

**EURO-JEWS AND AFRO-ARABS:
TOWARD THE EUROPEANIZATION OF THE JEWS AND
THE AFRICANIZATION OF THE ARABS:**

by

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This lecture scheduled for delivery at Columbia University, New York, on May 6, 2010, is partly based on the opening chapter of the author's book provisionally entitled EURO-JEWS AND AFRO-ARABS: THE SEMITIC DIVERGENCE IN WORLD HISTORY, edited by Seifudein Adem. The oral version of this lecture will be shortened.

The Semitic peoples are defined in three ways – by language, by genealogy and by religion. Linguistically, the Semites are those whose mother tongues are the Semitic languages. These languages are divided primarily into three categories. The Northwestern (or Northern Central) category includes ancient and modern Hebrew and the ancient languages of Aramaic and Phoenician.

Southern Central Semitic languages include Arabic and Maltese, while the Southern Peripheral include South Arabic, Amharic and one or two other languages of Ethiopia.

The Semitic language of Akkadian does not fit into these three categories. It is often regarded as a separate category (Northern Peripheral or Northeastern).¹

When Semitic peoples are defined genealogically, they often respond to their lineage cultures. In Israel, if the mother is Jewish the child is Jewish. In Saudi Arabia or Egypt, if the father is Arab the child is Arab.

The third definition of a Semite is religious. This is easiest when defining the Jews. Jews are people whose original language was Hebrew or Aramaic and whose ancestral religion is Judaism. Over the centuries, the Jews have become less and less of a linguistic group and more of a purely religio-cultural identity.

There is also a religious definition of “Semites” which links up with at least mythological genealogy. By their respective myths of ancestry, Jews and Arabs are descended from the patriarch Abraham. The Jews are descended from Isaac (Ishak) and the Arabs from Ishmael (Ismail). Jews and Arabs might, therefore, be regarded as Abrahamic peoples.

More recently the term “Abrahamic” has been theologized and not merely limited to genealogy. It is not just Arabs and Jews who are “Abrahamic”, but also the three monotheistic religions which were first “revealed” to them. Thus, Judaism, Christianity and Islam have more recently been designated as Abrahamic religions.²

When the Prophet Muhammad began to preach the message of Islam in the year 610 of the Christian era, the number of Jews had declined from previous highs of probably as much as four to five million to between one to one and a half million.³ The Arabs at that time were confined mainly to the Arabian peninsula, while the Jews were already partly scattered in the Diaspora.

The reduction of the Jewish population was partly due to massacres by the Roman Empire in the first and second centuries, but more Jews were lost through conversion, mostly to Christianity.⁴ The number of Arabs, on the other hand, has increased as a result of the spread of the Arabic language and Islam. As a result, today there are about seventeen Arabs for every single Jew in the world. There may also be close to eighty-four Muslims for every Jew.⁵

In addition to numbers, there is another crucial divergence which occurred between Jews and Arabs. As they dispersed across their own Diaspora, the Jews became more and more part of European history. A process of Europeanization began to affect this branch of the Semitic peoples.

On the other hand, the emergence of Islam initiated the process of the partial Africanization of the Arab branch of the Semites. Across the centuries, Arabs and Africans began to converge into one people. When Islam first arrived in Africa more

than fourteen centuries ago, there were very few Arabs even in the Hamito-Semitic areas of North Africa and the Horn.

Today there are *close to a* quarter of a billion Arabs in the African continent.⁶ That is to say, there are more Arabs in Africa than in the rest of the Arab world outside Africa. This is quite apart from the spread of Islam in Africa. We have called this Afro-Arab convergence as a transition toward AFRABIA.

What are the different stages of this Afro-Arab interpenetration? And what were the different historical processes which have resulted in the Europeanization of the Jews? Let us begin with the Jewish story.

Euro-Jews in the Making

The initial stage towards the Europeanization of the Jews was the first major Jewish experience of exile. This was the Jews' first Diaspora, which occurred after the Babylonian conquest of the Kingdom of Judah in 586 BCE. Jews were forced into exile, often deported as slaves. Cyrus the Great of Persia subsequently conquered Babylon in turn. In 539 BCE Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to Judah.⁷ However, many Jews preferred to remain abroad. The first Diaspora was born.

After the Babylonian exile, the only Israelites who retained Jewish identity were the survivors of Judah. The ten tribes of Israel proper had been dispersed earlier after the Assyrian conquest of 722 BCE. These exiles did not crystallize into a Diaspora because they were gradually assimilated by other people and lost their Jewish identity. It was the Babylonian exiles who initiated the process of Diasporization.⁸

The second major stage in the process of the Europeanization of the Jews began with the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great in 332 BCE. This initiated a

cultural phenomenon which came to be known as Hellenistic Judaism, which responded to the cultural stimuli of classical Greece and which flourished from the fourth century BCE to the second century of the Christian era. There were major centers of Hellenistic Judaism in Asia Minor, Syria, Babylonia and, most impressively, in Alexandria in Egypt.⁹ This port city of Egypt flourished into the largest, most productive and culturally most creative Jewish Diaspora in this early history of Judaism. It is estimated that 40 percent of the population of Alexandria in that period were Jews.¹⁰ This was the second major stage in the story of the gradual Jewish integration into European civilization.

By the middle of this Hellenistic period, five million Jews lived outside Palestine; four-fifths of them were in the Roman Empire.¹¹ In other words, Diaspora Jews by this Hellenistic period were already outnumbering Jews in Palestine even before the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 of the Christian era.

The cultural period of Hellenistic Judaism overlapped with Roman rule over the Jews. The Roman years of 63 BCE to 135 CE included one of the earliest attempts to establish a Jewish state. These proto-“Zionists” of yesteryears included Herodians, Zealots and some quasi-mystic [**what is this word—mystic/monastic?**] groups. These early aspirants for a Jewish state included an expectation of a Messiah to lead them to it.

Then came the era of Rabbinic Judaism (2nd to 18th century CE). This changed the nature of Diasporization, but did not reverse it. Jews as a Mediterranean people declined, while Jews as a European people gained new impetus during this period.¹²

The last Patriarch, Gamaliel IV, died in 425 CE, leading to the political fragmentation of the Mediterranean Jewry. But the continuing ritual role of the Jewish

calendar, and the supportive roles of the rabbi, did indeed help to ensure the survival and expansion of European Jewry.

In the course of the Middle Ages there developed a fourth major stage in the Europeanization of the Jews. Just as the Christian Church had split between Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic, the Jews came to be distinguished between the *Sephardi* and *Ashkenazim*. The Sephardi were products of the Andalusian-Spanish community, culturally linked to Babylonia, and conditioned to some extent by the Arabic-Muslim wider environment.

The Ashkenazim were more distinctly European. They were basically Franco-German Jewry, who had evolved out of Latin-Christian culture and who could trace their ancestry to both Palestine and Rome.¹³

Jewish incorporation into European society was in fits and starts, two steps forward and one step back. In 1306 France expelled most Jews; in 1442 Spain did the same, along with the expulsion of the Moors (Spanish Muslims).¹⁴ By the 18th century there was widespread persecution of the Jews in Europe. Conditions were so bad that many Jews converted to Christianity (apostasy) or pretended to be converted to Christianity (Marranism).¹⁵ There also arose pseudo-messianic movements and Jewish extremism.

But the persecution of the Jews also helped to stimulate the Jewish Enlightenment (Haskala) in Eastern and Central Europe.¹⁶ Messianic beliefs declined while the quests for individual achievement and collective Jewish fulfillment on this earth gathered momentum. This was the period when Moses Mendelssohn produced *Jerusalem* (1783),

a work which defended Judaism not just as the spiritual heritage of the Jews, but above all as a universal religion of reason.¹⁷

The Jewish Enlightenment led to Jewish religious reform in Western Europe, accelerating during the Napoleonic period (1800-1815). The Jews who were back in France concentrated on doctrinal reform. In Germany the reform paid special attention to the aesthetic aspects of ritual and worship. German Reform Judaism crystallized into a denomination. German reform did not spread much in Europe beyond Germany, but it found receptive constituencies in the New World, especially in the United States.¹⁸

Somewhere between Orthodox Judaism and Reform Judaism emerged Conservative Judaism, which also began in Germany in 1845.¹⁹ These cumulative trends were helping Jews to accommodate themselves to Western culture without permitting themselves to be assimilated. Even Orthodox Jews in Europe were culturally Europeanized while remaining adherents of Judaism in their spiritual life.

It was during these tumultuous and innovative years of the nineteenth century that a Jewish boy was born who was to have a greater impact on European and world history than any other single Jew, with the exception of Jesus Christ. This nineteenth century young Jew was called Karl Marx.²⁰ By a strange destiny, he was to propagate influential ideas which were at once products of his brilliant European mind and his profound Jewish legacy.

Euro-Jewish Genius: Marx and Others

We have decided to focus on Karl Marx as a particularly fascinating example of the Europeanization of the Jews. Although baptized as Jewish by his mother and

descended from a long line of Rabbis, Karl Marx was not just secular, not merely atheist, but anti-religion generally.

He unleashed one of the most influential ideological movements in modern times – a set of ideas which transformed the twentieth century fundamentally. At one time, more than a third of the human race lived under systems of government influenced by the ideas of Karl Marx. And within Europe this was a case of one single ethnic Jew transforming the power-politics of the whole continent. Yet the ideas of Karl Marx still bore the stamp of his own Jewish history and of the worldview of Judaism.²¹

"Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature and the soul of soul-less conditions.... It is the opium of the people."²²

So said Karl Marx, the last of the great Jewish prophets. It is intellectually legitimate to raise the question whether Marxism itself is a secular religion. It is also intellectually legitimate to ask whether that particular secular religion shows rabbinic and Judaic impact in the great tradition of the Jewish prophets.

The name Marx is a shortened form of Mordechai, later changed to Markus. Karl's father -- Heinrich Marx -- was born in 1782, the third son of Meier Halevi Marx who became Rabbi of Trier. Karl Marx's paternal grandmother was also descended from Rabbis. As David McLellan put it in his biography of Karl Marx:

In fact almost all the rabbis of Trier from the sixteenth century onwards were ancestors of Marx.²³

Marx's father converted to Protestantism for purely economic and professional reasons the year before Karl was born. When Karl was baptized in 1824, his mother Henrietta described herself as Jewish. Later on Karl Marx's youngest daughter, Eleanor, though only half Jewish, said with defiant pride at a workers' meeting in the East End of London "I am a Jewess."²⁴

Marx himself showed signs of anti-Semitism -- as in his pamphlet *On the Jewish Question*.²⁵ But does Marx's whole system of ideas originate in his rabbinic ancestry? Does his lifestyle lie in the prophetic tradition? Does his appearance affirm that prophetic credential?

Marx owed a lot to the German philosopher, Hegel. When Jewish history is Hegelianized the link with historical materialism is at its most pronounced. Nachman Krochmal (1785-1840) -- whose life overlapped with that of Marx -- carried this Hegelianization of Jewish history to a new level.²⁶ As a neo-Hegelian, Krochmal viewed the Jewish people as the bearer of the historical process. Krochmal added a cyclical dynamic to history. The Jews were the only nation to rise again and again, re-invigorated after every decline. The Jews alone had a direct link with the Absolute Spirit.²⁷

It followed therefore that the Jews were a source of special creativity, for each ascent was to a higher level of self-realization.

For Karl Marx the cyclic movement of history was not given to a nation like the Jews. It was given to an economic class in a constant movement between thesis, antithesis and synthesis. For Karl Marx the chosen people are not the Jews but the proletariat.

The idea that the Jews are the Elect of God has been recurrent in Jewish liturgy. "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people of his own possession, out of all the nations that are on the face of the earth."²⁸

For Karl Marx the proletariat was not the Elect of Gold but the Elect of History. And salvation is not for the individual (as in Christian liberalism or Reform Judaism), but for the whole people. For Marx salvation is through revolution on this earth.

There is the alternative interpretation that Marx's concept of the proletariat is messianic. For Jews "the Messiah as envisioned by the prophets, transmitted by the tradition, and embraced by the consciousness of the Jewish people, is the capstone of Judaism."²⁹

For Marx, the messianic role is not to be played by an individual but by the supreme class of historical destiny - the proletariat.

In the Old Testament God is often cruel in order to be kind. Noah had to have an ark to save only a fraction of God's creation. Most could not be saved from God's angry floods. For Karl Marx, history (like God) has to be cruel in order to be kind. But for Marx the curse is not on the sexual sinners, but on the economic exploiters. History's damnation is not upon the first born. History's curse is upon the privileged of each epoch of class struggle.

But other aspects of Marx's prophetic tendencies are closer to Christianity than Judaism. In Karl Marx the Original Sin is of greed. It was greed which was responsible for:

- causing class formation
- causing class struggle

- causing revolution
- causing death

Marx then allowed a cycle of redemption before greed once again disrupted society. There is an underlying fatalism in Marx's theory of historical materialism. This is the inexorable march of class-struggle.

The Hegelian aspects of Marxism are also partly Biblical. The negation of the negation is a Hegelian principle. And the Bible says that out of death life often arises. Adam would have had eternal life, but for his sin. Was it the sin of greed or disobedience? Jesus's death on the cross much later was the negation of Adam's death:

As by one sole man
 sin entered the world,
 And death by sin,
 And thus death passed to all men,
 because all have sinned....³⁰

As from one sole transgression
 there followed condemnation for all,
 So from one sole deed of justice,
 there followed justification for life.³¹

In the Divine Dialectic Jesus and Adam become two Adams - two men who determined the whole course of human history. The fifteenth chapter of the First Corinthians is more explicitly about this doctrine of two Adams.

Thus is it written:

There was made the first man, Adam, living soul

The last Adam, life giving spirit³²

If therefore Marxism shows the impact of aspects of the Old Testament, and even of the New, to what extent did the Soviet Union turn its back on religion by going Marxist? And yet for a while Western and Soviet political cultures confronted each other -- and militarized their rivalry to new levels of potential destructiveness.

Was it Judeo-Christian Western alliance arming itself against a Judeo-Marxist Soviet Bloc? Were two sister civilizations unnecessarily on a collision course?

The Soviet Union has been and gone. Is Judeo-Marxism likely to be as enduring as the Judeo-Christian legacy? It seems unlikely – but who thought Christianity would last at the time of crucifixion? The future can be trusted to keep its own secrets until the fullness of time.

In the context of a longer span of history, Judeo-Marxism might be regarded as a particularly striking example of the Europeanization of Jewishness. As we mentioned earlier, Karl Marx was next only to Jesus Christ as an ethnic Jew who changed the world.

What we might now note is that the greatest of the ethnic Jews who changed the world were, in any case, “renegade Jews” who combined their Jewishness with some dissident otherness. We know that Jesus Christ, while not disowning his Jewish heritage, started something which became an entirely new religion. We know Karl Marx rejected all religion. And yet Karl Marx’s ideas, style and personal appearance have led to his being described as “the last of the Great Jewish Prophets”.³³

Sigmund Freud was another ethnic Jew whose ideas have profoundly affected the modern world. He helped to give us the tools for understanding the human mind. Once again, this Freud, a European Jew, delved into issues of origins and the secrets of the soul. He even attempted to psychoanalyze Moses in retrospect!³⁴

Benedict de Spinoza (1632-1677) was another European Jew who had a profound impact on Western thought, though not necessarily in the wider world. Once again, this was an ethnic Jew whose greatness was partly based on his being a dissenter. He is celebrated as a Dutch-Jewish rationalist of Portuguese ancestry. Indeed, one description of him is that he “was, and to some degree remains, the prototype of the emancipated secular Jew.”³⁵ His belief in the supremacy of reason often led to his being accused of atheism.³⁶

Albert Einstein (1879-1955) was another European Jew who was a genius and whose ideas have helped to change physics. His letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States resulted in the Manhattan Project and the American pursuit of the atomic bomb. Einstein was widely regarded as a spiritual man, but not necessarily a religious man. Was he a “renegade Jew”? At one time, Einstein had renounced his membership in the Jewish community at the age of fifteen.³⁷ However, he “discovered for the first time I was a Jew” in his midthirties and was even offered the presidency of Israel.³⁸

As we shall indicate in a later chapter, Jewish achievements in Western history go well beyond this handful of individuals who belong to the absolute top of human intelligence. The number of Jews who have won the Nobel Prize since it was established

a century ago is staggering for a community so small (well below 15 million worldwide).³⁹

What is clear is that in modern times Jews have been at their best when they have been Europeanized or Westernized. It has been the combination of a Jewish heritage with Western assimilation which has produced the most outstanding intellectual results.

Moreover, the greatest of all Jews in the last two thousand years have been those who were leaning towards dissident otherness – from Jesus Christ to Karl Marx, from Spinoza to Freud.

We must conclude that the Europeanization of the Jews, while diluting the Judaism in them, has also resulted in the intellectual flowering of the Jews in modern history. But how does this study of Euro-Jews compare and contrast with the other story about the evolution of Afro-Arabs? It is to this Afro-Arab story that we must now turn.

The Genesis of Afrabia

We have already sought to demonstrate that Jews and Westerners have historically been two peoples in the slow process of becoming one. Is it similarly true that Arabs and Africans are two peoples who have historically been converging towards becoming one people? Let us explore this second scenario of the trend towards Afrabia.

Let us begin with the pre-Islamic links between the Arabs and the Africans. These early connections are part of the origins of the Semitic peoples generally. As we mentioned earlier, native speakers of the Arabic language belong to the Southern Central Semitic family. The distinctly separate language of South Arabic of ancient Yemen is closely related to the Ethiopian languages of Amharic and Tigrinya.

We might, therefore, say that long before Arabs and Africans were connected by the shared experience of Islam, the two peoples were connected by the shared experience of Semitic languages. Yemen and Ethiopia are even bonded by their rival claims for the Queen of Sheba. Most Biblical scholars place the Queen of Sheba in Yemen. Most Ethiopians and African historians, on the other hand, regard Sheba as Ethiopia's own Queen who gave birth to Emperor Menelik I.⁴⁰

The Qur'an itself refers to pre-Islamic relationships between the Arabs and Eastern Africans. The Qur'an refers to an invasion of Arabia by *as'haab el feel* (meaning "the people of the elephant"). It is almost certain that these invaders of Arabia were Ethiopians who were led by commanders riding elephants. Although this invasion was before the advent of Islam, God seemed to have been against the invaders. The Almighty sent birds to afflict the elephants. Was it pestilence breaking out among the invaders? Further evidence of pre-Islamic Afro-Arab relationships was the presence of an African Diaspora in the Arabian peninsula before Muhammad was born. After all, it was Muhammad's own close companion who bought the freedom of the enslaved Ethiopian, Bilal. This emancipated Black man lived to become one of the closest companions of the Prophet Muhammad. He subsequently had the historic role of being the first Muezzin to call believers to prayer at the Grand Mosque in Mecca after Muhammad conquered Mecca from pre-Islamic idol-worshippers in the year 630 C.E. It is believed that Bilal eventually died in Syria and is buried in Damascus or Aleppo.⁴¹

Mecca was already an important trading city in the sixth century of the Christian era. There is little doubt that the trade which Mecca conducted included commerce with

neighboring African countries across the Red Sea and possibly trading further into the African hinterland.

A much older historic connection between the Arabian peninsula and Africa was the fact that what became the peninsula of the Arabs was once part and parcel of the African land mass. As this book will later clarify, there was no Red Sea in very distant prehistoric times. It took a massive earthquake in antiquity to tear off the Arabian peninsular and create the great Rift Valley. To the present day, the geology of the Arabian peninsula shows striking affinity with the geology of eastern Africa and the Horn.

However, there is no doubt that the rise of Islam created much more complex relationships between Africa and the Arabs. In the seventh century of the Christian era, Islam arrived in Africa in two vastly different ways. Islam initially arrived in Ethiopia as a supplicant for religious and political asylum. In Mecca followers of the young religion of Islam were being persecuted by fellow Arabs, who were resisting the new religion as a threat to their polytheistic and idolatrous traditions. Uthman bin Affan (who later become the third Caliph of Islam after Muhammad's death) led a group of Muslim refugees to seek asylum in Christian Abyssinia.⁴² A historic religious contact was made.

Barely two decades later, Islam was triumphant in Mecca and in much of the rest of the Arabian peninsular. And long before the end of the seventh century, Islam arrived in another African country, but this time Islam came as conqueror. The Arabs annexed Egypt and initiated two processes of monumental historical significance. One process was Islamization, meaning the spread of the Islamic religion initially in Egypt and North Africa. The second process was Arabization, meaning the spread of the Arabic language.

Over the centuries, Egypt – which was Christian at the time of the Arab conquest – eventually became overwhelmingly Muslim. Over more centuries, Egyptians became native speakers of the Arabic language. In time, so did much of the rest of North Africa and the Nile Delta. Africa had become an Afro-Arab continent.

Here a major distinction arises between the destinies of the Jews and of the Arabs. When Uthman bin Affan and his band of refugees arrived in Ethiopia, their predicament was similar to that of early Jews on the run into exile, seeking religious asylum. But when the Arabs arrived in Egypt as conquerors, they started a process of assimilating their subjects into the conquering culture, rather than being assimilated by their host countries.

This constituted a major difference between the expansion of the Arabs and the dispersal of the Jews. It was a major reason why the Jews are now less than one-seventeenth of the global population of the Arabs.

Why did the Jews in Europe remain limited in numbers while the Arabs in Africa dramatically grew in population? One primary reason was that the Arabs in Africa were exporting their culture and spreading their religion, whereas the Jews in Europe were engaged in the politics of cultural and religious survival. Far from trying to proselytize, the Jews attempted to be religiously inconspicuous.

A second reason for the growth of the Arabs in Africa, as contrasted with the Jews in Europe, was that Arabness was defined by language, whereas Jewishness was defined by religion. An Arab is he or she whose mother tongue is Arabic and who identified himself or herself with the Arabs. A Jew, on the other hand, is an individual who is personally a follower of Judaism or culturally identifies with the Jewish heritage. Until

the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, the Jews had mostly lost their ancestral languages (Hebrew and Aramaic), while still struggling to save their religion in Europe.

A third reason as to why Arabs grew dramatically in population in Africa while the population of European Jews stagnated was that the Arabs were exogamous, responsive to racial intermarriage, while the Jews were endogamous, leaning towards marrying within their own community. Interracial marriage in Arab lands tended to produce more children than intracommunal matrimony among European Jews.

A fourth reason for Arab expansion was that Arab men were often polygamous in Africa, whereas Jews in Europe were almost always monogamous. Polygamous men produced more children than monogamous ones. Historically, in Palestine Jews had been polygamous, but Jews in Christian lands had to limit number of wives. Indeed, until the establishment of Israel as a state and consequent migration, Yemenite Jews preserved several of the ancient marriage and divorce customs, including polygamy.⁴³

A fifth reason for why Arabs multiplied much more greatly in Africa than Jews did in Europe was the difference between patrilineal Arabs and matrilineal Jews. In Arab culture, if the father is Arab the child is Arab, regardless of who the mother is. In Jewish culture, if the mother is Jewish, the child is Jewish, regardless of who the father is. But in a single lifetime a man can make more babies than a woman. Arab men have been known to be still making babies in their sixties, if not seventies. All their babies become fellow Arabs. But Jewish women normally stopped bearing babies in their forties at their oldest. Jewish matrilinealism, therefore, produced fewer Jews by descent in Europe than did Arab patrilinealism in Africa.

A sixth reason for Arab expansion of population is that Arabs owned slaves for centuries and children of a slave-owning father with his women slaves were themselves free offspring (according to Islamic law) and of Arab identity (according to Arab culture).

Jews, on the other hand, ceased to be slave owners after they left Palestine, although some of them did become slave traders in the Atlantic slave traffic centuries later. Indeed, there were some Jewish owners of Black slaves in the Caribbean as late as the nineteenth century prior to general emancipation.⁴⁴

With regard to slave-owning Arabs in Africa, their slaves were not always Black. The slaves could be from Asia or eastern Europe or from Black Africa. The Arab slave system was fundamentally multiracial. Egypt was ruled by former slaves for centuries (the Mamluk Dynasty), but the composition of the Dynasty was multiracial from the start.

A seventh reason as to why Arabs multiplied faster in Africa than Jews did in Europe was because Arabs were far less race conscious and ethnic conscious than Jews. Black children of a white Arab father were still fully recognized as Arabs, regardless of evidence of race mixture. Egypt from the 1952 revolution until the end of the twentieth century had four Presidents – Muhammad Naguib, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Anwar Sadat and Hosni Mubarak. The first and third presidents had black mothers and their appearance confirmed it. That was not an issue in Egyptian politics.

Kuwait has had a black Prime Minister who was a prince with a black mother. The Prime Minister was indeed obviously a black man.

In Washington, D.C., Saudi Arabia was represented for decades by Prince Bandar bin Sultan – who, in turn, was a Black man in appearance and by maternal descent.

Jews have tended to be more ethnically exclusive and racially conscious. A Black Prime Minister of Israel is very unlikely in the foreseeable future.

Although Judaism as a religion had deeply influenced Christianity and Islam, Jews as a people did not elicit many cultural imitators. The Jewish religion was a spiritual model to millions of non-Jews, but the Jewish people were not much of a role model to gentiles. While conditions in Muslim Africa were such that there were many non-Arabs who claimed to be Arabs, conditions in Europe had the reverse effect on Jews – many Jews pretended to be non-Jews (including Karl Marx’s father and Spinoza’s family before they left Portugal for the Netherlands).

However, there was one area of life where Jews excelled from almost the earliest days of their Diaspora. They certainly became influential intellectuals in the Muslim world – often serving as advisers to Sultans and Emirs, and translators of the riches of ancient Greek civilization.⁴⁵

These were the years when Muslims believed in creative synthesis and were ready to learn from other people and other cultures. The Muslim world was ready to be stimulated in mathematics by India, in architecture by Persia, in philosophy by ancient Greece, in law by the Old Testament and Roman law. Islamic civilization as a collectivity became a role model for the Western world. To the present day the West calls its numerals “Arabic numerals” – having abandoned the Roman numerals for most purposes of life and scholarship. Individual Jews made a contribution over the years to both Islamic and European civilizations.

What about Arab and Muslim scholars on the African continent across the ages? Were there any to compare in genius with such ethnic Jews as Spinoza, Sigmund Freud

and Albert Einstein? Perhaps the most brilliant of Arab scholars was Ibn Khaldun, who was born in Tunis in 1332 C.E. and died in Cairo in 1406.

Ibn Khaldun is widely regarded as the father of secular philosophy of history and the founder of the study of sociology. The twentieth century English historian, Arnold Toynbee, described Ibn Khaldun's masterpiece, Al-Muqaddimah, as a "philosophy of history which is undoubtedly the greatest work that has ever been created by any mind in any time or place."⁴⁶

Noted Arab historian Philip Hitti has said of Toynbee:

No Arab writer, indeed no European, had ever taken a view of history at once so comprehensive and philosophic.⁴⁷

Also a genius of a different kind from Arab Africa was Ibn Battutah – who was born in Tangier, Morocco, in 1304 and died in 1368/9 C.E., also in Morocco. He was probably the greatest of medieval travelers from any culture. He covered some 75,000 miles, detailing his observations from society to society with meticulous care. He covered almost all the Muslim countries and explored as far afield as China and Sumatra. His book, Rihla, (Travels), is widely regarded as the most ambitious travel book of all time.⁴⁸

In more modern times Jews in Europe have far outstripped Arabs and Muslims in intellectual, scholarly and scientific performance. While less than 15 million Jews worldwide have won dozens of Nobel Prizes in almost all Nobel fields, 1.2 billion Muslims across the world have won only a handful. In modern times, Arabs and Muslims have lagged far behind Jews in manifest brilliance. But Arab Africa continues

to be the location of two of the oldest universities anywhere in the world – Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt,⁴⁹ and the University in Fez, Morocco. Each of them is over a thousand years old. Both institutions are steeped in ancestral learning and tradition, from across the ages. The most influential centers of learning in the Muslim world are not in Mecca and Medina, where Islam was born, but on the African continent – where Islam first arrived as a refugee and later arrived as a conqueror in the seventh century of the Christian era. The relentless convergence of *Afrabia* has encompassed the norms of scholarship, as well as the principles and traditions of culture.

Conclusion

We have sought to demonstrate in this chapter two processes – how one branch of the Semitic people (the Jews) became increasingly indistinguishable from Europeans and Westerners; and, secondly, how another branch of the Semites (the Arabs) became intermingled with Africa and the Africans.

When Islam first arrived in Africa in the seventh century there were almost no Arabs in Africa apart from a few traders and settlers scattered here and there. Today there are many millions of Arabs on the African continent. There are indeed more native speakers of the Arabic language in Africa than in the rest of the Arab world.

Similarly, there is more territory under Arab control within the African continent than outside. The largest Arab city in population is in Africa; Cairo also happens to be Africa's own largest city.

When Africa's Arab population is added to Africa's Black Muslim population, the total would make Africa the first continent in the world to have an absolute Muslim

majority. Paradoxically, Nigeria alone may have more Muslims than any Arab country, including Egypt.⁵⁰

Afrabia, as a convergence between Africa and the Arab world, has now produced identifiable people who may be designated as Afrabians (rather than just “Africans” or “Arabs”). Genealogical Afrabians are those who combine in their veins both African and Arab genes and blood. Such Afrabians would include many Northern Sudanese and at least two presidents of Egypt since the 1952 Egyptian revolution – Muhammad Naguib and Anwar Sadat.

Cultural Afrabians would be those Africans who have no Arab blood in them but have been substantially assimilated into Arab or Islamic culture. Most sub-Saharan Muslims in Africa belong to this category.

Ideological Afrabians are those Africans who have neither Arab genes nor been assimilated into Arab or Islamic culture, but are ideologically committed to trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism. They believe in the solidarity between Black Africa and Arab Africa – a concept of “one Africa indivisible”. Such ideological Afrabians in history included Kwame Nkrumah, the founder President of post-colonial Ghana.

The fourth category is that of locational Afrabians. These would include Black Africans who do not culturally or ideologically identify with the Arabs but are citizens of a member of the Arab League (e.g., Southern Sudanese). Such locational Afrabians would also include non-Black Arabs who are citizens of non-Muslim African countries. A Coptic Egyptian who has become a citizen of South Africa would be an Afrabian in this locational sense.

Of these four categories, perhaps the fastest growing is that of cultural Afrabians – indigenous Black Africans who have substantially assimilated Islamic and Arab culture. The Muslim population of Black Africa is growing, both by expanding conversion and by biological increase within African Muslim families. On balance, sub-Saharan Muslims have larger families than sub-Saharan Christians and larger than Muslims north of the Sahara.

The number of genealogical Afrabians may also be expanding with the growing number of interracial marriages between Arabs and Africans. The convergence between Arabism and Africanity is still relentlessly moving towards the consolidation of Afrabia.

In this chapter we have already traced the different milestones in history towards the Europeanization of the Jews. There was the Babylonian exile following the conquest of the Kingdom of Judah by Babylonia. Some of the Jews remained in exile, even after Persia under Cyrus made it possible for the Jews to go back home.

The second milestone in the Euro-Diasporization of the Jews began after Alexander the Great conquered Palestine in 332 C.E. This conquest triggered the flowering of Hellenistic Judaism, inspired by ancient Greece.

The Roman period of 634 B.C.E. to 135 C.E. reactivated nostalgic Jewish dreams for establishing a Jewish state. These dreams failed. There followed Rabbinic Judaism from the second century of the Christian era to the eighteenth. The Mediterranean Jewry fragmented, while the Euro-Jewish Diaspora expanded.

The fourth stage in the Europeanization of Jews was the historic split between Sephardic Jews (linked to Andalusia and the legacy of Muslim Spain) and Ashkenazi

Jews (more distinctly European – basically Franco-German and influenced by Latin-Christian culture).

The incorporation of the Jews into European civilization was in fits and starts – with a number of anti-Semitic pogroms and periodic mass expulsions of Jews from time to time. But even the persecution contributed to the flowering of the Jewish Enlightenment (Haskala) in Eastern and Central Europe.

The Jewish Reform led to the emergence of Reform Judaism and to the Conservative School alongside the older Orthodox versions of Judaism. Reform and Conservative Judaism were particularly successful in the United States.

And then European Jews invented modern Zionism – a new campaign for the establishment of a Jewish homeland. The movement was led by Theodor Herzl. Its initial headquarters were in Switzerland and then moved to Cologne and Berlin. It was ironic that a movement which dreamt about guiding Jews out of Europe to a distant homeland had its headquarters in Germany – the land which, under the Nazis, later tried to rid Europe of all its Jewish population.

In its original conception, Zionism sought to reverse the historic Europeanization of the Jews. Instead of Jews and Europeans converging to create one people, Zionism originally aspired to divorce Jews from Europeans all over again. A Jewish homeland in Palestine was supposed to attract the millions of Jews from the Diaspora back to the ancestral homeland in Palestine.

For a long time, Jews in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were divided on whether Zionism was a sensible policy for world Jewry.⁵¹ Many Orthodox Jews opposed

the “modern nation of Israel as a Godless and secular state, defying God’s will to send His Messiah at the time he preordained.”⁵²

In 1885 American Rabbis issued the Pittsburgh Platform – a declaration that Jews were no longer to look forward to a return to Israel. But in 1937 the Rabbis of the United States reversed themselves. The Central Conference of American Rabbis abrogated the anti-Zionist Pittsburgh Platform and encouraged instead the quest for a Jewish homeland.⁵³

And yet many American and European Jews were still profoundly worried about Jews disengaging themselves from Europe and the West. Many Jews regarded Zionism as a declaration of divided loyalties – and dangerously close to disloyalty to the United States and to the European countries of which Jews were citizens or residents.

In 1943 the American Council for Judaism was founded with a platform which insisted that being a Jew was a religious affiliation and not a political identity. The Council was against the Zionist movement.

Few people knew before the end of World War II that while the Zionists were struggling hard to facilitate a Jewish exodus from Europe by voluntary emigration, the Nazis in Germany were facilitating a Jewish exit from Europe by extermination. When the full scale of the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews was exposed, support for the Zionist movement escalated. The anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism went moribund.

Many right-wing Christian Westerners supported the Zionist movement in the 1930s and 1940s in the hope of getting rid of their own Jews from Western countries. But the creation of the State of Israel did not result in a wholesale exodus of Jews from the Western world to Palestine. On the contrary, it resulted in giving to European Jews a

chunk of Arab land. Zionism did not result in the de-Semiticization of Europe. It initiated instead the Europeanization of Palestine – for better or for worse.

The great historic saga of Euro-Jews is still unfolding – against the background of the even larger saga of a continental Afrabia. The final goal of AFRABIA is a little behind the destination of JEWOP. But the historic movement towards those two destinies is surely irreversible. The struggle continue.

NOTES:-

¹For a guide to Semitic languages, see Robert Hetzron, *The Semitic Languages* (New York: Routledge, 1997), and on the linguistic origin and dispersal of Semitic languages, see Angel Sáenz-Badillos (transl. by John Elwolde), *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Cambridge and New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 3-8, and Thompson, *Early History of the Israelite People : From the Written and Archaeological Sources* (Leiden and New York : Brill, 1992), pp. 72-176.

²The Abrahamic approach is exemplified, for instance, in F. E. Peters, *The Children of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity, Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), Rev. Edition, with a foreword by John Esposito; Robin Wright, "At Cathedral, Iran's Khatami Urges Dialogue," *The Washington Post* (September 8, 2006) and an opinion piece by John Kearney, entitled "My God is Your God," *The New York Times* (January 28, 2004).

³ The Jewish population had declined from about 4.5-5 million in the first century to 1.2-1.5 million in the 6th century, and further declined to 1-1.2 million in the eighth century; see Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, "From Farmers to Merchants, Voluntary Conversions and Diaspora: A Human Capital Interpretation of Jewish History," Working Paper (August 2005), Tables 3 and 5, p. 11 and 18, manuscript available at www.colorado.edu/Economics/seminars/eckstein.pdf, accessed October 12, 2006.

⁴Botticini and Eckstein, "From Farmers to Merchants, Voluntary Conversions and Diaspora ," pp. 1 and 10.

⁵ The number of Jews worldwide is estimated at 14. 4 million; see John W. Storey and Glenn H. Utter, *Religion and Politics: A Reference Handbook*, (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002), p. 119. The number of Arabs is estimated at 250-300 million, according to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabs> (accessed October 24, 2006).

⁶ The population of current African members of the Arab League, according to the CIA World Factbook is: Egypt (79 million) Libya (5.9 million) Sudan (41 million)- Morocco(33 million) Tunisia (10.1 million) Algeria (33 million)- Mauritania (3.2 million) Somalia (8 million estimate) Djibouti (487 thousand) Comoros (690 thousand), leading to a total of 213-214 million. It must be remembered that population figures in many of these countries is not accurate.

⁷Elias J. Bickerman, "The Historical Foundations of Postbiblical Judaism," in Louis Finkelstein, Ed., *The Jews: Their History* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970, 1972), Fourth Edition, p. 73.

⁸Jews had been exiled to Babylon after the destruction of the first temple in 586 BCE, and many chose not to return even when they had the opportunity to do so; see Jonathan Magonet, *The Explorer's Guide to Judaism* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1998), p. 53.

⁹ For some discussions on Jews in some of these Hellenistic and Roman urban centers, see John R. Bartlett, Editor, *Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman Cities* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

¹⁰Jews occupied two of the five quarters in the city of Alexandria; see Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), Revised Edition, p. 90.

¹¹A critical look at Jewish population estimates is provided in Brian McGing , "Population and Proselytism: How many Jews were there in the ancient world?" Bartlett, Editor, *Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman Cities*, pp. 88-106.

¹²On the development of Rabbinic Judaism, see, for example, Jacob Neusner, *The Four Stages of Rabbinic Judaism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999) and Lawrence H. Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple And Rabbinic Judaism* (Hoboken, N.J. : Ktav Pub. House, 1991).

¹³The Sephardhi spoke the Judaeo-Spanish language of Ladino while the Ashkenazim spoke a Judaeo-German vernacular called Yiddish; see Magonet, *The Explorer's Guide to Judaism*, p. 54.

¹⁴There were eighteen major expulsions from European countries between 1290 and 1496 alone, see Magonet, *The Explorer's Guide to Judaism*, p. 55.

¹⁵The Marranos were concentrated in the Iberian countries; for some accounts, see B. Netanyahu, *The Marranos of Spain: From the Late 14th to the Early 16th century*, According to Contemporary Hebrew sources (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999) and Cecil Roth, *A History of the Marranos* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974,1975).

¹⁶ Relatedly, consult Shmuel Feiner, *Haskalah and History : The Emergence of a Modern Jewish Historical Consciousness*, Translated by Chaya Naor and Sondra Silverston (Portland, OR and Oxford : Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2002).

¹⁷ See Moses Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem, Or, On Religious Power And Judaism*, translated by Allan Arkush (Hanover : Published for Brandeis University Press by University Press of New England, 1983).

¹⁸ Relatedly, consult Steven M. Lowenstein, “The 1840s and the Creation of the German-Jewish Religious Reform Movement,” in Werner E. Mosse, Arnold Paucker, Reinhard Rürup, Editors, *Revolution and Evolution, 1848 in German-Jewish History* (Tübingen : Mohr, 1981.)

¹⁹ For an account of the beginnings of Conservative Judaism, see Moshe Davis, *The Emergence of Conservative Judaism* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1963).

²⁰ For a biography, see David McLellan, *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

²¹ The influence of Judaism on Marx’s life and thought is analyzed in Murray Wolfson, *Marx, Economist, Philosopher, Jew : Steps in the Development of a Doctrine* (New York : St. Martin’s Press, 1982).

²² This quotation is from Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel’s ‘Philosophy of Right,’* in Robert C. Tucker, Editor, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, p. 12.

²³ McLellan, *Karl Marx*, p.3.

²⁴ McLellan, p. 5.

²⁵ Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” in Tucker, Editor, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, pp. 24-51.

²⁶ Krochmal’s conception of history is detailed in Jay M. Harris, *Nachman Krochmal: Guiding the Perplexed of the Modern Age* (New York: New York University Press, 1991), pp. 103-155.

²⁷ Harris, *Nachman Krochmal*, pp. 75-81.

²⁸ Deuteronomy 14:2.

²⁹ Heinrich Graetz, *The Structure of Jewish History*, translated by Ismar Schorsch (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America and Ktav Publishing House, 1975), p. 73. Consult also Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), pp. 30-31.

³⁰ Romans 5: 12

³¹ Romans 5: 16

³² Corinthians 15: 45; consult Alfred Firmin Loisy, *The Birth of the Christian Religion and the Origins of the New Testament*, translated from the French by L.P. Jacks, (New York: University Books, 1962), p. 84.

³³ Ali A. Mazrui, Program 3, [The Africans: A Triple Heritage](#) (BBC/PBS television series, 1986).

³⁴ Relatedly, see Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism* (New York: Vintage Press, 1955, 1939) and Richard J. Bernstein, *Freud and the Legacy of Moses* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

³⁵ Steven B. Smith, *Spinoza, Liberalism, and the Question of Jewish Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 201.

³⁶ Smith, *Spinoza, Liberalism, and the Question of Jewish Identity*, p. 49. Also see Leo Strauss, *Spinoza’s Critique of Religion* (New York: Schocken Books, 1965).

³⁷ Frederic V. Grunfeld, *Prophets Without Honor: A Background to Freud, Kafka, Einstein and Their World* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979), p. 153.

³⁸Einstein did decline the honor; see Grunfeld, *Prophets Without Honor*, p. 184.

³⁹ Columnist Charles Krauthammer has pointed out that 20 percent of Nobel winners have been Jewish;; see his “Everyone’s Jewish,” *Washington Post* (September 25, 2006).

⁴⁰ The importance of the Queen of Sheba in various traditions is described in Lou Silberman, “The Queen of Sheba in Judaic Tradition;” W. Montgomery Watt, “The Queen of Sheba in Islamic Tradition;” Edward Ullendorf, “The Queen of Sheba in Ethiopian Tradition;” and Paul F. Watson, “The Queen of Sheba in Christian Tradition,” in James B. Pritchard, ed., *Solomon and Sheba* (London: Phaidon, 1974), pp. 65-145.

⁴¹An unusual account of this black Muslim’s life may be found in H. A. L. Craig, *Bilal* (London and New York: Quartet Books, 1977).

⁴² For a discussion of this journey, see W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), pp. 101-117.

⁴³See Aharon Gaimani, “Marriage and Divorce Customs in Yemen and Eretz Israel,” *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women’s Studies & Gender Issues*, (March 2006), Issue 11, pp. 43-83, and for the section on polygamy, pp. 61-65.

⁴⁴ The limited role of Jews in British and Dutch slave trade is described in, for example, Eli Faber, *Jews, Slaves, And The Slave Trade : Setting The Record Straight* (New York : New York University Press, 1998) and Saul S. Friedman, *Jews and the American Slave Trade* (New Brunswick, NJ : Transaction Publishers, 1998).

⁴⁵For surveys of several Jewish personalities in Islamic lands, consult Moshe Gil,, *Jews in Islamic countries in the Middle Ages*, translated by David Strassler (Leiden and Boston : Brill, 2004), pp. 273-489. Jews prominent in court life are described in Walter J. Fischel, *Jews in the Economic and Political Life of Mediaeval Islam* (New York, Ktav Pub. House, 1969).

⁴⁶Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History, Volume III* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1934), p. 322.

⁴⁷Philip Hitti, *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present* (London: Macmillan, 1953), p. 568.

⁴⁸ For samples, see Said Hamdun & Noël King, Editors and Translators, *Ibn Battuta in Black Africa* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2005).

⁴⁹Relatedly, see Bayadrd Dodge, *Al-Azhar: A Millenium of Muslim Learning* (Washington, DC: Middle East Institute, 1961).

⁵⁰ The estimation of the numbers of Muslims in Nigeria is somewhat controversial because of political issues over the census. According to an Associated Press report, “Muslim Mobs, Seeking Vengeance, Attack Christians in Nigeria,” *New York Times* (May 13, 2004), “Many of Nigeria’s 126 million people, [are] split almost evenly between Muslims and Christians. . .” However, another report estimates the percentage of Muslims in Nigeria at 75 percent; see <http://www.islamicweb.com/begin/population.htm>, accessed May 28, 2004. The CIA World Factbook July 2006 estimate of Nigeria’s population is 131 million (50 percent Muslim) and that of Egypt at 78.8 million (90 percent Muslim).

⁵¹ A brief description of this opposition may be found in Yakov M. Rabkin, *A Threat from Within : A Century of Jewish Opposition to Zionism* (Black Point, NS: Fernwood, 2006), pp. 15-21, and specifically in one American case, Thomas A. Kolsky, *Jews against Zionism :The American Council for Judaism, 1942-1948* (Philadelphia : Temple University Press, 1990).

⁵² Encyclopedia Britannica, “Diaspora” available at <http://www.search.eb.com/> (accessed October 14, 2006).

⁵³See Norton Mezvinsky, “Reform Judaism and Zionism: Early History and Change,” in Roselle Tekiner, Samir Abed-Rabbo, and Norton Mezvinsky, Editors, *Anti-Zionism: AnalyticalReflections*, p. 315, and pp. 327-328.