S: I. M. O. N.
SHOAH: INTERVENTION. METHODS. DOCUMENTATION.
Vol. 11 | 2024 | No.1
WIENER WIESENTHAL INSTITUT FÜR HOLOCAUST-STUDIEN (VWI)

Patrick Bernhard

North Africa and the Holocaust

European Colonialism, Nazism, and Local Agency

Abstract

To this day, the problem of relating colonialism to National Socialism remains highly controversial among scholars and a broader public. So far, comparisons have been drawn between the German presence in Africa during the German Empire and the Nazi extermination policy in Eastern Europe forty years later. This article, however, examines from a transnational perspective how the Holocaust that was initiated and driven by the Nazi state played out on colonial soil in North Africa, when the region became an important theatre of World War Two and the 450,000 Jewish people living there became the focus of persecution. The article argues that the exclusion, persecution, and partial murder of Jewish people in North Africa was strongly influenced by colonial traditions of violence against Arabs and Berbers. Under the conditions of World War Two, and fuelled by the Third Reich, the two phenomena overlapped and intersected, which in turn helps to explain the dynamics of violence that we can observe in the region. At the same time, however, this perspective highlights the agency of local non-Jewish populations, which ranged from helping persecuted Jewish people to actively supporting the Nazi regime and its allies.

Few works by authors from Africa caused more of a sensation in France than Albert Memmi‘s 1953 *The Pillar of Salt*.[1] Promoted by Jean-Paul Sartre and awarded two prestigious literary prizes shortly after its publication, the semi-autobiographical novel describes the coming of age of a Jewish boy in Tunisia in the country's tumultuous transition from colonialism to independence.[2] Born into poor circumstances in the capital Tunis, the protagonist initially experiences both friendly relations with Arabs and demeaning French colonial rule. From 1940, he is also faced with antisemitic exclusion by the Vichy regime, which ruled over large parts of the French colonial empire, including North Africa. When the Axis forces occupy the country in November 1942, he ends up in a forced labour camp run by the German military, from where, however, he manages to escape. He wants to join Charles de Gaulle‘s liberation army in North Africa, but the military demands that he first gives up his Jewish name. In the end, both the protagonist and Memmi leave Tunisia: the former aboard a steamer to Latin America to become a nameless migrant, the latter in protest against what he sees as the country‘s one-sided Arab cultural orientation after the country`s independence from France in 1956. Memmi becomes a writer and sociologist in France and accepts French citizenship, long withheld from him as an indigenous subject. Memmi vividly describes the plural and hybrid, yet ultimately fractured identities, that he and his alter ego assume over the course of their trou-

---

[1] Albert Memmi, *La statue de sel* (Paris: Corrêa, 1953). An English translation followed in 1955, a first German one in 1963: Albert Memmi, *The Pillar of Salt: A Novel*, trans. Edouard Roditi (New York: Criterion Books, 1955); Albert Memmi, *Die Salzsäule: Roman*, trans. Gerhard M. Neumann (Cologne and Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1963).

[2] My analysis is based on the definition of colonialism provided by Jürgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2005).

ARTICLE
https://doi.org/10.23777/sn.0124 | www.vwi.ac.at

bled lives. He was "a Jew in an anti-Semitic world", "a native in a colonial country", and an "African in a world dominated by Europe", Memmi asserts. "How is it possible to harmonize so many discords?", he asks himself and his readers.[3] Against this background, it becomes clear why *The Pillar of Salt* became a landmark text in French post-war literature: it perfectly fit into the French existentialism that was popular after 1945, which addressed, among other things, the contradictions of human existence in the modern age.[4]

What makes the novel so interesting from a historical point of view is that it draws attention to a circumstance that has so far received far too little attention in research: in North Africa, European colonialism, antisemitism, and National Socialism intersected in multi-layered ways; local people like Memmi experienced these complications literally firsthand and clearly had trouble integrating them into a coherent narrative of their own lives. In North Africa, World War Two took place on colonial soil: Memmi faced colonial racism *and* antisemitic hostility, he was confronted by French colonial masters *and* Axis occupiers.

These life experiences stand in stark contrast to a current of historical research that attempts to keep colonialism and Nazi Germany strictly separate. Recent attempts by scholars informed by postcolonial theories, such as A. Dirk Moses, to venture a comparison between Europe‘s violent colonial expansionism and Nazi occupation policies in Eastern Europe, and thus to bring the two phenomena and their commemorative afterlives into conversation with each other, have led to fierce criticism, most recently in the spring of 2021 in Germany.[5] Commentators accused the proponents of such a comparison not only of historical egalitarianism, but even of paving the way for radical right-wing movements that deliberately trivialised the Holocaust.[6] The result is that the debate has largely stalled: two positions stand irreconcilably opposed to each other.

In my current project, I seek to reopen and widen the discussion. So far, research has only looked at the extent to which the Nazi occupation regime in Eastern Europe may have been inspired by Germany's colonial past.[7] In my contribution, I would like to reverse the perspective and ask what significance National Socialism had in turn for colonialism. I propose an entangled history of the Holocaust in North Africa that is concerned with how antisemitic persecution played out in a colonial context.[8]

---

[3] Albert Memmi, *The Pillar of Salt,* trans. Edouard Roditi (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001), 95–96. See also George Steinmetz, *The Colonial Origins of Modern Social Thought: French Sociology and the Overseas Empire* (Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2023), 215.

[4] See Albert Camus, "Preface to The Pillar of Salt", *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy/Revue de la philosophie française et de langue française* 19, no. 2 (2011): 15–16.

[5] On the debate, see Ulrike Capdepón and A. Dirk Moses, "Introduction", Forum on the Achille Mbembe Controversy and the German Debate about Antisemitism, Israel, and the Holocaust, *Journal of Genocide Research* 23, no. 2 (2021): 371–373, https://doi-org.ezproxy.uio.no/10.1080/14623528.2020.1847851; Dirk Rupnow, "'Migration Background' versus 'Nazi Background': (German) Debates on Post-Nazism, Post-Migration, and Postcolonialism", *Central European History* 56, no. 2 (2023): 294–297; Saul Friedländer et al., *Ein Verbrechen ohne Namen: Anmerkung zum neuen Streit über den Holocaust* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2022); Susan Neiman and Michael Wildt, eds., *Historiker streiten: Gewalt und Holocaust – die Debatte* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2022); and Frank Bajohr and Rachel O'Sullivan, "Holocaust, Kolonialismus und NS-Imperialismus: Forschung im Schatten einer polemischen Debatte", *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 70, no. 1 (2022): 191–202, https://doi.org/10.1515/vfzg-2022-0008.

[6] An exemplary piece is Jürgen Kaube, "Die Gleichmacher", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 13 June 2021. See also Saul Friedländer, "A Fundamentally Singular Crime", *The Journal of Holocaust Research* 36, no. 1 (2022): 39–43, https://doi.org/10.1080/25785648.2022.2026703.

[7] A. Dirk Moses, "The Holocaust and Colonialism", in *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, eds. Peter Hayes and John Roth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 68–80.

[8] On entangled history as an approach, see more recently Julia Leikin, "From Comparative to Entangled Histories", *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 22, no. 1 (2021): 173–182, https://doi.org/10.1353/kri.2021.0006, and Wendy Bracewell et al., "The Past, Present, and Future of Comparative History in East

Conceptually, I apply to North Africa questions and presuppositions that underlie recent work on the Holocaust in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Scholars such as Yehuda Bauer, Omer Bartov, Raz Segal, Holly Case, Alexander Korb, and most recently Tomasz Frydel assume that, although the mass murder of Jews was initiated and driven by the Nazi regime, it could never have been enacted without the help of both Germany's Axis partners and local collaborators in the occupied European societies.[9] What is more, these works do not consider the persecution and murder of Jews in Eastern and Southeastern Europe in isolation, but examine it against the background of pre-existing local conflicts between population groups defined as religious, ethnic, or racial, thus embedding it in longer temporal contexts, some of which date back to the nineteenth century.

What is more, I relate the persecution of Jews in North Africa much more strongly to World War Two than has been the case in research to date.[10] The North African campaign is still understood as a conventional conflict, in which both warring parties not only adhered closely to the rules of international humanitarian law, but conducted a proper gentleman‘s war, characterized by mutual respect and guided by a medieval-like martial code of honour.[11] From this perspective, there was no room for war crimes against the enemy or mass violence against local civilians, including anti-Semitic atrocities. Rather, the North African campaign was a "war without hate," as a German military historian recently put it with direct reference to the memoirs of the same name by German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel.[12]

However, such ideas of a supposedly clean war, still shaped by the veterans themselves and uncritically carried forward to this day, clearly need to be revised. Instead of treating the North African Campaign as a chivalric conflict, and thus ultimately out of (modern) time, I propose to recontextualise it in the truest sense of the word and place it in other historical contexts. This precisely includes understanding it as an integral part of World War Two and the violent ideologies of the twentieth century that underlaid it. In this way, the campaign in North Africa is to be tied back to politics and worldviews, a procedure that military historians have been practicing in the case of the German campaign in the East and the Japanese expansion into East

---

Central Europe and Beyond: Roundtable Discussion, 22 June 2021," *East Central Europe* 48, no. 2–3 (2021): 328–344, https://doi.org/10.30965/18763308-48020008.

[9] Yehuda Bauer, *The Death of the Shtetl* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2009); Omer Bartov, *Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2019); Raz Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians: War, Social Breakdown, and Mass Violence 1914–1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016); Holly Case, *Between States: The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea during WWII* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009); Alexander Korb, *Im Schatten des Weltkriegs: Massengewalt der Ustasa gegen Serben, Juden und Roma in Kroatien 1941–1945* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2013); Tomasz Frydel, *Genocide from Above: Village Society and the Holocaust in Occupied Poland, 1939–45* (PhD thesis: University of Toronto, 2021).

[10] See, in particular, Aomar Boum and Sarah Abrevaya Stein, eds., *The Holocaust and North Africa* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019), and Matthew Ghobrial Cockerill, "Did the Nazis Plan to Extend the Final Solution beyond Europe? Assessing the Evidence", *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* (2 April 2024), https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2024.2326262. Both publications have more serious theoretical and methodological shortcomings. Better are *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord face à l'Allemagne nazie*, eds. Dan Michman and Haïm Saadoun (Paris: Perrin, 2018); Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Martin Cüppers, *Nazi Palestine: The Plans for the Extermination of the Jews* (New York: Enigma Books, 2010); Reeva Spector Simon, *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa: The Impact of World War II* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2020); and Francis R. Nicosia and Boğaç A. Ergene, eds., *Nazism, the Holocaust, and the Middle East: Arab and Turkish Responses* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2018).

[11] Patrick Bernhard, "Guerre et violences en Afrique du Nord", in *La guerre du desert 1940–1943*, eds. Nicola Labanca, David Reynolds, and Olivier Wieviorka (Paris: Perrin, 2019), 181–220.

[12] Peter Lieb, "Erwin Rommel: Widerstandskämpfer oder Nationalsozialist?," *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 61, no. 3 (2013): 302–343, in particular 304, https://doi.org/10.1524/vfzg.2013.0015.

Asia for decades and now do so as a matter of course.[13] It is often overlooked that the North African campaign was fought by fascist regimes united not just by a violent vision of racially pure new societies; moreover, a stated wartime objective of Fascist Italy in the African theatre was the conquest of *spazio vitale*, or "living space". The capture of British-controlled Egypt, Sudan, and Somaliland in the Horn of Africa was intended to complement the existing portions of Italian overseas territory in Libya and Ethiopia and to round them out into a new contiguous fascist empire in which the "New Man" of fascism would emerge, steeled in permanent battle with the desert and the "natives".[14] The idea was to make Africa a breeding ground for the "white race" and to reverse the declining birthrate that Europe had been experiencing since the late nineteenth century. Mussolini's vision thus had a major role to play in the rejuvenation and racial renewal of the Old Continent, which was supposedly in decline. The Desert War was thus inextricably linked to the imperial expansion of the Axis powers and their murderous biopolitics.

Adopting such a chronologically and geographically expanded perspective forces us to rethink the very definition of the Holocaust. In fact, my research is based on a widened understanding of the phenomenon. For a long time, parts of the research community and a broader public equated the Holocaust with the systematic mass murder of Jewish people that began in 1941. In recent years, however, Jewish historians such as Saul Friedländer and Dan Michman in particular have criticised this view.[15] They argue that the social exclusion, deprivation, and persecution of Jews between 1933 and the beginning of the war have been pushed into the background, although they marked essential steps on the way to extermination.[16] Ultimately, the Nazis were concerned with the complete eradication of Jewry, the people as well as their culture. Cultural, social, and physical extermination are thus to be understood as a unity. Even in the case of North Africa, where there were no mass murders but extensive antisemitic measures, one should therefore speak of the Holocaust, according to Michman.[17]

It would indeed be too shortsighted to understand the Holocaust in North Africa solely from its fatal result. Rather, it must be understood as a cumulative process that began with the persecution of Jewish people by the Italian and French states in the late 1930s. Based on extensive archival research, I argue that the exclusion, persecution, and partial murder of the 450,000 Jewish people living in North Africa was strongly influenced by colonial traditions of violence against Arabs and Berbers. Under the conditions of World War Two and fuelled by the Third Reich, the two phenomena overlapped, which in turn helps explain the dynamics of violence which we can observe in the region between September 1940, when fascist Italy invaded British-controlled Egypt, and May 1943, when the Axis forces surrendered in Tunisia. The fact that genocide in the end did not take place in the Maghreb was therefore not due to a lack of will on the part of the German authorities involved, but to other reasons. First and foremost, there was the military situation, which was difficult for the Axis powers from the very beginning and which, among other things, made mass deportations to the extermination camps in Eastern Europe impossible. In this sense, too, the course of the war and the persecution of the Jews were closely intertwined.

---

[13] Jürgen Förster, *Die Wehrmacht im NS-Staat: Eine strukturgeschichtliche Analyse*, 2nd ed. (Munich: De Gruyter-Oldenbourg, 2017); Rolf-Dieter Müller, *Hitler's Wehrmacht, 1935–1945* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2016); John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986); Christopher Alan Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Armies: Britain's Asian Empire and the War with Japan* (London: Penguin, 2005).

[14] Patrick Bernhard and Lutz Klinkhammer, eds., *L'uomo nuovo del fascismo: la costruzione di un progetto totalitario* (Rome: Viella, 2017).

[15] Dan Michman, "'The Holocaust' – Do We Agree What We Are Talking About?", *Holocaust Studies* 20, no. 1–2 (2014): 117–128, https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2014.11439098.

[16] See the similar argument made by Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses, "Editor's Introduction: Changing Themes in the Study of Genocide", in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, eds. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 1–18, in particular 9.

[17] Michman, "'The Holocaust'", 125.

My argument has three parts. The first part deals with the imperial connection between colonialism and the rise of modern antisemitism from the late nineteenth century. As I will argue, in France and Italy, antisemitic resentment was rooted to a significant degree in anti-Muslim violence perpetrated in North African colonies. The second part is devoted to the multiple interests that the Nazi regime displayed in North Africa and the Jewish people living there from 1933 onwards, and it explores how locals reacted to German attempts to exert influence. The third part focuses on the radicalisation of antisemitic thought and action during World War Two. As I will show, German decision-makers were determined to include the Jewish people living in North Africa in their murderous plans. I conclude by taking stock of the implications of these new findings for our understanding of the recent history of North Africa and the people living in the region. In the conclusion, I will address the wider consequences that such a perspective has for our understanding of Nazism and colonialism.

1. An Imperial Nexus: European Colonialism in North Africa, Anti-Muslim Violence, and the Rise of Modern Antisemitism

The persecution of Jewish people in North Africa during World War Two has a long history and is closely related to the violent European expansion in the region from the early nineteenth century. Modern antisemitism was thus ultimately also rooted in the colonialism of the Mediterranean powers of France and Italy, as recent research has formulated in strong contrast to older explanatory approaches. In fact, historians have so far located the cradle of modern antisemitism in Europe. According to this reading, from the nineteenth century, antisemites in the European metropolises succeeded in associating phenomena such as urbanisation, industrialisation, democracy, liberalism, the emancipation of women and minorities, and the progressive globalisation of the economy with Jewish people. Jews thus came to represent everything that millions of Europeans feared and despised about modernity. From this perspective, however, modern antisemitism, which also broke out in North Africa and the Middle East during this period, was ultimately only a “European import”.[18] The idea was that the local people had merely passively received the idea from the Old Continent and had not themselves played any part in its creation.

It was only recently that researchers identified imperialism and its consequences as an *additional* explanatory factor for the rise of modern antisemitism. As a result, North Africa and the Middle East have become more central to scholarly interest. Rather than conceiving of antisemitism as an ultimately purely European phenomenon in the narrower geographical sense, current explanations assume that the idea emerged in a complex interplay of various factors in both Western metropolises and colonised regions and eventually reverberated back to Europe, where it helped shape the notion of a genuinely European modernity.[19]

---

[18] Norman A. Stillman, “Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in the Arab and Islamic World Prior to 1948”, in *Antisemitism: A History*, eds. Albert S. Lindemann and Richard S. Levy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 212–221.

A decisive factor was the violence against Arabs and Berbers. Indeed, one of the far-reaching consequences of Europe's imperial expansion into large parts of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia in the nineteenth century was that colonial rulers faced a situation that was new to them: they had to live among and rule millions of Muslims. In North Africa, however, this proved to be extremely difficult. From the beginning, the Arab and Berber populations resisted the further advance of the European colonial powers, which in turn responded with ever more violence. Their colonial troops repeatedly committed massacres, poison gas was used in Morocco and Libya, thousands of civilians were interned in desert camps under sometimes horrendous conditions, and, finally, the colonial masters used hunger as a weapon. The cattle herds of the nomadic inhabitants were deliberately destroyed in order to deprive them of their livelihood.[20] According to estimates, between 1830 and 1872, up to 900,000 people died in massacres in Algeria alone, and as many more died as a result of the famine and disease triggered by destruction.[21]

The violence against Arabs and Berbers in turn set in motion antisemitic violence. Thus, the new European colonial masters were also confronted with indigenous Jewish people who – at least to European eyes – often looked very different from their co-religionists on the European continent. While there had been a cultural and economic elite of Jewish merchants, bankers, and entrepreneurs from Italy and Spain residing in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya since the late fifteenth century, most Jews in North Africa belonged to so-called Maghrebi communities, the eldest of which date back to antiquity.[22] The latter's language and culture shared many features with the local Arabic populations; thus, the boundaries between those two communities were rather fluid.[23] This explains why the soon-to-be-common phrase "Jews in Arab countries" virtually invited comparisons with Muslim populations that many Europeans at the time understood as inferior in cultural and/or racial terms. Using France as an example, Maud Mandel, Lisa Moses Leff, and Ethan B. Katz have recently argued that the brutal expansionism in Algeria substantially shaped both anti-Muslim racism and antisemitism.[24] On the one hand, colonial administrators and anthropologists Orientalised all Jews and taxonomised them – like the Muslims – as a specific group of "natives", thus irrespective of the fact that the members of the Jewish elites in North Africa understood themselves overwhelmingly as Europeans. This characterisation was repeated in reports and scientific papers until it became unquestioned "truth".

On the other hand, and depending on the argumentative context, either Muslims or Jews were portrayed as the supposedly exemplary group close to the Europeans and were played off against each other in this way.[25] The majority of Jews, for example, were granted French citizenship by the Crémieux Decree of 1870, while Muslims were not.[26] Conversely, right-wing extremists sometimes portrayed Muslims as the "good Semites", whose supposed virtues they sharply contrasted with the allegedly greedy and oppressive nature of "the Jews". Not surprisingly, both France's imperial policy of *divide et impera* and the cultivation of antisemitic resentment in parts of the local white societies led to further violence. Indeed, there were numerous attacks by right-wing French settlers on Jews, as well as violence by Arabs against Jews. The Constantine pogrom, in which twenty-three Jews died and hundreds more were injured in 1934, is a striking example. The legal and social betterment of Jews through the Crémieux Decree actually created a growing rift between indigenous groups.[27] It is true that, in the face of anti-Jewish incidents, some Arabs and Berbers expressed their solidarity with Jews, whom they also saw as victims of French colonial policy, and continued to seek amicable coexistence between the communities.[28] Others, however, saw their Jewish fellow citizens as a privileged minority that supposedly made common cause with the colonial rulers.

---

[19] Dorian Bell, *Globalizing Race: Antisemitism and Empire in French and European Culture* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2018).

[20] Kamel Kateb, *Européens, "Indigènes" et Juifs en Algérie (1830–1962): Représentations et réalités des populations* (Paris: Institut national d'études démographiques, 2001), 47.

[21] Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, *Coloniser. Exterminer: Sur la Guerre et l'État colonial* (Paris: Fayard, 2005), 188.

[22] Emily Benichou Gottreich and Daniel J. Schroeter, eds., *Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011).

[23] Ella Shohat, "The Invention of Judeo-Arabic", *Interventions* 19, no. 2 (2017), 153–200.

[24] Ethan B. Katz, Lisa Moses Leff, and Maud S. Mandel, eds., *Colonialism and the Jews* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017).

[25] Tudor Parfitt, "The Use of the Jew in Colonial Discourse", in *Orientalism and the Jews*, eds. Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar (Hanover, NH, and London: Brandeis University Press, 2005), 51–67.

2. Early Interactions: Nazi Interest in North Africa and Antisemitic Hostilities on the Ground, 1933–1940

After Hitler's rise to power in 1933, local conflicts in North Africa intensified once again. I argue that, on the one hand, the Nazi regime showed a genuine interest in the region and tried, among other things, to exploit the existing tensions in order to gain influence over the region. Conversely, radical right-wing settlers and Arabs on the ground used the National Socialist state and its ideology in various ways for their own purposes. Thus, there were many early interactions between the Third Reich and the local societies.

As recent research has shown, the German dictatorship had economic, military, and political-ideological interests in the Italian and French possessions in North Africa.[29] In this way, Jewish people living in North Africa became a target relatively early on. This can be seen in a series of publications whose authors attempted to compile general information about the people living in the North African possessions.[30] In addition, there were regular reports from the German consuls on the situation on the ground, which circulated not only within the Foreign Office but were also sent to other authorities. For example, a memorandum on the "Jewish Question in Algeria" reached Adolf Hitler's Reich Chancellery as early as October 1933, just a few months after the Nazis seized power.[31] By the time the war began in North Africa in the fall of 1940, moreover, the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Reich Security Main Office, the future central agency of the Holocaust, had built up a network of agents and informants in North Africa.[32] These agents stablished contact with groups within the white settler communities in order to win them over to the German regime. At the same time, the objective was also to undermine British and French colonial rule in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia as well as in the Middle East.[33] In this context, recent research has pointed to, among others, the radio programmes that the Nazi regime broadcast in Arabic in the region to mobilise the indigenous population as well. The idea was to exploit anticolonial resistance. Anti-Jewish resentments, however, played a crucial role in the Nazi strategy: the radio messages portrayed Jewish people as the prime profiteers of the imperial domination by the Western-liberal regimes, and as the driving forces behind the British Mandate over Arab Palestinians.[34] In sum, the German Reich had a relatively strong presence in North Africa and had created instruments with the aim of penetrating politics and society in North Africa in the National Socialist sense.

---

[26] Taoufik Djebali, "Ethnicity and Power in North Africa: Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco", in *Race and Nation: Ethnic Systems in the Modern World*, ed. Paul Spickard (New York and London: Routledge 2005), 143.

[27] Benoit Challand, "Citizenship and Violence in the Arab Worlds: A Historical Sketch", in *The Transformation of Citizenship*, vol. 3: *Struggle, Resistance and Violence,* eds. Jürgen Mackert and Bryan S. Turner (New York and London: Routledge, 2017), 93–112, in particular 102.

[28] Orit Bashkin und Daniel J. Schroeter, "Historical Themes: Muslim-Jewish Relations in the Modern Middle East and North Africa", in *The Routledge Handbook of Muslim-Jewish Relations*, ed. Josef Meri (New York and London: Routledge, 2016), 35–56.

[29] Karsten Linne, *Deutschland jenseits des Äquators? Die NS-Kolonialplanungen für Afrika* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2008); Patrick Bernhard, "Colonial Crossovers: Nazi Germany and its Entanglements with Other Empires", *Journal of Global History* 12, no. 2 (2017): 206–227, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022817000055.

[30] Patrick Bernhard, *In the Shadow of El Alamein: War Violence, Colonial Rule and the Holocaust in the North African Campaign* (in preparation).

[31] "Jewish Question in Algeria", report of the German Consul General, October 1933, National Archives Berlin, R 43-II/602, Bd. 21933.

Local residents responded very differently to the German initiatives. As in Europe, people in numerous cities in North Africa, including Jews, Arabs, and Christians, organised themselves against the new regime in Berlin. For example, the International League against Racism and Anti-Semitism, a French initiative that had existed since 1927, set up branches in North Africa to counter Nazi propaganda on the ground.[35] Thus, antifascism did not remain a phenomenon limited to Europe and North America; rather, it must be seen as a global force that included countries with Arab populations.[36]

Among the other inhabitants of North Africa, however, the Nazi suggestions fell on fertile ground. First of all, there were the nationalist Arab circles. For a long time, scholars have assumed that the eliminatory antisemitism of Hitler‘s regime had had such a strong impact on these groups that it still determined the attitude of large parts of the Arab world towards Jewish people after 1945.[37] More recent research, however, has emphasised that, although there were groups and individuals, such as the self-proclaimed Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini, who wanted to exterminate Jews at all costs, they were only a minority among those who collaborated with Berlin. Most Arab nationalists saw in the Third Reich little more than a powerful strategic ally (or tool) in their anti-colonial struggle against the much-hated French and British colonial rulers.[38]

---

[32] Telegram no. 1417 of the German Consul General in Tanger to the Foreign Office in Berlin, 11 November 1943, Political Archives of the German Foreign Office (PA-AA), R 101023, 4353.

[33] Georges Bensoussan, *Jews in Arab Countries: The Great Uprooting* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019); David Motadel, "The Global Authoritarian Moment and the Revolt against Empire", *The American Historical Review* 124, no. 3 (2019): 843–877.

[34] Thomas J. Kehoe, "Fighting for Our Mutual Benefit: Understanding and Contextualizing the Intentions behind Nazi Propaganda for the Arabs during World War Two", *Journal of Genocide Research* 14, no. 2 (2012): 137–157.

[35] Aomar Boum, "Partners against Anti-Semitism: Muslims and Jews Respond to Nazism in French North African Colonies, 1936–1940", *The Journal of North African Studies* 19, no. 4 (2014): 554–570. For the Middle East, see Sana Tannoury-Karam, "No Place for Neutrality: The Case for Democracy and the League Against Nazism and Fascism in Syria and Lebanon", in *Anti-Fascism in a Global Perspective: Transnational Networks, Exile Communities, and Radical Internationalism*, eds. Kasper Braskén, Nigel Copsey, and David J Featherstone (Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2021), 133–152.

[36] Boum, "Partners against Anti-Semitism". See also Michael Ortiz, *Anti-Colonialism and the Crises of Interwar Fascism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2023).

[37] An exemplary book is Matthias Küntzel, *Nazis, Islamic Antisemitism and the Middle East: The 1948 Arab War against Israel and the Aftershocks of World War II* (Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2024).

[38] Omar Kamil, *Der Holocaust im arabischen Gedächtnis: Eine Diskursgeschichte 1945–1967*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 11. On fascist Italy's reaching out in North Africa and the Middle East, see Anna Baldinetti, "Fascist Propaganda in the Maghrib", *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 37, no. 3 (2011), 408–436.

Despite the politically and morally highly charged discussion about "Islamofascism"[39] among Arabs today, a second important group has been largely forgotten: European settlers in North Africa. For many among them, in particular those of French origin, National Socialism was indeed a genuine ideological model. This was demonstrated not least by how readily they adopted the language, rituals, and emblems of the Third Reich. Between 1933 and 1939, there were numerous cases reported in which mobs of white settlers shouted "Heil Hitler" at antisemitic rallies in Algeria before turning violent and beating up Jewish people.[40] No doubt, many of the French settlers were already convinced racists and antisemites before Hitler‘s conquest of power. However, the reference to National Socialism seems to have been important for them. Obviously, its symbols and rituals created a new feeling of attachment to a movement that since 1933 had been considered the spearhead of an international struggle for the preservation of the "white race". With the Hitler salute and the swastika, one‘s own hatred could be expressed in a new and forceful way. National Socialism thus provided a cognitive framework that made violent resentments understandable in wider international frameworks and thus ultimately radicalised the existing antisemitic thinking.

3. Further Radicalisations: World War Two and Nazi Plans for the Murder of Jews in North Africa

In many ways, World War Two further radicalised the existing colonial relations of violence. For example, the Desert War between 1940 and 1943 ensured that violence against Arabs and Berbers and violence against Jews overlapped even more than had already been the case. Moreover, the fighting between the Allies and the Axis powers had an impact on the way that French, Italian, and German actors treated indigenous populations in their spheres of influence. For this reason, I have come to speak in my research of the North African campaign as ultimately involving three, closely intertwined wars: the struggle between the Allies and the Axis powers; anticolonial insurgencies in the rear of the front; and a state-organised policy of antisemitic violence that, at least in the German case, had as its stated goal the murder of Jewish people living in North Africa. In fact, these three wars were mutually exacerbating each other: this constellation helps to better understand the dynamics of violence that we can observe in North Africa after 1940.

How closely the war operations at the front were linked to the violence against civilians in the rear of the front was already evident in the first days of the war. Thus, in the fall of 1940, Arabs and Berbers were once again the target of far-reaching repressive measures that were entirely in the tradition of colonial counterinsurgency. Tribal leaders, for example, were immediately imprisoned as a preventive measure, as had been common practice since the nineteenth century.

Early on, this colonial violence affected the other two wars that defined the North African campaign. First, there was the fighting between the Axis powers and the Allies. It was, in particular, the many non-white soldiers who fought on the Allied side who became victims. Both Bernard Montgomery and Charles de Gaulle commanded multi-ethnic armies which were made up of indigenous soldiers from Australia,

---

[39] Peter Wien, "Arabs and Fascism: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives", *Die Welt des Islams* 52, no. 3/4 (2012): 331–350.

[40] Sophie B. Roberts, *Citizenship and Antisemitism in French Colonial Algeria, 1870–1962* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 165 f.

New Zealand, Polynesia, India, Palestine, and North Africa itself.[41] As prisoners of war of the Axis powers, quite a few of them experienced the racialised violence that had already characterised everyday colonial life in North Africa. For example, soldiers from India, Chad, and Senegal were publicly whipped in Italian POW camps when they refused orders.[42] Others were shot on the spot right after their capture by Axis forces, as the latter often did not consider such soldiers to be regular troops, a notion that itself has a long imperial past.

Second, the long tradition of colonial violence against Arabs and Berbers once again influenced anti-Jewish resentment and violence. Here, a broad field opens which, however, has so far only been partially covered by historians. Only in the case of France and Algeria are we somewhat better informed about the personal, institutional, and ideological continuities between colonialism and the persecution of Jews under the Vichy regime. These continuities became evident in the fall of 1940, when the colonial governments in Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco adopted a series of antisemitic measures that included occupational bans and the expropriation of Jewish property. As Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison has shown, although the Jewish Statute, for example, was conceived in Vichy and referred to the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, it was also part of a longer tradition of colonial discrimination by the French state. The Jewish Statute served the state's interest in maintaining imperial order in the overseas territories, which was also primarily conceived in racial terms. In short, the discrimination against Jews in North Africa was also based on a colonial calculation.

A close connection between colonialism and antisemitism also existed regarding the deportation of Jewish people to camps. Thus, Sylvie Thénault has drawn attention to the fact that Pétain's rule should be understood not only as a collaboration regime limited to Europe, but also as a vast colonial empire characterised precisely by a long history of the internment of locals who were supposedly endangering French rule.[43] Thénault, for example, understands the nearly seventy camps that the local Vichy authorities maintained in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia since 1940 as merely the culmination of a policy of locking people away. That policy had developed in exchanges between Paris and Algiers and dated back to the beginnings of French expansion in North Africa in 1830.

The considerable importance of the colonial territories for Vichy can be seen from the fact that, of the 600,000 prisoners who experienced the "France of the camps",[44] those who were considered particularly dangerous were shipped across the Mediterranean. It is true that there was no mass murder in the Vichy camps on African soil as in Europe. However, we can observe a practice of deliberate neglect and mistreatment, which favoured the premature death of inmates. In fact, living conditions in all these places were extremely precarious: water and food supplies were inadequate, as were sanitary conditions and medical care. In addition, prisoners were beaten by their Arab and French guards and forced to perform physically demanding forced labour. In some cases, prisoners were even murdered in cold blood, such as when they were no longer fit for work.[45] There are indications that Jewish inmates fared the worst, thus sitting at the very bottom of the camp hierarchy.[46]

---

[41] Tarak Barkawi, *Soldiers of Empire: Indian and British Armies in World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); David Killingray and Martin Plaut, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War* (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2010); Eric T. Jennings, *French Africa in World War II: The African Resistance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

[42] Memo "Italian terrorism in Libya" of the British Foreign Office, 14 February 1941, The National Archives/Public Record Office in Kew Gardens (TNA/PRO), FO 371/27571.

[43] Sylvie Thénault, *Violence ordinaire dans l'Algérie coloniale: Camps, internements, assignations à résidence* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2012).

[44] Denis Peschanski, *La France des camps: L´internement, 1938–1946* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002).

This violence behind the front was repeatedly fuelled by the German side at crucial points. Representatives of the Nazi regime, for example, put pressure on the French authorities to abandon their allegedly still far too lax attitude in the persecution of Jewish people in favour of a much harsher approach along the lines of the German Reich. As the German ambassador in Paris, for example, assured his superiors in September 1942, he had articulated very clearly to his French interlocutors the general expectation of the Nazi regime that "the solution of the Jewish question" must now be pursued much more vigorously. At the same time, he made it clear that the Third Reich also included the Jews in North Africa in the Reich's murder plans. In this context, he explicitly spoke of the "overseas French protectorates and colonies".[47]

The fact that large-scale deportations to the extermination camps in Eastern Europe did not take place in North Africa was not due to a lack of will on the part of the German authorities involved, but simply to a lack of possibilities. At no time during the North African campaign did the Third Reich have the necessary transport capacities. There was not even enough cargo space on ships and trucks for the basic supplies for its own troops, which had to be transported up to 1,000 kilometres to the front.[48] The defeat at El Alamein in the fall of 1942 then sealed all hopes of the Axis powers for future control of North Africa, which in turn would have been the prerequisite for the deportation of the people living there to the extermination camps of Eastern Europe.

The Nazi regime, however, did not abandon its antisemitic agenda after its defeat at El Alamein, but continued to pursue it on a smaller scale when the Axis forces withdrew to Tunisia in the fall of 1942. It is known that, during the German and Italian occupation of the country, representatives of the Nazi regime robbed the Jewish community on a large scale.[49] What is more, in several Tunisian cities Jewish people were also forced to wear the yellow Star of David, which in turn made them easy targets for attacks by Arabs and French colonists. During the German-Italian occupation of the country between November 1942 and May 1943, 350 Jewish people were killed, up to 700 died of malnutrition, and 20 more were eventually deported by the occupiers to Europe and imprisoned in concentration camps. Finally, the German occupiers incited the local population to open violence against Jewish people.

As in Europe, gentiles in North Africa reacted very differently to the German occupation and its antisemitic policies, albeit with different outcomes.[50] There were cases of Arab and French residents helping their Jewish neighbours by, for example, hiding them from arrests by the German and Vichy authorities. Others did not intervene when the stores of Jewish owners were looted but did not participate in such looting themselves. The boundaries become even more fluid when we look at the sequestration of Jewish property. Thus, local Frenchmen helped by buying up Jewish businesses as straw men to protect Jewish property from the authorities‘ grasp. Others, however, did so only to enrich themselves: quite a few retained the properties after the liberation of the country by the Allies. Finally, non-Jewish locals also participated in acts of antisemitic violence during the occupation. For example, the German military administration learned that individual Arabs in Tunis, in exchange for money, directed German and Italian soldiers to houses inhabited by Jewish families, and the soldiers then robbed the families and raped women and girls.[51] In this way, locals became accomplices of the German perpetrators.

---

[45] Patrick Bernhard, "Violence", in *The Oxford Handbook of the Modern Mediterranean*, ed. Manuel Borutta (Oxford: Oxford University Press, in preparation).

[46] Bernhard, *In the Shadow of El Alamein*.

[47] Patrick Bernhard and Stefan Petke, *Der Holocaust in Algerien: Antisemitische Verfolgung und ihre Erfahrung in vergleichender Perspektive* (Berlin: unpublished expert opinion for the German Federal Ministry of Finances, 2020).

[48] Kaushik Roy, *Fighting Rommel: The British Imperial Army in North Africa during the Second World War* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2020), 228.

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

[50] Irit Abramski-Bligh, "L'influence de la Seconde Guerre mondiale sur les relations judéo-arabes en Libye et en Tunisie", *Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah* 205, no. 2 (2016): 317–353, https://doi.org/10.3917/rhsho.205.0317.

An African Affair: Some Conclusions on the Holocaust in North Africa

What consequences do the results presented here have for our understanding of the connection between colonialism and National Socialism? Until now, it has been assumed that the nexus was very loose. The German presence in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific region under the Kaiser was only of very short duration, according to the conventional wisdom to this day.[52] The approximately forty years between 1884, when the German Reich acquired its first overseas possessions, and 1914/1918, when these were lost again in the wake of World War One, did not have a lasting impact on German society and, by natural extension, the Nazi leadership around Hitler. Until now, researchers have had problems drawing connections between the German colonialism of the late nineteenth century and the National Socialist policy of occupation and extermination in Eastern Europe during the Second World War.[53] Considerable temporal and geographical distances had to be overcome, which is why it was often difficult to identify suitable parameters for comparison.[54] It was therefore relatively easy for critics to argue that parallels and continuities were constructed ex-post by scholars rather than having actually existed historically.

However, if we also consider the other side of the coin – the impact of National Socialism on colonialism – a different picture emerges. The entanglements between the two phenomena were not only close, but also historically concrete. In North Africa, National Socialism and colonialism overlapped spatially and chronologically. In fact, from the late 1930s onwards, the Third Reich became increasingly involved in a region that had gradually come under the control of the European colonial powers of France and Italy from the start of the nineteenth century. From the beginning of 1941, the Nazi regime waged war in large parts of North Africa for over three years, which not only tied up considerable resources, but also represented the main theatre of war for both Germany‘s Italian Axis partners and the British Empire until the Allied landing in Sicily in July 1943.[55] In the rear areas, the Jewish people living in the region came into the crosshairs of the Nazi regime. In other words, we can observe a cumulative radicalisation.

---

[51] Patrick Bernhard, "Guerre et violences en Afrique du Nord", in *La Guerre du Désert 1940–1943*, eds. Nicola Labanca, David Reynolds, and Olivier Wieviorka (Paris: Perrin, 2019), 181–220.

[52] An overview of the debate is provided by Michelle Gordon and Rachel O'Sullivan, "Introduction: Colonial Paradigms of Violence", in *Colonial Paradigms of Violence: Comparative Analysis of the Holocaust, Genocide and Mass Killing*, eds. Michelle Gordon and Rachel O'Sullivan (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2022).

[53] On the problem of conceptualising such a story, see Birthe Kundrus, "Kontinuitäten, Parallelen, Rezeptionen: Überlegungen zur 'Kolonialisierung' des Nationalsozialismus", *WerkstattGeschichte* 43 (2006): 45–62.

[54] Rachel O'Sullivan, *Nazi Germany, Annexed Poland and Colonial Rule: Resettlement, Germanization and Population Policies in Comparative Perspective* (London: Bloomsbury, 2023).

[55] Dan Diner, *Ein anderer Krieg: Das jüdische Palästina und der Zweite Weltkrieg, 1935–1942* (Munich: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 2021); Andrew Buchanan, *World War II in Global Perspective, 1931–1953: A Short History* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2019); Rick Atkinson, *An Army at Dawn: The War in North Africa, 1942–1943* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2007).

French and Italian settler colonialism prepared the ground for anti-Jewish persecution by Nazi Germany and its collaborators in North Africa. The colonial regimes conditioned the increasingly violent social relations in the region. After all, modern antisemitism emerged in the exchange between Europe and North Africa at the end of the nineteenth century. This was less true for Germany,[56] but all the more so for countries such as France and Italy. The French colonial rulers in particular linked anti-Muslim resentment to antisemitic resentment. Colonialism thus created the sharp and increasingly racially imagined dichotomy between Arabs and Jews, whose cultures had previously been characterised by blurring lines. This dichotomy was an important prerequisite for the Holocaust. National Socialism was able to build on traditional prejudices and hostility towards Jews that had been established in the meantime, and to exploit the local situation. However, this was only possible because there were also people in North Africa who were prepared to participate in exclusion and robbery, and ultimately in the deportation of Jewish people to camps.

Indeed, as this article has shown, people in North Africa were by no means uninvolved observers who merely heard about the Holocaust in faraway Europe and discussed the events in coffee houses or in family circles. Rather, exclusion, dispossession, deportation, and, in some cases, murder also took place on their own doorstep. In this context, Robert Satloff has spoken of the "long reach of the Holocaust into Arab lands".[57] This means that local people were involved in the events in many ways. As in Europe, they exhibited a wide range of behaviours, ranging from hiding to denunciation and murder. And as in Europe, it is not at all easy to tell where help ended and exploitation began, as illustrated by the example of the straw men, some of whom saved Jewish properties, while others enriched themselves. Even more serious was that, as the Holocaust in North Africa took place in a colonial context with a long tradition of violence, individuals could first be victims themselves and then become perpetrators, and vice versa. This was the case, for example, with some of the leaders of the Libyan liberation movement, who had escaped persecution by the Italian colonial power in the 1930s by going into exile in Egypt, but after the liberation of their country they were behind the pogrom that took place in Tripoli in November 1945, in which more than 130 Jewish people were victims.[58] Thus, my research has confirmed what recent work on the Holocaust in Eastern and Southeastern Europe has already shown: the distinction between perpetrators, victims, and bystanders, as proposed by Raul Hilberg, is rather difficult to maintain.[59]

At the same time, it has become clear that the people on the ground had certain room for manoeuvre, which they used in different ways. North African life stories, such as that of Albert Memmi, with which I started this article, ultimately also reflect the diversity of responses that non-Jewish people gave to the exclusion, persecution, and murder of Jewish people in a colonial context. Personal histories like Memmi's thus complicate our understanding of the Holocaust, but at the same time they do so in illuminating and productive ways. They suggest that we should not only think beyond traditional geographical boundaries when we speak of the Holocaust. Moreover, they raise the question of the agency of people in North Africa, even if the answers given will not always be comfortable.

---

[56] Christian Davis, *Colonialism, Antisemitism, and Germans of Jewish Descent in Imperial Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012); *Colonialism and the Jews in German History: From the Middle Ages to the 20th Century*, ed. Stefan Vogt (London: Bloomsbury, 2022).

[57] Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2006).

[58] Abramski-Bligh, "L'influence", 346.

[59] Jan Burzlaff, "Confronting the Communal Grave: A Reassessment of Social Relations during the Holocaust in Eastern Europe", *The Historical Journal* 63, no. 4 (2020): 1054–1077.

Bibliography

Abitbol, Michel. *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989.

Abramski-Bligh, Irit. "L'influence de la Seconde Guerre mondiale sur les relations judéo-arabes en Libye et en Tunisie". *Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah* 205, no. 2 (2016): 317–353. https://doi.org/10.3917/rhsho.205.0317.

Atkinson, Rick. *An Army at Dawn: The War in North Africa, 1942–1943.* New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2007.

Bajohr, Frank, and Rachel O'Sullivan. "Holocaust, Kolonialismus und NS-Imperialismus: Forschung im Schatten einer polemischen Debatte". *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 70, no. 1 (2022): 191–202. https://doi.org/10.1515/vfzg-2022-0008.

Baldinetti, Anna. "Fascist Propaganda in the Maghrib". *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 37, no. 3 (2011): 408–436.

Barkawi, Tarak. *Soldiers of Empire: Indian and British Armies in World War II.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Bartov, Omer. *Anatomy of a Genocide: the Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz.* New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2019.

Bashkin, Orit, und Daniel J. Schroeter. "Historical Themes: Muslim-Jewish Relations in the modern Middle East and North Africa". In *The Routledge Handbook of Muslim-Jewish Relations*, edited by Josef Meri, 35–56. New York and London: Routledge, 2016.

Bauer, Yehuda. *The Death of the Shtetl.* New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2009.

Bayly, Christopher Alan, and Tim Harper. *Forgotten Armies: Britain's Asian Empire and the War with Japan.* London: Penguin, 2005.

Bell, Dorian. *Globalizing Race: Antisemitism and Empire in French and European Culture.* Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2018.

Benichou Gottreich, Emily, and Daniel J. Schroeter, editors. *Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011.

Bensoussan, Georges. *Jews in Arab Countries: The Great Uprooting.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019.

Bernhard, Patrick. *In the Shadow of El Alamein: War Violence, Colonial Rule and the Holocaust in the North African Campaign* (in preparation).

Bernhard, Patrick. "Violence". In *The Oxford Handbook of the Modern Mediterranean*, edited by Manuel Borutta (Oxford: Oxford University Press, in preparation).

Bernhard, Patrick. "Guerre et violences en Afrique du Nord". In *La guerre du desert 1940–1943*, edited by Nicola Labanca, David Reynolds, and Olivier Wieviorka, 181–220. Paris: Perrin, 2019.

Bernhard, Patrick. "Colonial Crossovers: Nazi Germany and its Entanglements with Other Empires". *Journal of Global History* 12, no. 2 (2017): 206–227. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022817000055.

Bernhard, Patrick, and Lutz Klinkhammer, editors. *L'uomo nuovo del fascismo: la costruzione di un progetto totalitario.* Rome: Viella, 2017.

Bernhard, Patrick, and Stefan Petke. *Der Holocaust in Algerien: Antisemitische Verfolgung und ihre Erfahrung in vergleichender Perspektive.* Berlin: unpublished expert opinion for the German Federal Ministry of Finances, 2020.

Bloxham, Donald, and A. Dirk Moses. "Editor's Introduction: Changing Themes in the Study of Genocide". In *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, edited by Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses, 1–18. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Boum, Aomar. "Partners against Anti-Semitism: Muslims and Jews Respond to Nazism in French North African Colonies, 1936–1940". *The Journal of North African Studies* 19, no. 4 (2014): 554–570.

Boum, Aomar, and Sarah Abrevaya Stein, editors. *The Holocaust and North Africa.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019.

Buchanan, Andrew. *World War II in Global Perspective, 1931–1953: A Short History.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2019.

Bracewell, Wendy, Ulf Brunnbauer, Diana Mishkova, Joachim von Puttkamer, and Philipp Ther. "The Past, Present, and Future of Comparative History in East Central Europe and Beyond: Roundtable Discussion, 22 June 2021". *East Central Europe* 48, no. 2–3 (2021): 328–344. https://doi.org/10.30965/18763308-48020008.

Burzlaff, Jan. "Confronting the Communal Grave: A Reassessment of Social Relations during the Holocaust in Eastern Europe". *The Historical Journal*, 63, no. 4 (2020): 1054–1077.

Camus, Albert. "Preface to The Pillar of Salt". *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy/Revue de la philosophie française et de langue française* 19, no. 2 (2011): 15–16.

Capdepón, Ulrike, and A. Dirk Moses. "Introduction", Forum on the Achille Mbembe Controversy and the German Debate about Antisemitism, Israel, and the Holocaust. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 23, no. 2 (2021): 371–373. https://doi-org.ezproxy.uio.no/10.1080/14623528.2020.1847851.

Case, Holly. *Between States: The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea during WWII.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009.

Challand, Benoit. "Citizenship and Violence in the Arab Worlds: A Historical Sketch". In *The Transformation of Citizenship*, vol. 3: *Struggle, Resistance and Violence*, edited by Jürgen Mackert and Bryan S. Turner, 93–112. New York and London: Routledge, 2017.

Cockerill, Matthew Ghobrial. "Did the Nazis Plan to Extend the Final Solution beyond Europe? Assessing the Evidence". *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* (2 April 2024). https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2024.2326262.

Davis, Christian. *Colonialism, Antisemitism, and Germans of Jewish Descent in Imperial Germany.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012.

Diner, Dan. *Ein anderer Krieg: Das jüdische Palästina und der Zweite Weltkrieg, 1935–1942.* Munich: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 2021.

Djebali, Taoufik. "Ethnicity and Power in North Africa: Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco". In *Race and Nation: Ethnic Systems in the Modern World*, edited by Paul Spickard, 135–154. New York and London: Routledge 2005.

Dower, John W. *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.

Friedländer, Saul, Norbert Frei, Sybille Steinbacher, Dan Diner, and Jürgen Habermas. *Ein Verbrechen ohne Namen: Anmerkung zum neuen Streit über den Holocaust.* Munich: C.H. Beck, 2022.

Friedländer, Saul. "A Fundamentally Singular Crime". *The Journal of Holocaust Research* 36, no. 1 (2022): 39–43. https://doi.org/10.1080/25785648.2022.2026703.

Frydel, Thomasz. "The Ongoing Challenge of Producing an Integrated Microhistory of the Holocaust in East Central Europe". *Journal of Genocide Research* 20, no. 4 (2018): 624–631. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623528.2018.1527091.

Frydel, Tomasz. *Genocide from Above: Village Society and the Holocaust in Occupied Poland,* 1939–45. PhD thesis: University of Toronto, 2021.

Förster, Jürgen. *Die Wehrmacht im NS-Staat: Eine strukturgeschichtliche Analyse*, 2nd edition. Munich: De Gruyter-Oldenbourg, 2017.

Gordon, Michelle, and Rachel O'Sullivan. "Introduction: Colonial Paradigms of Violence". In *Colonial Paradigms of Violence: Comparative Analysis of the Holocaust, Genocide and Mass Killing*, edited by Michelle Gordon and Rachel O'Sullivan, 9–30. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2022.

Jennings, Eric T. *French Africa in World War II: The African Resistance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Kamil, Omar. *Der Holocaust im arabischen Gedächtnis: Eine Diskursgeschichte 1945–1967*, 2nd edition. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018.

Kateb, Kamel. *Européens, "Indigènes" et Juifs en Algérie (1830–1962): Représentations et réalités des populations*. Paris: Institut national d'études démographiques, 2001.

Katz, Ethan B., Lisa Moses Leff, and Maud S. Mandel, editors. *Colonialism and the Jews*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017.

Kaube, Jürgen. "Die Gleichmacher". *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 June 2021.

Killingray, David, and Martin Plaut. *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War*. Woodbridge: James Currey, 2010.

Kehoe, Thomas J. "Fighting for Our Mutual Benefit: Understanding and Contextualizing the Intentions behind Nazi Propaganda for the Arabs during World War Two". *Journal of Genocide Research* 14, no. 2 (2012): 137–157.

Korb, Alexander. *Im Schatten des Weltkriegs: Massengewalt der Ustasa gegen Serben, Juden und Roma in Kroatien 1941–1945*. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2013.

Kundrus, Birthe. "Kontinuitäten, Parallelen, Rezeptionen. Überlegungen zur 'Kolonialisierung' des Nationalsozialismus". *WerkstattGeschichte* 43 (2006): 45–62.

Küntzel, Matthias. *Nazis, Islamic Antisemitism and the Middle East: The 1948 Arab War against Israel and the Aftershocks of World War II*. Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2024.

Le Cour Grandmaison, Olivier. *Coloniser. Exterminer: Sur la Guerre et l'État colonial*. Paris: Fayard, 2005.

Leikin, Julia. "From Comparative to Entangled Histories". *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 22, no. 1 (2021): 173–182. https://doi.org/10.1353/kri.2021.0006.

Lieb, Peter. "Erwin Rommel: Widerstandskämpfer oder Nationalsozialist?" *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 61, no. 3 (2013): 302–343. https://doi.org/10.1524/vfzg.2013.0015.

Linne, Karsten. *Deutschland jenseits des Äquators? Die NS-Kolonialplanungen für Afrika*. Berlin: Ch. Links, 2008.

Mallmann, Klaus-Michael, and Martin Cüppers. *Nazi Palestine: The Plans for the Extermination of the Jews*. New York: Enigma Books, 2010.

Memmi, Albert. *Die Salzsäule: Roman*. Translated by Gerhard M. Neumann. Cologne and Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1963.

Memmi, Albert. *La statue de sel*. Paris: Corrêa, 1953.

Memmi, Albert. *The Pillar of Salt*. Translated by Edouard Roditi. Boston: Beacon Press, 2001.

Memmi, Albert. *The Pillar of Salt: A Novel*. Translated by Edouard Roditi. New York: Criterion Books, 1955.

Michman, Dan. "'The Holocaust' – Do We Agree What We Are Talking About?". *Holocaust Studies* 20, no. 1–2 (2014): 117–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2014.11439098.

Michman, Dan, and Haïm Saadoun, editors. *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord face à l'Allemagne nazie*. Paris: Perrin, 2018.

Moses, A. Dirk. "The Holocaust and Colonialism". In *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, edited by Peter Hayes and John Roth, 68–80. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Müller, Rolf-Dieter. *Hitler's Wehrmacht, 1935–1945*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2016.

Neiman, Susan, and Michael Wildt, editors. *Historiker streiten: Gewalt und Holocaust – die Debatte*. Berlin: Propyläen, 2022.

Nicosia, Francis R., and Boğaç A. Ergene, editors. *Nazism, the Holocaust, and the Middle East: Arab and Turkish Responses*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2018.

Ortiz, Michael. *Anti-Colonialism and the Crises of Interwar Fascism*. London: Bloomsbury, 2023.

Osterhammel, Jürgen. *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, 2nd edition. Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2005.

O'Sullivan, Rachel. *Nazi Germany, Annexed Poland and Colonial Rule: Resettlement, Germanization and Population Policies in Comparative Perspective*. London: Bloomsbury, 2023.

Parfitt, Tudor. "The Use of the Jew in Colonial Discourse". In *Orientalism and the Jews*, edited by Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar, 51–67. Hanover, NH, and London: Brandeis University Press, 2005.

Peschanski, Denis. *La France des camps: L´internement, 1938–1946*. Paris: Gallimard, 2002.

Roberts, Sophie B. *Citizenship and Antisemitism in French Colonial Algeria, 1870–1962*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Roy, Kaushik. *Fighting Rommel: The British Imperial Army in North Africa during the Second World War*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2020.

Rupnow, Dirk. "'Migration Background' versus 'Nazi Background': (German) Debates on Post-Nazism, Post-Migration, and Postcolonialism". *Central European History* 56, no. 2 (2023): 294–297.

Satloff, Robert. *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2006.

Segal, Raz. *Genocide in the Carpathians: War, Social Breakdown, and Mass Violence 1914–1945*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016.

Shohat, Ella. "The Invention of Judeo-Arabic". *Interventions* 19, no. 2 (2017): 153–200.

Spector Simon, Reeva. *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa: The Impact of World War II*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2020.

Steinmetz, George. *The Colonial Origins of Modern Social Thought: French Sociology and the Overseas Empire*. Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2023.

Stillman, Norman A. "Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in the Arab and Islamic World Prior to 1948". In *Antisemitism: A History*, edited by Albert S. Lindemann and Richard S. Levy, 212–221. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Tannoury-Karam, Sana. "No Place for Neutrality: The Case for Democracy and the League Against Nazism and Fascism in Syria and Lebanon". In *Anti-Fascism in a Global Perspective: Transnational Networks, Exile Communities, and Radical Internationalism*, edited by Kasper Braskén, Nigel Copsey, and David J Featherstone, 133–152. Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2021.

Thénault, Sylvie. *Violence ordinaire dans l'Algérie coloniale: Camps, internements, assignations à résidence*. Paris: Odile Jacob, 2012.

Vogt, Stefan, editor. *Colonialism and the Jews in German History: From the Middle to the 20th Century*. London: Bloomsbury, 2022.

Wien, Peter. "Arabs and Fascism: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives". *Die Welt des Islams* 52, no. 3/4 (2012): 331–350.

Patrick Bernhard is Professor of Modern European History at the University of Oslo. His areas of specialisation include collective violence in modernity, the history of the Mediterranean, and the relationship between colonialism and fascism. He has recently published on colonial mass violence and the persecution of Jews in North Africa, as well as on Nazi Germany and its interconnections with other empires.
Email: p.p.bernhard@iakh.uio.no

Quotation: Patrick Bernhard, North Africa and the Holocaust: European Colonialism, Nazism, and Local Agency, in S:I.M.O.N. – Shoah: Intervention. Methods. Documentation. 11 (2024) 1, 4–22.

https://doi.org/10.23777/sn.0124/art_pber01

S:I.M.O.N.– Shoah: Intervention. Methods. DocumentatiON. is the semi-annual open access e-journal of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI) in English and German.

ISSN 2408-9192 | 11 (2024) 1 | https://doi.org/10.23777/sn.0124

This article is licensed under the following Creative Commons License: CC-BY-NC-ND
(Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivatives)