Mufleta, Zaban and Sushi: The Development of the Mimouna and its Foodways from Morocco to Montreal

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Abstract

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The Mimouna is a ritual that is unique to the Moroccan Jewish community and an important part of their identity. As an integral part of this community's Passover celebrations, its observance has been maintained through this community's emigration to new countries. With a large number of Moroccan Jews settling in Montreal, the Mimouna has now become a part of the Passover landscape of this city. With information gathered through interviews with members of the Moroccan Jewish community in Montreal and through participant observation carried out at Mimounas being held in Montreal, this thesis examines how its practice has developed in the new Canadian environment the community has settled in.

Food is a central element in the celebration of the Mimouna and is the lens through which my study of the Mimouna has been understood and used to examine the way the Mimouna has changed and remained the same since bring brought to Canada, the meaning the ritual holds for members of the Moroccan Jewish community, the role it plays among the Moroccan Jewish community in Montreal and the way in which this celebration impacts upon their identity as Moroccan Jews. In order to frame its celebration in Montreal the historical roots of the Mimouna are examined, how it was celebrated in Morocco, how it has been presented in Moroccan Jewish cookbooks as well as in a community magazine.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to my family who came searching for a new home in Canada. My great grandparents on my mother's side came to Canada from Italy and chose to settle in Montreal where they raised a family and built a new life. My great grandfather opened an Italian bakery called Corona bakery, in the east end of the city on the street where my family still lives.

My deep love of food was no doubt shaped by my exposure to our family bakery, where my grandfather was a baker and would make me teething rings out of bread when I was a baby. As I got older I remember spending time in the back of the bakery among the bakers who could be found mixing, kneading and shaping the dough that would be used to make the bread and pizza we sold. The floor was always covered in a fine layer of flour; the air smelled of yeast and was warm from the heat of the wood-burning oven. It is these memories as well as growing up in a family in which food was always central shaped my need to connect to people and the world through food.

I would like to thank my advisor Norma Joseph for first introducing me to the academic study of Jewish food, and allowing me to immerse myself in an area that has become my passion. Thank you for all your support through this process and for being a constant source of inspiration.

I would also like to thank the people whom I interviewed for this project who so willingly opened their homes to me, shared their stories and memories with me, as well as delicious meals.

To Susie and Rosa, for being constant pillars of support throughout it all. I can't say how much it has meant to me

Above all, to my parents, for your love, support and belief in me. Thank you for allowing me to follow my passions and helping me get to where I am today.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

The practices and rituals found within the Jewish community are extraordinarily diverse, with differences relating to foods that are consumed, liturgical practices and the rituals surrounding holiday celebrations. One of these many variations can be found within the Moroccan Jewish community in the celebration of the Mimouna, a ritual unique to them, which marks the end of Passover. Moroccan Jews have continued to celebrate it in the places where they have settled after leaving Morocco. The majority of Moroccan Jews settled in Israel, France and Quebec, in turn making Montreal an important center for this community, a place where their distinctive culture and foodways continue to flourish. It is in this environment that the Mimouna continues to be an integral part of Moroccan Jewish identity and a defining element of the community.

Throughout this thesis my focus will be on the ritual of the Mimouna and the way it has developed among the Moroccan Jewish community of Montreal, as well as on the process whereby food creates social bonds, identity and community. Thus, I will be specifically looking to understand how the Mimouna and the foods served at this celebration work to create social and communal bonds among the Moroccan Jewish community, as well as how these elements create a Moroccan Jewish identity in an environment far from this community's homeland.

Furthermore, this thesis attempts to add to the body of work concerning food and foodways that goes beyond simply discussing the way in which food symbolizes identity. Rather, I will show that there are multiple facets to the way food and identity interact, which is in accordance with the kind of work concerning food and foodways that scholar

David E. Sutton hopes to see emerge. In his conclusion to *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory*, Sutton writes, "In sum, more ethnography, but ethnography that begins from the premise that food is not simply another topic that "symbolizes" identity, but one that challenges us to rethink our methods, assumptions and theories in new and productive ways."[1] To this end, I aim to show the way in which food helps to create and recreate identity, while also strengthening and creating social bonds. Along with this I am also examining the impact food has upon the communal relationships of Moroccan Jews in Montreal. In examining this specific community and the way that the celebration and the foods of the Mimouna recreate their identity in this Canadian city, this thesis conveys the important point that identity created through food will change based on particular cultural, religious and geographical contexts. Thus, the way food informs and creates the identity of Moroccan Jews living in Israel, France, or Morocco will be different from those living in Montreal.

The study of the Mimouna and Jewish food in North America

The fact that the Mimouna is a distinctive event whose origins are still largely obscure adds a dimension of interest to this ritual that motivates both scholars and members of the Moroccan Jewish community to attempt to discover when it first began to be celebrated. However, despite the interest in trying to understand how this celebration emerged, it is still a relatively understudied event. My preliminary research on the topic returned three scholarly articles, written in English, devoted to the topic of the Mimouna. The earliest of

[1] David E. Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 170.

these, "The Mimuna and the Minority Status of Moroccan Jews," was published in 1978 and written by Harvey E. Goldberg.[2] In this article Goldberg discusses this celebration in light of ideas concerning the power of the weak as discussed by Victor Turner in "The Ritual Process", as well as through the use of structuralist methodology. The second article is entitled "The Bitter and the Sweet: A Structural Analysis of Mimuna," by Erik H. Cohen and was published in 2003.[3] Through this article, the author analyses the Mimouna in structural opposition to the Passover Seder that precedes its celebration. Cohen sees these two elements of Passover celebrations as being of opposite character to each other; the Seder being a ritual of ordered and specific actions, and the Mimouna a more organic and less structured event. Finally, Rachel Sharaby wrote "Political activism and ethnic revival of a cultural symbol" published in 2011[4] in which she discusses the revival of the celebration of the Mimouna in Israel as it went from a holiday known only among a small segment of the Israeli population, to one that has become publicly known and recognized. Both Goldberg and Cohen chose to examine the celebration of the Mimouna in a similar fashion using structuralist methodology while Sharaby's research situates the Mimouna in a particular place outside of Morocco, namely Israel, in order to examine the way in which it has developed in a new cultural context.

Although Goldberg and Cohen's articles are important contributions that help to better understand the nature and structure of this ritual, research such as Sharaby's which

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[2] Harvey E. Goldberg, "The Mimuna and the Minority Status of Moroccan Jews," *Ethnology* 17 (1978): 75-87, accessed June 17, 2013, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3773281.

[3] Erik H. Cohen, "The Bitter and the Sweet: A Structural Analysis of Mimuna," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 17 (2003): 90-98, accessed June 17, 2013, http://0-search.ebscohost.com.mercury.concordia.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rfh&AN=ATLA0001335671&site=ehost-live.

[4] Rachel Sharaby, "Political Activism and Ethnic Revival of a Cultural Symbol," Ethnicities 11 (2011): 489-511, accessed June 17, 2013, doi:10.1177/1468796811415760.

examines the way the Mimouna has developed in the Jewish Moroccan diaspora, is critical in allowing us to understand how this ritual has developed in the modern period. Such research allows us to see how it has both changed and remained consistent, as well as its impact on modern Moroccan Jewish identity. Furthermore, it allows for an understanding of the way that this ritual is influenced by the time and the place in which it is celebrated.

Ultimately, with only a handful of published academic works on the topic of the Mimouna, especially concerning its development in specific cultural contexts, there is much more research to be done concerning this topic, and I am attempting to expand this area of study through my own research about the Mimouna in Montreal.

In the area of Jewish food studies that looks at the foodways of the Jewish community of North America, the majority of the research concerns Ashkenazi food culture with less research being devoted to Sephardic and Mizrahi communities. This is evidenced through the fact that much of the academic works within this area concern the European Jewish community that settled in North America in the late eighteen hundreds and early nineteen hundreds. Some of the central works in this area of research include *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration* by Hasia Diner,[5] "Kitchen Judaism" by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett,[6] "Food Fight: The Americanization of Kashrut in Twentieth-Century America" by Jenna Weissman Joselit,[7]

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[5] Hasia R. Diner, Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, & Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[6] Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Kitchen Judaism," in *Getting Comfortable in New York: The American Jewish Home, 1180-1950*, ed. Susan L. Braunstein et al. (New York: The Jewish Museum, 1990), 75-105.

[7] Jenna Weissman Joselit, "Food Fight: The Americanization of Kashrut in Twentieth-Century America," in *Food & Judaism*, ed. Leonard J. Greenspoon et al. (Omaha: Creighton University Press, 2005), 335-345.

and "Kashrut: The Possibility and Limits of Women's Domestic Power" by Ruth Ann Abusch-Magder.[8]

However, there are few academic works that focus on non-Ashkenazi communities living in North America and the way in which their food practices developed once they settled here. Rather, information about the food practices of Sephardic and Mizrahi communities is usually found in cookbooks or culinary memoirs such as *Aromas Of Aleppo: The Legendary Cuisine of Syrian Jews* by Poopa Dweck,[9] *Mama Nazima's Jewish-Iraqi Cuisine* by Rivka Goldman,[10] and *A Fistful of Lentils: Syrian-Jewish Recipes from Grandma Fritzie's Kitchen* by Jennifer Felicia Abadi.[11] Perhaps this lack of academic research stems from the fact that their own immigration process took place more recently and the community must settle into a new environment before the thought of academic research becomes a possibility or a priority. Furthermore, the number of Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews who immigrated to North America was smaller than the number of Ashkenazi Jews who immigrated here, thus making their experience less recognizable.

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8 Ruth Ann Abusch-Magder, "Kashrut: The Possibility and Limits of Women's Domestic Power," in *Food & Judaism*, ed. Leonard J. Greenspoon et al. (Omaha: Creighton University Press, 2005), 169-192.

9 Poopa Dweck, *Aromas of Aleppo: the Legendary Cuisine of Syrian Jews* (New York: Regan Books, 2007).

10 Rivka Goldman, *Mama Nazima's Jewish-Iraqi Cuisine* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 2006).

11 Jennifer Felicia Abadi, *A Fistful of Lentils: Syrian-Jewish Recipes from Gradma Fritzie's Kitchen* (Boston: Harvard Common Press, 2002).

Methodology

Before I begin the discussion of my research methodology, I will discuss the scholarly works that shaped my own academic approach to the study of Jewish food. David Kraemer's *Jewish Eating and Identity through the Ages* is a seminal work in the field of Jewish food studies, which greatly influenced my own work as a scholar. In it Kraemer provides readers with the history of Jewish eating practices from the Biblical period until the modern period. His discussion includes topics such as the development of the prohibition of mixing meat and dairy, the institution of the period of waiting between the consumption of meat and dairy, as well as the consumption and production of kosher food in the modern period. The aim of examining these various topics was, as Kraemer states in his introduction, "[…] to present a history of Jewish eating practices through the ages and to interpret those practices as expressions of Jewish identity."[12] Thus, through this book we see the evolution of the laws of kashrut and the way in which these developments affected Jewish identity throughout history.

Furthermore, we are also shown the way in which changes in the dietary laws reflected questions and concerns about Jewish identity that arose in specific time periods. Kraemer's work challenged the idea that modern Jewish eating practices were the same ones that Jews had always adhered to. This perspective allowed me to see Jewish food as something that is in constant evolution and development rather than as a static entity, as well as something that is intimately tied to the historical periods in which it is being prepared and consumed.

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[12] David C. Kraemer, *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 3.

Through reading Kraemer's work it became clear to me that examining Jewish foodways in various historical periods can tell us much about Jewish identity during that particular time. Kraemer allowed me to understand the central role food has played and continues to play in defining Jewish identity throughout history. As a scholar I now approach my own research with the principal position that food is one of the main vehicles through which Jewish identity is expressed and how this identity is expressed through food will vary depending on the time period and location in which it is being looked at.

Finally, Kraemer makes the important point that food is simply one of the ways through which Jewish identity is expressed and yet it is an important lens through which to examine Jewish identity because it has not been studied in as much detail as other facets of Jewish identity. "By focusing in eating, I do not mean to suggest that this is the best lens through which to examine the question, nor that it stands in isolation from other practices. But it is a perspective that has been neglected, and for that reason it merits an extended and dedicated study."[13] Similarly, there are multiple ways that Moroccan Jews express their identity but I think how they do so through food is something which has not been examined in much detail and deserves research.

Another important work that influenced my own work is *Eat and Be Satisfied: A Social History of Jewish Food* by John Cooper. Through this book Cooper presents readers with information concerning both the daily and festival foods of the Ashkenazi and Sephardic community from Biblical times until the present. He does so by utilizing information gathered from rabbinic law, cookbooks and modern research about the

[13] Ibid., 8.

history of food. Each chapter contains sub-sections that are organized according to different foods, dishes or specific meals. For example, when discussing everyday food in the Talmudic age, Cooper created sections that dealt with bread and grains, pulses, vegetables, fruits, and cheese.[14] The topics Cooper covers are considered in-depth so that the book abounds with information that is extremely detailed in nature.

The important interplay between Jewish communities and the migration of food is highlighted throughout Cooper's book. One comes to understand that the fluidity of foodstuff has been an integral part of the development of Jewish cuisine. Just as the Jewish community has been in constant movement, the same can be said for the ingredients they use when cooking. For example, members of the Jewish community who relocated to new places brought the recipes and ingredients from their homelands with them to the new places in which they settled. Thus, Cooper reveals that Jewish food has been influenced by the many countries in which Jews have lived, making it a diverse cuisine.

Cooper's work has allowed me to develop a broad view as to what constitutes Jewish food as well as to think of Jewish cuisine as something that is active and based on exchange. When discussing Jewish cuisine, there are some who adopt the position that there is very little authentic Jewish food due to the fact that much of the food has been borrowed from the surrounding population in the countries in which Jews have lived. However, Cooper moves beyond such a position and adopts one that is more inclusive, which has allowed me to think of Jewish cuisine as constituting foods which have been prepared by Jewish communities over the centuries for both Sabbath and festival tables as

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[14] John Cooper, *Eat and be Satisfied: A Social History of Jewish Food* (New Jersey: Jason Aronson, 1993), 37-52.

well as recipes and dishes which have been modified in order to allow them to conform to Jewish dietary laws by using different ingredients or modes of preparation. Throughout time, Jews have worked with the food that was available to them as well as the laws of kashrut in order to sustain themselves, and in doing so created their own distinctive cuisine.

The research for this project was conducted in four parts that were carried out concurrently. One part consisted of research into the history of the Moroccan Jewish community in both Morocco and Montreal using library resources, online databases such as JSTOR and RAMBI, as well as online academic journals. These resources were also used to gather information about the origins of the Mimouna and how this holiday was celebrated in Morocco. The information collected during this part of my research was used in the second and third chapters in order to provide historical and background knowledge with which to frame the information gathered concerning the celebration of the Mimouna among the Moroccan Jewish community of Montreal.

The main books and articles used when writing about Moroccan Jewish history, the origins of the Mimouna and its celebration in Morocco, consisted of *Studies in the History of the Jews of Morocco* by David Corcos,[15] *Two Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Morocco* by Haim Zafrani,[16] "The Mellah of Fez: Reflections on the Spatial Turn in Moroccan Jewish History" by Susan Gilson Miller,[17] "Shifting Boundaries of Moroccan

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15 David Corcos, *Studies in the History of the Jews of Morocco* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 1976).

16 Haim Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Morocco* (Jersey City, NJ: KTAV, 2005).

17 Susan Gilson Miller, "The Mellah of Fez: Reflections on the Spatial Turn in Moroccan Jewish History," in *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, ed. Julia Brauch et al. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 101-118.

Jewish Identities" by Daniel J. Schroeter,[18] *Trois Énigmes: Le Joujou de Tisha bé Av, Pessah et la Mimouna. Les Cérémonies de "Noces enfantines* by Sibony Nessim,[19] *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs: The Ritual Practices of Syrian, Moroccan, Judeo-Spanish and Spanish and Portuguese Jews of North America* by Herbert C. Dobrinsky,[20] and the *Encyclopedia of Jewish Food* by Gil Marks.[21] It should be noted that Dobrinsky and Nessim were not writing for academic audiences but their works offer personal memories and information about the Mimouna passed on within the Moroccan Jewish community.

Concerning the Moroccan Jewish community in Montreal, about which there is only a limited amount of research, I relied heavily on *Juifs marocains à Montréal: témoignages d'une immigration moderne* by Marie Berdugo-Cohen, Yolande Cohen and Joseph Lévy, [22] "Migrations juives marocaines au Canada ou comment devient-on Sépharade?" by Yolande Cohen,[23] and "Between Ashkenaz and Quebecois: Fifty Years of Francophone Sephardim in Montreal" by William F.S Miles.[24]

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[18] Daniel J. Schroeter, "Shifting Boundaries of Moroccan Jewish Identities," *Jewish Social Studies* 15 (2008): 145-164, accessed June 16, 2013, http://0-search.ebscohost.com.mercury.concordia.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=36907185&site=ehost-live.

[19] Nessim Sibony, *Trois Énigmes: Le Joujou de Tisha bé Av, Pessah et la Mimouna. Les Cérémonies de "Noces enfantines* (California: J.T. Productions, 2003).

[20] Herbert C. Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs: The Ritual Practices of Syrian, Moroccan, Judeo-Spanish and Spanish and Portuguese Jews of North America* (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1986).

[21] Gil Marks, Encyclopedia of Jewish Food (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2010).

[22] Marie Berdugo-Cohen, Yolande Cohen, and Joseph Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal: témoignages d'une immigration moderne* (Montreal: VLB, 1987).

[23] Yolande Cohen, "Migrations juives marocaines au Canada ou comment devient-on Sépharade?," in *Les Communautétes Juives de Montréal: Histoire et enjeux comtemporains*, ed. Pierre Anctil et al. (Québec: Septentrion, 2010), 234-251.

[24] William F.S. Miles, "Between Ashkenaz and Quebecois: Fifty Years of Francophone Sephardim in Montreal," Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies 16 (2007): 29-66, accessed June 19, 2013, 10.1353/dsp.2007.0005.

The second part of my research consisted of conducting interviews with members of the Moroccan Jewish community of Montreal, all of whose names have been replaced by pseudonyms. I interviewed nine members of the community[25], consisting of seven women and two men who ranged in age from their early twenties to their seventies. Five of my interviewees were born in Morocco and later immigrated to Montreal; these include Esther, Rebecca, Moshe, Sarah, and Miriam. The other four interviewees, Rachel, Jacob, Leah and Deborah, were born in North America.

I was put into contact with my interviewees through the help of my advisor Dr. Norma Joseph and Dr. Sonia Sarah Lipsyc who is the director of ALEPH-Centre d'Etudes Juives Contemporaines that is affiliated with the Communauté Sépharade Unifiée du Québec (CSUQ). Both Dr. Joseph and Dr. Lipsyc provided me with names of members of the Moroccan Jewish community whom I then contacted to set up an interview. The interviews themselves were personal interviews, each of which was conducted on a one to one basis and lasted between thirty minutes to an hour. The interviews either took place in the homes of my interviewees or at their place of work. The interviews took on a semi-structured format, for which a set of questions were prepared beforehand but which were modified throughout the interview depending on the responses of the interviewees. The interviews were recorded using a digital recorder that was placed between the interviewee and myself throughout the interview and which was small enough not to be a distraction during our discussion.

The interview began with general introductory questions that would allow the interviewees to discuss their favorite dishes as well as their Jewish background.

[25] Please refer to p.115 for a complete list of the interviewees and the dates of when each interview took place.

Following this, the remainder of the questions concerned the Mimouna and the interviewee's experience with this celebration. It should be noted that certain questions about the Mimouna were phrased in such a way that specifically linked this holiday to Morocco and the Moroccan Jewish community. Through my research, I observed that within the organized Sephardic community of Montreal, which is overseen by the CSUQ, the Mimouna has recently been linked to the larger Sephardic community, rather than being specifically associated with the Moroccan Jewish community.[26] Therefore, I am led to question whether members of the Moroccan Jewish community also make this association or whether my interview questions that linked the Mimouna to Morocco prompted my interviewees to do so.

The third aspect of my research methodology consisted of attending Mimouna celebrations and using participant-observation methods to gather information. I attended a Mimouna celebration at the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue that was hosted by the CSUQ and a Mimouna at the home of my interviewees Sarah and Moshe, both of which took place on April 14th, 2012. I did not take notes while I attended the Mimounas but upon leaving the celebrations I wrote about my impressions and experiences extensively. I did take photographs at these events; however these photographs were not of individuals but of the space in which the Mimounas took place as well as of the food that was served.

The Mimouna held at the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue was a large affair open to the public, with between one hundred and two hundred people in attendance. Thus, most people did not know that I was there as a researcher. On the other hand, the

[26] Other members of the Sephardic community of Montreal include Jews from Iraq, Iran, Lebanon and Egypt. However, their numbers are much smaller than their Moroccan counterparts.

Mimouna, which was hosted, by Sarah and Moshe was much smaller and those in attendance knew that I was attending as a researcher because when I arrived Sarah announced to her guests that I was writing a thesis about the Mimouna. There is the possibility that this caused some people to treat me differently when interacting with me. Perhaps this deterred certain people from speaking to me because they either did not want to be included in my research or felt that they had nothing to contribute. Although, I cannot verify that this was a factor in my research at this time.

Finally, the fourth part of my research consisted of examining the way the Mimouna was presented in community publications. This consisted of examining two Moroccan Jewish cookbooks published in Quebec and a community magazine. The first cookbook is entitled *La Cuisine Juive Marocaine* by Rivka Levy Mellul and was published in 1983.[27] The second cookbook I looked at was entitled *La Cuisine Sépharade Marocaine des Grands Jours et du Quotidien* by Gilberte Cohen Scali which was published in 2011.[28] I looked at each of these cookbooks individually and then compared how the Mimouna was presented in each of them by looking closely at the recipes and written information contained within them. The community magazine I looked at was entitled *La Voix Sépharade* (LVS) and I examined issues of this magazine that were published between 1977 and 2009. I accessed copies of *La Voix Sépharade* at the CJCCC National Archives located in Montreal, however it should be noted that not every issue published during the years that I examined were contained in this archival collection.

Insider/Outsider Status

[27] Rivka Levy Mellul, *La Cuisine Juive Marocaine* (Montreal: Albert Soussan, 1983).

[28] Gilberte Cohen Scali, *La Cuisine Sepharade Marocaine des Grands Jours et du Quotidien* (Montreal: Communate Sepharade Unifiee du Quebec, 2011).

As a researcher it is important to keep in mind that one's age, gender and social position will cause the people that one is studying to interact with them in different ways and that it can also determine the kind of information that one will be privy to. In the methodology section of Susan Sered's *Women as Ritual Experts: The Religious Lives of Elderly Jewish Women in Jerusalem,* Sered discusses the fact that she was pregnant throughout most of her fieldwork and how this was both an advantage and disadvantage to her. For example, Sered explains that the women stopped certain conversations when she joined them because they believed these conversations could be harmful to the fetus. However, at the same time she explains, "I was party to a great deal of intimate advice concerning conception, pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing that a non-pregnant field-worker would probably not have heard."[29]

Similarly, my position in relation to my interviewees is one of an outsider, both in relation to being Jewish and Moroccan, which impacted the way in which my interviewees interacted with me. Being an outsider in both of these respects sometimes caused interviewees to qualify and more fully explain their statements about Jewish culture, in order to make sure that I understood their answers. Due to the fact that I am a non-Jew, they assumed that I was not well versed in things related to Jewish religion and culture. However, at the same time, I think my position as an outsider to the Moroccan Jewish community caused my interviewees to provide more complete answers to the questions I asked them. Perhaps having an outsider ask them questions about the Mimouna enabled them to think about it and discuss it differently than they would have if

[29]Susan Starr Sered, *Women as ritual experts: the religious lives of elderly Jewish women in Jerusalem* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 12.

the person they were speaking to was a member of the community. Speaking to an insider may have caused interviewees to gloss over certain explanations because they may have assumed that the interviewer already possessed this knowledge. On the other hand, being non-Ashkenazi was beneficial to my position as a researcher because it allowed for the tensions that have existed between the two communities to be left out of the interview process.

Additionally, the fact that I am an outsider may have caused some of my interviewees to answer my questions in a way that showed them to be "good" Moroccan Jews who upheld the traditions of their community. Perhaps this comes from wanting to be viewed and portrayed positively by an outsider, as well as being seen as upholders of their Jewish Moroccan tradition.

Being a young woman in my twenties was more than likely an advantage throughout the interview process when interviewing people older than myself. My interviewees seemed to quickly warm up to me and, I think, viewed me in a non-threatening way which allowed them to open up to me throughout the interviews.

Although I am an outsider in terms of not being a member of the Jewish or Moroccan communities, I do share certain commonalities with my interviewees. All my interviewees live in Montreal, the city in which I also reside. The majority of my interviewees were also women, albeit older than me, but this nonetheless provided an element of commonality between us. In one case, a shared experience of familiarity with Italian food created an unexpected link between one of my interviewees and me. In my interviewees' case this experience with Italian food came from her Tunisian father who

adopted elements of Italian cuisine because of the presence of Italians in the country, while my familiarity comes from my own family's Italian roots.

However, it should be noted that because of the fact that I am an outsider, in that I am neither Jewish nor Moroccan, does not make it so that I am simply on the outsider side of the insider/outside dichotomy. In fact, some academics suggest that rather than being viewed as a dichotomy, being an insider or outsider can be thought of as a continuum. Two articles which discuss this idea include "Connecting Anthropology and Quakerism: Transcending the Insider/Outsider Dichotomy" by Peter Collins,[30] and "Power and Positionality: negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures by Sharan B. Merriam, Juanita Johnson-Bailey, Ming-Yeh Lee, Youngwha Kee, Gabo Ntseane and Mazanah Muhamad. In the first article, Collins reflects upon his own experience with the insider/outsider positions through the course of his own research within a Quaker community in England, of which he is a member. Through his reflections on his position, we can see that he constantly experiences subtle shifts between being an insider/outsider while he is conducting research and interacting with the Quaker community. Furthermore, he makes the important point that being a member of a group, whether religious or not, is a position that can be multifaceted and shifting in nature. The second article illustrates the way in which the insider/outsider positions should no longer be viewed as a dichotomy but rather be thought of as more fluid conditions and is particularly good at illustrating the way in which a researcher can experience different facets of insider/outsider identity. "More recent discussions of insider/outsider status have unveiled the complexity inherent in either status and have

[30] Peter Collins, "Connecting anthropology and Quakerism: Transcending the insider/outsider dichotomy," *Theorizing faith: The insider/outsider problem in the study of ritual* (2002): 77-95.

acknowledged that the boundaries between the two positions are not all that clearly delineated. In the real world of data collection, there is a good bit of slippage and fluidity between these two states."[31]

From these articles it can be understood one's insider/outsider status can be influenced by factors such as gender, class, culture, religion and race. Seeing as these identities can shift depending on a variety of factors, there are various ways in which one can experience either of these positions. The following quote from Sofia Villenas that was included in the second article illustrates this well, "'as researchers, we can be insiders and outsiders to a particular community of research participants at many different levels and at different times.'"[32]

A description of the Mimouna

Finally, before I begin my discussion of the Mimouna, its foodways and how it has developed since being brought to Montreal I will offer a description of this celebration and a timeline of its observance. Although the Mimouna officially begins an hour after the end of Passover, preparations often, according to my interviewees, start earlier in the day when it is necessary for women to begin preparing their home for the visitors they will receive later in the night. In Morocco Jewish women would receive help doing so from their Muslim neighbors, often women, who would bring them foods that they could

[31] Sharan B. Merriam et al., "Power and Positionality: negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures," *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 20.5 (2001): 405, accessed January 7, 2013, doi: 10.1080/02601370120490.

[32] Merriam et al., "Power and Positionality," 411.

not keep in their home during the holiday because they were not considered kosher for Passover, such as flowers, milk, butter, starter dough, flour and honey.[33]

While living in Morocco, following the evening services men would sometimes stop at the homes of relatives or friends on the way back to their own celebrations. The night of the Mimouna was a time when members of the Moroccan Jewish community would open their homes to one another and spend the night visiting each other, with formal invitations being unnecessary. In Morocco, Jews lived in close proximity to one another in the *mellah* so its streets would be filled with people going from home to home. The open door policy is still a characteristic of the Mimouna celebrations that take place in Montreal, however because members of the Moroccan Jewish community no longer live as near to each other as they once did people are more likely to receive a verbal invitation to the Mimounas of friends or family. The Mimouna celebrations and the visits to family and friends last well into the night and central to these visits is the Mimouna table that is filled with a variety of dishes, which are usually sweet. In Morocco, the following day, families would leave the mellah to have picnics by the seashore or on land outside the city for those who lived inland. These celebrations are no longer part of the Mimouna celebrations of the Moroccan community in Montreal, two reasons likely being the cold temperatures that are typical at the time of year this celebration takes place, as well as the fact that people often have to go back to work the following day.

[33] It should be noted that the problem of kashrut and Passover laws is not clear in this practice. It is unclear whether or not women waited until after Passover was over to start preparing chametz dishes needs further investigation, which does not fall within the purview of this research project.

Chapter 2 – Back in Morocco: The Jewish Community in Morocco

The history of Jews in Morocco is one that spans centuries, yet there is much speculation as to when exactly Jews settled in the area. According to Haim Zafrani, Jews were the first non-Berbers to settle in the territory known as the Maghreb, the region of Northwest Africa between the Atlantic Ocean and Egypt.[34] The Moroccan historian Mustafa Na'imi' stated in his book entitled "Le Sahara à travers le pays Takna" that the Jewish presence in southern Morocco was concurrent with that of the Phoenicians[35] who arrived around the twelfth century BCE.

Subsequently, evidence was found of a Jewish community living in the city of Volubilis during the Roman period, "A seven-branched bronze candelabrum has been found in the ruins of that city, as well as a fragment of a tombstone bearing a Hebrew inscription that says in part, *matrona bat rabbi yehudah nah*, "woman, daughter of Rabbi Yehudah, may [her soul] rest.""[36] There is a lack of information concerning the Jewish community in the period between the end of the Roman era and the beginning of the Arab conquest of Morocco, however chroniclers writing in the fourteenth century CE document their presence, along with Christian and pagan groups at the time of the conquests of Idris I that began in the eighth century. From the time of the Arab conquests onwards it is a recognized fact that the Jewish community was a distinct element of Moroccan society.[37]

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[34] Haim Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Morocco* (Jersey City, NJ: KTAV, 2005), 1.
[35] Haïm Zafrani, *Juifs d'Andalousie et du Maghreb* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2002), 23.
[36] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 1-2.
[37] Ibid., 3.

Various theories attempt to explain the origins of Jews in Morocco. One such explanation is that of the Berber-Jew, which suggests that many of the Jews from the region are of Berber origin.[38] According to Daniel J. Schroeter this explanation, or myth as he chooses to describe it, most probably originated among Muslims in medieval times rather than among Jews. Schroeter explains that "it is best known from the accounts of the fourteenth-century scholar Ibn Khaldun in his *Kitab al-'Ibar*, in which he wrote about Berber converts to Judaism."[39] Nahum Slouschz was the main advocate of this theory in the twentieth century, at which time it was met with acceptance by French colonialists because the idea that Berber Jews were more indigenous than the Arab Muslims living in Morocco supported their "ideas on racial, ethnic, and religious divisions that underscored their policy in Morocco."[40] This theory was used to help legitimate colonial rule as well as in the search to discover the customs of Berber Muslims in the pre-Islamic period that the French believed would be more acquiescent to French rule. Interestingly, Schroeter notes that those Jews who lived among Berbers did not identify as Berber Jews and although they spoke Berber, Arabic was the language spoken at home. Among the Maghribi Jewish community, Berbers "were regarded as inferior" to the members of the community of Arab or Andalusian heritage.[41] On the other hand, "Some Moroccan Jews internalized the myth of the indigenous Berber Jew, calling the Jews of the countryside

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38 Ibid., 2; Daniel J. Schroeter, "Shifting Boundaries of Moroccan Jewish Identities," *Jewish Social Studies* 15.1 (2008): 147-148, accessed June 16, 2013, http://0-search.ebscohost.com.mercury.concordia.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=36907185&site=ehost-live.

39 Schroeter, "Shifting Boundaries," 148.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.,149.

"Shleuh," the group of Berbers speaking the Tashelhit dialect of southern Morocco where most of the rural Jews lived."[42]

The Jewish community of Morocco came to be made up of two groups that were divided according to the ethnic origins of its members, namely the *megorashim* and the *toshavim*.[43] The *megorashim* consisted of those Jews who were exiles of the Iberian Peninsula, while the *toshavim* consisted of Jews that were native residents of Morocco.[44] Zafrani explains that the two groups initially lived side by side with their own separate and distinctive institutions, social customs and religious rituals. However, over time they began to combine their communal activities "and leadership passed to the immigrant element of Spanish stock, which soon emerged as the dominant influence in the sphere of economics, and even rabbinical knowledge."[45] It should be noted that some descendants of the Spanish exiles maintained their own synagogues and communal institutions into the twentieth century.[46]

All Jews living in Morocco were accorded the legal status of *dhimmis* according to Muslim law (*fiqh*); this status was also given to Christians living in the country because both of these groups were considered to be "people of the book." In principle this meant that the Muslim majority tolerated them as residents of their country, and guaranteed to protect them. In turn, the Jewish community had to accept Islam as the

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[42] Ibid.
[43] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years,* 119.
[44] Schroeter, "Shifting Boundaries," 151.
[45] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years,* 119.
[46] Schroeter, "Shifting Boundaries," 153.

preeminent and ruling religion, while practicing their own religion discretely.[47] Despite the limitations that came along with this status,

> "the Jewish communities enjoyed a wide degree of administrative and cultural autonomy: they […] had their own courts and finances; they ensured that facilities for worship, welfare, and education were available to their members; they determined matters of personal status and even the application of Jewish law and had the power to enact compulsory regulations for their members in matters of taxation and public order."[48]

As *dhimmis*, all adult male Jews were required to pay a legal poll-tax known as the *jizya* which was "raised annually per capita."[49] Along with this, the community was also subjected to extralegal payments that were imposed for exceptional reasons or were simply random sums due on specific dates as decided by the government. "Added to this were confiscations, fines, forced labor, bribes, and the "gifts" or "presents" which made up the *hyiya*, consecrated by custom."[50]

Until the fifteenth century, Jews lived along side their Muslim neighbors in Morocco, not being expected to live apart from them. However, this changed with the creation of the first Jewish quarter in the city of Fes in 1438. Traditionally, it is suggested that the *sultan* called for the creation of the Jewish quarter after an incident in which Muslims killed Jews because of rumors that Jews had placed wine in local mosques.[51] On the other hand, David Corcos explains that historian H.Z Hirschberg connected the creation of the Jewish quarter in Fes to the discovery of the tomb of Moulay Idris (Idris II), who was a descendant of the Prophet and who was also responsible for the creation of

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[47] Marie Berdugo-Cohen, Yolande Cohen, and Joseph Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal: témoignages d'une immigration moderne* (Montreal: VLB, 1987), 15.

[48] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years,* 121.

[49] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 131.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Susan Gilson Miller, "The Mellah of Fez: Reflections on the Spatial Turn in Moroccan Jewish History," in *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, ed. Julia Brauch, et al. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 102; Schroeter, "Shifting Boundaries," 154.

the city of Fes. Upon this discovery, Fes became a *ville sainte* or a holy city, meaning that unbelievers or non-Muslims could no longer reside within it, necessitating the creation of a separate area in which they could live.[52]

In Morocco the Jewish quarters were known as *mellahs* due to the fact that the first one in Fes was built on a salty marsh, with the word *mellah* being derived from the Arabic root of "salt." This name was subsequently given to the various Jewish quarters around the country, despite the fact that they were not all located on salty marshes. The *mellahs* built across Morocco were commonly located in the vicinity of the royal compound, and were separated from the rest of the city by walls and gates. [53] Although many of the Jews living in Morocco were made to live in Jewish quarters, it should be noted that this was not the case in all cities.

According to Susan Gilson Miller, for the Jewish community of Morocco, the *mellah* came to represent their minority existence within Moroccan society. [54] Furthermore, Schroeter explains, living in *mellahs* caused the Jewish community to appear as outsiders who needed to be isolated from the larger society.[55] Yet at the same time, *mellahs* were distinct Jewish spaces within the larger Moroccan and Muslim environment from which much meaning could be derived. As Miller says about the *mellah*, "[…] more than a living room; it was also the setting for enacting the social practices, ceremonial performances, desires and memories that inscribed a specific

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[52] David Corcos, *Studies in the History of the Jews of Morocco* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 1976), 74.
[53] Miller, "The Mellah of Fez," 102-103.
[54] Miller, "The Mellah of Fez," 103.
[55] Schroeter, "Shifting Boundaries," 155.

Jewish identity onto a Muslim context."[56] Ultimately, it was a space for Moroccan Jews to act out their Jewish identity in the midst of a larger non-Jewish population.

Although *mellahs* worked to segregate Jews, they were also porous so that both people and goods crossed the walls of this space.[57] Along with the goods and people that traveled across the walls of the *mellah*, it could be said that intangible cultural elements were also exchanged. Miller illustrates this permeability through a discussion of the way in which the *mellah* was the setting for events during which Jews and Muslims celebrated together. She presents a story in which the two communities came together to celebrate the miraculous survival of the *sultan* from a lion attack. In this story the lions were meant to kill Christian captives but subsequently attacked the sultan. Although the author questions whether this event actually happened, she explains that the celebrations consisted of drunken revelry and debauchery. Miller says, "transgressions took place in the form of border-crossing and the breaking of moral and religious taboos, such as Jews wearing shoes in mosque, Muslims getting drunk inside the *mellah*, Jews robbing Muslim shops and going unpunished."[58] This story illustrates that the inversion of standard social roles was something that could happen within the walls of the *mellah*, and also displays the relative ease with which boundaries put in place between Muslims and Jews could be crossed.[59] Comparably, the Mimouna is an event that we know with certainty took place on a yearly basis, during which Jews and Muslims celebrated together, when boundaries were crossed and certain behaviour during its celebration reversed assumed social roles.

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[56] Miller, "The Mellah of Fez," 103.
[57] Schroeter, "Shifting Boundaries," 155.
[58] Miller, "The Mellah of Fez," 110.
[59] Miller, "The Mellah of Fez," 110-111.

Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy explained that on occasion, Jews living in *mellahs* experienced raids during times of revolts and political upheaval that sometimes degenerated into massacres. During such events forced conversions and abductions took place, yet in some cases the Jewish community also organized acts of armed resistance. However, it is noted that friendly social interactions between Muslims and Jews were not completely destroyed after such incidents; rather they continued to exist alongside them. These friendly social interactions probably took place during certain day-to-day interactions, although I think the Mimouna would have been an event during which the two communities could consistently carry out and renew friendly relations.[60]

Within the *mellahs* themselves there existed a disparity in the living conditions so that there were a small number of more luxurious dwellings, which were inhabited by a handful of the richest families while the majority of the inhabitants were faced with conditions of overpopulation and confined living spaces.[61] It was the latter circumstances that gave rise to negative assumptions that became associated with the space of the *mellah*. In the mid-twentieth century these negative beliefs developed into *mellahs* being seen as a place of danger and iniquity. Prior to this, visitors to Morocco such as Leo Africanus[62] wrote positive descriptions of its Jewish quarters, with the *mellah* in Meknes even being described as a place of progress.[63]

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[60] Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 18.

[61] Corcos, *Studies in the History*, 130.

[62] Leo Africanus was a Moorish diplomat who wrote *Descrittione dell'Africa* (Description of Africa) in which he described the geography of North Africa. The Moors are an African Muslim people who are of mixed Arab and Berber descent.

[63] Miller, "The Mellah of Fez," 103; Corcos, *Studies in the History*, 86.

Morocco Under the French

Unlike other countries in the Maghreb, Morocco did not experience Turkish domination; therefore it was only with French colonization in the beginning of the twentieth century that Western influences penetrated Moroccan society. It was under this new Western influence that Moroccan Jews began to consider the promises of emancipation and equality being put forward by the French. Furthermore, the establishment of l'Alliance israélite universelle (AIU) schools introduced French and Western ideals to the Moroccan Jewish community, which led to the abandonment, by some, of a traditional lifestyle. The Alliance israélite universelle was founded in 1860 by a group of six French Jewish intellectuals who were motivated by the ideas of the Enlightenment and through a sense of solidarity with the Jewish community, whose ultimate aim was the betterment of Jews around the world. The organization opened one hundred and eighty three schools around the world as a way to meet this objective.[64] The first Alliance israélite universelle school opened in Tétouan in 1862, after which numerous schools were opened in cities around Morocco. Although these schools did not initially receive a positive reception from religious authorities due to the fact that their curriculum included the study of secular subjects, such reservations began to decline and more Jewish students began to attend them.[65]

An important part of the Alliance israélite universelle school system was their focus on girls' education. To this end, the first girls' school was opened in Tétouan in

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[64] Frances Malino, "Alliance Israelite Universelle, Teachers Of," in *Jewish Women's Archive, Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, accessed June 24, 2013, http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/alliance-israelite-universelle-teachers-of.

[65] Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 19.

1868. Attendance at such schools was higher among girls living in urban cities where there was more exposure to European culture than in the more religious and traditional cities in the south and interior of the country. Similarly, girls living in the European quarters of the city, also known as the Ville-Nouvelle, generally began school earlier than those girls living in the *mellahs*. "However, girls' attendance at elementary school eventually rose throughout the country. Whereas only 310 girls attended school in 1872, 1,822 (a six-fold increase) were in school in 1912, the beginning of the colonial period. In 1912, twelve of the fifteen communities that had AIU schools had schools for girls."[66] Along with the traditional curriculum that included instruction in arithmetic, European geography, Biblical history and languages, vocational training programs were added to the school curriculum, which provided the girls attending these schools with a path towards economic independence. In the beginning, the vocational training courses offered to girls consisted of stereotypical female occupations, namely needlework and sewing. During the French colonial period the variety of courses being offered were broadened to include bookkeeping, commercial correspondence, typing and stenography. Finally, another opportunity was given to women graduates of the AIU with the establishment of an AIU normal school, the Institut Bischoffsheim, in Paris where women were trained as teachers who would then work as teachers in AIU schools in the Middle East.[67]

The education of girls in AIU schools received negative reactions by certain rabbis who believed that it would distract women from properly fulfilling their roles as wives and mothers. In some cases, objections were "supported by girls' mothers who

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[66] Beverly Mizrachi, "Morocco: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, accessed June 24, 2013, http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/morocco-nineteenth-and-twentieth-centuries.

[67] Mizrachi, "Morocco: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries."

complained that education would take their daughters away from their household duties."[68] However, it should be noted that the schools managed to combat the custom of marrying women at young ages. In order to do so they set out the claim that educated women would make better mothers, while also attempting to keep girls in school as long as possible. Stemming from this, the minimum age at which a girl could be married was raised to twelve by the Chief Rabbinical Court in 1934 and to fifteen in 1948.[69]

The official establishment of the French protectorate of Morocco in 1912, created a new social dynamic between Jews and Muslims. This was in part caused by the abolition of the legal status of the *dhimma* that had been applied to Jews and which had regulated many of the social relations between the two communities.[70] The more favorable treatment of Jews by the French created tensions between the two groups. Following from this, there was a change in the social position of numerous Jews in Morocco due to their adoption of the French language, higher levels of education and their participation in newly created economic opportunities, as explained in the following quote by Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, "L'adoption du français, langue d'usage et de prestige, la scolarisation plus poussée, l'insertion dans les nouveaux secteurs économiques créés par le protectorat affectent profondément les structures démographiques et sociales de la communauté."[71] This worked to create a larger cultural gap between the two groups.

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Yolande Cohen, "Migrations juives marocaines au Canada ou comment devient-on Sépharade?," in *Les Communautés Juives de Montréal: Histoire et enjeux contemporains*, ed. Pierre Anctil et al. (Québec: Septentrion, 2010), 240.

[71] Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 19.

Many within the community adopted the French language and aspects of French culture as a way of liberating themselves from their circumstances. In turn certain traditions were rejected, as well as the links they once had with the Muslim community.[72] Yet, such changes led many within the Jewish community to feel as though they were caught between two worlds in which they had very different positions. There was the old model in which they were protected *dhimmis* under Moroccan rule and the new model of emancipation under French rule. [73]

The Jewish community came to see that despite the changes instituted by the French, Jews did not have a place within the French nation.[74] Following the creation of Israel in 1948, there was a massive emigration of Jews to this country,[75] a place many chose to make their new home due to the religious attraction that the Holy Land held.[76] Other countries to which members of the Moroccan Jewish community chose to emigrate included Canada, France, and Spain.[77] Author Jamaâ Baïda provides emigration statistics that help to create a more complete picture of the impact that this relocation had on the Moroccan Jewish community. The author presents readers with the following numbers, "[…] in 1948, the Moroccan Jewish population numbered approximately 250,000 out of a total of about 8 million inhabitants; in 1960, there were 160,000 Jews left in Morocco; and toward the end of 1967, there were only 40,000. Today, fewer than 4,000 Jews still

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72 Cohen, "Migrations juives marocaines," 240-241.

73 Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 21.

74 Cohen, "Migrations juives marocaines," 240-241.

75 Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 9.

76 Jamaâ Baïda, "The Emigration of Moroccan Jews, 1948-1956," trans. Allan MacVicar, in *Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa*, ed. Daniel J. Schroeter et al. (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2011), 322.

77 Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 9.

live in Morocco." [78] Factors that influenced Jews to leave Morocco included "decolonization, the clash of national identities, the poverty of the Jewish masses, and the uncertainties of the political and economic future of Jews in an independent Morocco."[79] Following the call for Moroccan independence, the nationalist movement linked with this endeavor appealed to both Islam and Arabism as part of their rhetorical strategy. Although these references had a strong impact on the Muslim majority, they were not ideas that members of the Jewish community could relate to and ultimately Jews "felt themselves to be more or less outside the struggle for national liberation." [80] The harrowing experience of the racist laws implemented by the Vichy government and the decline in France's role as a power that would protect the Jewish community, also led to the desire to find places that would provide them with more hospitable living conditions.[81]

Theories Concerning the Origins of the Mimouna

The origins of the Mimouna and the reasons for which it is celebrated are obscure and remain largely unknown, leaving this subject to be surrounded by much speculation. Both scholars and others within the Jewish community have attempted to put forward explanations for its practice. In *Two Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Morocco*, Haim Zafrani suggests that many of the theories put forward to explain the celebration and etymology of the Mimouna, were chosen because they allowed for the celebration to

78 Baïda, "The Emigration of Moroccan Jews," 321.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., 322.
81 Ibid.

function within a defined ideological role. More precisely, Zafrani states, "Rabbinic orthodoxy strove to retrieve it in some way by making it a religious ceremony […] and legitimizing it on grounds contained in traditional Jewish literature (biblical texts, Talmudic and homiletical legends, etc.)."[82] The majority of the explanations discussed in this section work to illustrate the point being made by Zafrani in that the Mimouna, which developed in a context outside of rabbinic Judaism, is being linked to beliefs and ideas found in a variety of Jewish texts.

Many people have pointed to the similarity between the word Mimouna and the Hebrew word *emuna*, meaning faith. According to Rabbi Herbert C. Dobrinsky, this parallel is representative of the belief that the redemption of the Jewish people is supposed to take place during the month of *Nisan*[83], and therefore the celebration of the Mimouna, which occurs during this month, is meant to show that the people have not lost faith that this will one day take place.[84] Haim Zafrani also asserts that the Mimouna not only celebrates the end of Passover, but the faith and belief in the future deliverance of the Jewish people, "in the end of the exile and the messianic return of the Jewish people to its land."[85] With this explanation being included in various sources, it can be seen that the belief in the future redemption of the Jewish people has become an important explanation for the celebration of the Mimouna.

A suggestion put forward by certain scholars concerning the etymology of the name of this celebration is that the word Mimouna is derived from "the name of a

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82 Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 240.

83 On the Jewish calendar this is the first month of the religious year and the seventh month of the civil year. It usually corresponds to the months of March and April on the Gregorian calendar.

84 Rabbi Herbert C. Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs: The Ritual Practices of Syrian, Moroccan, Judeo-Spanish and Spanish and Portuguese Jews of North America*, (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1986), 268-269.

85 Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 241.

medieval North African female demon or goddess, who was considered Lady Luck and was married to another demon named Maimon."[86]

Dobrinsky mentions that the name Mimouna may have been derived from the word *shemona* meaning eight and used to refer to the eighth day of Passover.[87] Another suggestion for the origins of the Mimouna, link it to the Arabic word *maimuna* meaning wealth and good fortune, which goes along with the belief that success will be determined on the day of this celebration.[88] However, these theories do not shed light on why the Mimouna developed among the North African Jewish community and is not found in other Jewish communities around the world, when it is based on the belief in future redemption, which is relevant to the entirety of the Jewish people.

Another popular explanation links the holiday to the death of Moses Maimonides' father, Rav Maimon.[89] Due to the fact that *hilloulas*[90] could not be held during the month of Nisan, the Mimouna was instituted in order to honor his memory.[91]

Dobrinsky relates that an additional explanation created to help explain the importance of the Mimouna ritual is that its celebration was instituted "to complete the joy of Pesah which had been diminished by the fact that the Egyptians drowned (*Sanhedrin* 39b), thereby causing us to say only half-*Hallel* [92] throughout *Hol*

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86 Gil Marks, "Mimouna," *Encyclopedia of Jewish Food*, (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 407.

87 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 270.

88 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 268.

89 Marks, "Mimouna," 407.

90 A hilloula is a celebration that takes place on the anniversary of the death of a *tzaddik* in order to commemorate the life of this person.

91 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 269.

92 *Hallel* is a liturgical prayer consisting of Psalms 113-118, which is recited on Passover and other holidays.

Hamoed[93]."[94] Therefore, this extra day of festivities works to realize the complete happiness of the Passover holiday among Moroccan Jews.[95]

An explanation that links the celebration of the Mimouna with the agricultural cycle can be found in the article entitled *Political Activism and Ethnic Revival of a Cultural System* about the celebration of the Mimouna in Israel by Rachel Sharaby. In this article Sharaby writes that the literal meaning of the Mimouna is luck and in turn North African Jews believe that one should be happy and bless the upcoming year on this day "because the holiday of the Mimouna takes place in the spring, the season of harvesting the crops."[96] Despite the fact that Jews in Morocco did not work as farmers, Sharaby goes on to explain that this ritual focused on and celebrated themes of agricultural fertility because although Jews worked mainly as merchants and craftsmen, they still had much economic dependence on Muslim farmers and the produce they sold. If there were a shortage of produce it would have more than likely been made available to Muslims before it was sold to Jews. Therefore, given this relationship, it is understandable why Jews would hope for a good agricultural season for Muslim farmers. This link to agriculture comes to the Mimouna celebration in the greenery found on the Mimouna table and the picnics that happen outdoors on the day of the Mimouna.

Zafrani suggests that the carnival-like atmosphere of the Mimouna was in some way linked "to the Muslim festival of the *Sultan* of the *Tolbas*," which was celebrated by students in Fes at approximately the same time of year. This celebration commemorated

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[93] *Hol Hamoed* refers to the intermediate days of the holidays of Passover and Sukkot during which necessary work is allowed.

[94] Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 269.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Rachel Sharaby, "Political Activism and Ethnic Revival of a Cultural Symbol," *Ethnicities* 11.4 (2011): 495, accessed June 17, 2013, doi:10.1177/1468796811415760.

"the victory of the king who in the seventeenth century founded the Alawite dynasty over Ibn Mesh'al, the leader of the Jewish tribe, who terrorized Muslims in the Taza region."[97] However, no elements of the aforementioned celebration have been incorporated into the ritual of the Mimouna, so that these celebrations do not have any similarities that would work to reveal a link between them.

Nessim Sibony, the author of *Trois Énigmes: Le Joujou de Tisha bé Av, Pessah et la Mimouna. Les Cérémonies de Noces enfantines*, proposes a link between the sequence of events of the Exodus and those of the Mimouna in order to explain why it is celebrated in the way it is. According to the author, the order of the Mimouna can be described as follows, "le contact avec les femmes musulmanes, la consommation de la Moufletta à l'heure du diner puis la célébration dans la rue jusqu'à l'aube, la sortie collective et la marche de tous les juifs jusqu'à l'eau."[98] In turn, the sequence of the exodus is described as Sibony quotes verses from Exodus chapters twelve and fourteen. In chapter twelve, verse thirty-five described how the Jewish women went to ask the Egyptian women for jewelry and clothing. Verse thirty-nine describes how they cooked the unleavened bread, while verse forty two describes how the night of the exodus must be a celebration in honor of God for all future generations of the Jewish people. In chapter fourteen, verse one explains that the people of Israel should camp near the ocean; verse fifteen tells the children of Israel to start walking again and finally verse sixteen commanded Moses to raise his stick and separate the sea.[99] Sibony offers the following explanation for this link, "La pratique a de tout temps consisté à refaire tous les actes de la sortie d'Egypte avec cet

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[97] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 243.

[98] Nessim Sibony, *Trois Énigmes: Le Joujou de Tisha bé Av, Pessah et la Mimouna. Les Cérémonies de Noces enfantines* (California: J.T. Productions, 2003), 39.

[99] Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 39-40.

espoir de provoquer le sort."[100] According to this author, in carrying out the sequence of rituals of the Mimouna that mirror those of the Exodus there is the hope that the same result will be brought about. Although the resemblance between the sequences of events is uncanny such an explanation is not compelling and is a theory not encountered in other sources about the ritual.

Although the above explanations cannot be taken as definitive answers to the question of its origins, it is reasonable to accept that the Mimouna developed in North Africa, as has been suggested by both Claude Arrieu[101] and Haim Zafrani[102], and was not a tradition that was brought to Morocco from elsewhere. Thus, viewing it as something belonging "to the Maghrebian socio-cultural landscape and to the immediate local environment"[103] is a useful concept of origins in understanding this holiday for had this ritual developed elsewhere we would find traces of this celebration in these places as well.

Celebrations of the Mimouna in Morocco

The descriptions of the Mimouna contained in this section were gathered from academic works that examine the rituals of this celebration in light of the social-cultural context of the Moroccan environment. These include Claude Arrieu's *Mouna, Mimouna, Anchoura: Les fêtes de la convergence religieuses en Afrique du Nord avant 1962*, Haim Zafrani's *Two Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Morocco*, Rabbi Herbert C. Dobrinsky's *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs: The Ritual Practices of Syrian, Moroccan,*

100 Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 41.
101 Claude Arrieu, *Mouna, Mimouna, Achoura: Les fêtes de la convergence religieuse en Afrique du Nord avant 1962* (Estadens: PyréGraph, 2003), 64.
102 Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 240-241.
103 Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 240.

Judeo-Spanish and Portuguese Jews of North America, Gil Marks' The Encyclopedia of Jewish Food, Nessim Sibony's *Trois Énigmes: Le Joujou de Tisha bé Av, Pessah et la Mimouna. Les Cérémonies de Noces enfantines*, and Erik H. Cohen's *The Bitter and The Sweet: A Structural Analysis of Mimuna*.

In Morocco, the celebration of the Mimouna began on the afternoon of the last day of Passover when Muslim neighbors would "bring flowers, milk, butter, honey, green beans, stalks of wheat and grain, lettuce, etc., to the homes of the Jews."[104] According to Gil Marks, flour and starter dough would also be included in this gift, which would be used when preparing post-Passover *chametz* dishes for the Mimouna celebrations taking place later in the evening.[105]

Dobrinsky explains that Jews would give Muslims a piece of *matzah*[106] in return for having brought back their *chametz*, which they had sold to them before Passover. This *matzah* was considered to be a good luck omen that was known in Arabic as *senat al hadra*, meaning from one year to the next.[107]

In discussing the gifts that are brought to Jewish homes on the last afternoon of Passover in preparation for the Mimouna, Nessim Sibony qualifies that it was the Muslim women, rather than simply Muslim neighbors, who would come to his home on the last afternoon of Passover to bring gifts of food. According to his own experience, the Muslim women brought the following: "le beurre frais, le lait, le petit lait aigre, la farine, la levure consistant en prélèvement de pâte de pain laisée dans la cuisine près de 24

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104 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 265-266.
105 Marks, "Mimouna," 407.
106 Matzah is the unleavened bread eaten during the holiday of Passover when it is forbidden to consume any leavened grain.
107 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 266.

heures, des épis de blé, des fleurs séchées vertes jaunes et rouges et des bottes de menthe fraîche."[108]

Sibony goes on to explain that a reception would be organized for the Muslim women who brought these gifts, where they would be served a small meal of chicken and other foods that had been prepared during Passover. The meal would end with mint tea and dessert. Following this there would be an exchange of gifts. The Muslim women would lend the Jewish women their fancy dresses, caftans and scarves to wear on the night of the Mimouna, while they would be given *matzah* in return.[109]

Women who had not received these gifts from their Muslim neighbors, would instead receive them from their husbands or children who bought them from the Muslim merchants selling these products near the entrance of the *mellah*.[110] Furthermore, after the end of *minha*[111] service, Sibony remembers waiting in line to buy the first permitted dairy product since the onset of Passover from the "marchand de glace" due to the fact dairy was not considered kosher for Passover in Morocco. [112]

The Mimouna table, which was central to the celebrations of the night, would be decorated with the stalks of wheat and other greenery, such decorations also adorned to the rest of the home. In southern Morocco, stalks of wheat and green vegetables would be placed on the doorway of homes "as a way of wishing their guests a productive, successful and joyous year."[113]

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[108] Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 36.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid.
[111] *Minha* is the afternoon prayer service.
[112] Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 26-27. Dairy was not considered kosher for Passover among Jewish communities in various other countries.
[113] Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 266.

Sibony describes collecting tree branches and other greenery on the afternoon before the Mimouna to bring back to decorate his family's home.[114] As the author got older, he tells of walking to the *mellah* on his own to see the abundance of flowers that were sold at this time of year. Sibony explains, "Les marchands vendaient des bouquets tout prêts multicolores et énormes dans lequels les roses se mêlaient aux fleurs des champs et leurs parfums avec la chaleur du mois d'Avril inondaient tout ce paysage et transformaient la misère de ces lieux en une des entrées au Paradis."[115] This would have been memorable due to the fact that flowers were only seen within the Jewish quarter during Passover and the Mimouna.

Dobrinsky describes that men would stop at the homes of friends and relatives to eat and drink as they were making their way home from synagogue at the end of Passover. When greeting each other they would recite the following blessing in Arabic, "*Alallah maimuna ambarkha massauda,*" meaning, "Best wishes for a blessed successful Maimuna."[116] In Fes, as well as in a few other communities, the congregants would accompany the rabbi or the *hazzan*[117] home. The rabbi's wife would serve refreshments to everyone and the rabbi would recite the priestly benediction to those in attendance.

According to Zafrani, the first ritual to take place in the home on the night of the Mimouna happened when the father of the family or the grandfather returned from synagogue after *arbit*[118], at which time he would bless all the members in the family. The father or the grandfather would place "his left hand on each head and with his right gave

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114 Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 26.
115 Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 27.
116 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 266.
117 A *hazzan* is a cantor who helps to lead the congregation in prayer.
118 *Arbit* is the evening prayer service.

each a lettuce leaf dipped in honey and a sip of milk."[119] Zafrani's explanation of the blessing of the family by the father or the grandfather as being the first ritual of the Mimouna shows his focus to be on the role of men in this celebration. Rather, Jewish women receiving the gift of leaven from their Muslim neighbors and the preparation of the food for the Mimouna table could alternatively be seen as the activities that begin the Mimouna.

The evening of the Mimouna would be one during which Jews, who dressed in their finest clothes for the occasion, would open their homes up to each other as well as to their Muslim neighbors, with visitors coming late into the night. The evening of the Mimouna was believed to be filled with a sense of destiny and *mazel-tov* and also became a time to exchange promises of marriage.[120]

The streets of the *mellah* would be filled with people, especially with groups of youth, which imparted a sense of festivity to the Jewish quarter. According to Zafrani, both older and younger men would dress up as women on this night, while some wore Muslim clothing such as the "fez, turban, or red chechia, the colored *djellaba* or unbleached linen *farajiya* with silk buttons, and white or yellow babouches."[121] Dressing as their Muslim neighbors, may have come from the desire for social and political freedom, which in turn mirrored the religious liberation celebrated throughout the holiday of Passover.[122] It is also specified that indoors, women dressed in the traditional clothing for married women called *al-kaswa la-kbira*.

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119 Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 242.
120 Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 243.
121 Ibid.
122 Ibid.

As part of the festivities on the night of the Mimouna, Sibony describes that groups of young girls and boys rented carriages in which they would ride around the city or to go to the *Menara* gardens[123], along with hired musicians or while playing their own music. Some would also stop in the *Jemaa el-Fnaa*[124] to eat honey doughnuts from Muslim vendors before returning to the *mellah*. However, according to the author, most of the young girls and boys would walk around the *mellah* in groups and stop to sing at the homes of the wealthy members of the community. They would sing "*A Lala Mimouna A Lala Fetouha SafDonna El Dar El Khir Bghina NemSiw*" which according to the author translates into French as "Oh Lala Mimouna oh Lala qui ouvre, on nous envoie à la maison de la profusion nous voulons partir."[125] The residents of these households would give money to the singers and would offer them dried fruits, nuts, almonds and dates.

Sibony describes a difference between the celebration of the Mimouna in the *mellah* and in his own neighborhood, that of the *Bahia*. The author describes that when he went to visit his aunts and uncles who lived in the *mellah* on the night of the Mimouna the neighborhood was filled with a lot of noise, movement and singing. On the other hand, the Jews in his neighborhood would visit each other in silence. The streets were not alive with people as they were in the *mellah*.[126] This is an interesting distinction, which the author chooses to discuss and perhaps can be linked to the fact that because the *mellah* was a neighborhood that consisted entirely of Jews, which lent a sense of security in allowing the celebrations to span both the private and public spheres of the area.

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123 These gardens are located to the west of Marrakech near the gates of the Atlas moutains.
124 The Jemaa el-Fnaa is the central square in Marrakech's medina, old quarter.
125 Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 37.
126 Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 27.

Following the celebrations that took place throughout the night, Sibony describes that early the next morning the residents of the *mellah* in Marrakech would gather near its entrance and a member of the community, usually a man, would open the door to the Jewish quarter. Following this everyone gathered would exit the *mellah* while signing psalms. They would go to a nearby river or the Menara basin, by foot or in a rented carriage. Later in the day, members of the Jewish community would spend the day outside the mellah where they would have picnics in gardens, in the country or at the beach. If going to a location that was not near a source of water, there would often be "a ritual halt near a water point" that could either be a spring, a well or a river.[127] These celebrations were so integral to the ritual of the Mimouna in Morocco that Sibony's earliest memory attached to the Mimouna was of a carriage ride to the water basin at the Menara gardens where he described being surrounded by groups of adults who were eating and singing.[128]

Jews who lived in coastal towns and cities would usually go to the sea the next day, where they would eat their meals on the beach or on the rocks near the water. In some cases, Muslims would invite Jews onto their land or estates for these outdoor celebrations.[129] The Muslims on whose land the Jews carried out their celebrations and by whose points of water they also stopped, viewed these visits positively and believed that they would bring them *baraka*, which Zafrani explains as being a guarantee "of a rainy year and abundant harvest."[130] Some of these visits to Muslim owned land were even

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[127] Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 38; Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 243.
[128] Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 26.
[129] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 243-244.
[130] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 244.

arranged in advance. Zafrani explains that there is evidence of this having happened in Marrakesh, Quezzane, Sefrou, Essaouira and in the Tafilalet.

Dobrinsky explains that, the custom of having picnics and relaxing near the ocean, by rivers or other bodies of water is linked to the fact that the splitting of the red sea happened on the last day of Passover.[131] It should be noted that this could be seen as an attempt on Dobrinsky's part to link the Mimouna with the larger Jewish tradition.

According to Sibony, the celebrations on the day of the Mimouna took place in an outdoor setting because it was a day of space and nature, in opposition to the rest of the year, which was spent in the city. Additionally, Jews in Morocco did not carry out any type of agricultural activity and those Jews who sold fresh produce received it from Muslims. Therefore, in this environment the outdoor celebrations of the Mimouna worked to reconnect the Jewish community, who had long been an agricultural people, with the earth.[132]

On the day of the Mimouna it was also common to recite the traditional *birkat ha ilanot*, "blessing over the trees," when visiting parks or gardens.[133] In Marrakesh they would recite this blessing over an old olive tree, while in Larache the *birkat ha ilanot* would be recited after services on the day of the Mimouna "and each person would receive a flower or a vegetable from the proprietor of the garden" in which the blessing was conducted.[134]

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131 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 267.
132 Sibony, *Trois Énigmes*, 33.
133 Erik H. Cohen, "The Bitter and The Sweet: A Structural Analysis of Mimuna," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 17.1 (2003): 91, accessed June 17, 2013, http://0-search.ebscohost.com.mercury.concordia.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rfh&AN=ATLA0001335671&site=ehost-live.
134 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 268.

In a discussion concerning the celebrations of the Mimouna, Sharaby draws a distinction between the rituals that take place on the night of the Mimouna on the last day of Passover, versus those that take place the next day. The events that take place on the night of the Mimouna mainly happen within the private sphere.[135] First and foremost, the home becomes the central place where the ritual is carried out, specifically in the kitchen and dining room. Perhaps on this night, the idea of what the private sphere consists of can be extended to the entirety of the *mellah* for on this night Jews filled the streets of the Jewish quarter dressed in their finest clothing or dressed in Arab clothing, singing and raucously going from home to home. This behavior would not normally occur in the streets of the *mellah* and would generally only be found in the private sphere, thus extending what is considered the domain of the private sphere on this night.

On the other hand, Sharaby discusses that the events taking place on the day of the Mimouna happened within the public sphere and were seen as holding less importance than those rituals that had happened the night before. On this day, families spent time in parks or by the ocean where they would hold picnics that were accompanied by music and singing.[136] Thus, the dichotomy between the public and private spheres in which the public is most often privileged, is reversed in this case. The private sphere and its associations with women, becomes the place of importance.

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[135] Sharaby, "Political Activism and Ethnic Revival," 495.
[136] Sharaby, "Political Activism and Ethnic Revival," 495-496.

The Social Functions of the Mimouna in Morocco

The Mimouna and the celebrations surrounding it provided multiple opportunities for interactions between Jews and Muslims and in turn show the profound connection that existed between these two communities that lived side by side for centuries on Moroccan soil.[137] It worked to provide a time and space for friendly relations between Jews and the Muslim majority that surrounded them.[138] The Mimouna would have been an important social element in Moroccan society for it was a ritual that brought the two communities together despite the periodic conflicts and tensions that arose between them. In turn, it can be inferred that the Mimouna functioned as a space in which relationships between the communities could be repaired, thus helping to restore stability within the social environment of Morocco.

In reflecting on the Mimouna, Zafrani suggests that the Mimouna was an assertion of the intense links between the Jewish minority and the Muslim majority. "It was evidence of the existence of an area of convergence that must be taken into consideration where the two groups found each other and met […]. It constituted one of the elements in a remarkable symbiosis and a mainly peaceful co-existence that lasted for nearly two millennia on the hospitable soil of the Maghreb."[139] Ultimately this shows that the development of the Mimouna was closely linked to the social-cultural environment of Morocco in which largely friendly relations existed with their neighbors thus creating a space in which Jews could openly celebrate a ritual like the Mimouna. Without the kind

[137] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 245.
[138] Arrieu, *Mouna, Mimouna, Achoura*, 63.
[139] Zafrani, *Two Thousand Years*, 245.

of co-existence that existed between Jews and Muslims in Morocco such a celebration could not have developed.

In Morocco, the Mimouna acted as a socializing event for the Jewish community, one that worked to create a sense of unity among Moroccan Jews as well as to reaffirm relationships between members of the community. Thus, the two functions of the Mimouna discussed in this section can be summed up through the following quote by Claude Arrieu, "Elle est donc vécue comme un grand moment de solidarité communautaire et, par-delà, de fraternité humaine."[140]

The open door policy that was the practice on the night of the Mimouna created an intense atmosphere of hospitality that was unlike that of any other Jewish holiday and was particular to this celebration. As Sharaby says, "The motif of hospitality that characterized the night of the Mimouna was egalitarian, and everyone, Jew or Muslim, could visit without needing an invitation."[141] More than likely, this was one of the few times this kind of social interaction took place and Muslims were invited into the private sphere of their Jewish neighbors.

The Foods of the Mimouna in Morocco

An elaborate table would be set for the night of the Mimouna, which would be adorned with a white tablecloth, representing purity.[142] Various symbolic foods were

[140] Arrieu, *Mouna, Mimouna, Achoura*, 63.
[141] Sharaby, "Political Activism and Ethnic Revival," 495.
[142] Marks, "Mimouna," 407.

placed on the Mimouna table, including a pitcher of buttermilk[143], "a large fish on a bed of lettuce or, if possible, a live small fish in a bowl of water; a plate (*taifur del Mimouna*) filled with flour and topped with five or seven pea pods or green beans, dates, and coins; and green stalks of wheat."[144] These symbolic foods were meant to signify themes of "renewal, fertility, abundance, blessings, and prosperity […]."[145] Fresh and dried fruits, nuts, various sweets, and cookies were also part of the Mimouna table. Some of these desserts included almond paste, flourless coconut cookies called *raricha del kokous* and *zaban*, a nougat into which almonds or others nuts are mixed. With the flour and starter dough that was given to them by their Muslim neighbors, Jewish women would also prepare *mufleta*, which is a Mimouna delicacy that is a thin yeast pancake. These pancakes are served warm, spread with butter and honey.[146] In his discussion of mufleta, Dobrinsky explains that there exists a suggestion that this dish was prepared on the night of the Mimouna in order to show one's attachment and love for matzah, "The muflita made in mazzah-likeness in a hamez form was to show that the mazzah is not so easily forgotten."[147]

Dobrinsky also writes that yeast cakes were served at the Mimouna, which through its act of rising represents the destiny of the Jewish community. "In Morocco, some Jews bought these yeast cakes from Arabs, but many families insisted on making them by themselves."[148] This element has not been mentioned in other sources that

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143 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 265.
144 Marks, "Mimouna," 407.
145 Ibid.
146 Gil Marks, "Mufleta," *Encyclopedia of Jewish Food*, (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), p.410.
147 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 268.
148 Dobrinsky, *A Treasure of Sephardic Laws and Customs*, 265.

described the food of the Mimouna and it is unfortunate that Dobrinsky does not offer more of an explanation as to what exactly this cake consisted of.

Perhaps this cake is the one discussed by Claude Arrieu in his book entitled *Mouna, Mimouna, Achoura: Les fêtes de la convergence religieuse en Afrique du Nord avant 1962*. In his disucussion of the Mimouna, Arrieu explains that one of the cakes served at this celebration was called *mouna* or *mona*. This cake-like bread, which had Spanish origins, was made and eaten by Christians in North Africa during their Easter celebrations. Arrieu includes quotes from two people who remember that on Easter and Easter Monday families would go to the country or to the ocean or a river, where they would celebrate and eat this bread. This immediately calls to mind the picnics Jews have the day after the Mimouna.

Unfortunatly Arrieu does not provide a description of this bread, however I came across a recipe for a cake called *mona* in the cookbook, *La Cuisine Juive Marocaine* by Rivka Levy-Mellul. The recipe for *mona* is a yeast dough which consists of flour, brewers yeast, egg yolks, sugar, water, baking powder, oil and salt. Once the dough has risen it is separated into pieces that are rolled out and spread with whipped egg whites, cinnamon and raisin jam. These are then rolled up and baked.[149]

Taken together, this information leads me to believe that the *mouna*/*mona* being discussed by Claude Arrieu and the cake mentioned by Dobrinsky are one and the same. According to the information presented by Arrieu, this can be seen as a culinary tradition that was adopted by Jews, Christians and Muslims in Morocco, and eaten in the context of different celebrations. In terms of its presence at the Mimouna, it seems that the

[149] Rivka Levy-Mellul, *La Cuisine Juive Marocaine* (Montreal: Albert Soussan, 1983), 159.

tradition of eating this cake at this celebration was a tradition that was carried out in Morocco but not transplanted to Montreal.

Memories of the Mimouna in Morocco

Through my interviewees' discussion of their memories and experiences of the Mimouna as it was celebrated in Morocco, a picture of a celebration that was replete with variations emerges. Although there were many similarities in its practice and meaning in Morocco, it was not a uniform ritual, which can be seen through the discussion of food traditions by my interviewees. Four of my interviewees explained that families had different Mimouna specialties depending on the city they came from. Esther explained that the tradition of the mufleta came from Casablanca and that she only ate it at other people's homes. She grew up with a different tradition that came from her mother. She explained, "She does something else, she's from Meknes, this is more of a religious city […] and she makes what you call nougat, but it's called *zaban*. Now this is a delicious thing, she beats egg whites with sugar until it becomes really chewy and then she will incorporate in that grilled walnuts. And she lays it on a big platter and there will be all little spoons around the table, everybody will take a spoon and eat it."[150] Interviewee Miriam, who came from the village Beni Mellal located between Casablanca and Marrakesh, discussed another tradition. She explained, "Ma mère faisais les petits plombs […] c'est comme du couscous mais beaucoup plus gros, les grains de couscous rouler.

[150] Esther, personal interview, November 25, 2010.

[…] Elle faisais cuire avec du lait, du beurre, un peu de sucre et du miel."[151] Sarah explained that her family made couscous for the Mimouna while her husband grew up with the tradition of making mufleta.[152] Other dishes prepared for the Mimouna in Morocco included couscous au lait, *berkoks* and couscous with raisins and almonds.[153]

On the night of the Mimouna in Morocco people would greet each other with blessings, with the Arabic blessing *tarbeh* in particular being mentioned by four of my interviewees. Each of the interviewees gave slightly different explanation as to its meaning, however the various explanations all concern themes of abundance and good fortune for the upcoming year. Miriam explained, "Mes oncles, mes tantes, la famille proche venaient dire une benediction qui disent, *tarbeh*, ça veut dire que ta vie soit une réussite."[154] Esther offered a description that touched on the notion of gain, "And families visit each other throughout the night with greetings and they give nice words to each other. In the Moroccan tradition they say, *tarbeh*, it means like you win, in other words you win, you will gain this year. You should win this year."[155] Sarah said, "C'est une façon de se dire des bonnes choses, parce que l'objectif de la Mimouna c'est quelqu'un qui vient, qui t'apporte de bon voeux, ça veut dire ils te dit, comment est ce qu'on peu traduire *tarbeh*? Une bonne année heureuse, beaucoup d'abondance, pas de maladie."[156] Finally, Deborah gave this simple explanation, "This is the blessing, *tarbeh*, you should be blessed, you should be fruitful, you should multiply, you should have."[157]

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151 Miriam, personal interview, May 10, 2011.
152 Sarah, personal interview, March 21, 2012.
153 Rebecca, personal interview, October 13, 2010.
154 Miriam, personal interview, May 10, 2011.
155 Esther, personal interview, November 25, 2010.
156 Sarah, personal interview, March 21, 2012.
157 Deborah, personal interview, March 28, 2012.

The celebration of the Mimouna in Morocco is remembered fondly. Two of my interviewees discussed memories that their parents shared with them concerning this ritual. Jacob says that his parents remember it as a big celebration during which people would visit each other all night long, while Esther says that her mother remembered it as a very festive holiday.[158]

Many of the memories concerning the Mimouna in Morocco touched upon the interactions between the Muslim and Jewish communities. One of the main sources of interactions recalled was Muslims bringing food needed for the celebration of the Mimouna later in the night. Miriam explains that because they could not buy anything on the last day of Passover, their Muslims neighbors would bring them the foods which were not considered kosher for Passover that were consumed at the Mimouna. She says, "Ils [Muslims] amenaient des sauts de lait, du beurre dans le lait, du petit lait, du miel, des dates, de la menthe […] ils prenaient un petit peu de chaque chose et ils nous l'amenaient." Upon bringing this gift, Miriam said that the Muslims would have a glass of tea with them, but they would not share a meal. According to Miriam these interactions demonstrated the tolerance that existed towards Jews in Morocco, "Mais on vivaient vraiment notre Judaisme aussi, le Maroc était très tolerant vers nous par rapport à certaines pays."[159] Furthermore, Moshe explained that it was also a way of creating relationships with the local Muslim population, "Donc c'était une façon pour nous, si vous voulez, d'avoir des rapports avec la communauté autochtone."[160]

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158 Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010; Esther, personal interview, November 25, 2010.
159 Miriam, personal interview, May 10, 2011.
160 Moshe, personal interview, March 21, 2012.

Not only did the interactions with Muslims happen prior to the Mimouna, but Jacob says that his parents also recall that it was a time during which Muslims and Jews could celebrate together, "[…] the Arab population also knew that it was the Mimouna, it was a time where there was Muslims and Jews celebrating something together. Where if you had Muslim friends or Arab associates that they would also come to your house."[161] Interviewee Deborah, who travelled to Morocco and attended Mimounas there in nineteen ninety-four, noticed that the interactions between Jews and Muslims were still happening. She said, "But what I did find is that even the Arabic people came to celebrate, the mayor of Casablanca came to the Mimouna, the high deputy members, people close to the king came."[162]

According to Sarah, in the case of her family, Mimouna preparations were easier in Morocco than in Canada because their maid would help their mother cook for the celebrations, "Au Maroc on avait beaucoup d'aide, c'est beaucoup plus facile." This was also something Deborah noticed when she attended Mimounas in Morocco, where she said "they have lots of maids, so everything is done fresh and hot." For the women of families who were of a higher social class and could afford to hire maids while living in Morocco, the experience of the Mimouna would have likely undergone a drastic change upon moving to Canada, where they may no longer have been able to afford such assistance.

Throughout the interviews, recollections of food traditions that seem to have been more prominent among the Mimouna celebrations that took place in Morocco were discussed. Both Sarah and Leah mentioned the tradition of making jams of various

[161] Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.
[162] Deborah, personal interview, March 28, 2012.

flavors. Sarah says, "Il y a les confitures, c'est très importants les confitures, fait maison. Aubergine, orange, pamplemousse, cedrat. Ma belle mère faisait les confitures." Leah also described that her grandmother would make a sweet jam out of whole mini eggplants. She also described a dessert made by her grandmother in Morocco, which she claimed she did not see at Mimounas in Canada. This dessert consisted of roasted almonds that were covered in melted sugar and once the mixture hardened it would then be broken up into pieces and served.

Moshe described a dish that was eaten at the beginning of the Mimouna celebrations, one that is not mentioned in any of the literature concerning this ritual. He explained, "Il y a des familles et c'était la famille de mon père ça qui avait l'habitude de prendre des galettes, galettes de pesach, la matzah, de la couper en petit morceaux et de la faire cuire avec du lait et du miel. Et ont commencaient par ça. Sa s'appelle Sorotono."[163]

Mufleta was not the only dish made with the flour Muslims brought to their Jewish neighbors. According to Miriam, her mother would make bread with this flour as well, "[…] c'est à partir de la farine que ma mere faisait le levain. On ne mangaient pas le pain le soir même de la Mimouna. On attendaient le lendemain, parce que le levain il fallait qu'il lève, et a partir de ce levain là elle faisait le pain. Et on fêtaient encore une fois, c'était le repas d'après Mimouna […]." [164] This bread may be related to the *mouna*/*mona* bread that I discussed earlier in the chapter, making it an element of Mimouna food traditions that I think requires further research in order to more clearly understand its relationship with this celebration.

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[163] Moshe, personal interview, March 21st, 2012.
[164] Miriam, personal interview, May 10th, 2011.

Chapter 3 – In a New Home: The Moroccan Jewish Community in Montreal

Although Ashkenazi Jews make up the majority of the Montreal Jewish population, a significant and, until recently, unrecognized part of the community consists of Moroccan Jews. There is no consensus on the number of Moroccan Jews that reside in Montreal, however various estimates have been put forward. In his book *Like Everyone Else…But Different: The Paradoxical Success of Canadian Jews*, Morton Weinfeld discusses the immigration of Moroccan Jews to Quebec and presents two estimations that have been put forward by scholars concerning the numbers of this community.[165] The first of these estimates comes from Jean-Claude Lasry who suggested that in 1972 the North African population ranged between 10,000 and 13,000, while by the late 1990s the population was thought to number approximately 25,000 to 30,000.[166] The second estimate is from Charles Shahar[167] who carried out a survey of Montreal Jews in 1996 and found a lower total of 21,000.[168] Ultimately, they are a segment of the Jewish community whose unique characteristics make their addition to the Montreal Jewish landscape particularly influential and noteworthy. With their arrival beginning in the 1950s, this community increased the multinational character and diversity of the Jewish community in Montreal through their cultural and linguistic characteristics, while in turn

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165 Morton Weinfeld, *Like Everyone Else…But Different: The Paradoxical Success of Canadian Jews* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2001), 63.

166 Jean-Claude Lasry, "Sephardim and Ashkenazim in Montreal," in *The Jews in Canada*, ed. Robert J. Brym et al. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), 396; Jean-Claude Lasry, personal communication with Morton Weinfeld, August 18, 1998.

167 Charles Shahar and Randal Schnoor, *A Survey of Jewish Life in Montreal, Part II* (Montreal: Federation of Jewish Community Services of Montreal, 1997), 3; Charles Shahar, personal communication with Morton Weinfeld, November 24, 1998.

168 Weinfeld, *Like Everyone Else*, 63.

creating new parameters of what it meant to be Jewish.[169] A combination of factors such as demographic changes resulting from the end of World War II, the creation of the state of Israel, the acquisition of independence by Arab countries in North Africa, the rising nationalism that went along with independence movements and tensions in the Middle East prompted Jews to leave Morocco in large numbers.[170] Only a small portion of the community remained in Morocco. Although some members of the community began to settle in Montreal in the 1950s, it was around 1965 that many began to arrive in Montreal, but it was following the Six Day War in 1967 that there was a significant rise in their numbers.[171]

According to Yolande Cohen, in her article entitled "Migrations juives marocaines au Canada ou comment devient-on Sépharade?," two principle views have emerged among members of the Moroccan Jewish community concerning their departure from Morocco. One position held that the departure was voluntary, while on the other hand it was thought of as a forced exile, with various opinions falling somewhere in-between these two extremes. Cohen explains that the majority of the members of the Moroccan Jewish community whom she spoke to held the view that their departure was voluntary and explained that the Jews and Muslims in Morocco lived alongside each other in a relatively peaceful manner, which was even friendly in certain circumstances. The proponents of this view maintained that the links between the Jewish Moroccan community and the larger Muslim Moroccan community should be sustained through

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169 Yolande Cohen, "Migrations juives marocaines au Canada ou comment devient-on Sépharade?," in *Les Communautés Juives de Montréal: Histoire et Enjeux Contemporains*, ed. Pierre Anctil et al. (Québec: Septentrion, 2010), 235.

170 Joseph Levy and Yolande Cohen, "Moroccan Jews and Their Adaptation to Montreal Life," in *Renewing our Days: Montreal Jews in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Ira Robinson et al. (Montréal: Véhicule Press, 1995), 95.

171 Levy and Cohen, "Moroccan Jews and Their Adaptation," 95.

interfaith and inter-communal dialogue whenever possible. This position was more common in the early years of immigration between nineteen sixty and nineteen eighty. A second position emerged in more recent years, which sees the departure of the Jewish community from Morocco as a forced exile that was the culmination of the subordination and humiliation that Jews experienced under Muslim and French rule.[172] I think that the reasons for the Jewish community's departure from Morocco falls somewhere between these two positions.

Along with choosing to immigrate to Canada, many members of the Moroccan Jewish community also chose to settle in both Israel and France. Marie Berdugo-Cohen, Yolande Cohen and Joseph Lévy suggested that immigration to these countries can be understood in terms of their religious and cultural referents. Yet, according to the authors, it is more complicated when trying to understand the reasons for choosing to settle in Canada. It is suggested that reasons for this move include pragmatic motivations such as job opportunities, the possibility of social mobility, along with certain preconceived notions about America as the land of liberty and freedom that were by extension associated with Canada.[173]

As noted by Cohen, one reason that caused Moroccan Jews to immigrate to Canada, and in particular the province of Quebec in large numbers, was due to the fact that immigration to France became difficult for the community. French citizenship was granted on a case-by-case basis through the consideration of the services that the applicant could provide to France. Ultimately, this worked to prevent numerous people from choosing to go though with the process. The situation was further exacerbated when

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[172] Cohen, "Migrations juives marocaines," 238-239.

[173] Marie Berdugo-Cohen, Yolande Cohen, and Joseph Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal: témoignages d'une immigration moderne* (Montreal: VLB, 1987), 23.

France decided to severely limit the number of citizenships it would grant to Moroccan Jews following Moroccan independence. At this time, the number of requests rose significantly but were seen as having little political value and being too great an expense for the country.[174]

Although Canada and more precisely Quebec may have appeared as an attractive option to Moroccan Jewish immigrants, Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy suggest that ultimately their decision was based on a lack of knowledge concerning the various realities that living in this country entailed. When many thought of Canada, scenes of local folklore often came to mind, "Ce pays apparaît à beaucoup de ces émigrants sous les aspects folkloriques de la patrie de Maria Chapdelaine et des tuniques rouges, sur fond somptueux de montagnes, lacs et forêts couverts de neige."[175] Many within the community held idealized notions of the place that was going to be their new home.

The political realities of Quebec were also unknown. During the period in which Moroccan Jews began to arrive, there arose tensions between the federal and provincial government concerning Quebec's desire for national independence. Furthermore, the period during which the highest number of immigrants arrived in the province coincided with the Quiet Revolution[176] and the FLQ crisis[177], two events that profoundly changed the social-cultural landscape of Quebec. Prior to their emigration from Morocco, those who had chosen to come to Quebec had not received information concerning the

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174 Cohen, "Migrations juives marocaines," 241.

175 Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 24.

176 The Quiet Revolution took place in the 1960s and was a period of intense change of which the main characteristic was the rapid secularization of Quebec society.

177 The FLQ crisis, also known as the October crisis, was a series of events prompted by the kidnapping of two government officials in October 1970.

aforementioned events due to the fact that the social and political realities of Moroccan independence occupied their thoughts.

Other misconceptions about Quebec included the belief that money was extremely easy to acquire and, unlike in Israel, it was unnecessary to learn a new language because this was a province in which French was the official language. Members of the Moroccan Jewish community also believed that it was a place, which was far away from the tumultuous events surrounding bids for nationalism in the Arab world, conflicts within the Middle East and the assimilation required of French society.[178] Yet, choosing to settle in Quebec unknowingly brought this community to a place facing its own issues of nationalism.

Upon their arrival in Montreal, the integration of members of the Moroccan Jewish community into the existing social and cultural landscape was anything but straightforward due to their distinctive "ethno-cultural characteristics."[179] Being a community of French speakers made it so that Moroccan Jews shared the important defining characteristic of the French language with the Quebecois community, while also sharing the historical and religious elements of Jewish identity with the English speaking Ashkenazi community who were already settled in Montreal. Moroccan Jews were caught between two communities with whom they shared certain commonalities, but from whom they also remained separate because of differences that existed between them.[180] Namely, there existed linguistic and liturgical differences with the Ashkenazi

[178] Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 24.
[179] Levy and Cohen, "Moroccan Jews and Their Adaptation," 95.
[180] Levy and Cohen, "Moroccan Jews and Their Adaptation," 95.

community and religious differences between themselves and Francophone Christians.[181] These differences especially impacted upon their relationship with the Ashkenazi community, with whom the Moroccan Jewish community has shared a strained relationship.[182] The different customs and culture of Moroccan Jews, along with their differing language, made their acceptance by Ashkenazi Jews difficult. Furthermore, this made the creation of a rapport between the two communities challenging.

One of the attractions of settling in Quebec was that the province was seen as a place where the American dream could be pursued and attained, but in French. This was a great pull for many in the Moroccan community, but as Joseph Levy explains, they were in turn surprised to find out that at the time English was the predominant language in which business was conducted.[183] This created a socio-linguistic shock that profoundly affected these new arrivals, and led to difficulties integrating into the business world. Following from this there was a decline of the socio-economic status for some members of the community.[184]

The school system was another factor within Quebecois society that lead to Moroccan Jews being required to function within an Anglophone environment. In this period, schools were divided along religious and linguistics lines, so that there were French-Catholic schools and English-Protestant schools. With the arrival of Jews the question arose as to where they would fit into this system, which was answered with the passage of a 1903 law that transformed Jews into honorary Protestants for the purposes of

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181 William F.S. Miles, "Between Ashkenaz and Quebecois: Fifty Years of Francophone Sephardim in Montreal," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 16.2 (2007): 34, accessed June 19, 2013, doi: 10.1353/dsp.2007.0005.

182 Levy and Cohen, "Moroccan Jews and Their Adaptation," 95.

183 Joe King, *From the Ghetto to the Main: The Story of Montreal Jews* (Montreal: Montreal Jewish Publication Society, 2000), 258.

184 Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 24.

education.[185] This law was a consequence of Catholic schools not accepting students of other faiths. Thus, Moroccan students whose first language was French were made to attend schools in which English was the language of instruction. This ultimately worked to create a linguistic and cultural gap between the younger and older generations within the community.[186]

Furthermore, Ashkenazi Jews had created a community structure that included an extensive network of services for their members to draw upon. There was the expectation that Moroccan Jews would fit into this already existing communal organization that did not cater to their particular needs, something that was not a possibility for this community. Ultimately, "[t]he francophone Jews had their own idea of how they wanted to organize themselves and they developed their own array of community institutions."[187] This was another a source of tension between the two communities due to the fact that the Moroccan community chose not to rely on the more established and entrenched community of Ashkenazi Jews. This objective to create their own institutions and associations, distinct from those already in place, was viewed with reserve and open hostility by Ashkenazi Jews. Some even went so far to compare this effort to achieve autonomy as equivalent to the separatist movement in Quebec.

The autonomy being sought by the Moroccan community can be understood on the grounds that there existed fundamental differences between the Ashkenazi and Moroccan communities, which were not addressed by the organizations, put in place to welcome new immigrants. With the rise in Moroccan immigrants between 1965 and 1967,

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185 Miles, "Between Ashkenaz and Quebecois," 37.
186 Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 25.
187 King, *From the Ghetto to the Main*, 258.

North African associations, and according to Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, particularly l'Association sépharade francophone, attempted to reconcile their particular ethno-cultural identity with participation in the existing Anglophone organizations. It should be noted that at this time, Anglophone organizations were beginning to integrate French language services into the resources they offered, this was especially the case after the Parti québécois came to power.

Finally, it was during this period that the designation Sephardic began to be used in order for Moroccan immigrants to distinguish themselves in relation to the Ashkenazi community. In doing so, they distanced themselves from their North African referent, while still highlighting their linguistic distinction as French speakers.[188] The Sephardic designation also functioned as a way to unite as well as mask the differences between Jews from countries such as Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco who were now living side by side in Quebec.[189] It is also important to note that this term also worked to conceal the presence of Middle Eastern Jews living in Quebec.

The communal institutions created following the arrival of North African Jews included l'Association juive nord-africaine in 1959 whose mandate was to meet the cultural and religious needs of the community. In the ensuing years the Sephardic designation became more appealing and organizations using this nomenclature began to emerge. This included the Fédération sépharade des Juifs de langue française, which in turn became the Association sépharade francophone (ASF) in 1966. Soon these organizations became part of the Communauté sépharade du Québec (CSQ) which then

[188] Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 25-26.
[189] Cohen, "Migrations juives marocaines," 242.

became known as Communauté sépharade unifiée du Québec (CSUQ).[190] Along with providing services to a non-Ashkenazi audience, these associations provided a united front in the face of the Ashkenazi community.

The Communauté sépharade unifiée du Québec was founded by a group of young immigrants who modeled it on community organizations that had been created in Morocco in which religious elements were kept separate from social and political matters within the structure of the institution. Initially, its objectives were to promote Sephardic culture and ease the integration of Sephardic immigrants into Quebec society. It also offered a number of other services, including the organization of civil status records, visits to the sick, *Hevra Kadisha*[191], information concerning social services available in the city, and the publication of a monthly journal, *La voix sépharade*.[192]

During the sixties and seventies, more communal institutions were put in place. These included the creation of the French language Jewish school, l'école Maimonide, in 1969, a Francophone Hillel whose services were meant for university students, and the Communauté sépharade du Québec (CSQ) in 1976. Going beyond the communal level, the Fédération sépharade canadienne was created in 1973 to unite the communities of Montreal and Toronto and to promote education. Alongside these organizations various congregations opened to serve families living in neighborhoods around Montreal such as Saint-Laurent, Côte-Saint-Luc and Dollard-des-Ormeaux. According to Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, the move to these neighborhoods was not only evidence of the social

190 Ibid., 243.

191 An association of Jewish men and women who tend to the dead, ensuring that the bodies of Jews are prepared for burial according to Jewish tradition.

192 Cohen, "Migrations juives marocaines," 244.

mobility of members of the community but also the displayed the desire to recreate the feeling of a close-knit community that was present in Morocco.[193]

With the creation of these various communal structures there arose a division within the community that according to Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy called its unity into question. This conflict arose between those who believed that the rabbinic establishment rather than the CSQ could only legitimately represent the identity of the community. This underlined the tensions that existed between the religious and the secular members of the community, while at the same time revealing the diversity of opinions that existed among its members.[194] Ultimately, both the rabbinic establishment and secular institutions played essential roles in the affirmation and transmission of the identity of the Moroccan Jewish community.[195]

According to William F.S Miles, over the last twenty-five years the tensions between the Sephardic and Ashkenazi communities have eased. One factor, which is evidence of this, is the fact that Ashkenazi-Sephardic marriages are no longer uncommon in Montreal. The CSUQ also accepted the proposition to move into the same building as the Federation CJA in Montreal, which is organized by English speaking Ashkenazi Jews. Furthermore, Miles explains that the three factors that Lasry had pointed out as the cause of tension between the two communities ultimately evolved so as to no longer be a cause of strain. These three elements include the fact that Sephardic Jews were no longer new immigrants that the already established Ashkenazi community disparaged, and that their origins in Muslim societies was no longer something to be ashamed of. Finally, the fact

193 Berdugo-Cohen, Cohen and Lévy, *Juifs marocains à Montréal*, 26-27.
194 Ibid., 27-28.
195 Ibid., 30.

that they spoke French was now seen as a useful connection to the government of Quebec rather than a dividing cultural factor.[196]

The Mimouna: its practice and meaning within the Montreal Moroccan Jewish community

Throughout the Jewish community's emigration from Morocco to places such as Israel, France and Canada, the celebration of the Mimouna has been preserved in these various locations. Although always an important part of their Passover celebrations, the Mimouna has now become a ritual that sets Moroccan Jews apart from the larger Jewish community in the places they are living due to the fact that it is a tradition that is solely found among the North African Jewish community. In this move, the Mimouna has also acquired meanings that differ from those attached to this custom when it was being practiced in Morocco.

Throughout the interviews I conducted, I have come to see that the practice of the Mimouna by Moroccan Jews in Montreal has become infused with a variety of new meanings. The Mimouna has become a way for Moroccan Jews living in Montreal to preserve the traditions of their community. This is the case for both those that grew up in Morocco and celebrated the Mimouna while they were living there, as well as for those that grew up outside of Morocco, in Montreal or elsewhere. Through the continued celebration of the Mimouna in Montreal, members of the community are given a sense that they are upholding an important element of Moroccan Jewish practice that works to

[196] Miles, "Between Ashkenaz and Quebecois," 48.

define the community in this new context and express the membership of those participating in its celebration. As noted by interviewee Jacob, it also allows them to maintain a connection to Morocco, especially in the case of the first generation of Moroccan Jews who came to settle in the city.[197]

The need to maintain a strong link to Morocco can also be maintained in the way the Mimouna is thought about. When asked whether the celebration of the Mimouna had changed or remained the same in the way it is now carried out in Montreal, interviewee Rebecca explained that nothing had changed: "Aucune difference. On a garder nos coutumes, que ça sois ici ou au Maroc." When a ritual is transplanted from one location to another, it will inevitably undergo certain changes and therefore, an answer such as this one, which negates any changes, seems to be another way of maintaining a strong link to Morocco and her identity as a Moroccan Jew. This answer may also be her way of showing an outsider that she does in fact uphold the traditions of her community even after years of not living in Morocco.[198]

With the majority of the Jewish community in Montreal being of European descent, the Mimouna is a way for Moroccan Jews to differentiate themselves and preserve their own heritage by maintaining practices that the majority does not include as part of their Passover celebrations. Its practice has become a way for Moroccan Jews to show pride in their heritage and identity[199], something many once were made to feel ashamed of when they first settled in Canada.

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197 Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.

198 Rebecca, personal interview, October 13, 2010.

199 Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.

Pride in the celebration of the Mimouna as well as Moroccan Jewish identity is revealed through the way the ritual is celebrated in Montreal. When discussing its celebration, two interviewees explained that in their estimation the celebration of this ritual had become much bigger in Montreal than it was in Morocco. Jacob's impression is that since coming to Quebec Moroccan Jews have embellished the celebration of the Mimouna. He puts forward that one of the reasons for this development is tied to their communal identity, "You need to assert your identity so those are the kinds of things you use to say this is who I am, these are my roots, I'm proud of them." [200] Thus these larger Mimouna celebrations allow Moroccan Jews to declare their identity in a place in which they are the minority. It also allows them to assert their identity in a way that is visible to other Moroccan Jews, to the non-Moroccan Jewish community and to he non-Jewish community. Concerning these more elaborate celebrations, Esther explained, "And some people make huge parties for Mimouna […] in Montreal it's really gotten out of hand, some people make it big, you can have up to one hundred people coming to your house at night […]."[201] This quote hints at the fact that Esther may not see the development of more extravagant Mimouna celebrations in Montreal as something positive, which may result from believing this to be a loss of the more intimate character this celebration had in Morocco. In connection with this, it should be noted that these larger and more elaborate celebrations are a product of their environment in Canada where certain members of the community are wealthier and have access to a larger amount of material goods, thus giving rise to an element of conspicuous consumption. Therefore, alongside

[200] Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.
[201] Esther, personal interview, November 25, 2010.

allowing for the display of one's Moroccan Jewish identity such celebrations also allow for the display of one's socio-economic position.

Many of the foods that were being served at Mimouna celebrations in Morocco are still being served at Mimounas taking place in Montreal, which can be seen as a way of preserving the essential character of this ritual as well as serving as a link for those in attendance to their native land of Morocco. Mufleta, which has become the quintessential Mimouna food, was mentioned by each of my interviewees, two of which explained that this was in fact the food that they most associated with this celebration. In one case, the interviewee explained that despite the fact that mufleta is sometimes served at other events, such as at a *bris*[202], it was simply not as appealing and did not taste as good because it is was not being served in the right context.[203] Another interviewee explained that if she attended a Mimouna at which there was no mufleta being served, she would feel as though something was missing and would not fully enjoy the celebrations. The need for mufleta is so important in her case that she would move onto another Mimouna in hopes that they would be serving mufleta.[204] Interviewee, Miriam, would go so far as to call various family members in order to find out whether they would have mufleta at their Mimouna.[205]

Thus it can be said that this dish serves to orient Moroccan Jews in time, specifically within the time of the Mimouna. In his book *Remembrances of Repasts*, David E. Sutton discusses an occasion during which a man used a specific food to mark time in a story he was telling. Concerning this Sutton says, "Interestingly, the reference to

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[202] The Jewish circumcision ceremony which takes place eight days after the birth of a boy.
[203] Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.
[204] Rachel, personal interview, August 31, 2010.
[205] Miriam, personal interview, May 10, 2011.

such foods has the effect of placing one in time: one knows that if certain foods are being planted or harvested it must be a specific time of year."[206] I think that this idea can be extended to dishes that are prepared and eaten at specific times, such as dishes being prepared for specific holidays. This is a particularly pertinent way to mark time within the Jewish community in which specific dishes are linked to certain holidays on the Jewish calendar. Therefore, if one discusses making or eating mufleta, it would have the effect of situating one within the time of the ritual of the Mimouna and within the months of March or April. Furthermore, since mufleta so strongly has the ability to orient one in relation to the celebration of the Mimouna, when it is served outside of this context it can create a feeling of disconnect for certain people because it is not being served at the right time.

Despite the popularity of the mufleta and its status as the quintessential Mimouna dish among the Moroccan Jewish community of Montreal, through my interviews I came to see that there existed variation as to what people viewed as the defining dish of the Mimouna. Families often had different food traditions for the Mimouna depending on the city in Morocco from which they originated, and other traditional dishes include sweet couscous and zaban. Interviewee Esther had never tasted mufleta before celebrating the Mimouna in Montreal. Her family's food traditions included zaban and the Tunisian sandwich. Zaban, she explained, is a tradition from Meknes, the city that her mother is from, and the Tunisian sandwich is a tradition from Tunisia, where her father grew up. The sandwich consists of Italian style bread that is stuffed with tuna, peppers, squashed carrot salad, tomato and artichoke salad, black olives, hard-boiled eggs, olive oil and

[206] David E. Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 28.

sometimes a spicy condiment such as harissa.[207] Sarah similarly explained that she and her husband came from different cities in Morocco and that each had different food traditions for their Mimouna celebrations. Her husband's family served mufleta, while her own family served a sweet couscous. Once they were married they chose to serve both of these dishes at their own Mimouna celebrations.[208]

Different food traditions allow people to recognize where one originates from in Morocco. When discussing zaban as part of her Mimouna celebrations Esther highlights the significance of this function in explaining, "[…] whoever comes from Meknes gonna have that in their house, as a matter of fact when I relate to other people who are Moroccan and they say, What do you have for [Mimouna], they say why, your mother's from Meknes? Suddenly we connect somehow. I said yeah, oh wow, this is interesting, so your mother is from Meknes my mother makes it too. Okay so now we know our parents are from the same city. It brings you back immediately to where your ancestry is from." Particular food traditions can therefore create a strong link between people who come from the same city in Morocco, and functions as an instant way to connect back to the social landscape and communal structure of Morocco. This can also allow people to create new relationships based on shared food traditions.

Although traditional Mimouna dishes brought from Morocco are still being served at celebrations in Montreal, new dishes have come to be included on Mimouna tables in this city. Interviewee Jacob mentioned that sushi was being served alongside the traditional mufleta at one Mimouna he attended in Montreal.[209] Another addition to the

[207] Esther, personal interview, November 25, 2010.
[208] Sarah, personal interview, March 21, 2012.
[209] Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.

Mimouna table was mentioned by Sarah, who explained that she began to include a cheese platter alongside the other dishes she served. She says, "Avant on mettais pas du fromage sur la table, il y avait que du sucre. Il y pas tout le monde qui aime le sucre alors on a introduit les fromages."[210] Sarah went on to explain that her aunt created a Mimouna table that consisted of both sweet and savory foods, on which she included charcuterie meats. Having the combination of such foods on a Mimouna table is surprising since most dishes served on this night are dairy, which would exclude serving meat as per the laws of kashruth. I think this kind of addition to foods being served at Mimouna celebrations is exceptional, and in most cases the new dishes being included are either dairy or parve. Finally, Moshe and Sarah noted that they had come across mufleta topped with cream cheese and smoked salmon being served at a Mimouna, a creation they attributed to Ashkenazi Jews.[211] This is something that both found to be amusing and did not seem to see as a legitimate addition to this celebration. Perhaps it was seen as something that would be consumed by outsider Ashkenazi Jews rather than Moroccan insiders who understood how certain dishes should be eaten. The fact that savory foods are also being served at Mimouna celebrations was noticed by interviewee Deborah who mentioned that she had come across party sandwiches as well as lox and baguette being served on this night.[212]

It seems that within the Montreal context, those hosting the Mimouna have begun to feel the need to include more than sweets on their table. Perhaps this development has to do with the larger variety of foods that are available in North America, which in turn

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[210] Sarah, personal interview, March 21, 2012.
[211] Sarah, personal interview, March 21, 2012 and Moshe, personal interview, March 21, 2012.
[212] Deborah, personal interview, March 28, 2012.

causes people to serve a diverse variety of dishes during meals. Furthermore, the idea of what constitutes a meal may have evolved from Morocco to Quebec, which may have influenced what people serve to guests. Another reason for this may be that there are less houses to visit over the course of the night making it so that guests will spend more time in the homes they are visiting, therefore requiring more food to be served.

When discussing what changes may have appeared in the celebration of the Mimouna as it is carried out in Montreal, Esther mentioned certain differences that existed between the way in which she prepared for the Mimouna versus the way in which her mother prepared for this celebration. She explained, "She was more engaged [in] doing everything, she didn't have the resources we have today, the community has grown very much here in Montreal today so I am able to go out and order whatever I want. Maybe not the sandwiches [Tunisian sandwiches] and maybe not the zaban but you know all the cookies and the extra." Although Esther is still making certain things at home, she is purchasing more food than her mother did. Similarly, when discussing the foods she serves on the night of the Mimouna, Sarah explains that she has chosen to order the mufleta she serves to her guests. This is done well in advance, so on the night of the Mimouna they are delivered to her home once Passover has ended and they only have to be warmed up for guests. Having made them herself in the past, she says, "Avant je la faisais sur place mais plus maintenant, parce que je n'est pas le temps, trop de stress."[213] This modification to her Mimouna preparations, she says, allows her to be more organized on the night itself. Such changes to the Mimouna preparations would allow for the women hosting this celebration in their home to have a bit more time to speak to

[213] Sarah, personal interview, March 21, 2012.

guests, rather than continually being in the kitchen throughout the night. Prior to being able to order dishes for the Mimouna, women would have likely spent the majority of the night in their kitchen preparing food for guests. Thus, the task of greeting guests and socializing with them fell to the husband or other males within the household. Having the men greet the guests while the women remained in the kitchen would have been acceptable in Morocco, however in North America there is an expectation that women will also be taking part in the celebrations rather than remaining in the kitchen.

It should be noted that although my interviewees explained that they purchase foods for the Mimouna there are still certain dishes that they continue to prepare themselves. This includes Tunisian sandwiches and zaban for Esther and a variety of homemade jams for Sarah. It seems that these more specific regional dishes are not being sold in bakeries or by catering companies. Rather, apart from the standard fare of cookies and desserts that can easily be purchased, it seems that mufleta is the one traditional Mimouna dish that has been made available in bakeries. I think that this is related to the fact that mufleta has become the quintessential Mimouna dish among the Moroccan Jewish community in Montreal and is in high demand during this holiday. While other dishes such as zaban or homemade jam have not achieved the mufleta's popularity, nor is there the same demand for them.

Purchasing mufleta has become a popular option among Moroccan women in Montreal due to the fact that making mufleta is an extremely labor intensive process that requires a lot of practice. On top of mastering the technique of being able to stretch the dough to the required thinness without tearing it, women making this dish must stand at the stove for the majority of the night to cook them. From this, it is understandable why

women have been choosing to purchase mufleta. The following quote from Miriam in which she is discussing her mother's experience of making mufleta shows that this was in fact not always an enjoyable process for the women who carried it out, "She would always burn herself. […] She would say, Oh my god I hate doing this! I'm always getting burned!"[214]

Similarly to its social function in Morocco, the Mimouna continues to allow for the opportunity to interact with people outside of the Moroccan Jewish community. In Morocco the Mimouna was a time during which friendly interactions existed between Jews and their Muslim neighbors. There would be an exchange of gifts and Jews would invite Muslims into their homes during the celebrations. These interactions find a parallel in the interactions that take place between Moroccan and Ashkenazi Jews during Mimouna celebrations in Montreal. With the easing of the tensions that once existed between these two communities, interviewee Jacob mentioned that it was becoming more common for Ashkenazi Jews to be invited to a Mimouna by their Moroccan acquaintances. Thus, it has become a time for Ashkenazi Jews to get to know and understand the Moroccan Jewish community. Seeing that this is a custom that finds no parallel within the Ashkenazi community, inviting them to Mimouna celebrations places them squarely within the Moroccan community and at the center of an important ritual that serves as a strong identity marker for Moroccan Jews. This experience opens the Moroccan Jewish community to those Ashkenazi Jews attending the celebrations. As suggested by Jacob, the Mimouna is the perfect time and place for Ashkenazi and Moroccan Jews to get to know one another due to the character of the celebration, which

[214] Miriam, personal interview, May 10, 2011.

is one of hospitality and sociability. Food is a central focus around which the celebration of the Mimouna takes place and it is this element that works to create a sense of conviviality that in turn brings people closer together. It creates an atmosphere where barriers can more easily be broken down and language is not necessarily needed. With a language barrier once being a problem between the two communities, the Mimouna is a place where knowledge about the Moroccan community can instead be gained through the food and the ritual of the Mimouna.[215] Furthermore, inviting Ashkenazi Jews to Mimounas may not only point to the desire on the part Moroccan Jews to introduce their culture and rituals to this group but it can also be seen as a way of proclaiming their identity as Moroccan Jews to these outsiders. As suggested by Jacob it has become "a way of showing off […] to people who [are] not part of the inner circle of family and friends."[216]

In discussing the reactions of Ashkenazi Jews who have attended a Mimouna, two of my interviewees relayed positive feedback on the part of the Ashkenazi Jews. Jacob explained that he had been told that the Mimouna was a wonderful celebration, especially because of the open house concept and the delicious food that is served. He also noticed that attending a Mimouna prompted Ashkenazim to wonder why they did not have a similar celebration in their own Passover traditions.[217] Esther's discussion of the reactions of Ashkenazim focused on their comments concerning the food being served at the Mimouna. She explained, "And some of them even ask me if they can take some

[215] Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.
[216] Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.
[217] Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.

sandwiches home, can I get a doggie bag […]."[218] It is interesting to note that these comments seem to be focused on the hospitality of the holiday and the food served, which are two major elements that serve to define the holiday while in turn being easily recognizable and accessible to those attending this celebration for the first time.

Interviewee Rachel grew up in a household with an Ashkenazi mother and Moroccan father. She attended an elementary school and a high school in which the majority of students were of Ashkenazi descent, making her one of three people who were half Moroccan. The Mimouna was always part of her Passover celebrations as she was growing up, however she did not realize that her Ashkenazi friends did not end Passover with this celebration until high school. Upon realizing this, she explained that she chose to bring her Ashkenazi friends along to Mimouna celebrations with her, "I was able to bring a friend with me, so every year I brought one friend so they got to experience something they never got to before. So it was actually kind of nice […] and they probably wanted to be invited next year but everybody gets a turn!" It is interesting to note that Rachel did not immediately realize that her Passover celebrations differed from those of her Ashkenazi friends. This points to the fact that there was no discussion of other Passover traditions in the Ashkenazi dominated schools she attended.

Although the element of sociability has always been at the heart of Mimouna celebrations, the way in which this functions for members of the community has changed since it began to be celebrated in Montreal. As Esther explained, she and her family had not practiced the tradition of the Mimouna while they resided in France, but began to practice it relatively quickly after arriving in Montreal because of the fact that most

[218] Esther, personal interview, November 25, 2010.

others within the Moroccan Jewish community were doing so. Thus, it was a way for herself and her family to integrate themselves into this community. Furthermore, because much of their family had remained in France it was also a way for them to get to know others within the community, "So we had to do this celebration in order to get people in. To come visit us and so forth, us [to] go visit them."[219] Although, she is the only interviewee to have mentioned this kind of experience related to the Mimouna, I think that other new arrivals to Montreal would have likely gone through a similar experience when such a move often necessitated the dissolving of the extended family unit and the social community of which one was a part of in their country of origin. Therefore, the Mimouna served an important function when Moroccan Jews were first beginning to settle in Montreal for it allowed them to form new social connections that would in turn allow them to become part of the social network of this community and provide a sense of connection to the new place in which they had recently settled.

The Mimouna has also become a time, which enables those attending to connect with others who they may only see at this celebration. According to Rachel, her parents felt it was important to attend the Mimouna due to the fact that it was their chance to see people that they would only see within this context, and at no other point throughout the year.[220] Similarly, Jacob, explained that it is a time to keep track of what is going on in the lives of friends and family and simply put, is "an opportunity to catch up."[221] Through its celebration, the Mimouna allows the social network of the Moroccan Jewish community in Montreal to be upheld.

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[219] Esther, personal interview, November 25, 2010.
[220] Rachel, personal interview, August 31, 2010.
[221] Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.

At another level, the Mimouna creates what Esther termed a circuit around the city that is made up of those houses hosting Mimounas on this night. She explains, "[…] everybody is going from house to house and bringing back what they saw from one house to another house, so I could know what that other house made without even being invited there. But somebody will come and tell me, you know what was at that house, well this is what they made and this is what they did."[222] As can be seen, on that night links are created between those attending the celebrations, no matter where they are located in the city. At the center of this circuit lays the food being served at the various Mimounas, which acts as an element of comparison that situates people along the circuit that is created on this night.

Not only does the Mimouna work to strengthen social relationships between Moroccan Jews of the same generation but it also provides an environment in which members of different age groups can come together. Interviewee Rachel spoke fondly about being able to spend time with her grandmother on this night. She explained, "something else that I liked was the night of the Mimouna, me and my sister would go to my grandmother's house a bit earlier than everybody else and she would let us make some of the mufleta. So it was nice actually being part of the process and being allowed to eat my own."[223] Thus, this celebration provided a time for interactions such as these to happen, which may not have otherwise taken place. It also allowed a woman of an older generation to introduce and pass on this central Moroccan tradition to a younger generation of Moroccan Jews. Furthermore, I think that this interaction served to root

[222] Esther, personal interview, November 25, 2010.
[223] Rachel, personal interview, August 31, 2010.

Rachel to the Mimouna in a way that went beyond the experience of simply attending the celebration because it allowed her to become part of the process itself.

My youngest interviewee, Rachel who is in her mid-twenties, explained that the Mimouna is a tradition she would like to carry on in the future. Not only would this celebration be for her family, but she would also make a point of inviting Ashkenazi Jews, "And probably I would actually want a lot of Ashkenazi people to come over just to see what they were missing their entire childhood and adolescence. I guess even then I could just tell people what the Mimouna is but it would just be nice to have and everybody would obviously appreciate it because it would just be normal food [in relation to Passover food]."[224]

Throughout the interviews I conducted, I came to observe that my interviewees had different reasons as to why the Mimouna was an important ritual with which to end Passover. Jacob made the following comment, "You need to do it in order to finish Passover, you can't finish Passover without Mimouna or else you're going to be in perpetual Passover which would be a disaster!"[225] Although this statement was made in a humorous manner, I think it nonetheless shows the importance of this ritual among Moroccan Jews, and for members of this community Passover simply would not be complete without it. The thought of not having Mimouna is almost unthinkable, and so absurd that it can only be discussed with humor. So entrenched is this practice among the community that it simply could not be otherwise. For Rachel, the significance lay in the fact that it was reward at the end of a week of abstaining from the foods she usually consumed. In her words, "The Mimouna is the prize at the end of Passover. The Gold

[224] Rachel, personal interview, August 31, 2010.
[225] Jacob, personal interview, October 25, 2010.

Medal! It's what you're working towards during Passover."[226] Finally, interviewee Deborah explained that after all the hard work of Passover; the Mimouna is her night out and time to party. It should be noted that she does not host her own Mimouna, but accompanies her husband to Mimounas being hosted by other people. However, this statement would elicit a strong reaction from those Moroccan women who host their own Mimouna during which they have little or no time to relax.

Cookbooks and the Mimouna

Despite its importance among the Moroccan Jewish community, there is no cookbook that is entirely devoted to the food of the Mimouna. Recipes for the dishes served at this celebration can usually be found interspersed within a cookbook, while in some cases a section will be devoted to the foods of the Mimouna. A small number of Jewish Moroccan cookbooks have been published over the last thirty years, two of which were published in Quebec. These two cookbooks, *La Cuisine Juive Marocaine* by Rivka Levy-Mellul and *La Cuisine Sépharade Marocaine des Grands Jours et du Quotidien* by Gilberte Cohen Scali, both include recipes that are traditionally prepared for the Mimouna, and in this section I will examine how the foods of this holiday are presented in each.

The first of these cookbooks to be published was *La Cuisine Juive Marocaine* by Rivka Levy-Mellul. This cookbook was published in the early eighties; about fifteen to twenty years after the majority of Moroccan Jews arrived in Quebec, and was aimed at

[226] Rachel, personal interview, August 31, 2010.

this first generation of Moroccan immigrants who had direct experience with Moroccan cuisine. In the introduction we are told that this cookbook was created out of a sense of nostalgia for life in Morocco, "Chacun garde en soi une vague nostalgie, un regret conscient ou non qui le pousse à rechercher au plus profond des temps de gouts, des souvenirs, des odeurs connues et chères, et je pense que c'est ce qui m'a poussée principalement à écrire ce livre."[227] In writing this cookbook the author hoped that she would be able to bring this first generation of immigrants the foods, flavors and tastes they remembered from Morocco.[228] Levy-Mellul also wanted this cookbook to have a wide reach that went beyond the Moroccan Jewish community and hoped that in learning about the foods and rituals of this community, members of other communities could feel a connection with these unfamiliar foods and practices. Ultimately, trying to use this cookbook as a tool to bring communities closer together.

Further in the introduction Levy-Mellul writes that the peaceful coexistence between Jews and Muslims in Morocco remains a vivid memory for many and that each Jewish holiday, in particular the Mimouna, were times for the two groups to reaffirm their good relations. This mention of the Mimouna in relation to the friendly interaction of Jews and Muslims in Morocco shows how important this element was to the holiday when it was celebrated in this country.

In describing Moroccan cuisine, Levy-Mellul explains that the foods eaten on a daily basis would often consist of one-pot stews of meat and vegetables, while Shabbat and holiday meals would be more elaborate at which an array of soup, salads, meat and fish would often be served. Following the introduction, readers are provided with

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[227] Rivka Levy Mellul, *La Cuisine Juive Marocaine* (Montreal: Albert Soussan, 1983), 6.
[228] Levy-Mellul, *La Cuisine Juive Marocaine*, 7.

information about cultural characteristics of the Moroccan Jewish community such as Le Mellah, La Mimouna, Les Coutumes "*El âada*", Dinette des Enfants "*El Minedra*", Visite lors d'un repas, Les Soirées de Shabbat et de Fêtes, Type de Beauté, and La Croyance en les Démons.[229] The discussion of the Mimouna informs readers that this celebration happens on the last day of Passover and that once the holiday was over tables were filled with a variety of foods that signified abundance. The mufleta was given the place of honor at the Mimouna table, and was a symbol of happiness and blessings for the year to come. People would move from house to house throughout the night, wishing each other *Terbhou ô Tseedou*, which we are told means luck and happiness. There is even mention of the fact that Muslim neighbors would visit the homes of Jews on this night bringing greenery, cakes, butter and other dairy products as a sign of friendship. The next day was a time during which families would have picnics and spend the day outdoors.[230] The author does not explain why she chose to discuss these eight topics, but it can be assumed that they were included because it was believed that they would help to provide a sense of the character of the community. In particular, the inclusion of the Mimouna among these subjects signals its importance to the identity of the Moroccan Jewish community.

The recipes in this cookbook are divided according to the main ingredient of each dish, with sections about couscous, salades, legumes farci et tajine, soupes, plats (this consists of vegetables and rice), dafina, viandes, volailles, poissons, omelettes, pains et pâtes, gâteaux-pâtisseries, and boissons-fromages. Recipes that would be prepared on the night of the Mimouna have been placed in different sections throughout the cookbook and these include Couscous Sucré et Sec "Seffa", a sweet dry couscous flavored with

[229] Ibid., 9-13.
[230] Ibid., 10.

sugar and cinnamon; Grumeaux de Couscous au Lait "Berkoukch", also known as Berkouks, which is a dish of large couscous cooked in milk; La Mofléta, the crepe-like dish that has become a fixture on Montreal's Mimouna tables and Nougat aux Amandes "Zabane Belouze", which is a soft meringue. The mufleta recipe ends with a short explanation informing the reader that it is a dish prepared on the night of the Mimouna, "La mofleta est préparée le soir de la Mimouna. C'est une coutume marocaine."[231] This makes it the only recipe to offer such an explanation, and one would have to possess prior knowledge of the food of the Mimouna to know that the other recipes should be prepared on this night.

The second cookbook to be examined is *La Cuisine Sépharade Marocaine des Grands Jours et du Quotidien* by Gilberte Cohen Scali, which was published by the Communauté Sépharade Unifiée du Québec (CSUQ) in 2011. Although this cookbook is specifically Moroccan, it should be noted that the author attempts to situate the Moroccan community firmly within the larger Sephardic community of Quebec and perhaps within the worldwide Sephardic community through the inclusion of the designation sépharade in the title. This link is also made in the introduction of the cookbook in which the author chooses to use the Sephardic designation rather than Moroccan when naming the cuisine of the cookbook. For example, it is written "Et, de fil en aiguille, est apparue la nécessité de colliger toutes ces recettes éparses-véritable trésor patrimonial-qui font la success de nos tables et la reputation de la cuisine sépharade."[232] This can be linked to the idea promoted by Yolande Cohen, mentioned in the first section of this chapter, which describes the Sephardic label as being a way for the Moroccan community to distance

[231] Ibid., 147.

[232] Gilberte Cohen Scali, *La Cuisine Sepharade Marocaine des Grands Jours et du Quotidien* (Montreal: Communate Sepharade Unifiee du Quebec, 2011), 3.

themselves from their North African roots and place themselves within a larger united community of those members of the Jewish community who are descendants of Jews who were expelled from the Iberian peninsula during the Spanish Inquisition. Another suggestion concerning the use of this designation comes from William F.S. Miles who raises the point that the use of Sephardic, was adopted by the Moroccan community in order to help the larger Ashkenazi community that they had settled amongst in Quebec understand them. Ultimately, it is a simplifying term that arose in relation to Ashkenazi identity or to go further "within an (Ashkenazi-defined) bifurcation of the Jewish world."[233] Thus, the use of the term Sephardic has become almost interchangeable with the term Moroccan when discussing the community. Finally, the use of Sephardic may also be an attempt to expand the potential audience of the cookbook.

In the introduction to the cookbook readers are told that the recipes contained within its pages are kosher and divided into sections according to the major holidays of the Jewish calendar, namely *Shabbat*, *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, *Sukkot*, *Chanukkah*, *Purim*, Passover, Mimouna, and *Shavuot*. Other sections include popular and easy recipes for various occasions, drinks and vegetarian recipes that draw on the flavors of Moroccan Jewish cuisine.

In the section devoted to the Mimouna, the author begins by explaining that this holiday celebrates the end of Passover and following this presents four theories concerning the origins of the Mimouna. The first two theories presented include one which links this celebration to Maimon, the father of Maimonides, and the other, which associates it with the Hebrew, term *emounah* meaning faith. The next two theories the

[233] Miles, "Between Ashkenaz and Quebecois," 34.

author presents are ones I had not previously come across in my research concerning the origins of the celebration. The first of these theories makes an etymological link to the colloquial Hebrew word for money, *mammon*, due to the ideas of abundance that permeate the ritual. The last theory discussed links the Mimouna to the offering of the *Omer*[234] given at the time of the first Temple. Following this the author devotes the last three paragraphs to providing readers with a description of the celebrations of the Mimouna. Readers are told that the ritual is a time that honors the communal identity and hospitality of the Sephardic community, and that on this night tables are laden with milk, butter, honey, fish, stalks of wheat, a bowl of flour in which fresh fava beans have been placed, along with gold and jewelry, all of which are symbols of fecundity and well being. Finally, the author explains that people visit each other throughout the night, and dishes such as mufleta covered in butter and honey, berkoks cooked in milk, couscous, jaban and other desserts are served.

The information being presented concerning the Mimouna provides readers with a basic understanding of this celebration through a discussion of its elemental characteristics. Through these paragraphs the celebratory and social nature of this ritual is emphasized, along with its associations to ideas of fertility and plenty. Similarly to the introduction of the cookbook, the Mimouna is linked to the Sephardic community, rather than to the Moroccan Jewish community, and in turn becomes a marker of Sephardic identity rather than Moroccan Jewish identity. I think in doing so the author obscures its importance to Moroccan Jewish identity as well as to the specific ties this celebration has to the region and culture of North Africa.

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234 A harvest offering that was brought to the Temple on the second day of Passover.

Although the author mentions various dishes that are served at the Mimouna in the introduction to the section readers are only presented with two recipes, those for zaban and mufleta. The other recipes mentioned in the introduction can be found in other sections of the cookbook, with a recipe for berkoks being in the Purim section and a recipe for sweet couscous in the popular recipes section.

The description of the Mimouna that is found in *La Cuisine Juive Marocaine* by Rivka Levy-Mellul provides a more complex and nuanced view of this ritual, and a better understanding of the way it is celebrated. While there was more of an emphasis on theories concerning the origins of the Mimouna in *La Cuisine Sépharade Marocaine des Grands Jours et du Quotidien* by Gilberte Cohen Scali, Levy-Mellul's cookbook focused on the details of the night itself which worked to provide a more concrete picture of the ritual. Furthermore, Cohen Scali's cookbook assumes less prior knowledge as to when recipes should be prepared given that its chapters are divided by holidays, ultimately providing people with the information concerning the preparation of dishes. While, as previously mentioned Levy-Mellul's cookbook is organized according to main ingredients, which makes it so that recipes for a particular holiday will be found in different sections throughout the book.

The Mimouna and its representation in a community magazine

The institutionalized Sephardic community in Quebec offers a variety of services and activities to its members, of which one is the publication of a magazine, entitled *La Voix Sépharade* (LVS). This French language magazine is one of two official

publications of the CSUQ and appears on a semi-monthly basis with a print run of about 6000 copies of each edition.[235] It was first published in 1969 under the name *Presence*, and came to be known under its present title in 1977. Topics covered in this magazine included communal news and events, the history and culture of the Sephardic community, as well as a variety of other issues pertaining to the life of Sephardic Jews in Quebec.

Among the issues I examined the first mention of the Mimouna came in the 1978 April-May edition in an article entitled "Origines Judéo-Andalouses de la Cuisine Sépharade au Québec" written by Charles Abraham and translated by Moïse Levy.[236] This piece is about one thousand words long and focuses on a discussion of the etymology of the central Mimouna delicacy, mufleta. The author puts forward the idea that this pastry was created in the area that was once known as *Al-Andalus* and that the word itself is a linguistic hybrid of two different dialects of Arabic spoken in Muslim Spain meaning flaky or flaky pastry. Following a short description of the Mimouna, readers are told that the oldest recipes for this dish were found in two manuscripts devoted to matters of cooking from thirteenth century *Al-Andalus*. Due to the fact that mufleta continues to be known as a Jewish pastry in Morocco while being unknown in both Spain and Portugal, and because Jews in Quebec know the aforementioned etymology of the word, the author concludes that the origins of the Sephardic community in Quebec come from *Al-Andalus*.

The next mention of the Mimouna comes in the March-April issue of 1981 in a short article, entitled "Mimouna," in which the ritual is discussed in relation to its

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235 Miles, "Between Ashkenaz and Quebecois," 43.

236 Charles Abraham, "Origines Judéo-Andalouses de la Cuisine Sépharade au Québec," trans. Moïse Levy, *La Voix Sépharade* 6.5 (1978): 14.

celebration in Israel.[237] The beginning of the piece provides readers with an explanation of the meaning of the Mimouna as well as its origins. The author specifies that this celebration does not have a religious basis, but comes from a combination of culinary and folkloric traditions. Readers are told that the Mimouna is a celebration of the cycle of nature since it marks the beginning of spring and the renewal of the earth, as well as the themes of fertility, luck, and wealth that are displayed through stalks of wheat, a bowl of flour topped with fresh beans in their pod, a whole fish, a few pieces of gold and a profusion of desserts that are placed on the Mimouna table. The author then creates a link between the North African community, the Mimouna and the state of Israel through the mention of the fact that not only was April 26th, 1981 the day on which the Mimouna was going to be celebrated that year but it also happened to be the thirtieth anniversary of North African Jews moving to Israel. With these two celebrations occurring simultaneously readers are shown a schedule of events that link the two occasions taking place in Jerusalem. The name and number of a travel agent is provided at the end of the article for those readers who were inspired to travel to Israel to join in the celebration of these two events.

The third mention of the Mimouna that I found in the magazine was in the May-June issue of 1983 in an article entitled "Les Ashkénazes invités chez les Sépharades pour la Mimouna."[238] This article describes that seven Ashkenazi couples were invited to celebrate the Mimouna at the homes of four Sephardic couples and explains that this was organized as a way to bring Sephardic and Ashkenazi women closer together. Readers are told that this event was part of a larger program initiated by the Fédération des Femmes

[237] Eliezer Hod, "Mimouna," *La Voix Sépharade* 10.2 (1981): 7.
[238] Barbara Berger, "Les Ashkénazes invités chez les Sépharades pour la Mimouna," *La Voix Sépharade* 14.2 (1983): 31.

that generated much interest among women in both communities. This was done with the hope that it would foster an increased mutual understanding between women of the Ashkenazi and Sephardic communities. The article states that not only were the Ashkenazi couples able to admire the tables arranged for the Mimouna celebrations, but they also dined on the delicacies that were prepared for the occassion, "Ils ont goûté aux diverses specialtiés marocaines, telles que le couscous sucré, des gâteaux et des friandises, des fruits secs et frais etc."[239]

The final mention of the Mimouna among the issues of *La Voix Sépharade*, which I examined, came in the March-April issue of 1984.[240] The book, *Mille ans de vie juive au Maroc: histoire et culture, religion et magie* by Haim Zafrani, had recently been published and an excerpt from the book concerning the Mimouna was presented to readers. Zafrani was a leading scholar on the history of Moroccan Jews, and this book was an important work about the history and culture of this community.

The fact that the editors of *La Voix Sépharade* chose to include this excerpt points to the importance that this celebration holds for the community, as well as to the central role it plays as part of their identity as Moroccan Jews in Quebec. Furthermore, because the celebration of the Mimouna would have occurred around the time that this issue was distributed, the inclusion of this section made this newly published book relevant to the ritual life of the community.

The article concerning the etymology of mufleta along with the excerpt from Haim Zafrani's book show that there was a certain amount of interest in the historical aspect of the Mimouna among members of the community. This desire to more fully

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[239] Berger, "Les Ashkénazes invités chez les Sépharades," 31.
[240] La Voix Sépharade, "La Mimouna ou la «bonne fortune»," *La Voix Sépharade* 15.2 (1984): 24-26.

understand the origins and the history of the community may have been more strongly felt on account of the fact that they were no longer living in Morocco. Having more knowledge about the history of the community, even the history of a specific celebration like the Mimouna, would allow Moroccan Jews to strengthen their identity as members of this community and create a stronger link to their Moroccan identity in the Quebec context.

Mimouna celebrations in Montreal

Among the Moroccan Jewish community of Montreal Mimouna celebrations are still held in private homes throughout the city, however Mimounas are now also being held in communal spaces. Two such Mimounas were brought to my attention during my research, one of which was held at Le Cercle, a private club for young professionals aged twenty-three to forty, located on Queen Mary Road in the Côtes-des-Neiges neighborhood of Montreal. The second was held at the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, which is located in the Snowdon neighborhood of Montreal.

Le Cercle was created by the CSUQ with the hope that it would draw more young adults to actively participate in the community.[241] Along with Mimouna celebrations, other events held at Le Cercle include lectures, Shabbat dinners, and *Yom H'aatzmaot* celebrations.[242] Although I did not attend the Mimouna celebrations held at Le Cercle in both 2011 and 2012, certain elements of the way in which the event was advertised merit discussion. These Mimounas were initiatives of the CSUQ and were advertised on the Le

[241] Le Cercle, Club Privé, accessed June 25, 2013, http://www.lecerclemtl.com/en/.
[242] Le Cercle, Club Privé, accessed June 25, 2013, http://www.lecerclemtl.com/en/.

Cercle website[243], their Facebook page[244], and a website called Super Party Factory[245]. The Mimouna of 2011 took place on Tuesday, April 26th with the poster for the event advertising that along with traditional mufletas and Moroccan pastries there would be a DJ, a cash bar and bottle service. Admission to the event was free. The following year the Mimouna took place on Saturday April 14th, 2012 and similarly to the previous year it was advertised that there would be mufleta, pastries, a DJ and a cash bar. However, there was now a cover charge of 5$ to attend the event.

It is clear that the organizers were attempting to attract young adults to this event by creating an atmosphere that sounded more like a club than a traditional Mimouna celebration. The five-dollar cover charge that was instituted for the Mimouna of 2012 further added to the club-like character of the event, while at the same time going against the open house policy that is traditional on this night. To charge people an entrance fee takes away the element of hospitality that is a central characteristic of the holiday and doing so makes it similar to the parties that young adults can go to on any given weekend. It seems as though the organizers felt that having mufleta and Moroccan pastries at this party ultimately made it a Mimouna celebration. More so than any other element this shows the centrality that mufleta has taken on in relation to the ritual of the Mimouna in Montreal, where it has become a defining factor of this celebration.

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243 "Mimouna 2012," Le Cercle, Club Privé, accessed June 25, 2013, http://www.lecerclemtl.com/events/mimouna-2012/.

244 Le Cercle, Club Privé Facebook Page, accessed June 25, 2013, https://www.facebook.com/lecerclemtl?hc_location=timeline.

245 "Mimouna 2011 @ Le Cercle with DJ Tiguru," Super Party Factory, accessed June 25, 2013, http://montreal.superpartyfactory.com/events/mimouna-2011-le-cercle-dj-tiguru; "Mimouna 2012 à Le Cercle," Super Party Factory, accessed June 25, 2013, http://montreal.superpartyfactory.com/events/mimouna-2012-le-cercle.

The Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue was the host of public Mimounas in both 2011 and 2012. There was no cost to attend these Mimounas and similarly to the celebration held at Le Cercle, it was being hosted by the CSUQ. The Mimouna celebration of 2012 took place in a large reception room within the building of the synagogue that could hold approximately two hundred people. Canadian, Israeli and Quebec flags had been placed on the stage that was located at the front of the room, on which there were also three musicians playing instruments and a fourth singing in Moroccan Arabic.

I think the display of the Canadian, Quebec and Israeli flag point to the elements of the communal identity that the community would like to privilege in the Quebec environment. Despite the fact that the Mimouna originates from the Moroccan element of the community's identity, I think that the exclusion of the Moroccan flag on the stage that night may point to a certain distance that members of the community may feel towards Morocco, stemming from the circumstances under which many left the country. This omission may also stem from the viewpoint that sees the departure from Morocco as a forced exile, which according to Yolande Cohen is a position that has emerged within the community in recent years.

When I arrived at the Mimouna shortly after 10 pm, the room was full of people and most seats were taken. The majority of those in attendance were aged between forty and seventy years old, there were also a smaller number of young adults and children present. Each of the tables was covered with gold or pink tablecloths and large gold candleholders that looked liked Moroccan-style lamps were placed in the center of each

table. The tables were set with silverware, plates and wine glasses. Upon arrival there was already coke and water set out on each table for the guests.

Shortly after I sat down, food began to be served by waiters. The first dishes to arrive were plates of cookies, as well as dried fruits and nuts. This was followed by couscous that tasted as though it had been cooked in a savory broth and which was topped with cinnamon and powdered sugar. Another couscous dish was served, but unlike the first, this was the larger Israeli couscous, which was cooked in milk. The last dish they brought out was the mufleta, which were accompanied by butter and honey. This was the dish that people seemed to be most excited about from the reactions of those around me and in serving this dish last the organizers of the Mimouna reaffirmed its position as the crowning glory of the Mimouna table.

After the food had been served, the president of the CSUQ, Marc Kakon, took to the stage to introduce the guests of honor who were in attendance and seated at the table in the center of the room. This included, Lawrence Bergman, a member of the national assembly of Quebec; Fatima Houda-Pepin, another member of the national assembly of Quebec; Bernard Landry; Joel Lion, the Israeli Consul-General; Amin Malika, the Egyptian consular general; Javier Dago Elorza, the Spanish consular general; representatives from the city of Montreal and the city of Côte St-Luc; Irene Buenavida, the President of the synagogue's sisterhood and Andrew Parker, the US consular general. The presence of political figures and foreign ambassadors as guests of honor at the Mimouna was reminiscent of a similar phenomenon taking place at Mimouna celebrations in Israel. Rachel Sharaby explains that politicians attending these celebrations began to us them as an opportunity to campaign and reach potential voters,

"The public figures tried to ingratiate themselves and draw near the electoral public by their presence, wearing the Moroccan headgear, tasting the foods, giving speeches and declarations and touring among the celebrators."[246] However, unlike in Israel those politicians attending the Mimouna in Montreal do not carry out any overt political campaigning.

Following this introduction, the Israeli consul took to the stage and addressed those in attendance. Speaking in French, he began by complimenting the mufleta that had been served and went on to say that the most wonderful aspect of the Mimouna was the fact that it allowed people to come together. After Passover when Moroccan Jews did not socialize or eat at each other's homes, the Mimouna was a time to begin visiting each other once again. Following from this, he ended his speech by describing the Mimouna as being a celebration of the unity of the Jewish people.

In speaking of the Mimouna in this way the Israeli consul displayed the way in which the Mimouna has come to be viewed in Israel where it has moved beyond being an ethnic holiday celebrated by Moroccan Jews to one that is celebrated nationally.[247] This is a relatively recent development, prior to which the Mimouna was celebrated quietly by Moroccan Jews who had settled in Israel because their culture was viewed in negative terms by the largely Ashkenazi Jewish population that had settled in the country prior to them.[248] Unlike the Mimouna in Israel, the celebrations in Montreal have remained an ethnic holiday that is only celebrated by a specific part of the community. Although it has become a celebration that brings the Moroccan and Ashkenazi communities together, it

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[246] Rachel Sharaby, "Political Activism and Ethnic Revival of a Cultural Symbol," *Ethnicities* 11.4 (2011): 501, accessed June 17, 2013, doi:10.1177/1468796811415760.
[247] Sharaby, "Political Activism and Ethnic Revival," 490.
[248] Ibid., 494-495.

has not become a holiday that the entire Jewish community of Montreal celebrates.

While speaking to a young man who was sitting next to me at the Mimouna about my research of the celebration, he commented that I should go to a "real" Mimouna rather than being at one being held in a synagogue and specified that I should have gone to his grandmother's Mimouna. Although it was said in a joking manner, I think it is telling in relation to how members of the community think about the public Mimounas organized in Montreal. Despite the fact that members of the Moroccan community are attending this public Mimouna, it may not be seen as a genuine Mimouna celebration. However, in the absence of being able to attend a Mimouna at a private home this option is better than missing out on the celebration completely.

I also attended a Mimouna in a private home, more specifically at the home of Sarah and Moshe who also happened to be two of my interviewees. The door to their home was unlocked and thus in line with the open door policy that is traditional on this night. The celebrations were centered in their living room and dining room. The atmosphere was calm and in comparison to the public Mimouna that I had attended earlier in the night, this celebration was more intimate. The Mimouna table was the central focus of the evening, as demonstrated by the fact that the majority of the guests were standing in close proximity to it.

A larger variety of foods were being served at this Mimouna; this included cookies and pastries such as chebakia, almond cookies, nougat, cornes de gazelle, chocolate mousse cake and chocolate truffles. Couscous mixed with nuts served along with buttermilk, mufleta, and homemade etrog jam was also included. Sarah had included some dishes that are not traditionally part of the Mimouna table, which included a bowl

of olives as well as a cheese platter. Finally there were symbolic foods on the table, namely a whole fish and fresh fava beans placed in a bowl of flour.

Sarah made sure that I helped myself to the food she had set out, but she specifically recommended that I try the etrog jam, the couscous and the mufleta. I think it is noteworthy that the foods she thought were most important for me to try were three traditional Mimouna dishes. Despite the addition of new foods to the Mimouna table, traditional dishes maintain their centrality to the celebrations.

Guests at this Mimouna were free to help themselves to the food laid out on the central table, while guests at the public Mimouna were seated at tables set with plates and cutlery and had food served to them by waiters, creating fewer opportunities for mingling between guests. Furthermore, I noticed that the mufletas were finished extremely quickly, therefore those people who arrived after they were served may have not been able to eat any at all. Ultimately, this also lent a certain formality to the night, something not usually associated with these celebrations.

When I arrived at this Mimouna there were about twenty guests present and by the time I left approximately fifty people were in attendance. This made it so that this Mimouna followed the traditional model of having an open door policy with guests coming in and out throughout the night. This ebb and flow of visitors allowed for moments during which the Mimouna table could be replenished and made ready for more visitors. In contrast, many guests showed up to the public Mimouna held at the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue at an appointed hour, and there was less of an ebb and flow of visitors.

Among the visitors at Sarah and Moshe's Mimouna were family members, friends as well as the Israeli and American ambassadors who had been at the Mimouna at the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue earlier in the night. Seeing the ambassadors at a second Mimouna illustrated the reality of the social circuit created between the homes at which Mimounas are taking place on this night, as discussed by interviewee Esther earlier in the chapter. Ultimately, this works to create a strong link between those attending similar Mimounas.

Chapter 4 – Conclusion

Since being brought to Montreal the Mimouna has evolved and developed a number of new meanings in the Montreal context. This has extended to the meanings surrounding its celebration, what it means to members of the Moroccan Jewish community and the meanings surrounding the food being served at this ritual. The significance of these facets of the Mimouna is central to the way in which it has been shaped in the Montreal context and this closing chapter will discuss these meanings in light of academic works in the areas of food studies and Judaic studies. The two works that I will be using to frame my own findings concerning the Mimouna will be *Remembrance of Repasts: an anthropology of food and memory* by David E. Sutton and *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism* by Jordan D. Rosenblum.

The Mimouna, Food, and Memory

Within the Canadian context the Mimouna has become an important marker of Moroccan Jewish identity. It has in fact become so important that I think both the celebration and the foods associated with this ritual can be considered a cultural site for the Moroccan Jewish community in Montreal that works to create a link with Morocco while also functioning to uphold their identity as Moroccan Jews. Sutton applies the idea of cultural sites to his own research concerning the Kalymnian community that he discusses in *Remembrance of Repasts*, and proposes that food is a cultural site which can help to understand the experiences of immigrants. Fog Olwig and Hastrup who describe a cultural site as "localized cultural wholes that become points of identification for people

displaced by migrations caused by larger global processes" first brought this idea forward.[249] Just as the idea of the cultural site is applied to the Kalymnian community studied by Sutton, this idea is particularly relevant to the Mimouna. This can be seen from the fact that the Mimouna has remained an important localized celebration of the Moroccan community in Montreal, just as it was in Morocco. This ritual remains a distinctive characteristic not found among the larger Jewish community in Montreal that is an important point of identification for this community as well as a significant element of their identity.

The link between food and memory is a significant element of people's experience with food as can be evidenced by scholarly discussion concerning this topic. One of the most frequently cited works in this area is Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*. Proust discusses the involuntary memories that can be created by the food one consumes, which in his case was prompted by taking a bite of a madeleine. Other works on this topic include *Food and Memory : Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery*, "Food and Memory" by Jon D. Holtzman, and *The Migrants Table: Meals and Memories in Bengali-American Households* by Ray Krishnendu.[250] Throughout *Remembrance of Repasts*, Sutton discusses a variety of ways through which food and memory are linked. One such discussion concerns the way in which memories are formed in relation to food that has been brought from its homeland to other parts of the world. Sutton discusses the way in which products and foods can take on new meanings for members of a community in a new context. Sutton illustrates this using the

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[249] David E. Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts: an anthropology of food and memory* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 75.

[250] Ray K, *The Migrants Table: Meals and Memories in Bengali-American Households* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 2004).

example of Feta cheese, which he says, can be viewed as a Greek cheese and thus takes on national connotations while at the same time in other situations it can also be associated with specific localities in Greece. Thus, "Just as people's identities shift levels in changing contexts such as migration, local products can take on shifting identification as well."[251] Through my research this is something that I have found has happened to the food that is served at Mimouna celebrations and becomes particularly apparent when thinking about mufleta. This dish has become the quintessential Mimouna dish, the one that most people will think of when you ask them about Mimouna food. However, through my interviews I learned that in Morocco the dishes one served at Mimouna celebrations depended on what city or town one was from. Some families served sweet couscous dishes, others served zaban, while others served mufleta. Therefore, when the Mimouna was being celebrated in Morocco, mufleta represented a local identity rather than representing the entire Moroccan Jewish community and the holiday of the Mimouna as it does in Montreal. Although other local dishes that were served in Morocco are still being served at Mimouna celebrations in Montreal they are not what people most readily associate with the Mimouna.

In his discussion of migrants' relationship to the food of the homeland they left, Sutton puts forward the idea that in an environment which is generally strikingly different from the home that they left, food can act "as a tangible site for memory."[252] Within *Remembrance of Repasts*, Sutton links this idea to packages of food that family members living in Greece send to those who have moved away. Similarly, I am putting forward the

[251] Ibid., 85.
[252] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 78.

idea that the foods of the Mimouna can be considered "a tangible site for memory"[253] for the Moroccan Jewish community of Montreal. Although such foods are not being sent to members of the Moroccan Jewish community in Montreal from Morocco, due to the fact that so few members of the Jewish community still reside there, it is the foods that members of the community brought with them to Montreal and continue to prepare as well as purchase for this celebration that act as physical reminders of the community from which they came. This idea can also be extended to say that for those members of the community who were born in Montreal; these foods are also sites of memory. Yet rather than allowing them to remember a home that they left these foods allow them to remember their distinct Moroccan Jewish identity in a fully embodied way.

Similarly to the idea of the foods of the Mimouna "as a tangible site for memory," these foods also offer members of the Moroccan Jewish community a link to other members of the community who are also eating these foods. Sutton explains, "[…] there is an imagined community implied in the act of eating food "from home" while in exile, in the embodied knowledge that others are eating the same food." This is especially relevant to the celebration of the Mimouna because on this night the participants that are taking part in this celebration know that others within the community are also carrying out this ritual and eating similar foods in Montreal, as well as in Israel, France and Morocco. Thus, just as it creates links between members of the community living in the same place, it also creates links to the larger Moroccan Jewish community found around the world. The links are not as personal as those created between people living in the

[253] Ibid.

same city but the knowledge that others are eating and celebrating as well creates these links, even if they are intangible.

There has been much scholarly study about reciprocity and the exchange of gifts, and the way in which these create links and obligations between people. Sutton puts forward the opinion that food can be deemed an object that creates links and obligations between people. He says, "[…] ritual feasting or mundane food exchanges can create lasting memory impressions, particularly when cultivated through narratives of past exchanges. Further, unlike solid objects, food *internalizes* debt, once again calling for verbal and non-verbal acts of remembrance and reciprocity."[254] The Mimouna and the food one eats when one attends this celebration at the home of family or friends, creates bonds between those involved. There is the expectation that one will be invited to the Mimouna of those attending and if they are not hosting their own Mimouna perhaps this will be the occasion to be invited to their home at another time throughout the year. At the very least, it reaffirms bonds. If there is no exchange through an invitation, maybe talking positively about this person's Mimouna to other people within the community is a way to return the gift since it creates a good reputation for the person being spoken of. Ultimately it creates links and obligations, which can be fulfilled in various ways. On the other hand, similar obligations are not created between those people attending public Mimounas. Rather, I think it becomes a place for people to reconnect and reaffirm social relationships.

[254] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 160.

The Mimouna as Identity in Practice

In *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism,* Jordan Rosenbloom "examines how the tannaitic movement constructed identity through regulating culinary and commensal practices."[255] He does so by focusing solely on the tannaitic literature written by the Tannaim and on the culinary and commensal regulations between both Jew and non-Jew, and between rabbinic Jew and nonrabbinic Jew in the tannaitic period, so as to provide a complete picture of their identity.[256] Furthermore, central to his study of the identity of the Tannaim is the way in which Rosenblum chooses to think about and define the idea of identity. Rather than seeing identity as an analytical category, he sees it as a category of practice.[257] The importance of this is the fact that according to Rosenblum, practices work to establish social orders. He explains, "Because practices are not just the context, but also the site where the meanings of arranged entities are instituted, understanding identity as a category of practice provides a glimpse at the blueprint for a society."[258] Following this he gives the examples that American identity can be in part derived from participating in commensal practices such as eating Turkey, stuffing and cranberry sauce on Thanksgiving.[259] Ultimately, Rosenblum shows that identity is not something which is passive, but rather "[l]ike the act of eating, it is an active social practice."[260]

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[255] Jordan D. Rosenblum, *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 2.
[256] Rosenblum, *Food and Identity*, 3.
[257] Ibid., 5.
[258] Ibid., 6.
[259] Ibid.
[260] Rosenblum, *Food and Identity*, 7.

I am taking the same position as Rosenblum in defining identity as practice and as something that is acted out by a person. I also think that this can be directly applied to my research concerning the Mimouna. Throughout this thesis I have examined the way in which Moroccan identity in Montreal has been created through the celebration of the Mimouna and the foods consumed at this celebration. When thinking about the way in which the Mimouna works to create identity among Moroccan Jews in Montreal, I think that the ritual can be seen as a practice that allows members of this community to act out their Moroccan Jewish identity in the Montreal context. There are a variety of ways that the Mimouna allows Moroccan Jews to act out their identity. The most obvious of these is through the act of attending Mimouna celebrations and consuming the foods served at these events. I think that whether one is attending a private or a public Mimouna, both allow the attendee a key way to act out their Moroccan Jewish identity. Another way that the Mimouna allows one to demonstrate their Moroccan Jewish identity is through the organization of a Mimouna in one's home. Traditionally this would consist of preparing the food to be served throughout the night as well as arranging one's home to receive guests. Throughout the event itself, this would mean greeting guests as they enter the home, replenishing the Mimouna table and preparing foods such as mufleta that could not be started before the end of Passover. In this case it is usually women who will carry out these actions. Although there are still people who prepare the food being served at their Mimouna from scratch, many people are also beginning to purchase traditional Mimouna foods rather than making them. Even in this case, I think having the knowledge of what to serve and in turn what to purchase for the celebration, as well as knowing where to purchase these foods is another way to practice one's Moroccan identity.

The Mimouna as a way to maintain and reaffirm Moroccan Jewish Identity

Along with allowing Moroccan Jews living in Montreal to act out their identity as members of this community, the Mimouna also provides opportunities to maintain reaffirm as well as create a new kind of Moroccan Jewish identity. For those individuals who immigrated to Montreal from Morocco, the Mimouna works to maintain the identity that they brought with them to this new country of residence. Furthermore, for both those members of the community who immigrated to Montreal as well as for those who were born in Quebec and may have never been to Morocco, the Mimouna and the foods served at these celebrations function to reaffirm their identity as Canadian Moroccan Jews. The maintenance and reaffirmation of this identity happens through one's attendance of Mimouna celebrations as well as through the preparation and consumption of traditional Moroccan Jewish food at these celebrations. Attending Mimouna celebrations also allows for the creation of a new Canadian Jewish Moroccan identity. Through my research I noticed that a new identity was being formed through the inclusion of non-traditional foods that come from North American and Jewish North American culinary traditions. Throughout the interviews I conducted, my interviewees mentioned examples of such foods. Jacob explained that he had witnessed sushi being served at a Mimouna he attended in Montreal. This is a food, which has become extremely popular among a large spectrum of the North American Jewish community and is something, which members of the Jewish community will go out to eat at restaurants as well as serve at a variety of celebrations, the Mimouna being one example.[261] Another example is the inclusion of a

[261] A discussion of the popularity of sushi among the North American Jewish community can be found in the following article: Miryam Rotkovitz, "Kashering the Melting Pot: Oreos, Sushi Restaurants, "Kosher

cheese plate on the Mimouna table of my interviewee Sarah, which she explained as a way to be accommodating to those guests who did not want to eat the sweet foods that are traditionally served at the celebration. Finally, interviewee Deborah explained that she had come across party sandwiches as well as lox and baguette served at Mimouna celebrations. Through the inclusion of these non-traditional foods Moroccan Jews are creating a new identity for themselves that could have only developed within the North American context.

A Changing Celebration of the Mimouna

Related to the inclusion of non-traditional foods at Mimouna celebrations, which are generally of the savory variety, Moroccan Jews in Montreal are also expanding the way the Mimouna is celebrated. As discussed in chapter two, when the Mimouna was celebrated in Morocco people would visit a variety of homes throughout the night, stopping at each one for a short period of time. From the descriptions I read, a table of sweets and symbolic foods would be laid out for the celebrations. From this it can be assumed that when visiting a home and partaking of the food being served, one would eat a small amount since they would also be going to other homes where they would again be served more food. On the other hand, perhaps non-traditional savory foods are being served alongside the sweet foods of the Mimouna due of the fact that on the night of the Mimouna in Montreal people are visiting a smaller number of homes than they did in Morocco and staying at each home for a longer period of time. This change has likely

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Treif," and the Observant American Jew," in *Culinary Tourism*, ed. Lucy M. Long (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2004), 174-176.

happened because members of the community live further away from each other than they did in Morocco where for the most part they were living side by side in the Jewish quarters of cities. This makes it so that visitors will stay at the homes that they do visit for a longer period of time, which may lead the host to feel that they are required to serve more food. Furthermore, because this celebration happens soon after the end of Passover there may have arisen the need or the desire to feed visitors something that is more akin to a meal, in North America terms, rather than simply dishes which would fall into the category of dessert.

Through my discussions with my interviewees concerning the Mimouna as well as through my research on the subject, I have come to perceive that there exists a more homogenous picture of the Mimouna in Montreal with less focus on the regional diversity of the foods served at this celebration. Throughout the interviews I conducted, it came to be seen that families from different cities or towns in Morocco would have different food traditions for the Mimouna. For example, interviewees Esther explained that her family prepared zaban for their Mimouna celebrations and that she did not taste mufleta before coming to Montreal. As well, Sarah explained that she and her husband had different food traditions for the Mimouna, so that her family would serve sweet couscous and his family would serve mufleta. Ultimately, they chose to serve both of these dishes at their own celebrations. However, despite the variety of dishes that can be prepared on this night, among the Moroccan Jewish community of Montreal, mufleta has become the quintessential dish of this celebration and the one that is most readily associated with this celebration. Two of my interviewees, namely Rachel and Miriam, explained that Mimouna celebrations would not be complete without this dish. While another

interviewee explained that the Mimouna was the only place that he could eat mufleta. If it was served at other celebrations it simply did not taste as good. These comments show the important link that exists between this celebration and this dish. The popularity of mufleta was also evident at the public Mimouna being held at the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue. At this event people in attendance were served a variety of dishes including cookies, dried fruits and nuts as well as sweet couscous dishes. Although, the last dish to be served was the mufleta which was received the most enthusiastically by those around me and whose position as the most valued dish of the night.

I think the reason that mufleta has come to be the quintessential Mimouna dish is due to the central role that wheat plays in the diet of many North Americans. Although many foods are deemed *chametz* during Passover, the foods that people seem to miss eating the most during the eight days of the holiday is bread and other foods that combine yeast and wheat, which in turn creates the desire to eat them as soon as possible after the holiday is over. Popular dishes eaten at the conclusion of Passover among the Jewish North American community include pizza, pasta and bagels. Among dishes that are traditionally prepared for the Mimouna, mufleta is the one that is most similar to the aforementioned North American dishes consumed when breaking Passover. The Moroccan Jewish community in Montreal is now beginning to be made of more members who have been born and raised in North America as opposed to Morocco. Thus, these members of the community have been socialized within North American culture and adopted a variety of its social norms, such as a diet in which wheat based foods have become staples. This in turn may have lead to the rise in a preference for mufleta.

The Mimouna and the Social Network of the Moroccan Jewish Community

An important function of the Mimouna in Montreal is that it works to keep the social network of Moroccan Jews living in this city connected. The Mimouna has become a time that allows those attending the celebrations to connect with others that they may only see at these celebrations. Interviewee Rachel explained that her parents placed much importance on attending the Mimouna because it allowed them to see people that they did not see at any other point throughout the year. Similarly, interviewee Jacob said that it was a time to catch up on what was going on in the lives of family and friends. Along with this, Mimouna celebrations also allow the different generations of the community to come together and in some cases pass on knowledge about Jewish Moroccan culture, something which further strengthens the social network of the community. For example, interviewee Rachel recalled going to her grandmother's Mimouna earlier than other guest in order to help prepare for the festivities.[262]

Furthermore, the Mimouna works to determine a family's social circle. This is similar to the function of *shaloch manot* as discussed by Norma Joseph in her article entitled *Food gifts – female givers: A taste of Jewishness*. Through this article Joseph puts forward that food gifts, known as *shaloch manot*, which are given to family and friends during Purim constructs a family's social circle.[263] She says, "On Purim, women – usually married women with young children – decide what to give, how much to give, and most importantly to whom to give. They spend a great deal of time preparing and

[262] Rachel, personal interview, August 31, 2010.
[263] Norma Joseph, "Food gifts – female givers: A taste of Jewishness," in *Women and the Gift: Beyond the Given and All-Giving*, ed. Morny Joy (Indiana: Indiana University Press, forthcoming).

choosing and in the process circumscribe their family's social circle."[264] Similarly, through the action of choosing who to invite to their Mimouna celebrations Moroccan Jewish families define their own social circle for the upcoming year.

Another important aspect of the Mimouna celebrations that take place in Montreal is that it has become an occasion that can bring together members of the Moroccan and Ashkenazi in an environment that allows them to socialize and learn about each other, in spite of the tensions that have existed between the two communities. This mirrors the interactions that took place between Jews and their Muslim neighbors in Morocco during Mimouna celebrations. Muslim neighbors would often bring Jews gifts of food prior to the Mimouna and in turn Muslims would be invited to their Mimouna celebrations. Thus, it can be see that the Mimouna celebrations have maintained their social function as a time to bring together Moroccan Jews with people outside their own community. This function continued to be present among the Montreal Moroccan community shortly after they settled in Quebec as documented in an article in *La Voix Sépharade* which explains that Ashkenazi Jews were invited to Mimouna celebrations in order to bring the two communities together.[265]

The Mimouna and its Continued Research

The research for this thesis has examined an area that had not been previously looked at by other academics and it has proven to be a rich area of inquiry in which there

[264] Ibid.

[265] Barbara Berger, "Les Ashkénazes invités chez les Sépharades pour la Mimouna," *La Voix Sépharade* 14.2 (1983): 31.

is much more to study. In order to get a more complete picture of the Mimouna as it is celebrated in Montreal it would be interesting to speak to the younger generation of Moroccan Jews who most likely have only encountered this celebration in Montreal in order to understand how they relate to this holiday, whether attending Mimouna celebrations serves to reaffirm their identity as Moroccan Jews and whether they intend to host their own Mimouna celebrations in the future. As more people are attending public Mimounas it would be worthwhile to speak to the organizers of these events in order to understand why they chose to organize these celebrations. It would also be interesting to speak to people who are attending these events and how they perceive this new kind of Mimouna celebration. With some people choosing to order food for their Mimouna celebrations, speaking to a caterer who supplies the Moroccan Jewish community would also work to provide researchers with an understanding of the way in which this influences the food traditions of the Mimouna. Although I mentioned that Ashkenazi Jews have been invited to attend Mimounas in Montreal, it was not within the scope of my research project to speak to those members of this community who have attended these celebrations. However, it would be interesting to understand their experience of this celebration that is not found within their own community.

On a larger scale, it would be important to carry out similar research concerning the Mimouna in France. I have not come across any academic research concerning the celebration of this ritual in France. Furthermore, as explained through Rachel Sharaby's work concerning the Mimouna in Israel has developed into something akin to a national holiday that is not only celebrated by Moroccan but by non-Moroccan Israelis as well. To that end, much of the focus concerning its celebration in Israel centers on these large

celebrations that happen on the days after the Mimouna celebrations that take place on the last night of Passover. It would be interesting to research they way in which the private Mimouna celebrations taking place once Passover ends in order to understand how these celebrations have developed in Israel. Do the foods served at these celebrations differ from those being served at celebrations in Montreal or are they similar. Are people purchasing foods or are they largely making them from scratch? Finally, although only a small number of Jews still live in Morocco, it would be interesting to see how Mimouna celebrations have developed there. What changes has this ritual undergone after much of the community left the country and how has it remained the same? What does this celebration mean to those Jews who decided to stay in Morocco?

The Mimouna is a ritual whose celebration has evolved in the process of being brought from Morocco to Montreal. Although there are elements of this celebration that have remained constant, there have been various changes in its celebration that have been brought about by the new environment that the ritual now finds itself in. Despite these changes the Mimouna remains an important identity marker for Moroccan Jews and the food served at this celebration is a signifier of a changed Moroccan Jewish identity that has developed in Montreal. A variety of experiences and expressions of the Mimouna exist within the Moroccan Jewish community, both within Montreal and elsewhere, and mapping these out is an ongoing project.

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Appendix A - English Interview Questions

Demographic/ Introduction Questions

- What is your favourite food and why?
- Do you keep Kosher?
- What kind of community did you grow up in and did that change in adulthood?
- Are you involved with groups within the Jewish community? How? Examples?
- Is being Jewish a strong part of your identity?
- How did you, if at all, learn to cook?

Questions concerning holidays

- What holidays on the Jewish calendar do you observe?
- What holiday do you enjoy the most and why?
- Do you enjoy the celebration of the Mimouna? Why or why not?

Questions concerning the Mimouna

- Has the Mimouna always been a part of your Passover celebrations?
- Where have you attended a Mimouna?
- Can you describe a typical Mimouna?
- Can you tell me about the Mimouna as it was celebrated in Morocco? How do you know that, did someone tell you, did you experience it etc.?
- Can you tell me about the Mimouna as it is celebrated in Montreal?
- What are the similarities and differences between the celebration of the Mimouna in Morocco and Canada?

- How has the celebration of the Mimouna changed? Why do you think these changes have come about?

- What foods are served at the Mimouna?

- Are there certain foods that you connect with the Mimouna? Has this food always been something that defines the Mimouna for you? Why do you think that this food has come to be connected to this holiday?

- Have the foods being served at the Mimouna changed?

- When you were younger did your mom or your grandmother prepare the Mimouna?

- Have you prepared a Mimouna?

- Where did you learn to cook the foods served at the Mimouna?

- Do you prepare the Mimouna alone or with others?

- Do you feel that the Mimouna enhances the celebration of Passover or does it make it harder?

- Do you think that the Mimouna serves as a bridge between the end of Passover and the time afterwards?

Appendix B - French Interview Questions

Demographic/ Introduction Questions

- Quelle ailments ou plats preferez-vous et pourquoi?
- Est-ce que vous manger cachere?
- Dans quelle communaute avez-vous grandi et devenue adulte? Et ce que ceci a changer quand vous etes devenue adulte?
- Est ce que vous etes impliquer avec des groupes dans la communaute juifs? Si oui, de quelle facon? Est ce que vous pouvez me donner des examples?
- Est ce que etre juive/juif forme une grande partie de votre identite?
- Comment avez vous appris a cuisiner?

Questions concerning holidays

- Quelles fetes du calendrier juif observez vous?
- Quelle fete aimez-vous le plus et pour quel raison?
- Est ce que vous aimez la celebration du Mimouna? Pourquoi ou pourquoi pas?

Questions concerning the Mimouna

- Est ce que la celebration du Mimouna a toujours fait parti de votre celebration de la paque juive?
- Ou avez vous celebrer la Mimouna?
- Est ce que vous pouvez me d'ecrire comment une Mimouna typique est feter?
- Est ce que vous pouvez me dire comment la Mimouna est feter au Maroc? Comment le savez vous? Est ce que quelqu'un vous a decrit ceci, ou est ce que vous avez vu ceci vous meme, etc?
- Est ce que vous pouvez me d'ecrire comment la Mimouna est feter ici a Montreal?

- Quelles sont les similarites et les differences entre les Mimouna qui sont feter au Maroc et au Canada?

- De quelle facon est ce que la celebration du Mimouna a changer? Pour quelles raisons pensez-vous que ses changements sont arrivez?

- Quelles plats sont servi au Mimouna?

- Est ce qu'il y a certains plats qui sont lies a la fete du Mimouna pour vous? Est ce que ces plats on toujours ete lies a la fete du Mimouna pour vous? Pourquoi pensez vous que ces plats sont lies a la fete du Mimouna?

- Est que les plats servi au Mimouna on changer?

- Quand vous etiez jeune est ce que votre mere ou votre grandmere preparait la Mimouna?

- Est ce que vous avez déjà preparez une Mimouna?

- Ou avez vous appris a prepare les plats servi a la Mimouna?

- Est ce que vous prepaprez la Mimouna toute seule ou avec d'autre personnes?

- Est ce que vous pensez que la fete du Mimouna est une addition positive a la paque juive ou est ce que la Mimouna rend la fete de la paque juive plus difficile?

- Est ce que vous pensez que la fete de la Mimouna fonctionne comme un lien entre la fin de la paque juive et le temps après?

Appendix C – Consent Form

Consent to Participate in Passover Food in the Moroccan Jewish Community of Montreal

This is to state that I agree to participate in a program of research being conducted by Katherine Romanow of the Religious Studies Department of Concordia University, who can be contacted at ksromanow@gmail.com or 514-238-2283.

A. Purpose

I have been informed that the purpose of the research is to inquire into Passover food traditions held by members of the Moroccan Jewish community in Montreal.

B. Procedure

The research will be conducted in my home and at the location appropriate for discussing and examining the rituals and foods of Passover. I understand that I will be interviewed and/or observed for the information concerning my relationship to and attitudes towards the rituals and foods of Passover. I am aware that the time taken for the interview will be between 1-2 hours and any time taken for observation will be based on the extent of my participation.

C. Conditions of Participation

- I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without negative consequences.

- I understand that my participation in this study is:

  __Confidential (the researcher will know my identity, but not disclose it)

  __Non-Confidential (my identity will be revealed in the results of the study)

- I understand that the data from this study may become part of a future thesis and may be published.

- I understand the purpose of this study and know that there is no hidden motive of which I have not been informed.

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

NAME (please print) _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____