

which one must add about 6,000 Libyan Jews, most of whom were on the point of leaving for Israel in 1951) represented 4.35 per cent of the Jewish population of the world, and 60.2 per cent of the Jewish population living in Mohammedan countries.

FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

POLITICAL circumstances did not permit France to follow the same policy with respect to the Jews of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. The development of the Jewries of these countries was also conditioned by the length of French rule (which was established in Algeria in 1830, in Tunisia in 1880, and in Morocco only as late as 1912). In Algeria, this French-influenced development went deepest; in Morocco, fastest.

ALGERIA

Jewish Population

THE growth of the Jewish population was constant in Algeria from 1831 on. From 1881 to 1931, the Jewish population increased by 215 per cent, while Algeria's general European population increased by only 96 per cent and the Mohammedan population by 97 per cent. Since 1931 population growth had been steady, thanks to Algerian Jewry's high birth rate and the immigration of other, mainly Moroccan, Jews. In the department of Constantine, which was more cut off from Western influences, the Jewish birth rate was the highest.

The Jewish population was widely scattered throughout Algeria. The results of the last census of Algerian Jews (1941), as revised in the light of the general census of 1948, showed that a total Jewish population of 140,000 was distributed among 253 urban centers. Nevertheless, the bulk of the Jewish population was concentrated in the cities of Oran (25,671), Algiers (25,591), and Constantine (13,037).

The table on p. 376 shows the distribution of the Jewish population of Algeria by department and district.

ECONOMIC LIFE

The Algerian Jews were principally engaged in commerce and banking, textiles, and the liberal professions (dentists, 22.08 per cent; doctors, 21.50 per cent; administrative officials, 18 per cent; lawyers, 16.30 per cent; midwives, 15.20 per cent). An extensive survey conducted by the author revealed that about one-third of all Jewish women earned an income. This figure is a very important indication of the general advance of the population, which used to restrict the activities of women to cooking and bearing children.

Jewish women were employed in transport, commerce, textiles, the garment trades, as domestics, etc.; only a few were to be found in industry.

The economic importance of the Jews was considerable in Algeria, in spite of the crisis caused in 1941 by German and Vichy anti-Semitism and the abrogation of the Crémieux decree. Especially in the south they played a virtually irreplaceable role in commerce; Jews were particularly active in the buying and selling of metals and precious stones, and in the flour trade. Despite this emphasis on commerce, however, over 75,667 hectares of land were under cultivation by Jews.

TABLE 1
JEWISH POPULATION OF ALGERIA

<i>Department</i>	<i>District (City and Environs)</i>	<i>Number</i>	
Algiers	Algiers.....	38,740	
	Miliana.....	1,575	
	Médéa.....	1,810	
	Orléansville.....	1,540	
	Tiziuzu.....	500	
			44,165
Oran	Oran.....	38,212	
	Tlemsen.....	11,197	
	Mascara.....	3,864	
	Tiaret.....	3,754	
	Sidi-Bel-Abbès	3,759	
	Mostaganem.....	3,451	
			64,237
Constantine	Constantine.....	15,854	
	Bône.....	3,326	
	Sétif.....	1,720	
	Batna.....	1,527	
	Guelma.....	976	
	Bougie.....	785	
	Philippeville.....	668	
			24,856
Southern areas		6,742	
			6,742
	TOTAL.....		140,000

Civic Status

Administratively, Algeria is an integral part of France. In 1870, the Crémieux decree conferred French citizenship upon the Jews of Algeria in a body. One generation saw the sons of illiterate natives grow up into university professors. This evolution was expected to be virtually completed with the passage of a pending bill which would extend the authority of the laws of the territories of the north to the Sahara region. The 4,000 or so Jews living in M'zab and still subject to the Mosaic statutes with all their anachronisms could hope that the end of 1951 would see them enjoying a regular civic status (including the right to vote); it was now possible for

them to choose to come under French law in matters of marriage, divorce, and inheritance.

Anti-Semitism

The situation of Algerian Jewry was often made difficult by the political, economic, and social role which the Jews came to play after 1870. The political rights accorded the Jews gave them a decisive voice in the elections. This suddenly acquired political importance stimulated a strong movement of anti-Semitism which lasted until 1944. But there had been no overt manifestations of anti-Semitism in Algeria since the end of World War II. Moreover, the progressive emancipation of the Mohammedan masses, accelerated during the past few years, was completely changing traditional perspectives. Efforts (such as the Union des Croyants Monothéistes) were made in Christian, Moslem, and Jewish circles to develop a social and cultural exchange among the three principal sections of the population. The results of these efforts were seen in the fact that the last election (June, 1951) was accompanied by no disorders whatsoever; not a single candidate ran on a racist program, and René Mayer, Minister of Justice and vice-president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, was elected a deputy from Constantine by a great majority.

Community Life

As in France, the Jewish communities in Algeria were organized as religious associations under the law of 1905. These associations were joined together in a Federation of the Jewish Communities of Algeria, with headquarters at Algiers. The Federation was active in educational affairs, and recently inaugurated a rabbinical school in Algiers aimed at training rabbis and teachers of Hebrew for the small communities of the interior. Invitations to attend the annual conference of the Federation, held in Algiers in the spring of 1951, were extended to representatives of the Moroccan and Tunisian Jewries. Thus, for the first time North African Jewry showed an awareness of its need of unity.

A great relaxation in religious observance could be noticed among Algerian Jews. In the city of Algiers, with a Jewish population of 25,000, there were only 165 boys who became bar mitzvah in 1951. The Talmud Torah, which was badly organized, had 440 students of both sexes.

Each community conducted its own welfare activities, no efficient centralized system having as yet been established. The OSE and the ORT did very useful work, but much more remained to be done, particularly in the Department of Oran, where an influx of poor Jews from neighboring Morocco continually aggravated welfare needs. Pauperism was a problem in certain of the southern regions and in the big cities. A large program of vocational education was still at the project stage.

Emigration

Algerian Jews felt themselves to be completely integrated into French Algerian life; scarcely one per cent emigrated to Israel.¹ Where life was hard, as for example, in the south, Jews looked to the cities of the north or to France. Thus, in the postwar period many Algerian families went to settle in Marseilles, Lyons, and the Paris region.

Cultural Life

It should be noted in conclusion that during 1951 not a single Jewish magazine was published in Algeria, either in French or in Hebrew; this was in marked contrast to the situation in Tunisia and Morocco. A book recounting the story of the Algerian Jews in World War II (they played an important role in the organization of the American landing in November, 1942) was published by the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine.

TUNISIA

Jewish Population

JURIDICALLY, there were in Tunisia two distinct groups of Jews: Tunisian Jews proper, who were subjects of the Bey, and Jews of French nationality born in Tunisia or Jews of foreign origin, who were now French nationals. According to the last available census (1948), the Tunisian Jewish population proper amounted to 70,971 out of a total Jewish population estimated at 105,000. The total population of Tunisia, Jewish and non-Jewish, was 3,990,952. Jews in Tunisia played an important role in industry (45.5 per cent being employed in that field); in commerce (33.1 per cent); in the liberal professions (8.9 per cent); and in administration and transport (5.9 per cent).

Unlike the scattered Jews of Algeria, those of Tunisia were concentrated in some forty principal centers. More than half of the population was to be found in the Tunis area which with its 65,000 Jewish inhabitants was the second largest Jewish center in North Africa (Casablanca being the first). After Tunis there was Sfax, with 4,223 Jewish inhabitants; Djerba, with 4,294 inhabitants; Sousse, 3,679; Gabes, 3,663; and Bizerta, 2,350.

According to the last census, of every 1,000 Jews of Tunisian nationality, 443 were between the ages of 9 and 19; 484 between the ages of 20 and 59; and 73 were sixty years and older. These statistics reveal how long-lived was the Jewish population, and also its exceptionally high birth rate.

¹ For statistics of immigration of North African Jews to Israel see *Immigration to Israel*, p. 421.