "anti-Semitism" as a hostility towards Jews as Jews is clearly flawed… [since] the history of racial Jewishness is not merely the history of anti-Semitism; it encompasses the ways in which both Jews and non-Jews have construed Jewishness…over time." (p.1)

[102] See: Boum, Aomar. "From "Little Jerusalems" to the Promised Land: Zionism, Moroccan nationalism and rural Jewish emigration" in *The Journal of North African Studies*. Vol. 15:1. 2010. Pp 51-69, and Boum, Aomar *Memories of Absence How Muslims Remember Jews in Morocco*. Stanford University Press: Stanford. 2013.

[103] Despite its strong theoretical foundations, Boum's methodology can leave quite a bit to be desired. Like many academics, Boum has recycled and used his ethnographic interviews for the publication of dozens of articles over the years which is a totally legitimate practice. It is not, however, until you read his book that some salient contextual details about these interviews become evident, which is to say that there were only 80 of them were conducted, back in 2004 (even though he is *still* publishing writing based on that research to this day), and admittedly none of the interviewees were women. This is not terrible in and of itself since Boum is very upfront about whose memories he is reconstructing and why; however, if one is looking for quantified, comparative and intersectional caches of data, it is clear that there is still much more work to be done. In terms of future research, the opportunity to compare the Muslim memories of Jews across gender, regional or economic demographic lines could be highly illuminating.

[104] It should also be noted that the departure of Jews from southern Morocco is primarily remembered as deeply traumatic and a massive wound in the communities it affected, much more so than northern coastal locales. The work of Emanuela Trevisan Semi shows that southern Jews leaving was akin to Muslim family members leaving with remaining Muslims being "paralyzed with grief…[begging their neighbours to" take them in a box to Palestine..."and threatening to kill themselves if *their* Jews left. See: Semi, Emanuela Trevisan. "Double Trauma and Manifold Narratives: Jews' and Muslims' Representations of the Departure of Moroccan Jews in the 1950s and 1960s" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*. Vol 9:1, March 2010: pp 107-125.

Overlooking this point would not be so much of an issue if Boum's findings were not regularly invoked or echoed by other historians speaking of Moroccan Jewry more generally. Ultimately, this illuminates a recurring issue at hand: that many prominent scholars in the field of departure studies tend to cite one another at length, adding research which looks to corroborate certain narrative hypotheses, often without challenging them, and universalizing regional particularities in the process. Scholarly discursive communities can come to accept some of these memories and narrative grammars as invariable and even timeless, resulting in finely-grooved paths upon which acceptable future research treads. This practice leads to the acceptance of a hypothesis about a specific historical question as the truth and is exemplified best when the above argument is mentioned, in passing and matter-of-factly, in the work of both Jamaâ Baïda,[105] and Samir Ben-Layashi and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman.[106] While scaffolding on one another's research is of critical importance because it enhances the richness and cooperative spirit of the discipline of history, it can also lead to serious holes in the field when scholars simply do not venture off these established historical narrative paths, as we will see.

The narrative of failing to integrate Moroccan Jews into the nationalist story is complicated by a number of important factors including the fact that nationalist leadership often advocated against Jewish emigration publicly for several important reasons. Firstly, sentimentality cannot be overlooked in that many Moroccan nationalists saw Jews as an intrinsic part of the Moroccan state and the King himself continued his paternalistic rhetoric around protecting "his Jewish sons."[107] Secondly, it was feared that a continuing Jewish departure after independence would destabilize the economy and public administration system. The fears of Jewish economic prowess being lost permeated the Muslim worldview from the lowest strata of society upwards. Boum has noted on several occasions that Muslims will often say that "a market without Jews is like bread without salt"[108] and still others have

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[105] Baïda, Jamaâ, "The Emigration of Moroccan Jews, 1948-56" in *Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa*. Gottreich and Schroeter, eds. 2011

[106] Ben-Layashi, Samir and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman. "Myth, History and Realpolitik: Morocco and Its Jewish Community" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*. Vol. 9:1. 2010. Pp. 89-106.

[107] Bin-Nun, Yigal, "The Disputes Regarding the Jewish Emigration from Morocco 1956-1961" in *Jews and Muslims in the Islamic World*. Eds. Bernard Dov Cooperman and Zvi Zohar, University of Maryland Press, 2013, pp 56.

[108] Boum, Aomar *Memories of Absence How Muslims Remember Jews in Morocco*. Stanford University Press: Stanford. 2013

noted that rural Muslims believe Jews to be endowed with *Baraka* – a magical propensity for abundance that is allocated divinely.[109] There were also fears that a Jewish departure would hurt Morocco's international image and make them appear undemocratic or intolerant while simultaneously damaging their relations with Arab nations because so many Jews would be immigrating to Israel. Concerns around global Islamophobia making people reluctant to criticize Muslim countries do not arise in the historical sources. Such concerns do, however, become a prominent issue in popular memory. Lastly, nationalist leaders opposed Jewish emigration on the basis that the injection of thousands of young men in Israel would support the IDF fighting Arabs.[110] One historian thus announces that "Morocco was united from one corner of the political spectrum to the other in its opposition to the idea of allowing the Jews to leave the country."[111] While this would seem to imply an affinity for Jews, it could also be interpreted as revealing of far more sinister implications: that Muslims hated the idea of supporting Israel so much they would limit the mobility rights of their Jewish citizens and that they felt they had the presumed authority to do so. Neglecting to mention the possibility of an alternate historical interpretation is related to the underlying assumption by the historians putting forth this narrative: that Jews and Muslims lived in harmonious coexistence that was ruptured by an unfortunate "mistake" of Muslim nationalists in adopting pan-Arab and even Islamocentric rhetoric. If one were to assume that pre-departure relations were less than idyllic and were characterized by Muslim hegemony, the idea that they alone might decide how and when Jews are entitled to mobility is far more ominous.

Not only did Muslim nationalists have these reasons to protest Jewish emigration, inclusion-failure narratives also belie the fact that nationalism in Morocco was neither monolithic nor unchanging throughout the entire period preceding independence in 1956. Additionally, many Moroccan nationalists at the time were actually Jews and there were many moments of Muslim-Jewish nationalist unity – or what Michael Laskier refers to as the Judeo-Muslim *entente*.[112] I am less than satisfied with the term *entente* because it assumes the cooperative efforts of two groups who put their Muslimness and Jewishness at the forefront of

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[109] See: Eickelman, Dale. *Moroccan Islam: Tradition and Society in a Pilgrimage Center*. University of Texas Press, 1981.

[110] Bin-Nun, Yigal, "The Disputes" pp 56.

[111] Ibid. Bin-Nun, p 57.

[112] See: Laskier, Michael, "Zionism and the Jewish Communities of Morocco 1956-1962" in *Studies in Zionism*, Vol 6:1, 1985: pp119-138.

their identities when working together as though both religious groups were not invested in nationalist discourses, but more importantly, it also assumes that these groups thought of themselves as separate irrespective of which identities they brought to the fore. The idea of the *entente* may be the retrospective application of the notion of separation between Muslims and Jews (generally speaking), something much more reflective of perceptions around Palestine-Israel at the time when Laskier is writing, rather than the lived reality of the Moroccan nationalist groups to which he is referring.

In "Rethinking Moroccan Nationalism 1930-44," Adria Lawrence complicates simplistic narratives about how nationalism is both monolithic and inherently linked to anti-colonialism. She points to the fact that early Moroccan nationalist movements were primarily interested in reform rather than decolonization and that the reform they called for was primarily focused on the equitable treatment of all citizens and the abolition of French authoritarianism, rather than independent statehood. She notes that demands for reform from nationalist groups for over a decade were couched in "a desire for inclusion and access, not separation" and that "conceptualising these demands as components of one larger, nationalist agenda obscures important differences" in how Moroccans understood both colonialism and themselves over time.[113] For example, in 1934, the *Kutlah al-Amal al-Watani*, or the *Comité d'Action Marocaine* (CAM) presented a lengthy plan to the French government which asked for "a stricter application of the Protectorate Treaty" without calling the system itself into question.[114] This group was later outlawed under the premise that they represented no one but the elites within the confines of the party and came to form the highly influential *al-Hizb al-Watani li Tahqiq al-Matalib* under the direction of Allal al-Fasi, and eventually the *Hizb al-Istiqlal* party which would be built on the push for independence first and foremost.
This call for a more detailed and nuanced understanding of Moroccan nationalist movements brings to light the dangers of subsuming all political opposition into the nationalist independence narrative. Firstly, it masks the historical tensions which existed between the reform and later nationalist movements, assuming that independence is a natural response to colonialism. Perhaps the most poignant loss in conflating the two ideas, for our purposes, is

[113] Lawrence, Adria, "Rethinking Moroccan Nationalism, 1930-44" in *The Journal of North African Studies*. Vol 17:3, June 2012, pp 475.
[114] Ibid. Lawrence p 477

the fact that the reform movement was indeed focused on elite needs and beliefs in republican, universalizing secular principles – something which many Moroccan Jewish nationalists could get behind as a result of their frenchification. However, when the shift occurred from a reformist platform to an independence movement, there was also a move "away from universal principles to particularistic identities."[115] Rather than placing emphasis on the importance of equality for all citizens, the independence movement became focused on pointing out the incompatibility of French and Moroccan culture, forcing them to articulate a conception of the latter which was couched in ethno-religious terms that would seem to exclude Jews.

It is important to note that during the entire period that historians are writing about nationalist inclusion failure narratives, from the last 1980s until the early 2000s, Morocco was undergoing a significant shift in foreign policy, most notably an opening to Western nations like France and the United States. This shift started in the later years of the reign of Hassan II, also known as the end of the Years of Lead (French: *Les années de Plomb*), and has continued throughout the reign of his son, Mohammed VI.[116] The Years of Lead were marked by mass human rights abuses and inwardly-focused economic policies, and when the shift in policies occurred, the monarchy aimed to make Morocco more palatable to the West by decreasing political repression and expanding trade. Thus it is not surprising that these historical arguments about independence movements being centered on highlighting Moroccan and French incompatibility (to the exclusion of Jews) in the period of this political-economic opening of the country do not appear.

Another trope among some historians is that Jews were not only civilized by the French but they also placed their only remaining trust in them – something which led to their exclusion in nationalist independence movements. [117] Not only does this illustrate a misunderstanding about the complex and contradictory effects that frenchification had on Jews and their participation in nationalist movements, it also makes claims from the present that are simply not found in the past with very specific reasons for them. One group which many improperly claim for the pro-French camp is the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* which

[115] Ibid Lawrence 484
[116] See: Miller, Susan Gilson. *A History of Modern Morocco.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2013; and Pennell. C.R. *Morocco since 1830: A History*. New York University Press: New York City. 2000.
[117] Ben-Layashi and Maddy-Weitzman. "Myth, History and Realpolitik".

arrived in Morocco in the 1860s from France and began building schools to raise the status of Moroccan Jews through education. Despite the fact that AIU schools introduced Jews to French language and culture, I do not agree that this translated into an affinity for and trust of the French, as Ben-Layashi and Maddy-Weitzman have claimed.[118] Despite the fact that it is not unusual for human beings to hold two contradictory and even potentially harmful ideas in their mind, it was more likely an affinity for French *Jewishness* rather than European Frenchness proper, particularly in light of overwhelming evidence of French Judeophobia.[119] The fact that these historians were writing just after a time in which France's public apologies for the Vichy persecution of Jews during the Second World War are more mainstream than the knowledge of the persecutions comes to bear on how this past is then represented and understood.[120] Further, and perhaps more importantly, the notion that Jews still suffered Judeophobia at the hands of the French undermines the mythologization of King Mohammed V and his protection of them – a narrative upheld by both Moroccan Muslims and Moroccan Jews in popular memory and other histories.[121] Therefore, a narrative which argues for a positive Jewish-French relationship in Morocco obfuscates or diminishes the historical realities of French Judeophobia in light of the present.

The point that Jews developed an affinity for French Jewishness rather than European Frenchness is in line with the work of Yolande Cohen who has found that when AIU students rejected traditional Moroccan Jewishness, they later found that they had no place in the French nation and that "not far from Europe, from its devastating anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, the Jews in Morocco were fully aware of their extreme vulnerability [among the French]."[122] With 33,000 students in 83 schools in the post WWII era, the AIU mandate was

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[118] Ibid.

[119] See: Wynchank, Anny, "Consequences of French Colonization for North African Jews: The Division of a Cohesive Minority" in *French Colonial History*, Vol 2, 2002: pp 145-57. And Cohen, Yolande "The Migrations of Moroccan Jews to Montreal: Memory, (Oral) History and Historical Narrative" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies,* Vol 10:2, July 2011: pp 245-262.

[120] See: Fette, Julia. "Apology and the Past in Contemporary France" in *French Politics, Culture and Society*. Vol 26:2, Summer 2008. pp. 78 – 113.

[121] See: Kenbib, Mohammed. "Moroccan Jews and the Vichy regime, 1940-2" in *The Journal of North African Studies*. Vol 19: 4, 2014. pp. 540-553; and Wagenhofer, Sophie. "Mohammed V and the Moroccan Jews under the Vichy Regime" in *Memory and Forgetting among Jews from the Arab-Muslim Countries. Contested Narratives of a Shared Past*, eds. Emanuela Trevisan Semi, Piera Rossetto, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC*, n.4 November 2012. Accessed April 29, 2017. http://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/focus.php?id=318

[122] Cohen, "Migration of Moroccan Jews", pp 247.

primarily focused on "transform[ing] and liberat[ing] the Jews on *home* soil"[123] and "struggl[ing] for the emancipation of the Jews of the Diaspora through its schools in order to achieve their assimilation in society at large."[124] Not only did this mean that the AIU maintained a very public anti-Zionist stance for much longer than any other local Jewish organization, it also meant that they were quite happy to cooperate with other elite groups to ensure space was kept for Jewish political participation once independence was achieved. Another reason the narrative about a lack of nationalist inclusion is complicated is that many Jews who remained recognized their lack of inclusion and still did not feel the impulse to leave. In other words, a lack of nationalist belonging[125] was not necessarily a primary motivator for going. In retrospective histories where Moroccan Jewish longings for The Land of Israel[126] are taken for granted, the fact that many Jews did not actually feel the need to leave belies that presumption. In Boum's article "Little Jerusalems," he interviews Masoud Sarraf who lends insight into the perspective of Jews who remained and shows that even though they might have been left out of the nationalist discussion, they still had economic partnerships and lives that had been built in Morocco: "we are both from Akka and from Eretz-Israel."[127] He claims that Southern Jews thought of themselves as Moroccan and retained something of a choice in staying and that, for him, letting go of their inter-generational existence in Morocco was no simple task. It did not happen simply because some[128] Jews may have felt excluded by nationalist rhetoric. It is important to note that from the Jewish and historical perspective, they had always been outside the majority (and the subject of sporadic abuses) for millennia (in Morocco specifically): Why should exclusion now warrant their escape?[129] As I will demonstrate in the next section, the presumption that

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[123] Laskier, Michael. "The Evolution of Zionist Activity in the Jewish Communities of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria: 1897–1947" in *Studies in Studies in Zionism*, 4:2, 1983, p 205-236. Emphasis added.

[124] Laskier, Michael. "Jewish Emigration from Morocco to Israel: Government Policies and the Position of International Jewish Organizations, 1948-56,"in *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol 25:3, July 1989; page 339

[125] Here, belonging refers to a reciprocal identity affirmation between individuals, small or regional groupings and greater society based on particular myths of the nation.

[126] Elsewhere I refer to this as indigenous Zionism, meaning the anachronistic assumption that historical Jews have always desired either move to The Land of Israel, form a State there, or felt that other Jews had a right to.

[127] Boum, Aomar. "From "Little Jerusalems" p 53.

[128] I.e. Northern, urban and differently-educated Jews.

[129] I realize in saying this that it is not only the Jewish perspective on this issue that matters, as I have noted when mentioning that their exclusion may have given way to Judeophobic practices by way of Othering. An area that is important by way of future research would be looking at how Euro-nationalist discourses, which are immersed in Christiano-secular-form narratives about blood and belonging, were different than Islamo-form narratives around

nationalist exclusion would cause Jews to turn to their timeless desire for *Aliyah* is unfounded and reflects the political climate in which historians are writing more than the historical realities for some Moroccan Jews.

Ultimately, despite the above complications to the nationalist-inclusion narrative, it cannot be said that exclusion did not occur, nor that it was unimportant to some Jews when it did occur. As has become clear, in some regions and at certain times, Jews and Muslims (who did not necessarily conceive of themselves as separate or in religious terms) worked together for the nationalist cause and, at other times, they did not. It is not necessary that these accounts match up. It is entirely possible that at the same time as some elite cooperation between Muslim and Jewish nationalists occurred, southern or rural or differently-educated Jews were simultaneously excluded in nationalist narratives as they came to push for independence over reform, and that this exclusion contributed to an overall feeling of unrest eventually leading to their departure (especially when combined with other contributing factors) – something which more narrow approaches belie. It is equally important to note that in referring to these instances of cooperation and indifference, I am not obfuscating the fact that there was mistrust and even violence between some Muslims and Jews in the post-War period.[130] The purpose here is not to write all-or-nothing stories but, in part, to complicate simplistic views of the past.

Zionist Enticement

The second major strain of narratives put forth by historians accounting for the departure fall under the category of European Zionist enticement of Moroccan Jews. Two dominant discursive groups emerge and tend to be divided on geographical lines. Some authors argue that external Zionist propaganda had a growing influence over Moroccan Jews who (for whatever reason) felt increasingly uncertain about their position in Moroccan society. The

religious "dignity" (using that term with caution) such as *dhimmi* status. The latter form implies a kind of tolerance of difference (albeit, not necessarily a perfectly executed one historically) while the former implies the expulsion of difference.

[130] One of the standard reasons put forth for the mistrust of Jews by Muslims was the perceived betrayal to the nationalist cause in the so-called Jewish preference for French European culture. (Ben-Layashi, Samir and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman. "Myth, History and Realpolitik: Morocco and Its Jewish Community" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*. Vol. 9:1. 2010. pp. 89-106) As I have mentioned above, this assumption is faulty and does not sufficiently investigate the Jewish affinity for "Frenchness." It also continues a standard historical narrative trope of Jewish persecution for collusion with the ruling powers which invokes a determinism regarding Muslim-Jewish relations.

uncertainty Jews were experiencing is rarely elaborated on in any great detail but reasons given tend not to reflect on local relationships and are contingent on broader historical events that Moroccan Jews are assumed to have been aware of. This group usually emerges from the Moroccan Muslim historiography, allowing authors to alleviate guilt and reconcile for themselves and Muslims the possibly embarrassing question of why Jews left: that European Zionists on Moroccan soil were able to convince them to leave. Here, Zionism becomes an extenuating factor whose influence was seen to have been possible to stop, if only Muslims had been more attentive to the presence of these agents and had paid more attention to it through inclusive narratives of belonging. More commonly, another group of authors argues that European Zionists appealed to an allegedly indigenous Moroccan Zionism sympathetic to state-building in Israel, by way of invoking narratives of sacralised movement there, using biblical precedence – narrative grammars which reflect contemporary narratives of legitimacy in Israel. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the latter camp tends to emerge from the Moroccan Jewish historiography, particularly those authors who were émigrés to Israel themselves and might still be based there or who later went to western institutions abroad. In both cases, the penetration of European Zionists who either convinced Moroccan Jews of a better life in Israel or awoke them to their supernatural connection to The Land allows authors to maintain a prelude narrative of relative coexistence in Morocco which was disrupted.

The first important point to note is that, contrary to some of the assumptions in the historiography, there *is* a discrepancy about when sacralised pilgrimage in the form of emigration to the new State of Israel became a central point of Moroccan Zionism. Zionism is a complex and easily abused term that has not necessarily always meant an imperative to return to and settle the Holy Land throughout history. In fact, for the majority of Moroccan Jews through most of Moroccan history, the concept of Zionism meaning emigration (without the ushering in of a messianic age) was unthinkable. They tended to characterize Zionism as the selling of *shekelim* to support settlements around Jerusalem for European Jews who suffered persecution at the hands of Europeans.[131] The point at which the intellectual shift from support of persecuted European Jews in the Holy Land to Zionist, settlement-based

[131]Yehuda, Zvi. "The place of Aliyah in Moroccan Jewry's conception of Zionism" in *Studies in Zionism*, Vol 6:2, 1985, pp 199-210; Tsur, Yaron, "The Religious Factor in the Encounter Between Zionism and the Rural Atlas Jews" in *Zionism and Religion*, 1998. pp 312-329.

Aliyah occurred is highly contested. Examining rabbinical responsa (which are some of the few resources to illuminate Moroccan Jewish life before the 20th century), Shalom Bar Asher argues that this change in attitude towards *Aliyah* happened between 1770 and 1860.[132] Authors like Asher stand alone in claiming that this shift took place centuries earlier than their mass departure (and use limited resources from a limited number of regions to argue that the inclination for Zionist *Aliyah* had always been there), disregarding the fact that many Jews who emigrated to Palestine before the colonial era actually returned because of economic stagnation and poverty. This emphasis on sacralising immigration belies stated intentions of émigrés in going and in returning when they failed to fulfill what they set out to do.

Other authors have placed the shift to *Aliyah*-based Zionism in the 20th century. Using a variety of newspaper sources starting from the 1920s, Boum argues that prominent Moroccan Jewish journals changed their policies towards *Aliyah* as a response to Moroccan Arab nationalism, the Third Reich, and the centrality of Palestine to pan-Arabist ideology.[133] In a similar vein, Laskier questions when *Aliyah*-based Zionism "penetrated" Morocco– something which, in itself, belies his claim that it was always there among Jews. While he echoes some of Boum's work, Laskier claims that Zionism did not take hold among Moroccan Jews until the mid-1940s. He cites the reasons for this revival of emigration-based Zionism at this particular point in time as numerous and including: moments of anxiety under Vichy French rule, the support of American Jewry and American Zionist groups, the Holocaust,[134] and the failures of the AIU as an organization representative of the Jewish community. Elsewhere, he also points out that the failure of the Judeo-Muslim *entente* of the 1950s occurred because there was a disconnect between the elite who wanted to push for the socio-political participation of the community and the commoners who wanted to flee for the above-mentioned reasons.[135] Kristin Hissong echoes some of these reasons, stating that European Zionism took hold during the War (even though *Aliyah* was banned then) and until

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[132] Bar Asher, Shalom. "The Jews of North Africa and the Land of Israel in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: The Reversal in Attitude Toward *Aliyah* from 1770 to 1860" in *The Land of Israel: Jewish Perspectives*, 1986, pp 297-315.

[133] Boum, "Little Jerusalems".

[134] Laskier shines here in his momentary inclusion of the Holocaust as a key factor in the post-war Jewish mental climate – one of a handful of Moroccan Jewry historians to mention it, even in passing. Of course, this mere mention does not go far enough and the broader context of the Holocaust in effecting the departure remains understudied.

[135] Laskier, "Zionism and the Jewish Communities of Morocco" p 124.

independence (after which point it was temporarily banned again by the *makhzan*) as a response to both Moroccan independence-based nationalism, and contact with pro-*Aliyah* American Jewish organizations.[136] Others, such as Semi, claim that Zionism took hold in Morocco after the War as "an act of pride" aimed at overturning a stereotype of the meek Jew, and because it was simply "easier" than before to go to Jerusalem to fill an "ancient" desire after the 1950s.[137]

Thus some discussions of European Zionism enticing Moroccan Jews away by way of sacralised pilgrimage portray the secular movement as having appealed to a timeless, internal desire to perform Zionist *Aliyah* while ignoring the fact that until post-independence emigration did occur, Moroccan Jews regularly rejected and refused it based on the lack of a messianic age.[138] Further one should note that the sacralisation of Zionist *Aliyah* mobilized by European Zionists did not have *zero* influence over Moroccan Jewish thought (particularly after independence); however, the question of why sacralised pilgrimage achieved rhetorical persuasiveness when it did remains understudied especially when, historically, one could be a pro-Zionist, Frenchified Moroccan nationalist without connoting disloyalty to any of those identity markers. Key AIU educator Charles Bensilhom stated the following example of this

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[136] Hissong, p 322-3.

[137] Semi, p 110-111; In the early years after the establishment of the state of Israel, the Second World War was almost always presented through the lens of the Holocaust and centered around two characterizations of the survivors who had immigrated after the war: *galuti* and *sabra*. The former title was given to allegedly passive victims who had allowed themselves to enter the slaughter (which was perceived to be the vast majority) and was contrasted with the latter which represented not only partisan Jewish fighters in WWII, but those who had fought in the Israeli War of Independence or the Nakba in 1948. Zionism itself came to be the ideology of the latter group and adopting it implied a similar valiancy. See: Ofer, Dalia. "The Strength of Remembrance: Commemorating the Holocaust during the First Decade of Israel." In *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol.6:2, 2000. pp 24-55. The roots of this discourse run far deeper than the context of Europe in the 1940s though. Mark Levene succinctly points out that even though modern Zionism arose in Europe during the Romantic period as a mode of rejection (meaning that Europeans could not properly accommodate Jews socially or politically) which led Zionists to argue for Jewish singularity in the need to separation from other peoples in Eretz-Israel, such a point could also be interpreted the exact opposite way: that "Zionist intellectuals `imagined' a Jewish national community pretty much in the same way that the elites of other would-be nations `imagined' theirs. Zionist strivings to distance themselves from European ideas and movements only confirmed how utterly they were in its debt." The imaginings of these states were immersed in hyper-masculine discourse that eschewed anything perceived to be weakness as effeminate and rests its might on military strength. See: Levene, Mark. "The Travails of Zionism" in *The Historical Journal*, Vol 40:3, 1997, pp 845-855; Anderson, Benedict *Imagined communities: reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism.* London, 1983;

[138] Laskier, Michael. *The Alliance Israelite Universelle and the Jewish Communities of Morocco, 1862-1962.* SUNY Press: 1983, and Abitbol, M., 1985. "The encounter between French Jewry and the Jews of North Africa: analysis of a discourse (1830–1914)" In: F. Malino and B. Wasserstein, eds. *The Jews in Modern France.* Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 31–53. This rejection was common in most orthodox Jewish communities at the time.

mental balancing act when addressing a Parisian audience on the issue of the place of Morocco's Jews in the newly independent state in 1957:

> Even if we are strongly attached to *notre patrie,* it is impossible to ignore Israel, the cradle of our religion. Neither the Catholics of France, nor the Muslims of Morocco, nor the Jews of England can remain indifferent in regard to the three great spiritual centers of the world: the Vatican, Mecca, and Jerusalem.... Intransigent patriotism and full loyalty to Morocco do not exclude faithfulness to Israel. If we are separated from Israel by citizenship, Moroccan Jewry is united with Israel and world Jewry by a common religious doctrine. Yes, we are Moroccans, but we are also Jewish.[139]

He ended this point by noting that if assimilation into the new Morocco were to happen, it could not occur without "dignity and honor"[140] which implies that such values were not, in fact, being put forth as important. This could reference back to the disgraceful days under Vichy French rule and intra-community conflicts thereafter until independence, or could point to more general, low grade oppression that had been endured by Jews for centuries. It is neither elaborated on by Bensilhom nor historians examining his speeches, presumably because it contradicts the presumed myth of interfaith utopia.

By approaching the effects of European Zionism on the departure in this way, these anachronistic narratives clearly both reflect and serve current Israeli (government) rhetoric that secular European Zionism is somehow indigenous to and an integral part of all historical expressions of Judaism. Beyond the anachronism and questionable polemical nature of these historical arguments, the notion of indigenous Zionism also causes historians to overlook the unique convergence of factors which caused Moroccan Jews to embrace *Aliyah*-based Zionism *contrary* to their historical traditions.[141] Not only have the dramatic effects of rapid Jewish urbanization under French colonialism been largely overlooked, but so too has the

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[139] Bensimhon, Charles "La mission de l'instituteur marocain de l'Alliance," *Les Cahiers de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* 111 (Septembre-Octobre 1957), p.61. Quoted in English in Laskier, Michael. "Zionism and the Jewish Communities of Morocco: 1956-1962" in *Studies in Zionism: Politics, Society, Culture*. Vol.6:1, 1985. p. 121. Interestingly, this notion of pan-Judaism, in a similar vein as pan-Arabism or pan-Islamism, did become a significant narrative feature in the new state of Israel, particularly in justifying the conducting of Mossad operations to facilitate Jewish emigration from Arab-Muslim countries. Pan-Judaism in this period centers on the idea that anti-Semitism is timeless and universal and that Jews would have to fight for one another eventually, even in cases where violence or oppression was evidently not part of lived reality – such as in Morocco.

[140] Ibid, Bensimhon

[141] It should be noted that the management and minimizing of the scriptural need for the appearance of a messiah to necessitate *Aliyah* was part of mobilizing and making useful the biblical trope of the ownership of The Land of Israel by Jews, contrary to their own historical and religious understandings of that ownership and when they would be entitled to it.

resulting isolation from the adoption of Euro-secularism, among other factors.[142] Additionally, the sacralisation of Zionist *Aliyah* by European Zionists is often given primacy in these narratives when it was simply one tool among many (including economic enticement, Jewish nationalism and outright propaganda) by which populations of Jews outside of Israel could be convinced to emigrate. The fact that the sacrality of the founding of Israel is brought to the fore in writing histories about Zionist influence over Moroccan Jews is unsurprising as it the repeats the contemporary Israeli myths about the interpretations of scriptural sources which legitimize the State's establishment (and the violence that produced it) – a context in which all of these authors are found.

Ultimately, the issue of how Moroccan Jews came to or were made to embrace European Zionism, became convinced of sacralised emigration or, at the very least, accepted and undertook the notion of departure in light of these factors, remains understudied. In the case of Zionism specifically, it is difficult to know what came first. As mentioned, historians who discuss it as influencing Jewish motivations tend to give it primacy without contextualizing prior Moroccan Jewish understandings of *Aliyah* and without questioning what gave it social traction at this particular historical moment. Did the Muslim suspicion of Zionist activity create a climate of fear for Jews, driving them into the arms of actual Zionists? Or were the Zionists instrumental in developing the fears of Muslim suspicion within the Jewish communities, thereby creating a need for their presence? My first impressions are that the process was largely simultaneous and became feed-forward. Suspicions that anti-Palestinian Zionism had taken root among Moroccan Jews served to Other them among Muslims in a way that was foreign to them historically. This led to increased Judeophobia and both Muslim and colonial violence (largely unmentioned in the historiography), driving Jews further into the arms of Zionists who were warning of these increases and sounding the alarm to leave, colluding with the French colonial powers first and then the independent Moroccan government. Awareness of the potential of this snowball effect in getting Jews to leave was openly expressed by the top Zionist organizations facilitating *Aliyah*, particularly as they

[142] See: Shokeid, Moshe. *Three Jewish Journeys: Through an Anthropologist's Lens.* Academic Studies Press, 2009: p 80-95. Additionally, the issue of urbanization as a key factor in causing social isolation and leading to acceptance of secular Zionism in internally displaced Moroccan Jews is mentioned (but only in passing) by interviewees in Kristin Hissong's study: "Dynamic Belonging: Jewish Identity in French Protectorate Morocco" in *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa*, Vol. 6:3-4 and Yolande Cohen's "The Migrations of Moroccan Jews to Montreal: Memory, (Oral) History and Historical Narrative" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies,* Vol 10:2, July 2011: pp 245-262.

noted that the wealthy and middle class Jews had not yet left by 1956 and would not do so without "violent deterioration" of relations with Muslims.[143] The notion of Zionist conspiracy to instigate or even perpetuate violence does not emerge until we begin to explore popular memories of the departure in media sources.

Whether speaking of narratives of inclusion-failure or Zionist enticement, historians have tended to parse narratives of causality which presume a prelude of interfaith utopia, prioritize one narrative over another, and tend to be informed by their own context. It should be noted that across the board, historians have paid little attention to the post-script of the departure narratives and seem unconcerned with what happened to Moroccan Jews after they left. Because of an assumed coexistence, the departure itself hinges on the factors that stimulated Moroccan Jews to decide to leave. Whether excluded by Moroccan Muslims or attracted by European Zionists, Moroccan Jews are invariably painted as shouldering part of the responsibility for their own departure. This raises the important question of what the émigrés themselves thought they were doing and why. This is especially important to suss out as the vast majority of them were the unnamed common masses, rather than the elites, whose stories have been all but forgotten by history (or at least by historians).

Why They Left: In Their Own Words (Testimonials)

In speaking of the departure as soon as 1972, Moroccan Jewish historian André Chouraqui stated that "the poor are not philosophers; the historical and sociological data that explain the present situation are beyond their reach."[144] While this has been a typical stance towards oral narratives in the discipline of history, the growing tendency towards interdisciplinary methodologies in the social sciences should be embraced as they open up valuable new resource pools largely underexplored by historians. Up to this point, the only authors mentioned in this paper who focus on ethnographies with living émigrés or Jews who remained in Morocco are Boum, Hissong, Semi and Yolande Cohen - all of whom have published within the last six years.[145]

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[143] Laskier, "Jewish Emigration from Morocco to Israel" pp 352.
[144] Chouraqui, André. *The History of the Jews in North Africa*. Hachette Press: Paris. 1972, pp 322.
[145] And future researchers are indebted to them for doing these interviews and publishing analyses of them before these émigrés pass away.

In light of the historical narratives about the departure in my literature review above, the contrast with the findings of those directly speaking to émigrés can be startling for how differently these narratives seem to form, particularly for how pedestrian some of the reasons given are. There are, however, some underlying similarities. Émigrés who stayed in Morocco, those who went to Israel, and those who went to Montreal and France (sometimes going to Israel first) offer accounts of causality for the departure alongside Moroccan Muslims who were left behind and the children of émigrés growing up in the new countries. All interviewees categorically refuse to use the term "expulsion" in describing the Jewish emigration – a tendency commonly found in interviews with émigrés from other Arab-Muslim countries.[146] It should be noted that, in addition to reporting and analyzing the reasons given by émigrés for the departure, the authors of these studies also offer their own narratives of causality which will be explored below.

In all interviews with Moroccan Jews who were themselves émigrés and their Muslim neighbours, the prelude to the departure occupies a large part of the narrative and all of them not only presume coexistence but also spend a long time describing what appear to have been picturesque Muslim-Jewish relations. In fact, one of the recurring images throughout the interviews is stories of friendship between Muslims and Jews, particularly among men in business settings.[147] In describing cordial relations, many interviewees also mentioned the protection of Jews by King Mohammed V, especially during the period of Vichy French rule. The oldest generation of émigrés to Montreal, who offered their interviews in so-called Judeo-Arabic[148], expressed nothing but nostalgia for Morocco and regret at having left.[149] Sometimes the narrative of coexistence is only implied in that Jews who left knew that they were not being expelled, but tend to describe the departure as something "experienced, not

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[146] *See: Fournier, Sara. "Sharing and Unsharing Memories. Life Stories of Jews from Muslim-Arab Countries: Fear, Anger and Discontent within a Silenced Displacement",* in *Memory and Forgetting among Jews from the Arab-Muslim Countries. Contested Narratives of a Shared Past,* eds. Emanuela Trevisan Semi, Piera Rossetto, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC*, n.4 November 2012. Accessed April 30, 2017. http://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/focus.php?id=310

[147] It should be noted that in the article, Cohen and Messika refer to Moroccan Muslims as "Arabs" – a linguistic conflation which is common in Israel and erases the Amazigh heritage of many Moroccans. It also reflects the assumption within Israeli discourse that all Muslims are Arabs and that the Other of Jews is The Arab.

[148] For an excellent critique of the entire concept of Judeo-Arabic as a linguistic category, see: Shohat, Ella Habiba, "The Question of Judeo-Arabic" in *Arabic Studies Journal*, Vol 23:1, Fall 2015: pp 14-76.

[149] Cohen, Yolande "The Migrations of Moroccan Jews to Montreal: Memory, (Oral) History and Historical Narrative" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies,* Vol 10:2, July 2011: pp 245-262.

sought" – like a wave that carried them all away and seemingly without reason, undermining historical narratives which seek to determine what motivated Jews in choosing to leave.[150] The Muslim population who remained (specifically in Meknes) describe the entire episode of departure as an emotional wound that has not yet healed nor been grieved,[151] while the departure itself is seen to have been orchestrated by those in power.[152] This renders Jewish agency within the departure moot as well. Ultimately, however, agency in general is questionable as Moroccan Muslims see the departure as *maktub* (what is written) by the will of Allah – a variation of the engulfing wave that just happened and a decidedly Muslim response which simultaneously absolves them of any responsibility.[153]

Jewish interviewees who did not leave and have remained to this day describe the cause of the departure as triangulated local identity politics internal to Morocco that imposed narratives of incompatibility on Jews causing them to feel that they had to leave. Moroccan Jews who were present at the time of the departure of their coreligionists are remarkably frank about the fact that, at the time of the emigrations, they were negotiating three main facets of their identities, ranking them according to the socio-political climate in which they found themselves. It is worth mentioning that all of those interviewed in these cases were highly educated at the time of the emigrations either in French or AIU schools, as was the case for most of those who remained which may help account for why they felt pulled so strongly in multiple directions of their identities. Researcher Kristin Hissong notes that this shifting of primary identities was mainly dependent on the factor of belonging. Here, identity is defined as one's self-perception arising through the negation of the Other and always in the process of becoming. In this framework, it is possible to have multiple and overlapping allegiances that shift according to one's context, whereas belonging implies reciprocal societal acknowledgement of that self-identity. Tensions arise when allegiances do not match up with social categorization and communities of belonging.[154] One of Hissong's interviewees notes that Jews were put under serious pressure for allegiance by the French colonial power, the

[150] Semi, Emanuela Trevisan. "Double Trauma and Manifold Narratives: Jews' and Muslims' Representations of the Departure of Moroccan Jews in the 1950s and 1960s" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*. Vol 9:1, March 2010: pp 110.
[151] Ibid. p 108 and 116.
[152] Ibid, p 117.
[153] Ibid. p 121.
[154] Hissong, p 313.

nationalists seeking independence and European Zionists. However, by developing an affinity for the "colonizing oppressors," the interviewee notes that they lost the Arabic language and became estranged from the traditions of Hebrew learning, exacerbating a divide with the other two facets of their identity. Initially, French culture and Moroccan nationalism were the two main points with which Jews self-identified; however, after the war "and a period of uncertainty about the place and security of Jews in post-war Morocco, that changed [the attitude to and popularity of European Zionism]."[155] Whereas initially supporting colonizers while identifying with nationalists would be incompatible in the eyes of society at large, later identification with European Zionists would also be wholly incompatible to the pan-Arabist leanings of the nationalist independence movement.

In the end, any of these allegiances could be made within the various facets of society to be largely incompatible with one another, despite the fact that it was possible for Jews to identify with all three of them at any given time, depending on the context. Hissong concludes that "when belonging is not reciprocated, identity adjusts and responds by rearranging the hierarchy of identity traits, thus informing both narrative and action"[156] – a dynamic which she feels aids in explaining why many Jews felt they needed to leave. Taking these retrospective testimonials as data that can aid in understanding the event of the departure itself is a leap and misses the more valuable information that *can* be learned from them: that Jews who remained in Morocco understand the departure of their coreligionists in terms which reflect their current socio-political situation. Jews who have remained in Morocco are isolated, lack a prominent sense of belonging, are ambivalent about re-establishing relations with Moroccan Muslims in meaningful ways, and have largely resorted to methods of self-preservation.[157] Part of this has to do with self-imposed internal exile where Moroccan Jews currently travel through cultural "corridors" that move through Morocco but are not part of it.[158] Another component in their current isolation is the rising Judeophobia and intolerance of Jews among Moroccan Muslim youth.[159] While this narrative about the departure presumes an

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[155] Ibid, p 318.
[156] Ibid. p 328.
[157] For a full discussion on this issue, see: Levy, André, "Center and Diaspora: Jews in late-20th-Century Morocco" in *City and Society,* Vol 8:2, 2001, pp 245-270 and Levy, André, "Notes on Jewish-Muslim Relationships: Revisiting the Vanishing Moroccan Jewish Community" in *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol 18:3, 2003, pp 365-397.
[158] Ibid.
[159] See: Boum, *Memories of Absence*.

interfaith harmony that was ruptured when these competitive identity politics converged, the comparatively small narrative space that the prelude gets suggest that their present situation dominates their rememberings.

One interviewee adds that Hissong ought not to assume "that the French were on good terms with the Jews."[160] This corroborates the notion that Jewish affinity for the French was not for European Frenchness but for their own Jewish understanding of Frenchness. The interviewee also neglects to mention that being on bad terms with the French had less to do with Jewish self-identification with other groups than by the mere fact that they were Jews in light of persistent French Judeophobia – something which becomes clearer in other interviews where Jews emphasize the anti-Semitism both in Morocco and in France (if they emigrated there).[161] Interviewees tell stories of their homes being painted with crosses by the French (to mark them for raids) and being forced to sit in the back of French classrooms because they were Jewish.[162] Not only does French Judeophobia not appear in any meaningful way in the historiography, and, for that matter, French-Jewish relations, it would seem that preludes of interfaith coexistence refer only to Muslim-Jewish relations. Regardless, the entire issue of French-Jewish relations is only a minor point mentioned by very few of those interviewed. The overwhelming majority of émigrés to France, Montreal, and Israel describe the departure as a "logical consequence of family emigration"[163] in light of the assumption that the education and economic prospects of the children were simply better outside Morocco.[164] The fact that the promise of economic advancement (and therefore the idea that emigration was undertaken because of it) was part of the promises made by Zionists enticing Jews to Israel is never contextualized in these testimonials or by the researchers examining them.

The narrative post-scripts among these émigré testimonials – the story of what happened after Jews left – are absent. For many émigrés to Montreal, there is little to no mention of their journey and their lives in Canada since, despite being repeatedly asked direct questions

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[160] Ibid. p 323.
[161] Cohen, Yolande and Martin Messika, "Sharing and Unsharing Memories of Jews of Moroccan Origin in Montréal and Paris Compared", *in Memory and Forgetting among Jews from the Arab-Muslim Countries. Contested Narratives of a Shared Past,* eds. Emanuela Trevisan Semi, Piera Rossetto, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC*, n.4 November 2012.
[162] Ibid.
[163] Cohen, Yolande "The Migrations of Moroccan Jews to Montreal, p 251.
[164] Ibid.

about them. Cohen argues that, by speaking mainly about an idyllic life in Morocco and remaining quiet about everything that came after, émigrés preferred to forget or were unreflexive about why they had left.[165] In fact, it is common in memories of journeys to have the movement itself diminished in narration, unless something happened during the travel which either determined which course émigrés took or was negative. Perhaps one of the most surprising parts about these narratives is that all the émigrés involved left in a clandestine manner and yet, still do not relay negativity in their narrative preludes. Despite some awareness that Zionist organizations were facilitating their departure, they seemed to view these agents neutrally – facilitating the wave of movement because someone had to. Additionally, due to the fact that many of these interviewees parsed their motivations for leaving in familial or economic terms, and then went on to achieve success in those areas, dwelling on what happened to them after the departure as a way of retroactively justifying it is really the only post-scriptural mention.

In interviews with the children of émigrés, memories of life in Morocco are filtered through the stories of their parents, if at all, and, more prominently, through the context of their post-departure lives. The children in Montreal had no regrets about leaving, spoke Québécois, and felt liberated. This likely has much to do with their high socio-economic position as Baby Boomers in Canada. As fluent speakers of French and as the children of fluent French speakers, their social integration would have been much easier than other non-French speaking immigrants to Quebec. They also only had vague recollections of Morocco, if born there, but did not associate any significant emotions to it as a place. The youngest group (the grandchildren of émigrés) identified only as Jewish and felt no connection to Morocco whatsoever.[166] In families that had gone to Israel *then* to Montreal after a long stay in Israel (versus to Montreal directly) the cause of the departure, as understood by the children of émigrés, was global Jewish exclusion from all societies. This exclusion was understood in terms of being something that just happens (to Jews), and is likely rationalized as part of the narrative of timeless and ever-impending anti-Semitism that dominates Israeli discourse. Among those younger interviewees who were born in Morocco and made to follow their parents or siblings to Israel, there was a resentment towards them at being displaced into a

[165] Cohen p 250.
[166] Cohen, p 252-3.

new world they did not understand. They also describe a feeling of powerlessness which they felt had triggered their family's departure but which more likely describes the turbulence they felt as youth who had to emigrate along with their families. Citing their exclusion from Moroccan society at large and exclusion from the Western world as bringing on a feeling of alienation, they felt that their families had turned, out of the need to belong, to Zionists who then pushed for them to immigrate to Israel.

In the process of writing articles about the results of their studies, one of the ethnographers offers her own narrative of causality about the departure, often in passing. While interviewing Jews who immigrated to Montreal, Yolande Cohen echoes the narrative of exclusion, arguing that Moroccan Jews felt excluded (from society), as opposed to Algerian Jews who were repatriated and Tunisian Jews, who had a voluntary exile.[167] Cohen also argues that interviewees seemed to have little awareness of the context of their own history (as Cohen puts it). However, when she tried to push the idea on her interviewees that tensions around the Six Day War had stimulated their departure, they brushed her off and reconciled the episode along familial and economic lines. While this signifies to readers that these Jews left at the very end of the departure period, as the Six Day War happened in 1967, it also testifies to how strongly the story of Muslim-Jewish coexistence persists as their relations survived an event that has altered Muslim-Jewish discourse and representations of one another on a global scale ever since.[168] That Cohen, herself an émigré to Israel and then Montreal, would try to relate their departure to the Six Day War is also telling of her worldview in which it is central. For the long story of the departure, however, that war is largely irrelevant as a primary stimulus because at least 92% of Jewish émigrés had already left by then and there was no surge in emigration from Morocco reported as a result in the aftermath of the war.

In terms of divergences, what could be the reason for the absence of these local and familial reasons stated by émigrés in the historiography? It is possible that a disciplinary or methodological divide is to blame and yet, in scholarly texts and popular discourse about Moroccan *Muslims* migrating in the millions to European countries, the feed-forward process

[167] Cohen, p 248.

[168] See: Gavrieli-Nuri, Dalia. "Saying 'War', Thinking 'Victory' – The mythmaking Surrounding Israel's 1967 Victory" in *Israel Studies*. Vol 15: 1, Spring 2010, pp 95-114.

of family emigration and the promise of economic benefits for both incoming Moroccans and the countries to which they immigrate are well-accepted primary motivating factors for emigration, among others.[169] In the case of Moroccan Jews, the issues of economy and family migration are not seen as stimulating enough to warrant their departure elsewhere and, in any case, are not pushed to their analytical boundaries by researchers looking for ideological pulls or fear-based pushes which drove Jews away. Further, the general economic context at the time of departure is overlooked by historians and ethnographers alike. Financial pressure from severe drought in 1945, its effect on both urban and rural populations, and the fact that this would have made Zionist promises more appealing are not contextual points that are brought into the academic discourse around the departure.[170]

Ultimately, because ethnographers, like historians, center their theories about the departure on questions of *why* Jews left Morocco with unstated intentions of finding Jewish motivations, and because they accept Jewish testimony of Muslim-Jewish coexistence, the analytical possibilities for the data acquired are limited to making claims about what could have caused Jews to make the decision to leave. Despite seeming to have their own broader historical knowledge, the tendency on the part of interviewers is to accept these testimonials as literal evidence of why Jews left, rather than as traces, within memory, of broader colonial projects of departure within a much broader historical context. Interestingly, it is not until one examines examples of popular memory that the possibility of conceptualizing the causality of the departure in terms other than Jewish motivations (and therefore responsibility) is found.

Why They Left: Popular Performative Memories

In the case of popular memories, the narratives told about the Jewish motivations for departure can be found in news articles, opinion pieces, blogs, online forums, and

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[169] For a good introduction to this subject, see: Ennaji, Moha. *Muslim Moroccan Migrants in Europe: Transnational Migration in its Multiplicity*. Palgrave Macmillan: New York. 2014. While economics are not the main object of study in the following article, the promise of financial and material success underlies the authors' examination of the role of family networks in Moroccan migration culture. See: Heering, Liesbeth, Rob van der Erf and Leo van Wissen. "The Role of Family Networks and Migration Culture in the Continuation of Moroccan Emigration" in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Vol 30:2. March 2004, pp 323-337.

[170] See: Swearingen, Will. *Moroccan Mirages: Agrarian Dreams and Deceptions, 1912-1986.* I.B. Tauris: London, 1988.

documentary films.[171] The sheer volume and diversity of these resources reflects the weighty site of popular memory that the departure has become. Its occupation of such a large part of the social mindscape is at least partly due to the fact that present political divisions and future aspirations of these groups are directly related to how they remember and conceptualize life in Morocco prior to the departure and in Israel after it. These types of resources also shed light on holes in scholarly research by illuminating which threads are important to different groups of people mobilizing this past event for their present and future purposes. While their representations are expectedly simplistic and cannot be used for historical verification, they do draw attention to these silences in the historiography and ethnographies which not only offer areas for future research, but also allow us to recognize and examine the discursive assumptions that academics could be operating under.

Almost all these media sources have been produced in the last decade (2007-2017), with the vast majority of them in the last five years. Part of the reason for such an explosion of popular memories during this period is the increased global use of the internet, in which most of them are published. The interactive and immediate nature of the internet allows for billions of global users to perform memories for one another on a global stage. The self-made potentiality of the internet also allows individuals to join others outside their immediate physical surroundings to create economies of significance online. Transnational collaboration in the development of shared memories tends to result in the diminishment of individual and local particularities in favour of simplified narrations to which disparate groups who share broad ideological traits can subscribe. Sometimes these mnemonic communities are developed by socially-peripheral individuals and groups who generate memories in response to hegemonic discourses they do not necessarily find themselves reflected in.

Online written media sources for this project were found using a variety of search terms and keywords aimed at locating representations of the departure primarily in the English and French languages. Blogs and online forums where anonymous users can contribute to the conversation were located first using search terms in Google, Bing, and Yahoo such as “Why did the Jews leave Morocco?”, “Jewish departure from Morocco”, “Moroccan Jews”, “Jews

[171] There are also feature films and photography exhibitions that have centered on this subject. For the purposes of this project, I am focusing on cultural representations which have the most significant web presence relational to search terms around the question of why Jews left Morocco.

of Morocco", "Exodus from Morocco" and "Moroccan Jewish exodus." These search terms were chosen to widen the net of possible results by including multiple names for the departure, searches in the form of questions, and terms that are not directly related to the departure itself. The question form of the search terms, in particular, yielded top hits from online, cooperative forums such as Yahoo Answers because of the dominance[172] of those websites, the similarity of the terms to the questions formed in the post, and the appearance of those terms in the keywords or URL slug of those sites as a result. Search terms which did not make mention of the departure or "exodus" still led to articles about it signifying how intertwined narratives of the departure are with expressions of Moroccan Jewishness online. Sometimes the "news" function of Google was used to find relevant journalistic articles and, other times, the names of news agencies were included with the search terms on the assumption that certain media groups, particularly in Israel and Morocco, would carry news and opinion articles related to the subject of the departure. News articles and opinion pieces from Israeli newspapers and journals such as *+972, The Times of Israel, The Jerusalem Post* and *Haaretz* dominate the English-language web. There are also publications by *The New York Times* and *Morocco World News.* Additionally, one of the consistent top results for all searches was the English-language Wikipedia article on the subject of the departure which combines not only public editing of the page, but relevant content to the discussion below. Overall, the forums, the Wikipedia article and one massive online blog archive entitled *Point of No Return* were consistently in the top, first-page results of almost every search. Some articles were also found as ping-backs on pieces that I discovered through search engine methods outlined above. In total, 23 news articles and opinion pieces, 37 blog entries (out of total of 292 examined) and 4 interactive public forums are cited for this project.

Films about the Jewish departure range from amateur interview-style street videos and home-made documentaries to professional productions sponsored and supported by the Moroccan and Canadian governments. Almost all these samples are available on source-sharing websites like YouTube or Live Leak which allow them to generate thousands of views from all over the world. The diversity of their audiences is often reflected in their

[172] Dominance in terms of web presence refers to a number of factors: the hosting website (the more popular the media site, the higher its entries about a subject appears in searches) and their SEO practices, particularly their titles, slugs and tag words which correspond to the most predictable search terms for any given subject.

saturated comment sections. Some of the professional documentaries have also been screened for thousands of people globally in film festivals and public showings. Almost all the films examined for this project, which include 7 amateur YouTube videos (mainly from Israel) and 5 professional documentaries, were found online using identical search terms I have outlined above. In the case of these videos, these search terms were also plugged into YouTube for the purpose of finding films specifically. They either appeared as top results on YouTube (meaning the first or second page of hits) or they were suggested videos in the sidebar of other films – samples which are generated using algorithms according to past searches and, especially, according to keywords from the video currently being viewed. Only one film is not available online – a professional Canadian documentary entitled *They Were Promised the Sea* by director Kathy Wazana which has been shown in at least 10 international film festivals (including in Canada, Morocco and the United States) and many more public showings. All the samples include interviews with Moroccan Jewish émigrés who have settled in Israel and France, with Moroccan Muslims and Jews who have been left or stayed behind, or with the children of émigrés. For the majority of these samples, easy accessibility in terms of technological convenience, as well as the approachability of their content make these films potent sites of contested popular memory upon which certain narratives vie for dominance in accordance with the contemporary political milieu.

It should be made clear from the beginning that popular memories about the departure give the vast majority of their narrative space to preludes which polarize exponentially around what Mark Cohen called the myth and countermyth of Jewish life under Muslim rule.[173] One group of memories brings to the fore some of the underlying assumptions in the historiography and ethnographic work, most particularly by upholding and exaggerating the myth of Morocco as an interfaith utopia. These narratives spend a long time emphasizing idyllic relations between Muslims and Jews around the figure of the King and fraternity with neighbours. Unlike the historiography and ethnographic testimonies though, the causal responsibility for the departure is put squarely on European Zionists and the State of Israel. Many of these samples emphasize the narrative post-script as well, paying particular attention to describing how awful life in Israel has been for Moroccan Jews suffering under Ashkenormativity there. They also tend to express remorse about their implication in

[173] See footnote 6.

colonizing Palestinian people (sometimes characterized as fellow Arabs) and land. While these narrative forms are found in a couple of left-wing[174] Israeli media sources and YouTube channels, it tends to dominate professional documentaries that are funded by the Moroccan and Canadian governments. The most extreme iteration of the coexistence prelude is found in several blogs and news articles in Arab-Muslim media sources which exaggerate Moroccan Jewish historical research about the Egoz ship tragedy of 1961. They claim that Zionists went so far as to murder Moroccan Jews to destroy the religious harmony in Morocco and generate a climate of fear, thereby stimulating the departure of the rest of the community.[175] It goes without saying that these sources, even those which involve historians speaking of their own work in media interviews, neglect certain historical contingencies to force their narrative version of the departure.

Popular memories which devote enormous narrative space to developing preludes which counter the myth of coexistence have a much more dominant web presence. They favour stories about unrelenting economic oppression of Jews and horrific Muslim violence. Sometimes, these narratives include the assertion of indigenous Moroccan Zionism but normally as the coda to the tale of persecution perpetrated by Muslims. Virtually every instance of this counter-myth come from sources in Israel. The narrative arc which most of these pieces follow is formulaic: that Jews endured centuries-long humiliation and oppression that culminated in radical Muslim violence from which Jews fled to the convenient sanctuary of The Land. In many sources, the tropes of the *mellah*, Exodus imagery and the Jewish *nakba* (which entails the making of the Moroccan departure into one small part of the story of Jewish expulsions from all Arab-Muslim countries) recur.

There is a third narrative form which emerges out of a massive online archive called *Point of No Return* and its partners. The multiple samples of these popular memories seem to

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[174] "Left-wing" and "right wing" in Israel cannot necessarily be mapped onto political spectrum of other countries and carries with it, its own internal logic. Generally speaking, "left wing" media sources in Israel refer to media outlets that are critical of government policies, especially illegal settlements, hypernationalism and hyper-militarism, and are sympathetic to the struggle of Palestinians.

[175] See: Sourgo, Youssef. "Study Reveals 'Truth' behind Moroccan Jews' Migration Wave to Israel." *Morocco World News*. October 19, 2013. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2013/10/109273/study-reveals-truth-behind-moroccan-jews-migration-wave-to-israel/; Rehmat, "Why Jews left Morocco?" *Rehmat's World* (blog). November 13, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://rehmat1.com/2013/11/13/why-jews-left-morocco/; Andraus, Zuhair. "Bihath isra'eli yakshuf: Al mossad qutl al yehud bil Maghreb wa'gharq wafenah lilmahajireen lita'leeb al ra'ee al 'aam al 'aalmee dodd al mumlakah wa'ijbar al malik 'ala alsamah lihum bilhijarah." *Al Quds, Al Arabi*. London, UK. October 18, 2013. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=94253

bridge the other two narrative forms, rejecting coexistence in favour of Muslim persecution preludes while also upholding the theory that Zionists killed Moroccan Jews to further stimulate departure. It is in this cache of samples that Moroccan Jews are centered in a story of dual oppression and multiple colonisations. The post-script of marginalization and exploitation in Israel is also prevalent here, but unlike the first group, without giving any narrative space to the suffering of Palestinians or their own role in Palestinian displacement.

Myth: Interfaith Utopia and Intra-Jewish Violence

An article written by Ron Gerlitz for *+972 Magazine* argues that the departure, which he refers to as *Aliyah,* was a "national tragedy…organized by the State of Israel."[176] *+972* is a web magazine that is blog-based, is cooperatively owned by a large group of journalists and bloggers, and is transparently financed by reader patronage and funding. The stated goals of the organization are to provide original, on-the-ground reporting and analysis of events in Israel and Palestine while remaining committed to human rights, freedom of information and opposing the Israeli occupation. It should come as no surprise then that Gerlitz, who is the co-executive director of Sikkuy, a Jewish-Arab NGO that works to advance equality between the Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel, opens his article lamenting the fact that it has been "20 years since the last serious attempt to solve the conflict" in Israel/Palestine. He manages to historicize the Zionist presence in what is now Israel, thereby situating himself among "leftist" Israelis who do not buy into the mythology of the timelessness and inevitability of the creation of the State. The article is a personal narrative of his visit to Morocco with the Shaharit "120" program, a multicultural group working towards a new social partnership in Israel. The group of 20 men and women traveled to Morocco, visiting the former mellahs and renovated synagogues and watched the documentary film *Tinghir-Jerusalem* by director Kamal Hachkar and sponsored by the Moroccan government. Gerlitz notes that one of the old Muslim men in the film, remembering "the hasty exit of all the Jews from the village in the early 1960s" states, "We cried when the Jews left." This sentence sticks out to Gerlitz, who

[176] Gerlitz, Ron. "Why Morocco can be a model for Jewish-Arab Partnership." *+972*. April 19, 2016. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://972mag.com/morocco-a-model-for-jewish-arav-partnership/118649/ Reader should note that in invoking *Aliyah* and blaming the departure on the orchestration of Zionist agents, Gerlitz seems to hold two surface-level contradictory points in tandem. This just shows some of the room there is for nuance in the concept of Zionism.

states that few cried over the murder of European Jews, never mind their departure. While noting that he is neither a historian nor naïve, Gerlitz acknowledges that there was some Muslim violence towards Jews throughout history but states that "as a general rule, the Jews were respected, seen as an integral part of the Moroccan nation, and safeguarded by a special decree of the royal family." Gerlitz challenges what he views to be the "harsh ultranationalist discourse" in Israel that puts the experience of all Jews of Arab and Muslim countries in the same basket and uses "Holocaust-themed trips to Poland" to legitimize Ashkenormativity in Israel and the existence of the State itself, along with the violence that produced it. Gerlitz boldly argues that "Marrakesh should be complementary to Auschwitz," meaning that observing evidence of harmonious coexistence in an "Arab" country can help Israeli Jews counter the claim that all Arabs have always hated Jews, in addition to tempering what he sees as the propagandistic use of the Holocaust to stir up Israeli nationalist fervour that justifies illegal occupation and oppression of Palestinians.

There are a few amateur videos which seem to express some of these sentiments. They come from a whole series of street interview-style videos on YouTube uploaded to the account of Corey Gil-Shuster – an Ashkenazi Israeli-Canadian whose entire account is comprised of videos in which he asks Israelis and Palestinians questions sent in by viewers. His web presence is massive, with 557 videos uploaded over the last 6 years, over 65,000 subscribers, and hundreds of thousands of views which make his videos some of the first hits for search terms related to Moroccan Jews and the departure. All of his interviews are conducted spontaneously with random people that he encounters in the streets of the various cities he visits all over Israel and the West Bank.

Like Gerlitz, some interviewees recognize that violence occurred in Morocco but ultimately minimize it. In a YouTube interview video by Corey Gil-Shuster from July 23, 2014, an elderly Moroccan émigré states that Jews were indeed harassed, especially as children but when Gil-Shuster asks if it was because they were Jews, he expresses total surprise, exclaiming "What? No! Because of their poverty. The Jews were in a good economic position and they knew it."[177] He then adds that the exact same thing is happening

[177] Gil-Shuster, Corey. "Moroccan Jewish Israelis: How Are You Doing?" *Corey Gil-Shuster YouTube account*. July 23, 2014. 18 minutes and 36 seconds. Accessed April 16, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnMy3Hm4_tk&t=368s

in Israel today, presumably referring to what he sees to be "harassment" from Palestinians who are irritated by their economic disparity – a notable rejection of the "right wing" Israeli rhetoric about how all Arabs are anti-Semitic with little understanding of the Palestinian situation.

Similar to the ethnographic testimonials, other interviewees speak of positive Muslim-Jewish relations in Morocco, weaving together descriptions of intimate, neighbourly relations with praise for the King of Morocco (Mohammed V) and how he was very good to the Jews, truly loved them (and his grandson continues to today) and that because of his actions, "the people of Morocco acted the same way."[178] The trope of the King's protection also appears in opinion pieces with increasing regularity, particularly as the Moroccan and Israeli governments have increased cooperation to promote Israeli tourism in Morocco in the last ten years. An article as recent as April 25, 2017, by Richard Hurowitz writing for the *L.A. Times* argues that there is something to be learned from the example of the King refusing to give up his Jewish subjects to Nazi collaborators during the war, particularly "at a time when anti-Semitism and Islamophobia are on the rise globally."[179] The additional and very recent imperative to set aside differences in light of the global (and especially Trump's American) context of discrimination against both Jews and Muslims is invoked alongside the figure of the King. The centrality of this figure to Muslim-Jewish coexistence actually contradicts claims made in documentary films which center Muslim violence. Those pieces follow the narration that individual, neighbourly compassion outweighed governmental leadership's mass hatred and the creation of unbearable conditions in Arab-Muslim countries. In works which celebrate the King as evidence of coexistence in Morocco, *both* the monarchy and day-to-day individual relationships between Muslims and Jews are seen as largely positive.[180]

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[178] Gil-Shuster, "Moroccan Jewish Israelis: How Are You Doing" (1:54-2:15, 3:05, and 9:40)

[179] Hurowitz, Richard. "You Must Remember this: Sultan Mohammed V protected the Jews of Casablanca" *Los Angeles Times*. April 25, 2017. Accessed April 25, 2017. http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-hurowtiz-moroccan-king-mohammed-v-20170425-story.html

[180] Plenty of examples of the glorification and sacralisation of the Moroccan monarchy by Moroccan Jewish émigrés are available. Some examples for reference include: Cohen, Anne. "Honoring the King Who Saved the Jews" *Forward*. December 22, 2015. Accessed April 30, 2017. http://forward.com/news/breaking-news/327772/honoring-the-moroccan-king-who-saved-the-jews/; JTA, "Late King Mohammed V of Morocco Honored for Protecting His Country's Jews" *The Jerusalem Post*. December 23, 2015. Accessed April 30, 2017, http://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Late-King-Mohammed-V-of-Morocco-honored-for-protecting-his-countrys-Jews-438206; Jabrane, Ezzoubeir. "Moroccan Jews Dancing While Carrying Photo of Mohammed VI" *Morocco World News*. September 25, 2016. Accessed April 30, 2017.

Similarly, in an interview with an older Moroccan émigré in Tel Aviv, Gil-Shuster interviews an elderly man named Eli from Morocco, centering on questions about how relations between Jews and Muslims were before 1948.[181] Eli notes that the relations were good, primarily because "the King loved the Jews in Morocco." When asked why he left though, Eli pauses and sighs before saying that his parents simply decided to come to Israel because "there were people before us" and his brothers had been there since the 1930s.[182] This echoes some of the ethnographic interviews conducted by anthropologists with Jews recalling the reasons for their departure as being particular, familial and relatively mundane. After relaying the fact that he used to sleep in Arab homes in Morocco and that his family had many Arab friends, he reiterates that "at the time, a family would immigrate, another family, another family so there was pressure all the time thinking everyone is moving to Israel."[183] The imagery of being overtaken by the momentum of the group leaving like a wave again echoes the testimonies of interviewees questioned by scholars. Like other older Jews who immigrated at a much later age, Eli narrates that many people did not want to leave Morocco and that when they arrived in Israel, life was extremely difficult but they could not return.[184]

In narratives which emphasize coexistence, the emphasis on the centrality of the pull of The Land seems to be generational. When asked by Gil-Shuster whether or not he felt coming to Israel was a mistake, Eli answers, "It's their land so we're supposed to be here."[185] By stating that it is "their" land but "we" are supposed to be here, Eli invokes a biblical trope about ownership of The Land commonly used by Israeli Zionists, while removing himself

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https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2016/09/197277/moroccan-jews-dancing-while-carrying-photo-of-king-mohammed-vi/

[181] Gil-Shuster, Corey. "Before 1948: Eli, Morocco" *Corey Gil-Shuster YouTube channel*. August 16, 2012. 7 minutes 36 seconds. Accessed April 19, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9Mpn_1Q3J0

[182] Gil-Shuster. "Before 1948: Eli, Morocco" (0:40)

[183] Gil-Shuster. "Before 1948: Eli, Morocco" (4:26)

[184] There are a number of reasons why Moroccan Jews who immigrated to Israel felt they were unable to return to Morocco. Due to the fact that most Jews left all of their property, businesses, and wealth behind in Morocco, many may have felt that there would be nothing to return to. (Unbeknownst to them, in many small rural Moroccan villages, Muslim neighbours maintained Jewish homes, property, synagogues and cemeteries for decades after their Jewish neighbours left in the hopes that they would return. Some of these are maintained to this day.) Additionally, on arrival in Israel, Moroccan Jews were likely to be economically marginalized, making their return to Morocco nearly impossible. Over time, the deeper divisions between Jews and Muslims caused by the Palestinian-Israeli conflict might make Moroccan émigrés feel that something irreversible had happened in the Middle East and North Africa. Returning to Morocco might pose political and safety problems for them, so remaining in Israel or immigrating again to Western countries seemed to be the only options.

[185] Gil-Shuster. "Before 1948: Eli, Morocco" (4:15)

from such a narrative, pointing to a possible rejection of Moroccan indigenous, *Aliyah*-based Zionism – something characteristic of both his age and emigration status. To contrast, another interviewee, who is the child of émigrés and was born in Israel, upholds all of the same points as Eli but places herself within the discourse of ownership of The Land, using possessive pronouns. She emphasizes that Jews had very good relations with Muslims in Morocco and that her parents are still nostalgic for their homeland, particularly as life in Israel was extremely difficult after emigration.[186] This woman exhibits a depth of knowledge about Moroccan culture and a shared Muslim-Jewish past characteristic of her generation and her age, echoing the stories of her parents by answering the question of why they left with particular, familial reasons.[187] When pushed though, she also adds The Land of Israel element, retrospectively applying it to her parents, stating that "they wanted to move to Israel, to the Jewish state"[188] and even though people can acknowledge that it was difficult in the beginning, "it was our country for the Jews."[189] Similarly, at the end of the video, another interviewee simply notes that his parents came "because there was an Israel."[190] In remembering the departure among those in Israel, the mere existence of Israel dominates the historical awareness of all actors in their narrations.

The large mindspace retroactively afforded to Israel and the influence of Zionists agents among those remembering in recent years runs contrary to the elements of the historiography which emphasize only internal Moroccan politics as primary push factors and which also argue that Zionist propaganda was an internal pull factor. Multiple sources including amateur documentaries and blog articles follow narrative patterns that go beyond the idea that Zionist propaganda simply lured Jews, instead arguing that Zionist agents actively pushed Jews out of Morocco by making them fear Muslims and orchestrating their departure. The primary argument of these sources is that Moroccan Jews were duped into leaving their homeland where they had coexisted harmoniously with Muslims for centuries. In this version, Moroccan Jews were forced to leave their livelihood behind only to be at the mercy of Ashkenazi Zionists who would then use them as a border buffer between the new state and Palestinian

[186] Ibid. (10:02)
[187] Her father's brothers had moved to Israel as youth and "then they told them to come." Gil-Shuster, "Moroccan Jewish Israelis: How Are You Doing?" (1:24)
[188] Gil-Shuster, "Moroccan Jewish Israelis: How Are You Doing (Ibid)
[189] Gil-Shuster, "Moroccan Jewish Israelis: How Are You Doing (2:58)
[190] Gil-Shuster, "Moroccan Jewish Israelis: How Are You Doing" (13:12)

territory, simultaneously exploiting their military and agricultural labour to build up what would become a European Jewish state that erased Moroccan Jewish culture and history. This extensive post-script is one variant of the counter-myth which Mark Cohen calls Intra-Jewish Persecution. In these instances, recalling the notion that "self-righteous oppression of rivals" is not the sole domain of Muslims against Jews, but is also something that Jews can inflict on themselves, plays into the continuing argument that Jews under Muslim rule (as opposed to Christians) are never persecuted *as* Jews.[191] These scripts tend to emphasize the importance of centering Moroccan Jewish voices and experiences, however, the degree to which this prerogative is readily apparent is more striking in some sources than others. It should be noted that recognizing intra-Jewish violence does not correlate with also recognizing Jewish violence against Palestinians, as we will see.

An amateur documentary uploaded on January 14, 2015 to the public forum website Live Leak by user Kreon (based in Morocco) is entitled *Moroccan Jew Tells His Story*.[192] Produced by Alternative Information Centre, a pro-Palestinian and anti-Zionist news site, the entire video is an interview with Reuven Aberjel, one of the founders of the Israeli Black Panthers movement in the 1970s. Born in 1942 in Rabat, Aberjel assigns responsibility for the departure on "the Zionists started coming to the *mellah* and all of Morocco"[193] causing families to leave to Palestine. When asked by the host why people went wherever the Zionists told them to go, Aberjel's answer is that only God knows. Diminishing the narrative space of the departure completely, Aberjel spends the rest of the time developing a lengthy post-script which describes life for Moroccan Jews after arrival in Israel. Throughout the interview, Aberjel speaks *darija* exclusively (indicative of his commitment to decolonization) and takes the host through the neighbourhoods where Moroccan Jews were first settled in "empty houses where Muslims used to live before the Zionists kicked them out" at around 14 people per every small room.[194] Witnessing the hardship endured by their parents, he argues that

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[191] Cohen, Mark. p 187.

[192] User Kreon, "Moroccan Jew Tells His Story" *Live Leak.* January 14, 2015. 10 minutes and 30 seconds. Accessed April 17, 2017. https://www.liveleak.com/view?i=b0f_1421265759&comments=1; It should be noted that this is only one of four posts made by this user between 2014 and 2015, and despite being active within one minute of my logging onto his page, his last posting was a video called "Real Jews Exposing Satanic Zionism" on January 15, 2015. The only other items on his page videos of a Sochi Paralympic skier crashing and Batman robbing a store in a G-string. See: https://www.liveleak.com/c/Kreon for more information.

[193] User Kreon, "Moroccan Jew Tells His Story" (0:17)

[194] User Kreon, "Moroccan Jew Tells His Story" (1:04 – 2:04)

Moroccan youth formed the Israeli Black Panthers to call for their freedom from Ashkenazi economic, political and social dominance and to demand their basic rights. Touring former Arab neighbourhoods, Aberjel expresses regret at the expulsions and argues that the reason for this is because there was a religious shift among Jews from the welcoming religion in Morocco to one that is "about stealing land from Palestinians and oppressing people."[195] He argues that this shift was an erasure of Moroccan religiosity and identity by dominant Ashkenazi discourses and systems, placing Arab Jews on the border regions with Palestinians[196] and pushing for an Israeli identity which homogenizes people and pushes Zionism on them unwillingly. A fierce anti-Zionist and anti-elitist, Aberjel argues that Zionists will never bring peace because "the essence of Zionism is occupation" built by elites on the backs of the popular masses. Unlike the interviewee Eli who believes it is impossible to return to Morocco, Aberjel argues that the path to peace is for the Moroccan King to help Palestinians reclaim their country and for Ashkenazi Jews to return from whence they came in Europe. The centrality of the monarchy in saving Jews from persecution, even in Israel, persists here – in this case to rescue them from intra-Jewish violence.

The narrative of intra-Jewish violence varies in extremism, from describing economic and political marginalization in Israel to the outright murder of Moroccan Jews by Zionist conspirators. The latter argument has a large web presence because of three articles (one blog and two news articles) which link back to the same source. One blog in particular, entitled "Why Jews left Morocco?" and located on the blog *Rehmat's World,* is consistently a top search result because its title and URL slug mimic search terms of a similar composition. The About section of this blog is very informative in that the author of the blog, Rehmat, who self-describes as a "retired Canadian Nuclear engineer" is explicit about his modus operandi, declaring himself an "engineer, historian and general carer[sic] of what Muslims are facing today, and exposing non-Muslim lies about Islam and Muslims."[197] One need only scroll through a few of the dozens of praising comments by international fans to discover who Rehmat characterizes as non-Muslims, meaning "Zionist bastards" and "Zionazis" including the "Zionist Jew from Brooklyn," Mark Zuckerburg who allegedly created Facebook with the

[195] User Kreon, "Moroccan Jew Tells His Story" (5:10-5:38)
[196] User Kreon, "Moroccan Jew Tells His Story" (6:31)
[197] See: https://rehmat1.com/about/

help of Shimon Peres as "an ideal tool to silence criticism of Israel, and to spread [the] holocaust myth."[198] It should come as no surprise that this person then argues that Jewish elites demand their followers to dominate the world "like [in] 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion'."[199] His denial of the Holocaust and perpetuation of Judeophobic myths are indicative of his hatred of Jews (or at least Zionist Jews) and his tendency to view historical events as parts of global conspiracy comes at the expense of both research and local particularities. This might help to explain why, when describing the departure, Rehmat offers only implicit insight into whether or not he subscribes to a narrative prelude of coexistence. In his narration of the departure, Rehmat calls it an "exodus," which would imply Jewish agency in the matter, but ultimately argues Mossad "was behind the whole operation" in Morocco, carrying out "attacks against *well-settled* Jews… in order to terrorize them and subsequently convince them that they were the victims of persecutions by the Moroccan authorities and African Muslims in general."[200] Here, Rehmat offers an argument against narrative preludes which presume Muslim persecution of Jews but does not go so far as to articulate coexistence as an alternative. Ultimately, actively promoting an image of interfaith harmony would contradict his hatred and his portrayal of Zionists (and to a certain extent, all Jews) as conspiratorial, deceitful people. In this way, he is able to defend Moroccan Muslims as innocent without having to concede that Moroccan Jews were too.

Rehmat's source for this information is said to be a study released by historian Yigal Bin-Nun in October 2013, however, his hyperlink to "read more" only takes us to a report from Morocco World News written by Youssef Sourgo on October 19, 2013.[201] Despite claiming to bring the news of Morocco and the MENA region to the rest of the world "without bias or a political agenda,"[202] this online media outline run by Samir Bennis adopts a vigorous Moroccan nationalism in its sentiments, is unapologetic about the occupation of the Western Sahara and is unflinching in its condemnation of the existence of Israel. Sourgo's article is a

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[198] Ibid. Comment recorded June 24, 2010, 10:38am.
[199] Ibid. April 26, 2010, 9:50pm
[200] Rehmat, "Why Jews left Morocco?" *Rehmat's World* (blog). November 13, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://rehmat1.com/2013/11/13/why-jews-left-morocco/ (emphasis added)
[201] Sourgo, Youssef. "Study Reveals 'Truth' behind Moroccan Jews' Migration Wave to Israel." *Morocco World News*. October 19, 2013. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2013/10/109273/study-reveals-truth-behind-moroccan-jews-migration-wave-to-israel/
[202] See: https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/about-us/

summary of a report in *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, in which he reported on Bin-Nun's research, reiterating many of the arguments and assumptions put forth by Rehmat. The Sourgo article, however, affords more narrative space to the incident in question: the sinking of the Egoz ship in 1961. Sourgo claims that forcing "terrorized Moroccan Jews" onboard the doomed ship was part of Mossad's plan, which was allegedly justified at the time by Mossad chief Isser Harel who stated, "We are in need of Jewish martyrs," presumably to stimulate emigration and populate Israel. This statement is not cited or footnoted despite the media outlet's proclaimed commitment to accuracy. Sourgo then asserts that Bin-Nun claims that the Egoz ship was "sank [sic] purposefully" by making sure that the ship was "so sea-unfriendly that it would doubtlessly sink in the middle of its journey," allowing Israeli authorities to apply serious diplomatic pressure on the Moroccan monarchy to allow Jewish subjects to leave. Unsurprisingly, the trope of a monarchy benevolent to its Jews underlies this version of the narrative. In this case, Jews had been forbidden to leave by the King who wanted to keep his Jewish subjects, but he was ultimately swayed to allow them to leave after they lost their lives at sea because of the clandestine operation. In light of the pro-Monarchy stance which pervades this article and many other articles put out by *Morocco World News*, it is unsurprising that this narrative remains unarticulated because in order for it to be true, the Moroccan King would also have to have been duped by Mossad.

By examining the *Al-Quds* article itself, slight variations on these narrative forms can be sussed out.[203] First of all, it should be noted that the publication is a self-declared pan-Arab newspaper owned by Palestinian refugees based in London. Known for aggressively defending the Palestinian cause and being publicly confrontational about Israel, this daily print and online newspaper also has a circulation upwards of 50,000 people. The paper gained notoriety in the late 1990s for a famous interview with Osama Bin Laden by then-editor-in-chief Abdel Bari Atwan. In addition to leading us back to the original source of Bin-Nun's study (the Israeli newspaper, *Yedioth Ahronoth)*, its author Zuhair Andraus emphasizes that Morocco was a central objective for Mossad. He argues that the head of the project responsible for driving Morocco's Jews to Israel visited the country four times a year and

[203] Andraus, Zuhair. "Bihath isra'eli yakshuf: Al mossad qutl al yehud bil Maghreb wa'gharq wafenah lilmahajireen lita'leeb al ra'ee al 'aam al 'aalmee dodd al mumlakah wa'ijbar al malik 'ala alsamah lihum bilhijarah." *Al Quds, Al Arabi*. London, UK. October 18, 2013. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=94253

trained local Jews "in carrying out terrorist operations" in secret preparation for the Egoz tragedy. The author notes that Bin-Nun's work reveals that this group was working with then-Prime Minister of Israel David Ben-Gurion, the Israeli Minister of Defense, Moshe Dayan, and Israeli Foreign Minister, Golda Meir who is quoted in a cabinet meeting as saying that it was "imperative for Israel to carry out an operation that would lead to shock in Morocco, even if it was ordered that people would die." The cultivation of a story of elite Zionist conspiracy replaces the typical preludes about Muslim-Jewish coexistence or persecution because it portrays the entire departure as the spontaneous, reactionary response to the Egoz tragedy. After the incident caused international outrage, Andraus alleges that a propagandistic statement was issued by Mossad and "hung on the walls of Jewish houses and shops," stating the following:

> We know that Islam opposes anti-Semitism, but there are people in Morocco who decided to kill Jews at all costs [referring to the government negligence in the Egoz ship incident] and we, for our part, are aware that the fate of Jews will be like the fate met by those under Hitler and the Nazi, Eichmann.[204]

By centralizing this statement as a significant factor in whipping up Moroccan Jewish fears of their Muslim neighbours before the departure, Andraus implicitly critiques the use of the Holocaust for Israeli political gain – a common tendency among anti-Israeli activists and Muslims who deny the Holocaust.[205]

While all of these articles make reference to the research of an actual historian, the problem is that the original article by Bin-Nun cannot be found[206] to verify the extent to which his research was taken appropriately in context or was exaggerated, simplified or embellished to serve the narrative needs of the above three publications. Given the near universal tendency to simplify in popular memory, it might be assumed that the latter is the case. However, it is only in clarifying Bin-Nun's own narrative form about the departure that this can be confirmed.

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[204] Ibid.

[205] See: Boum, *Memories of Absence.*

[206] Multiple searches on both the English and Hebrew versions of www.ynetnews.com, yield no results of articles written by Bin-Nun from the fall of 2013. Searches of archived snapshots by The Internet Archive dating back to several weeks in October 2013 also do not yield any articles by Bin-Nun, never mind on this subject. This option was explored in the event that the newspaper had decided to remove the article for any reason after it had been published, but to no avail.

In order to clarify his position, determine its rhetorical persuasion in popular memory, and where it diverges from these memories, I found several sources from which I can assemble Bin-Nun's own narrative about the departure and the Egoz tragedy in particular. The first source is an interview with an Israeli talk show host posted on Bin-Nun's personal YouTube channel on July 28, 2013. In this video, Bin-Nun casts doubt on what is the commonly accepted narrative about the "accidental" sinking of the Egoz ship by blaming Meir and Harel and their purposeful negligence of the vessel, causing the deaths of those on-board.[207] In the video, the host asks Bin-Nun whether Meir and Harel really wanted to sink the ship. Bin-Nun replies,

> Without over-exaggerating, they didn't want to sink the ship but they did everything so that it would happen…They wanted a ship and they knew the situation of this ship was terrible, that it had no rescue boats, no communication devices that worked…[and] in the entire time leading up to this sinking, I read a lot that there were many communication protocols in Jerusalem, [calculating] all the factors for the sinking [and that] the department in Israel kept saying "We need to do a mission that is spectacular, [one that is] dramatic against Morocco, even if we cost lives and even if it endangers children of Adam.[208]

An unnamed male also in the interview argues that Jews of Morocco had been trying to get out of Morocco for 17 years prior and that eventually Moroccan Jews would have the same endangerment as the Jews in Europe, implying that there was something beneficial in stimulating them to go faster by sinking the ship. Bin-Nun fires back that the narrative of endangerment of Jews among Muslims is false, meaning that, except for Zionists, there was no immediate threat to Jews in Morocco. This hints at the possibility that Bin-Nun subscribes to the narrative prelude of interfaith utopia – something corroborated in a chapter publication of his from the following year.

In the piece entitled "The Reasons for the Departure of the Jews from Morocco 1956-1967: The Historiographical Problems," Bin-Nun argues that elite Israelis at the time of the Moroccan departure perceived the world according to a basic axiom "claiming that in the

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[207] Bin-Nun, Yigal. ד"ר יגאל בן-נון: ראיון על טביעת ספינת אגוז בחופי מרוקו, איסר הראל וגולדה מאיר. July 28x, 2013. 7 minutes 37 seconds. Accessed April 12, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qI1RpUNpMmE

[208] Ibid. Bin-Nun is in the company of self-published author and famous anti-Zionist, Naeim Giladi who has asserted (in his book *Ben Gurion's Scandals)* that the 1950-51 Baghdad bombings of Jewish targets were "perpetrated by Zionist agents in order to cause fear amongst the Jews and so promote their exodus to Israel." See: Giladi, Naeim. *Ben Gurion's Scandals: How the Haganah and the Mossad Eliminated Jews*. Dandelion Books, Second Edition 2003.

Diaspora any Jew, as such, is in constant danger due to eternal and universal antisemitism,"[209] conferring on Zionists the responsibility to intervene abroad to bring Jews back to Israel by any means possible. Bin-Nun relies heavily on the research of Eliezer Shoshani[210] who noted that the good treatment of Moroccan Jews by their Muslim neighbours made the fulfillment of their responsibility to "rescue" their Jewish brethren difficult.[211] After all, how can you rescue someone from persecution who is not, for the most part, persecuted? How can you rescue someone from their economic and social misery when they are not, for the most part, miserable? A testimonial from the chief of the Miserget in Paris, Ephraim Ronel, who had allegedly given consent to sink the Egoz ship, signifies that having to force the conditions for such a narrative to be made a reality called the entire enterprise into question: "[These events] encourage us to ask ourselves the following question: Are we really allowed to put in danger the lives of Jews, men, women and children, while there is no risk of an immediate pogrom in sight and that their lives are not in danger?"[212] These expected moral questions[213] allegedly did not deter members of Mossad from undertaking these operations, if Bin-nun's assertions are to be accepted.[214] Here, Bin-Nun and those who significantly amplify his work, implicitly push the coexistence narrative, thereby necessitating the dramatic and violent interventions of

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[209] Bin-Nun, Yigal. "The Reasons for the Departure of the Jews from Morocco 1956-1967: The Historiographical Problems," in *Postwar Jewish Displacement and Rebirth 1945-1967.* Francoise S. Ouzan and Manfred Gerstenfeld, eds. Brill: Leiden and Boston. 2014, pp. 198.

[210] Bin-Nun spends much of the chapter outlining why accessing archival documents related to this issue are all but impossible, meaning that one must primarily rely on testimonials of those involved (which may have evolved according to the dominant discourses of today), or one must work through the reports of various organizations (often encoded). Bin-Nun describes the three main resource pools available to researchers at this time thusly: "The first category includes the reports prepared by the WJC, the AJC, B'nai B'rith, and the HIAS as well as reports of visits to Morocco by those organizations, by the leaders of the Mossad in Paris, and by the heads of Misgeret in Morocco. The second category contains details of interviews of Alexander Easterman, Gerhart Riegner, André Jabes, Aqiva Lewinsky, André Chouraqui, Yaaqov Caroz, Marcel Franco, and others with important Moroccan political personalities, as well as some from the opposition." (205) The third pool of resources is the testimonies of those involved.

[211] Ibid. Bin-Nun, "Reasons" pp 199.

[212] Ibid, Bin-Nun "Reasons" pp 200.

[213] One would hope that someone would stop and ask themselves such obvious ethical questions, but evidently, if this testimony is to be believed, it did not happen *prior* to such an order going out.

[214] It should be noted that in other articles about the Egoz tragedy, the sinking is understood to simply be an accident. Yael Greenfeter, citing the report on the incident that was made public in Israel in August 1993, asserts that "malfunctions led to the disaster" and that it "appears the report did not blame a specific person or mention the names of those responsible for the operation." See: Greenfeter, Yael. "This Week in Haaretz: 1961 The Egoz Sinks, Killing Moroccan Jewish Immigrants to Israel" in *Haaretz*. January 13, 2011. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/features/this-week-in-haaretz-1961-the-egoz-sinks-killing-moroccan-jewish-immigrants-to-israel-1.336721

Zionists on Moroccan soil. He concludes by noting that all of this was largely unnecessary in that the "relative backwardness of Moroccan society would sooner or later have pushed the Jews out…it was an inevitable process for the country's Jews, who sought to improve their social status…concerned about their children's cultural future."[215] It would seem that Bin-Nun comes full circle to the economic stagnation argument but does not go further in exploring it. One reason for failing to elaborate on this point is the perception that putting forth multiple narratives might take away from the one which he has given primacy in accounting for the departure's causality – a tendency that occurs throughout the rest of the historiography.

This whole issue of such a large share of the mindspace going to the Egoz tragedy raises an important question: How much does any of this actually matter to why Jews left Morocco? While there are a few other online articles which also articulate the narrative of the centrality of the Egoz tragedy in stimulating Moroccan Jews to emigrate to Israel, [216]it should be made clear that by the time of 1961, well over half of the Jews who were going to leave Morocco had already left. Additionally, the historical context of 1961 is almost completely overlooked in these accounts. Only a cursory glance into the events of that year reveals that the Jewish saviour King Mohammed V died in February, Gamel Abdel Nasser visited Morocco in April, and the committee for the Pan-Arab games held in Morocco excluded Jews from participation in July – each of which could have been just as important to influencing Moroccan Jews. While the case might be made that the Egoz tragedy pushed the Moroccan government to reach an agreement that allowed Jews more mobility to leave the country legally, thereby stimulating a much faster departure over the next three years, asserting that this was a primary impetus for Jews leaving at all is too little and far too late. Jews had already been leaving *en masse* and, while the sinking of the Egoz likely had some influence on just how many left in a short period of time right after, it would be a stretch to say that it was even the main motivation for the third wave of departure. Persisting in this argument says far more about the

[215] Ibid, Bin-Nun "Reasons" pp 211.

[216] See: Kabilo Gilad. "The Tragedy of the 'Egoz' and the story of Moroccan Jewry's return to Israel" in *The Jerusalem Post*. January 26, 2017. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://www.jpost.com/printarticle.aspx?id=479589 and User Bataween, "Egoz Tragedy was Catalyst for Aliya" *Point of No Return Blog*. January 31, 2017. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2017/01/egoz-tragedy-was-catalyst-for-aliya.html

authors' critique of the contemporary ethics of the State of Israel and the questionable activities of Mossad in particular than anything else.

The story of interfaith coexistence without Intra-Jewish violence also exists. These narratives do not, however, let Zionists completely off the hook simply because they do not accuse them of murder. An important professional documentary called *Tinghir-Jerusalem: Echoes of the Mellah* has been the subject of much criticism by online bloggers and was also the subject of mass protests by nationalists in Morocco over the issue of its screening. Director Kamal Hachkar takes us on his personal journey to understand both his relationship to his *bled*, Tinghir, and the historical identity he and other Amazigh-Muslims inherited from relations with Jews on that land. The first third of the film takes place in Tinghir itself with Hachkar piecing together a story of coexistence between local Jews and Muslims by virtue of their economic interactions in the Kissariat, living amongst one another in the center of the village, and intersecting over similar acts of prayer and worship. He not only interviews Muslim elders who lived with Jews before the departure, but also speaks with Muslim youth who have inherited knowledge about the past of coexistence through stories told by their parents. When one young man is asked if Jews could attend school with him had they not left, he replied: "Of course…they have a right to study also…even if we have a different religion, we would have coexistence [because] there is *khayr* [goodness] between us."[217] This is clearly a different stance than many Moroccan youth take about Jews today both online and as has been documented in scholarly ethnographic interviews.[218] That being said, Hachkar notes that even if coexistence was still in the minds of Moroccan Muslims, he quickly realized that "people at home do not understand the reasons for [the Jews] leaving."[219] This stimulates him to visit Israel to interview émigrés from Tinghir there.

Like the ethnographers dissatisfied with the broad historical narratives put forth by historians, Hachkar heads to what he considers to be the heart of understanding why Jews left: Jews themselves. One of the first people he meets, however, is Dr. Youssef Chetrit, a historian of Moroccan Jewry and an émigré himself. Chetrit argues that the most important

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[217] Hachkar, Kamal. *Tinghir- Jerusalem: Echoes of the Mellah.* Icarus Films, France. 2013. 53 minutes and 55 seconds. Accessed April 18, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcZoLaMvaP0 (10:23)

[218] See: Boum, *Memories of Absence*. The final chapter of this entitled "Between Hearsay, Jokes and the Internet" documents the roots of increasing anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial among Moroccan youth.

[219] Hachkar, *Tinghir-Jerusalem*. (11:01)

question to ask is why Jews left, citing the resonance of The Land of Israel in Jewish consciousness alongside the 20th century upheavals of colonialism and World War II as factors which "completely upset Jewish life in North Africa… [especially when combined with] the War of [Israeli] independence, the alignment of Morocco's nationalisms [and] the points of view of the Palestinians and the Arab League."[220] He argues that all of these converging factors led Jews to understand that there was no longer a place for them in Morocco. However, Hachkar seems at least subconsciously unconvinced because he immediately injects his own perspective, by juxtaposing this scene with one of an émigré being asked the same question. The émigré responds: "Zionists had come to us…They told us that there was work and housing in Israel."[221] Hachkar gives the post-script about Jewish suffering in Israel a large part of the narrative when another émigré then relays the story of their arrival in which they had been told by agents that they would end up in Haifa or Ashdod but were brought to Beit Shean instead and had to be forcibly removed from their bus by police officers because new Moroccan immigrants warned them not to disembark (on account of the poor living conditions).[222] To round out this segment, a last émigré is asked about his arrival in Safed in 1963. He stops walking and asks to say something to Hachkar in Hebrew. "I was in a state of shock," he relays, "I was from Morocco and suddenly, I found myself in another place."[223] He has a hard time continuing and his anguish is evident on his face. When asked how he identifies himself, he rejects the second generation's claims that they are Israeli, stating

> I live here but I don't know my identity. I do not feel like someone who is born here. The one who is born here doesn't know anything other than Israel. Me, I know two countries. My parents who were born in Morocco don't have anything to tell like German or Polish Jews who fled. There was not anti-Semitism in Morocco. Maybe here and there were disputes between Jews and Muslims but not like in the countries where they exterminated Jews because they were Jewish. There was not anti-Semitism in Morocco.[224]

Back in Tinghir, Hachkar corroborates this story in an interview with a local Muslim who was present at the time of the departure. He simply states that Zionist agents had identified Jews

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[220] Hachkar, *Tinghir-Jerusalem*. (18:00)
[221] Hachkar, *Tinghir-Jerusalem*. (18:54)
[222] Hachkar, *Tinghir-Jerusalem*. (20:23)
[223] Hachkar, *Tinghir-Jerusalem*. (20:46)
[224] Hachkar, *Tinghir-Jerusalem.* (21:42)

for departure and "one day they came for them."[225] The narrative arc of the film is simple: Muslims and Jews lived in an interfaith utopia that was disrupted by Zionists who took Moroccan Jews to terrible living conditions in Israel.

Despite Hachkar's clearly critical stance on Israel, particularly how Moroccan Jews are treated there, some critics of the film within Morocco center their protest of it on the notion that it normalizes the State of Israel. Zhor Rehihl (the curator of the Museum for Moroccan Judaism in Casablanca) argues that despite isolated incidents of violence, there was "no national campaign" against Jews and that many of them left "after being told by Zionist agents they were in danger."[226] The primary reason for the departure given in the article is "the establishment of Israel and the encouragement of Zionists." While Rehihl is clearly putting forth the coexistence narrative and absolving both Moroccan Muslims and Jews of any responsibility for the departure, we cannot say that these are the intentions of Paul Schemm, who authored the article in which she is quoted in *The Times of Israel*. While Schemm's area of expertise appears to be reporting on North African news, the tone his articles take in other *Times of Israel* publications is clearly biased, aimed exclusively at exposing Islamic extremism and reporting on Muslim violence. *The Times of Israel* itself is notoriously right-wing, publishing multiple articles in support of illegal settlements, the Israeli occupation, the Likud party and Israeli ultra-right prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. As recently as 2016, Seth Klarman (cofounder of *The Times*) was discovered to have donated an enormous sum of money to supporting CAMERA.[227] These points make Schemm's interview with Rehihl suspect and seem to paint Moroccans as people who not only hate Israel but Israelis as well. Another interviewee is Mohammed Khiyi, a parliamentarian with the Justice and Development Party who argues that the film normalizes "the Zionist entity." The use of this term signifies not only Khiyi's reluctance to name Israel, but also speaks to his characterization of any Jews who live there. He goes on to argue that even Moroccan Jews who left for Israel are traitorous, contending that "the real Moroccan Jews were those who stayed in their country and were proud." This is a sentiment echoed by another interviewee,

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[225] Hachkar, *Tinghir-Jerusalem.* (32:47)

[226] Schemm, Paul. "Morocco film searches out Jews who left for Israel." *The Times of Israel*. February 26, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://www.timesofisrael.com/morocco-film-searches-out-jews-who-left-for-israel/

[227] See: Blau, Uri. "Times of Israel Cofounder Gave $1.5 Million to Right Wing Media Watchdog That Routinely Goes After News Outlets." *Haaretz*. September 5, 2016. Accessed April 25, 2017. http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/1.740340

Moroccan Jew, BDS activist and anti-Zionist, Sion Assidon, who reiterates the claim that the film is simply a propaganda tool for normalizing the Israeli state, the "daily violence and hatred" of which he and others lament.

Interestingly, promoters of Moroccan Jewishness in Israel, who take issue with the glossing over of Muslim violence and oppression in Morocco in order to promote a narrative of coexistence, are also potent critics of Hachkar's film signifying how the internet becomes a conversational and confrontational zone for performing memories of contestation. In an article from the large online blog archive, *Point of No Return,* the primary blogger Bataween argues that despite receiving the Israeli government's stamp of approval for the film, *Tinghir-Jerusalem* is merely part of Morocco's plan for "instrumentalizing its former Jewish subjects to project a positive PR image."[228] Bataween goes on to challenge the narrative that Zionists scooped up Moroccan Jews, pointing to a list of anti-Jewish pogroms from 1903 to the Oujda-Jerada riots in 1948 as reason enough to leave. Bataween even challenges the philosemitism of Mohammed V noting that Jews themselves mindlessly regurgitate this narrative which is nothing more than the "stuff of legend." In another review of the same film, Bataween argues that the primary message of the film seems to be that Amazigh Jews "are 'in exile' [in Israel] from their real homeland… [and that] their place is really in Morocco."[229] Subsequent commentary by another user, NormanF, and Bataween states that despite Hachkar's good intentions as a Berber who "sees Israel as a model for freedom from the Arab yoke," he does not understand that Jews in Israel are home. These critiques tend to point to films such as this as nothing more than Moroccan state propaganda – a claim that is difficult to argue against when funding for the film came from the *Fondation Hassan II* and the film aired nationally on Channel 2M – a television group originally established by the royal conglomerate ONA. It should be noted that 20% of the channel is still owned by the King's company SNI and 60% is controlled by the Moroccan government itself.

In a similar narrative vein as Hachkar's piece, is the professional documentary *They Were Promised the Sea* by Moroccan-Canadian, Kathy Wazana, who left Morocco with her parents at the age of 10 during the departure years. Despite not being available online, this film has

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[228] User Bataween, "'Coexistence' films make great PR for Morocco." *Point of No Return blog*. June 12, 2015. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2015/06/coexistence-films-make-great-pr-for.html

[229] User Bataween, "Film shows that Berber Jews are 'in exile' in Israel." Edited by User Elder of Ziyon. April 29, 2012. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2012/04/film-shows-that-berber-jews-are-in.html

been screened at more than ten international film festivals to audiences in the hundreds, in addition to winning the Canadian National Film Board Award for Best Independent Production in 2013. In Wazana's view, the creation of Israel is central to the story of "exodus" (meaning the departure), as she opens the film to explain how Morocco was "virtually emptied" of its Jews by the early 1970s.[230] The idea of Morocco being emptied invokes the notion that there was a group or system designed to empty it, setting up the audience from the beginning for a story of ruptured coexistence. According to Wazana, this interfaith utopia was destroyed by the peddling of a Zionist narrative among Jews that they "were no longer safe in their Arab homeland."[231] Common narrative tropes which appear in other popular memories of coexistence also appear throughout the film including the assertion that Muslims did not want Jews to leave,[232] Jews themselves did not want to leave,[233] the King "asked his children to stay"[234] and everything was organized by the Zionist apparatus.[235] The social marginalization and exploitation of Moroccan Jews by Ashkenazim in Israel also emerges as a powerful post-scriptural theme and receives at least half of the narrative space.[236] Like the interview with Aberjel, Wazana's film argues that Moroccan Jews were multiply colonized – first by the French who caused division among them and their Moroccan brothers, and then by Zionists who sought to erase their culture and identities for the purposes of building and sustaining a European Jewish state. While being interviewed, Sami Shalom Chetrit does not mince words, saying

> Here you are in a country that the Arab is its enemy, what are going to do? You need to negate yourself, to erase your Arabness. Since they landed in that land, they have to wake up every day and look in the mirror and say, I hate you.[237]

The self-hatred émigrés cultivated as a result of their marginalization in Israel perpetuates the narrative of coexistence by way of lamentation for its loss.

In another powerful scene, a Moroccan Israeli woman named Shira Ohayon visits Casablanca for the first time to find her roots, meeting with Simon Levy, the founder and

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[230] Wazana, Kathy. *They Were Promised The Sea.* Bicom Productions Inc. 2012. 72 minutes. 1:23
[231] Wazana, *They Were Promised*. 3:11
[232] Wazana, *They Were Promised.* 13:22
[233] Wazana, *They Were Promised*. 18:26
[234] Wazana, *They Were Promised.* 15:53
[235] Wazana, *They Were Promised.* 16:45
[236] Wazana, *They Were Promised.* 23:56 – 26:37
[237] Wazana, *They Were Promised.* 29:04

director of the Jewish Museum in Casablanca. At this point in the film, the viewers are made aware of some of the director Wazana's motivations for creating the film. Levy lays into Ohayon in a manner that articulates a brand of Judaism based on ethics and defending the oppressed, particularly Palestinians. For Levy, in the final analysis, non-Israeli Jews are also the victims of all Israelis who continue to behave as the Nazis they suffered under once did.[238] But, when Ohayon becomes incensed at being lumped in with European Zionist Israelis who oppress Palestinians, she declares that Moroccan Jews "too are victims of Zionism."[239] Levy will have none of that, interrupting her immediately and stating that the time for such arguments (which erase Palestinian displacement and suffering) is now over. By giving him the final word, Wazana moves us away from asking why Jews left Morocco and what to do about Moroccan Jewish marginalization to the future imaginary of asking what kind of fate Judaism has when a place like Israel exists in the manner that it does. Levy argues that there are two possible future paths: either Israelis can make peace with their neighbours (focusing on coexistence in the past to bring it to life in the future) or they can continue the way of the "tank invasions…that will lead to the destruction of the spirit of Judaism."[240] Although the departure is rendered secondary to the central narrative of Palestine-Israel, this film shows that memories of both are wrapped up in the future imaginings of those who remember them.

The question of the future of Judaism also appears in the Charlotte Bruneau documentary *Return to Morocco*, produced in 2015 for Al Jazeera World. Al Jazeera is a Doha-based media outlet that is partially funded by the ruling family of Qatar and is owned by the Qatari government, both of which have been accused of anti-Israeli and anti-Shia reporting biases. This film aired internationally and was viewed by millions of people. For Moroccan émigrés that have returned to Morocco to either live or for touristic pilgrimage purposes, the creation of Israel is still central to the departure story, as it was after the founding of Israel in 1948 that "the tide began to turn [and] Jews started leaving Morocco for Israel, their journey facilitated by Mossad, Israel's secret service."[241] The descriptions of buses leaving and removing all Jews from small towns across the country are relayed by Muslim neighbours who continue to

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[238] Wazana, *They Were Promised.* 57:45
[239] Wazana, *They Were Promised.* 58:01
[240] Wazana, *They Were Promised.* 59:06
[241] Bruneau, Charlotte. *Return to Morocco*. Al Jazeera World. January 21, 2015. 47 minutes and 30 seconds. Accessed April 16, 2017. http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/aljazeeraworld/2015/01/return-morocco-20151201243467514 67.html

lament the Jewish departure to this day.[242] While economic oppression is mentioned as problematic in the film, it is noted that this was not unique to Jews and that all Moroccans "were under colonial rule which monopolized the country's wealth."[243] Later, the French colonial power is blamed (by Jewish advisor to King Mohammed VI Andre Azoulay, who is being interviewed) for creating division by giving Jews preferential treatment over Muslims, exacerbating their division and presenting Israel with an opportunity to facilitate their emigration.[244] Much of the film is centered on establishing the narrative of coexistence by interviewing both Muslims and Jews to offer testimony to the truth of previously peaceful relations for centuries in Morocco, making zero mention of any anti-Jewish violence. The commitment of the King to protecting all Jews is again given significant attention[245] along with statement of the fact that Moroccan Jews do not have their citizenship revoked for living in Israel. A narrative of Moroccan exceptionality permeates the film, including the notion of an exceptional Moroccan Judaism which is portrayed as the antidote to Zionism. Azoulay argues that he cannot feel completely Jewish as long as Palestinians remain stateless and oppressed because he is not "Jewish by blood, but through [Judaism's] values."[246] At the heart of the departure for those remembering it through the lens of Palestine-Israel is the question of what it means to be Jewish.

To the director's credit, Bruneau does attempt to get inside the worldview of Zionists, making mention of the fact that Mossad set about facilitating illicit immigration after Moroccan independence because they feared Moroccan Jews would be in danger when France left[247] – which is not entirely untrue as they did believe that in light of their subscription to the axioms of universal anti-Semitism and perpetual, global anti-Jewish violence. At the same time, Bruneau discredits the legitimacy of that worldview by pointing to the argument that Zionists orchestrated the departure because they needed Moroccan Jews to populate Israel. Multiple interviewees reiterate the trope of arriving in Israel to unprecedented poor conditions that led them to believe that they were nothing more than a "human resource" for the Israeli

[242] Bruneau. *Return to Morocco*. 5:53-6:50
[243] Bruneau. *Return to Morocco*. 9:10
[244] Bruneau. *Return to Morocco*. 12:24
[245] Bruneau. *Return to Morocco*. 35:10
[246] Bruneau. *Return to Morocco*. 39:09
[247] Bruneau. *Return to Morocco*. 10:02

military and for Ashkenazis who refused to work in "construction and agriculture."[248] Moroccan Israelis visiting Essaouira for the first time report bursting into tears at the lack of comprehension they had about how their parents could possibly "leave this magnificent city to live in a tent in Israel."[249]

Due to the fact that these films are so quick to recognize the Moroccan Jewish trauma of the 20th century, it still might be surprising to some that their production teams would choose, in all of this, to not make mention of any of the violent pogroms and massacres of Jews in Morocco that contributed to their feeling of fear, instead choosing to pin all of the blame for the departure on the Zionist colonial machine. There is, of course, the strong possibility that the Moroccan state is heavily invested in promoting and funding popular memory performances in which Moroccan Muslims are absolved of responsibility in causing the Jewish departure, and particularly in portraying Morocco as a timelessly tolerant place in which foreign governments should invest and foreign tourists should travel.
However, on a less skeptical note, it is not surprising that those remembering would diminish stories of pogroms and massacres if we understand that these cultural memories of the departure are seen through the lens of the future memories of the individuals and groups remembering them. How one remembers the departure depends, in part, on the kind of future one hopes for, according to the grammatical preferences of one's group, and based on one's geography and generation. For those remembering who wish to see Muslim-Jewish reconciliation and peace in the Middle East, it would make sense to amplify narratives of coexistence, while diminishing narratives of violence perpetuated by Muslims as a way of projecting a future society through the narration of the past. As will be seen in the next section, in a world where the second generation of Moroccan Israeli youth refuse to visit anywhere Arabs might be and who negate their own Arab identities because of timeless discourses of global anti-Semitism, Muslim violence against Jews, Ashkenazi dominance and by virtue of the sacred pull of The Land of Israel, it would seem that the primary means to counter the powerful memories that continue to separate and divide, while being fully invested in Zionist colonization, would be to promote ones that seem to do the exact opposite. This is why the samples which promote the coexistence narrative challenge the notion of

[248] Bruneau. *Return to Morocco*. 20:26
[249] Bruneau. *Return to Morocco*. 45:30

Israeli identity in light of Ashkenormativity, while downplaying what are seen as relatively small instances of violence in light of what they see as an overwhelming historical trend of both neighborly and monarchical fraternity towards Jews. What is at stake is not the past but the future and lest anyone be mistaken about the intentions of people like Wazana, one need only look at the subtitle on the back jacket of her DVD case to reveal that she describes her own film as "a lyrical, *polemical*, musical road movie on dispossession and exile, hope and the possibilities of coexistence." Choosing one way to remember the past for these people ultimately causes a ripple effect from which multiple future realities are possible. But, in their hope for a better future, are these sources merely substituting one state's official narrative (Morocco's) for another's (Israel's)? And what is lost in obscuring a violent Muslim past?

Counter-myth: Muslim Violence

While the myth of coexistence is clearly strong in popular memory, it is no match for the dominant status of its counter-myth: that Moroccan Jews were pushed out of Morocco (and all Arab and Muslim countries) by violent Muslim persecution and, to a lesser extent, were magnetically pulled by an indigenous Zionism that pushed Jews to immigrate to Israel. The centrality of low-grade, long-term oppression of Jews by Muslims in the memory of the departure is not, at first glance, problematic and could very well be an underexplored but important factor in determining what stimulated *some* Jews to leave when they felt they finally could; however, the reader might note that, until now, the story of Muslim persecution has not yet appeared in a dominant way in the historiography, in the testimonials of émigrés themselves or those of their descendants. In fact, the online literature is really the first place that we encounter such an answer to the question of "why" Jews left Morocco and after slogging through hundreds of articles and videos, it becomes apparent that it is the dominant discourse. It should be noted that the absence of the Muslim persecution narrative in the historiography and ethnographies, or its lack of scholarly verification for "truthfulness," does not necessarily mean the narrative has no value.

The unique and contrarian appearance of this narrative form supports the idea that narrative preludes have more discursive power in memory than narrations of the departure itself do because of their relationship to future imaginaries. In these instances, the support and continued existence of a dominating Israel, regardless of how relationships in the Middle East

and North Africa region look, is paramount in these memories. This notion is supported by the presence of narratives which articulate Israeli Zionist triumphalism in light of departure memories. It is my intuition that the narrative thread which centralizes and gives primacy to Muslim persecution is heavily politicized and part of the more general discourse about the undeniable global persecution of Jews, which legitimates the need for the State of Israel and, by extension, all actions taken to achieve that state, however violent. While it is expected that triumphalist narratives would justify violence against Palestinians, in one major set of resources, intra-Jewish violence is also cast as necessary through the adoption of Zionist conspiracy theories first seen in coexistence narratives. When either iteration is combined with the false claim that Moroccan Jews *naturally* subscribed to political Zionism which stimulated them to make *Aliyah* with the intention of participating in state-building, these narratives appear to the reader as traces of a standard Israeli state propaganda story used to legitimate its existence. The final point that this argument is pushed to is that the silence around Muslim violence is a purposeful obfuscation of the memory of that violence and is part of the Moroccan government's conspiratorial project to uphold the myth of coexistence for political-economic reasons. In terms of memory, the fact that this narrative emerges in a dominant way in popular, performative spaces and runs *contrary* to all other discourses offers a lot by way of learning about the context and mindscape of those remembering. It also raises the question of why historians and ethnographers are *not* remembering the departure in these ways, for which answers that the narrative is not "true" do not suffice in light of their own narrative simplifications.

One of the first places that expressions of the narrative of Muslim persecution can be encountered is the Wikipedia article entitled "Migration of Moroccan Jews to Israel". This entry is one of the top search results for a variety of common search terms about the Jewish departure and cites "increasing terrorism" towards Jews as the primary impetus for their leaving, including "acts of murder by radical nationalists/Islamists who wished to avenge the misfortunes of their Muslim brethren in Israel."[250] This characterization of Moroccan Muslims of the past uses terms identical to those used in describing Palestinians today. The article also paints the French colonizers as the civilizers of Morocco's Jews before generously

[250] Multiple authors, "Migration of Moroccan Jews to Israel." *Wikipedia.org*. Accessed: March 27, 2017. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Migration_of_Moroccan_Jews_to_Israel

letting them migrate to Israel both as a "bold move" (in joining forces fighting the War of Independence for Israel) and as the only way to escape inevitable persecution by Muslims which had allegedly been boiling for centuries. Unlike figures like Azoulay who argued that French colonization caused Muslim-Jewish division, these authors celebrate one colonization (French) for its permission of another colonization (Israeli). Additionally, the authors claim that the establishment of the State of Israel awoke Moroccan Jewry to the possibility of emigration in part because of their "Zionist-religious values" and the "worsening conditions for the Jews" in Morocco, combining the push-pull factors that led to their departure.

The authors[251] of the Wikipedia article center their argument around the Oujda-Jerada riots of 1948, which are a repetitive trope in multiple narrations that hinge on the countermyth prelude

[251] Wikipedia authors are notoriously difficult to track down. However, with the help of I.P. address searches and mining Wikipedia editing history, I determined the profiles of most of the authors of the article or can deduce some basic information about them from their editing log. The article was first created on January 10, 2013 by a user under the name of Meitsi which no longer exists. This article was their only contribution to Wikipedia using that account and the only other activity under their account was a conversation with the next person to edit the article under the username of FoCuSandLeArN who was banned in 2013 for violating Wikipedia's harassment policies. From 2013 to 2015, the only editor of the article was David Goodman, a librarian and alumni from Rutgers University, under the user account DGG who made minimal changes but came back at the same time every year for three years to make them. Further minimal changes were made by Earl Andrew under the username Bearcat from Quebec. The only potentially scholarly changes came on February 14, 2015 when an unknown user made edits from an IP address located within the University of California, Berkeley. Following this, username Kingbird, whose account no longer exists, made reference edits, followed by edits by username Wiae – a person located in Canada, part of the Wikiproject Copyright aimed at clearing up copyright infringements and whose most recent Wiki contributions include articles about Food Justice. In July 2015, username Bohemian Baltimore, a Czech Jew located in the USA altered the categorization of the article which changes which search terms it is accessed by. Other contributions to Wikipedia by this user tend to revolve around Czech History in Baltimore (unsurprisingly). A couple months later, user Zbase4, located in Wisconsin made a number of content changes to the article. This user is possibly Jewish as they are a member of Wikiproject Judaism and Wikiproject Israel, and have spent extensive time in Israel. Their most recent contribution to the Wikipedia community includes multiple edits on an entry entitled "Political Appointments of Donald Trump". The last user of 2015 is Iridescent who is very active on Wikipedia but there is almost no information available about them. They only fixed some minor typos in the article. In 2016, No More Mr Nice Guy made several changes to the article including proposing to merge it with another article (unknown) which was not completed. This user no longer exists but while active contributed to articles on the Baghdad bombings of 1950, the Balfour Declaration, the Jordanian Annexation of the West Bank and Human Rights in Israel. Two subsequent content edits happened in February 2014 by an unknown user whose IP address traces back to Luxembourg. In March 2016, user Triggerhippie4 (whose account no longer exists) made content changes to the page. Their other Wikipedia contributions include a timeline of the Syrian Civil War, the American-led intervention in Syria, the Shayrat Missile Strike, Old Hebrew, Proto Hebrew and Kol Chai (a Haredi and National Religious Radio Station in Israel). On July 25, 2016, an unknown user made edits from an IP address which locates to Tel Aviv. These changes were revoked in their entirety on the exact same day by Wishva de Silva, a user located out of Hong Kong whose other Wikipedia contributions have nothing to do with Jewish or Moroccan history. On October 10, 2016, an unknown user whose IP address corresponds to Rabat, Morocco added the entire section on the Policy Instated by Mohammed V which was then edited by E.M Gregory – a "Tutnum" user, meaning a veteran Wikieditor who has created 301 articles, most recently on the Antwerp Attack. The article was last edited (minor punctuation changes) by user GunniX for whom there is no information.

of Muslim violence. The riots are portrayed as the catalyst for making Jewish unease unmanageable, leading to their spontaneous departure. That this subtextually undermines the importance of the other trope of innate long-term longing for The Land of Israel – which also figures heavily into these narrations – does not take away from their simultaneous appearance. Further, the implication that the riots were unique also undermines the assumption that the prelude to the departure was actually a story of long-term Muslim violence. Regardless of this cognitive dissonance, which is a common feature of popular memories, the riots take up significant space in the Wikipedia piece which goes into relatively deep, descriptive detail of the "axes and knives" carried by the mob who would go on to kill 44 Jews. In a similar fashion, the same riots are also described by Lela Gilbert, quoting the opinion of historian Heskel M. Haddad, who argued that it was one of the major causes of "the Jewish exodus from Morocco." [252] Gilbert was writing for *The Jerusalem Post,* which was established before the state of Israel itself (1932) and is based in Jerusalem with a readership of 50,000 for weekdays and 80,000 for weekend editions. Originally considered "leftist", the paper has undergone several transformations, going "right" in the 1980s and back to "center" in the early 2000s. The nature of Gilbert's piece from April 28, 2010 shows that political spectrums are relative to the politics of their location as her emotional emphasis on Muslim persecution could be seen as stirring up anti-Muslim sentiment elsewhere –a tendency more prominently found in Western European or North American "right wing" circles – but is perfectly acceptable in an Israeli centrist paper. She begins with evocative, heart-wrenching images of a six-year-old girl on a tossing ship, "saying good-bye forever to her Morocco home" with her parents and many others, taking us through a story of constant pressure from Muslims, insults, intimidation, violence and mysterious disappearances.

The centrality of the Oujda-Jerada riots is also found in cooperative online forums in which users post questions and others post their answers. These forums are important not only because they demonstrate *interactive* popular memory performances in action, but also because they appear as some of the highest hits when entering variations on the following question into search engines: "why did the Jews leave Morocco?" The probability of these search terms being entered by someone seeking information about the departure is

[252] Gilbert, Lela. "The 'Nakba' of Morocco's Jews." *The Jerusalem Post*. April 28, 2010. http://www.jpost.com/printarticle.aspx?id=174196

significantly high, as is the subsequent prescriptive status of these memories. In entries on *Black History Forums*[253] and two forums from Yahoo Answers,[254] the riots are named as the primary reason that Moroccan Jews began leaving for Israel, combined with the secondary reason of "fulfilling Zionist yearnings" or immigrating "for religious and ideological reasons." Like the Wikipedia article, the spontaneity of the departure because of these pogroms potentially undermining the story of long-term longing for The Land does not stop their mutual expression. If anything, an unspoken part of these narratives could be the (divine) coincidental nature of Israel being founded at exactly the time Moroccan and other Jews needed it.

This is not to say that the Oujda-Jerada riots were peripheral in all Jewish memories, nor are they never mentioned by historians in academic publications. In fact, they appear most notably in an article by Samir Ben-Layashi and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman[255] and in a chapter by Jamaâ Baïda.[256] In both cases, the "point of no-return" for Moroccan Muslim-Jewish relations was the riots – the moment when everything changed. This, of course, is an oversimplification and makes no mention of any other contingent historical factors such as the creation of the State of Israel or colonialism, something they can be criticized for as they are historians. While Ben-Layashi and Maddy-Weitzman mention the incident matter-of-factly in a similar manner as these internet forums and opinion pieces, Baïda does investigate a little further (and provides more context after the fact). He is quick to point out that despite official French regional authority reports putting the origin of the riots in the Palestinian issue, further investigation by the *Ligue française des droits de l'homme du citoyen* showed that the events were far from this straightforward and pointed to "the French authorities' lax control in the Oujda region"[257] as being a primary cause of the riots. Further, it is not enough to say that the Palestinian issue alone was at the heart of the riots because archival documents point to

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[253] Mawuli, "Morocco Jews" *Black History Forums*. June 24, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://blackhistoryforums.com/threads/morocco-jews.35

[254] Best Answer, "Moroccan Jews immigration to Israel please help?" *Yahoo Answers.* December 18, 2012. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20121218184923AAtmRVr; Best Answer, "How many Jews came from Iraq, Egypt, Yemen and Morocco?" *Yahoo Answers*. November 19, 2007. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20071119105911AAboikQ.

[255] Ben-Layashi, Samir and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman. "Myth, History and Realpolitik: Morocco and Its Jewish Community" in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*. Vol. 9:1. 2010: Pp. 89-106.

[256] Baïda, Jamaâ, "The Emigration of Moroccan Jews, 1948-56" in *Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa*. Gottreich and Schroeter, eds. 2011, pp 321-333.

[257] Baïda, Ibid. p 324.

economic inequity and pressures as a result of colonial policies playing a key, primary role.[258] In other words, Baïda argues that it is not possible to take this one incident as the extreme expression of a long history of violent persecution in Morocco, nor is it possible to consider it exclusively (or even primarily) as "Muslim" violence, despite being perpetuated by Muslims. I recognize that in saying this, I can appear to some as a Muslim apologist; however, it remains to be said that the French context of the riots is lost in the Ben-Layashi and Maddy-Weitzman article, as well as opinion pieces and forums that mention it. The fact that support is thus gained for arguments which emphasize Muslim violence (even painting violence as intrinsically Islamic) is one reason for the diminishment of the French role in remembering the riots.

The degree to which the authors build up a long-term narrative of Muslim violence against Jews varies. Gilbert goes so far as to declare the departure itself a *Nakba* for Moroccan Jews. While the Arabic term *nakba* literally means "catastrophe" (also coming from a root meaning affliction, to deviate or steer clear from, or to take upon one's shoulders) it is most commonly used to refer to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians after the Israeli Declaration of Independence in 1948.[259] To apply this term to the departure of Moroccan Jews automatically implies that there was a war between Moroccan Muslims and Jews, suggesting an innate incompatibility between Muslims and Jews more broadly speaking. It also serves to erase the Palestinian Nakba by collapsing multiple Jewish oppression narratives in order to offer legitimation for the existence of the State of Israel – i.e., to offer refuge for Jews fleeing Muslim-Arab persecution. Lastly, and related to both of these points, the use of this term for the Moroccan departure serves to legitimize continuing violence and military actions against Palestinian Arabs by claiming that Jews were always the victims of Arabs, in Morocco or elsewhere.

This tendency to lump the Moroccan departure in with Jewish expulsions from other Arab and Muslim countries often goes hand-in-hand with the symbol of the *mellah*[260] as the Moroccan equivalent of a ghetto. These narrative tropes situate Moroccan Jewish persecution within the discourse of the Holocaust and the Israeli state myth of timeless anti-Semitism and

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[258] Baïda, Ibid.

[259] See: Wehr, Hans. *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*. J.M. Cowan, Spoken Language Services: Ithaca, NY. 1994.

[260] The Jewish quarter in many Moroccan cities

forever-impending persecution, on which it heavily relies for its popular legitimacy. Given that these authors also refer to the departure an "Exodus," there is the added religious mythology of Israel being a place of refuge and deliverance from exile and hardship for Moroccan (and all) Jews. Examples of these tropes abound online. In an article entitled "The Moroccan Jewish Journey and Exodus" for *The Times of Israel,*[261] a descendent of Moroccan Jewish émigrés, Jeremy Dery, equates the term *mellah* with ghetto, conjuring up images of the Holocaust in Europe and applying them to a context where they are foreign.[262] It should also be noted that, in addition to this, Dery also argues for indigenous Moroccan political Zionism, claiming that "Jews thought that Jews only belonged in their Jewish homeland as written in the Old Testament [and while]…influenced by Arab persecution…many Jews felt the need to live in their ancient country" both out of religiosity and in order to escape the *mellah*."[263] With regards to the term Exodus, Dery points out that exile from Morocco now constituted a longing for that homeland among émigrés, in a manner similar to The Land in the original Exodus wandering story, contrary to his lengthy descriptions of Jews being considered "second-class citizens" under Islamic rule for centuries. Dery, like many authors, simply dismisses Jewish longing for Morocco as émigré naïveté – a tendency in the imaginary spaces of the second generation in Israel and indicative of their acceptance of Israeli state myths about the ownership of The Land.

In fact, the sheer volume of articles using these tropes is enough to call them normative in the memory discourse around the departure. The term exodus appears even in an article by the

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[261] Dery, Jeremy. "The Moroccan Jewish Journey and Exodus." *The Times of Israel*. January 9, 2014. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://blog.timesofisrael.com/the-moroccan-jewish-journey-and-exodus/

[262] Multiple historians note that while Jews were largely confined to the *mellah,* this was not universally the case, nor were these neighbourhoods necessarily oppressive in nature. In other words, the historical jury is out on mellahs in general – a point which is irrelevant to those using the symbol of the mellah in particular, polemical memoryscapes. See: Semi, Emanuela Trevisan. "Shared Memories and Oblivion: Is Israeli Jews' Nostalgia for Morocco Shared by the Muslims in Morocco?" in *Memory and Forgetting among Jews from the Arab-Muslim Countries: Contested Narratives of a Shared Past.* Emanuela Trevisan Semi and Piera Rossetto, eds. *Quest Issues in Contemporary Jewish History: Journal of Fondazione CDEC.* No. 4, November 2012. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/focus.php?issue=4&id=312; See also: Kenbib, Mohammed, *Juifs et Musulmans au Maroc 1859-1948*, Rabat: Faculté de letter et des sciences humaines, 1994; Chouraqui, Andre. *La Condition Juridique de l'Israelite marocain*. Paris: Presses du livre francais, 1950; Rivet, Daniel. *Le Maghreb a l' épreuve de la colonisation*. Paris: Hachette, 2002.

[263] Another article for *The Times of Israel* follows the same story of Jews being forced to live in areas that "became synonymous with ghettos. See: Shmulovich, Michel. "Glimpsing Jewish Memories amid the Mellahs of Morocco." *The Times of Israel.* March 9, 2014. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.timesofisrael.com/the-mellahs-of-morocco/

"leftist" Israeli media outlet *Haaretz* which describes the Moroccan departure as such.[264] The term is not limited to describing the movement of Moroccan Jews alone though. Whereas Lela Gilbert used the term *Nakba* to refer to Jewish departures from all Arab-Muslim countries, "Exodus" is also often used as a simplifying short-hand for the same mass migrations.[265] Even in articles that seem to celebrate past coexistence models in Morocco and what they might mean for challenging Ashkenormativity in Israel [266] or fostering Muslim-Jewish communities in Morocco[267] in the future, the term exodus is still used, carrying its historical and

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[264] JTA. "Moroccan Islamists Protest Screening of Film on Jewish Exodus." *Haaretz*. February 7, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/news/moroccan-islamists-protest-screening-of-film-on-jewish-exodus-1.502069

[265] In the *Black History Forums* mentioned above, the primary user Maluwi also refers to the departure as an exodus in English but claims that he is translating this from the Arabic term *at-tahjeer* related to *hijrah,* meaning to migrate, or in this context, to be forced to leave. It is possible that this form of the word is used instead of hijrah because of the positive connotations associated with the Islamic hijrah. The Arabic term Maluwi uses, however, refers to the general Jewish expulsions from all countries after 1948 and not to Morocco specifically (*at-tahjeer al-jama'I lil-yahud min ad-duwal al-'Arabiyah wal-Islamiyah)*. In a similar manner, an article in the Times of Israel marking the commemoration of the expulsion of 850,000 Jews from Arab and Muslim states, lumps the experiences of all Jews in all countries together and all of them are under the banner of "exodus." See: Times of Israel Staff. "Israel Marks exodus of Jews from Arab Countries." *The Times of Israel*. November 30, 2015. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-marks-exodus-of-jews-from-arab-countries/ This article also feels the need to stress that the number of Jews who "escaped persecution in countries in the Arab Middle East, Iran, Turkey and Africa [was in numbers] exceeding the estimated 700,000 Palestinians who fled their homes in what became the State of Israel in 1948." This ever-adopted tone in news articles out of both the Times, Haaretz and the Jerusalem post seems to signify a constant need to justify the Jewish presence in the State and the State itself – even to the point of engaging in narratives of comparative victimhood. See also: Aharoni, Ada. "The Displacement of Jews from Arab Countries: Jewish Exodus from Muslim Land, 1948-1972." Accessed April 4, 2017. http://chelm.freeyellow.com/displacement.html#12 This lengthy encyclopedia-like entry entitled "The Displacement of Jews from Arab Countries," appears on a website called Chelm Free Yellow. Subtitled as "Your One-Step Guide to Defending the Jewish People," this Ashkenazi-run (Polish) collection of articles focuses primarily on the themes of the Holocaust and combating anti-Semitism (defined as Anti-Zionism and Anti-Israel). The entry, written by author Ada Ahroni, flattens the Moroccan experience to be one among many of the same experiences across the Arab world. Aharoni argues that the end of the oldest Jewish settlements in the world were "in great part due to a long chain of intolerance, discrimination, degrading civil codes and often cruel persecutions which were meted out to the members of the Jewish faith by their host countries, after the rise of the State of Israel in 1948." The main section of the article is entitled "The Second Exodus" and is based almost entirely on Aharoni's own research and publications focusing on the uprooting of Jewish communities from Egypt. In her section on Morocco, she notes that "the waves of mass immigration, which brought a total of more than 250,000 Moroccan Jews to Israel, were prompted by anti-Jewish measures carried out in response to the establishment of the State of Israel."

[266] See: Katz, Jonathan. "1 Thing Moroccans Want All Jews to Know." *Forward*. March 29, 2015. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://forward.co/opinion/217638/1-thing-moroccans-want-all-jews-to-know/ and Howe, Marvine. "Homeland Attracts Some Morocco Jews." *The New York Times*. April 18, 1979. Accessed March 27, 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/1979/04/18/archives/homeland-archives-some-morocco-jews-encouraged-by-kings-stand-they.html?_r=0

[267] See: Gressel, Madeline, Zoe Lake, Siyi Chen, Kelsey Doyle and Khadija Boukharfane. "In Morocco, Muslims and Jews side-by-side but for how long?" *PBS Newshour.* July 29, 2015. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/morocco-muslims-jews-study-side-side/

mythological baggage with it and spinning a particular story of the departure even before one is told.

To a lesser extent, in some of the aforementioned articles, authors note that some Jews left with the hope of a better economic future outside Morocco.[268] As an example, while writing for *A Brave African World* blog, Dr. Mohamed Chtatou – a Moroccan Jewish historian – blamed the poor economic situation for Jews on the Istiqlal Party who "circulated posters asking Muslims to boycott Jewish business and trade."[269] While this narrative is rarely invoked as the *primary* impetus for departure, when it is mentioned, it is set as part of the narrative prelude of Muslim violence in the form economic oppression."[270] Only one author, Gilbert, tells a reverse story, describing the property, businesses and positions of leadership that many Moroccan Jews left behind on the way to Israel where they would find "themselves among the poorest of the poor."[271] Her story ends, however, with economic and political success as Moroccan Jews began to build themselves up as the State itself was built up. In a short homemade documentary by Marc Eliany entitled *Illicit Departure from Morocco to Israel*, uploaded to YouTube on August 19, 2012, the narrator asks, "Why did the Jews leave?"[272] Eliany follows with a similar argument that "Jews left behind all they had [in order] to live in Israel [because it is Israel]." In this way, the story of Israel's success is one of Jewish sacrifice and runs parallel to that of the Moroccan Jews who would help populate it. A large cache of films also exist that invoke a myth of Israeli Zionist triumphalism in which tropes of indigenous Zionism, biblical justifications for Jewish claims on The Land, and the primacy of Israeli identities (over Moroccan ones) coalesce. This myth is dominant among second-generation Israeli youth, suggesting an unquestioning adoption of the narrative of

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[268] Maluwi argues that one of the pull factors drawing Jews out of Morocco was the hope of finding "a better economic status and secured home in Europe or the Americas," while devoting the rest of his explanation to Jews leaving for Israel. A PBS Newshour piece examining the future of Muslim-Jewish relations in Morocco notes that "Moroccan Jews have been flowing to Israel, Europe and the Americas for religious reasons, fear of persecution and to better their economic situation." See: Gressel et al;

[269] Chtatou, Mohamed. "Moroccan Jews' Departure to Israel Regretted in Morocco." *A Brave African World: The African Exponent.* January 10, 2017. Accessed March 27, 2017. https://www.africanexponent.com/blogs/braveafrica/4528-moroccan-jews-departure-to-israel-regretted-in-morocco

[270] Gressel et al, Ibid.

[271] Gilbert, Ibid.

[272] Eliany, Marc. *Illicit Departure from Morocco to Israel.wmv*. YouTube. August 19, 2012. 7 minutes, 11 seconds. Accessed April 17, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIoukzsHMX4

Jewish ownership of The Land, likely filtered into their memoryscape through popular memory, commemorative and educational resources. It should be noted, however, that the generational division in these narrative is not precise enough. There is also a division of age. Second-generation Moroccans who are the children of émigrés who arrived *as children* tend to identify exclusively as Israeli, refuse to visit Morocco, and believe that Jewish ownership of The Land is self-evident. Second-generation Moroccans who are the children of émigrés who arrived *as adults* have strong ties to their Moroccan culture, identify as both Moroccan and Israeli, and the narration of indigenous Zionism is present but peripheral to their story. In a street interview video from August 10, 2012, Corey Gil-Shuster asks people who self-identify either as Arab Jews or Mizrahim, "Why did your parents move to Israel? And was there pressure from Ashkenazis in Israel [to make them move]?"[273] Only one Moroccan is interviewed at the end of this video but she echoes many of the answers given by interviewees before her. Her parents are said to have also come to Israel as "true Zionists [and that] they loved Israel, the religion...and wanted to be Israeli, Jewish."[274] While she notes that there was never any difficulty in Morocco even conceding that "there was unity between Jews and Muslims,"[275] she claims that the primary impetus for emigration was *Aliyah,* equating the living on The Land of Israel with being Zionist and therefore Jewish. In another video from Gil-Shuster, uploaded on May 21, 2015, Moroccan Israelis are asked about their ethnicities and whether or not they have retained cultural practices from these backgrounds.[276] Additionally, Gil-Shuster asks them if they are aware that they have the right to obtain a Moroccan passport and asks if they would ever live in or visit Morocco. Their understanding of why they felt they could not return to Morocco enacts certain memory grammars about the departure on-screen. The second respondent said that he would never visit Morocco because "they are Arabs [and] Jews don't get along with Arabs, not at all."[277] He then clarifies and says that it is "not like it once was for [the Jews]…The Arabs there started to attack them; they say that slowly, the relations between Muslims and Jews got worse and [that] the Arabs

[273] Gil-Shuster, Corey. "Arab-Jews/Mizrahim: Why did your parents move to Israel?" *Corey Gil-Shuster channel, YouTube.* 9 minutes. August 10, 2012. Accessed April 18, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xlytnFAQFEo
[274] Gil-Shuster, "Arab-Jews/Mizrahim: Why did your parents move to Israel?" (6:48)
[275] Gil-Shuster, "Arab-Jews/Mizrahim: Why did your parents move to Israel?" (7:14)
[276] Gil-Shuster, Corey. "Ethnicities of Israel: Moroccan Israelis" *Corey Gil-Shuster YouTube channel.* May 21, 2015, 21 minutes, 55 seconds. Accessed April 18, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nNo1RQUgRW
[277] Gil-Shuster, "Ethnicities of Israel: Moroccan Israelis" (1:00)

started to forcefully marry the Jewish girls to Muslim boys."[278] Both continuous, invariable violence and the hypersexualization of Arabs again cast Moroccan Muslims of the past in ways used to describe Palestinians in Israel today. One respondent said he would never return to Morocco because he spends enough time "in Babylon just being in New Jersey,"[279] putting forth the notion of Israel as the center and everywhere else as the peripheral realm of diasporic life or exile. In this subtle way, he evokes biblical imagery to make claims about The Land and why Jews are tied to it.

The notion of a dominant Israeli identity arises in the same video as one interviewee identifies strongly as Israeli, even noting that his family is not made up of "those kinds of Moroccans,"[280] later getting angry that Gil-Shuster is even asking about ethnicities and ending the interview prematurely, much to the shock of his girlfriend who was also present. Another person states that he does not do anything Moroccan because "we are Israeli" and it "just doesn't interest" him.[281] This suggests that in the collapsing of particular national identities of Jews into the broad category of Mizrahim or Arab Jews, these Jews can paint themselves as true Zionists – presumably asserting their rightful position in the Israeli context where Ashkenazim dominate the discourse as the heroes who founded Israel.

The age factor is most prevalent in contrasting these points with those of the last interviewee who is given the most time in the video, likely because of Gil-Schuster's ongoing critique of ultranationalist, "right-wing" Israeli rhetoric that employs the above-mentioned mythologies to justify violence against Palestinians. While the interviewee was not born in Morocco, he is significantly older than the others and relates how immersed he continues to be in Moroccan culture. He spends most of his time talking about how after his mother died, he suddenly felt a loss for "her stories she told us when we were children and *because we were Israeli* we didn't pay much attention to them…stories of Morocco."[282] When he arrived in Morocco, he felt he had been born there because the Moroccan land was alive in his memory. Others with whom he had travelled, who had been born there and were older at the time of departure, "returned to the homes they lived in and the local Arabs who saw them

[278] Gil-Shuster, "Ethnicities of Israel: Moroccan Israelis"(3:50)
[279] Gil-Shuster, "Ethnicities of Israel: Moroccan Israelis"(7:05)
[280] Gil-Shuster, "Ethnicities of Israel: Moroccan Israelis"(11:20)
[281] Gil-Shuster, "Ethnicities of Israel: Moroccan Israelis"(13:33)
[282] Gil-Shuster, "Ethnicities of Israel: Moroccan Israelis"(16:44), emphasis added

were very excited and told them 'come back to live here'."[283] Despite all of this and his much deeper understanding than other interviewees, he echoes his co-nationalists, stating that they could live only in their country (meaning Israel) because things were different now and there was a problem with Muslims. He argues that this causes fear and then, without hesitation, relates this to why his parents originally left Morocco, making the oft-repeated anachronistic leap of equating Moroccan Arabs in Morocco with Palestinian Arabs. It should be noted that here and in all other videos involving Israeli interviewees, Moroccan Muslims are constantly referred to as Arabs, erasing both their Muslimness and their potentially Amazigh identities, and signifying that perhaps Amazigh affinity and respect for Israel[284] as an anti-Arab-colonial power in the Middle East is not reciprocated in popular Israeli memory. Unlike the Palestinians whom many Israelis fear because of violence, the fear around Moroccan "Arabs" is primarily related to economic oppression, something which the interviewee articulates when he states that "Moroccan Arabs knew they were going to Israel [and] they waited for them to leave and then took their homes. That's what happened."[285] The irony that this interviewee is, himself, a settler living amongst stolen homes does not register because of the sense of entitlement cultivated in the Israeli State myth of ownership of The Land.

Not all narratives about Muslim persecution and Zionist Israeli triumphalism rely on biblical myths alone to legitimize Jewish claims to The Land of Israel. In fact, The David Project's[286] documentary film *The Forgotten Refugees*[287] follows a similar narrative trajectory of exile in diaspora, persecution and the permeation of constant fear due to the scapegoating and persecution of Jews under Arab nationalisms and timeless anti-Semitism. Highly visceral and emotive descriptions of riots, pogroms, rapes, and massacres endured by Jews dominates the narrative space in this film with some survivors weeping on screen and managing to say

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[283] Gil-Shuster, "Ethnicities of Israel: Moroccan Israelis"(18:44)

[284] See: Maddy-Weitzman, Bruce, "Morocco's Pro-Israel Berbers" in *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol 18:1, 2011, pp 79-85.

[285] Gil-Shuster, "Ethnicities of Israel: Moroccan Israelis"(19:34 – 20:41)

[286] It must be noted that The David Project is a political Zionist organization in Boston whose mission is "to empower student leaders to build mutually beneficial and enduring partnerships with diverse student organizations so that *the pro-Israel community is integrated and valued on campus."* See: See: http://www.davidproject.org/ Accessed April 20, 2017. (emphasis in original)

[287] The David Project. *The Forgotten Refugees*. YouTube. 2005. 49 minutes and 1 second. Accessed April 16, 2017. This documentary has been uploaded by Israel's Voice, the World Jewish Congress, Jewish individuals and other organizations. It is widely accessible from a variety of links, including this one: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KH8RL2XRr48

that "The smell of a burnt human being is terrible."[288] The film concludes that after the *longue-durée* of violence and oppression, Jews left because Israel "unshackled the Jew from being under the rule and control of Arabs and Islam."[289] Despite finding deliverance in Israel, this documentary diminishes the trope of indigenous Israeli Zionism in favour of arguing for the indigeneity of Mizrahim to the land of the Middle East. In this narration, Muslims are the intruders on the land because Mizrahi Jews pre-date their presence and the establishment of Israel represents a veritable *Reconquista*. Not only does this undermine post-colonial discourses among Palestinians who also characterize themselves as conquered indigenous peoples, the emphasis on how these indigenous Jews have been forgotten signifies that, in some ways, this narrative is also about asserting the place of Mizrahim in the Ashkenazo-centric history of Israel.

One last narrative trope, relating to Israeli Zionist triumphalism and deliverance in Israel, emerges significantly in memories that narrate preludes of oppression and violence perpetrated by Muslims: the celebration of Mossad's clandestine operations in Morocco as *rescue* missions. This version flips on its head the coexistence narrative that laments the operations as either stimulating Jews to leave or outright stealing them. In a BBC World Service podcast for their show *Witness*, producers explore the subject of the Moroccan Mossad Operation known as "Mural," primarily led by David Littmann. Littmann is interviewed along with an émigré who partook in the "clandestine operation to smuggle Jewish children…to Israel."[290] While the term smuggle might make one think that this programme is critical of the operations, it quickly becomes clear that producers are celebrating this intervention action by Zionist agents and holding up Littman as a kind of Schindler character who, after allegedly reading Shirer's *The Decline and Fall of the Third Reich,* felt that just he had to "do something" for oppressed Jews around the world.[291] The fact that this narration appears on a British public service broadcasting agency headquartered in London speaks to continuing British justifications for their role in the partitioning of Palestine in 1947. The pervasive notion that, in doing so, the British were morally impelled to provide

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[288] The David Project. *The Forgotten Refugees* (25:44)
[289] The David Project. *The Forgotten Refugees.* (36:44)
[290] *Witness: Morocco Operation Mural*. BBC World Service Podcast. 2011. 9 minutes and 5 seconds. Accessed April 16, 2017. Available through *Point of No Return blog.* User Bataween, http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2011/07/bbc-marks-fifty-years-since-operation.html
[291] BBC, *Witness: Morocco Operation Mural*. (0:55)

global Jewry with a sanctuary persists to this day.[292] The belief that they were rescuing Moroccan Jews is also enshrined in a lengthy description of the facilitated departure of Moroccan Jewish children. Here, Littmann describes his sheer terror at the moment of him leaving on the plane with the last convoy, stating that he suddenly realized the danger of what he was doing. The issue with this narration is that, at this point, Littmann was technically breaking Moroccan law and although he depicts his fear as coming from the Arabs around him, he neglects to mention that these Arabs are not anti-Semites but passport officers and airport security whose job it would be to stop operatives from essentially stealing Moroccan citizens. Such an admission would contradict both the depictions of Littman as a hero of Mossad, Israel and all Jews, and dominant discourses of innate enmity between Muslims and Jews.

Similarly, the celebration of the Mossad operations is also enshrined in a news piece by *Jewish News One* reporter Jordana Miller. Showcasing an exhibition about Moroccan Jewish history taking place in Marseilles[293], Miller opens with the notion that part of the success of the emigration was due to "various clandestine efforts to smuggle Jews out of the country"[294] which were undertaken when the Jewish community's "long stay [in Morocco] began to unravel rather quickly after Israel's stunning victory over its Arab enemies in 1947."[295] The notion of a long *stay* in Morocco presupposes a narrative of exile and return to The Land of Israel. When asking Alain Berhamou (grandson of Moshe Zobadia who was responsible for smuggling Jews out of Oujda into Algeria in the 1930s) why these operations needed to take place and why Jews left, he replied that "once Morocco gained independence from France in

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[292] As recently as April 25, 2017, the British government refuses to yield to calls by Palestinian leaders to apologise for the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which many people argue paved the way for the Creation of Israel. The government statement noted that the British "are proud of [their] role in creating the State of Israel" and that in the historical context in which it was created "establishing a homeland for the Jewish people in the land to which they had such strong historical and religious ties was the right and moral thing to do, particularly against the background of centuries of persecution." See: Dearden, Lizzie. "UK refuses to apologise to Palestinians for Balfour Declaration and says it is 'proud of its role in creating Israel" *Independent.* April 25, 2017. Accessed May 1, 2017. http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/palestinian-authority-uk-balfour-declaration-israel-sue-israel-zionism-refuse-apologise-lawsuit-a7702866.html

[293] Bizarrely, Miller opens by asking why the French should care about Moroccan Jewish history and states that the primary reason is that Marseilles was a "pit-stop" for Jews on the way to Israel, completely erasing French involvement in the division of the religious communities, economic oppression of both Jews and Muslims, and the incitement to violence because of French anti-Semitism.

[294] Miller, Jordana. "Jewish Moroccan History" *Jewish News One*. July 4, 2013. 6 minutes and 1 second. Accessed April 16, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lluFITIdiWo

[295] Miller, "Moroccan Jewish History" (1:48)

1956, the new government outlawed Jewish emigration and made it clear that Jews were not welcome."[296] In fact, throughout this short video, the French colonial power is celebrated because they had "allowed" Jews to go to Israel. Restricted mobility in the post-French period is again seen as an infringement on Jewish human rights and a cause for alarm stimulating the secret operations. Additionally, contrasting Moroccan Muslims' violations of Jewish human rights with simplified narratives of the benevolent French subtextually celebrates secular institutions of universal human rights, not only in France and Britain, but also the United Nations –all of which had a hand in the partitioning of Palestine to secure The Land of Israel. By proximity, such narratives also associate the State of Israel with those entities which claim to be founded on democratic values and human rights. As an extension of this, the tendency for the Israeli State to self-describe as "the only democracy in the Middle East" not only casts all non-Israeli Middle Eastern countries as inherently undemocratic, exceptionalizing Israel while normalizing its presence in the region, it also covers their brutal repression of Palestinian human rights with a thin veneer.

Combining Myths: Muslim and Intra-Jewish Violence

While myths of interfaith utopia seem to pair easily with arguments about malevolent Zionist conspiracy designed to rupture that coexistence, there is a large pool of resources in a blog archive called *Point of No Return* which pairs the counter-myth of Muslim violence with benevolent Zionist conspiracies, centering a narrative of dual violence and the voices of Moroccan Jews in the process. In these instances, Moroccan Jews are the ultimate victims in both Morocco, where they once suffered oppression, and in Israel, where they continue to suffer under Ashkenazi hegemony. In most instances, the category of the Moroccan Jew is again collapsed into the broader category of Mizrahim, employing some of the narrative tropes which saw the combination of all Jewish suffering in Arab-Muslim countries with stories of hardship and cultural erasure in Israel. Unlike narratives which uphold Moroccan coexistence *and* lament what is happening in Israel, these narratives diminish or silence the suffering of Palestinians by remaining vehemently committed to Israel, despite "Mizrahi" marginalization. The commitment to Israel, expressed as ultranationalism, is not contradicted

[296] Miller, "Moroccan Jewish History" (3:37)

by the fact that these authors often live elsewhere. The necessity for the existence of a strong Israel is parsed in terms of securing an eternal safeguard against total Jewish annihilation which is always a possibility in the narrative of universal anti-Semitism and forever-impending persecution.

Dispelling or "imploding" the myth of Moroccan Muslim-Jewish coexistence in favour of these combined counter-myths is a declared preoccupation of the blog's primary author –an anonymous descendent of Iraqi Jewish émigrés to the UK. This user, Bataween, is also a mother of four and her screenname is a formerly majority-Jewish neighbourhood in Baghdad. Even though the real identity of Bataween is unknown, this does not stop her from having a large share of the social mindscape online, not only in terms of the sheer volume of articles on her blog but also her cross-posting on other major websites and blogs. In addition to her blog archive, Bataween is also a regular contributor of articles to *UK Media Watch* (formerly CiF Watch) – an independently supported project of CAMERA (Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America) which is a "right-wing" media watchdog that attacks media outlets who they perceive to be anti-Semitic. This usually only requires the appearance of criticism of the Israeli occupation and illegal settlements to warrant such a moniker. Other Israeli bloggers have openly espoused and shared the work of Bataween, increasing the scope of her audience by the hundreds of thousands, including Elder of Ziyon,[297] Yaacov Lozowick,[298]Norman Geras,[299] and Martin Solomon.[300] The Elder of Ziyon blog, which follows a similar narrative form but with less emphasis on the Moroccan experience, is also written anonymously but regularly cross-pollinates with Bataween both on her blog and on theirs. Despite being anonymous as well, the user Elder of Ziyon also regularly contributes to UK Media Watch. Combined, their Facebook groups have an engaged reach of over 10,000 users and every blog article is peppered with dozens of comments from engaged users all over the world.

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[297]See: http://elderofziyon.blogspot.com/

[298] See: Lozowick, Yaacov. "Readers' Blogs" *Yaacov Lozowick's Ruminations: Personal Musings on Israel, Jewish Matters, history and how they affect each other.* April 22, 2010. Accessed April 24, 2017. http://yaacovlozowick.blogspot.ca/2010/04/readers-blogs.html

[299] See: Geras, Norman. "The normblog profile 319: Point of No Return" *normblog on Typepad.* October 30, 2009. Accessed April 24, 2017. http://normblog.typepad.com/normblog/2009/10/the-normblog-profile-319-point-of-no-return.html/

[300] See: http://www.solomonia.com

Of the 255 archived articles about Moroccan Jews published on the blog since October 2005, there are approximately 64 entries which deal directly or indirectly with the issue of the departure and virtually all of them argue that any attempt to blur out the centrality of Muslim violence against Jews and to uphold a narrative of historical coexistence is a piece of Moroccan state propaganda which benefits no one beyond that entity. Whereas other films and articles have implicitly countered the myth of interfaith harmony by portraying Muslim violence instead, Bataween argues against it directly, stating that glowing pictures of Moroccan Muslim-Jewish past as an "ill-conceived dream [of] leftist Ashkenazim who only have contempt and condescension for 'Jews of Middle Eastern descent."[301] Popular memory pieces that uphold the myth of interfaith utopia are seen as nothing more than "essay[s] in nostalgia [which] intend to boost Morocco's image"[302] perpetuated for the Moroccan government by artists[303], writers,[304] and scholars.[305] In other places, the myth of coexistence aims at being "islamically-correct… [while] concealing or playing down the historical facts in

[301] See: Julius, Lyn. "If Gideon Levy wills it, it is a Nightmare" *The Times of Israel*. April 28, 2013. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/if-gideon-levy-wills-it-it-is-a-nightmare/; User Bataween, "Another piece based on Moroccan Coexistence Myth." *Point of No Return blog*. April 20, 2016. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2016/04/another-piece-based-on-moroccan.html

[302] User Bataween, "Sequel will return Jewish 'exiles' to Morocco." *Point of No Return blog*. July 3, 2015. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2015/07/sequel-will-film-jewish-exiles.html

[303] Bataween's review of the PBS Newshour piece calls it "a sloppy and reductive history of the Jews...designed to project coexistence and a positive image of the kingdom." See: User Bataween, "PBS Projects reductive Moroccan history" *Point of No Return blog*. July 30, 2015. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2015/07/pbs-projects-reductive-moroccan-history.html; Critiquing the claims of the 2015 Al-Jazeera documentary by Charlotte Bruneau entitled *Return to Morocco*, Bataween dismisses the possibility that Jews were "persuaded to leave" as more propaganda from Azoulay that is "long on nostalgia and short on historical context." See: User Bataween, "'Return to Morocco' on Al-Jazeera." *Point of No Return blog*. January 26, 2015. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2015/01/return-to-morocco-on-al-jazeera.html

[304] User Bataween, "If Gideon Levy wills it, 'tis a nightmare." *Point of No Return blog*. April 30, 2013. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2013/04/if-gideon-levy-wills-it-tis-nightmare.html

[305] Commenting on a "disappointingly bland interview" with Aomar Boum about his book *Memories of Absence,* Bataween takes issue with Boum claiming that the Jews "left" Morocco (rather than fleeing) and finds Boum's assertion that anti-Semitism comes from "Christian sources" simplistic and somehow "politically correct". See: Bataween, "A Market Without Jews Like Bread Without Salt." *Point of No Return blog.* December 22, 2013. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2013/12/a-market-without-jews-like-bread.html; Even figures like Professor Mohamed Chtatou are included as mere propagandists, despite his work in showing that Jews did suffer persecution, especially economically and particularly at the instigation of the Istiqlal party. Bataween argues that Chtatou does not go far enough in his condemnation because he only chastises Moroccan nationalists, Zionists and the French colonial power, failing to include Amazigh tribes in the subjugation of Jews and asserting that they "were always subordinate and their situation sometimes precarious." See: User, Bataween. "Moroccans Bitterly Regret Departure of Jews." *Point of No Return blog*. January 22, 2017. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2017/01/moroccans-bitterly-regret-departure-of.html See footnote 268.

order to project an illusion of cultural diversity"[306] in Morocco today. But, according to Bataween, even more than notions of multiculturalism stands to be gained by people who she sees as the source of the propaganda such as André Azoulay, Jewish advisor to Mohammed VI. Azoulay is mentioned dozens of times in various articles on the blog as an architect of propaganda, accused of using the myth of coexistence in order to put "another feather in [his] cap" in his project to endear Morocco to the West.[307] Reasons given for such a project include soliciting American protection regarding the Western Sahara conflict and the attraction of over 40,000 Jewish tourists (and their tourism dollars) annually. Bataween's cynicism about the Moroccan occupation of the Western Sahara is not hypocritical in this instance if one understands that she does not equate it with the Israeli occupation of Palestine. In the latter case, she believes that Jews have legitimate claims to The Land, particularly as indigenous peoples of the Middle East in a manner expressed similarly to *Forgotten Refugees*. Thus, the occupation of the Western Sahara by Morocco is simply another example of how Arab countries brutally repress other indigenous peoples in the region, this time the Saharawi.

While a large part of Bataween's archive is devoted to critiquing which narratives about the departure she does not accept, she also offers accounts of narratives which she does accept. Her description of pre-departure life is consistently one in which Moroccan Jews endured abuse, hunger and discrimination from Arabs who treated them "with a conditional tolerance" that evaporated when things got tough and resulted in the "exodus." Bataween's vast online collection which includes additional articles that claim to explode the myth of Moroccan coexistence,[308] further cast doubt on the benevolence of Muslims on the eve of Moroccan independence,[309] and show how 18th century Moroccan Jews suffered under 'dhimmitude' of the "madman religion from Arabia."[310] It also contains articles which

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[306] User Bataween, "Moroccan exhibits vaunt delusional diversity." *Point of No Return blog*. September 2, 2016. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2016/09/moroccan-exhibits-vaunt-delusional.html
[307] See: Bataween, "'Return to Morocco' on Al-Jazeera." *Point of No Return blog*. January 26, 2015. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2015/01/return-to-morocco-on-al-jazeera.html
[308] User Bataween, "Book explodes myth of Moroccan coexistence" *Point of No Return Blog.* December 18, 2015. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2015/12/book-explodes-myth-of-moroccan.html
[309] Lipman, Jennifer. "On this day: Morocco Declares Independence." *The Jewish Chronicle*. March 2, 2011. Accessed April 11, 2017. https://www.thejc.com/on-this-day-morocco-declares-independence-1.21548
[310] User Bataween. "18th c. Jews tried and failed to alleviate their lot." *Point of No Return blog*. June 23, 2011. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/18th-c-jews-tried-and-failed-to.html

"expose" how 15th century Jewish families in Fes were forced to convert to Islam,[311] claim that the "primary reason why Jews left independent Morocco in such numbers" was the 1912 pogrom of Fes,[312] argue that 19th century Moroccan Jews were completely helpless to resist constant Muslim violence,[313] reveal the stories of Jewish martyrs in the same breath as denying the existence of both Islamophobia and illegal West Bank settlements,[314] and finally, argue that Jews were the consistent historical "scapegoat" in the Muslim world before being "ethnically cleansed" in a single generation.[315] Of the 16 articles which deal directly with the

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[311] User Bataween, "Moroccan newspaper mentions mass conversion of Fez Jews." *Point of No Return blog*. September 30, 2016. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2016/09/moroccan-newspaper-admits-conversion-of.html

[312] Julius, Lyn. "When the Jews Sheltered the Sultan's Lions." *The Jewish News*. April 16, 2012. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://blog.timesofisrael.com/when-the-jews-sheltered-with-the-sultans-lions/ Readers should note that the author makes the claim that "the trauma of the Fez Tritl [was] seared into the collective memory, and constitutes the primary reason why Jews left independent Morocco in such numbers." This particular pogrom is never mentioned in any testimonials of Moroccan Jewish émigrés or any of the historical research examining Jewish motivation in leaving.

[313] User Bataween, "19th c. Moroccan Jews helpless to threats of violence." *Point of No Return blog*. December 11, 2015. Accessed April 11 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2015/12/19th-moroccan-jews-helpless-to-face.html See also: Bataween, "About those salted, decapitated heads." *Point of No Return Blog.* November 15, 2011. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2011/11/about-those-salted-decapitated-heads.html

[314] Anson, Daphne. "Solica Hatchouel, Jewish Martyr in Old Morocco." *Daphne Anson blog*. August 6, 2011. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://daphneanson.blogspot.ca/2011/08/solica-hatchouel-jewish-martyr-in-old.html Unbelievably, in a very short time, the sidebar of this blog article contains quotations from Benjamin Netanyahu about how "Israel is what is right about the Middle East," how there are no such thing as 'settlements' and that the core problem in the Israel-Palestine issue is the "right of Israel (or any non-Muslim nation) to exist inside any borders in that part of the world," how the BDS movement is anti-Semitic, bigoted and immoral, and how Islamophobia "is a false allegation of prejudice which is deployed to silence rational criticism."

[315] User Bataween, "Jews were Scapegoats in Muslim World." *Point of No Return blog*. December 17, 2013. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2013/12/jews-were-scapegoats-in-muslim-world.html See also: Bensoussan, David. "Why the Jews left their Arab lands." *Asia Times Online*. December 11, 2013. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/MID-03-111213.html; User Bataween, "1967: My ordeal in a Moroccan Jail." *Point of No Return* blog. December 15, 2014. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2014/12/1967-my-ordeal-in-moroccan-jail.html; User Taboola, "Le Maroc, paradis de la cohabitation judeo-musulmane?" *JSS News.* June 9, 2011. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jssnews.com/2011/06/09/le-maroc-paradis-de-la-cohabitation-judeo-musulmane/; and Poller, Nidra. "Same Mob, Different Caption." *American Thinker*. March 20, 2011. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2011/03/same_mob_different_caption.html The last article actually goes so far as to co-opt the narrative of the Arab Spring, claiming that the oppression of human rights by Arab dictators is "inherent in <u>their</u> culture or values" and that the mobs that took over Tahrir are no better than "the mob [which] stormed into the *mellah* and massacred Jews." The author appears to view the Arab Spring as a threat to the State of Israel, concluding with "the difference is, we are not defenseless barefoot Jews in the *mellah* [this time]. We will not submit." See also: User Bataween. "Jews lived happily and untroubled amongst Arabs." *Point of No Return blog*. July 9, 2007. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2007/07/jews-lived-happily-and-untroubled.html This article consists of four undated and uncaptioned pictures which show destroyed homes, vandalised shops and squatting, homeless Jews in *mellah* after it was pillaged. Bataween claims "for this you could not blame Israel, nor the colonial powers. Morocco was not yet a French protectorate." She also reiterates Lyn Julius

question of why Jews left Morocco, Bataween offers the following reasons: colonization brought the end of dhimmitude without offering French citizenship, the interwar colonial period impoverished Jews and Muslims exacerbating the cleavage between them,[316] anti-Semitic laws put in place by French settlers during the Vichy period worried Jews[317] and were not immediately repealed by the Americans after Operation Torch,[318] forced conversions of

assertion from Footnote 207 that "is any no wonder [sic] that with anti-Jewish pogroms such as these [1912 Fes pogroms] deeply ingrained in their memories, Jews fled the country as soon as they could?" (meaning in 1948 with the creation of Israel). When confronted by a user named Moroccan in the comments that "all of the photos are dated after the French colonized Morocco" regardless of when the official beginning of French rule started, user Eliyahu m'Tsiyon responds, claiming that the pogrom was not "because of something genuinely wrong that the Jews had done [but was] the Moroccan soldiers' way of letting off steam and frustration over the accord with France".

[316] User Bataween, "How Interwar relations worsened in Morocco." *Point of No Return blog*. April 24, 2009. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/how-relations-worsened-between-war-in.html This article is a smattering of quotations from *Information Juive* (2009) by historian Michel Abitbol.

[317] User Bataween, "Morocco's forgotten labour camps" *Point of No Return Blog.* June 23, 2014. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2014/06/moroccos-forgotten-labour-camps.html This article is primarily comprised of excerpts from the work of historian Jean-Paul Fhima in *Tribune Juive*.

[318] User Bataween, "Operation Torch freed the Jews 70 Years Ago." *Point of No Return blog*. November 12, 2012. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2012/11/operation-torch--free-jews-70-years-ago.html and User Bataween, "Seventy Years since 'Megillat Hitler'" *Point of No Return blog.* February 22, 2013. Accessed April 11, 2017. Http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2013/02/seventy-years-since-megillat-hitler.html While the former article only references a Haaretz article by David Green, the latter article has many of the same points and includes excerpts from the work of historian Raphael Medoff writing in the *Jewish Journal*.

young Jewish girls,[319] fear[320] and violence,[321] specifically the Oujda-Jerada riots (1948)[322] and the Petit-Jean pogrom (1954).[323]

The only cultural piece which Bataween seems to approve of in expressing her version of the events is the dramatic film *Où vas-tu, Moshe?* by director Hassan Benjelloun, precisely because the center of the plot is the last Jew of Boujad, Shlomo, who is humanised.[324] Additionally, Bataween feels the director is sufficiently critical of the Moroccan government and "accurately describes the harsh conditions awaiting them in Israel… [giving] an objective

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[319] User Bataween, "Winning Party helped drive Moroccan Jews Away" *Point of No Return blog.* October 21, 2007. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2007/10/winning-party-helped-drive-moroccan.html; User Bataween, "How the Jews of Morocco went into Exile" *Point of No Return blog.* January 11, 2007. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2007/01/how-jews-of-morocco-went-into-exile.html The latter article contains large excerpts by the Jewish former Minister of Tourism Serge Berdugo who has historically been sympathetic to pro-Moroccan narratives and has worked extensively with Azoulay on projects of Muslim-Jewish reconciliation on Moroccan soil. Due to the fact that his narrative fits with the general project of Bataween, this fact seems to have been overlooked. Additionally, comments by User Maghrebi are very interesting in that they call out Bataween for using quotations from a website that promotes Jewish world conspiracies (if we take into account Bataween's hatred of the "Ashkenazi agenda", this is not that much of a stretch) and that they make no mention of the differences between anti-Zionism and anti-Jewish sentiments in Morocco. Bataween did not respond to these comments, which is uncharacteristic, given her prolific engagement elsewhere on the site.

[320] Elbaz, Penina. "The Truth about Morocco: fear made Jews leave." *Point of No Return Blog.* September 11, 2016. Accessed April 11, 2017. https://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2016/09/the-truth-about-morocco-fear-made-jews.html Elbaz claims that the rich elite (who gained from their social positioning in Morocco) have continued to deny the "persecutions endured by the majority, especially those who had to live in Muslim areas" and concludes by thanking God for Israel where "Jews from Arab countries…could live with full citizenship rights." See also: Bensoussan, David. "The Truth about the Jews of Morocco" *Point of No Return blog*. February 5, 2008. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2008/01/truth-about-jews-of-morocco.html In this interview, Bensoussan cites fear, forced conversions of young girls, indigenous political Zionism, economic troubles and violence after the Six-Day War as reasons for what he calls the exodus.

[321] User Bataween, "How Morocco's Jews Became Shadows." *Point of No Return blog*. April 9, 2015. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2015/04/how-moroccos-jews-became-shadow.html This entry is a point form timeline of all violent atrocities that took place against Jews in Morocco from the Fez pogrom in 1912 to the shipwreck of the *Pisces* (Egoz) in January 1961.

[322] Julius, Lyn. "Sixty-Five years ago, panic sweeps Moroccan Jews," *Point of No Return blog.* July 13, 2013. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2013/07/sixty-five-years-on-panc-sweeps.html; User Bataween, "Sixty-Three Years since Oujda and Djerada Pogroms" *Point of No Return blog*. June 7, 2011. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2011/05/sixty-three-years-since-oujda-and.html; Green, David. "Remembering the Oujda Massacre." *Point of No Return blog*. June 30, 2014. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2014/06/remembering-oujda-massacre.html

[323] User Bataween, "1954: Morocco's Summer of Terror" *Point of No Return blog*. August 29, 2014. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2014/08/1954-moroccos-summer-of-terror.html This article is essentially a translation and transcript of the JTA report from August 12, 1954 depicting the aftermath of the massacre. Julius, Lyn. "What Really Made Moroccan Jews Leave?" *Point of No Return blog*. September 4, 2014. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2014/09/what-really-made-moroccan-jews-leave.html; User Bataween, "More on the 1954 massacre at Petit Jean" *Point of No Return blog*. August 31, 2014. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/2014/08/more-about-1954-massacre-at-petit-jean.html

[324] User Bataween, "Moroccan press attachée whitewashes Moshe film." *Point of No Return blog*. December 22, 2011. Accessed April 11, 2017. http://jewishrefugees.blogspot.ca/moroccan-press-attachee-whitewashes.html

view of the subject matter," despite the fact that the film is a work of fiction. Indeed, it seems that uplifting the stories of Moroccan Jews themselves while condemning everyone who has ever interacted with Moroccan Jews (including, Israel itself) is her mission.

What do we do with sources such as these? What do we learn from constellating historiography with myth and countermyth? What can be learned from this arrangement? Even though an online figure like Bataween is deeply immersed in her own memoryscape which pays little attention to archival work, occludes Palestinian suffering, and has an open polemical agenda, her collection of work spanning 12 years of daily blogging in light of these other sources *does* teach those of us examining these narratives closely one thing: there is something to be said about both the historiography and ethnographies in that most of them are relatively silent on the issue of violence. This point is something that can only be realized when voices like Bataween are constellated or placed in direct contrast to how historians and ethnographers research and remember the departure. Where violence *is* mentioned, it is primarily in passing and its importance is diminished either by virtue of the limited narrative space it is given or by authors arguing that it was not a long-term problem, that Muslim violence was not a big deal or that the violence itself cannot be characterized as Muslim. But, is the diminishment of Jewish massacres only acceptable because we are talking about Oujda and not Jedwabne?[325] Only because we are talking about Petit-Jean and not Kielce?[326] Without taking anything away from the memory of the Holocaust by comparing incomparable things, historians must ask themselves: how has it become acceptable to essentially deny these atrocities simply because they take place under Muslim rule and not under that of European Nazis and their collaborators? At this point, it must be said that the distance from Oujda to Jerada is much farther than their hyphenation would suggestion. This tiny piece of punctuation alone erases the 62.5km that angry mobs of Moroccan Muslims wielding axes and knives traveled between killings.

What reasons do scholars and some groups producing popular memories have for diminishing the legitimate and horrific suffering of Moroccan Jews? For individuals in

[325] Jedwabne refers to a town in Poland where German Ordungspolizei, along with Polish male collaborators, murdered at least 340 Polish Jews of all ages and genders by locking them in a barn that was then set on fire. This horrific atrocity occurred on July 10, 1941.

[326] Kielce refers to a city in Poland where an outbreak of violence saw 42 Jews murdered (and at least 40 more wounded) by Polish civilians, and military and police officers. This atrocity occurred on July 4, 1946 after these Jews had survived the Holocaust and had returned to their community.

popular memory, there are multiple issues which might diminish the importance of Jewish death in Morocco. These reasons include the fact that these cultural representations are being created in a time of increasing, global Islamophobia and Israeli dominance in a region of the Middle East. The concern about condemning Muslims in an age of their persecution, the problem of erasing Palestinian suffering and the legitimization of the Israeli state might be some of the root causes for this inexcusable denial in the public realm.

For historians, there are at least two main possibilities: firstly, we cannot rule out that scholars might be complicit in this silence because of their own biases, especially when such sinister conclusions about denial are not only present but anticipated in Eastern European Holocaust studies. My inclination, though, is to take the second possibility, offering the benefit of the doubt that this is simply a blind spot in the historiography that remains to be rectified. Historians operating within underdeveloped niche discursive communities that continue to shirk multivocality in narratives about the departure are far more likely to replicate the simplifications of popular memories in slightly more sophisticated ways. Despite the limited sophistication afforded by skilled archival research, the quality of these histories is impeded by the consistent tendencies of historians to give a singular motivation for departure primacy, to narrate preludes of coexistence which assume that one *needs* to uncover Jewish motivations for going, and finally, to depict of all Moroccan Jews as homogeneously holding these motivations first and foremost. If the tendency of popular memory is to simplify, the response of historians should be to develop a more complex narration by which the richness of life can better be emulated and the power entrenched by simplistic memories can be undermined. By studying a multiplicity of memories in radically different discursive domains, a scholar can uncover the narrative placement and assumptions of their own domain, thereby paving the way for future research.

THE SPACES BETWEEN: SILENCES & REFLECTIONS ON REMEMBERING

Our role is to widen the field of discussion, not to set limits in accord with the prevailing authority.
- Edward Said, *Orientalism*[327]

Come, whoever you are. Wonderer, worshipper, lover of leaving. It doesn't matter.
Ours is not a caravan of despair. Come, even if you have broken your vow a thousand times.
Come, yet again, come, come.
-Rumi

Is it possible to imagine a history of the departure which seeks to do as little violence to all these memories as possible? Is it possible to imagine a method of retelling in which many voices are heard but few are silenced? Does it only involve the gathering together of narrative threads already remembered, albeit in disparate memoryscapes? What is lost in the turbulence of remembering? Which stories do not get told and why not? In this chapter, I will briefly outline some of the silences of the departure which fill the spaces between the assembled tesserae of memories, continuously shaping them in their fluidity. It should be noted that the majority of these silences are a matter of limited understanding about the departure in both global historical terms and its mechanics – the "how" of the departure. Not only are these types of silences a common tendency in simplified and localized memories, but the discursive ideological environments in which memories are developed and performed also develop silences around them for particular reasons related to the entrenchment of power. Resistance in the form of perpetual and collective remembering of silences both inside and outside the historiography presents a way forward for historians.

One important silence in the memory of the departure is the role of the French colonial power and French immigrants living on Moroccan soil. In the historical discussions around the rise of Moroccan nationalist movements and their exclusion of Jews in articulating an ethno-religious form, there is little to no mention of the French colonial backdrop against which the shift from reform-based platforms to an independence movement arose. Historians quick to blame exclusion of Moroccan Jews on nationalist thinkers fail to take into account the context in which that exclusion arose, and the broader historical trend in which exclusionary articulations of particularistic national identities almost always form the prelude to decolonization. Taking it for granted that independence movements are both a natural and

[327] Said, Edward. *Orientalism.* 20th Anniversary Edition. Random House: New York. 1994: pp xxiii.

necessary response to colonization obfuscates the unique ways in which Moroccan Muslim and Jewish nationalists initially resisted that trend while being inclusive of their diverse populations. Such a tendency also overlooks the opportunity to recognize that when ethno-religious identity formations coalesce around newly-independent states in the context of decolonization from European powers, Jews are a social category that are among the first to be marginalized. The specificity of the Frenchness of the Moroccan context is thus lost in the historiography.

Additionally, it is well-documented that European, especially French, colonial powers made it a priority to purposefully divide diverse populations under their rule in order to consolidate their power over them. The program by which French authorities sowed discontent between the mass populations of Muslims and Jews in Morocco remains underrepresented and understudied. This is especially the case in the examination of violence that erupted between Jews and Muslims under French rule. As Jamaâ Baïda alluded to in his brief discussion of the Oujda-Jerada riots, there is simply more to the story than Muslims spontaneously becoming homicidal. Because violence in general is all but absent in the historiography, the opportunity to examine the French role in these incidences is lost. Considering the dominance of the narrative of Muslim violence in popular memory, nuancing such incidents in terms of how they came to occur in a French context would go a long way to breaking down the simplicity of that narrative.

In a similar vein, the silence of French violence and, especially French Judeophobia, is particularly deafening. Here, it is not only the colonial authority's presence that may have incited a climate of fear and uncertainty for Moroccan Jews, it is also the presence of French immigrants who had negative neighbourly relations with them as well. The combination of living under a colonial power that was openly anti-Semitic, particularly in the Vichy era, with regular micro-aggressions from common French people cohabiting urban landscapes with Jews might have contributed to their overwhelming feeling of a lack of security. Similarly, narratives about the sanctification of King Mohammed V around his rescue of Moroccan Jews almost always paint the context of that rescue as Nazi Germany, rather than the French Vichy rulers who wanted to send them on to the European death camps.

The reasons for the diminishment of the role of the French in the context of the departure are multiple. Firstly, in memories where narrative preludes of coexistence dominate,

highlighting instances of violence against Jews perpetrated by Muslims and the French would contradict that story. Since the direct violence of the French themselves is not well-documented (outside of some work on studying French concentration camps in the Sahara Desert[328]), drawing attention to their role would mean having to concede that Muslims did, indeed, attack Jews. Additionally, the cult that has arisen around the sacralisation of King Mohammed V as a saviour of Moroccan Jews, and its large share of the memoryscape in narratives of coexistence, is compromised if the was unable to save Jews from both French and Muslim persecution on Moroccan soil. Additionally, French oppression could be indicative of a persistent cultural colonization of Moroccan Jews abroad who continue to view themselves as having been civilized by the French. In light of ethnographic testimonials by émigrés which center on how Jews left in order to explore education and economic opportunities abroad for their families and the fact that interviewees often cite that this was possible because of the French language, it makes sense that highlighting French oppression and violence would not be a priority. The diminishment of French violence, however, is not limited to the context of Moroccan Jewry alone. In fact, in multiple histories of the colonization period in Morocco, French violence against Moroccan Muslims is also muted.[329] This silence is probably reflective of contemporary friendly Moroccan-French diplomatic and economic relations, and the conciliatory opening of Morocco to the West in general after the Years of Lead.

A silence tangentially related to the silence around the French role is the desire to remember the mechanics of the departure – that is, how it was orchestrated so that 240,000 people could be uprooted and moved large distances in three relatively short waves of time. Firstly, it should be noted that there is a common grammar in memories of migration to mute the journey itself, unless the passage is the center of the narrative, involves something cataclysmic happening, or comes to bear heavily on the prelude and post-scripts of the movement itself. The danger of failing to explore the mechanics of the departure is that the entire historical episode comes to appear as spontaneous, inescapable and unavoidable. Additionally, the role of colonial entities such as the French and Israeli authorities is

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[328] See: Oliel, Jacob. *Les Camps de Vichy: Maghreb Sahara 1939-1944*. Les Éditions Du Lys, une division de HTTT Inc: Montreal. 2005.

[329] See: Miller, Susan Gilson. *A History of Modern Morocco.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2013; Pennell. C.R. *Morocco since 1830: A History*. New York University Press: New York City. 2000.

diminished unless these entities are painted as the saviors of Moroccan Jewry. As I mentioned above, in narratives of coexistence, this would have to undermine that prelude because of the implication that Jews needed to be rescued from something. In some narratives of Muslim persecution, Israeli authorities and Mossad are, indeed, celebrated for how they orchestrated the rescue of Moroccan Jews. Even in these instances though, the details of the mechanics are limited by the unskilled research of those who remember them. Even in the realm of skilled memory among historians, the mechanics of the departure have been muted in memories because scholars have been preoccupied with asking the question of *why* Moroccan Jews left, rather than *how.* Even if they do pose such questions, it is unlikely that details about Israeli orchestration would gain much rhetorical persuasion in popular or official memory for two reasons: firstly, it again undermines the authority and sacrality of the Moroccan King in protecting Jews and secondly, it compromises the contemporary economic relations between Morocco and Israel, which are very strong.

Lastly, another oppressive silence in the memory of the departure is the context of the Second World War, the Holocaust and their aftermaths. The fact that there was a general European (and even global) trend of mass, forced migrations in the name of the nationalization of territories in the post-WWII period goes completely unmentioned in memories of the Moroccan departure. The movement of millions of members of the Ukrainian-speaking minority from Poland, the settlement of 1.5 million Poles in regained territories or even the movement of 75 million Muslims into East and West Pakistan between 1947 and 1951 do not seem to come to bear on the movement of Jews from Morocco. Despite having some possible saliency in the historiographical memories of nationalist exclusion, the fact that these historical narratives of the departure hinge on a presumed coexistence means that the formula for mass migration does not apply well to the Jewish departure. In each of the examples mentioned above, the presumption and articulation of mass violence precluded the migrations. Additionally, in narratives which hang on presumed violence perpetrated by Muslims against Jews, arguments which put the movement of Jews in the global context of mass migrations undermine the necessary assumption that Moroccan Jews were persecuted because they were Jews. The importance of timeless anti-Semitism and universal violence against Jews to the Israeli state origin myth must render the Jewish departure unique in its Jewishness. At the same time, the uniqueness of Jewish persecution in Morocco and Arab-

Muslim lands has typically been marginalized in Israeli discourse because it infringes on the centrality and dominance of the Holocaust in an Ashkenonormative origin myth. It was not until December 2015 that anti-Semitism experienced by Jews in Arab-Muslim countries was officially recognized in the State of Israel.[330] In years prior, the German government had tried to strike a deal with the Israeli authorities to issue compensatory Holocaust payments to Moroccan Jews in light of the suffering they endured from restrictions to their freedom of movement. Despite the fact that it is historically undeniable that Jewish mobility was infringed upon, prominent voices were raised in opposition to the payments in the media at that time. These voices were led by none other than historians Yigal Bin-Nun, Michael Laskier and Yaron Tsur –each of whom clearly insist, even in popular performative domains, to push the narrative of interfaith utopia.[331] Thus, the Holocaust is almost never mentioned as a factor in contributing to Moroccan Jewish uncertainty, even in the context of Vichy French rule.

In understanding how causality of the departure is remembered in three domains – the historiography, testimonials of émigrés and popular performative memories – it becomes clear that six major narrative forms have emerged along with their varying combinations according to the needs and context of their discursive environments, and how they reference and respond to one another. Memory studies help scholars to make sense of what is remembered, why it is remembered in these ways, what is not remembered, and how both remembering and forgetting entrench systems of power. When taken all together, the turbulence of these memories and their silences, along with the contexts in which they are formed help scholars to understand their contemporary geopolitical climate as well as the future imaginaries at stake for those who remember. This process sets the stage for the possibility of translating the meaning of memories across disparate discursive groupings. Additionally, historians who examine the tendencies of popular memories to simplify and arrange particular narratives hierarchically while silencing others, set the ground work for scholarly reflexivity about what

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[330] See: Allilou, Aziz. "Israel: Moroccan Jews 'Who Suffered Anti-Semitism' to Get Holocaust Payments" *Morocco World News.* December 6, 2015. Accessed February 17, 2016. https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2015/12/174418/israel-moroccan-jews-who-suffered-anti-semitism-to-get-holocaust-payments/

[331] See: Hasson, Nir. Experts: German Promise to Pay Moroccan Shoah Survivors Won't Help More than a Few." *Haaretz*. October 6, 2011. Accessed May 1, 2017. http://www.haaretz.com/experts-german-promise-to-pay-moroccan-shoah-survivors-won-t-help-more-than-a-few-1.388420

is accomplished in the historiography. Are the histories that are written merely sophisticated versions of what can be found in popular performative spaces? Or can historians recognize these tendencies and, as a result, push for a historiography that is comfortable with multivocality, in which they are not tied to one memory over another in a complex mix of competing contexts and motivations for departure? Historical convergence through perpetual and collective remembering among historians can not only resist the ways by which power roots itself in memory, it can stimulate new avenues of research to more accurately account for how the vast majority of Moroccan Jews came to no longer live in Morocco.

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