

Tourism, Charity, and Profit: The Movement of Money in Moroccan Jewish Pilgrimage

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Prologue

In 1986, the Council of the Jewish Communities of Morocco (CJCM) organized a “national” Jewish pilgrimage to the shrine of Rebbi Yahia Lakhadar. The event corresponded with celebrations that are held during the springtime Jewish festival known as Lag b’Omer when the death of Rebbi Shimon Bar Yohai is commemorated. Although Rebbi Shimon Bar Yohai lived, died, and was buried in the Holy Land, annual pilgrimages in his honor are directed towards the tombs of several Moroccan saints.¹ Partly in recognition of the centralization of Morocco’s remaining Jewish population in urban areas, the shrine selected for the national pilgrimage in 1986 was located near the village of Ben Ahmed, an hour’s drive from the country’s largest city, Casablanca.

The CJCM also promoted the pilgrimage as part of an eight-day “tourist circuit” developed to attract Jews from the Moroccan diaspora. Through a network of ethnic associations, the CJCM sent glossy brochures written in French to émigrés in France, Canada, and Israel. Recipients of the brochure were addressed as follows:

If your employment and your means permit. . . . If you are enchanted by Jewish events, especially those celebrated by a warm, authentic, and Mediterranean community. . . . If your origins are Moroccan or if your parents or grandparents lived in Morocco. . . . If a blue sky, picturesque countryside, the colors of true nature, and spontaneous hospitality tempt you, don’t hesitate! Come celebrate the pilgrimage in honor of Rebbi Shimon Bar Yohai. The tourist circuit associated with these events will reintroduce you to, or acquaint you with, the Rif and the Atlas [mountain ranges], the imperial cities rich with history, ancient and modern Morocco where for nearly two thousand years our community has existed and produced many eminent rabbis.

Scanning the brochure, potential pilgrims would find the evocative imagery of the text reproduced in the accompanying photographs that exploit a visual vocabulary drawn from the Moroccan tourist industry. Beyond the cover of the

brochure, on which a picture of an elaborate tomb is featured, color photographs of the High Atlas Mountains, medieval urban architecture, and traditional Moroccan tile work depict a vacation destination as much as a pilgrimage itinerary. The tourist circuit would combine leisurely travel through picturesque Morocco with visits to the shrines of four other saints. Prospective pilgrims are assured that hotel accommodations, travel within the country, and dining arrangements are included in the package.

The final two pages of the brochure include photographs of Rebbi Yahia Lakhadar's shrine complex, a short biography of the saint, and an icon of Rebbi Shimon Bar Yohai. In the text, the local saint emerges as a man of great faith, religious knowledge, and divine spirit. His capacity to perform miracles and grant divine favor—the very power that continues to draw many pilgrims today—is conspicuously ignored in the advertisement. The saint is rendered, like Morocco itself, as a nostalgic attraction easily accessible in an age of mass transportation. Potential pilgrims are hailed: "If, like us, you consider it necessary to perpetuate the memory of the venerated masters of Judaism, take the airplane; it's so easy, fast, and pleasant."

The pilgrimage to the shrine of Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan peaks with the auction of candles sold in the name of saints. Speaking in Moroccan Judeo-Arabic, the auctioneer draws the crowd into the evening's activities:

This night, how many people wait for it?
 And how many people across the world suffer just to attend this time of faith?
 On this night we must make a festive occasion and be happy!
 This is a great night!
 We must sit and be happy and sing!
 And the *zekhut* [power] of the saint?
 Those who came for something, he will achieve it for them. Amen!
 He removes from you bad things. Amen!
 He removes that which has gone bad for you, and illness!
 He gives you health! Amen!
 Rebbi Amram! You know his great and wondrous deeds! Amen!
 And whoever came for something, Rebbi Amram and God make it happen for them.
 Amen!

As the bidding for the first candle proceeds, tensions mount. The auctioneer displays his skills at diffusing antagonism while provoking competition. He explains that the money collected through the auction is considered charity to be used for the benefit of the shrine and the community it serves. Following the auctioneer's lead, the congregation joins in rounds of song that emphasize communal sentiment:

May his [the saint's] power be with us.
 With us and Israel, our brothers.
 Praise the Lord for He is good.

But the auctioneer also encourages bidding by emphasizing the value of money given by each individual:

I remind you that what each of you has given,
That is what the saint owes you.

As the bidding on the most expensive candles reaches a climax, and as raises are slower to come, an excited silence comes over the crowd. After the last call is made, the winner humbly accepts his candle and returns to his seat while pilgrims talk of his deed and the price paid. Too much talk, however, is garish. There is an ideal that charity be given anonymously, so the reputation of bidders is established quietly; yet not so quietly as to prevent even a newcomer like myself from quickly learning who to watch at candle auctions.

Introduction

The recent transformation of communal pilgrimages to the shrines of Moroccan Jewish saints, events known as *hillulot* (sing. *hillulah*),² into transnational tourist attractions has highlighted a divide between two relatively autonomous spheres of exchange. One is determined by the tourist economy of pilgrimage; the other is established in the ritual economy of pilgrimage. Each form of exchange, in turn, is associated with different categories of money: expenditures (Fr. *dépenses*) in the first case and charity (Judeo-Arabic *sedaqa*) in the second. Although in practice these spheres of exchange and categories of money bleed into each other, since the late 1970s the transnational tourist economy of pilgrimage has assumed heightened importance as airfare, rental cars, and hotel rooms have been increasingly figured into the budgets of pilgrims, many of whom have emigrated from Morocco.

The transformation of pilgrimages into transnational tourist attractions represents one obvious point of articulation between the global economy and local ritual practices.³ This articulation has been recognized by both the Moroccan State and the resident Jewish community who have combined efforts in the promotion of Jewish pilgrimages as transnational events with a significant economic payoff. As illustrated by the advertisement introduced at the start of this article, the promotion of *hillulot* as tourist events has been predominantly directed at Moroccan Jewish émigrés living for the most part in France, Canada, and Israel.

The Moroccan Jewish diaspora and its embodiment in ephemerally constituted communities of pilgrims can be characterized as transnational because it is situated at the dynamic intersection between global displacement from a homeland and the construction of a deterritorialized community that, in demographic actuality and cultural imagination, transcends the confines of particular nation-states (cf. Appadurai 1991:193). Moroccan Jewish identity is intimately tied to nostalgic images of place, society, and country rooted in a North African national geography. As one might expect, these are precisely the images that are exploited in the Moroccan promotion of *hillulot*. Rather than motivating a

nationalist desire to repatriate to a Moroccan homeland, however, such nostalgic images have been implicated in the emergence of a transnational Moroccan Jewish identity that self-consciously transcends international borders.⁴ "Moroccan," in this context, refers less to national or cartographic boundaries than to forms of mobile identity and globalized community. Hillulot, in this context, are transnational not merely because they draw adherents from a variety of nation-states, but more significantly because the communities they create are affectively and symbolically constituted without necessary reference to the national boundaries that are crossed on pilgrimage.⁵

The commodification of hillulot as part of the Moroccan tourist economy has ironically relied on the transformation of Moroccan émigrés into tourists in their own homeland. Through this transformation, the money spent by tourist-pilgrims has become valued as an infusion of foreign currency into local Moroccan coffers and as a contribution to the national GNP. In the first half of this article, I trace the unapologetic economic and political exploitation of hillulot as tourist commodities. Such exploitation depends both on the vitality of transnational Moroccan Jewish identity, itself reliant on polyvalent expressions of nostalgia, and on the capacity of dispersed Moroccan Jews to serve as conduits for the repatriation of money, if not of people. In this regard, the transnationalization of hillulot refers also to the deterritorialization of the Moroccan Jewish communal treasury, which is popularly understood to be largely concentrated in the capitalist interests of the most successful entrepreneurs in the Moroccan Jewish diaspora.

If contemporary hillulot, commodified as attractions, mark a convergence of pilgrimage and tourism, they also situate capitalist profit within a ritual economy that has been erased from glossy promotions. Hillulot are sites of commodification, not only as the result of tactical marketing, but also through the practices by which pilgrimages emerge as events of sacred devotion, piety, and faith. Specifically, the transformation of pilgrimages into tourist events has not extinguished an alternative logic of exchange that persists in rituals of charity. Charity refers both to money given directly to poor pilgrims as well as to money given to saints and accepted by the managerial bodies of shrines. In the second half of this article, I demonstrate that charity money is valued according to practical ideologies of ritual exchange in ways that are not directly determined by the commodification of hillulot as tourist events. Nor, however, does pilgrimage charity represent a simple counterpoint to hierarchies of wealth, to self-interested exchange, or to capitalist profit. Rather, rituals of charity are constituted by performances of wealth and honor, relationships of self-interested calculation, and sacred strategies of interpreting and inviting capitalist profit in the transnational economy.

In focusing on charity as a form of self-interested exchange that can represent capitalist profit, my argument is in line with approaches to gift exchange as a competitive and economic practice (Appadurai 1986; Bourdieu 1970, 1977; Mauss 1990). The following account of Moroccan Jewish pilgrimage charity extends and articulates several critiques of facile oppositions between

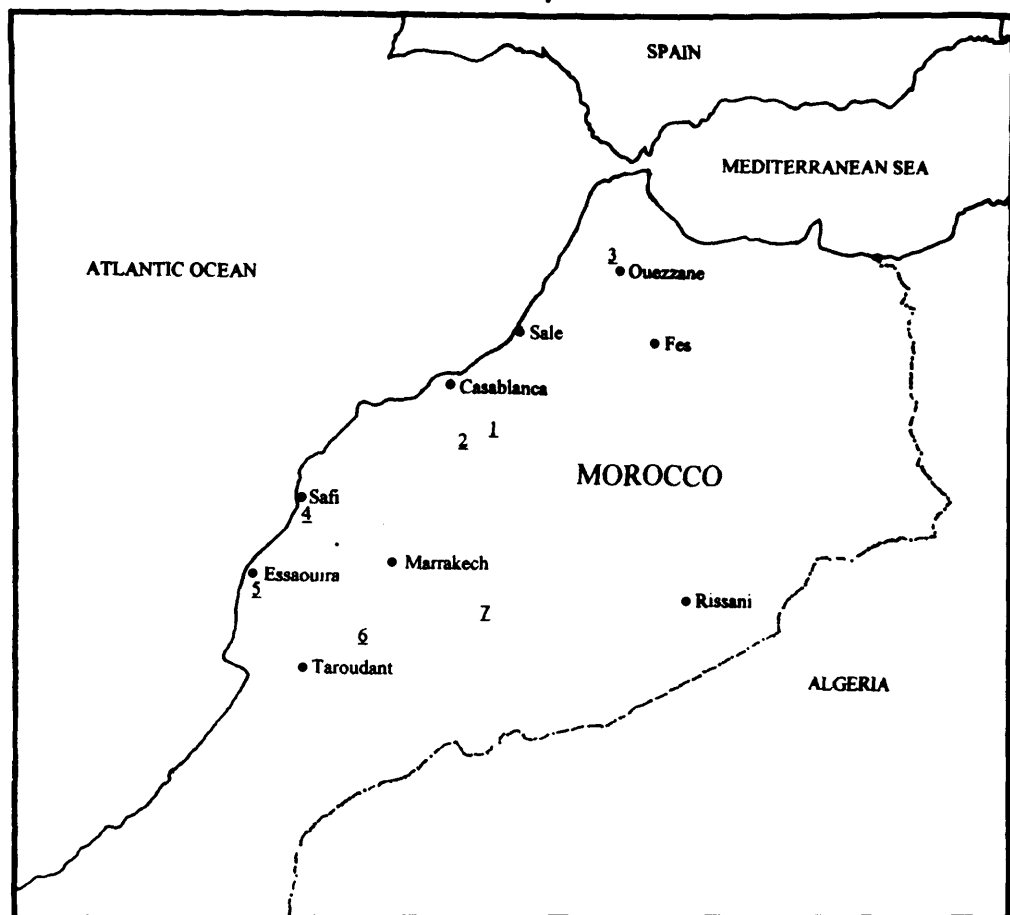
altruism and hierarchy, generosity and self-interest, charity and profit (Parry and Bloch 1989). While pilgrimages constitute intimate communities of fraternal pilgrims, hierarchies of wealth and honor are negotiated and performed in public rituals of charity (cf. Godelier 1999:13; Hermann 1997:992). In binary terms, charitable exchanges enact and reproduce a distinction between the wealthy and the poor. At a more discriminating level, epitomized by the public auction of candles, the wealthiest pilgrims compete among themselves for honor (Appadurai 1986; Bourdieu 1970, 1977).

All forms of pilgrimage charity, however, are also mediated by saints. Insofar as charitable giving constitutes a form of exchange between donors and saints, pilgrims who give at the shrines can expect divine recompense. Although this recompense may take a variety of forms (e.g., health, marriage, fertility, protection from harm, the return of lost items, and other favors commonly associated with saintly intercession [Hawley 1987]), the largest sums of money given are often expected to be returned in kind. For the wealthiest pilgrims, whose income derives from transnational manufacturing and commerce, money directed towards saints is renewed through the vicissitudes of the global market. Especially during the candle auction, profit is transformed into, and recognized as, saintly restitution.

Locating Pilgrimage Exchange

The ethnographic space of this article encompasses those shrines, seven in all, which support the largest transnational pilgrimages in Jewish Morocco (see Figure 1).⁶ Of the over two dozen annual hillulot celebrated today, approximately one quarter have remained or emerged as focal pilgrimages that attract a significant number of devotees from throughout Morocco and the Moroccan Jewish diaspora. Although a hillulah usually occurs on a designated date, devotees often remain at the shrine for several days. Although one date on the Jewish festival calendar (Lag b'Omer) commands pilgrimages to several shrines, major hillulot occur throughout the year. In this dynamic cycle of pilgrimages, the symbolic space of hillulot is not limited to a single event or shrine. Poems, songs, stories, and icons link various saints and shrines in unified narratives, interwoven miraculous plots, and pictorial montages in which multiple saints appear. Even though pilgrimages are directed to the shrines of particular saints, numerous holy men and holy places are integrated into most pilgrimage rituals.⁷

Evidence of Moroccan Jewish pilgrimage, and more broadly of the veneration of deceased holy men known as *saddiqim* (saints, sing. *saddiq*), extends back to at least the 18th century (Romanelli 1989).⁸ The growth of communal pilgrimages on the anniversary of a saint's death appears to have accelerated during the late 19th century and through the period of the French protectorate (1912–56).⁹ French colonial ethnographers observed Jewish pilgrimage predominantly as evidence of Jewish-Muslim mystical syncretism, which also incorporated vestiges of ancient Berber "paganism" (Voinot 1948). Colonial representations of Jewish pilgrimage emphasized the similarities between Muslim



Saint / Shrine	Location	Date / Season of Hillulah
1. Rebbi Yahia Lakhdar	Region of Ben Ahmed	Lag b'Omer / Spring
2. Rebbi Abraham Aouriouir	Region of Settata	Lag b'Omer / Spring
3. Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan	Region of Ouezzane	Lag b'Omer / Spring*
4. Ouled Ben Zmirou	Safi	August / Summer
5. Rebbi Haim Pinto	Essaouira	26 Elul / Fall
6. Rebbi David Ben Barukh	Region of Taroudant	3 Tevet / Winter
7. David U-Moshe	Agouim	1 Heshvan / Fall

Figure 1

*The hillulah of Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan is celebrated three times each year. Although the Pilgrimage on Lag b'Omer attracts the largest number of pilgrims, smaller celebrations are also held on 15 Ab (Summer) and 1 Elul (Fall).

and Jewish ideologies of saintly intercession and focused on the veneration of common saints by members of both faiths (e.g., Goulven 1927:91–98). For some Jewish modernist reformers, saint pilgrimage became an exemplar of those Moroccan superstitious practices that violated both Jewish orthodoxy and French modernity.¹⁰ For the most part, colonial period accounts of pilgrimage,

written by both French ethnographers and Moroccan-Jewish reformers, paid little attention to such material matters as money and exchange.

Charitable giving at pilgrimages was recognized by some colonial-era observers, but mostly as further proof of the irrationality of saint veneration. As the administration of the Jewish community of Morocco became increasingly centralized and bureaucratized during the colonial period (see Bensimon-Donath 1968), Jewish reformers hoped that rationalized mechanisms of philanthropy would replace previous forms of charitable redistribution (Abbou 1946). The poor at pilgrimages were represented as beggars who would be better served by money funneled through newly created social service institutions. Donors of charity were cast as superstitious dupes who believed that money given at shrines would lubricate any intercession sought from the saint.¹¹ Beyond these brief glosses, the economy of hillulot disappeared in colonial-era representations.

Postcolonial ethnography has likewise marginalized economic aspects of pilgrimage in Jewish Morocco. While patterns of charity and exchange have been explored by researchers of Moroccan Muslim pilgrimage (Crapanzano 1973; Eickelman 1976; Reysoo 1991), only limited attention has been paid to comparable Jewish practices (Ben-Ami 1998:93–102), despite a growing anthropological literature on saint veneration among North African Jews (e.g., Ben-Ami 1981; Bilu 1987; Bilu and Ben-Ari 1992; Deshen and Shokeid 1974; Goldberg 1990, 1992; Levy 1991, 1997; Myerhoff 1993; Stillman 1982; Weingrod 1990a, 1990b). Although this lacuna is consistent with colonial-era representations of pilgrimage, I think that the scant treatment of the material aspects of hillulot refers, at least in part, to the positive analytical concerns that have dominated the contemporary ethnography of Moroccan Jewish pilgrimage.¹² In general, these studies have emphasized the ways in which saint pilgrimages function in the politics of national and ethnic identity among Moroccan-Israelis. In contrast, I am interested with Moroccan hillulot as they emerge in the context of a transnational Jewish diaspora that takes Morocco, and not Israel, as its center.¹³ The transnational promotion of pilgrimages by the resident Moroccan Jewish community has relied on tropes of tourism and nostalgia for a North African homeland. I argue that these developments indicate an exploitation of the Moroccan Jewish diaspora in the context of broader Moroccan national strategies of inviting foreign capital into the country and increasing tourist revenues.

A second trend in the study of North African Jewish pilgrimage has been to follow Victor Turner (1974; Turner and Turner 1978) in focusing on *communitas* in the pilgrimage process. Hillulot, for example, have been observed as ritual episodes in which quotidian social hierarchies of gender, age, and wealth recede (Goldberg 1983, 1990; Weingrod 1990b). Other studies have highlighted the functions of saint pilgrimage in producing communal sentiment, cohesion, and identity among transplanted North African Jews (Cernea 1988; Deshen and Shokeid 1974; Weingrod 1990b). These authors argue convincingly that pilgrimages to the shrines of *saddiqim* in Israel and North America

have been instrumental in the transformation of immigrant collectives into ethnic communities.¹⁴ While a *communitas* approach to pilgrimage leads to certain insights, an equally serious attention to the social hierarchies enacted and reproduced at hillulot is due.¹⁵ Rituals of pilgrimage charity, which represent and rejuvenate hierarchies of honor and wealth, invite such attention.

Pilgrimage and Transnational Tourism

The emergence of national pilgrimages in the late 1970s and early 1980s corresponded with a more general renaissance of public Jewish activity in Morocco. From a population peak of nearly 300,000 in the first part of the 20th century, the Jewish community of Morocco had declined to less than 30,000 by the 1970s. During this period, the vast majority of Moroccan Jews emigrated to Israel (Bensimon 1980), with significant numbers also relocating to France and Canada (Lasry and Tapia 1989). By the mid-1990s, less than 10,000 Jews remained in Morocco, with no city outside Casablanca retaining a Jewish community numbering more than a few hundred.¹⁶

During several decades of Jewish uncertainty and emigration that followed Moroccan independence in 1956 and in a regional climate of Arab nationalism, hillulot dwindled in number and size. Jewish pilgrimages were revitalized as transnational events partly as a consequence of the renewed confidence with which the CJCM, based in Casablanca, reasserted itself as the central administrative body of the Jewish community.¹⁷ As part of this reawakening, the CJCM became instrumental in managing shrine revenues and promoting hillulot in Morocco and abroad. In the colonial era, several short-lived attempts had been made to centralize the administration of hillulot (Ben-Ami 1998:125–130), but only since 1979 have all pilgrimages been continuously organized under the formal authority of the CJCM.¹⁸ In the early 1980s, the CJCM began producing brochures for international distribution and continued to do so through the mid-1990s.

Beyond newly emergent national pilgrimages, such as the one to Rebbi Yahia Lakhadar, previously well-established hillulot situated throughout the country have been transformed from local and regional pilgrimages into national and transnational ones. During the colonial period, for example, the hillulah at the shrine of Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan attracted up to 15,000 pilgrims (*Union Marocaine* 1932:1). The tombs of Rebbi David Ben Barukh and Rebbi Haim Pinto were also significant regional pilgrimage sites administered by members of the respective saints' lineages and their associates. In contrast, the shrine of Ouled Ben Zmirou in Safi has not had a continuous tradition of large-scale pilgrimage during the 20th century. In the early 1990s, after years of relative abandonment, a wealthy contractor from Casablanca spearheaded efforts to reconstruct the shrine and revive the hillulah. It has been through a combination of initiatives by the CJCM, shrine committees, saintly lineages, and motivated individuals that certain sites have emerged as transnational pilgrimage destinations. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, when concerted efforts to revitalize shrines were initiated, the hillulot of Yahia Lakhadar, Amram Ben Diwan,

and David Ben Barukh were attracting over 1,000 pilgrims, with several hundred of them coming from the Moroccan Jewish diaspora (*Le Matin du Sahara et du Maghreb* 1979, 1980, 1986a). The major hillulot I attended between 1995 and 1997 regularly attracted several hundred pilgrims, a significant number of them coming from abroad.¹⁹

In order to attract pilgrims, the CJCM and shrine committees have relied upon networks of ethnic community organizations throughout the Moroccan Jewish diaspora.²⁰ In 1996, for example, brochures advertising the hillulah of Ouled Ben Zmirou were sent to France, Canada, the United States, and Israel. Potential pilgrims outside Morocco were able to obtain information and make reservations for travel and hotel accommodations from local committees devoted to supporting the shrine and its pilgrimage. The pilgrimage to honor Rebbi Haim Pinto is embedded in a different kind of transnational network. The shrine, located in the coastal city of Essaouira, is dedicated to the patriarch of a saintly lineage whose living descendent is considered by some to be a holy figure himself. The current bearer of the saintly mantle, Rebbi David Pinto, has built a transnational organization, Hevrat Pinto, comprised of a network of religious schools and institutions catering predominantly to North African Jews in such places as Paris, Los Angeles, Ashdod (Israel), and Montreal. Hevrat Pinto is also involved in the administration and promotion of the hillulah in Essaouira. The attendance of Rebbi David Pinto, a resident of France, at the hillulah is a major attraction that draws pilgrims from throughout the Moroccan Jewish diaspora.

The promotion of hillulot by Moroccan Jewish organizations such as the CJCM and Hevrat Pinto illustrate the most structured channels through which pilgrimages have become transnationalized. At one level, this development has been a response to the demographic transformation of Moroccan Jewry into a diasporic population. At another level, however, the transnationalization of hillulot corresponds with developments in Moroccan diplomacy and economy that have made the growth of Jewish and, more recently, Israeli tourism in the country both possible and desirable.

Pilgrimage, Nostalgia, and Jewish Tourism

The revitalization of hillulot in the late 1970s dovetailed with increased attention, by both the Moroccan government and the resident Jewish community, to the potential of Jewish tourism in Morocco. Beginning in the 1980s, as tourism grew as an important sphere of the national economy and the Moroccan government began a rapprochement with Israel (see Tessler 1988), Moroccan Jewish émigrés started visiting their country of origin in increasing numbers. Since Moroccan independence, Moroccan Jews living in Europe and North America have been granted entry visas to their native country. The vast majority of Moroccan Jewish émigrés live in Israel, however, and only with the political warming between Morocco and Israel over the past two decades has travel between the two countries become relatively unencumbered. During the

mid-1990s, with the establishment of formal diplomatic ties with Israel, Morocco opened its doors to Israeli tourists.²¹

The Moroccan Ministry of Tourism has not ignored the growing pool of Moroccan Jewish émigrés as potential tourists. Hillulot, in particular, have been recognized as gateway attractions that represent the goal of expanded Jewish tourism in Morocco. As early as 1986, the Moroccan minister of tourism held an official reception for a delegation of Moroccan Jewish pilgrims who had returned from Paris for the hillulah of Rebbi Yahia Lakhadar (*Le Matin du Sahara et du Maghreb* 1986b). By 1993, a Moroccan Jewish businessman, Serge Berdugo, had become the Moroccan minister of tourism. Not since the first postcolonial government in 1956 had there been a Jewish ministerial appointment in Morocco.²² Berdugo's nomination confirmed the importance of the Jewish diaspora in Morocco's tourist economy. Berdugo, in fact, was also secretary general of a transnational organization, the Global Assembly of Moroccan Judaism (GAMJ). According to its constitution, the GAMJ advances the goal of assuring "the permanence of a historical, religious, and cultural Judeo-Moroccan heritage in Morocco," while also maintaining and developing "sentiments of attachment and solidarity towards Morocco from all the Jewish communities throughout the world." Given this organizational affiliation, Berdugo's appointment registered a tacit recognition that the nostalgia cultivated by the GAMJ could be exploited for the benefit of Morocco's growing tourist industry.

That hillulot provide a crucial object of Moroccan Jewish nostalgia was recognized by the GAMJ in its earliest efforts. In 1986, two years after its creation, the GAMJ compiled a brochure that paraded Moroccan press coverage of the national hillulah at Ben Ahmed. As illustrated by the promotional materials distributed for that hillulah (as described in the prologue), the organizers of hillulot have also recognized and cultivated nostalgia as a motivational force behind individual decisions to return to Morocco on pilgrimage. Such nostalgia, to be sure, is not merely manufactured by the ministry of tourism nor is it entirely fabricated through strategic advertising. Pilgrimages and shrines are situated at the intersection of several practical ideologies that attract Moroccan Jews to their natal homeland.

Many pilgrims, for example, value personal and biographical relationships that attach them to specific saints. One man I met at the hillulah of R. David Ben Barukh had returned from Montreal in order to reconnect with the saint to whom his mother had prayed for a successful pregnancy and after whom he had been named. Pilgrims who return to Morocco in order to acknowledge their indebtedness to saints manifest nostalgia for shrines from which they feel themselves distanced. The identity between saints and shrines, upon which such pilgrimage nostalgia rests, is registered in the linguistic practice of referring to shrines by the names of saints (e.g., "I am making pilgrimage to [the shrine of] R. David Ben Barukh"). Shrines are also situated in the context of place-based nostalgia that refers to sentimental attachments to the land (*Ar. bled*). Pilgrims raised in the vicinity of specific shrines, for example, return

with their families so that foreign-raised children and grandchildren can experience an ancestral landscape. Returning pilgrims often range beyond the confines of the shrine complex to visit natal villages, walk the surrounding countryside, or meander through once familiar city streets and reminisce with locals who have remained. At the hillulah of R. David Ben Barukh, one elderly woman, who split her time between Paris and Casablanca, led a family trek to her natal village, located some two kilometers from the shrine. She found the house in which she was born, spoke with local Muslims about past acquaintances, and insisted that her grandchildren (themselves residents of Paris) drink from the spring that runs through the village.

Such nostalgia for natal and ancestral territory conforms with pervasive sentiments of Moroccan identity that extend beyond the Jewish population (cf. Geertz et al. 1979:7). Pilgrimage nostalgia is partly an expression of more general Moroccan modes of local identity that have been shaken, and subsequently reinforced, by the disruptions of emigration. The promotional brochure for the national hillulah in 1986, as excerpted at the beginning of this article, is pitched towards, and consequently contributes to, the creation of such territorial nostalgia. The imagery of "a blue sky, picturesque countryside, the colors of true nature, and social hospitality" invoked by the brochure captures the same litany of nostalgic longings that returning pilgrims express for the geographic, climatic, and social landscape of their ancestral homeland. If such nostalgia is rooted in Moroccan identification with natal territory, it is elaborated in relationship to the contrasting environments of transnational and urban dislocation. I heard pilgrims, for example, speak of dreary Parisian skies, snowy Montreal winters, and the anonymity of Israeli urban life as counterpoints to the life which was left behind in Morocco.

The desire of pilgrims to reconnect with saints and vicinities reflects a dialectic between sentimental attachment and the experience of dislocation. While such forms of nostalgia may be implicated in the motivations of Moroccan Jewish pilgrims returning from abroad, they are equally salient for resident Moroccan Jews, the vast majority of whom no longer live in their ancestral territories. Casablanca, no less than Washington, D.C., or Tel Aviv, serves as a crucible for urbanized Moroccan Jews who trace their roots to elsewhere in the Moroccan hinterland. The transnational parameters of hillulot, however, also introduce new dimensions of nostalgia in which a Moroccan homeland emerges as an object of sacred longing. As a Jewish practice, transnational hillulot indexes a nostalgia born of exile (Heb. *galut*) from a national homeland in Israel. A sacred model of dispersion and nostalgia, in which the land of Israel serves as the center of a universal Jewish diaspora, is elaborated in canonical Jewish ideology and expressed in Moroccan synagogue and festival liturgy. While the ritualized longing to return to a homeland (in Israel) fostered Moroccan emigration in the 20th century (Malka 1978), it also provides a sanctifying diagram of contemporary migration from a homeland (in Morocco). The substitution of Morocco for Israel as a sacred Jewish homeland at the center of a global diaspora is accomplished in a range of discourses and practices, including

those of saint pilgrimage. I heard pilgrims, for example, compare hillulot with the biblical pilgrimages (Heb. *regalim*) to the Temple in Jerusalem. The status of Rabbi Shimon B. Yohai as the object of hillulot at Moroccan shrines further conflates Moroccan pilgrimage destinations with the saint's actual shrine in the Holy Land.

The sentimental force of nostalgia for a Moroccan homeland thus draws ideological power from universal Jewish familiarity with tropes of diaspora, homeland, and return. That pilgrimages and shrines are central sites in the transposition of classical Jewish longings for Israel into more parochial—though still sacred—Jewish nostalgia for Morocco, is recognized and reinforced in the 1986 hillulah brochure. The characterization of Morocco as a place “where for nearly two thousand years our community has existed and produced many eminent rabbis,” is telling in this regard. For Moroccan Jews, the same two thousand years also refers to the duration of a Jewish diaspora that began with destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the beginning of the Common Era. As I was informed on pilgrimage and elsewhere, the destruction of the Second Temple marked the end of Jewish cultic sovereignty and national presence in Palestine as well as the beginning of Jewish history in Morocco. That Morocco would take the place of Palestine as the center of Jewish sacred life during the ensuing period is suggested in the brochure's reference to Morocco's “many eminent rabbis.” This final claim indexes direct comparisons between Moroccan rabbinic (cum hagiographic) personalities and those who lived and died in the Holy Land. Moroccan hagiographic rabbis, in short, are often identified biographically as emissaries from Palestine and as the equals or betters of their contemporaries in the Holy Land. The language of the hillulah brochure thus exploits and establishes a nexus of signifiers (e.g., “two thousand years,” “eminent rabbis”) that effect the transposition of Jewish nostalgia for a Palestinian homeland into longing for a Moroccan one.

If Moroccan Jewish nostalgia is continuous with pervasive modalities of Moroccan identity and Jewish exile, such nostalgia has also been mediated by the concrete experiences and social conditions of 20th-century emigration. Given the multiplicity of destinations and the heterogeneity of emigrant experiences, the trauma of dislocation felt by Moroccan Jews in their adopted countries cannot be reduced to a general formula. As Oriental Jews in Israel, North African migrants in France, and francophone constituents of a historically Anglophone Jewish community in Montreal, diasporic Moroccan Jews have variously, though consistently, found themselves marginalized from the nested Jewish and national communities which they have entered.²³ From this perspective, the Moroccan past need not represent a trouble-free paradise in order to evoke a nostalgia for something that is absent in the present. If Moroccans remember the social, economic, and political circumstances of their Moroccan past with ambivalence (cf. Bilu and Levy 1996), they also return “home” in order to selectively recall a social order in which Jews experienced a degree of protection, autonomy, amicability, and even respect within Moroccan society.

Pilgrimage magnifies many of the features of Jewish life that are idealized in Moroccan Jewish memory. Hillulot are exclusively Jewish events from which ordinary Muslims are almost entirely excluded. That exclusivity, moreover, is enforced by the visible presence of the national soldiers who are regularly assigned by the Moroccan government to police the boundaries of shrines during pilgrimages. Far from representing the oppressive presence of a police state, national soldiers are generally welcomed by pilgrims as evidence that the Jewish community remains a protected minority, an integral constituent of the Moroccan national patrimony, and an affectionately regarded beneficiary of the King's munificent consideration. The formal visits of crown delegations, during which government officials and community representatives exchange pledges of protection and loyalty, attachment and affection, enact an idealized Moroccan sociopolitical order in which Jews can be confident of their secure position.

Conversely, pilgrims simultaneously recall the sociopolitical status of Jews in the Moroccan past as characterized by subjugation, humiliation, and disenfranchisement in the sequential contexts of the precolonial Sultanic regime (pre-1912), the French colonial protectorate (1912–56), and the postcolonial kingdom (post-1956). Pilgrimage nostalgia is not characterized by an unmitigated glorification of Jewish life in the Moroccan past. Moroccan Jews, it is worth emphasizing, are increasingly returning to their homeland as tourists and pilgrims, not as repatriating subjects.²⁴ Nostalgia, in this context, implies not merely the condition of spatial and temporal distance, but also the desirability of relegating much of the homeland past to memory. Pilgrimage tourism permits a temporary, selective, and controlled evocation of a transcended past that, while arousing nostalgic emotions, has been willfully left behind.

In this regard, the nostalgia of poverty is particularly significant in the pilgrimage context. Moroccan Jews, both resident and expatriate, have at their disposal memories of poverty that signify both economic limitations that have been happily transcended and social conditions that have been sadly lost. In the discourse of nostalgic memory, the cost of economic advancement is often cast in terms of the dislocation of emigration, the alienation of fractured urban life, and the lost familial and communal intimacy born of material interdependence. For those who can afford to return to Morocco on pilgrimage ("If your employment and your means permit . . ." states the 1986 hillulah brochure), the trip reconciles the social intimacy of poverty with the achievements of economic advancement. At hillulot, the social intimacy of poverty is reexperienced in the context of extended stays at densely populated, roughly constructed, and minimally equipped shrine complexes. That hillulot attract the contemporary Moroccan poor, as eminently visible pilgrims, further contributes to the signification of hillulot as reenactments of a communal solidarity that issued from collective poverty. Pilgrims returning to Morocco, however, incur inflated expenses that attest to their relative economic success. Pilgrimage, among other things, demonstrates one's ability to take an overseas vacation. Some hillulot

thus temporarily recreate the lost intimacy of poverty, while also enacting transcendence over the economic limitations of the past.

Nostalgia is not the only disposition exploited in the marketing of hillulot, and the Moroccan Jewish diaspora does not represent the only recognized clientele for hillulah tourism. While the 1986 hillulah brochure predominantly addresses Moroccan expatriates, it also seems to hail other potential customers. These two readerships and the markets they represent are ambiguously recognized, for example, in the claim: "The tourist circuit associated with these events will reintroduce you to, *or acquaint you with*, the Rif and the Atlas, the imperial cities rich with history, ancient and modern Morocco" (emphasis added). While in this case any presumed unfamiliarity with the geographic territory may refer primarily to second-generation Moroccans born abroad, the imagery of the brochure indexes Western exoticism as much as diasporic nostalgia. In fact, some of the brochure photographs reflect the visual commodification of Morocco as an exotic tourist destination. A non-Moroccan Jewish clientele also appears to be recognized in the promotional lure: "If you are enchanted by Jewish events, especially those celebrated by *a* warm, authentic, and Mediterranean community . . ." (emphasis added). Here, Jewish tradition and Mediterranean authenticity, rather than an autobiographic Moroccan past, are cued as cultural attractions. That this message is directed at non-Moroccans is further established by the contrastive use of the indefinite and impersonal pronoun "a," as opposed to the ambiguously inclusive "our" (as in, "*our* community has existed . . ."), in reference to the Moroccan Jewish community.

Hillulot, then, have been promoted as objects of both nostalgic tourism for Moroccans and exotic tourism for other European, Israeli, and North American Jews. This double marketing has been facilitated by the fact that the same rhetorics and images can dialogically refer to both "native" discourses of nostalgia and "Western" discourses of exoticism. If Moroccan Jewish émigrés long for their own "warm, authentic, and Mediterranean" youth, Jews of European extraction have increasingly sought tourist encounters with non-Western Jewish traditions in which warmth, authenticity, and pleasant climate are no less appealing. Hillulot must also be considered in the context of the burgeoning industry of international Jewish tourism, in which Moroccan Jewish pilgrimage has been strategically situated.²⁵

Between the late 1970s and the mid-1990s, the Moroccan Ministry of Tourism, in cooperation with CJCM, sponsored several visits of Jewish journalists and travel agents from Canada, France, the United States, and Israel. The first of such visits in 1978 was scheduled to coincide with the inaugural "national" hillulah, which was held that year at the shrine of Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan (*Le Matin Du Sahara* 1978: 8). Several national hillulot in the 1980s were attended by similar coteries of Jewish journalists, whose reports appeared in the Jewish press in Europe, North America, and Israel.²⁶ In 1992, a delegation of Anglo-American Jewish journalists participated in an eight-day tour of Morocco sponsored by *Royal Air Maroc* and the Moroccan National

Tourist Office. A spate of travel articles appeared in the American Jewish press that same year.²⁷

Beyond Morocco, Jewish entrepreneurs and organizations seeking Jewish clients, with or without roots in Morocco, have promoted tourism to the country. In the United States, private travel agencies have offered tours with such names as "Judaism in Morocco." In 1996, The American Jewish Historical Society organized a "Jewish history tour of Morocco" that included visits to "the major institutions of the Jewish community" in Casablanca. A 1997 tour to Morocco sponsored by the United Jewish Appeal, an American Jewish philanthropic organization, included the opportunity to "participate in the festive Hillula [*sic*] of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai [*sic*]." In Israel, travel agencies organize pilgrimage tours that coincide with major hillulah dates (Levy 1997). Now Israelis of Moroccan origin arrive by the busload at shrines, many returning to their country of birth for the first time since their emigration decades prior.

Political Dividends and Economic Revenues

The Moroccan state regulates, supports, and represents Jewish pilgrimages in a variety of ways.²⁸ Soldiers from the national army are stationed at shrines where they protect the right of Jews to practice their cultural traditions. Municipal governments furnish shrines with electricity, water, and logistical services (such as traffic control on pilgrimage routes) free of charge. Representatives of the crown make official visits to hillulot where they offer the blessings of the king and in return receive pledges of loyalty proffered by representatives of the Jewish community. State-run newspapers cover hillulot with articles praising the Moroccan government for its religious tolerance, stressing full acceptance of Jewish customs as part of the national patrimony, and highlighting the international composition of the pilgrimage community.²⁹

While the motivations behind state support and representation of hillulot cannot be reduced to the economic significance of pilgrimages as transnational tourist events (the assertion of state authority and the production of loyal subjects are clearly at stake) neither can such significance be ignored. As Morocco has attempted to attract investments from developed economies, its government has been keen on presenting itself as a modern, liberal, and tolerant constitutional monarchy, and thus, as having those characteristics that are supposed to correspond with a stable environment for investment according to institutions like the World Bank and the European Union (see Tessler 1988). The tolerated and protected status of Jews, as the only indigenous non-Muslim religious minority in Morocco, has become a popular banner of Morocco's commitment to human rights, public freedoms, and equal opportunity. In the speeches delivered by government officials at pilgrimages and in the national press, hillulot have become a showcase of Morocco's tolerance of its Jewish minority.

There are also direct economic benefits derived from pilgrimage tourism for the resident Moroccan Jewish community and for local Moroccan economies. The Jewish community in Morocco has increasingly relied on contributions

from abroad to fund its many services and projects.³⁰ In 1996, the official speech given by the representative of CJCM at the hillulah of Ouled Ben Zmirou included the following words:

Through the restoration of our holy places [saint shrines], the year 1993 marked a cultural renaissance for the Jewish community of Morocco. Two other projects have been organized and are being realized: one regarding the restoration of ancient synagogues in Fez, Meknes, Essaouira, Tetuan and Tangier, the other concerning our cemeteries. *Especially with the aid of our coreligionists living abroad*, we hope to follow our program of rehabilitating our ancient cemeteries that are more and more frequently being visited by the descendants of those buried therein. Our visitors from abroad, in fact, attach great sentimental importance to this effort. This year we expect to open a Museum of the Patrimony of Moroccan Judaism in Casablanca. Our community is fully aware of its privilege despite its current geographic dispersion. Its sons who live in Morocco or elsewhere in the world remain attached to their country of origin. We must all be involved in developing in them and their children, who continue to demonstrate their national loyalty, the memory of a country that has always known peace. [emphasis added]

Pilgrimages, as I shall develop more fully below, are typically occasions for charitable giving. In this case, the projects for which donations were solicited—the restoration of historical synagogues, the maintenance of cemeteries, and the construction of museums—respond to the transformation of Moroccan Jewry into a diasporic community whose relationship with Morocco can be represented through a rhetoric of attachment, sentiment, and memory. Hillulot provide an opportunity for the CJCM to raise funds for its local projects, especially those that respond to the nostalgia of pilgrims returning from abroad.

Hillulot are also an economic boon to the localities in which shrines are found. Those pilgrimages that take place in urban settings, for example in the cities of Essaouira or Safi, now rely on four-star hotels and local caterers. Pilgrims returning from abroad make use of the national airline, regional airports, rental-car agencies, chartered buses, and taxi services. While at hillulot, pilgrims take the opportunity to shop for mementos and gifts in the local shops of these picturesque seaside cities. For rural pilgrimages, local drivers who can navigate dirt roads in their four-wheel-drive jeeps and trucks provide transportation to and from shrines. In these remote areas, vendors set up temporary markets in order to sell food, basic necessities, and traditional crafts to tourist-pilgrims.

Vendors who install their makeshift bazaars to sell Moroccan handicrafts are especially cognizant of the foreign origins of their clientele, or at least the foreign origin of their money, and try to sell their wares at tourist prices. Pilgrims, in turn, attempt to establish their native identity, for example by speaking Moroccan Arabic and noting their place of birth, in order to show that they cannot be fooled into paying prices they consider too high. Rural pilgrimages also are likely to involve the slaughter of livestock (turkeys, sheep, cows, goats, etc.) for ritual and nutritional purposes. Local vendors catering to pilgrims may sell their entire stock in a day. Dealing with Jewish pilgrims is particularly

attractive because, if a slaughtered beast is found to be ritually impure (i.e., not kosher), the carcass may be resold to the vendor at half price or even returned without charge as an act of charity given in the name of the saint.³¹

Ritual Exchange and the Moral Economy of Pilgrimage

Thus sacrifice shows itself in a dual light; it is a useful act and it is an obligation. Disinterestedness is mingled with self-interest. That is why it has so frequently been conceived of as a form of contract. Fundamentally there is perhaps no sacrifice that has not some contractual element. The two parties present exchange their services and each gets his due.

—Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Functions*, 1964

Alms are the fruits of a moral notion of the gift and of fortune on the one hand, and of a notion of sacrifice, on the other.

—Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, 1990

Ziyara meqbula. (May your pilgrimage be accepted)

—Hillulah greeting

The value of money spent on pilgrimage is not only determined by its capacity to buy transportation, lodging, or souvenirs. Pilgrims engage in a variety of exchanges involving money and other goods that exist outside the tourist economy and beyond local marketplaces. In ritual relationships of charitable exchange, pilgrims enact hierarchies of wealth while also attempting to acquire a form of sacred capital that both justifies and reproduces entrepreneurial profit. Pierre Bourdieu's (1970, 1977) discussion of honor, as a system of exchange in which social prestige and power are determined largely by one's ability to inflate the value of counter-gifts, provides an instructive orientation to charity at hillulot. At one level, rituals of pilgrimage charity discriminate between the wealthy who can give and the poor who are only able to receive. At another level, in rituals from which the poor are excluded, the wealthiest pilgrims compete among themselves for both honor and sacred capital. During the public auction of candles sold in the name of saints, the wealthiest pilgrims exchange gifts and counter-gifts, taking the form of bids and counter-bids, in a competition over ritual prestige. Ultimately, bidding also establishes relationships between bidders and saints who mediate sacred capital in the form of saintly indebtedness that is restituted as worldly profit.

From Bourdieu (1977), I also take an appreciation of the importance of tempo in this cycle of gifts and counter-gifts. On one hand, exchanges among Moroccan Jewish pilgrims are condensed within the hillulah. The condensation of exchanges between pilgrims takes on particular significance in the diasporic context of Moroccan Jewry. The pilgrimage community is temporary and refers to no ongoing, localized network of social relationships from which debts can be readily repaid or counter-gifts offered. Auctions, in particular, constitute a ritual game of honor in which the moves are compressed into an evening's

activity that culminates in relative closure. On the other hand, since charitable giving is mediated by the expectation of saintly recompense, exchanges between pilgrims and saints entail a deferral to an indeterminate future. As a form of exchange among pilgrims, charity is ritually resolved during the course of hillulot. As a form of exchange between pilgrims and saints, charity represents ongoing relationships that extend beyond the ritual event.

The deferral of saintly restitution into the future might seem to resonate with Bourdieu's argument that the extended interval between gift and counter-gift can contribute to "the sincere fiction of disinterested exchange" (1977: 171). The deferral of the counter-gift, which pilgrimage charity calls forth, does not, however, refer most saliently to a dissimulation of instrumentality, as Bourdieu and others have argued (Smart 1993). While pilgrimage charity is often portrayed in public discourse as the enactment of sacred obligation, a native ideology of disinterested charity coexists with an equally public recognition that charitable gifts engage saints in reciprocal relationships of exchange. Charity given at pilgrimage is supposed to be returned by the saint in the form of wealth, health, good fortune, or other conventional benefits.³² Especially for the largest donors, charitable gifts are expected to be returned as entrepreneurial profits. Capitalist and sacred economies are thus integrated into a single system of exchange in which saints are key players.

Charity, Community, and Sacred Restitution

Pilgrims invoke the universal Jewish concepts of *klal yisrael*, what might be translated as divinely ordained Jewish *communitas*, and *seduqa*, the religious obligation to give charity, to represent acts of giving as disinterested practices of Jewish piety. Pilgrims commonly assert that the poor are necessary constituents of the hillulah community, which represents a collective that transcends class difference and enacts communal generosity. Charity to the poor takes a variety of forms. Ritual meals (Heb. *se'udot*, sing. *se'udah*), often eaten on or around the saint's tomb, are prepared by women of modest means and distributed to the community of pilgrims. Although all are enjoined to partake of these communal meals, the food is consumed predominantly by the poor. The poor also receive gifts of clothing, often in the form of traditional garb. Money, especially, is given directly to dispossessed pilgrims who often solicit donations.

Charity, however, extends beyond direct gifts to the poor. In its most general sense, charity can refer to virtually all forms of pilgrimage expenditure. Thus, any money directed towards pilgrimages, shrines, or the general expenses of the hillulah event can be interpreted as a form of charity. Even the mundane expenses of tourism, insofar as they facilitate the pilgrimage experience, can be incorporated into the moral calculus of charitable money. Charity, in this extended sense, refers to all money and goods given "in the name of the saint" (as in direct donations to the poor) or given "to the saint." At hillulot, money given "to the saint," often through the purchase of candles, is collected by representatives of the committee responsible for the shrine and pilgrimage.

In the past, this money was used mainly for the maintenance of the shrine, for the expenses of the hillulah (utilities, security, communal meals, accommodations, musical entertainment, etc.), and for local distributions to the poor (Ben-Ami 1998:125–129). Today, some of the saint's money is funneled into the general budget of the CJCM. Though there are debates between local pilgrimage committees or saintly descendants and CJCM over the control of the shrine income, pilgrims generally concur that in any case their donations should benefit some charitable cause, be it the saint's glorification, the community's welfare, the hillulah event, or the poor.³³

A counterdiscourse represents these numerous acts of giving as self-interested tactics rather than as distributive relationships of generosity. Some pilgrims who take a critical view of pilgrimage charity regard public displays of charity as ostentatious attempts to garner prestige based on wealth. For such critics, the true communitarian ethos of pilgrimage in the past has been corrupted by an egoistic and materialistic present. Expectations of sacred recompense, likewise, are seen by some as contaminating the purity of disinterested giving. Most pilgrims, however, recognize the remunerative benefits of charitable giving as an authentic and moral aspect of the pilgrimage experience. Honoring saints with money confirms the piety of the donor, while saintly restitution is testament to the role of sacred power in determining worldly fortunes.

The importance of divine favor in establishing material fortune is deeply embedded within Moroccan Jewish ideology. The local Arabic distinction between mundane profit (*rebh*) and holy recompense (*rezq*) mark two points in a continuum of worldly gain. If *rebh* ideally refers to profit derived through industrious work and *rezq* refers to a gift from God, the two ideals converge in the meaning of *baraka* (lit. "blessing") as a central idiom of wealth in Morocco (see Westermarck 1926). *Baraka*, used in reference to an individual's riches, encompasses a recognition of the importance of divine favor in all human fortune. The Hebrew *parnasa*, or livelihood, as it is used in the context of hillulot, refers to the same combination of practical work and sacred assistance necessary to material well-being. Honoring saints through pilgrimage is one means of attracting *parnasa tova* (a bountiful or, more literally, good livelihood). Supplementing pilgrimage with charity, as one pilgrim explained to me, is a way of guaranteeing such good fortune.

Money given as charity is often called *baraka* in Arabic or *zekhut* in Hebrew, terms referring to the blessedness and power of saints. *Zekhut* refers to the meritorious life and deeds of saints, but in this context it implies the supernatural *power* of the saint that is accessible to pilgrims. Thus, for example, a poor man or woman might ask for money with the request: " 'Atini shi baraka" (give me some blessings) or " 'atini shi zekhut" (give me some merit/ power). To ask for blessings or merit/power in this sense carries a double meaning that encapsulates the nature of charitable exchange. On the one hand, the possession of wealth to be given as charity is considered a blessing, dependent on divine will and saintly intercession. In this sense, the money given as charity is

the *result* of past favor proffered by the saint and by God. On the other hand, charity represents the *future* money donors will receive as reward for their generosity.

The principle that whatever is given at pilgrimage will be returned through the favor of the saint is inscribed in anecdotes, poetry, and other forms of public discourse at pilgrimages.³⁴ Once at the hillulah of Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan, to take a single example, I found myself purchasing a candle whose price was higher than I had expected. Although the candle was well within my budget, I registered surprise as I paid its price of 100 dirhams (approximately US\$9). The vendor, a member of the pilgrimage committee, noted my response and took pity on what he considered to be a hardship on my part. My status as a "student," poor by conventional definition, lent plausibility to his interpretation of my predicament. Later in the day, as we walked the grounds of the cemetery, the man consoled me with a story about the time he had given a substantial amount of money to the saint only to find later that the very same sum had miraculously appeared beneath the rear seat of his automobile. That evening, I found a 100-dirham bill crumpled in my pocket.

Although this episode lays bare the simple expectation of recompense inherent in giving charity at pilgrimage, charitable exchanges are not necessarily of this type: They may not be calculated with such precision; the gift is not necessarily returned in kind; and the interval before saintly recompense is generally longer. My own marginality in the pilgrimage (as a student, researcher, foreigner, and potential skeptic) may have conditioned the way this particular exchange unfolded. Yet, the tension between the disinterested gift and the return it calls forth, that is, the dialectic between charity and exchange, is evident in the concrete relations between the entire assortment of receivers and givers at pilgrimages.

Charity and the Ritual Poor

Beneath the idealized collective of klal yisrael, pilgrims can be divided initially into two categories: those who receive and those who give.³⁵ I have already mentioned the participation of "the poor" at pilgrimage and their status as such requires further elaboration. The combined presence of rich and poor together at hillulot is often celebrated by pilgrims as evidence of Jewish unity and mutual welfare. The poor exist not only as a class of economically disadvantaged individuals but also as a ritual category that defines a certain kind of pilgrim. What might be called the ritual poor are only infrequently referred to with the French term *pauvres*, with its class connotations, or with the Hebrew term *hiluk*, which emphasizes their legal and customary right to funds from the Jewish communal treasury.³⁶ At pilgrimages, the Arabic term *drawesh* (sing. *derwish*), which in Morocco can connote holy mystical asceticism, is commonly used to refer to the ritual poor.

The *drawesh* comprise a distinct social group at pilgrimages. At rural shrines (e.g., Rebbi David Ben Barukh and Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan), where pilgrims stay in roughly hewn plaster and concrete rooms, the *drawesh* are

housed in relatively segregated clusters, often in the most dilapidated accommodations. At urban pilgrimages (e.g., Rebbi Haim Pinto and Ouled Ben Zmirou), where hotel rates are well beyond the means of the poor, the few rooms available at the shrines are reserved for the exclusive use of the drawesh. During the course of hillulot, the poor are visible in their tattered, traditional Moroccan clothing, which, as many remark, resembles the costume once worn by living saints. The poor spend most of their time in close proximity to the tomb where they encounter arriving pilgrims. Many of the poor are also considered crazy (Ar. *mejdub*) and are sought out for their fantastic conversations: one is a confidante of the Moroccan king, another traveled to Israel in the blink of an eye. Such personae resonate with Moroccan images of spiritual adepts (Ar. *sufis*) whose "craziness" is a sign of mystical power. Some of the drawesh are said to have saintly ancestry themselves. In these ways, the poor are identified with the saints, who are often portrayed as having had little concern for worldly fortune. Partly based on this close identification, the poor are defined largely through their role as recipients of charity; giving to the drawesh is considered a form of "giving to the saint."³⁷

In return for money given, the poor often recite petitionary prayers on behalf of donors. Most sought are blessings by *mejdub* and aged drawesh, who are considered particularly effective intercessors between supplicants and saints. Petitionary prayers are derived from the daily Hebrew prayer liturgy (thereby indexing Jewish textual authority) and are tailored to the specific circumstances of the pilgrim. The standard introductory invocation is often recited in Hebrew whereas specific requests (for health, wealth, marriage, fertility, etc.) are spoken in colloquial Arabic.³⁸ At the pilgrimage to Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan, a young man returning to Morocco from Israel sought out the eldest derwish and asked for a blessing of *parnasa* (livelihood) in exchange for a small contribution:

- Derwish: May the One [i.e., God] who blessed our fathers
Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, David and Solomon, Moses and Aaron
May He bless—
- Pilgrim: Gad Ben Moshe Ohayon.
- Derwish: Gad Ben Moshe Ohayon.
May our Master save him.
And may the torah and saddiqim
Be with him in his house and on the road.
Him and his family.
May a doctor never enter his house.
Give him health and protect him from the evil eye.
- Pilgrim: And *parnasa* [livelihood or wealth].
- Derwish: May the evil eye never find him.
And give him the cure [that he needs].
And a long life and may great fortune [*rezq*] be granted
By the power [*zekhut*] of the torah and the saddiqim.
May it be His will, Amen.

The recompense (*parnasa*, *rezq*) invoked in this prayer is to be granted by a web of sacred forces—God, the biblical forefathers, the *torah*, and the saints—which together constitute the realm of *zekhut* or sacred power accessible to the pilgrim. Just as saints function as intercessors between pilgrims and God, the poor momentarily assume the role of intercessors between donors and saints.³⁹

Whether given in cash or distributed as food, wealth donated by pilgrims enters an economy of sacred recompense in which the charitable gift is transformed into the initiating act of an extended relationship with the saint. The poor are thus positioned as the quintessential human recipients of money given in the name of the saint. In this position, the poor are merely conduits of exchange between donors and *saddiqim*. As such, it is essential that the charity of donors not be remunerated immediately, for this would end the circuit of exchanges which donors seek to continue in the sacred sphere.

The position of the poor as conduits of sacred exchange is made clear by the ambivalent stance taken towards *drawesh* who attempt to supplement their pilgrimage income by vending small items. The visible presence of the solicitous poor is accepted, indeed welcomed, by all but the most self-fashioned modernist critics who would prefer “charity” to be bureaucratized by the CJCM. As I have mentioned, the poor are at once emblems of Jewish *communitas* and necessary for sacred exchange. Some of the poor, however, also engage in petty trade, selling such things as toiletries, costume jewelry, key chains engraved with saintly icons, cassettes of hagiographic poetry, and other pilgrimage mementos (see Figure 2). Their stock contains both practical amenities, such as razors and soap, and ritual paraphernalia, such as small plastic hands, common symbols of good fortune in Morocco. People often buy these hands, along with an array of other Jewish ritual items, in order to place them on the saint’s tomb where they are transformed into charms of good fortune to be either distributed to friends and relatives who could not make the journey or kept by pilgrims themselves.

Derwish vendors are commonly criticized by pilgrims for introducing the materiality of commercial exchange into the space of sacred charity. Unlike the sellers in temporary markets located at the periphery of the shrine, the derwish often display their wares directly adjacent to the saint’s tomb.⁴⁰ The money that passes hands in such transactions assumes certain qualities of charity: many of the items purchased are related to pilgrimage activities; the price paid clearly exceeds the monetary value of the trinkets; and any “profits” benefit the poor. But since the purchase has an element of market exchange, as an immediate transaction of goods for money, the “donor” lays no claim to remuneration from the saint. What some pilgrims express as a grievance against the nickel-and-dime attempts of the poor to earn money can be interpreted as hesitancy on the part of the former to deal with the *drawesh* in cases where the deferral of a debt to the saint is endangered.



Figure 2

A derwish vendor selling costume jewelry and inexpensive tokens during a hillulah.

Candle Money

The antagonism towards derwish vendors is most evident in cases when the items being bought and sold are candles. Candles are a common element of Jewish rituals; they are lit to initiate and conclude the weekly Sabbath festival and during annual holy days dispersed throughout the year. Candles also function in a nexus of metaphors that unite saints, Holy Scriptures, and God—all of which are portrayed as fire and flame in pilgrimage talk and iconography. Flames also figure into the hagiography of saints, who are often depicted as studying sacred texts by candlelight late into the night. The Jewish tradition of

lighting memorial candles for the deceased further contributes to the significance of the candles in the context of the hillulah.

Virtually all pilgrims purchase candles of some sort during hillulot. Most common are the least expensive: small, white candles sold in packets of six or eight at a price of 5 dirhams (approx. US\$0.75). These candles are generally burned for the saints in furnaces that adjoin their respective tombs. Like other pilgrimage tokens, some candles are made "to visit" the saint; they are left to rest on the tomb and then collected by pilgrims after the hillulah. The importance of lighting the candles at hillulot or using them in other ritual contexts throughout the year, however, does not exhaust their significance. Just as important is the act of purchasing the candles while on pilgrimage. On the one hand, it is essential that the candles be bought at the shrine. Thus, although the price of candles at shrines is inflated over the market rate, pilgrims rarely arrive at hillulot having previously bought lower-priced equivalents. On the other hand, one's own money must be expended on the purchase. Once, for example, I agreed to buy several packets of candles for a man who was unable to make the pilgrimage to the hillulah of Rebbi David Ben Barukh. I suggested that he repay me for the candles upon my return, but he insisted on giving me the money for the purchase in advance. It was important, he explained, that *his* money buy the candles.

Although candles have a monetary value, they appear to function as gifts more than as commodities: The purchase price of ritual candles is not determined through market competition; candles cannot be resold for a profit; and their use-value is limited to the ritual sphere. The majority of candles are bought at shrines and burned immediately upon purchase. Money used to buy candles is unambiguously considered charity to be distributed for the benefit of the shrine, the community, and the poor. In contrast with marketing and petty vending, the traffic in candles participates unambiguously in the ritual economy of exchange. For these reasons, any hint that candle sellers are motivated by immediate profit threatens to recast candle transactions as mundane trade. It is not surprising, then, that individual entrepreneurs are prohibited from selling candles, partly to ensure that candle money goes to the shrine and partly to allay suspicion of personal profit mongering.

At pilgrimages, the sale of candles is monopolized by the organizing committee and the CJCM. The CJCM has couched its control of candle income as a strategy of promoting the efficiency and rationalization of communal welfare. Local committees, sometimes at odds with the CJCM, claim that candle money must honor the saint directly (for example by being used exclusively for shrines and pilgrimage costs) without multiple levels of bureaucratic mediation and redistribution to the community and its needy. In either case, community bodies rather than individuals lay claim to the sale of candles. Although the task of selling packets of candles is sometimes delegated to individual drawesh, the revenues are collected and distributed by the official authorities of the hillulot. In this way, the poor mediate the circuit of sacred exchange without assuming an entrepreneurial role as independent vendors of candles.

At several of the hillulot I attended, however, drawesh attempted to sell candles independently. When this happened one year at the hillulah of Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan, public outcry on the part of pilgrims (fellow drawesh among them) precipitated a swift reaction from CJCM representatives. The ensuing confrontations between community officials and the offending vendor occurred in public, near the saint's tomb where the derwish had installed himself. With great passion and display, befitting his role as mejdub, the derwish claimed his rights to pilgrimage income (i.e., charity) while attempting to resist the control of the authorities. With calm forbearance, pilgrimage officials confiscated candles and terminated independent sales.

Modernist pilgrims who would prefer that charitable giving be impersonal and rationalized, along with CJCM officials charged with the task of overseeing hillulah income, were equally affronted by independent candle vendors and the traditional forms of communal welfare they represented.⁴¹ At stake for most pilgrims, however, was also the cultural logic of ritual exchange in which money used to purchase candles must unambiguously go to saints. Unlike other forms of charitable money, which can be directed to individual drawesh, candle-money must enter the shrine treasury. Since the immediate transaction of material items is involved, any mediation by independent vendors threatens to transform the ritual exchange into a commercial one.

Candle Auctions as Tournaments of Value

Tournaments of value are complex periodic events that are removed in some culturally well-defined way from the routines of economic life. Participation in them is likely to be both a privilege of those in power and an instrument of status contests between them. The currency of such tournaments is also likely to be set apart through well understood cultural diacritics. Finally, what is at issue in such tournaments is not just status, rank, fame, or reputation of actors but the disposition of the central tokens of value in the society in question. Finally, though such tournaments of value occur in special times and places, their forms and outcomes are always consequential for the more mundane realities of power and value in ordinary life.

—Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things*, 1986

Apart from the readily available small candles purchased in packets, more expensive ones are sold in circumscribed contexts. At the hillulot of Rebbi David Ben Barukh and Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan, larger candles are occasionally sold around the saint's tomb at prices ranging from one hundred to several thousand dirhams (see Figure 3). These candles may be wrapped in decorative ribbons and secured in cardboard boxes that are inscribed with the saint's name, his icon, and some verses of honorific poetry. Such candles are unlikely to be burned at the pilgrimage. Rather, purchasers often keep them as charms of good fortune, embodiments of saintly presence, and evidence of a good deed done.

Whereas the least-expensive or moderately priced candles are sold for fixed amounts, the most expensive ones are auctioned. Candle auctions generally take place on the eve of the hillulah date at an event that punctuates the



Figure 3
Moderately priced candles being sold by the tomb of the saint.

most intense period of the pilgrimage experience. Although the entirety of the pilgrimage period can be referred to as the *hillulah*, in its most specific usage the term refers to the auction. During the proceedings, bidding is interspersed with the spontaneous chanting of honorific poetry, Moroccan and Israeli music performed by professional bands, hagiographic lore recounted by the auctioneer, and rounds of food and drink bought with funds from the shrine treasury. These activities last several hours and ideally culminate at midnight, when pilgrims move in a processional to the saint's tomb. It is at this time that pilgrims most intensely feel the saint's presence at the shrine.

The auction designates a certain category of person as wealthy by distinguishing those who can actively participate in the event (cf. Baudrillard 1981).⁴² At some shrines (e.g., Rebbi David Ben Barukh and Rebbi Haim Pinto), auctions are held in synagogues within the cemetery grounds (see Figure 4). In such cases, women are segregated from men behind a ritual barrier (Heb. *mehitzah*), which serves an identical function during regular prayer services. At auctions held outdoors (e.g., Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan) or in newly constructed reception halls (e.g., Ouled Ben Zmirou), men and women may be seated together, though only the former participate in the bidding. In most cases, the drawesh are either sitting in the far recesses of the auction arena or not attending at all. In contrast, those who make the largest bids tend to cluster

near the center of activity in close proximity to the auctioneer. Of all the social performances at pilgrimage, the auction is characterized by the most blatant displays of hierarchy that divide the community.

Those who participate in the auction constitute a distinctive group whose membership is restricted and defined at a variety of levels. Participation is restricted to men with the resources to make bids, which may begin as high as several thousand dirhams. This informal restriction relies on the locally respected Jewish tenet that it is foolhardy and immoral to give beyond one's means. Successful bids that remain unpaid are considered a moral liability, comparable to an unfulfilled promise or vow, and place the debtor in a position worse than if he had not bid at all. Conversely, all rightful bidders stake a claim to saintly favor. As an increase of a previous bid, and thus as an augmentation of the final price, even unsuccessful bids are considered acts of charity. Moreover, participants who are unsuccessful in earlier rounds are often able to buy



Figure 4

Candle auction being conducted in the men's section of a shrine synagogue. The cabinet (Heb. *Hakhal*) in the background houses torah scrolls.

candles as the auction progresses and as winning bids depreciate. Whether successful or not, participants recognize each other as what Bourdieu has called “peers in honor”—those worthy of being challenged and in a position to riposte (1970:197).

Bidders establish themselves as worthy of participation but not all can win. Each bid is meritorious, but winning bids are most desired. The auction thus discriminates among wealthy bidders who seek ritual domination over their competitors. As bidders vie to honor the saint and to commit themselves to charitable giving, they simultaneously challenge each other with increasing displays of wealth. As an arena for staking reputations and dominating others, however, the auction is an exception to what Bourdieu claims to be a key element of competitive gift giving, namely, the extended and strategic lapse of time before which counter gifts are returned (1977:1–15). In the case of Bourdieu’s Kabyle peasants, return gifts are calibrated with seasonal agricultural and ceremonial demands in localized villages (1977:171–183). Apparently disinterested expenditures of generosity and hospitality are reclaimed, for example, in the form of work at labor-intensive harvest times (1977:179). In contrast, the tempo of the candle auction, in which competitive bids are exchanged in rapid succession, represents a strategic condensation of time. This tempo is well suited to the diasporic context of pilgrimages that constitute transnational communities of limited duration. For Moroccan Jewish pilgrims, the exchange of bids is immediate. Obligations or debts between participants do not extend beyond the *hillulah*.⁴³

While successful bidders acquire renown and prestige, their status does not entitle them directly to other men’s labor or wealth. Even though the fraternity of bidders is constituted by men who might do business with each other, its members have relatively independent commercial interests. Included among the regular winners are textile manufacturers living in France, wholesale beverage dealers from the south of Morocco, and real estate developers in Casablanca. The community of bidders, like the larger pilgrimage community, is formed temporarily from a transnational population whose cultural affinities, more than ongoing economic relationships, bring them together. Although this diasporic community is increasingly imagining and reconstituting itself in a variety of ways, and while social and economic networks do link points in the Moroccan Jewish diaspora, the prestige of participating in the auction does not necessarily create lasting economic relationships between people.

Bids, however, do not only establish relationships among participants in the auction. Auction money is a gift of a double nature; it is at once directed at men, whom the bidder is trying to defeat, and at the saint, whom the bidder is trying to obligate. The duality of auction money is epitomized in the final bid, which would seem to place the winner in a precarious position. “To make a gift so great that it cannot be reciprocated is also to dishonor oneself” (Bourdieu 1970:204). The winning bid, however, is no more dishonorable than a gift of charity to the poor; in both cases, where reciprocation between pilgrims ends, exchange with saints begins. Giving to the poor in no way dishonors the donor.

since the gift, and hence the challenge, is clearly directed to the saint. So too in the auction, the challenge to reciprocate is ultimately leveled at the saint, even though the bidding first entails an honorable challenge to fellow men.

Candle Auctions and the Ritual Production of Wealth

Charity money appears at once to be disinterested and instrumental, generous and selfish. According to Bourdieu, this dual nature of gift giving can be masked by the time elapsed between a gift and its return; in this interval, what is given appears autonomous of the debt it entails (Bourdieu 1977:171). As part of the sacred economy of pilgrimage, the return of candle money is deferred into the extended future and the rapid tempo of bidding gives way to the slower tempo of saintly recompense. This process, however, does not result in a dissimulation of self-interest. The eventual recompense that pilgrimage charity calls forth is not masked during candle auctions. To the contrary, expectations of saintly remuneration are emphasized and self-interested motives are encouraged.

Candles bought on auction are more closely related to saints and their sacred power (*zekhut*) than those bought in small packets. Each candle is auctioned in the name of a different saint, usually beginning with the holy man buried at the local shrine. Whereas the common white candles are made of wax, auctioned "candles" often take the form of oversized glass tumblers (*kisan*, sing. *kas*) filled with oil. Participants bid to light the *kisan*, which recall the memorial lamps to the dead hung in synagogues. Although those who buy the honor of lighting an oil lamp usually receive a candle as well, some pilgrims claim the *kisan* hearken to an authentic traditional past and represent the *saddiqim* more accurately than do wax candles.

Candle auctions, thus, provide select pilgrims with the best opportunity to come closest to the saint and to contract his sacred power. The first candles auctioned generally sell for the highest prices. At the largest pilgrimages, these candles can fetch over 250,000 dirhams (approximately US\$27,000). Consequently, the acquisition of these candles represents the most significant purchase on future monetary remuneration; the vast sums expended are expected to be returned as even greater profits in the enterprises that enriched the successful bidder in the first place.

The public accounting of the auction highlights the fiscal aspects of pilgrimage charity. In this accounting, the auctioneer plays a pivotal role. As the person charged with keeping the lengthy proceedings energetic, the auctioneer is generally noted for his theatrical personality, strong voice, and sense of timing. His performance includes soliciting and announcing bids, initiating the singing of honorific poetry (Heb. *piyyutim*), cuing musicians when to play, inviting women to contribute their joyful ululations, and recounting stories of miracles performed by saints in their lifetimes and after their deaths. The auctioneer regularly repeats the amount of current bids in song form, with a characteristic melody and cadence. Bids tend to be made in units of *centimes* (1/100th of a dirham), thereby inflating the number uttered by participants and

the auctioneer.⁴⁴ As bids reach standardized increments divisible by ten (1,000, 10,000, 100,000, 1,000,000), the auctioneer often leads an extended chorus of the amount offered, followed by popular verses of honorific poetry. The following is a short excerpt from the auction of the first candle sold at the hillulah of Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan:

Bidder:	One million [centimes]
Auctioneer:	One million and one million! One million and one million! One million and one million! One million and one million! Rebbi Amram lives!
Congregation:	Rebbi Amram Lives!
Auctioneer:	Rebbi Amram Lives! Come, my brothers we will go to Ouezzane. Our visit accomplished, we will be happy. We will visit Ouezzane. Full of Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan. The one who buys the lamp [<i>kas</i>] and lights it. No one will file a claim [<i>d'a</i>] against him. The saddiq is the one who will reward/restitute [<i>khlef</i>] you. The saddiq is the one who will reward you.

Before being inscribed in the official ledgers of the pilgrimage committee, bids and donations are accounted in the poetic performances of auctioneers. This poetic accounting links the amount given with a twofold debt encumbered by the saint. First, the successful bidder will find protection from mundane suits, claims, and slanders, together signified by the term *d'a*. Second, the money expended by the pilgrim will be returned by the saint, through an act of divine restitution (*khlef*).

In another instance, at the pilgrimage to Rebbi Haim Pinto, the auctioneer was selling the most desired candle. Purchase of the candle also entitled the successful bidder to a medallion engraved with an icon of the saint and to the honor of opening the door to an enclosure (Heb. *hekhal*) housing a torah scroll in the saint's shrine. The honor of opening the enclosure, an act referred to with the Hebrew term *petiha*, shares its name and function with the parallel honor auctioned during synagogue services.

Auctioneer:	Now we will sell . . . In front of Rebbi Haim Pinto's tomb . . . In front of Rebbi Haim Pinto's tomb there is a hekhal where there is a scroll of torah. We are selling the <i>petiha</i> of parnasa. There is the hekhal in the cemetery, facing the one who will open the <i>petiha</i> of the parnasa. That is to say the parnasa that is all of one's work during the coming year, from this New Year until the next New Year. Here he has come, Rebbi Haim! Here he has come! Here he has come, Rebbi Haim! Here he has come!
Congregation:	Here he has come, Rebbi Haim! Here he has come! Here he has come, Rebbi Haim! Here he has come!
Auctioneer:	The opening of the torah scroll of Rebbi Haim Pinto, the gold medallion, and the candle. This means that the one who opens it

will know already, he will already know how to mark what he will earn in this next year.

In the most public pilgrimage ritual, auction money and business profit are acknowledged as gifts and counter-gifts in cycles of sacred exchange rejuvenated annually at pilgrimages.

Such relationships are not endangered by acts of overgenerosity. "To submit the other party to an over-difficult test is to risk seeing the exchange interrupted," writes Bourdieu (1970:231). Yet, where the other party is a saint, whose capacity for recompense is unlimited, no gift is so great that it cannot be reciprocated. The relationship established between winning bidders and saints emerges as an extension of the auction itself, with the implicit expectation that any recompense will take the form of an increase on the final bid. Beyond the auction and the hillulah, the possibility of the ever-increasing return-gift mirrors a faith in boundless profits: Where those profits derive from commercial activity on a global scale—from jeans manufactured in Morocco to be sold in France or from soft drinks licensed in the United States to be produced and distributed in Morocco—saintly recompense and transnational profits converge in the money of charity.

The circulation of money between candle buyers and saints serves as an ideal representation of the movement of money in the transnational economy. In many respects, the sacred economy of pilgrimage diagrams the profane economy of transnational capitalism. Both realms rely on long intervals between investment and return. Both hold out the hope of ever-increasing profit. Both rely on discrepancies of wealth that must be reproduced. Both require faith that an uncertain future can be strategically controlled. In these ways, Moroccan Jewish pilgrimage and the transnational economy are articulated in the money of charity, not only as the money of tourism.

Conclusion

The radical opposition which so many anthropologists have discovered between the principles on which gift and commodity exchange are grounded derives in part, we believe, from the fact that *our* ideology of the gift has been constructed in antithesis to market exchange.

—Parry and Bloch, *Money and the Morality of Exchange*, 1989

Money flows in and around pilgrimages in a variety of ways, and its value is determined in competing discourses and practices. As an ethnographically grounded heuristic, I began this article with a distinction between expenditures (*dépenses*) and charity (*sedaqa*) as indexes of two domains of value. Expenditures, as I have used the term broadly, index a range of interests, investments, promotions, and payments that frame hillulot as transnational tourist events. Charity includes money given to the poor and to saints in rituals of exchange that entail sacred recompense. The distinction between expenditures and charity could be made to map neatly onto the opposition between commodity and

gift that Parry and Bloch warn against. Yet, my demonstration that charity and profit are intimately linked in rituals of pilgrimage exchange indicates that I take heed of what Appadurai has similarly identified as the "exaggeration and reification of the contrast between gift and commodity in anthropological writing" (1986:11). I want to conclude by emphasizing how my argument resonates with critiques of exclusivist approaches to gifts and commodities (see also Bloch 1989; Hermann 1997; Lemon 1998; Yan 1996).

To develop this point, I have relied on a genealogy of readings (Appadurai 1986; Bourdieu 1970, 1977; Parry and Bloch 1989) that extends back to Mauss's seminal discussion of the gift. Appadurai, recognizing his indebtedness to Bourdieu, summarizes this line of interpretation as extending "a hitherto underplayed aspect of Mauss's analysis of the gift (Mauss 1976:70-73), which stresses certain strategic parallels between gift exchange and more ostensibly 'economic practices' " (Appadurai 1986:12). In this vein, pilgrimage charity represents gift exchange not only because of an ideology that emphasizes generosity and social solidarity (*klal yisrael*), but also because of the competitive, hierarchical, and self-interested ideological practices through which pilgrimage charity circulates.

Rituals of charity, I have shown, initiate and continue triadic relationships of exchange that involve donors, recipients, and saints. As exchanges among pilgrims, rituals of charity rely upon and reproduce hierarchies of wealth. As exchanges between pilgrims and saints, rituals of charity inscribe these hierarchies into a sacred idiom that justifies wealth and poverty in the present and channels the circulation of money in the future. Money given as charity is transformed into a recognizable form of sacred capital that will be repaid by saints. In the dialectic between disinterested charity and the expectation of recompense, gift and commodity are difficult to distinguish, especially where saintly recompense is realized as profit in the global market.

Hillulot partake of the global market both as commodified rituals cum tourist attractions and as sacred rituals cum investment strategies. The transnational revitalization of Jewish pilgrimage in Morocco reflects a strategic re-fashioning of the hillulah as a political showcase of liberal pluralism and as a multifaceted juncture of economic revenue. This strategic revitalization, moreover, relies less explicitly on the faith of devoted pilgrims, or on what certain Moroccan Jewish modernists view as "archaic" forms of "saint-worship," and more explicitly on nostalgic sentiments that can be animated in a transnational community. Yet, local and diasporic pilgrims also continue to cultivate ongoing relationships with saints, whom they revere and on whom they depend. Although such relationships have become muted in the late-20th-century promotion of pilgrimage, hillulot have not become disenchanting. Hillulot, at their ritual core, comprehend a globally commodified world in which certain pilgrims become recognized as the rightful beneficiaries and moral agents of entrepreneurial success.

Notes

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Transcription note. Regional and ethnic dialects of Arabic and Hebrew in Morocco complicate transcription strategies. For the sake of readability, I have transcribed Arabic and Hebrew words as they are spoken in Morocco with an English orthography. Those familiar with these languages should have little difficulty tracing word roots; hopefully, those unfamiliar with the languages will not encounter the foreign terms as stumbling blocks. I have used the following abbreviations to indicate the original language of foreign words: Ar. (Arabic); Fr. (French); Heb. (Hebrew).

1. The preeminence of Rebbi Shimon Bar Yohai among the saints of Jewish Morocco relies partly on his status as the putative author of *Zohar*, a central text of the Jewish mystical tradition (kabbalah). The celebration of Rebbi Shimon Bar Yohai’s pilgrimage at Moroccan shrines relies on various ideological tenets of saint veneration in Morocco. Many local saints, for example, are said to have died on Lag b’Omer, thus suggesting a sacred linkage to both the festival calendar and to Rebbi Shimon Bar Yohai himself. Moreover, pilgrims believe that Rebbi Shimon Bar Yohai is present at local shrines on the eve of the Lag b’Omer pilgrimages.

2. Hillulot, also celebrated in homes or synagogues, do not necessarily entail pilgrimage to shrines. Moroccan Jews, however, often use the terms *hillulah* and pilgrimage (Fr. *pèlerinage*; Ar. *ziyara*) interchangeably. In general, pilgrimage is considered an integral part of the hillulah experience, and for this reason I use the terms synonymously in this article.

3. The relationship between pilgrimage and tourism has been explored in a variety of secular and religious contexts (see Cohen 1992; Dubisch 1995; Frey 1998; Graburn 1977; Levy 1997). On the political economy of international tourism, see Crick 1989.

4. This self-consciousness has been institutionally formalized in transnational organizations such as the Global Assembly of Moroccan Judaism (see Note 20).

5. This is not to say that these national boundaries and identities are never significant, but rather that a transnational Moroccan Jewish identity creates contexts for circuits of movement, exchange, and identity in which international boundaries may be subordinated. Insofar as one attends to newfound national identities assumed by Moroccan Jews in the states to which they have emigrated (cf. Levy 1997), one can reasonably speak of the international context of Moroccan Jewish pilgrimage. I do attend to such identities and, as such, do not discuss the important distinctions between pilgrims arriving from Israel, France, Canada, and so forth. My analysis invites an investigation of these distinctions, which I intend to pursue elsewhere. Such an approach would further

complicate the category of “pilgrim” and illuminate the ways in which the transnational and the international are in dynamic tension.

6. Although only a relatively small number of communal hillulot continue to be celebrated, over 600 Moroccan Jewish saints have been identified (Ben-Ami 1984).

7. To take a single example of this integration, one of the most popular poems sung at pilgrimages hinges around a refrain thanking “[all of] the dear saints.” The total number of verses varies according to the skill, energy, and creativity of the singers. Each verse refers to a different saint and often mentions the location of the saint’s shrine as well (see Ben-Ami 1998).

8. The attributes of Jewish holy men, particularly their function as exemplars of piety and as intercessors between persons and God, suggest the term *saint* as a convenient English gloss. For commentaries on the use of the term *saint* in Jewish and Moroccan contexts, see Cohn 1987, Cornell 1998, and Jacobs 1990. The great antiquity of saint veneration among Jews in Morocco is asserted by pilgrims themselves. French colonial scholars commonly portrayed saint veneration among Jews and Muslims as survivals of prehistoric Berber animism (Voinot 1948). Without making any claims as to the prevalence of pilgrimage in Jewish Morocco in the premodern period, I simply note that pilgrims understand the practice to be a long-standing part of their cultural tradition.

9. See Goldberg 1983:67, 1996:26–27, Schroeter and Chetrit 1996:102. According to informants, during the early part of the 20th century, the largest hillulot attracted upwards of 20,000 pilgrims. Newspaper articles and photographs confirm the large scale of pilgrimages during this period. An article appearing in 1932 in the Judeo-Moroccan press, for example, estimates that 15,000 pilgrims attended the hillulah of Rebbi Amram Ben Diwan that year (*Union Marocaine* 1932).

10. See, for example, “La veille du Conseil annuel des Rabbins du Maroc: La Hilloula” in *La Voix des Communautés* 1951.

11. For an example of colonial critiques of money at pilgrimage, see Abbou 1953:383.

12. Contemporary studies of Moroccan Jewish pilgrimage have been conducted primarily by Israeli anthropologists whose research has been based predominantly on interviews conducted with North African immigrants in Israel and on ethnographic research conducted at Israeli shrines that attract North African adherents. The few examples of Morocco-based research have, correspondingly, focused on pilgrim-tourists returning from Israel (Levy 1997). Kenneth Brown (1989) has commented on the relationship between the religious and commercial motivations of Moroccan migrants to Israel. His discussion is one of the few to note a tight connection between mobility, commerce, and hillulot, especially in the transnational relationship between Morocco and Israel.

13. I do not mean to simplify the ways in which Morocco and Israel compete as Jewish homelands, as they do in a range of Moroccan practices and discourses. I only want to suggest that certain, especially economic, aspects of Jewish pilgrimage in Morocco are mediated within the Moroccan-Jewish diaspora, of which Israel is one part.

14. For a similar argument regarding Christian pilgrimage in Greece, see Danforth 1989.

15. Pilgrimage studies, more generally, have been characterized by a reevaluation of Turner’s emphasis on *communitas* and an increased emphasis on hierarchy and contestation. For a review of this analytical turn, see Dubisch 1995:41–47. Although a *communitas* approach has been dominant in studies of hillulot, several authors have, in varying degrees, appreciated the competitive and hierarchical social dynamics of North

African Jewish pilgrimage with regard to intercommunal and interethnic tensions in Israel (Shokeid 1974; Weingrod 1990a). Yoram Bilu (1988) has proposed that Moroccan pilgrims in Israel enact a form of sibling rivalry as they attempt to acquire the limited blessings of petitioned saints. My analysis of hillulot extends and foregrounds a sensitivity to pilgrimage competition and hierarchy based on class and enacted in the pecuniary rituals of charity.

16. For population estimates, see *Les Cahier de la Alliance Israelite Universelle* 1997:37. My estimate of the population in the 1990s is based on discussions with CJCM leaders. Although the CJCM does not keep exact statistics, it is likely that the number of Jews living in Morocco at the time of my research was closer to 5,000 than 10,000.

17. On the revitalization of the CJCM, see Levy 1994.

18. Until the early 1990s, the CJCM appointed a "president of holy places" whose responsibilities included the administration of all pilgrimages. Through the 1990s, the CJCM retained its authority over pilgrimages even as individual pilgrimages continued to be organized by "local" committees, members of which now reside predominantly in Casablanca. Tensions between the CJCM and pilgrimage committees frequently erupt around issues of administrative authority and rights to shrine income.

19. The transnational revitalization of hillulot suggests a reconsideration of André Levy's (1994) emphasis on the "contraction" of saints and shrines. While there has been an overall diminution in the number of active shrines and pilgrims, the trend has not been uniform nor have hillulot been generally characterized by a "depressed and gloomy" atmosphere (Levy 1994:139). Indeed, the shrine of David U-Moshe, which Levy observed as having lost its previously prominent position, hosted one of the largest transnational hillulot in 1996.

20. Ethnic community associations have been created throughout the Moroccan Jewish diaspora, especially in Israel, France, and Canada. Among the events organized by these associations are hillulot, now celebrated in these and other countries (Cerneia 1988). In 1985, the Global Assembly of Moroccan Judaism was formed partly to facilitate the interaction among diasporic Moroccan Jewish communities.

21. Official diplomatic relations between Morocco and Israel were established in 1994. Previously, Jews returning from Israel traveled on European passports or were required to apply for Moroccan entry visas in European cities. By the time of my research, entry visas could be obtained in Israel, Israeli travel agents were organizing group tours to Morocco, and several direct commercial flights between the two countries had been chartered.

22. As part of an initial national politics of Jewish political inclusion, Dr. Léon Benzaquen was appointed as the first minister of post and telegraphs. For commentary on Benzaquen's short-lived tenure and on the early involvement of Jews in national government, see Dahan 1995.

23. For summary perspectives on these varied diasporic experiences, see the often autobiographically informed essays in *Juifs de Maroc* 1980.

24. While I was in Morocco, rumors circulated that the royal government was developing strategies to attract Jewish repatriation. The King's oft quoted remarks to the effect that he continued to recognize Moroccan Jews abroad as royal subjects and national citizens were viewed in this light. More specifically, I heard of indefinite plans to develop a seaside nursing home in Tangiers for aged Jews who might want to return to live out their lives in Morocco. I did know a handful of Jewish men who had returned to Morocco to pursue economic opportunities, but virtually all Moroccan Jews I met found the idea of mass repatriation unthinkable.

25. For a graphic example of the development and profitability of Jewish Tourism see: http://www.heritagetoursonline.com/jewish_heritage.html, accessed April 11, 2002.

26. See, for example, "Retrouvailles à l'ombre d'un saint" in *Information Juive* 1986.

27. For example, see "Morocco: Coexistence for the Sons of Abraham" in the *Jewish Exponent* 1992.

28. For a related discussion on Muslim pilgrimage in Morocco, see Reysoo 1991:181–192.

29. For example, see "La Haïloula, ou le pèlerinage des sept saints des Ouled Ben-Zmirou à Safi" in *Le Matin du Sahara et du Maghreb* 1995.

30. The Moroccan Jewish community receives financial support and services from a number of international Jewish organizations, including the American Joint Distribution Committee, the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, Lubavitch/Habad, and the *Organisation Reconstruction Travail*.

31. It is difficult to calculate the percentage of annual income which local vendors derive from the pilgrimage economy. However, informal interviews with marketers and local service providers (e.g., hoteliers, taxi drivers) suggest that they consider pilgrimages an important economic opportunity.

32. The role of pilgrimages and shrines in transforming exchanges between men into ongoing relationships with saints also characterizes Moroccan Muslim practices (see Crapanzano 1973; Eickelman 1976).

33. Where shrines are dedicated to saints whose sacred lineage extends to the present, as in the cases of Rebbi Haim Pinto and Rebbi David Ben Barukh, living members of the family are recognized by many as the rightful stewards of funds collected at pilgrimages.

34. For numerous examples of relevant hagiographic folk tales, see Ben-Ami 1998.

35. Klal yisrael is also fractured by social divisions that refer to criteria other than wealth, class, and charitable display. My intention here is not to suggest that identities of gender, age, current residence, and so forth, are insignificant in the inflection of social difference at hillulot. My emphasis on identities of wealth, rather, is only intended to analytically foreground some aspects of pilgrim identity and hillulah practice that have previously received little ethnographic attention.

36. The French term *pauvres* is used most often in the context of the affairs of the CJCM. At pilgrimages and in other contexts, the CJCM has attempted to transform the poor into a category of individuals serviceable by a social welfare bureaucracy, as opposed to dealing with them as a node in a sacred economy of exchange. Thus, for example, at some hillulot the CJCM has taken to posting charity boxes with captions enjoining pilgrims to "pensez à nos pauvres" (think of our poor).

37. A similar relationship between the ritual poor, charity, and saints is established at Moroccan Muslim pilgrimages. The categorical poor (Ar. *foqra*) at Muslim pilgrimages (Ar. *mwasem*, sing. *musem*), however, may include all the living descendants of the saintly lineage who are entitled to a share of the proceeds (Crapanzano 1973).

38. Victor Turner remarks on a similar relationship between pilgrimage petition and orthodox liturgy in the context of Catholic pilgrimage: "Now pilgrimage may be regarded as an accelerator of normal liturgical practice. It is popularly felt that the merits acquired by the saint or martyr lent power to masses said on the altar of a church dedicated to him" (1979:136).

39. Dale Eickelman has written about a similar relationship among alms, the poor, and Muslim saints (marabouts) in Morocco: "Ideologically, the giving and receiving of alms (*sadaqa*) between Moroccans are also outside the calculus of obligation. Nonetheless, an implicitly triangular reciprocity is involved. Beggars ask God or a marabout to repay the donor on their behalf" (Eickelman 1976). A corresponding triadic relationship among beggars, donors and sacred reward appears in the ethnography of Jewish life in the Eastern European *shtetl* (Zborowski and Herzog 1952:191–214).

40. Muslim vendors are generally restricted from access to areas directly surrounding saints' tombs. On several occasions, I did witness Muslim marketers attempting to hawk their wares near a saint's tomb. At the behest of pilgrims, these vendors were forcibly removed by soldiers stationed at the shrine.

41. It is worth noting that the range of responses to candle sales problematizes any construction of "modern" pilgrims as a homogenous category. Shrine officials committed to the bureaucratization of pilgrimage charity under a central authority did not necessarily question the power of saints to compensate donors of charity. To the contrary, the very same officials who halted the independent selling of candles sometimes functioned as auctioneers in candle auctions and performed hagiographic narratives and poems that hailed the miraculous powers of saints.

42. As a category of persons, the wealthy are called '*ashirim* (sing. '*ashir*) in Hebrew and *tujar* (sing. *tajer*) in Arabic. Both terms connote wealth specifically acquired through successful business and commercial endeavors rather than wealth more generally (Ar. *ghani*). These terms, however, do not have nearly the same currency at pilgrimages as those used to refer to the poor.

43. Winning bids must eventually be paid. Outstanding debts to the shrine committees, however, are not always forthcoming. Indeed, auctioneers sometimes begin the proceedings with an entreaty that past debts to the saint should be paid and forthcoming debts should be settled quickly. The negotiation of payments, however, takes place off the public stage and is motivated by responsibility to the saint and expectations of recompense rather than by the competition for social honor.

44. A rhetoric of inflated numbers is exploited in a variety of Moroccan discourses through which finances are negotiated and wealth is displayed. I am not suggesting that this rhetoric is unique to auction poetics but rather that it is central.

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