BAGEL, BAGELRY, SMOKED MEAT AND DELI AS THE JEWISH PART OF MONTREAL'S CULINARY HERITAGE.

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1. Introduction

On July 13, 2011, Pierre Bellerose, 'Public relations, Product research and development VP for Tourism Montreal' invited his blog's readers to 'taste Montreal's culinary heritage'. He drew a list of his 'favorite addresses', all 'restaurants of another time' that 'kept their old character'. Among the ten cited restaurants, six were Jewish.

> *Fairmount Bagel, opened in '1919, [by] Isadore Shlafman […,] first bagel bakery in Montreal, in an alley adjacent to Saint-Laurent boulevard'; Schwartz's, 'opened in 1928 by a Jewish immigrant from Romania: Reuben Schwartz'; Beauty's, 'opened in 1942 by Hymnie and Freda Sckolnick, in the Jewish neighborhood of the time'; Déli Lesters, opened in 1951; St.-Viateur Bagel, 'opened in 1957, [it] is an integral part of Montrealers' culture and daily life'; Moishes, 'founded in 1938 by another Central European Jew (Moishe Lighter from Romania)' (Bellerose, 2011).*

Pierre Bellerose's list is peculiar in that, among the Jewish establishments, two sell bagels (we will qualify them as *bagelries*), three offer smoked meat (we will call them delis, diminutive of *Delicatessen*), only one, the tenth, is a more classical restaurant, namely a steak house. We can read a history of Judaism in Montreal in the following discourse:

> *'One of the more striking aspects of Jewish life in Montreal has to do with food. Two specialties, smoked meat and bagels, have strongly contributed to making the community known, and even to giving it a certain fame beyond the city. It was foremost Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe who gave the Main their very distinctive culinary traditions. Steaming bagels, decorated with sesame or poppy seeds, were everywhere popular. In fact, Montrealers of all origins quickly converged on Saint-Laurent boulevard to give smoked meat its aura of living legend. Many people lived their first significant contact with Jewish culture when they finally went to the Main to taste the dish.' (King, 2002: 115)*

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Our motivation in writing this article came from the remarquable concordance between Bellerose's list and King's remarks. It would seem that Montreal's gastronomical heritage corresponds almost exactly and almost exclusively to Jewish culinary specialties. And it is a largely proven fact, an experience highly recommended by tourist guides and travel chronicles[1], that in Montreal, bagels and smoked meat are the first dishes that one should taste. This would tend to *overvalorize* Jewish gastronomy in a city where Jews only make up 2.6% of the population[2].

2. Method

In this article, we adopted a process in three simple steps that we can present very briefly. In a first time, we will identify the main facts that make bagels, bagelries, smoked meat and delis artefacts of Montreal's culinary heritage; for that we will mobilize both our own experience as a consumer and stories and essays around them. In a second time, we will choose a theory that will enable us to understand to which type and which grade of hybridity the presence of bagels, bagelries, smoked meat and delis in Montreal bear witness; we will borrow it from the study of religion which is used to treat questions of religious and cultural hybridity. Lastly, we will specify of which hybridity bagels, bagelries, smoked meat and delis are the signs; we will formulate hypotheses, which we will submit to different tests[3].

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[1] On Schwartz's reputation, Nash writes: 'And should anyone wonder what "good things" people have said, the most famous accolades can be seen not only on the restaurant walls but repeated to such an extent in tourist guides, websites and newspaper columns that, long bereft of their original sources, they have come to have a currency of their own.' Nash, A. (2011). Smoke and Mirrors? Montreal Smoked Meat and the Creation of Tradition. In H. Saberi (dir.), Cured, fermented and smoked foods: proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2010 (p. 211–220). Totness, England: Prospect Books, p. 213. Alan Nash's article was brought to my attention by Dr Susan Weingarten, Department of Jewish History à Tel Aviv University.

[2] According to the 2001 Census, which contains the most recent numbers relative to religions, Christians represented 84.6% of the population and Jews, 2.8% (Muslims: 3%) (Source: Statistics Canada, « Certaines religions, pour les régions métropolitaines de recensement et les agglomérations de recensement – Donées-échantillon [20 %] ». Recensement de la population 2001). In 2001, Montreal hosted the second Jewish community in Canada, namely 92,970 individuals. Jews were 101,000 in 1991.

[3] We renounce to discuss here the notion of 'heritage', 'patrimony' or '*patrimoine*'. Elsewhere, we have demonstrated the gendered dimension of the French term 'patrimoine' and the impossibility of including food in a 'immaterial heritage' category see: Bauer, O. 2009a. Le mot et la chose, l'hostie dans le matrimoine du Québec. Accessed: 2010, September 16 from: http://www.usask.ca/relst/jrpc/art(se)-Hostie_Matrimoine.html. We have proposed the use of the term '*matrimoine*', especially to designate 'culinary matrimoine'. 'Recognizing a "*matrimoine*", next to the "*patrimoine*" renews our outlook on heritage. It enables us to recognize the patrimonial – or matrimonial – value of goods, both material and immaterial, that are

3. Some Facts

Let us start by stating some facts about bagels and smoked meat.

3.1. What are bagels and smoked meat?

What is a bagel? A sort of rounded bread with a hole in the middle. Yet Montreal's is a specific bagel with a unique taste: *'The "authentic" Montreal bagel [is] a sweeter, less chewy bread than its New York cousin.'* (Balinska, 2008: 185) This is due as much to its ingredients – adding malt and eggs to the dough – than to the way it is prepared:

> *'There is not a sliver of stainless steel in either the St.-Viateur or Fairmount bakeries. Their bagels are rolled by hand; the ovens are wood-burning and never shut down; the hot bagels are tipped out into a long, wooden through set at an angle, rolling down slowly to the cash register and the customer at the head of the queue.' (Balinska, 2008: 185)*

What is smoked meat? It is a dish *à la mode de Montréal*, the result of an intercultural recipe, adopted as much as adapted, indisputably Ashkenazi, familiar with multiple Central European countries.

> *'While Montreal smoked meat's origins may lie in Romania, Lithuania, or even the Lower East Side of Manhattan, it is now Montreal's own. Outside the city it is always referred to as Montreal smoked meat, but in Montreal, it is simply called smoked meat or le smoked meat and is earn with religious devotion.' (Sax, 2009: 195)*

3.2. How are bagels and smoked meat prepared?

Preparing a bagel requires a specific technique:

> *'[The baker] first needs a fast gesture of the hand to roll a ring directly from a long strip of dough. The round bun is then dipped for about five minutes in boiling water to which honey was added. An experienced worker can roll up to a thousand bagels an hour. The bagels are then sprinkled with sesame or black poppy seeds, and are then placed on a long board (shiba in Yiddish) which serves to insert them within the hearth next to the fire.' (King, 2002: 120)*

Bagels are sold by the piece, or preferably by six or the dozen. It can be eaten on the spot, in front of the *bagelry* – whole or sliced and filled with cream cheese or smoked salmon, for example – or be taken away for later, but quickly as it loses its taste quickly.

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ephemeral, that have no market value nor owner, that are constantly evolving. The term valorizes the essential role that women play in the constitution of "patrimoine" and "matrimoine", in their conservation, their interpretation and their transmission.' Bauer, O. 2009b. Les goûts du matrimoine religieux. In: S. Lefebvre, éd. Le patrimoine religieux du Québec. Éducation et transmission du sens. Laval : Presses de l'Université Laval, pp. 109-122.

Smoked meat is prepared with pieces of Alberta beef, seasoned with a highly secret spice mix based on coarse salt, ground pepper, garlic, herbs and sugar. They are then marinated during a week, smoked for multiple hours and steamed[4]. Finally, they are cut by hand in very thin slices. Smoked meat are served on a plate or on slices of rye bread seasoned with mustard and topped with gherkins (Sax, 2009: 197). The result is typically Montreal[5] and savoring it is a real sensory experience, described in poetic terms by Sax:

> *'The waiter deposits the pièce de résistance, a smoked meat sandwich barely holding itself together, the fast strips of streaming meat hanging over the edge of the bread that defies the urge to collapse against all of Newton's laws. The meat is a wild mess of carnivorous beauty: at parts, black and sticky, at points a light rose, mostly a meaty maroon. Weighing in at roughly fir ounces, it's at the smaller end of the deli sandwiches scale, though you'll never leave Schwartz's hungry. Half of the smoked meat sandwich is drawn to the mouth, where a bouquet of whole peppercorns and coriander seeds and faint hints of brown sugar rise up from the meat, through the nose, and into the brain. This is a taste of smoked meat in its purest, finest, and most famous form: a touch spicy, a bit salty, always fatty, and foremost tender. The sandwich disappears in eight bites, a glorious, debauched, greasy invocation of pure animal savagery. Haven.' (Sax, 2009: 199)*

3.3. When did bagels and smoked meat arrive in Montreal?

The bagel was obviously not born in Montreal. It is most probably from Poland, where it coexisted by

[4] « There were and still are several secret formulas based mainly on the combination of salt and spices used to coat the briskets. Variations in secret curing ingredients will affect flavour, but the most important aspect of a successful outcome is the cooking. An inferior cut of beef may be improved with careful cooking. Conversely, a superior brisket could be transformed into an outstanding taste experience with expert cooking. The secret formula is in the cooking as well as the curing. Expert trimming of the briskets by a butcher also contributes to quality. Traditionally, the dry curing process commenced with salt and spices being rubbed on the surfaces of briskets which were then piled into wooden barrels where they remained marinating in their own juices for a period of 12 to 20 days depending on the thicknesses, and being turned over a couple of times. The cured briskets were then hung up on racks which were placed in a smokehouse and cooked for six to nine hours depending on brisket size. Their progress was checked occasionally. This form of cooking caused a 25 percent loss in volume, but resulted in the unique quality and flavour of Montreal-style smoked meat. In conformity with kosher rules, the meat was taken from the forequarters of the animal, usually a steer. The brisket was used for Montreal-style smoked meat and the fattier cut called the plate was used for pastrami. » Harris, E. (2009). Montreal-Style Smoked Meat. An interview with Eiran Harris conducted by Lara Rabinovich, with the cooperation of the Jewish Public Library Archives of Montreal. Cuizine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures/Cuizine: revue des cultures culinaires au Canada, 1(2). Spotted on http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/037859ar, § 96–99

[5] Its recipe borrows from two ways to prepare meat: pastrami and corned beef. 'If pastrami is spiced, smoked navel and corned beef is pickled, boiled brisket, then Montreal smoked meat (listen carefully) is a combination of the two: a brisket cured and smoked like a pastrami, with slightly different spicing.' Sax, D. (2009). Save the deli: in search of perfect pastrami, crusty rye and the heart of Jewish delicatessen. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, p. 196.

obwarzanek, a Gentile (non-Jewish) version of the same bun. Legend traces it back to 1683, when the 'Turks' besieged Vienna. A Jewish baker to honor Jan Sobieski, king of Poland, who defeated them, would have created it. The craftsman would have found inspiration in the shape of the king's stirrup (*Beugel* in German). The legend is beautiful, but most certainly wrong. A first mention of the bagel can be found in a text from 1610, a sumptuary law of the City of Krakow that wanted to limit spending during rites and celebrations, as much Christian– *'The Elders of Krakow were particular in their instructions on just when bagels should be consumed and by whom. Among gentiles, the* obwarzanek*, continued to be eaten, especially during Lent.'* (Balinska, 2008: 18) – as Jewish: *'Specifically, the bagel regulation in question pertains to the celebrations to mark the circumcision of a baby boy. In great detail the document prescribes who may "send for" bagels, cakes and* challah*, and who may receive them.'* (Balinska, 2008:46)

But the bagel's history begins to interest Montreal when it crosses the Atlantic Ocean. If it is impossible to precisely date the bagel's arrival in North America, we nonetheless know that it was brought there by the waves of Jewish immigrants who were fleeing the pogroms of Central Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. We also know that the bagel quickly became pivotal in the North American Jews' diet, as Balinska puts it, *'the new immigrants' steadfast craving for it'* (Balinska, 2008: 96). We finally know that the bagel became a distinctive mark not only of Jewish cuisine, but also of its culture.

> *'Over the course of the twentieth century, the bagel seems to have acquired the status of a touchstone of Jewishness within the American Jewish community – and not necessarily in a positive sense – as the children and grandchildren of Jewish immigrants moved out to the suburbs and assimilated into mainstream American culture. Bagels, or rather the combination of bagels and lox on Sunday morning, became dismissive shorthand for people who had only a superficial link with their Jewish identity.' (Balinska, 2008: 193)*

But this identification of the bagel to Jewish culture did not please everyone. It especially angered bagel makers who were limited to one particular customer base. In the sixties, Murray Lender, co-owner of one of the largest bagel factories, who succeeded in establishing frozen bagels sold in plastic bags, wrote:

> *'A bagel has versatility. When most people call it a Jewish product, it hurts us. It's a roll, a roll with personality. If you must be ethnic, you can call it a Jewish English muffin with personality. You can use it for breakfast, sandwiches, TV snacks, dinner rolls – from morning till evening. We don't talk of bagels, lox (Nova Scotia salmon) and cream cheese. It limits them. Think of toasted bagels and jam, if you like.' Murray Lender quoted by (Balinska, 2008: 159)*

Seeking to conquer new markets, the Lender company achieved in *un-Judaizing* the bagel and imposing it to all Americans. With certain success, as, in 1984, Lender produced 750 million bagels a year.

The history of smoked meat in Montreal was meticulously and rigorously described by Eiran Harris, archivist emeritus of the Jewish Public Library Archives in Montreal (Harris, 2009). In particular, he

settled the nagging question of its introduction in Montreal. We first wavered between Bern Krawitz who claimed to have opened the first deli, Ben Delicatessen, in 1910, and Wolf Wiseman who had apparently begun selling smoked meat on Ontario Street in 1911. It then seemed that a Herman Rees Roth had left New York to open in Montreal the British-American Delicatessen in 1908 already (Sax, 2009: 195). But Harris maintains that Montreal owes its smoked meat to Aaron Sanft, a Jewish immigrant from Romania who founded, in 1884, the first kosher butcher's shop of Montreal[6].

> *'The actual genesis was the arrival in 1884 of Aaron Sanft from Yassi, Romania. He became Montreal's first kosher butcher. Historians believe that modern day smoked meat originated in Turkey and was brought to Romania by invading Turkish armies. Romanian Jewish butchers improved the curing process resulting in an exquisitely tender delicacy.' (Harris, 2009: § 7)*

3.4. Where are bagels and smoked meat eaten?

The oldest delis, the most typical and renowned bagelries are almost all to be found in the neighborhoods surrounding Saint-Laurent Boulevard[7]. This concentration is not accidental since it is on the long Saint-Laurent Boulevard – it crosses the whole island from South to North – that Jewish immigrants settled in the beginning of the twentieth century. The settlement occurred in two periods, first at the bottom of the boulevard, close to the harbor[8], then, after the First World War, climbing the boulevard northwards:

> *'As with other Montrealers before them, it did not take long for Jews to feel constricted in the old neighborhoods of the city and they likewise started, shortly after the end of the First World War, moving up towards the suburbs on the North side of the city. Actually, many were only following their workplaces that were "migrating" to the Plateau-Mont-Royal thanks to electrification. And the mechanization of industrial processes. In this sense, the building of large factories along Saint-Laurent Boulevard and the*

[6] Harris however reports a first mention of smoked meat in Montreal in 1876, sold by a non-Jewish company: 'The earliest ad in Montreal mentioning smoked meats, of which I am aware, appeared in 1876, announcing that they were being manufactured by the Canadian Meat and Produce Company, whose agents were McGibbon, Baird & Company of Montreal. These were not Jewish-style products.' Harris, E. (2009). Montreal-Style Smoked Meat. An interview with Eiran Harris conducted by Lara Rabinovich, with the cooperation of the Jewish Public Library Archives of Montreal. Cuizine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures/Cuizine: revue des cultures culinaires au Canada, 1(2). Spotted on http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/037859ar, § 6.

[7] Renamed Main Boulevard with the English conquest, once again officially boulevard Saint-Laurent, it remains known as '*la Main*', '*Main*' being pronounced the English way, in a Frenglish typical of a hybrid Montreal.

[8] 'Already from 1905, Jews constituted the most important immigrant community in Montreal. In 1911, they were almost 30,000, nearly all settled along Saint-Laurent boulevard, and, in 1931, just under 60,000.' Anctil, P. (2002). Saint-Laurent : la Main de Montréal. [Montréal] : Pointe-à-Callière, musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal : 50.

> *concentration, in the same area, of the Jewish population, go hand in hand between the two wars.' [Anctil, 2002: 52-54]*[9]

But, as well as hosting the immigrants[10], Saint-Laurent Boulevard filled – and partly still fills – another function. Administratively, it splits the city of Montreal between East and West[11]. Symbolically, it separates it between Francophones and Anglophones, the East attributed to French speakers and the West to English speakers[12].

Delis and *bagelries* thus opened on a Saint-Laurent boulevard that was at once a fault line and meeting point between Francophones and Anglophones, between immigrants and Montrealers.

3.5. Who eats bagels and smoked meat?

It is evident that Montreal Jews eat bagels and smoked meat. The bagel itself is certainly popular among Jews since the addition of other ingredients than flower and water makes something other than bread. The kashrut then allows a Jew to buy it and eat it immediately, without proceeding to the rituals required before consuming bread. As testimony to this Jewish taste for bagels, *bagelries* and delis have multiplied through the years, following the movements of the Jewish population: from Saint-Laurent boulevard to the Mile End, then to Outremont, Town Mount Royal, Saint-Laurent Borough, and afterwards to the West Island, Côte-Saint-Luc, Hampstead, etc.

But Montreal's Jews would not have sufficed to make the numerous bagelries and delis viable. Bagels and smoked meat needed to please a non-Jewish clientele as well[13].

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[9] A period which corresponds with the founding of most of the Jewish restaurants cited by Pierre Bellerose, opened between 1919 and 1957.

[10] After the Jews, Chinese, then Italian, and finally Greek, Portuguese and Hungarian immigrants moved on Saint-Laurent boulevard, *'setting about settling in Montreal in a neighborhood which already wore manifest marks of pluriethnicity'* Anctil, P. (2002). Saint-Laurent : la Main de Montréal : 63.

[11] In 1792, 'it was decided to make Saint-Laurent road the administrative demarcation line between Eastern and Western territories of [Montreal] municipality' [Anctil, 21]. Saint-Laurent boulevard has divided addresses between East and West for more than a hundred years (http://www.imtl.org/rue_montreal.php?rue=Saint-Laurent).

[12] Of course, this is but a perception, which rests on a historical reality since, 'until the beginning of the twentieth century, Francophones and Anglophones made up […] distinct communities side by side on the Plateau-Mont-Royal, from where comes this perception that Saint-Laurent boulevard is also a demarcation line within the city'. (Anctil, P. – 2002–. Saint-Laurent: la Main de Montréal : 32-33). In Montreal's imagination, the city still remains thus divided, even though, of course, populations are not as homogeneous anymore.

[13] A food item's success outside of its original ethnic group is one of the reason turning it into iconic food: *'As such, of course, Montreal smoked meat has a significance to a population much larger than merely its regular consumer.'* Nash, A. (2011). Smoke and

> *'It was only the adoption of smoked meat by French Canadians, largely in the late 1960s and 1970s, that saved Montreal's delis from total decline. For the entirety of the 1980s and much of the 1990s, Montreal endured a bitter recession.' (Sax, 2009: 204)*

3.6. How much do bagels and smoked meat cost?

The bagel's low price certainly represented a determining factor for its adoption by Montrealers. *Bagelries* and delis found among the garment industry's (the *Schmatte Business*) workers their first and most loyal clients. 'Delis were, and remain, the communal watering holes for garmentos' (Sax, 2009: 202). It is true that their prices long were unbeatable[14]:

> *'When delis [were] first opened at the start of the century by poor Jews, it was affordable food that served the people who worked in those neighborhoods and in the garment trade, namely French Canadian and Jews.' Robert Beauchemin quoted by (Sax, 2009: 201)*

But what remained true for so long is not so anymore. Today, Schwartz's smoked meat, whether in a sandwich or on a plate, is not such a cheap meal anymore. Many fast food establishments offer hamburgers for equivalent or lesser prices. Of course, some will say that those two products are not comparable, which might be true. Nonetheless, smoked meat is not anymore the cheapest way to eat.

Why are bagels more Jewish than smoked meat?

Besides their nutritional value, bagels and smoked meat also present a symbolic dimension. With differences, though.

We have only found one mention of a symbolic value for smoked meat, when Sax reveals the initiation role that it played in his accession to adulthood. It had nothing to do with Judaism, but everything to do with life in Montreal.

> *'Dad initiated us into the rituals of Montreal Jewish manhood, like the way to ask for the hottest hand-rolled bagels, fresh from the wood-fired oven at St. Viateur Bagel Bakery. It was my father and his best friend, Stephen Rothstein, who first brought me to Schwartz's Hebrew Delicatessen, Dad pointing out the piled white slices of speck in the shop's window, saying, "This is what killed Poppa Sam," while Rothstein*

Mirrors? Montreal Smoked Meat and the Creation of Tradition. Dans H. Saberi (dir.), *Cured, fermented and smoked foods: proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2010* (p. 211–220). Totness, England: Prospect Books, p. 218

[14] In 1908, the British-American Delicatessen sold a smoked meat for five cents with the following arguments: "'We intend to make ourselves famous with our ready-to-serve hot corned beef, fresh twice daily." It was further declared that: "Our aim is not to sell you the cheapest goods, but only the highest grade goods at the lowest price possible. In connection with our store we have an elegant lunch room with the right service at all times.'" Harris, E. (2009). Montreal-Style Smoked Meat. An interview with Eiran Harris conducted by Lara Rabinovich, with the cooperation of the Jewish Public Library of Montreal. Cuizine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures/Cuizine: revue des cultures culinaires au Canada, 1(2). Spotted on http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/037859ar, § 35

> *correctly demonstrated the way to eat Karnataka, a long, thin Romanian beef salami that Montrealers hang to dry until it literally snaps. Rothstein took a single slice of rye, painted it with yellow mustard, and rolled it around the dark stick of meat. It was the first time I ever ate mustard, and I recall how its sour tinge perfectly offset the garlicky beef.' (Sax, 2009: 194)*

The situation is completely different for the bagel, to which Judaism confers the power of a theological symbol. It owes it foremost to its shape, an elemental torus. Pierre Anctil, when he writes the history of Judaism in Quebec, signals that 'the bagel is first connected to a conception of the Divine, and to Its image it reflects Its infinity, having neither beginning nor end, neither front nor back' (Anctil, 1997: 165). And when related to human existence, this circular shape evokes immortality, making bagels consumed during some rites of passage:

> *'The bagel's shape has a distinctive signification to Jews. It is a symbol recalling the eternal cycle of life, and which had to property to attract good fortune. In the Old World, bagels were frequently served during circumcision ceremonies, when a woman was about to give birth or during periods of mourning following a death, then most often accompanied with boiled eggs. This combination of round forms had to make bad spirits flee in the eyes of the superstitious.' (King, 2002: 120)*

In her impressive history of the bagel, Balinska signals an interesting evolution regarding its symbolism. If the symbolic medium used to be the solid, the perimeter, hence the bread, in the beginning of the twentieth century, Yiddish culture invests meaning into the hollow, the hole, the void. 'But what does that hole represent? Nothingness? Infinity? What a feast for intellectual discussion in a small roll' (Balinska, 2008: 66). In this perspective, she tells an anecdote, of a Rabi in Stamford, Connecticut, which centered four sermons on the bagel:

> *"Why does [the bagel] stand out, at least among Ashkenazi Jews, as the quintessential Jewish food? And then it hit me. It's the hole." And so he continues, for four sermons, arguing that the hole is not just about "the yearning, the hunger, the dissatisfaction, the fear, the emptiness, the depression, the anger and the mortality". The significance of the hole, what makes it Jewish, is also how it is filled. A hole can be a tragedy, but, "we arise from the shiva [mourning] bench and remember our dead not with endless bitterness and regret but with … acts of kindness … not to deny tragedy – rather to grow from it." The bagel's roundness is about inclusiveness – "the Jewish ideal of the synthesis of alone and together". "Round foods," concluded the rabbi on the Day of Atonement, "that's our response to blood and swastikas. A delicious honey dipped challah. And a bagel with a hole."' (Balinska, 2008: 195)*

4. Of which hybridity bagels and bagelries, smoked meat and delis signal?

Having established that bagels and bagelries, smoked meat and delis form part of Montreal's culinary heritage, if it appears that such typically Jewish foods and establishments in a city with a strong Christian

majority testify to a form of hybridity, we have yet to understand of which hybridity bagels and bagelries, smoked meat and delis are the sign.

For if hybrid is a convenient and politically correct concept, it is also a polysemous concept that can take multiple forms resulting from different types of crossings. To better distinguish them, we think that the study of religion, armed with expertise in the study of how diverse religions, diverse spiritualties and diverse philosophies met and mixed in diverse regions, diverse times, diverse cultures and diverse contexts, can aid in recognizing and qualifying those different forms of hybridity.

Thus, when the Canadian historian Cornelius J. Jaenen examines the 'Amerindian responses to French Missionary Intrusion' between 1611 and 1760, he distinguishes 'for the sake of convenience and clarity […] eight categories, four of which could be termed negative and four of which could be called positive responses' (Jaenen 1985: 185). He classifies them on a scale organizing responses from the most negative to the most positive:

> *[-4] 'Aggressive response' (185), [-3] 'hostile and derisive rejection' (187), [-2] 'manifest disinterest and indifference' (189), [-1] 'the assertion of the existence of dichotomous universe, with a present and a hereafter designed for Europeans and another for the Amerindians' (190); [+1] 'responses which tended more to positive results than to rejection' (191), [+2] 'religious dimorphism, or the simultaneous assent to both the old ways and the "new religion", each compartmentalized and called upon as circumstances and needs dictated' (192), [+3] 'syncretism, or a marrying of traditional religion with the "new religion", a fusion of elements of both to form a new belief system different from either of its progenitor' (193), [+4] 'fully converted' (Jaenen 1985: 194)*

All those responses, except, of course, the most negative, bears witness to some form of hybridity, more superficial or deeper, more partial or more complete.

To qualify the hybridity of which bagels and bagelries, smoked meat and delis are the sign, we think appropriate to apply the same typology to responses given to a 'gastronomical intrusion', in this case to apply it to the way Montrealers responded to the arrival15 of Jewish gastronomy in the first half of the twentieth century. And of the eight responses put forward by Jaenen, we think that that of a 'culinary dimorphism' generally describes best the way Montrealers at the same time adopted and adapted bagels and bagelries, smoked meat and delis. They would then signal accordingly this particular type of hybridity. But before testing the validity and interest of this hypothesis, let us again stop an instant on this concept of dimorphism.

[15] Considering our context, we substitute here the term 'arrival' to 'intrusion'. If Christianity and European culture have been imposed on Amerindians, Judaism only proposed its food to the Montrealers.

In an article where he mentions Jaenen's typology, Canadian Religious Studies scholar William Closson James defines dimorphism in very simple terms:

> *'In general, dimorphism refers to the occurrence of two distinct forms within one type. The literal meaning of dimorphism is "having two forms"' (James 1999: 281).*

In its simplicity, this concept of dimorphism presents a threefold interest: firstly to recognize that two or more 'forms' can remain distinct all the whilst being hybridized in one bigger 'type': secondly to be able to apply to all kinds of differences16; thirdly to leave the manners of hybridity flexible. Consequently, James presents in his article two very different examples of religious dimorphism.

In Japan, Shintoism and Buddhism are sometimes practices simultaneously; this is why Shinto sanctuaries and Buddhist temples are built on the same grounds, 'so that devotees can move quite readily from Shinto observances to Buddhist practices without any apparent sense of conflict or tension' (James 1999: 278). But they are also practiced successively[17], since the Japanese celebrate Shinto rites for a birth, Buddhist rites for a death and Christian rites for a wedding[18].

In the North of Quebec, Crees responded to evangelism by alternating traditional religious rites, celebrated in winter, during hunts, in wild lands, and Christian practices, celebrated in summer, in daily life, within villages[19].

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[16] Thus, in zoology from where the term comes, dimorphism can be 'seasonal, sexual or functional (suggesting all kinds of rich metaphoric possibilities for religious studies scholars to borrow, mine, exploit or play with' – James 1999: 282 –).

[17] In his article, James evokes two occurrence mode of distinct forms: 'simultaneously or alternatively' (James 1999: 279). We add a third form, of a successive occurrence.

[18] 'Religious responsibilities in Japan, it is well known, are shared between these two major religions so that one is said to be "born Shinto, and die Buddhist". Shinto looks after the rituals of fertility and birth while Buddhism attends to the practices relating to death. Today one might add that many Japanese also "marry Christian" and turn to New Religions in a time of crisis or for spiritual healing' (James, W. C. 1999. Dimorphs and cobblers: Ways of being religious in Canada. Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses 28: 275-291: 279).

[19] 'In the course of the film [*Cree Hunters of Mistassini*] several families are shown engaged in traditional religious rites related to hunting: they tie the bones of animals in a tree; they place some flesh from a pregnant cow moose into the mouths of the fetal calves to ensure continuation of life; after the kill of large game there is drumming at the feast and the men rub bear grease into their hair. Throughout the film there is no depiction whatsoever of any kind of Christian observance, but we know from other sources that when Cree returned to the village of Mistassini during the summer months, they practiced Christianity. It is as if the new religion is for village life while ancestral practices related to hunting are for life on the land. As with the Japanese, situational needs determine which religion is being followed at a given time.' James, W. C. 1999. Dimorphs and cobblers: Ways of being religious in Canada. Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses 28: 275-291: 280.

Armed with this conceptual system, we can now come back to Montreal, to bagels and bagelries, to smoked meat and delis to try and understand if dimorphism can be the hybridity of which they are the sign. We will try this hypothesis through to test: of an eventual culinary dimorphism first, of an eventual patrimonial dimorphism second.

A. Culinary syncretism and dimorphism.

Do bagels and bagelries, smoked meat and delis bear witness to a culinary dimorphism? We will give a nuanced answer to this question.

If, taking James as inspiration, we define culinary dimorphism as 'the persistence of two distinct flavors in a single plate', then we have to answer negatively. Admittedly, bagels and smoked meat are the result of a hybridity, as, like all culinary preparations, they result from mixing distinct ingredients to form a new dish. But this hybridity is not a true dimorphism since the distinct ingredients are not, or not anymore '*compartmentalized*' and cannot each be '*called upon as circumstances and needs dictated*' (Jaenen 1985: 192). Eating a bagel is eating in the same mouthful the flour, the malt, the honey and the eggs. Eating smoked meat is eating the beef and spices altogether. In consequence, on Jaenen's scale, we would rather place bagels and smoked meat within syncretism, seeing as they are the 'fusion of elements to form a new food different from either of its ingredients'.

But if, moving on to the next level, we are not concerned with the ingredients anymore but to the cuisine itself, meaning in the manner of preparing the ingredients, then the answer is positive. Bagels and smoked meat do give evidence to a hybridity of Jewish, Central European and North American cuisine. And, according to James' definition, the '*occurrence of two distinct forms within one type*' (James 1999: 281), it does form dimorphism. Within the two generic types 'bagel' and 'smoked meat' coexist multiple distinct forms: within the 'bagel' type, at least the Polish *obwarzanek*, the New York bagel and its '*sweeter and less chewy*' Montreal cousin (Balinska 2008: 185); and within the 'cold meat' type, at least the spiced and smoked pastrami and the spiced, marinated and smoked Montreal-style smoked meat.

B. Patrimonial dimorphism.

But dimorphism does not only take into account the food itself, but also the culinary heritage, which they integrate. We must then put our hypothesis to a second test and take back Jaenen's question by adapting it to our own topic. We must examine how Montreal[20] responded to the arrival of bagels and smoked

[20] We here prefer talking of Montreal and not of Montrealers for two reasons. The first aims at bypassing the difficult definition of who is a Montrealer and who is not; the second wants to report what in this answer exceed the human being, the desire

meat in the first half of the twentieth century. Should we find that Montreal also enshrined in its culinary heritage foods coming from Jewish cuisine[21], that Montrealers also buy bagels from bagelries, eat smoked meat in delis, then we will have demonstrated that the hybridity of Montreal's culinary heritage truly corresponds to dimorphism.

4.1.1. Geographical dimorphism.

It is certainly in geography that the Montreal's response to the arrival of bagels and smoked meat proves to be the most dimorphic. The bagelries' and delis' map reveals a Jewish Montreal inserted between a Francophone and an Anglophone Montreal.

> *'The debate over "the original Montreal bagel," reveals something of Montreal's Jewish experience. A very different city from Manhattan, here the Jews were caught between the English ruling class and the French majority; membership of neither was available and the Jewish community was, in consequence, more inward-looking: dynamic but also defensive' (Balinska, 2008: 182).*

Wedged between Anglophones and Francophones, the Jewish community, that '*for decades […] was the only important one after the French-Catholics and the Anglo-Protestants*' (King 2002: 96) probably served at the same time as buffer and link between the two language communities.

> *'In the eyes of Francophones and Anglophones, it was a strange universe, dominated by people dressed in dark clothes, talking in a bizarre, guttural language. All the same, curiosity prevailed, the Jewish neighborhood was visited by people who would appreciate its unusual aspect, would like to taste the food it offered and were especially searching for those bargains of which the travelling salespeople know the secret' (King 2002: 97).*

The establishment of Jewish immigrants in a linguistically neutral area, the installation of bagelries and delis at the border of the two language communities, participated in the success of bagels and smoked meat. They could then seduce both Francophone and Anglophone clienteles, even acting as a bridge between the Christian majority and the Jewish minority.

> *'Many [Montrealers] lived their first significant contact with Jewish culture when they travelled to the Main to taste the dish' (King 2002: 115).*

On Jaenen's scale, Montrealers responded positively to the arrival of bagels and smoked meat. They responded through dimorphism, confining bagelries and delis to a distinct part of town and coming there according to circumstances, needs and wants.

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to plan or master, the arrival and the response to it.

[21] We immediately must note that Montrealers only integrated a small part of the Jewish cuisine in their culinary heritage. We will come back to that later.

4.1.2. Gustatory dichotomy and dimorphism.

To explain the success of bagels and smoked meat, Sax claims a 'Francophone effect'. Schwartz's owner estimates that 80% of his clientele is French-speaking. Sax explains this 'Francophone effect' through the French's love of good food.

> *'The Gallic passion for food is just as prevalent in French Montreal today as it is in Paris. While Anglo-Canadian cuisine reflects its bland British influence, Francophones are gaga over fat, salt, garlic, herbs, and strong flavor' (Sax, 2009: 201).*

This way of radically distinguishing between two cuisines, French and English, gives the impression that, in taste, Montreal does not show dimorphism. Qualified negatively, it corresponds more to a dichotomy, the exact opposite of dimorphism in Jaenen's scale, where two universes coexist without meeting, in this case a British culinary universe for the Anglo-Montrealers and a French culinary universe for Franco-Montrealers.

But what about bagels and bagelries, smoked meat and delis? In which universe do they fit? For Sax, it seems evident that they form part of the Franco-Montreal culinary heritage since Franco-Montrealers adopted smoked meat because it fit their typically French taste for fat, salt, garlic, herbs and strong tastes[22]. In this dichotomous universe, we then should classify smoked meat (and delis) within the Franco-Montreal culinary universe, all the while inscribing it as well within the Judeo-Montreal culinary universe. But to think them at the intersection of those two heritages means reintroducing a kind of patrimonial dimorphism. The two Judeo-Montreal and Franco-Montreal culinary heritage cease to be dichotomous universes to become forms which meet, and precisely around smoked meat in delis.

And what about bagels and bagelries? Its success in the United States gives a hint to its placement in the Anglophone heritage. We can then think that they form a place where the three culinary heritages, Judeo-Montreal, Franco-Montreal and Anglo-Montreal, meet, which marks again another gustatory dimorphism.

4.1.3. Hostile and derisive religious rejection.

Let us then dig a bit further the question of hybridity and verify if the presence of bagels and bagelries, of smoked meat and delis in Montreal's culinary heritage are also the sign a religious hybridity between

[22] For our part, we believe necessary to relativize this statement. To be sure, French culture grants a greater value and a greater place for food and French cuisine is more varied and globally better appreciated than British cuisine. But does that suffice to explain the smoked meat's success? Definitely it would have contributed to it but we need to move with caution. What applies to France does not necessarily apply to Quebec. To affirm that Francophones are 'crazy for fat and salt' seems to rightly mark a difference between Francophones in Quebec and in France.

Christianity and Judaism; or to formulate the question in Jaenen's terms, understand how Montrealers responded to the Jews' arrival in the city. Did they adopt Judaism and the Jews at the same time that they adopted two of their foods?

In the thirties, when bagelries and delis were opening, all Christian Montreal, Francophones and Anglophones combined, met to discriminate against the Jews. Let us give one example close to us, the fears expressed in the thirties about the growing number of Jewish students in two universities: McGill University and the Université de Montréal.

> *'In front of the Jewish question, the position of the two Montreal universities is symptomatic of the opinions and values that were common in the whole of Quebec society, both with Francophones and Anglophones. We can then see in them the reflection of the latent tensions within the Quebec collectivity, in the absence of a precise object and of a social place where to resolve them. Those who were preoccupied by the integration of the new Jewish immigrants, both within the Anglophones and the Francophones, turned to the university as soon as it was faced with the question and expected from it a solution applicable to the whole of society. For a good part, they were not disappointed: the debate around this fundamental question took in the university a spectacular, nearly epic dimension, at least on the Francophone side; the worries and the doubts that would assail the whole of Quebec society were clearly expressed there. At the same time testing ground and experimental laboratory, the Quebec university carried out its task and brought out the attitudes that were brewing in numerous sectors of society, on both parts of the language border. Both Currie [principal of McGill University from 1920 to 1933] and Maurault [Mgr. Olivier Maurault, rector of the Université de Montréal from 1934 to 1955] remained representative of the milieux that placed them in their posts, so much the Jewish students carried at the time the aspirations of their community of origin. More than two generations after these events, and once lifted the irritating and discriminatory measures which got in their way, Jewish students make up today almost 20% of the student body at McGill University, and about 2% at the Université de Montréal, namely the proportion at the beginning of the twenties' (Anctil 1988: 158).*

In this context, we must conclude that Christian Montrealers did not widen their taste for bagels, bagelries, smoked meat and delis to a taste for Jews nor for Judaism. Most of those buying a bagel in a bagelry or eating smoked meat in a deli probably did not know that they thus were consuming an artefact of Jewish culinary heritage. For Morton Weinfeld, sociology professor at McGill University, Quebecers always dissociated smoked meat and bagels from Judaism and Jews.

> *'It's an adopted cultural item. They can be eating smoked meat and completely disassociate it with Jews. Jews are the crazy ones in black hat, les Maudits Juifs, and they'll say it while eating a smoked meat sandwich. [Smoked meat and Deli are] removed largely from Jewish influence.' Morton Weinfeld; quotation in (Sax, 2009: 202)*

We can then conclude, on a slightly bitter note, that it was precisely because they were not identified with Judaism that Montrealers adopted bagels, bagelries, smoked meat and delis. They are a sign of no religious hybridity. On Jaenen's scale, we situate the Montrealers' response to the arrival of Judaism at the third negative grade of response, that of a hostile and derisive rejection.

4.1.4. How did Jews respond to the implantation of bagels and smoked meat in Montreal during the first half of the twentieth century?

In order to conclude, we would like to briefly touch upon the way Jews did or did not hybridize their cuisine when they settled in Montreal during the first half of the twentieth century. Beyond some superficial adaptations (adopting Alberta beef; what makes a Montreal bagel different from a New York bagel), they did not fundamentally transform the foods that were already part of their culinary heritage. We could explain it with the commercial success of bagels, bagelries, smoked meat and delis, a success, which rendered pointless or even risky any change. But we think more precisely that the rigor of the Kashrut forbade any profound change and any drastic adaptation. No matter, it remains true that for the Jewish Montrealer, neither the bagel nor smoked meat are signs of any hybridity.

Thus, to qualify the Jews' response to the implantation of their bagel and their smoked meat in Montreal, and taking for one last time Jaenen's scale, we place it on the second negative grade of response that of manifest disinterest and indifference.

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