

Sephardi Voices UK

IMPORTANT

This transcript is copyright Sephardi Voices UK.

Access to this interview and transcript is for private research only. Please refer to the Oral History curators at the British Library, and to Sephardi Voices UK, prior to any publication or broadcast from this document.

**Oral History
The British Library
96 Euston Road
London
NW1 2DB
020 7412 7404
oralhistory@bl.uk**

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this transcript, however no transcript is an exact translation of the spoken word, and this document is intended to be a guide to the original recording, not replace it. Should you find any errors please inform the Oral History curators (oralhistory@bl.uk) and Sephardi Voices UK (info@sephardivoices.org.uk).

Interview Transcript Title Page

Collection title:	Sephardi Voices UK
Ref. no:	SV045
British Library C. Number:	

Interviewee Title:	Rabbi
Interviewee Surname:	Dadoun
Forename:	Moshe Nissim
Interviewee Sex:	Male
Interviewee DOB:	14/10/1952
Interviewee POB:	Casablanca, Morocco
Interviewee Occupation:	Rabbi
Father's Occupation:	Plumber
Mother's Occupation:	Housewife

Date of Interview:	23/04/2013
Location of Interview:	London, UK
Name of Interviewer:	Sharon Rapaport
Recording Format:	Video
Total Duration (HH:MM):	02:31
Copyright/Clearance:	Yes

Additional Material:	Photographs
Interviewer Comments:	

[00:00:21]

I'm interviewing today Rabbi Moshe Nissim Dadoun in his house in London. Today is the 23rd of April 2013. My name is Sharon Rapaport.

Rabbi Dadoun, I would like to thank you for taking part in Sephardi Voices and contributing with this interview. Could we start by telling us your full name, when you were born, and where you were born?

I am Rabbi Moshe Nissim Dadoun. I'm born Casablanca, the lovely city of Morocco, in a house full of joy, living with my parents and my grandparents.

In what year were you born?

1952.

The family name, could you tell me a bit about it?

Later on when I learn university I make some investigation regarding the name Dadoun. Find out that our family name is Dalet, Alef, Dalet, Vav, Nun, D'Adon, and it's written in the grave of my grandmother, *aleha shalom* Fricha Dadoun. The D'Adon it means De Adonin and they came from Spain to Morocco 800 years ago. [00:02:07] They settled in the Berber part of Morocco and therefore family Dadoun is very familiar and is spread all over the world. I found in Beit Hatfutsot it's written about the family Dadoun.

What kind of memories do you have from your childhood in Morocco?

I have a very, very fruitful and nice childhood. We live in a house with as I said my grandparents, Mama Zohra and Baba Akan, we called them. There was lovely and we live in a harmony house that's the joy and the *simcha*, the happiness was over all of us. The *chagim*, the *Shabbatot*. The nice memory when I was three years old, all the time my grandfather calling me *ajin hina*, 'Come here. Sing me a song.' And since I was a little boy I have a very nice

voice and I was singing to him *ya bint l'medina, walik et ha nerani* [sings]. So he take one rial and he say, 'Go, buy a sweet.' And this memory until now I remember. The bed was like on the floor, a very nice kaftan on him, because he was a dealer of material, of clothes, and he was very comfortable in Morocco. [00:04:02] The house, as I said it was, like, you know, a small *riad* that we – the sleeping rooms was upstairs and the other room was like, you know, a living-room, they came round, kitchen, whatever. And I remember that we go drew water by a man who bring the water in a – I think it's a ladder [sic] of the lamb, that they killed the animal and make for meat like a sack that can put water. It's called a *chabiya*. So we buy the water every day, we pour it in a big jar, and from there we are using the water all the time. In *Sukkot* we built a *sukkah* on the roof, on the balcony on the roof, and this environment of *shabbat* is unbelievable. I remember as a child taking the *hamin*, the *cholent* to a very public oven and all the neighbours bring the pots and the men was standing inside the oven putting all the pot. And after he put the fire, and he close it, and you take it only the next day. The bread the same. All the neighbours bring the bread and go – and I all the time remember myself joining my mum to take the bread to the oven and bring it back.

I remember my father was driving me on his scooter to school, because I refused to go to *Alliance*. Since I was four years old I said to my father, 'I'm not going to *Alliance*, I'm going to Talmud Torah.' [00:06:01] And my family don't understand. All of them go to *Alliance*, 'Go as well to *Alliance* like everybody.' I say, 'No, I want to go to Talmud Torah,' and my father taking me every day with his scooter to the school. Talmud Torah, it was a little bit far from there, the centre of Morocco, and come back. And I remember the trees running – until now, running off on my head [laughs], on the ride, you know, the hand would come back.

I would like to go back a bit with you to your grandparents. Your grandparents that lived with you in the house. Were they from the mother's side or were they from the father's side?

Yes, they was from the mother's side.

And where did they come from? Were they also born in Casablanca?

They're born in Morocco in Casablanca, the parents of my mother. Then the grandparents from my father, they're born in Benahamed. It's a city next to Agadir. And they came to

Morocco, my grandfather *alav ha-shalom* Baba Shalom he was a very scholar man and very professional man in plumbing water. Whatever goes water, he was professional in. All his children – that's unfortunately most of them passed away – with my father *y'hir l'shanim rabot* they take control of the department of the water in Casablanca. So they have a big shop there and they was professional. The other side of my mother, they was, like, businessmen. Like my father *alav ha-shalom* Baba Akan he's in the picture, he was dealing with material, and the love of Israel it's unbelievable. [00:08:03] I remember as a child –

Your grand – your –

Both of them. Both of them come before us to Israel.

Yes, later on.

Yeah, they make *Aliyah* before us. We stay in Morocco and they already gone. I remember as a child when we hear the *Hatikvah* [sings hatikvah] in the radio, you know, it was a small radio, was turning up. Doesn't matter which time of the year, when they heard the *Hatikvah* they stand up. This is the love of Israel. My grandfather, *alav ha-shalom*, Baba Akan he was a tourist. In 1954 he come to Israel as a tourist and he saw Mitz'ad Yom Haatzmaut Today they don't do it anymore. Was so impressed, he come back to Morocco saying, 'I cannot stay here. I must go to Israel.'

So your grandparents from your mother's side that lived with you, you said that they were business –

He was in business, yeah. He have a shop selling material, clothes.

And his clothes was traditional?

Yes.

Were traditional? Could you tell me about it?

The clothes was normally traditional but because there was a little bit modern they have also suits. Like in the picture we can see he with a a suit when somebody born but normally he go with *jalebiya* that we have in the house, we wear it in the *chagim*, in occasions, in *brit milah*, *bar mitzvah*, in *Pesach*, or in *hinna*, we use them for most celebration. But for like, you know, to be smart, the French influence was very hard in Casablanca. [00:10:03]

Did you hear stories from your grandparents that lived next to you about their lives? Were there stories that ran in your family about –?

Yes. The stories was all the time regarding the good life they have. The simple but the good life they have. It means they know – for example my father when my mother was pregnant the first time, he thought it's a boy, yes? So already all the instrument people like, you know, all the *naganim* coming, was all the people to prepare the food was all there, everything was ready for, you know, a big celebration. And the life in Morocco, it doesn't matter if you are a plumber or electrician or a doctor or professor, we are equal in the synagogue. We are equal in celebration. We have to – we have – as I say, really, it doesn't matter which profession you are, it's matter your behaving, your contribution to the community in the synagogue, in the social life. Because we look at it, doesn't matter how you get your money to live. It's your profession. It's a profession. It's not like if I'm a doctor I'm above you, or if I'm plumber I'm less. No. The income coming, whatever God give you the skills, your perfect skills is how you entertain people in the synagogue, how you can sing, how you can do the celebration for your family, which happiness you give to your family. [00:12:10] And this is make the community in Morocco like more together, more to contribute to each other. For example, as a child I remember I am going to Em Habanim. Em Habanim, it was an organisation how to teach children to pray and to sing in the *tefillah*. So every *shabbat* and on Sunday we are going to the synagogue before *minchah* for two hours, just reading the *Tehillim* and singing. Beautiful. So if you hear the music of the children you get melts, and it's bringing everyone to synagogue. In our community you cannot say, 'I am not keeping *shabbat*, why I'm *chillul*..' you know? Everybody came to synagogue. Everyone.

What was the name of the synagogue?

We have a lot of synagogues. We have the synagogue of Ben Harosh, we have synagogue of Em Habanim, Otzar HaTorahTorah.

Which one did your family belong to?

Normally we go to Ben Harosh, was next to us, and after, Em Habanim. But as I remember, my father was taking me every synagogue, every time to a different synagogue 'cos I have a good voice and they want to show off that I can sing with them. So part of it, he liked – he was not so religious when I was a little boy. For my family the *shabbat* is *shabbat*, but not like today, we keep it 100%. [00:14:02] In Morocco, every *shabbat* after *shachrit*, after *musaf*, after eating the *chamin* it means okay, now we can be more lenient. When I grew up about five/six years old, I said, 'Daddy, *shabbat*'s still not finished.' He say, 'It's okay, we can go.' We go to *mincha*, we go to *mincha*, we go to *arvit*, but you can go in the middle to see a match of football. It take them time to understand that *shabbat* is to keep it from the beginning through the end. So this environment of *masoret* – *masoret* means to keep the main thing, and after you can be lenient to enjoy us for playing football or something like this. So therefore Em Habanim, like the organisation, to learn the tradition of our fathers become the main issue. And today, *Baruch Hashem*, you can see that all over the world they keep the music of the Moroccan in every synagogue, and every event that's celebration. If it's *mimouna*, if it's *Pesach*, if it's *Sukkot*, if it's every *shabbat* or wedding, if you do the tune of the Moroccan, ah, I feel like I go back home.

How did the synagogue Ben Harosh look like? As a child when you go back today how –?

Yes, it's a lot of lights by big pots with – a glass pot with candles, and chairs like normal chairs, like, with big handle like these but with row, without standard. [00:16:11] More organised by everyone knows his place and as a child you cannot run away, like today running – no, no, you sit down next to your father, you are not moving, and if you move you are not coming next time, you are staying at home. So this is the environment – and the *teva* the Rabbi was sitting at the *teva*, or the *chazzan*, and he guide all the *mitpallelim*, all the people, and everybody join

the *tefillah*, everybody know how to pray. They know how to sing, how to sing it properly, and this is what is beautiful of the community.

When did the women join your community and what occasions did the women come to synagogue?

It's a very good question because in Morocco hardly can see a woman in the synagogue. They came only in a wedding or *brit milah* or *bar mitzvah*, but day-by-day I can't remember any *azrat nashim*, place of a woman. Because there was, you know - but *melech p'nina* The woman are with home to look after the children, to send the children from bed to synagogue, she can stay at home and do the preparation to welcome the men coming from the synagogue. But as I say, the occasions of *chatunah* [wedding] of *bar mitzvah*, they can come, or *brit milah*, but normally I can't remember *azrat nashim*. Today there is a little bit of space more for *azrat nashim* but my time, I can't remember. [00:18:06]

Would you like to tell us the name of the Rabbi of your synagogue?

As I remember, we have – Ben Harosh was the name. We have the name of Monsonico, we have the name of even – Dadoun was also part of the *Rabbonim* and the place Bouzaglo, Toledano, all the name is the familiar name of the *Rabbonim* of Morocco. Abu Hatzira, Pinto, the power of Morocco is full of Rabbis. Full. A lot – every place you go there is a big Rabbi and every cemetery you go in Morocco you find more than a dozen of great Rabbi in the cemetery. So Morocco was full of *Torah*, full of enjoyment during – around Judaism. And the beautiful is that Arab in Morocco participate. Participate 100%. They honour us. I remember the Arabs was helping us to build a *sukkah* and if we need something for the *chag*, they're running and bring it. If we need anything, they just stand by us and the most beautiful thing that they love to come for a *shabbat* lunch, to eat the *hamin*, *schina*. 'Til today the Consul of Morocco is my friend Agazim, he say, Rabbi Dadoun, when you invite me for *schina*? I'm waiting for it'. So please god he will come to us soon. [00:20:10]

So these relationships which you're talking about between the Jews and Arabs, how did they happen? Where did you meet the Arabs?

In every step because we live together. Next door. They are not far away.

Part of your neighbourhood.

They were part of our neighbourhood, they are in the small supermarkets, the small shops, the tradespeople, the professional people, the doctors, the teachers, all around us. We make business with them, we work with them. All the time they was with us. The police, the government, and the most powerful relationship was that the Jewish people, the one was – or the community all the time, invite the government officers to participate with us.

*So could you give me please an example of your personal memories of this relationship?
Something that happened --*

I will tell you something that's happened to me about ten years ago. I go to visit to Morocco with the grandson of Baba Salih, Rabbi Ishag Rachamim. And we go to Morocco, of course when they heard Rabbi Dadoun from London, Rabbi Ishag Rachamim coming, they was waiting for us. We don't ask for it. And especially the grandson of Baba Salih, Ishag Rachamim, he's so shy, he don't want no one to know that he exist. And we run away from them and we go to visit the grave of his great-uncle Rabbi Itzhak Abu Hatzira.[00:22:07] The grave is inside the mountains in Toulal. Toulal is about eleven hours driving from Casablanca. We drove all the way. We came to a place, this is nowhere, and we pray. Was happy. Only him, myself, and two people from, Martiziano from Casablanca *zacher et ze tov* [I remember well] and we pray. Suddenly from nowhere coming two people with scooters, [makes engine noise], all the way. 'Who are you?' 'Sorry, the government sent us to give you security.' 'Who send you? Who knows about us?' 'No, they told us that, you know, Rabbi Dadoun from London and Rabbi Ishag Rachamim the grandson of Abu Hatzira and they love the Abu Hatzira family. We come to secure you.' 'Rabbi Dadoun tell them it will take us a long time to pray here. Tell them to go away.' *Ana sidi* - in Arabic I talk to him, you know, it take time. 'Don't worry, we have time. We are sitting with you.' And the governor of the region, he rang, said, 'Please come to my office tomorrow, I want you to come to bless us.' So I said, 'Rabbi Bishav Rachamim your grandfather Baba Salih come, let's bless him.' 'Oh, I don't want to see no

one. Leave me alone. I don't want to bless anyone.' I said, 'It's not nice, you know, you invite us.' 'Okay, tomorrow God will help.' [00:24:03] And we go. We went to the arfud to visit the graves of his family of Rabbi Ishag Rachamim. Suddenly it was a plague of locust in the area. So the governor say, 'Oh, apologise, I cannot have you because I have to go to solve the problem of this locust.' 'Oh, thank God, you save us [laughs]. I don't want to see any – it means – and everywhere we go they just *Baruch Haba*, welcome. How can I help you?' You know, they treat us like kings. And even I go myself to my friend now 'cos I'm visiting a lot in Morocco, I got from the embassy, I have now a Moroccan passport, so I go there to Fez, to Marrakesh, Casablanca, everywhere I can, they respect me so much. So I thought maybe it's because my friend, this solicitor my friend, he's a businessman. So one day I say, '*Shalom*,' I go to the airport and there was a queue, big queue. I was standing, you know, like everyone, suddenly some guy about thirty, thirty-five years old look at me, 'Okay, I hope everything's all right.' He say, 'No, no, no,' he say in Arabic, *inta Hacham*' You're a *Hacham*. Don't stand here, come, come.' He take me to his office, with the passport, bam, bam, bam, *yashir alyadi* [straight through me].

But these positive relationships, did they happen and occur through all your childhood in the fifties, in the early fifties after '48 that Israel was a country? [00:26:05]

Yes. I remember myself as a child, six/seven years old, walking in a fair, it was in Casablanca, and a child must have been playing with us – it happened to me twice – they steal my *kippah* and run away. I don't run after them. Suddenly, an adult Arab run after this boy, give him a good smack and bring me the *kippah* back. The Arab in Morocco are a special Arab. They are the best Arab in the world. The connection between them to the Jewish people is like brothers. They respect each other. Of course there is pocket, some pocket that's like every kind of nation but as a nation, the government, the governors, the police, the simple people, they love the Jewish people.

But did that also happen in the fifties?

Yes. I'm talking about that time.

That time.

Today, they are *nichsafim* it means they miss the Jewish people. They say, 'You go from our country, you take all the glory of our country. Please come back.' You have to visit Marrakesh in *Pesach*. I was there in *Pesach* in Marrakesh seven/eight hotels, 600 Jewish people doing *Pesach*. Marrakesh glorify. And all the Arabs there, they taxi the driver, the shops, *barach babikum* in Hebrew they say '*Baruch babikum* understand? And they welcome us so well that you feel that this is your country. [00:28:06] I mean, the visit of Baba Baruch two years ago – Baba Baruch is the son of Babi Salih the one – he's the picture, he's there. He visit us, he was in my house one week. It's like to welcome a king. And I made him to meet the Dayan Ehrentreu. Dayan Ehrentreu is the chief of the *Beth Din* of the Ashkenazi. And they met together, and on the meeting Dayan Ehrentreu told him, 'I heard from the Rosh Yeshiva of Palavich that the Arab in Morocco are the tribe of the Girgashi, that was in Eretz Israel.' You know that in Eretz Israel we have the K'naani, Yehivi, Ha Yevusi, Girgashi. So suddenly the Girgashi was not appeared. What's happened? The Girgashi nation heard that Hashem, Ha Kadosh Baruch, the Almighty, give the Land of Israel to his children the B'nei Israel. So they say, 'Oh, if God decided to give the Land of Israel to his people, to Israelis, we have to leave this country. We don't want to fight.' So therefore they leave the country voluntary without war and they go and they settle in Morocco. So God say to them, 'Your nation, you love my children, I will look after you, that you will have the land like Israel.' And this was the blessing. And Baba Baruch told Dayan Ehrentreu, 'You know what, this is *masoret avoteinu b'yadeinu* [The tradition of our ancestors is in our hands]. This is the truth that the *sheret* the tribe of the Girgashi is the tribe that's sitting down in Morocco.' [00:30:10] Now if you take the fruit of Morocco it taste like Israel, only the size of Morocco is ten time of Israel but everything there is in Israel, there is in Morocco. It's so beautiful explanation and you cannot find other explanation because 'til today, since I remember myself as a child until today, I feel when I go to Morocco, I feel it's my home. I feel like it's part of my life all the time. It's not like I left forty years and finish. And this, the beautiful of the connection between Morocco, the Arabs, and the Jewish people. They can sit together and play the same music. It was about five years or ten years ago they have, like, a group of musician, musical people of Arabs and Jewish people, and there was, like, you know, making *tacharut*.

Competition.

Competition between each other. So it's –

Where as that? In Morocco?

In Morocco. So they sing Allah kind of music, they sing Allah. They sing Andalucí, they sing Andalucí. They was fighting each other and they was equal. So come one of the Rabbi say – because all the *paytanim* have to be also Rabbi. In Morocco there's no Rabbi of this and Rabbi for this. The Rabbi have to be *mohel*, have to be *shochet*, you have to be *tokeah b'shofar*, to have to be everything, and *paytan*. So he say, 'Ah Jacob, let's defeat them by singing the *kinot* of Tisha B'Av' [laughs]. *Kinot* Tisha B'Av they don't have [both laugh]. So they start *Kinot* Tisha B'Av. [0:32:14]

But I want to go back to your childhood. What languages did you speak at home?

At home we spoke Arabic and French. All my sisters, my parents was talking French because they learn in *Alliance*. I refused to go there so I missed this language although I love French and I can understand French. And I feel home when they hear this language but I didn't spoke the French. My sisters and my wife-- my mum, my father, all my relative speak French mixed with Arabic.

So the Arabic that you spoke and you learnt at school in the cheder that you went to –

Yeah.

Was it a special kind of Arabic that Jewish people use to –?

We call it Arabic Moghrabiya Arabic Moghrabiya that the Jewish people have little bit softer of on it. There is of course a high level Arabic in Morocco that they learn in school, we don't talk, we talk the simple language. It's called common language in Arab, and Hebrew. We spoke little bit Hebrew.

And also in what occasions did you speak Hebrew?

In the synagogue, in school. Myself as a talmid Torah we learn the *parasha* in Hebrew, we learn in Hebrew. [0:34:01] So it's like you speak in Hebrew, '*anochi rotze lalechet*'. So we use the biblical Hebrew in our conversation but it's mixed with Arabic, with the common Arabic, but not like the Yiddish. The Yiddish was really a complete language. We speak Arabic Moghrabiya. Part of it also the other Arabs talk about it, with it.

Did your parents speak Hebrew?

They speak Hebrew but not the modern one. But in Morocco they have about – again, about twenty/thirty words in Hebrew. They know what is *chol hamoed*, what is *shabbat* what is *beyn hazmani*, what is – you know, words that can compare with holiness of the Jewish tradition.

And you were saying that your grandparents were very, very Zionist.

Yeah.

Were there Zionist after school activities or Zionist organisations that you –?

No. It was really a pure *ahavat Eretz Yisrael*, the love of Israel. The fact that we call them Zionist or the Zionist organisation came and helped them to organise them, it's not because of them. They came to something ready. It means the love of Israel, the love of *Tzion*, it was inside them all the time. [00:36:07] They want to go *Eretz Yisrael*. They don't care if they call them *Tzionist* or they call them David or Baruch for them it's *Yerushalayim* for them it's Israel. After they find out what they done to them because a lot of our neighbours that come to Israel and find themselves in the *kibbutz* without *masoret*, without tradition, without *shabbat*, without *Kashrut*, there was – they broke them down. And this – we never know about it in Morocco. We never. We all the time thought a Jew is a Jew. So for a Moroccan Jew is that you can keep *shabbat* 100%, 80%, 60%, 40%, but zero? Never happened.

Before we move on, I would like you please to tell me how you used to celebrate shabbat and chagim and the uniqueness of the Moroccan tradition. How you at home used to celebrate shabbat.

For us, if I get back about fifty-four years back, what I can see in my eyes is from Wednesday the *shabbat* was start preparing. By buying the product, by prepare the clothes, by prepare the table of *shabbat*, and the house for *shabbat*, and everything is around *shabbat*. *Pesach*, it was – [00:38:04]

The shabbat clothes –

Yeah.

The shabbat clothes and table, what were they?

The best you can afford.

What did you wear?

Shabbat, we are wearing, you know, the small *jalabiya*. Yes, I remember when I was six years old my father brought the *jalabiya* to wear. So it's like small *jalabiya*, we're sitting at the table and we keep the *shabbat*. The synagogue we go like this. With suit, not with *jalabiya*.

Then you used to come home and change –

Come home, take the clothes and put this kind of light *jalabiya* and sit down around the table with all the salad, with all the *salat*, all the *birkat hashem* that give to you. It means you can afford more, you put more. And the guest was all the time the neighbours and the family, never were we alone, never.

Your mother used to cook in the home. Did you have an oven at home?

Ah, [laughs]. We have a *frena*. A *frena* it means – was like, we built some small oven with clay. We put some wood inside and it was heating the food inside for *shabbat*. Putting the *hamin* inside. When you go to a different house like a flat, modern flat, we use the Primus with gas. *Neft*, yeah? With gas, with – that's all. We don't have electricity.

You didn't have – in the fifties you didn't have –

No, didn't have electricity. [00:40:00] It come later on. Oven, no. We don't have even running water. We don't have running water in our place. After they make it, but I remember a big, big jar as I said to you, they fill the water inside and we take it from the water. Why I remember because once one of my sisters [laughs] push something into this big jar and it broke it down and all the house was flooded with water.

And on shabbat you were saying before that you used to get after the synagogue the hamin.

Yeah.

Was the name the hamin or did it have a –?

No, we call it *Schina*.

Schina.

Schina.

And what's the difference between Schina and Adafina?

It's the same. Like the *Dafina*, the Iraqi people say *Dafina* but the Morrocan say *Schina*. *Schina* it means – somebody say, 'When you eat these dishes on *shabbat*, you feel the *Schina* coming to you [laughs].' So it's like a *cholent* in Ashkenaz and –

So the Schina was cooked somewhere out of the home?

No, you prepare it in the home but because you need all the day to be in the oven so we take it to a centre oven in the city. They have a few centres so all of us bring their own pot and the Arab there, he say, 'Ah, these belong to Rachel, these belong to Rivka, these belong...' he knows all the pots with whom it belong. And he put them of course carefully, and of course a Jew is supervising, the cooking is a Jew prepared by *bishul yehudi*. [00:42:06] And then when we come after *shacharit* to collect our *Schina*, so he open the oven, then he take all the pots from there. And everyone take his own and go home.

On Saturday.

On Saturday. On Saturday. I can't remember that we have at home any kind of facility to keep all *shabbat* this *Schina*. You don't have the facility.

So that was shabbat. Are there any other chagim that was special – you had special traditions around them?

The *Pesach* was the most difficult because we don't eat nothing from the *goyim*. So what's left to eat is meat because no rice, no – even no sugar, nothing from the *goyim* we don't take, only vegetables, fruit, and meat. So the celebration at *Pesach* can see that everyone, every house, they take all the house outside to clean all the house and after put the furniture back. *Sukkot* was wonderful because all the Arabs bring all the palm tree leaves to build a *sukkah*. So they come to you, 'Am yeshidi, ani boneh sukkah, ani boneh lekhah Sukkah.' [Heb: I will build a *Sukkah* for you]. They come to offer themselves and of course we give them the opportunity to help us to build a *sukkah*. So we try to involve as much as possible all this – the native of Morocco to be participate with us on the *chagim* as well. And all the *Shabbatot* by inviting them. [00:44:03] Somebody ask me, 'Are we allowed to invite non-Jew to our *shabbat*?' Because they don't allow to keep *shabbat*, the non-Jew and we don't want to spoil our table for *shabbat* with non-Jew. So I told them, 'In principle, no. But if it will be nice to invite someone that can influence our tradition and will make him more friendly with Jewish people, and this is the main target, of course you're allowed to.' And this is what the *masoret*, this tradition of the Jewish people with Arab, until today. When I'm going to my friend in Fez

in *shabbat*, they're coming to eat this *Schina*. The mayor of Sefrou, the mayor of Fez, the Governor of the Prosecutor in the area, everyone coming to celebrate with us. That is the movement, you can feel the *shabbat* outside. You can feel the *chagim*. Not like, you know, go a place, you don't find *shabbat*. No, no. The life was around *shabbat*, around *chagim*, and around the celebration. If it's wedding, all the city knows. If it's *brit milah*, everybody knows. If it is a girl, it's nobody [laughs]. They hide it, unless you have three boys then after a girl like me, so all the city knows I have a girl. You understand? But this is the life was.

And this good relationship was it unique especially to Casablanca, or did it happen all around Morocco?

It's very good question and I find it out that it's all over Morocco. All over Morocco. Some places more and some places even more. And this until today, *Baruch Hashem*, I go – we went with the Federation, World Federation of the Moroccan, to see the King last year, to bless him. [00:46:12] And the way they accept us in the parliament with the ministry, with the government, is unbelievable. Unbelievable. They admire us so much and when they saw a Rabbi, they glorify him, and they feel proud. 'You are my production.' It means – if I say to them, 'Ana Moghrabi' It's happened to me here in Tesco. It's very funny. In Tesco I was waiting to pay in the counter and two Moroccan womens was in front of me. And they don't know if I'm before them or after them. So I told her, 'Shirachti,' in Arabic. 'Ah! Moghrabi,' [laughs], 'Go in front of me.' I said, 'No, you can go.' They feel like, you know, it's part of the family. It's incredible. You cannot find it – I go, thank God in my job I go everywhere. Los Angeles, Monaco, Nice, Italy, everywhere. I don't feel the same. To this *shabbat* I'm going to Geneva for *bar mitzvah*, I want to see if somebody will even take notice of me. Okay, like, everybody go, go. But in Morocco you cannot go if you are – if you look like a Jew, yeah? If you go like everyone, they won't even take notice. But if you look a Jew or a Rabbi, a Jewish Rabbi, they know, and they respect. [00:48:05]

Before we move to talk about your education and your schools, the cheder that you studied in, the neighbourhood, what was the name of the neighbourhood you lived in?

I can't remember the name now, but I know that today the main market in Casablanca is there. *Souk*, it's called a *souk* today. If you go to Casablanca there's only one *souk*. I was there living inside. The picture, I'll show you this – from this environment. At that time it was not so crowded like today. I can remember only the shouting of *selichot*, the shouting, 'Come to *baqashot*.' So because it's like a *mellah*, small *mellah* –

So it was a Jewish – like the Jewish quarter?

Yeah, yeah, Jewish *cupat*, was a *mellah* and, you know, the *Shamash*, you can hear him knocking the door of the neighbours, or knocking the door of yours. This is the environment and [pause] this neighbourhood is nostalgia. You want to remember it all the time, you want to repeat it all the time. It's not like a memory, oh, thank God, I love this place, I don't want to come back on this place. And this is the beautiful memory that not only me, every Moroccan, I spoke to him, he said the same. He said, 'Rabbi, when you organise a journey a *tiyul* to Morocco, don't forget me.' [00:50:00] Why? The desire to go back to see Morocco, it's unbelievable.

Where were you educated and from what age?

As I said, since I was three years old I was taken to the *cheder* and as far as my parents and my grandparents was aware they say, 'You are the most serious boy in the family.' So therefore whatever I asked, they provide me, when I was young. And I learn in the *cheder*, Talmud Torah, I was in Em Habanim, I was singing with them. The most beautiful sound I heard all the time is – until now is affecting my desire to sing because to hear the *Tehilim Ashrei Ha'ish* and the *piyutim*, and the *tefillah*, is the most beautiful tradition to pass it to our generation. In *Baruch Hashem* we do a lot to inherit this kind of tradition to others.

So at what age does your family – in what year does your family decide to leave Morocco and why did they decide to leave Morocco?

Since my grandparents from my mother's side, Mama Zohra and Baba Akan left to Israel in 1956 after the Sinai War. [00:52:10] Because my aunties from my mother's side, they came

to Israel in 1952/'53, before *Milchemet Sinai*. And they came to Israel because just love of Israel. Because they thought if Israel now is created, the *moshiach* has come. *Moshiach* is coming, let's go to Israel.

And not because anything to do with Morocco, that – if I understand?

No, he came to Israel with ten million riadh. It's a lot of money at the time.

Your uncle.

No, my grandfather. And when he arrive to Israel all my cousins come to him, you know, 'Saba, we want this business,' so he spread his money like, you know, sweets.

Where did he settle in Israel, your grandparents, your grandfather?

They settled in Tel Aviv in Or Yehuda, and when he spread all his money, he thought that all the investment will give him some more income. But unfortunately instead to have some income, he lost all his money. So he start crying and say, 'Oh, I left my beautiful family, Dadoun family, in Morocco,' because he love my father, 'and I came here to these people without respect.' And then he really was waiting for us. [00:54:03] We came in 1961 and we look a little bit after them, and then they live in very poor condition the rest of their life, in Afula Elite. Without water, without electricity. And all the time this kind of sorrow, he say, 'We left all the best in Morocco and come here to suffer.'

But when your auntie, which was the first one –

Yeah.

That left actually Morocco to Israel, what did she say? How did she – what did she say about the way that she adjusted as a Moroccan in Israel?

I can't remember much of her at the time but the reason that he came to Israel is just love for Israel and, like, to look for better opportunities. When they came to Israel they found different environment, and now they have to survive. And they live in Or Yehuda in very hard situations. The children of course they – was lovely but family of ten children, it's not so easy to be without any source of good income. All of them came just for the love of Israel. They have a very good life in Morocco and the life of Morocco just give them a push to go for better opportunities in Israel. There was nothing to do with hard time or let's run away from Morocco. No, the other way round. The other way round. [00:56:05]

In what year does your family decide to leave Morocco?

Because we have a lot of – it was at the time telegrams, come to us, you know, 'We are alone here,' –

From your grandfather, from the grandfather.

Yes. And my father all the time, it was exciting, you know, Israel, Israel, you know, *moshiach*. This is the mind of them. So as I said, before as a child I was so proud to go to Israel and I tell all my school, 'I'm going to Israel, I'm going to Israel,' and I take all what's belong to me, I give it to my friends. Everything. Take a present, take--. 'Why?' 'In Israel there's plenty.' And for me as a child I can remember we have in the synagogue *chumash*.

Your synagogue in Morocco.

In Morocco, *chumash*. In the *chumash* was two palm trees, big, two palm trees when you open. So we believe that when you entered Israel you have to pass these two trees. And I remember when I was in the boat to Israel – and almost we die in the journey because the ship was wonky all the time from Gibraltar to Israel – suddenly, I tell my father, 'Daddy, it's *tzviva*, is Israel? Where are the trees?' I was looking for the trees.

From the chumash.

From the chumash. He say, 'No, this is normal Israel.' But Israel's not in the sky? I thought it's in the sky, it's like *Gan Eden*, Israel is *Gan Eden* [laughs]. It was – you know, the naivety of understanding, like Israel is *Gan Eden*, is in the sky not in the earth. [00:58:01] It's holy, it's not – this is the environment we live with in Morocco. Like, you know *Ha'kissufim le Eretz Yisrael*. The desire to go to *Eretz Yisrael*, it's the Holy Land. We call it *Eretz ha Kadosh*. What is, *Eretz ha Kodesh*, like others call *Yerushalayim il kuds - ir ha kodesh*. So we call *Eretz Ha Kadosh* is the Holy Land. *Eretz Ha Kadosh*. So for us, to go to the land of Israel and step on it and we have like without respect in Israel, it was – it's not right. It's a Holy Land.

You're a child of around eleven when you leave and you mentioned –

I think I was about nine, nine.

Nine?

Nine.

You mentioned that you told all your friends.

Yeah.

Are there any other memories surrounding the day, the actual leaving of Morocco?

Oh, it was enjoyable, it was the most happiest day in our family. Because we packed everything we want to pack, we was waiting for the day, we –

Who helped you organise the [overtalking 00:59:26]?

All my –

Was the sochnut involved?

Yes, the *sochnut* was involved. We have a nice friend that was also called Albert. He was helping us and he was quite friend of my sisters 'cos my sister was quite – sixteen/ seventeen at the time, and the oldest one was nineteen, Marie was nineteen. And we – the memory – the happiness there, until now I can feel the – I feel it. [01:00:06] And when we go to Gibraltar, suddenly I felt that, you know – come down a little bit. Because as a child – if somebody say we are in a camp, we're taking some paper for getting some food, some yellow paper I can remember, you know. They give us this small tickets so we can go to the kind of restaurant or kitchen to get some food. You go there and get food, and you go to this room with very uncomfortable beds to – we was there about two weeks.

In Gibraltar.

In Gibraltar. It was an uncomfortable time really, and I can feel that my mother start regret at the time. And my father, 'It's okay, it's just to prepare to go to the ship to go--.' And unfortunately this feeling of my mother never stopped. When she come, she come to Israel to see – we was in *Maabarot* Napoleon.

So this part –

Yeah.

I would like to – I'm interested in this part. How were you welcomed in Israel?

This was the shock of my parents. That they thought as I said, we come with – because we come with so high expectation, and to find as I said, the Gibraltar was a bit to put down our expectation. The journey from Gibraltar to Israel with this weak ship, yeah, it was so horrible that a few times we vomit all the time. [01:02:06] And we go to Israel and they welcome us, *Baruchim Habaim*, nice, but it's so very dull, very poor situation. 'Where do you want to live?' 'We want to go to Jerusalem.' 'Ah well, where you have relative?' So my parents was naïve. They say, 'We have...' – she have a brother in Haifa, and her most was in Jerusalem. 'We'll give you Haifa. Okay? Haifa's okay for you?' 'Yeah.' So they sent us to Akko, *ma'abarot* Napoleon. It's far.

But when you say they sent us, you go out, you embark from the ship –

Yeah, from the ship.

And where do you –?

They take us with very uncomfortable buses, they take us to Napoleon. ‘This is your home.’

They take you? It’s the sochnut?

Yeah, Everything is the *sochnut*. They take us. They put us there. ‘This is your home.’

Napoleon, where was Napoleon?

In Akko, it’s called now--. It’s next to the mountain – on the time of Napoleon, he built this mountain to conquer Akko. So next to it they build, like, you know, small caravans, like, you know, *ma’abara*, small caravans. Nice build accommodation. There was no water and no electricity at the time. ‘Okay, this is your home.’

For those of us that don’t know, what is a ma’abara?

Ma’abara is like a small village with, like caravan but build them – like small caravans but permanent one, not moving one. **[01:04:02]** Yes? They are built with asbestos from outside. Inside board and small rooms with garden, with land. This was a beautiful thing in our houses, the land that we can run, the children. And nothing else.

And who were the people that – part of the ma’abara?

They’re coming from Morocco, from Tunis, from *Lub* [Libya], from Romania, from Poland, from everywhere. They put them together. It’s called, like, you know, a temporary dwelling until you go to a better *shikun* or whatever. But the life in the *ma’abara* was beautiful. As a

child we have a beautiful childhood. My parents suffer a lot because they come from different style of life, and as I say my mother was suffering so much that she become ill. She was so sorrow. She was like a princess in Morocco. Her father was rich and they have a nice house and nice servants to help them to do the washing. This Fatima, there is a lot of workers around her. And now, she had to do everything by herself. To wash by hand, to clean. There's no electricity. No water.

So from where did you get your water in the ma'abara?

So water, we have to go to the main tap. The water coming through not so late, about two or three months after, but the electricity, it's about two years without electricity. We have to put the lamp every day, to light it, and cooking with the Primus, and for my parents it was very hard. [01:06:06] For us as children it was a beautiful childhood.

So it's interesting to understand. In the ma'abara you meet other Jewish people from other countries.

Yeah.

In what way did you – if at all, did you feel that there's difference between you as a Jew that came from Morocco to a Jew that came from Iraq or a Jew that came from Romania? Was there any difference?

There's a lot of difference. The culture, the songs, the food, the behaving, is totally different. The Moroccan is easy going. They get upset and angry quick but also they can calm and be friendly very quick. And they are not, like, small-minded. You find out other culture is different. They are tough, they are not so easy going. They want their way. So straightaway you make your group in the ma'abara. And suddenly, either you combine with others and participate, invite each other, and enjoy their tradition, they enjoy our tradition. The most important point that we find out as a child, that even the Moroccan have difference [laughs]. So the Moroccan from Casablanca is not the same like the Rabat from Rabat. And the Moroccan from Fez is not the same like – and Marrakesh it's different.

So tell us the difference, what was the difference of the children? [01:08:03]

The difference is that you find out even the tune are different.

In the synagogue.

In the synagogue. Even the food was different and the way to behave is different. And everyone have his own pride. I am better, and everyone think he is more better than the other. But when you start to say, 'Okay, we are the same country, let's learn from each other.' But in one, in the synagogue there is no compromise. I have my own way in the synagogue and you have your own way. Because the tradition, we want to keep my children. So this make – as I remember my father build the first synagogue in the *ma'abara* and as a child we built ourselves the chairs. Yes? We have – we take a carpenter and he do for us, and we fix everything. I remember all the night was working on this synagogue. And suddenly we have another synagogue. Moroccan, but in different cities. The Rabat and the Sefrou, they are different from Casablanca in the tune and in the way they make *t'fillah*.

And so how many synagogues were there in the ma'abara?

In the *ma'abara* we have about three synagogues.

Three synagogues for Moroccans or three synagogues for all the community?

Only Moroccans. The other one join us. They go – outside the *ma'abara* they have other synagogues like the Egyptian and the Tunisian but inside the *ma'abara* – because most of us was from Morocco. [01:10:02] So obviously the majority take place. And we have a lovely synagogue with a lovely *chazzanim* that we learn a lot from them.

You told us before that your mother found it very difficult to adjust to the Israeli society.

Yeah.

How did your father adjust to the new society that he was brought to?

My father was involved in his work to bring *parnasa* and –

What did he do?

He was a plumber.

In the ma'abara also?

He was working with a big company that was building a lot of houses, and they build the hospitals, and he was one of the professional of doing all the oxygen system for the hospital. Because all what's concerning pipes, he was a professional. How to connect pipes, copper with metal, copper with all other kind of materials. And he was involved in synagogue. So this give him, like, his own world. Coming of course, he spoil us, the children, bring – since I was a child we don't get new clothes during the year. We got new clothes before *Pesach* and before *Rosh Hashana*. So the two occasions that as a child 'til I grow up my father – my parents they go, they come, it was big shopping every day before *Pesach* and before *Sukkot*. Not like today, everybody buy what he need. [01:12:04] The rest of the time if my mother needs some help, it's okay but he was involved on his work. My mum have to suffer the everyday working. It means to feed all the children in the morning, to dress them up, we was quite young, and to wash the clothes. It was the most hard thing for her. There's no washing-machine, so by hand and she was not used to it. And without electricity, without water, it was very difficult for her to – and the language. That's Hebrew, everything in Hebrew, although all the neighbourhood was speaking Arabic or French, but for her it was really – it take her about long, long time to discover the sorrow of leaving Morocco. And thank God today, they are still alive and happy with a lot of children around them, but if you ask my mum, 'Do you want to go to Morocco back?' She say, 'Yes,' [laughs], even after so many years.

How many years were you in the ma'abara?

About ten years.

Ten years you were in the ma'abara.

Ten years, until we go –

So actually all your childhood was in ma'abara.

Yes. We have a big land and we grow up – I was - love agriculture, so I grew up all the vegetables. My father bought us two nice *gdi* [kids] like a lamb, and we play with them in the garden, we grow them up there. [01:14:13] We have a lovely childhood around this kind of land. We go fishing because there was a river next to us. So for us, as children, it was a beautiful harmony life. But for my parents it was a little bit difficult and when I was – I remember about thirteen/fourteen years old, I push all my family to get more education properly. So thank God I succeed to push everyone to have professional and education through the years.

Where did you study in Israel?

I study in – in the *ma'abara* we have a school, a beautiful school. It was not a religious school, 99% of the children was with *kippah* and *tallit katan*, *tzitzit*. None, religious school. All the teachers, 90% we have *kippah*. We study *Torah sh'be al peh* [oral Torah] *Torah*, *Nach* [Writings and Prophets] *Moledet Yisrael* [National Studies], and *Machshevet Yisrael* [Jewish Studies]. Five subject in non-religious school. It was a beautiful school. Why before, the first year I study, 1961 when I arrive, it was – we arrived in summer so 1962, there's not enough school for children. [01:16:02] So they decided that every child have to learn half a day in one school and the half day, different children. So it means these boys or girls that learn in the morning and afternoon the other one. I go to the morning a very religious school, Beit Yaakov and when I finish, twelve o'clock, twelve-thirty, I tell my brother, 'Take this back home,' and I take the other bag to the other school for the afternoon [laughs]. The afternoon school was non-religious. So everybody run home and you run to other school. It means you take all the

opportunities. Then we learn in the *ma'abara* they opened our school and I finish my primary school in the *ma'abara*. And from there I go to the high school, the religious school in Akko.

In 1967 in the Six Days War –

Yeah.

You are around –

I was about fifteen years old.

Fifteen/sixteen.

I remember myself, we was in the school in the *ma'abara*, was learning still there. I got all my family to build a shelter inside our garden and I remember we pray a lot, was praying a lot, and at the end of the war one of the camp was blow up and all the explosion was there was horrible. It was worse than the war itself. Then we used the shelter properly, but during the war, Six Day War, we don't feel it was a war, because it finish so quick. [01:18:03] The preparation and the prayer we done, and the *t'filot* in the synagogues, at home, it was so powerful you feel the environment of *Ha'achdut* [unity] of *Am Yisrael*. That everyone was willing to do everything. Like in every war that we have. Not the latest one that we don't feel anything. We feel that we have to survive. As a child of fifteen years old, I was really much involved in the school, in the neighbourhood, of course in the synagogue I was involved to lift up everybody and to have a nice environment.

But you actually grew in a culture where the Arabs were your friends.

Yeah.

And here you're fifteen and you are facing part of the war where the Arabs around you are known to be enemies. How did you negotiate it?

You know, it's a very important point. We don't think like this all the time. The Arab in Akko was very friendship with us. We don't feel any kind of enemies. Not like today, every Arab become our enemy. They even look at the one that's against us, as troublemakers. Not someone who wants really to have something for himself. Just troublemakers to have more power and more position. And this is the way. All the time we said, 'If we were negotiated with the Arabs,' we, the Moroccan, 'it will be different because we can understand their head and they will understand us'. [01:20:08] The problem is we cannot negotiate or deal with terrorism. It's just pure terrorism for power and for money. Not ideals. All the time we want to have our own country, our land that God promised us. Not that we want to conquer something that belong to us. Yeshua B'Nun conquered us Israel, by the order of God. So it means Eretz Yisrael inherit the Jewish people from the first day. But why we have to fight too much today? Because our belief, and this is my belief, that God give to us on condition. 'I'm giving you the Holy Land if you respect the Holy Land. But if you come to Holy Land to open non-kosher shops and eating *trefot* in Israel, and not keeping the *shabbat* and not keeping the *chagim*, what for come here? Go to do it in Europe. Do it in Africa. Do it Asia. Don't come to Israel. Why come here to dirt my palace' And this is what we read every day in *Shema Israel*. '*V'hayhu im sh'mu tishmeru*', 'If you listen to me', to *mitzvot*, yeah, Israel will be like a paradise for you. You can live like in *Gan Eden* really, we thought we was a child. But if you come to Israel to act as other countries, it can't be. So therefore you are fighting every day. [01:22:01] I remember ten year – fifty years ago, a Palestinian was here and Arafat was in his big power, so he start talking to me, he say, 'I'm not blaming you Arafat. He's okay, he's doing his job.' What? I never heard a Jew speak like this. I'm not against them. I'm against myself. I am in the wrong. If I keep *shabbat* properly and I keep the Holy Land properly, there will not be Arafat. Arafat is only a stick of Hashem. A stick of God mighty it want to punish us. I promise you, if you Jewish people will keep *shabbat*, will keep the tradition of the Jewish people, they will treat the Holy Land as holy, no nation can touch Am Israel. No nation. At the time of Shlomo Ha Melech and Shlomzion Ha Malka. In the time of Shlomzion Ha Malka, she was the queen. Twelve years nobody touch Israel. Why? Because she told her brother, Shimon Ha Tzadik, he was the Cohen Ha Gadol, 'You are the leader. I want the land to go by the *Torah* way.' They say on her time the wheat and the barley was big like –

Olives.

More than olive but the – how you call it, the *shazif*. Like a plum, yeah? So it means the wheat – so the pomegranate was bigger and everything was – there was fruit over all the land. Why? *Eretz Yisrael* have everything. We have oil, we have gas, we have gold, we have everything in Israel. Just have to find it. [01:24:03] And when you find it? When *Am Israel* will fulfil the *Torah* as it is. Because the *Torah* say *Ha Eretz chalav v'dvash, ha kol bah* [A land of milk and honey, all is in it.] And do you know now slowly, slowly they find the gas, there is oil in – next to Rosh Ha'Ayin. They find something there. There is, but we have to do our part. So therefore, this thought of the Arabs, I can feel after the Six Days – after the – when I was *chayal* [soldier], it was '73, '71 –

Yom Kippur, after Yom Kippur.

Yom Kippur – before *Yom Kippur*, after *Yom Kippur*, I was working in Shchem. When I was adviser of the minister, I work in Shchem like my house. I work in Ramalah like my house. When I built my settlement in Israel, the Arab, the local Arab in Alberia [sic] they was my guard to the tractors who did the work. What? You are sick. You are taking Arab to guard your tractors. I say, 'Yes.' I was friendly with them and they told me, 'You know, we like the government of Israel. We don't want Jordan. They're just taking from us everything.' And this relationship was because we give – when you give your heart and your belief but stand on your rights, they will respect you. When you give and you dismiss your respect, your tradition, your identity, then they will ride on you and they will take more advantage. The more you give, the will take more advantage. And this kind of feeling that today in Israel for the last ten years, was not in my time. [01:26:04] Even after the six wars of course it was – the Arabs was shut like, you know, down. But we don't take the opportunity.

We'll stop here.

[Break in recording]

We stopped, when, before you started telling us about how your life went on in Israel after the army.

I would like just for a few sentences to start, as I came to Israel, *ma'abara* Napoleon, I remember myself as a child teaching other children with candles. It was so nice feeling that you can contribute even the facilities are so poor. I continue to do it all the way of the primary school, all the way in the high school. In the army I was a medical man but I was not sitting and waiting job to be done, I study on Open University through my service in the army. I found myself in *milchemet Yom Kippur* when I was a soldier. I succeed to save a lot of life in the war of *Yom Kippur* and I granted to be the best soldier in *milchemet Yom Kippur* and get my prize from the President of Israel. [01:28:03] The most beautiful story I have in *Yom Kippur* war is that I build a *sukkah* immediately after *Yom Kippur*, between all the bombers. I build a *sukkah*. I have a nice visitor on *chol HaMoed Sukkot*. It was a Chief Rabbi, Ha Rav Goren. He visit us. My camp was in Nafach in Ramat HaGolan and he said, 'Oh, *sukkah*, who build *sukkah* here?' 'We have a soldier, you know.' They call me. He say, 'Moshe, you build a *sukkah*?' I say, 'I built it.' 'How you do it?' 'Between bombs I run and build a *sukkah*.' He said to me, 'Yeah, what the mattress is doing here?' I say, 'I'm sleeping here.' 'What? In the war, you are sleeping in the *sukkah*, not in the bunker?' I say, 'Bunker, better in the *sukkah*?' He look at me and say, 'Wow, you are right. I will sleep with you.' It's happened when I was adviser of the minister in Israel, Religion Minister. He sent me to make – the Chief Rabbi of Israel was Rabbi Goren to sign some documents. And I told my minister, 'I will do it. I will not send just a *shaliach*. I will go myself.' I go and I make him to – I went to him, he signed, and when he finished to sign, I said to him, 'I have a nice story for you,' and I told him about the *sukkah*. He jump – he was a small man – he jump, 'Paula, come, come see this soldier I told you.' He was so glorified to see me after about almost six years that we met together. [01:30:06] So after the army I study in university, social worker in Bar Ilan and I take the scholasts to be social worker community, and at the end of my three years I take the fourth year to be a community Rabbi in diaspora leading by Rabbi HaLevy, Yehuda HaLevy, he was a Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, and I do all the time since I was – after the army, activities like, you know, in Akko I created the movement of Odette, that help a lot of people. I took students and I told them, you know, 'I have a small boy. You teach.'

But was it the charity Odette – movement?

Odette it was an education movement of my friends of Moroccan – all of them Moroccan, it was Bardouko it was Knafo family. There was big Evaknim, the Dayan was after a member of Parliament in Rosh Iryat Ashkelon. So we done a lot of activities and they told me, ‘Moshe, create some in Akko.’ In a few months it had become the biggest branch in Israel. I had about seventy volunteers and we have a very nice organisation. They come every *shabbat* from Bar Ilan to Akko to meeting for all my people, and they make activities through the week with all the volunteers. [01:32:06] The idea was to teach a child from poor family to give more education and guide to be successful in his life. And for all these volunteer was making, like an entertainment every *shabbat*, together, the lecture, singing together, go for *tiyulim* together. It was a good activity. In Rosh HaAyin I was doing also activity with the school, high school, and when the inspector saw me, he said, ‘Oh, we have for you to go to Mikve Israel to be the *merakez hadracha ve p’nmia*’ To be like, you know, in charge of the school after the education study. And I work there very hard from five o’clock in the morning until twelve o’clock midnight. We have about 400 students and, *Baruch Hashem*, I did a very good job there. I know that they replace me with three people and they said they don’t do even half what I did. Because I involved everyone with this school, even money I got it from other sources, not from the school, to teach them music, instruments, *chugim* [workshops], a lot of activities. The inspector saw me working so hard they offer me to take institute that was failure to build up, but I have another offer from the ministry to be the adviser – the assistant of the minister for religions. [01:34:04] And I remember – they said to me ‘*ata choshev al zeh?*’ [you’re thinking about it?]. ‘You have to decide quick,’ because I was – don’t know what to do. Go to the ministry or to go to school. So I went to Yerushalayim. We done a very good job in the office. As I stand there in the office, the minister was Abu Chatzira Moroccan, the adviser was Knafo, my friend, *alav l’shalom* he passed away, so he told me, ‘Take the ministry,’ because he knows me about the course I do in Beit Berl with the federation of the – Sephardi Federation. They give me some budget and I do a nice project with – to prepare student from poor family about to do *Bakar Horim*. It was very successful of course, and just in between in the summer. So he recommended me to the minister, religion minister. The religion minister say, ‘When I step there was doing the programme of *baqashot*.’ *Baqashot* is a *piyutim* songs that the Moroccan tradition do every, *erev shabbat*. This is what also I remember in Morocco, *erev shabbat*, only

on winter, they wake up two o'clock in the morning and you go to synagogue and singing. The books of *Ayira Shahar* it's called *Ayira Shahar* and they sing. After they sing, after they have some drink, some refreshment, and they have a pray, and after they go home for eating and – so we was preparing this kind of show *Ayira Shahar*. [01:36:02] And I was shy, I just came to the office don't put your noise, so I was quiet, but I feel that they're going to drop it because nobody could organise this properly. We have – our tradition, the Moroccan, they are proud so everybody think he's better than the other one. So it was difficult to compromise between who will start, who will do this. It's not so important but for them it was. So I told the minister, 'Can I take the project on me?' Look at me. What? He just gave me one to – he say, 'You can do it?' 'I can try.' 'Do it.' So I take the lead and it was the Chief Rabbi of Rishon LeTzion Rabbi Yosef Azran, *alav l'shalom* he helped me a lot. I said, 'Come, I need your help,' 'cos he also *paytan*, also Rabbi, and we respect Rabbis of course. So he helped me to understand the mind of these *paytanim*. So, *Baruch Hashem*, I took these *paytanim*, I treat them everyone on his head I gather all of them in Ashdod. We do the nice project, two programmes for the TV *Ayira Shahar*. It was the best project to show the tradition of the Moroccan in beautiful way. And on *Misrad HaDatod* [Office of Religion] we work all the time by find the education people from Sephardi and Moroccan, to put them in a high position in Israel. Because it's normal, who build Israel? The people from Europe. [01:38:04] So it's not like *protectzia* but sometimes you prefer to put someone you know and not someone you don't know. So I'm not blaming no one by doing it because it's normal. So now when we are in power I'm going also to find someone belong to my tradition, to my way of life, and they are in high – they can deliver the job that I want them to deliver. Not because they are Sephardi. And we succeed, do it very well. And slowly – my job in *Misrad HaDatod* we start building the structure of the Moroccan and the Sephardi to be more pride. After, we move to *Misrad HaAvoda, HaRevaha* [Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs]. It was a very huge opportunity because it's very hard, much harder ministry to manage. On that we work hard on *chog mishpachot pruchat yeladim* [Law for families creating children] for the biggest family and all the children. We done all the job there. And, *Baruch Hashem*, we succeed on this field. On this time I build the Yishuv Kochav Yaavov . They build a Yishuv was hard to build up because it's Sephardi [inaud] Ashkenazi disturb us and thank God today, it's a big Yishuv of 7,000 people and the glory of this Yishuv that the Arabs around us help because when them told them, 'I am a Moroccan,' and I speak with Arabic with them, *marhaba, asbarkom* [welcome] they feel, oh, they are like

us. [01:40:06] You are not foreigner. It means this is kind of love that we have all the time, to keep with our neighbours.

Rabbi Dadoun, when do you leave Israel and why do you leave Israel for England? When do you arrive to England?

The truth is after we build the settlement, three years of work, I was very tired. I was not tired physically but mentally. Sometimes when your friends betray you and when you are doing all the time good for them and they beat you and they are ungrateful, you become very upset and very weak. It's happened that we have big accident and my wife was injured very much.

Just a second.

[Break in recording]

We stopped when you started telling us for the reasons coming to London and about the accident of your wife.

Yeah. So when we go to the settlement, the building settlement, and I want to go for a rest. The first holiday that I booked to go to Beit Haavra, Nahariya and in the way we have the accident. It was my father-in-law, *alav l'shalom* the sister of my minister, myself, and my wife, and my first born son. [01:42:08] We have a terrible accident and my wife injured very much. We come back to the Yishuv with all the difficulties and after a while, two years, that we want – was very tired from the accident, from the Yishuv, from the people. We say, 'Let's go for one month to...' – we have some money. We get the blessing from Rabbi Nahum Cohen that I was – I feel very bad to leave Israel. He say, 'Don't worry, go. Israel is in all your heart. Don't be worried.' So we come to England because I sent my brother just to learn here in English for his study. We come to England and my wife like the environment in England. It's cold. In Israel the Yishuv was very hot. The education was fantastic. The children go to school eight o'clock, come back four o'clock. It was heaven for her. She say, 'I want to stay.' So this month is not finished yet.

And how long are you here already?

Now it's twenty-five years.

Rabbi Dadoun, when you look at the Moroccan community in Israel and the Moroccan community here in London, what are the differences?

You cannot see the different because both of them keep the tradition properly. [01:44:03] The Moroccan one, their food, their tradition of – the way they pray, the way they celebrate, and you can find it everywhere in the world. The only different is the Moroccan here become a little bit English. So they are more polite, and they have to phone before you're coming, and all this kind of English behaviour. But inside the house you can find all the salads, you can find all the tradition, *kaftan*, or *jalabiya*, in almost every Moroccan house. And especially the way they cook, the food. And we find here – we build here the community, the Porat Yosef, we build it from 1980 – end of 1988 they found me and they say, 'Oh, we have now a *hazzan*.' I was not at the time a Rabbi. I was a *hazzan*. And I was – even I finish my degree in university to be a local Rabbi, I was not officially a Rabbi. And we started this community with group, a small group of people in a small room, and we start revival all the music, the Moroccan music, the Moroccan *t'fillah*. And suddenly I was shocked to see behind me a person without kippah during the week, very, very common person. He was following me with voice that, you know, like it is like, a big prayer. [01:46:05] So was, '*ma ata choshev?* [what do you think?] [inaud], for my father. For my home I know all the *t'fillah* by heart. And the Jewish Moroccan feel at home in their own culture. Like almost every kind of community but we are specialised that we have our own tune, our own tradition, in every kind of *t'fillah*.

So Porat Yosef is especially Moroccan? It's only Moroccans?

Porat Yosef at the moment is doing this like twenty-five years or twenty-four years already. The main is Moroccan. The main, but sometimes we have *chazzanim*, we have members that are Askhenaz, they are Iraqi, they are Egyptian, they are *Lubi*, they are *Babli* all the kind. Persian, all the Sephardim and even Ashkenazim come to us. But the majority is Moroccan. The environment is Moroccan.

In what other community institutions, Moroccan institutions, are you involved here in London?

I know the president of the World Federation of the Moroccan, Sam Beshivrit from Israel that he is organise all the Mimouna party in Israel. I know for thirty years from my job in Israel as adviser of the minister. Last year he come to me, he say, 'You know, before you was Sidney Assor, was Jacques Onona, with the Moroccan organisation. I want you to be the head of the World Federation of the Moroccan Jewry.' [01:48:03] And for the last five years he ask me all the time and I say, 'I don't have time for it. These other people, it's enough.' He come to me last year and he say, he beg to me, he say 'I need someone that I can rely on. I want our tradition to continue. We are supporting students in Israel for grant for studying. Even they not have to be Moroccan but at least we are doing for them because we know what we suffer, and we want now to give to the others to help them.' I agreed to take this task on me, and we got together with other chairmen, with other cities like Marseilles, Paris, Washington, New York. We went to Morocco and we have very nice journey in Casablanca, Rabat, Marrakesh, Fez, and we meet all the Jewish community in Morocco. We have a lovely welcome and the most beautiful is the government of Morocco support this organisation and are proud to invite us, and they give us even bus and people to guide us. It means the Moroccan government financial part of the journey.

And how do the places that you knew as a child look today now that you came back forty years later?

For me, it was amazing because as a child for me it was everything huge, it was everything clear and nice. [01:50:01] Today, sometimes you can see places that are like Europe and some places are very, very poor and very need to be developed. The heart of the people and – they were coming – I can feel it, is the same. And the most important thing that you feel at home everywhere you go. And they welcome you. Even the governments heard about the small radicals here and there, and they secure you, and they come to you, and they hug you everywhere, that nobody will touch you. Outside, people are relaxed. In the hotel, they accept you very well. They serve you very well. I remember when I go with my family to Marrakesh for *Pesach*, were sitting there two Arabs with *kinor* [Heb: violin] they are singing. When I

come to them and say, 'Okay, let's sing together.' So I sang my famous song *ya bint l'medina*, [sings] *ya bint l'medina walik et ha nerani*. I'm singing about the girl from my country. So they come to me, 'Ah, you know this song? It's old song.' And they were so happy to play it with me and we sang together all the time this song and that song. There was feeling, you know, you are – belong to us. Doesn't matter now if you are a Jew or if you are living in Israel or you are living – they don't interfere on the politics of others. [01:52:04] This the good relation, until now if I'm going to the embassy of Moroccan, they say, 'Oh, *Hacham* Dadoun, come.' Straight away I'm going to sit with the consul and everyone coming with me for treatment, *chick-chack*.

And the Jewish community there in Casablanca, how many people are there today in the Jewish community?

In Casablanca there's quite – very nice organisation of Jewish people. According of some people say about 5000, some say even 10,000 people. We was welcomed with very welcome from the community that they invite all the people for dinners with us at separate time. They have good facilities like, you know, clubs and like a community club, *mo'adon* that everybody can gather together and have lunch, and have dinner, and have – beside the synagogues. And today there's about thirteen synagogues in Casablanca.

So did you have the feeling as if members of the Jewish community in Casablanca want to leave or –?

Not at all. Not at all, but to one who can afford have also a house in Paris. And part of them, going back to Paris, coming back to Morocco because they have assets in Morocco, they want to leave it. Not only in Casablanca, I saw the same in Rabat, the same in Fez, the same in Marrakesh. Everywhere there is Jewish people that are connected to Morocco but live in Paris. [01:54:06] So they have, like, two homes all the time. Most of them send their children to study outside Morocco in France, most in France. I have just two months ago a phone call from my friend in Fez, a solicitor, [pause] what's his name, Yedidia Tobali. And he told me the deputy of the main security in Fez want to send his son to do some *stage* [placement] in financial. Can you find him a place? So it was in the phone, he is the second in charge in all

the security in Fez. We have a big, and come, welcome and just begging and feel like, you know, if I know Tobali, he know you, for sure I am welcome and ask to join us in England. So it means that they want to give, and they want to take in relationship between us and Arabs in Morocco. And last time that we organise here by the Federation, they appoint me here the teacher of the Rabbanim, we invite the consul, the member of Parliament. We want here, to do more tradition activity, active party, Mimouna, and slowly we develop more activities here in England surrounding Moroccan tradition. [01:56:02] We just start now and I take on myself this project, and I hope that when I organise myself better with our friend that joined the Federation, we will do more activities. There was a very successful evening and hope that we want to do with Porat Yosef this activity of Mimouna. It was not successful because our hall was not ready, but please God when the hall be ready, we will have our own place that we can do a lot of stuff for the Moroccan in England. Of course with the people at Porat Yosef and people outside Porat Yosef because in every community here, we have Moroccan. There's no community you cannot find a Moroccan inside the synagogue.

How many Moroccan Jews are there in London would you –?

In my opinion through all the list I have, at least about 500 families.

And do you feel that the Moroccan tradition will be able to be passed on to the next generation?

It's very interesting because five years ago a group from France moved to England of Moroccan, and they ask me to do with them *Yom Kippur*. And it was so exciting to do *Yom Kippur* as a Moroccan. They are not religious but traditional. We did it with them and last year I did with them in Berkeley Hotel in Knightsbridge, it was 200 people coming. [01:58:03] With the women it's about 300 people. Most of them was Moroccan, because now the Moroccan people in England grow because a lot of French people came to England, and most of them the source is Morocco. The reason is because of the situation in France. So therefore they want to keep the Moroccan tradition so, 'Please Rabbi Dadoun, teach my son for *bar mitzvah*.' They want the tune of the Moroccan for the *parasha*. Two years ago I have a very interesting phone call and the person say to me – sorry, three years – she say to me, 'You pray with us *Yom Kippur* in Knightsbridge and I know that you are a Moroccan Rabbi. My friend

Joseph want – he's going to die and he want the ceremony to be Moroccan.' 'Okay. Who is this one?' 'Joseph Ettedgui I don't know about this person. I said, 'Okay, we'll do it for him.' Later I find that he is like you know, Yves Saint Laurent brother, Joseph. Joseph Ettedgui a fashion shop –

Big fashion shop.

Big fashion shop. Very famous. I never know about it. When I do the ceremony and my son was – 'Daddy, Joseph, you know, I saw in the internet it's – he is a famous...' I say, 'Okay.' 'What he want?' 'He want a Moroccan ceremony on his grave.' [02:00:03] And on the cemetery of course all the fashion was there, Prada, okay, all the – Yves Saint Laurent – all the *mitzigim* – yes?

Representatives.

Representative of every firm that came, and there was – I do a very nice ceremony for them, and the Rabbi there of the cemetery say, 'Oh, it's too long, it's too nice, how you do it?' We do it like *chick-chack*. So he want Moroccan tradition so I did Moroccan tradition.

From all these stories that you're talking about, what especially will stay, will pass on?

Exactly. So I was asking myself [laughs], you don't keep so much the tradition so why you care? You finish [claps]. [Laughs] You go to heaven. What you care about? This is the glory. The glory that's our tune, our respect. In the *t'fillah*, in the ceremony it's full of love. It's full of harmony and you feel that something happened, and you want to feel something happened. Not like do it like this it's finished. You go to wedding, you want to have a nice dress, making properly nice makeup, nice – so when you do everything properly like *hina* you have a special dress, special ceremony, you feel that you are important person. If you are important person so I have to do it. And as a person that I am really open-minded and I am study in university and was everywhere in the world, I say, 'So what? Why I have to keep everything? It doesn't matter.' [02:02:15] I was also *hazzan* for Ashkenaz for ten years. I was a Spanish-Portuguese Rabbi in Manchester and I know the tradition of Spanish-Portuguese. What? I find out that the

personality is more important. It doesn't matter your profession, if you are rich or poor, the personality is there. I want to hear my music. I want to hear my tradition. And this the pride that we're taking with us. The proud. How to enjoy every moment of our life.

What would you say that the Jewish Moroccans give to the Jewish community here in London? To the Sephardi community especially but to the Jewish on the whole?

It's very hard to conclude because everyone is different character and different influence. But if I conclude it is the happiness and the fact that you are enjoy to do the *t'fillah*, you enjoy to do the wedding, you enjoy to help each other. The enjoyment and the open house. Open house, it means if you come to Moroccan they will not leave you hungry. Ah, where you are going to eat today? Where are you going to celebrate? [02:04:00] If you have place to go to eat. So this is the Moroccan tradition that if you go everywhere, if you find Moroccan you can be relaxed because you will have a nice meal and a nice food and a nice treatment. Why? Because we care about the feeling and the person. However, we know all this kind of jokes about the Moroccan are aggressive are angry are – they are not fake. When we are upset with someone we say, 'I'm upset and I'm angry, yes, I'm angry.' But when I understand I become [makes noise] finish. We are not holding hatred. We are not holding anything to harm someone. So clear. But unfortunately this character's changing because of the place, because of the education, and because of your own character. So we cannot today say Moroccan is one person. Everyone on his grand- background. For example for me, when I was working in the ministry or after, they say, 'You are not Moroccan. We cannot see – you're never angry. You are calm. You are very polite. You're singing all the day.' When I was in the ministry I was working all the way so all the way I'm singing. So everyone say, 'Oh, Moshe is coming.' Because you are happy all the time. You sing all the time. So it means not all the Moroccan are the same character. So we cannot really conclude but the main is to enjoy and to make the life more happy. This is the most important. [02:06:09]

Where is home for you Rabbi Dadoun?

Wow. It's a very hard question. You know, I love to go to live in Israel. When I step in Israel I love the place I step on it. When I go to Ashkelon, I love Ashkelon. When I go to

Yerushalayim, it's feeling holy. So I cannot go to Israel because I love every place I'm going. I go to Morocco, I love Morocco. When I go to England, I love England. So it means – but I feel home, I feel it, I come to my home is in Yerushalayim. Because since I was a child I don't want to live in Yerushalayim and live home Yerushalayim. It means for me to live in Yerushalayim is like to dirt the holiness. I have to visit Yerushalayim and go to sleep somewhere else. And this feeling was with me. Of course Akko for me, the childhood, the city, you have some feeling there. So really today for me, home is where I find good people, where I find that I can distribute and contribute to this community for my skills, for my tradition, for my connections. And the more I can give, the more I feel belong.

And how do you regard yourself in terms of identity? If I would ask you Rabbi Dadoun is... Are you Jewish, are you Moroccan, are you Israeli, are you – what are you? [02:08:04]

You know, you're taking me back in a picture in my mind the first day of my high school, I've been asked this question. I was only fourteen years old and they ask me because I come from a non-religious school to religious school, '*Ata haredi? Ata dati? Ata chiloni?*' [Are you Haredi? Are you modern orthodox? Are you secular?] –

Say it in English, just –

'Are you Haredi, are you very orthodox, are you medium orthodox, are you...?' I say, 'What? I'm a Jew and I will stay a proud Jew.' So myself, I call myself a very proud Jew that try to fulfil the *mitzvot* of the *Torah* as much as I can. I don't like this kind of stigma of you are *chiloni* or you are *dati* or you are orthodox, ultra-orthodox. It's not apply to me. What apply to me is I am a Jew. I am born in Morocco. I am born in Morocco and I'm living in England. I love Israel. I, are you *tzioni* [Zionist]? What is *tzioni*? No. I am a Jewish that love Israel. *Tzioni* is *Tzion* to love *Tzion* to love Yerushalayim. I don't like all the kind of organisation that want to – we are the organisation that want to – we are the owner of Israel. No. Israel belong to everyone, everyone. [02:10:01] If you are a Jew and you are keeping what you can keep of the *Torah*, you have a proud of your tradition of your inheritance, then [claps] the best to be ambassador of the Jewish people all over the world. Doesn't matter if you're born in Morocco or Russia or Argentina or everywhere in the world. But this is my feeling. Because of this I

can befriend and accept everyone. I accept everyone from any country or any tradition or any kind of religion. I have conversation with Christian, with a priest and with Imam, all kind of religion. I can contribute and have a very high conversation in every subject so therefore I'm not limiting myself. Even *chiloni* [secular] that don't keep nothing, I don't throw him away. We can continue and slowly, slowly I bring him to understand what does the *Torah* mean. And because of this I'm very successful. One of my specialist in England is to help to do the conversion. So, *Baruch Hashem*, we have plenty people passing our hand, rich people, professional people, member of Parliament, all kind of professional people coming here. When they want to be Jewish they can find a beautiful address to fulfil their desire. If they want to cheat, it's not the place. [02:12:03]

When you think about Morocco what comes into your head first?

When you mention Morocco you mention nostalgia, you mention the peaceful life, you love the environment of this kind of happiness I'm talking about. All the life is for life. Not for getting more money and more property and more to be rich. It's to do with your life. And this was beautiful. You've got breakfast, you have breakfast with everyone, you enjoy it. You have dinner, so you enjoy the dinner. You have *simcha* you enjoy the *simcha*. Just to enjoy the life, the happiness was all found there. Today everybody's keeping with himself, only for himself, not for the others. And in Morocco is me with you, you with me and with others, not to be selfish. To be more spread your ability and your assets or your beautiful cooking or beautiful voice with the others.

We're getting towards the end of the interview and I would like to ask you is there any message that you would like to give to someone, to some stranger that will watch the video about you in a couple of years, about you as a Moroccan Jew? Something about from your experience as a Moroccan Jew.

[02:14:03] As I see my background I think the most beautiful thing in life is to give. If you give everything in your life for the society. Whatever you know you teach the other. Be proud about teaching the other and giving to the others, it fulfil your life. You can see the result that others following your tradition, following your way, especially that if it's of course positive

and nice. And the more you're doing it, the more the society will be proud of themselves and they carry on with the others. I find out that some people don't want to teach the other because maybe he will be better than me, so better not to teach him. And it's wrong. Never be scared, never be afraid. The more you teach, the more you give to others, you will get double. And this is the most important message that I feel in my life and, *Baruch Hashem*, I succeed since I was – I remember myself as a baby, I give. I give and I give and I will continue to give all the time in my life.

Is there anyone or anything that you would like to mention that we didn't touch in the interview and you would like to mention?

I have two great men, guides, in my life. One of them was my minister Aron Abu Hatzira that was a very good example as a Moroccan who is proud of his identity and his family. [02:16:03] That he put a lot of influence on my way. And my teacher Wa'ish Cohen that he was also a great *paytan*. That he teach me one year. Because of the programme *Ayira Shahar* that I did with him. And he was so happy to teach me and everybody say, 'He never teach anyone. How come you succeed to sit with him?' He was a giant in the music of Morocco *Ayira Shahar* he was the pillar after the great Rabbi David Bousiglo and he passed away last year *alav hashalom*. And I have a lot of friends, a lot of people surrounding me all the time. As I said, the more you give everybody come to you and hug you. And of course my wife that I met her in the office of Aron Abu Hatzira. The moment I opened the door, I saw her, I say, 'You're my wife.' And *Baruch Hashem*, we have together three children, three boys and one daughter, and these three children thank God was the best in school and today they are in Yerushalayim learning *Torah*, great Rabbis. And my daughter now she's 21 *Baruch Hashem*, very successful, learning very well, and she support me all the time. She was the machine of my activity. [02:18:01] She help a lot, especially when I invite people to *shabbat*. Since she was in Israel, never my *shabbat* was alone. All the time full of guest in my table, and all this hard work she had to do it. So *Baruch Hashem* she not only want to do it with love, she encourage and now when my children are coming to the *chagim*, 'Daddy, what, no guests today? So even we are already twelve and fourteen, they want more people to come. So *Baruch Hashem*, our table all the time is full of guests. And my wife, she is also from a very, very famous family *Mishpachat Yachi*, that her grandfather was the Chief Rabbi of Tunis, and this influence is – or the help of my wife is the

power of the family to be of course survive in a very hard time to carry on with our tradition, with our work.

Rabbi Dadoun, I thank you very much for the interview. We will now move to the pictures [pause]. [02:20:01] Could you tell me who do we see in this picture?

It's my lovely grandma, we call her Mama Zohra and she grow up all my sisters and brothers. She was our mother in the house. My mum and my father, they married very – every year, so seventeen and eighteen, so she take care about all the house and growing all the children.

When was this picture taken?

This picture is around the fifteen.

1915.

1950/'51.

Fifty?

'51 yes, '51/'52.

And where was it taken?

It was in Morocco. It was in Morocco. You can see the shoes. I can see it's still Moroccan [laughs], even the dress is not – the jewellery on her, you can see it's Moroccan. And she have a very nice life in Morocco with my grandfather.

Thank you [pause]. Who do we see in this picture?

This is my grandfather from my mum's side. We called him Baba Akan, Ya'acov, Baba Akan Ben Baruch. He was a very quiet man, strong-minded, a very good businessman, and he all the

time look after his children and keep his tradition work at home. [02:22:13] I remember him through my childhood that I all the time was singing and he was – he loved my voice and my singing. So I earn my money from him. Every song I get one rial.

And the two children that are in –?

They are my cousins. It's from my uncle David, and this – *alav l'shalom* this is my auntie [Dina 02:22:45], also passed away.

In what year – around what year was this photo taken?

These babies are born in 1951, so here they look like half year, all these babies.

And where was this photo taken?

This was in Morocco.

Morocco. Thank you. Yes.

[Speaks Hebrew] –

In English please.

Yes, we can see here the *brit milah* of myself in Morocco. Here we can see my grandfather Baba Akan, Mama Zohra, we can see here is my uncle Shlomo and two cousins of my mother. And here is the husband of my auntie Doda Sa'ada also passed away. This kind of celebration they put – you can see a lot of money on the baby. It means look at the money, don't look at the baby. [02:24:01]

Where was it taken? Where was the –?

It was in Morocco in our house in Morocco.

Thank you.

The pictures look like millionaires [laughs].

When was this picture taken?

This was in Morocco in a studio before of course the wedding of my parents. The year is about 1940.

What were your parents names?

It's Yaacov and my mum, Ruchama, Hannah. My mum is Ben Barouch family and my dad Dadoun. And they meet together and their age was – with my father was twenty years old and my mother was almost seventeen [laughs].

Thank you [pause]. Could you tell us who – when was this picture taken and who –?

This is the wedding of my sister Marie with my cousin Albert Arswan. They was friend in Morocco but he make *Aliyah* and he keep all the time in touch with Marie. He was the first-born of my auntie Yanina, and she was my first sister. And when we come to Israel, end of 1962, they get married. And you can see all the pictures is relative. My brothers, my sisters, my cousins. [02:26:02] We can see on the right-hand my Mama Zohra and my father on the left side and of course we was so happy to have this wedding in Israel. Unfortunately after the Six Day War my cousin have a accident in the army and he passed away.

Thank you.

Okay, I'm here in this photo. I'm in the left side and my friend is Israel Sebag. After the *Yom Kippur War* we met together as I was in the north in Ramat HaGolan. He was in Sinai so we was happy we survived the War and we go to pray in the Kotel.

Thank you. Yes. Who do we see in this picture?

This picture is my *Hina* [Henna] with my dear wife Tikva, our friend that was Yemen, from *Temen*, and have organisation of the spread, the tradition of Yemen. Love us very much. He say, 'I will do for you the *hina*' Which was in Malon [Hotel] Daniel in Herzeliya and they put on her all this tradition Yemen clothes, not Moroccan. But we combine the Moroccan tradition inside this celebration and my wife could not move her head for two weeks after, but it was a lovely occasion.

What year was it taken? [02:28:00]

1982.

Thank you.

[Speaks Hebrew] –

Can you talk in English?

Yes. It's my *chuppah* in my wedding in 1982. My dear wife Tikva. Behind us is my father and the one who do the *kiddush* for the *chuppah* is the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, HaRav Shalom Mashash, the Chief Rabbi of Morocco. And we was involved to bring him from Morocco to Yerushalayim. So he was happy to come to be the Chief Rabbi of Yerushalayim, although he was regret to leave Morocco that he was treated by like a king. And he managed to bring the glory of Morocco to Yerushalayim.

Thank you.

Yes, here I visit Morocco, Casablanca. It was in 19 – 2007. I visit the cemetery, the new cemetery in Morocco. I rewrite all the writing of my grandmother from my father's side and you can see her name is Freha Dadoun and interesting that the Hebrew is dalet alef, dalet, vav,

nun, so it show that the source of the family D'Adon is really, we find it in Beit Hatfustot. That the family D'Adon came from Spain about 800 years ago to Morocco.

Thank you. When was this picture taken?

My visit in 2007 in Morocco I was in Casablanca. [02:30:06] And I told my cousin David Dadoun, he's still there, he's living there, 'Take me to my old house' that's in Morocco. So he took me. It's now in the middle of the market, the traditional market in Morocco. It is interest of my home. Here I remember my childhood and the funny thing that I go inside and I told my cousin, 'This door was not here.' He say, 'How you remember? You left this house when you were seven.' I say, 'I'm telling you this door was not there.' So he asked the owner of the house, 'Is this door was there inside?' He say, 'No, no, we put it.' I say, 'I told you.' He say, 'How you remember?' I say, 'When I have a fight with my brothers I go down all the stairs until the end, to the floor. Was no door to stop me,' [laughs]. So it was lovely memory.

Thank you.

This picture we can see here the *bar mitzvah* of my little son Uriah. It was about thirteen years ago in Hendon in the hall of Od Yosef Chai. Three of these boy today are in Jerusalem learning *Torah* and I pray that we'll follow them *Be'ezrat Hashem*.

Thank you very much.

[End 02:32:42]