MINORITIES IN WEST ASIA AND NORTH AFRICA

Religious Minorities in Non-Secular Middle Eastern and North African States

Mark Tessler

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Minorities in West Asia and North Africa

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To Pat
My Love and Companion in Adventures, Now as Then

Preface and Acknowledgments

With a focus on the 1970s and to a limited extent the early 1980s, the chapters in this volume examine the circumstances, and the response to these circumstances, of the Jewish minorities in Tunisia and Morocco and the Arab minority in Israel. The chapters look back at these communities during an important period in their modern history, a period during which each of the groups was in the midst of a transformation driven by both internal and external forces. During this period, and specifically in 1972, 1973, and 1974, the three communities were the focus of more than 16 months of in-depth fieldwork. Rereading these chapters now, more than 40 years later, is like discovering a time capsule filled with stories, and now memories, of the friendships I made, of the help and guidance these friends and others provided, and of the adventures my wife and I had during our months in Tunisia, Morocco, and Israel.

My research was made possible by grants from the American Philosophical Society and the Social Science Research Council. I was also awarded a Fulbright fellowship to support the North African part of my research. Interestingly, however, and at the time unfortunately, the Cultural Affairs Officer at the US embassy in Tunisia intervened and had the Fulbright award rescinded on the grounds that the subject of my proposed study was too politically sensitive. My project nonetheless went forward, and I later met this individual during the course of my fieldwork in Tunisia. He apologized for having had the grant rescinded and asked if I would share with him any insights that resulted from my research. In addition to the APS and SSRC grants, for which I am extremely grateful and without which my research would not have been possible, I received a

small grant from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), where I was an assistant professor of political science at the time. I am very grateful for UWM's support as well.

The US Cultural Affairs officer was correct about the sensitivity of my project, at least in Tunisia. It was not *too* sensitive, but it was sensitive. Indeed, the research in Tunisia might not have been possible, or at best might have been superficial, had I not previously established a network of friendships and professional connections. A few years earlier, I had spent a year studying Islamic and North African sociology at the University of Tunis, and this was followed, after a year back in the United States, by 13 months of dissertation research in Tunisia. My dissertation investigated the nature and determinants of Tunisian social and political attitudes.[1] These experiences gave me both a familiarity with Tunisia and a number of professional and personal relationships that were important, as well as satisfying, given the apprehensions of many in Tunisia's Jewish community. Among the members of that community who were particularly encouraging and helpful are Raymond Calvo, Susanne Boutboul, and Elie Debbache and his family.

I also want to record my special thanks for the help and guidance I received from Paul Sebag, another member of the Tunisian Jewish community. Sebag was a professor of sociology at the University of Tunis, as well as a respected Tunisian nationalist, and he taught one of the five year-long courses I took at the university. Professor Sebag had previously done ethnographic research on the Tunisian Jewish community,[2] as well as empirical research on many other subjects. He was an esteemed colleague, as well as a valuable informant, during my time in Tunisia. A number of Tunisians who were not part of the country's Jewish population were also extremely helpful. I am particularly grateful for the support I received from Professor Abdelwahab Bouhdiba. Bouhdiba, a philosopher specializing in Islamic law and its interpretation and application, was also one of my professors at the University of Tunis. In addition, he was director of the Centre d'études et de recherches économiques et sociales (CERES), where I was given an office and welcomed as a visiting scholar during my research on Tunisia's Jewish minority.

My prior experience in Morocco was much more limited and so, too, accordingly, were my professional connections. Fortunately, the apprehensions of the country's Jewish population were much less pronounced and its communal institutions were much more open and visible. There were, therefore, few questions about the nature and purposes of my research,

and meeting people and scheduling interviews did not pose any particular problems. But in addition to expressing a kind of collective thanks to the many Moroccan Jews who told me their stories and arranged for me to visit their community's schools and other institutions, including those not only in Casablanca but also in Rabat, Marrakesh, Fes, and elsewhere, I want to give special thanks to Gabriel-Axel Soussan. Soussan, a young Moroccan Jewish businessman and entrepreneur, welcomed me on my initial reconnaissance trip from Tunis, and then, when I later took up residence in Casablanca, he both helped me to meet people and provided logistical support through an enterprise of which he was one of the directors.

Turning finally to Israel, I knew my way around to some degree, having spent my junior year of undergraduate study at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Most of my courses were regular Hebrew University offerings in which Israeli professors taught Israeli students in Hebrew. I had also returned to Israel to spend the summer that followed my year at the University of Tunis. Nevertheless, my contacts with Israel's Arab citizens did not extend much beyond pickup soccer games with Arab as well as Jewish students. Thus, in advance of beginning the Israeli portion of my project, I wrote to and arranged meetings with a number of individuals and institutions.

I began my research in Israel in Haifa, where I secured an informal affiliation with Haifa University, the Israeli university with the highest proportion, now as then, of Arab-Israeli students. At the university I came to know and formed a friendship with Professor Sammy Smooha, a prominent Israeli sociologist who had done pathbreaking research, including public opinion research, on Israel's ethnic and sectarian communities, and particularly on the country's Arab minority.[3] I also received valuable assistance from two Arab undergraduate students at Haifa University: Hoda Barghouti and Nadim Rouhana. I employed both as research assistants, and both were extremely helpful, including in helping me to design and carry out an original public opinion survey of Arab Israelis. Nadim, who received support from Professor Smooha as well as me, eventually came to the United States to do doctoral studies in social psychology. He has gone on to a distinguished academic career, focusing, in part, on the circumstances of Israel's Arab minority.[4]

My research included public opinion surveys not only among Israel's Arab citizens but also among the Jewish populations of Tunisia and Morocco. The two North African minorities had not previously been the

focus of systematic and data-based social science research; and so these surveys provided a rare opportunity to undertake individual-level analyses in order to gauge, map, and to some extent account for variance in the attitudes, values, and behavior of the members of these communities, including, of course, the Arabs in Israel. These surveys made it possible, in other words, to carry out analyses in which the individual, not just the community, is the unit of analysis. I should note that the data from the surveys in all three countries remain available for secondary analysis should others wish to obtain and further exploit them—should they wish, as it were, to go back in time and converse with Jews in Tunisia and Morocco and Arabs in Israel about their understandings of and attitudes toward the circumstances in which they found themselves in the early and mid-1970s.

As valuable as these surveys are, most of my time in the field employed other methodologies and collected other kinds of data. These methodologies included participant observation, especially in the case of Jewish Tunisians, visits to key institutions, unstructured interviews with various officials and community leaders, and the collection of relevant documents. Deep involvement with the three communities, particularly the Jews of Tunisia but also to a considerable extent the Jews of Morocco and the Arab citizens of Israel, was especially satisfying. These connections enabled me to obtain not only useful information but also valuable insights. I was able to keep in touch for a number of years with the friends I made in Tunisia, even after many of them, including Paul Sebag, had left Tunisia and were living in Paris. And I am in touch until today with several of the people I first met during my research in Israel.

I took copious notes during my fieldwork in Tunisia and Morocco. I filled several notebooks both with the information I received and also, following almost every meeting, event or institutional visit, with my observations and assessments. Just as analyzing my public opinion data today gives the feeling of going back in time and engaging people in a contemporaneous conversation about their attitudes, preferences, and concerns, so rereading my field notes today returns me to the time of my study and brings back the feelings as well as the facts associated with my research experience. The field notes themselves are somewhat difficult to read, but should they be of interest, copies of these notebooks can be shared with scholars doing research on Jews in Tunisia and Morocco.

The results of my research on the Jews of Tunisia and Morocco and the Arabs in Israel are presented in the chapters in this volume, which are reprints of papers I published earlier. The chapters in the first part compare

the groups and explore the possibility of deriving analytical and potentially generalizable insights from these comparisons—insights that will shed light on a particular type, or conceptual category, of minority group and the circumstances by which its character is shaped.

An interest in comparison and the pursuit of broader analytical insights does not mean that the three communities are of interest only in that context. Each one of the three minority groups deserves attention on its own terms, not only with reference to the other two or to the political science literature on ethnicity and minority groups. Accordingly, chapters in the last two parts of this volume, Part III and Part IV, focus, respectively, on Jews in Tunisia and Morocco and on Arabs in Israel. These chapters look in depth at selected aspects of the political, economic, and social life of each community at the time the research was carried out. Readers with an interest in one or more of the three minorities at a specific and important historical moment will find these chapters instructive.

In between the concern for theory that informs the chapters in Part I and the deeper and more descriptive accounts in Part III and Part IV, the chapters in Part II consider domestic and regional aspects of the context in which the groups resided during the time of my research. Themes to which these chapters devote attention include the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Islamic resurgence in North Africa, the prospects for secularism in the Middle East and North Africa, and foreign policy and regional interstate relations. Although these chapters do not focus specifically on Jews in Tunisia and Morocco or Arabs in Israel, they consider factors that structure the broader environment in which these groups reside and that play a role in shaping the attitudes and behavior of the communities and their members.

In concluding, I want to record my sincere appreciation for the editorial assistance I received from Kallan Larsen and Shireen Smalley. Kallan is a graduate student at the University of Michigan. She is specializing in survey methodology. Shireen has recently taken a position as Organizational Development Manager at the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services in Dearborn, Michigan. Both Kallan and Shireen were immensely helpful in preparing this volume for publication, and I am extremely grateful to each for the valuable assistance they very cheerfully provided.

Ann Arbor, MI Mark Tessler

Notes

1. Findings from my dissertation research were published in my coauthored book, *Tradition and Identity in Changing Africa*. New York: Harper & Row, 1973. My coauthors are William O'Barr and David Spain.
2. Paul Sebag. 1959. *L'Evolution d'un Ghetto Nord-Africain: La Hara de Tunis*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
3. Sammy Smooha. 1978. *Israel: Pluralism and Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press; and Sammy Smooha. 1989. *Arabs and Jews in Israel: Conflicting and Shared Attitudes in a Divided Society*. Boulder Colorado: Westview Press.
4. Nadim Rouhana. 1997. *Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State: Identities in Conflict*. New Haven: Yale University Press; and Nadim Rouhana. 2017. *Israel and its Palestinian Citizens: Ethnic Privileges in the Jewish State*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

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Part III. Jews in Tunisia and Morocco: Two Small Mobilized Minorities

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Part IV. Israel's Arab Citizens: A Large Proletarian Minority

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Tessler, Mark, "Arabs in Israel," *Report for the Universities Field Staff International*, January 1980.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction. Jews in Tunisia and Morocco and Arabs in Israel: Defining Attributes and Foundations for Comparative Analysis

The chapters brought together in this volume present findings from research that was carried out in the early and mid-1970s among the Jewish minorities in Tunisia and Morocco and the Arab minority in Israel. Detailed accounts of the characteristics and circumstances of the three minorities at that time, and of the response of each community to these circumstances, are presented in half—the second half—of the chapters in this volume. These chapters, of which there are seven, are in Part III and Part IV, with Part III focusing on the Jewish minorities in Tunisia and Morocco and Part IV focusing on Israel's Arab minority. More specifically, in the case of all three minorities, these chapters focus on the attributes and actions of the groups themselves, on the nature and impact of relevant "host" country actions and policies—the host country being that of which the minority's members were citizens at the time of the research—and on what all this meant for the political, economic, and social life of each minority group. Readers with a particular interest in one or more of the three minorities, and especially in their individual or respective lived experience during a period marked by important transitions, will find instructive descriptive information in these chapters.

Against the background of present-day interest and frequently contested narratives about both the historical trajectory of the Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel and the experience of Jewish communities in the Arab world, particularly in the Maghreb, these chapters provide a great

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deal of straightforward and objective information about the lives of the three communities and their members at a very important time in their respective histories. The goals of these chapters are scientific and scholarly, not political. Based on 16 months of in-depth fieldwork—fieldwork that included the conduct of a public opinion survey in each community—these chapters sought, and seek, to faithfully and accurately report what I saw and heard in the field. Thus, for the most part more descriptive than explicitly analytical, and absent a self-conscious attempt to weigh in on contemporaneous and current arguments about Arab-Jewish relations in various settings, the chapters in Part III taken together and those in Part IV taken together offer time-specific ethnographic portraits, or rather partial ethnographic portraits, of Jews in Tunisia and Morocco and Arabs in Israel in the early and mid-1970s.

There is also a significant amount of descriptive and ethnographic information in the chapters in Parts I and II, but in this case the purpose of the chapters is explicitly analytical and only very secondarily ethnographic. The chapters in Part I, self-consciously placed at the beginning of the volume, consider the nature and implications of attributes that the three groups have in common, and why, therefore, despite the differences among them, it is instructive to consider them together as exemplars of a particular type of minority group. Usually described as religious minorities in non-secular states, although sometimes also described as non-assimilating minorities, the members of each minority are citizens of a state that explicitly ties its mission, identity, and priorities to the religion of the majority, a religion that is different than their own.

The chapters in Part I offer a fuller account of what it means to be a religious minority in a non-secular state and indeed how the concept of a "non-secular state" is understood in the research reported in these chapters. After providing conceptual definitions and clarifying the type of minority group that Jews in Tunisia and Morocco and Arabs in Israel constitute, the chapters in Part I compare the three groups in pursuit of both generalizable and conditional insights. They investigate, in other words, the group-level and individual-level attributes and orientations that tend to emerge under the particular circumstances that define the three groups' common political status. In addition, as is discussed more fully elsewhere in this introduction, the chapters in Part I also consider the analytical significance of the time period during which the research reported here was carried out. In other words, they locate Jews in Tunisia and Morocco and Arabs in Israel in time as well as space, conceptually defined in both cases,

and then ask whether and how these come together to shape the character and behavior of the three minority groups.

Comparison of research findings about each of the three communities is central to the methodology and analytical goals of the research. The chapters in Part I thus consider the communities together and then ask about explanatory insights that may be drawn from intergroup similarities and differences. Similar or conceptually equivalent patterns across the three groups suggest insights that are potentially generalizable to religious minorities in non-secular states, and possibly to other types of minority groups as well. Put differently, comparison considers minority group type as an independent, or explanatory, variable, and findings of similar patterns indicate when and for which community-level and/or individual-level attributes minority group type has explanatory power. Intergroup differences, and potentially within-group differences as well, identify relationships that may have explanatory power but only under particular conditions, what are usually called scope conditions. Although limited by an unavoidable measure of over-determination, the finding of differences permits informed speculation about scope conditions, about the particular group attributes and circumstances that specify when and for what outcomes minority group type does and does not have explanatory power.

The place of comparison in the pursuit of analytical insights about religious minorities in non-secular states is further discussed elsewhere in this introduction. Indeed, given the analytical objectives of a good part of the research reported in this volume, this introduction devotes considerable attention to conceptual matters associated with comparative analyses that examine the three minority groups together, rather than individually. Much of the introductory account that follows is, therefore, devoted not only to the ethnographic and descriptive goals of the research but also to the study's more analytical objectives and its concern for explanation as well as description.

The chapters in Part II consider the broader regional environment within which the three minorities resided, and by which they were buffeted, at the time of the research. With attention devoted to significant currents, issues, and concerns that impacted a particular part of the world at a particular historical moment, these chapters are something of a bridge between Part I, on the one hand, and Parts III and IV, on the other. More specifically, they contribute to a fuller and more substantive understanding of how and why certain aspects of the situation in the Middle East and North Africa at the time of the research, in the early and mid-1970s, impacted Jews in Tunisia

and Morocco and Arabs in Israel and, therefore, need to be included in analyses that aspire to explanation as well as description.

Prominent among the relevant currents, issues, and concerns considered by the chapters in Part II is the Arab-Israeli conflict, a longstanding dispute in which, following the war of June 1967, the Arab state dimension gradually began to fade and the Palestinian dimension became more prominent. Jews in Tunisia and Morocco and Arabs in Israel were in some ways only on the periphery of the Arab-Israeli dispute. None was involved in any actual fighting, and neither Tunisia, Morocco, nor Israel changed the political status of its minority or behaved in ways that overtly treated the group as a security threat. Nevertheless, Tunisian and Moroccan Jews were impacted by the anti-Israel protests in Tunisia and Morocco that broke out during the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war, a period contemporaneous with my fieldwork.[1]

For Israel's Arab citizens, the country's capture and occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in the June 1967 war helped to bring the Palestinian dimension back to the central place in the Arab-Israeli conflict that it had occupied before Israeli independence and the Palestinian *nakba*. Additionally, with the borders between Israel on the one hand and the West Bank and Gaza on the other relatively open during the time of my fieldwork, Israel's Arab citizens could for the first time since Israel's independence be in direct and sustained contact with Palestinian populations that had previously been under the state control of Jordan and Egypt, countries that had engaged in wars with Israel.

Also prominent during this period, and perhaps even more so, was the increasing importance of political Islam, which had both regional and country-specific implications. The influence of political Islam was abetted by the Arab's defeat in the June 1967 war, which raised doubts about the previously dominant ideology of Arab socialism associated with Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and other leftist Arab leaders and regimes. In many Muslim-majority countries, especially but not only in the Arab world, political Islam also benefitted from the funding for Islamic schools, mosques, charitable societies, and other Muslim religious institutions coming from Saudi Arabia and other wealthy Arab countries. This was particularly salient during the time of my research since it was a rise in the price of oil following the October 1973 war that provided Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, and a few other Arab countries with resources to make available for the promotion of Islam, including political Islam, in many Arab and other countries.

The growth of political Islam thus had the potential to reshape the national ideological environment within which the Jewish minorities in Tunisia and Morocco resided. Political Islam also offered an ideology on the basis of which Israel's Arab citizens might organize, as indeed they began to do within a few years. In addition, the growth of religious nationalism among important segments of Israel's Jewish population following the June 1967 war increased the scope and militancy of demands that Israel project its Jewish identity, which in turn had the potential, later realized, to impact Israel's policies toward both Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza and its own Palestinian Arab citizens.

Although the three more analytical chapters in Part I might have been placed at the end of the volume, after information about the groups and the regional context had been presented, they were deliberately placed at the beginning of the book for several interrelated reasons. First, this was done in order to establish from the outset the reasons for, and the value of, a study that brings together these three particular minority groups. Second, this placement is also intended to make clear from the beginning that the research reported in this book has analytical as well as ethnographic objectives. Finally, placing these comparative chapters before those with more in-depth and detailed accounts of the groups themselves will encourage readers to be attentive as they read the later, minority-specific chapters to the possibility of insights and understandings that apply elsewhere. As this reasoning suggests, the chapters in Part I seek not only to offer insights about the three particular minority groups on which they focus but also to contribute analytical insights to the more general, theory-focused scholarly literature on minority group politics.

The Groups

The three minority groups that are the focus of the research reported in this volume may be very briefly introduced here, in advance of the detailed descriptions that are presented, individually and collectively, in the chapters that follow. The two Jewish communities are broadly similar to one another. Tunisian and Moroccan Jews were few in number in the early and mid-1970s, representing in each case slightly less than 10 percent of the roughly 100,000 Jewish citizens of Tunisia and the roughly 250,000 Jewish citizens of Morocco in 1956, the year in which French colonialism ended and both countries gained their independence. The Jewish communities in Tunisia and Morocco are indigenous. Although some Tunisian

and Moroccan Jews arrived later and/or came to identify with France during the colonial period, which began for Tunisia in 1881 and for Morocco in 1912, the origins of the two communities stretch back centuries. There were Jewish communities in North Africa before Islam came to the region in the seventh and eighth centuries. Indeed, the earliest Jewish populations in North Africa date from Roman times.

Relations between the Jews and their Tunisian and Moroccan Muslim counterparts were generally correct and frequently cordial over these centuries, although there were also instances of tension and hostility and, during the colonial period, the lived experience of Jews and Muslims, as communities, to a significant degree followed diverging paths. The reasons that most Tunisian and Moroccan Jews eventually left the country in which they were born differ across segments of each community and also by time period. Security concerns and Arab hostility were among these reasons, but at least for these two Jewish communities, they were not among the most important reasons. Equally important, and probably more important for most Tunisian and Moroccan Jews, were economic concerns; professional obstacles at home and more appealing opportunities elsewhere; differences of culture and, for some, national identity; and the attraction of Israel and a desire to be part of the Zionist project. Finally, there was also a degree of what might be called path dependency, or momentum. As the communities grew smaller, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the full range of educational and other institutions needed to serve the communities. It also became steadily harder for young men and women to find a Jewish marriage partner. A fuller account of the reasons that Tunisian and Moroccan Jews left the country in which they and their families had lived for generations is given in a number of the chapters that follow, and particularly in Chap. 9.

The Tunisian and Moroccan Jewish communities were relatively educated and affluent, at least in comparison to each country's Muslim majority. This was the case historically, and it was the case at the time of the research presented in this volume. Minority groups whose members tend to be relatively advantaged, having had more education and being better off economically than the majority, are sometimes described in the scholarly literature as "mobilized" minorities. This is in contrast to groups whose members tend to be less educated and less well-off than the majority, to which the term "proletarian" is sometimes applied.[2] The Tunisian and Moroccan Jewish communities were distinguished not only by their aggregate educational and economic character but also by other attributes

that tend to characterize mobilized minorities. Among these, again referring to the communities as a whole, are a relatively high level of social engagement and social mobilization, hence the name "mobilized," and a perspective and outlook that tend to a significant degree to be more cosmopolitan and international.

This description characterizes both the Tunisian and the Moroccan Jewish communities, again in the aggregate, and so specifies important ways in which each country's minority and majority populations differed. It must be noted, however, that the degree to which, and the way in which, each minority differed from the Muslim majority was not the same in Tunisia and Morocco. In Tunisia, both the Jewish population and the Muslim majority fared better than did their Moroccan counterparts with respect to education, economic well-being, and social mobilization more generally.

Particularly important among the reasons for this are differences in each country's colonial experience and in its geography and demography. Tunisia is a relatively small country, and its borders are those of a country that has been governed by a central authority for many centuries. It does not have a political hinterland, in other words, and its Muslim population is homogeneous. Also very important, the French colonial experience was lengthy, and despite the distortions and exploitation that are almost always a part of colonialism, the French did not seek to reinforce traditional political institutions and did not work to suppress, and to some extent even supported, the efforts at modernization that were already underway when the French arrived. The Moroccan case is different. Like Tunisia, Morocco existed as a state long before the French arrived. But Morocco had, and to some extent still has, a political hinterland—more remote areas, often separated by mountains or desert, where the sultan's authority did not always reach. Further, the mother tongue in these areas was often a Berber dialect. With respect to the colonial experience, the French arrived late; they pursued policies that reinforced the division between Morocco's Arabophone and Berberphone populations; they reinforced traditional political institutions, even as they used these institutions for their own purposes; and they showed little interest in reform and modernization, important arenas in which, in contrast to Tunisia, the authorities in precolonial Morocco also displayed little interest.

The Jewish communities in Tunisia and Morocco differed from the Muslim majority in each country with respect to education and the other attributes noted above—the Jews were more mobilized, and perhaps it

would not be a stretch to say that, as a community, they were more "modern" than the Muslims. In addition, however, Tunisian Jews, again as a community, were also more mobilized and modern than Moroccan Jews. Some in the latter community were very, indeed extremely, wealthy. This mirrored the inequalities among Morocco's Muslims. But a smaller proportion of the Jews in Morocco than in Tunisia entered and subsequently identified with the French educational and cultural orbit, as is reflected in the fact that France or other francophone countries were the preferred destinations of Tunisian Jews who left the country, while Israel was the destination of most Moroccan Jews who left the country.

Although these historic differences between the Tunisian and Moroccan Jewish communities did not disappear, mass migration had made them less pronounced by the early and mid-1970s, the period of the research reported in this volume. At the same time, the Jewish communities remaining in Tunisia and Morocco were by then dissimilar in other ways. For one thing, reflecting the greater size of the Moroccan Jewish community, both historically and in the 1970s, Tunisian Jews, with one exception to be described shortly, were not present in significant numbers in any city other than Tunis. Even the few remaining Jews with business interests outside of Tunis had by this time moved their families to the capital, or even overseas, and managed these interests from there. In Morocco, by contrast, while Jews did tend to be concentrated in Casablanca, the largest city and commercial capital, there was also a sizable Jewish presence in Rabat, the capital, and smaller but more or less viable Jewish communities in Fes, Marrakesh, and Tangier. Another difference between the two Jewish communities in the early and mid-1970s, again reflecting their difference in size, was the greater presence of viable community institutions in Morocco.

The Moroccan Jewish presence in towns outside of Casablanca, and perhaps Rabat, was clearly declining, and communal institutions were shrinking and to some extent becoming more fragile during the period of the research reported here. Accordingly, it was easy to imagine that in these respects the Jewish minority in Morocco would in the years ahead come to resemble Tunisia's Jewish minority in the 1970s. Nevertheless, at the time, the Moroccan Jewish community remained more whole and viable, and the life of the community was more vibrant and less inward-looking.

There is an additional segment of the Tunisian Jewish community that should be noted before concluding this introductory overview of the Jewish minorities in Tunisia and Morocco in the early and mid-1970s.

This is the ancient Jewish community on the island of Djerba in southern Tunisia. The origins of the Djerbian Jewish community are in the pre-Islamic period, possibly, according to local folklore, going back to the time of the Romans. At the time of my research, the Jews of Djerba numbered slightly more than 1000 souls who lived, as they had for centuries, in two small towns. The Djerbian Jewish community tended to be conservative and traditional as a consequence of remaining largely outside the French colonial and cultural orbit. Some adult men and young people who had gone to a Tunisian public school, as opposed to receiving a Jewish religious education, did know French, but the first and preferred language for most was Arabic, or a variant that mixed in some Hebrew and other foreign words and was called Judeo-Arabic or Djerbian Arabic. The Jews in Djerba made up about 15 percent of all the Jews remaining in Tunisia in the early 1970s.

In contrast to the Jews of Tunisia and Morocco, the Arab citizens of Israel are a large proletarian minority. In the early 1970s, at the time of the research reported in this volume, they numbered roughly 450,000 and constituted about 14 percent of the Israeli population. Like the Jews of North Africa, they are also an indigenous population. They are descendants of Palestinian Arab families who had lived for centuries in the territory of Palestine. At the beginning of Zionist immigration to Palestine in the 1880s, Arabs, or Palestinians, constituted 95 percent of the territory's population. At the time of the 1947–1948 war that resulted in Israeli independence, there were about 900,000 Palestinian Arabs in the country, and of these roughly 750,000 left the territory on which Israel was established and went into involuntary exile. Many, though not all, were forced to leave by Zionist forces. This is what Palestinians call the *nakba*, the catastrophe. About 160,000 Palestinian Arabs remained in the country and became citizens of Israel. Some of these Arabs were internal refugees. They left their homes and villages during the fighting but they did not leave the country. Rather, they moved to another location in Israel, in many cases taking up residence in homes that had previously belonged to Arab families that by then were in exile in Jordan, Lebanon, Gaza, or elsewhere.

Israel's Arab minority was not a homogeneous community. On the contrary, there were, and still are, important divisions based on religion, residence, and other factors. At the time of my research, about three-fourths of the Arab citizens of Israel were Muslim. About two thirds of the non-Muslim Arabs were Christians, divided between Greek-Catholic, Greek-Orthodox, and a number of other denominations, and most of the

remaining third, or one-twelfth of the total Arab-Israeli population, were Druze. Another significant within-group difference concerns residence, and this had implications for contact with Israeli Jews and interaction with mainstream Israeli institutions. The majority of Israel's Arab population lived in villages, most of which had only Arab inhabitants, and at the time of this research most were governed by traditional extended family networks. There was also a sizeable Arab population in some cities, particularly in the mixed Jewish-Arab towns of Jaffa, Haifa, Acre, Ramleh, and Lod. Among Christians, over 60 percent lived in urban areas, with the remainder living in large Arab villages.

The economic and political circumstances of the Arab community in Israel were, and remain, inferior to those of Jews by a wide margin. This is not to say that the living standard of Arab Israelis was uniformly low. Many members of this community, primarily men, found employment involving manual labor, in the construction trades, for example, and these jobs paid well and gave considerable purchasing power to many Arab families. At the same time, alongside working class and middle-class families that lived relatively comfortably, there were many Arab Israelis who lived in urban slums or impoverished villages. Contributing to the problems of the former, those residing in urban slum neighborhoods, was the difficulty of obtaining permits for the significant renovation of homes that were often in a state of serious disrepair. The reason for this was that homes previously owned by Palestinians who had left the country and become refugees during the 1947–1948 war were considered "absentee property" by the Israeli government. This absentee property was governed by the Absentee Property Law of 1950 and by a separate administrative authority that very often, for a variety of reasons, refused to authorize new construction or even significant home improvement projects. A major complaint of the latter, residents of Arab villages, was the low level, both relative to comparable Jewish communities and in absolute terms, of state funding for municipal improvements and even, in some cases, for the provision of basic utilities.

As Israeli citizens, Arabs enjoyed the same political rights as Jews. And since Israel is a democracy, this means that Arabs could vote, organize politically, and be elected to and serve in the Israeli parliament, the Knesset. All of these rights were regularly exercised during the period of my research, as they have been subsequently. Thus, the Arabs' political rights existed not only in principle but also in practice. At the same time, there were, and still are, policies and practices that significantly disadvantage and sometimes overtly discriminate against Arab Israelis. Some social services

and economic benefits are tied to service in the Israeli military, for example, and most Arabs are barred from the Israeli Defense Forces. There were also, and still are, unwritten understandings about political positions that Arabs may not hold. Political parties that get most of their votes in the Arab sector, and that were therefore seen as representing Israel's Arab community, were not acceptable as members of a multiparty government coalition. Similarly, although not barred by law, it was unthinkable that an Arab might become president of the country. As expressed by a knowledgeable student of Israeli politics, "the notion of an Arab President of Israel is rejected by the Jewish population because of its historic impropriety, and because it would introduce fundamental doubts about the reasoning behind Zionism and about the most basic understandings of what Israel and Israeliness mean."[3]

Relations between Israel's Arab minority and the country's Jewish majority were mixed. At the time of the research on which this volume reports, a significant proportion of the Arabs lived in Arab villages or neighborhoods where everyday contact with Jewish Israelis was limited. Those whose employment took them outside their residential community frequently worked in establishments that did bring contact with Jews, and in these instances individual-level relationships for the most part varied between proper, or correct, on the one hand, and cordial and friendly on the other. Some Arab Israelis also lived in what are frequently termed "mixed cities," of which Haifa is probably the best example. In these cities, the range of Arab-Jewish interactions was broader, and again individual-level relationships were sometimes cordial and friendly and otherwise, usually, at least correct. Even here, however, genuine friendships and extensive socializing between Arabs and Jews outside of work were very much the exception rather than the rule.

At the time of the research reported here, the circumstances of Arab Israelis also reflected the country's security concerns. Israel's Arab population was, and is, part of the Palestinian Arab community that opposed, and in some cases actively fought against, the Zionists in the 1947–1948 war. The war brought defeat to the Arabs and resulted in Israel's independence, and the new state deemed it necessary to establish a security regime in border areas and parts of the country with a large Arab population. The security regime took the form of a Military Administration which, imposing a form of martial law, monitored and sometimes severely restricted Arab movement and other activities. Arabs, understandably, very much disliked

and resented the Military Administration, which had been established in 1948 and remained in force until 1966.

There are accounts of the circumstances and experience of Arab Israelis in several of this volume's chapters, and these accounts are both broader and more detailed than the introductory overview presented here. As in the chapters on the Jewish communities of Tunisia and Morocco, the principal focus of chapters devoted to Arab Israelis is the nature and explanatory significance of their circumstances, and then their response to these circumstances, at the time of my research. Among the topics of particular concern are the social and political identity of the members of this community, including the character and extent of its members' identification with Palestinians outside Israel; the character of the community's political and economic life, including attention to Israeli state policies and actions relating to land, property, and local administrative units; and the circumstances of Arab-Israeli women and the way they think about and pursue greater equality between the women and men of their community.

The chapters devoted to the Jewish minorities in Tunisia and Morocco and to the Arab minority in Israel do not explicitly ask about the broader implications of the accounts they present. In other words, they do not self-consciously seek to present information and insight with the potential to shed light on the circumstances and behavior of other minority communities. These chapters rather offer a detailed look inside the politics and society of each minority at a very important time in its recent history. Much of the information, including findings from public opinion surveys carried out among the members of all three minorities at the time of the research, was original at the time it was published, and some of it deals with issues and concerns that remain pertinent and even today do not always receive the recognition, or the attention, they deserve. None of this is to suggest that these minority group-focused chapters are devoid of analysis and merely descriptive. But "analysis" in this case means being attentive to the social and political dynamics that may contribute to a fuller understanding of why, as well as how, each minority group and its members behaved as they did.

The Type

The rationale for juxtaposing and comparing the Jewish citizens of Tunisia, the Jewish citizens of Morocco, and the Arab citizens of Israel, different as the three minority groups are, lies in the important and somewhat unique