

# HALACHIC AND HASHKAFIC ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

## 209 - SOFT MATZA OU ISRAEL CENTER - SPRING 2021

Very few 'Jewish' foods are better known than matza. In Jewish tradition there is absolute agreement on its ingredients - flour and water - but considerable discussion as to what it is actually meant to look like. There are many different things that one can make with flour and water and different minhagim around the Jewish world as to how to bake matzot.

Most people are familiar with 'Ashkenazi matza' being very thin and brittle, and are aware there is an alternative 'Sefardi matza' which is softer and thicker. In this shiur we will look briefly at the evidence in the sources - historical and halachic - for what matza was, and address the question of whether Ashkenazim can choose the softer thicker option for their Seder table<sup>1</sup>.

### A] WHAT IS MATZA?

1. שבעת ימים מצות תאכלו אף ביום הראשון תשביתו שאר מפתיתכם כי כל-אכל חמץ ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מישראל מיום הראשון עד-יום השבעה:

שמות יב:טו

*The Torah includes a mitzva to eat matza for 7 days and links this with the prohibition of eating chametz for 7 days.*

2. בראשון בארבעה עשר יום לחמש בערב תאכלו מצת עד יום האחד ועשרים לחמש בערב:

שמות יב:יח

*The Torah also includes an obligation to eat on the first night,*

3. מצות עשה מן התורה לאכול מצה בליל חמשה עשר שנאמר (שמות יב) בערב תאכלו מצות .... אבל בשאר הרגל אכילת מצה רשות - רצה אוכל מצה רצה אוכל אורז או דוחן או קליות או פירות. אבל בליל חמשה עשר בלבד חובה ומשאכל כזית יצא ידי חובתו.

רמב"ם חמץ ומצה פרק ו הלכה א

*The Rambam rules that a kezayit of matza must be eaten on Seder night, but implies that all matza eaten on Seder night is a mitzva. After the first night, eating matza is permitted - reshut - during the Chag, but not obligated.*

4. יש לך דברים שמקבלים שכר צעשייתם ועונש כשחין עושים אותם - כגון מלה זלילה כראשון. ויש לך דברים שאין מקבלים שכר צעשייתם ועונש כשחין עושים אותם - כגון מלה מליל ראשון ואלך. ומ"מ מלות 'שצעת ימים מלות תאכלו' כתיב - כלומר אם אכל מלה כל שצעת הימים קיים הפסוק זה של שצעת ימים מלות תאכלו.

חוקני שמות יב:יח

*The Chizkuni<sup>2</sup> write that, although there is no obligation to eat matza for the full 7 days (and perhaps not even a specific mitzva to do so), someone who does so has 'fulfilled the meaning of the verse'.*

5. **קפה** שבעת ימים תאכל מצות - כל שבעה מצוה, ואינו קורא לה רשות אלא לגבי לילה ראשונה שהיא חובה - ומצוה לגבי חובה רשות קרי לה. אעפ"כ מצוה מדאורייתא הוא. וכן פירשו יום טוב אינו צריך 'אות' - פסח במצה סוכות בסוכה ועוד כמה ראיות. והיה מחבב מאד מצות אכילת מצה כל שבעה, וביו"ט אחרון היה אוכל סעודה שלישית אף על פי שלא היה אוכל שלש סעודות בשאר י"ט מפני חביבת מצות אכילת מצה שזמנו הולך לו.

מעשה רב הלכות פסח קפ"ה

*The Vilna Gaon rules that there IS a Torah mitzva to eat matza all 7 days of Pesach, albeit no obligation to do so.*

1. Some recommended resources on this topic in English are (i) *The Thick and Thin of the History of Matzah*, Ari Zivotofsky and Ari Greenspan, Hakira Journal Vol 17 (2014) p105, available at <http://www.hakirah.org/Vol17Zivotofsky.pdf>; (ii) an different version of that article by the same authors in the Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society Vol LXVII p107 available at <http://halachicadventures.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/Journal-of-contemporary-society-and-halacha-soft-matzah.pdf>. There are number of detailed articles in Hebrew - see *Matzot Avot baPesah*, Yaakov Spiegel, Yerushatenu, 5774 (vol. 7, 2014) pp. 193-217; *Beofen Afiat Maza Lefi Minhagei Haeidot Hashonot*, Rabbi B. Oberlander, Ohr Yisroel #51 and #52.

2. R. Chikzkiah b. Manoch - 13C France.

- The Torah does not define<sup>3</sup> what matza is made from, although we see clearly that it is contrasted with chametz.

6. אלו דברים שאדם יוצא בהן ידי חובתו בפסח - בחטים בשעורים בכוסמין ובשיפון ובשבולת שועל ...

משנה פסחים פרק ב משנה ה

The Mishna specifies 5 types of grain which one can use for matzot. 'Chita' is wheat and 'seora' is barley. The others are less clear. 'Kusmin' is usually understood to be spelt, 'shifon' to be rye, and 'shibolet shual' to be oats<sup>4</sup>.

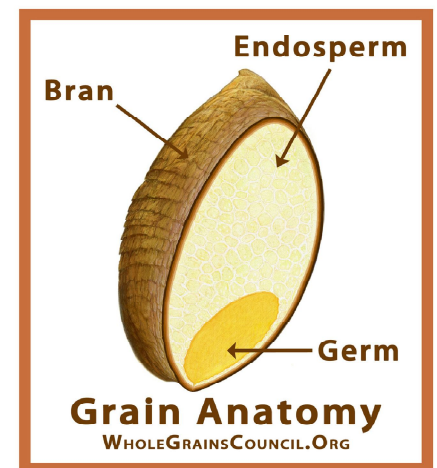
7. אלו דברים שיוצאים בהם ידי חובת מצה - בחטים ובשעורים ובכוסמין ובשבולת שועל ובשיפון. והמנהג ליקח לכתחלה חטים (מהרי"ב). אבל לא באורז ושאר מיני קטניות, וגם אינם באים לידי חימוץ ומותר לעשות מהם תבשיל. הגה: ויש אוסרים והמנהג צאשכנז להחמיר ואין לשנות

שולחן ערוך אורח חיים סימן תנג סעיף א

The Shulchan Aruch rules that any of the 5 grains will be acceptable to make matzot. However, other grains such as rice and other kitniyot are NOT kosher for matza, even though they are not chametz.<sup>5</sup> The Rema adds that the Ashkenazi custom is only to eat matzot made from wheat.

## B] WHAT IS WHEAT?<sup>6</sup>

A kernel of wheat is made up of three components: the bran, germ, and endosperm. Bran is the outer layer of the edible kernel. The germ is the embryo with the potential to sprout into a new plant. The endosperm is the germ's food supply should it grow, and it is composed primarily of carbohydrates and a small amount of protein. Gluten is one of the proteins in wheat, and when flour and water are mixed, the gluten is responsible for making the dough sticky and elastic. In dough, the carbohydrates, or complex sugars, found in the wheat, are broken down into simple sugars. Natural yeasts in the flour begin to use that sugar and break it down into two components, carbon dioxide gas and alcohol. As the gas is produced, it is trapped by the sticky gluten and as gas bubbles develop, the gluten holds them and expands, hence the rising of the dough. The alcohol evaporates out and is thus not found in the final product. Typical bread and soft, laffa-like matzah made by Yemenites has a crust that differs from the inside, known as the crumb. The crust is hardened and brown due to the intense heat that leads to the Maillard reaction in which the amino acids and sugars in the bread combine to form 6-Acetyl-2,3,4,5-tetrahydropyridine. This seals the inside, permitting it to retain some of its moisture. Thin matzah is made with less water and baked uniformly, drying out inside and out such that there is no crust and it is completely dry.



## C] THE 3RD INGREDIENT - TIME!

8. לא יניחו העיסה בלא עסק ואפילו רגע אחד. וכל זמן שמתעסקים בו, אפילו כל היום אינו מחמיץ. ואם הניחו בלא עסק שיעור מיל, הוא חמץ. ושיעור מיל הוא רביעית שעה וחלק מעשרים מן השעה. הגה: ויש להחמיר למהר צענין עשיית המלות, כי יש לחוש שהשכיות ינטרפו לשיעור מיל, או שיהיה במקום חם שממהר להחמיץ

שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הלכות פסח סימן תנט סעיף ב

The Shulchan Aruch rules that if the dough is left for 18 minutes it will become chametz. If it kept in constant motion this time can in principle be extended since fermentation will not occur due to the movement. However, the Rema is strict to speed up the process as much as possible in case heat (including friction from hands) speeds up the process of chimutz.

9. הוא רביעית שעה וכו' - עיין מ"צ דיש פוסקים שחלקין על שיעור זה ולדידכו שיעור מיל הוא שליש שעה וחלק ט"ו מן השעה [24] ויש מצעלי סברא זו שחושבין שיעור מיל לחשבון כ"צ מינוטין וחצי [22.5]. ולכתחלה במקום שאין הפסד מרובה מששעה י"ח [18] מינוטין הוא חמץ ואסור בהנאה וכדעת השו"ע ... אמנם בהפסד מרובה אפשר דיש לסמוך על בני פוסקים דפליגי וכל כמה דלא שיה עכ"פ כ"צ מינוטין וחצי אין לאסור אם לא ראינו בה סימני שיאור וסידוק ...

ביאור הלכה סימן תנט

There are other more lenient opinions that the halachic mil is 22.5 or even 24 minutes, but the 18 minute psak is to be followed unless there are exceptional circumstances.

3. It is normal for the written Torah to omit the legal definitions of mitzva objects - such as a succah, 4 minim etc. This is left to the Oral Law and comprises the first of the Rambam's 5 categories of Oral Law - 'peirushim mekubalim' (definitions of the Written Torah handed down by oral tradition). See the Rambam's Introduction to his commentary on the Mishna.
4. We looked in previous shiurim at the controversy over whether *shibolet shual* is actually oats.
5. The Rema adds that Ashkenazim have a minhag not to eat kitniyot, even though they are not chametz. This is clearly the case for cooked dishes eg rice and ultimately stems from a concern that the kitniyot may inadvertently have chametz grains mixed up in them. Alternatively, there is a concern that people may confuse the flour of kitniyot with that of the 5 grains. For a more detailed discussion of this see <http://www.rabbimanning.com/index.php/audio-shiurim/halacha/understanding-minhag/>. An interesting question is whether the minhag not to eat kitniyot would apply even in situations where the final product could NEVER be chametz eg an 18-minute matza made from kitniyot flour and prepared with all the stringencies of regular matza.
6. Taken from the Zivotofsky/Greenspan article in Hakira Vol 17 cited above.

## D] HOW CAN THERE BE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MATZA?

- Since the ingredients of wheat matza are always identical - flour + water<sup>7</sup> + <18 mins, how can there be different types of matza?
- The other three variables are (i) type of oven - metal vs earthenware and large vs small; (ii) baking temperature; (iii) flour~water ratio.

10. .... רבי עקיבא אומר לא כל הנשים ולא כל העצים ולא כל התנורים שוין.

משנה מסכת פסחים פרק ג משנה ד

When discussing the method of baking matza, R. Akiva points out that it is hard to set universal rules since different bakers, different fuel and different ovens produce different results with the same ingredients<sup>8</sup>.

### D1] FLOUR-TO-WATER RATIOS

- Generally speaking, the less water one introduces to the dough, the harder and dryer the matza will be. Here are typical flour-to-water ratios<sup>9</sup> for different types of matza:

Regular Ashkenazi machine matza -	300 ml water to 1 kg flour
Regular Ashkenazi hand matza <sup>10</sup> -	400-480 ml water to 1 kg flour
Soft hand matza -	550-830 ml water to 1 kg flour

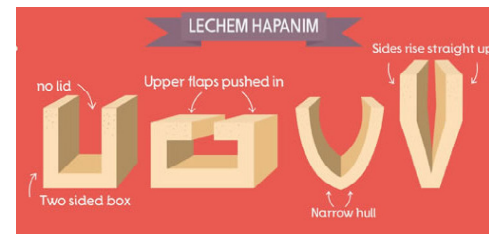
## E] THIN AND THICK MATZA IN THE TALMUD

11. [a] תנו רבנן: אין אופין פת עבה בפסח, דברי בית שמאי, ובית הלל מתירין. וכמה פת עבה? אמר רב הונא: טפח, שכן מצינו בלחם הפנים טפח. מתקיף לה רב יוסף: אם אמרו בזרזין - יאמרו בשאינן זרזין? אם אמרו בפת עמילה - יאמרו בפת שאינו עמילה? אם אמרו בעצים יבשין - יאמרו בעצים לחים? אם אמרו בתנור חם - יאמרו בתנור צונן? אם אמרו בתנור של מתכת - יאמרו בתנור של חרס?

[b] אמר רב ירמיה בר אבא: שאילית את רבי ביחוד, ומנו - רב. איכא דאמרי: רב ירמיה בר אבא אמר רב: שאילית את רבי ביחוד, ומנו - רבינו הקדוש. מאי פת עבה? - פת מרובה. ואמאי קרו ליה פת עבה? - משום דנפישא בלישה. ואי בעית אימא: באתריה דהאי תנא לפת מרובה פת עבה קרו ליה. מאי טעמא? אי משום דקא טרח טירחא דלא צריך - מאי איריא בפסח? אפילו ביום טוב נמי - אין הכי נמי, והאי תנא ביום טוב של פסח קאי. תניא נמי הכי, בית שמאי אומרים: אין אופין פת עבה ביום טוב, ובית הלל מתירין.

פסחים לו:

The key sugya in the Talmud dealing with the consistency of matza is this discussion about 'pat ava' - thick bread. In part [a] the Gemara presents a machloket between Beit Hillel and Beit Shamai about the baking 'pat ava' on Pesach. Rav Huna learns from a comparison to the Lechem Hapanim in the Mishkan (which were also unleavened like matza) that 'pat ava' means matza thicker than 1 tefach (around 8-9 cm). Beit Shamai prohibit this and Beit Hillel permit it. Rav Yosef rejects the comparison with the Mishkan since the circumstances of the Mishkan were far more controlled and likely to avoid chametz, whereas we need to be stricter with individuals baking matza for Pesach. In part [b] the Gemara presents a completely different understanding of 'pat ava' as meaning a large quantity of bread. The problem here is the exertion involved on any Chag. On this reading, the Gemara is not making any comment on the thickness of matza on Pesach.



- The Rishonim split 3 ways in their understanding of the psak, based on this discussion in the Gemara:

- The Lenient Position : Some Rishonim<sup>11</sup> understood that matza can be any thickness (even more than a tefach) as long care is taken to avoid chimutz.
- The Middle Position: Many Rishonim<sup>12</sup> (mostly Ashkenazim) understand that matza can be made up to a tefach thick.
- The Stringent Position: Many Rishonim<sup>13</sup> (mostly Sefardim) understand that matza should be thinner.

7. Most traditions do NOT add salt to matza, but some Yemenite traditions do. Similarly, most traditions do not DIP the matza in salt at the seder, but the minhag of the Ari z'l was to dip the matza in salt.

8. See also source 11 below.

9. Taken from *The Halachic Acceptability of Soft Matzah*, Rabbi Dr Ari Zivotofsky and Dr Ari Greenspan, Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society Vol LXVII p108.

10. The Chatam Sofer (shu't OC 127) recommends 1 part water to 4 parts flour. The Chazon Ish writes that the matza should be as dry as possible and recommends under 250 ml water to 1 kg flour.

11. Ba'al HaMichtam (Beitzta 22b). See below that this may be the position of the Rif, Rambam and Tur! See also Machatzit Hashekel and Shulchan Aruch HaRav 460:10 who permits (bedieved) matza even if thicker than a tefach.

12. Meiri, Ra'avan, Ra'avaya, Or Zarua, Rashbatz and others.

13. Ritva, Maharam Chalava, R. Yerucham and others.

**F] OTHER INDICATIONS AS TO THE TYPE OF MATZA USED IN THE PAST****F1] KORECH?**

12. זכר למקדש כהלל. כן עשה הלל בזמן שבית המקדש היה קיים: היה כורך (פסח ו) מצה ומרור ואוכל ביחד, לקיים מה שנאמר: על מצות ומרורים יאכלהו.  
הגדה של פסח

13. אמרו עליו על הלל שהיה כורכן בבת אחת ואוכלו, שנאמר על מצות ומרורים יאכלהו.  
פסחים קטו.

*As is well know from our seder, Hillel, at the time of the Second Temple, used to make a 'korech' of the matza and marror (and some also add the Pesach<sup>14</sup>).*

- We normally assume that 'korech' means a wrap. However, this is not the only meaning of korech.

14. ... ואח"כ נוטלין המצה השלישית כדי לקיים בה מצוה ושמן המרור בין המצה וכורכן יחד ...  
ערוך השולחן אורח חיים סימן תעה

*The Aruch Hashulchan makes it clear that we sandwich the marror between two pieces of matza.*

- In this sense, 'korech' is like the kericha (cover) of a book, which surrounds the book but need not wrap it. So too a walled city is called a 'krach' since the wall surrounds it.

15. דתניא אמרו עליו על הלל שהיה כורך המרור על המצה ואוכלו בבת אחת  
רבינו חננאל מסכת פסחים דף קטו עמוד א

*In fact, Rabbeinu Chananel's version of the Gemara was that Hillel used to wrap the marror around the matza<sup>15</sup>. In this case, the matza could be thin and hard.<sup>16</sup>*

- On that basis, Korech is not a proof in either direction to the type of matzot used in Temple times.

**F2] MOULDY MATZA**

16. מצא פת בפסח בביתו ואינו יודע אם הוא חמץ או מצה, מותר אפילו באכילה, דאזלינן בתר בתרא. ואם הוא מעופש הרבה, שאי אפשר לו להתעפש כל כך משנכנס הפסח, אז ודאי הוא חמץ. ואם עברו מימי הפסח שנוכל לתלות שנתעפש משנכנס הפסח עד עתה, אם אנו נוהגים לאפות בפסח פת חם בכל יום תולין להקל, אפילו הוא מעופש הרבה. שאנו תולים לומר בכל יום אפה פת חם ונתנו עליו ולפיכך הרבה להתעפש.

שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הלכות פסח סימן תמו

*The Shulchan Aruch rules a halacha (taken from Pesachim 7a) that, if one finds mouldy bread during Pesach and cannot tell if it is mouldy chametz bread from before Pesach or mouldy matza from Pesach, one can assume it is matza and does not have to destroy it. If it is VERY mouldy, one should assume it is from earlier and is chametz. However, if one made fresh hot matzot every day which could have gone mouldy very quickly, one can assume it is this matza.*

- Clearly, the case in the Gemara, which is ruled as relevant by the Shulchan Aruch in the 16th century, assumes (i) that bread and matza look very similar to each other and; (ii) that matza can go mouldy.
- Our matzot look nothing like bread and they NEVER go mouldy!
- It is therefore clear that the matza discussed was soft - more like pita. If this is put into a closed container when still warm it will go mouldy very quickly.
- Modern day Yemenite matza looks very similar their pita, except that the chametz version has added oil, yeast and other ingredients.

17. (יב) ואינו יודע וכו' - דין זה הוא לפי מנהג זמנם שביי ארופין מלות עצה קלת ולא היו חלוקין בתארים מככרות של חמץ.  
משנה ברורה סימן תמו ס"ק יב

*The Mishna Berura clarifies that this halacha was only relevant in former times when matza was thicker and looked like bread.*

14. Rashi and Rashbam include the Korban Pesach in their text (see Taz OC 475:9). Rambam indicates otherwise.

15. This assumes that the marror is lettuce, rather than horseradish.

16. This was also the practice of Rav Soloveitchik.

## F3] THE 3 MEGA-MATZOT AT SEDER

18. א"א הרא"ש ז"ל וכתב ונוהגין באשכנז וצרפת לעשותן מעשרון זכר ללחמי תודה

טור אורח חיים הלכות פסח סימן תעה

*The Tur quotes in the name of his father, the Rosh (13C Germany), that the minhag in medieval Ashkenaz was to make the 3 matzot for seder from 1 isaron of flour as a zecher to the lachmei todah where 3 loaves were made from 1 isaron<sup>17</sup>. The Rema (16C Poland) also mentions this minhag (OC 475:7).*

19. (מו) ונהגו לעשות וכו' - עיין בספר בית מאיר שמפקפק על המנהג וזכמה מקומות כהיום נשחקע המנהג:

משנה ברורה סימן תעה

*The Mishna Berura (19C Russia) quotes some views which question the minhag and notes that in some places the minhag has fallen away. Clearly, in other places the minhag was still observed.*

- On isaron of flour is 43.2 *kebeitzim*, which is 86.4 *kezetim*. This means that each of the three matzot would be just under 30 *kezetim*. Since an average hand matza today is around 2 *kezetim*<sup>18</sup>, if we were to make our matzot following this minhag, they would have to be FIFTEEN times their current size. Clearly, this would be impossible to fit into any oven<sup>19</sup>.
- This was possible only if the matzot were much thicker (and probably also the halachic measure of the kezayit was somewhat smaller<sup>20</sup>). An average Yemenite matza today contains around 10 *kezetim*, compare to 2 *kezetim* in an Ashkenazi hand-matza<sup>21</sup>.
- This also explains sources which describe giving a kezayit everyone at the seder from one of the 3 matzot. This is impossible today.

20. (ו) כתב מהר"י ווייל צדרשה (סי' ק"ג) דאס יש לו צנים הרבה מותר ללוש שתי עיסות פחות מכשיעור וללרפן ....

דרכי משה הקצר אורח חיים סימן תעה

*The Darchei Moshe (R. Moshe Iserlis - 16C Poland) talks about combining dough to make a bigger middle matza to give a kezayit to all the children in a big family<sup>22</sup>.*

21. וא"כ בלילי פסח שאף הג' מצות - שרוב העולם נוהגין זה יותר ממאה שנים, שלענין זה אכשור דרי, ועושין מצות דקות - שאף אם הם מצות גדולות לא יספיק, אם ידקדקו לאכול כזית מצה, אלא לשנים. .... ונמצא שלא שייך כלל הג' מצות, אלא לבעה"ב ולאישתו. ואם ירצה ליתן גם לכל המסובין מבניו ובנותיו, אף רק להחייבין במצוות, הרי יצטרך להוסיף על המצות, שוודאי לא נכון לעשות, שהרי היה צריך אדרבה לגרוע משום לחם עוני, ולא להוסיף! ולכן אין לעשות כן, אלא יסדרו שיהיה לכל אחד מהזכרים לחם משנה מיוחד ....

שו"ת אגרות משה אורח חיים חלק ה סימן טז

*R. Moshe Feinstein writes (in 1982) that for over 100 years<sup>23</sup> it has no longer been possible to use the 3 matzot to give out to the family. To make mega-matzot (even if physically possible) would also go against the idea of lechem oni. So he recommends that each person at the seder has their own matzot.*

## F4] PUSH YOUR FINGER INTO A MATZA

22. מצה שנאפת עד שאם פורסין אותה אין חוטינ נמשכים ממנה, יוצאים בה.

שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הלכות פסח סימן תסא סעיף ג

*The Shulchan Aruch rules that one knows that a matza is sufficiently baked if it can be pulled apart and threads of sticky dough will not pull from the pieces.*

23. .... כתב הח"י דאס יש לספק אי חוטינ נמשכין ממנה ותוחז אלצט תוך המלה ואינו נדבק צה עיסה יש להחירה, דזכו סימן שאין חוטינ נמשכין ממנה. וכ"ז אם המלה חמה אבל אם נלטננה אפשר דאין ראיח מזב.

משנה ברורה סימן תסא ס' ק יג

*The Mishna Berura suggests an alternative test - stick a finger into the matza and see if it comes out moist. The Chazon Ish points out<sup>24</sup> that, the way we make matzot, even if you stuck a finger into the unbaked dough it would come out dry!*

17. In that way, we hint to the obligation of those who escaped bondage in prison to bring a korban todah with the lachmei todah.

18. Following the average shiur of R. Chaim Naeh.

19. It would also be against the halacha brought in the Rema (454:1) that matzot should not be too wide.

20. See <http://rabbimanning.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/The-Kezayit-A-Halachic-Biography.pdf> on the development of the size of the kezayit.

21. It is therefore possible to pull off a kezayit for each person. In the Zivotofsky/Greenspan article (fn 14) they reference a Yemenite Rav who showed them how the Yemenites place four finger on the soft matza and a thumb underneath and pull off that amount as a kezayit.

22. In the 18th Century, the Chok Ya'akov (OC 475:26) writes that one could make an especially big middle matza and give TWO kezetim from it to each of his family members.

23. This could place a rough date on when matzot finally turned into what we have today.

24. Chazon Ish OC Moed 120:17 page 190a.

F5] KEEP IT UNDER YOUR PILLOW

24. (יט) לאפיקומן. והחלק הגדול יעמין. אחרונים. גם ראוי לכורכה צמטפת ולהניח בין הכר והכסת וכשרואה לאכול יוליאה כמו שביה צתוך המפה וישלשל לאחוריו וילך כמו ד' אמות ויאמר 'כך היו אבותינו הולכים משארותם לרורות צמטפתם' (רש"י).

באר היטב אורח חיים סימן תעג ס"ק יט

*The Ba'er Heitiv (R. Yeshaya ben R' Avraham HaLevi, 18C Amsterdam) quotes the earlier Ashkenazi minhag to hide the afikoman between the pillow and the chair and then to throw it over their shoulder to re-enact the Exodus! If we were to try all this with our had matza today, we would be eating matza meal for afikoman! Clearly, the matza was more robust!*

F6] THE ERUV MATZA

- It has long been the custom for the community to use a matza as the communal food for the eruv and to change it once a year.
- The earliest reference to this comes from the time of the Geonim when the Halachot Ketuvot<sup>25</sup> writes that flour should be collected from the community and the eruv food baked on Erev Pesach and kept in one of the homes in the community. Although it does not specifically state that this was matza, it seems clear that it must have been, and it lasted for a long time.
- The same situation is described in the Machzor Vitri (late 11C France) and by the Ra'avya (13C Germany).
- Does this indicate harder long-lasting matzot in those times?
- In 15C Austria, the Leket Yosher describes the eruv matza being hung up in the home of the R. Yisrael Isserlin (the Terumat Hadeshen) and that it once broke because it went mouldy and had to be replaced.

25. אם נתעפש פת העירוב ונפסל מלאכול, הרי הוא כמו שכלה לגמרי וצריך לערב מחדש. הגה: ולכן נהגו לעשות העירוב חלת מלה שאינה ממהרת להתעפש (כל זו וב"י סי' ש"ה). ועוד דיכולים לשמרה צימי הפסח ויכולים לשמור העירוב כל השנה. וזה טוב יותר מלערב כל שבת ושבת, שלא ישכחו מלערב. מיהו אם רואים לערב כל ע"ש ולאכול העירוב כל שבת, הרשות בידם.

שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הלכות שבת סימן שסח סעיף ה

*The Rema recommends the yearly matza eruv over weekly eruvin since it is easy to forget to make the weekly eruv and the matza option is also good over Pesach. The weekly option is however also acceptable.*

26. (כא) טוב יותר וכו' – והאחרונים כתבו דיותר טוב לערב כל ע"ש. כי רוב פעמים מלה של עירוב מתקלקלת ומתעפשת מאורך הזמן וגם מזוי ליפול צו תולעים [שקורין מילצין] מאורך הזמן ואינה ראויה לאכילה והרי היא כמו שכלתה לגמרי.

משנה ברורה סימן שסח ס"ק כא

*The Mishna Berura is more concerned that the eruv matza would become mouldy or wormy and prefers the weekly eruv.*

- From the Rema and earlier Rishonim, it certainly sounds like they had a matza option which could potentially last a whole year! On the other hand, it sounds from the Mishna Berura<sup>26</sup> that the matzot he had were NOT like ours today, which would never go mouldy.
- In fact, the Yemenites also used their matza for a yearly eruv! How did they avoid it becoming mouldy?

27. The most surprising evidence comes from Yemen. Rav Yosef Kafich wrote that in Yemen the city rabbi would make an eruv on hol ha-moed Pesah for the whole city for the year. He would bake several small loaves of matzah and put them in a high window in the shul. And he testifies that such was the practice of his grandfather in the late 19th century. This called for an experiment because Yemenite Jews to this day all bake soft matzah. Using a thread we hung a standard pita for three months to see what would become of it. It quickly dried out but never became moldy. It remained completely edible such that upon taking it down we found that it could be eaten as is and was simply like a dried cracker. Alternatively, because in the old days bread was often eaten dipped, we dipped it in thick porridge and it became soft and took on (almost) its original constitution. This is in concordance with the comment of the Ravyah (Germany d. 1225) who, while discussing (siman 452) the custom of making an eiruv for the year with matzah, observed that when erev Pesah was on Shabbat the old eiruv would be soaked and then fed to children. It seems that by soaking the matzah it become more palatable. This seriously weakens any proof for the use of matzah as the eiruv. It demonstrates that indeed a pita can remain non-moldy and even edible after a long period, and thus the fact that matzah was used as a year-long eiruv indeed rules out the use of puffed bread such as our challah, but not the use of matzah that looked like pita, and it therefore does not conclusively prove the use of hard matzah.

What can be gleaned from the eiruv sources is as follows: There are two extremes. Those sources in which there was a serious concern of rotting would seem to imply that relatively soft matzah was being used. If the matzah was not hung and there was little worry of spoilage it seems to be evidence that they were using drier, harder matzah. .... In the middle are those sources that were concerned but acknowledged that it often survived the year. It is harder for us to envision that matzah but it was likely pita-like. Furthermore, climate may play a role. It is plausible that the dry, hot environment of Yemen might prevent the soft bread from getting moldy, and the damp cold weather of northern Europe might be a factor in having even dry matzah turn moldy.

<http://www.hakirah.org/Vol17Zivotofsky.pdf> p114

25. Usually attributed to 8th century R. Yehudai Gaon.

26. He is also reflecting earlier poskim with these concerns - see Shulchan Aruch HaRav 368:4



F7] ILLUSTRATED HAGGADOT



Copenhagen Haggada - 1739



Cincinnati Haggada - 15th Century Germany



Birds Head Haggada - 14th Century Germany



Lombard Haggada - 14th Century Italy<sup>27</sup>

G] HALACHIC DEVELOPMENT AND THINNING MATZA

G1] RISHONIM

- We saw above that the Gemara discusses the halachic status of 'matza ava'. Based on that sugya, different Rishonim took differing approaches as to whether matza could (or should) be more than a tefach thick, less than a tefach thick, or much thinner.

28. .... שנהגו העולם לעשות מצה של חובה דקה, ומכל מקום אפשר דדיעבד לא אסרו עד טפח, ע"כ כתב זשם הרא"ה ז"ל.

חידושי הריטב"א פסחים לו.

The Ritva quotes in the name of R. Aharon HaLevi - 13/14C Spain - that, although matzot could be up to one tefach thick, the Sefardi custom was to make thin matzot specifically for Seder<sup>28</sup>.

- If the concern is chametz, why would matzot for Seder be any different from those for the rest of the week?
- Two answers are given: (i) this gives an extra level of *shemirai* for the shemura matzot at seder; (ii) there is a concern that thick matzot may not be considered *lechem oni*, which is required for the mitzva of matza at seder.

29. ותמהני איך לא כתב רבינו כאן הא דמשמע התם דאסור ללוש צפסח פת עבה טפח. ורבינו ירוחם כתבו.

בית יוסף אורח חיים סימן תס

The Beit Yosef is very surprised that the halacha not to make matza thicker than a tefach is not mentioned in the Tur<sup>29</sup>.

27. When interpreting illustrations it is critical to have an understanding of the style and approach of the particular school. Were they attempting to portray actual objects, or to communicate a stylized idea or message through the drawing?

28. This practice of making thinner matzot for Sefer is also mentioned by the Talmidei HaRosh in the 14th Century.

29. The Bach (OC 460) learns that many of the key poskim (Rif, Rambam, Tur - who do not mention the tefach limit) understood from the Gemara that, although the comparison with the

## G2] SHULCHAN ARUCH

30. אין עושין בפסח פת עבה טפח. [משנה ברורה יז – דכשהיא עבה כ"כ יש לחוש שמא לא ישלוט חוס האש צחוכה ותחממן צחוכה צשעת אפייטה. אבל צפחות מטפח מותר, ועיין צצה"ל שהצאנו דעה כמה פוסקים דאפילו צפחות מטפח יש ליזכר. וצדיעוד אס כבר אפה יש מתירין אפילו צעבה טפח. ויש אורסין אכן צפחות מטפח אין לאסור צדיעוד. ומ"מ כל שהיא עבה יש לעיין צחוכה אס נאפית יפה ולא נתחמלה

שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הלכות פסח סימן תס סעיף ה

*The Shulchan Aruch rules that matza may not be thicker than a tefach. The Mishna Berura brings the more lenient and the stricter opinions but rules that, bedieved, as long as the matza is less than a tefach thick and we have checked to ensure there are no indications of chimutz, it will be permitted.*

31. אין עושין סריקין המצויירין דהיינו לציייר בפת כמין חיה ועוף. אבל כל מה שעושים אותו במסרק כדי שלא יתפח, וכן מה שמנקבין המצות, מותר. ומ"מ טוב למהר לעשותן שלא להשהות בהם. הגה: ויש לעשות המלות ריקין, ולא פת עבה כשאר לחם, כי אין הרקיקין ממכרין להחמין. [משנה ברורה טז] – היינו אף דמצואר צס"ה דפחות מטפח מותר לעשות [כצ] מ"מ נכון יותר לכתחלה לעשות ריקין דקין

שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הלכות פסח סימן תס סעיף ד

*In this halacha (which actually precedes the one above), the Shulchan Aruch rules against that the custom to make matzot with designs of birds and animals since this introduces delay into the process which could lead to chimutz. The Rema then comments that one should make matzot like 'rekikin' - crackers<sup>30</sup>. Although he may be commenting specifically on the custom of designed matzot mentioned in this section, many mefarshim understand that he is qualifying the psak of the Mechaber in the section concerning thick matzot which follows.*

## G3] ACHARONIM

- The Rema ruled that the matzot should be 'rekikin'. However, that does not necessarily mean that his matzot were like our own.

32. וכי תקרב קרבן מנחה מאפה תגור סלת זרית מצלת בכלילת בשמן וריקין מצות משונים בשמן. [תרגום: וארי תקריב קורבן מנחתא מאפה תנור סולת גריצן פטירן דפילן במשח ואספוגין פטירין דמשיחין במשח]

ויקרא ב:ד ותרגום אונקלוס

*The word 'rekikin' need not be translated as thin crackers. Targum Unkelos translates 'rekikin matzot' (for the korban mincha) as 'esfogin petirin' - spongy matza<sup>31</sup>. Indeed many Rishonim who had thicker matzot<sup>32</sup> refer to them as 'rekikin'.*

33. ... לחם דק כמו מצות שאופין לפסח ... שהוא כעובי אצבע כנהיג במצות

בית היילל על שולחן ערוך י"ד צ"א

*R. Hillel b. Naftali<sup>33</sup>, who lived in Lithuania in the 17C testified that the custom for thin Ashkenazi matzot in his time was to make them the thickness<sup>34</sup> of a thumb<sup>35</sup> (2-3cm).*

## G4] BAKING MATZOT IN ADVANCE

- A critical development in the thinning of matza was the move to bake all matzot BEFORE Pesach<sup>36</sup> so as to ensure that any chametz that may have accidentally been introduced to the matza was *batel beshishim*. On Pesach itself chametz is never nullified so baking

lechem haPanim was rejected, the halacha may remain that matza could even be thicker than a tefach.

30. This reflects the psak of many earlier Ashkenazi Rishonim on the question of designed matza - see R. Peretz comments in Sma'k mitzva 222:11.

31. See Rashi Bava Batra 19b s.v. rakik: סופנין חרה דק ורבה

32. See for instance Rambam Hilchot Chametz U'Matza 8:6.

33. Quoted in the Ba'er Heitiv 460:8.

34. In the Zivotofsky/Greenspan article in Hakira, the authors make the following observation: "By mid-18th century it seems that in Ashkenaz there were both thick and thin matzahs. The Adnei Paz explains that thick matzahs need a hotter oven than do thin ones. Therefore the thick matzah, called "rib matzah" [because it will be grated with a rib-eizen (hand grater) into matzah meal], should be baked first. He concludes by noting that unfortunately, new bakers have started baking the thin matzah first and bake the thick one when the oven has already begun to cool. Again, it is clear that they had more than one type of matzah. .... By the late 18th century hard matzos clearly existed, as evidenced by the interesting comments of the Sha'arei Teshuva (Rabbi Hayyim Mordechai Margolios; Poland, d. 1818). In a very long discussion (OC 460:10) of the issues surrounding gebrokhts (sheruya), he explains the history of the disappearance of thick matzah. He implies that at some point before his time there were two types of matzah: relatively thin but not totally hard that was used for eating, and quite thick matzah that was dragged over a rib-eizen (hand grater) in order to make matzah meal. And indeed in those latter matzos it was not uncommon to find unbaked inner sections, and hence the concern that led to avoiding gebrokhts from matzah meal (although not from dipping the thin matzahs) was logical. However, in his time thick matzos were not made, and the matzah meal was made by further drying the thin matzahs in the oven and then grinding or crushing them. From this description it is clear that in Poland by the late 18th century all that was being used was thin matzos, and that the assumption is that in days of yore, with no idea how far back, thick matzah was produced. What is particularly interesting is that to make matzah meal, the thin matzah was dried and then ground. This implies that his thin crackerlike matzahs were not fully dry, as ours are, and thus had to be further dried before making matzah meal. It is also not clear if the original thick matzos were soft. It would seem not, because it is difficult to grate a soft item on a rib eizen. On the other hand, the need to further dry even the thin matzahs implies that they were not as hard as crackers.

35. See Pri Megadim (Eshel Avraham 460:4).

36. There is a halachic discussion as to whether matza for the mitzva must be made within 30 days of the Chag. Although the accepted psak is that it need not (MB 458:1), some poskim rule that it should (see Bach OC 458). R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach would only eat matza made within 30 days of the Chag.



matzot on Pesach (or even from noon on Erev Pesach) is a higher risk strategy. On the other hand, there is a halachic advantage to baking the matzot once chametz is prohibited<sup>37</sup>.

- From the time of the Rishonim, there was a minority approach that favored baking all the matzot early for this reason, but this only became a mainstream practice in the 18th Century.
- Clearly, once it became standard to bake matzot well before the Chag it was no longer possible to bake thick matzot; these would be rock hard and inedible by Pesach. As such, wafer thin matzot became standard.

34. ויותר נלע"ד משום דזה ידוע שבזמן הקדמון לא היו אופין כל המצות קודם הפסח. אלא היו אופין בכל יום מימי הפסח פת ליום זה. עד שהטור כתב לדבר חידוש וז"ל ואני ראיתי בברצלונא מהמדקדקים שהיו אופין כל מה שצריכין למועד מקודם המועד, שאם יתערב עמו משהו מחמץ יתבטל קודם איסורו עכ"ל. וזהו כמנהג שלנו וכתב זה לדבר חידוש. ולכן כשהיו אופין בכל יום ולאכול פת חמה א"כ למה יגרע מצת מצוה שלא יאפו אותה סמוך לאכילה - והיינו אחר חצות. ומה גם שכתבו דבמרור יש ארס והחמימות מבטל להארס [א"י שם]. ולכן אפו סמוך ללילה, וגם משום חביבה מצוה בשעתה, וגם כדי שיהנו מהמצוה בערב - דפת חמה טוב הרבה יותר מפת צוננת! דהם אפו מצות עבים לא כשלו והצונן קשה לאכילה, והוה הידור מצוה. .... וזה שאסרו למי שאפה קודם שש הוא למיגדר מילתא כדרך הקדמונים שהיו זריזין במצות וזהירים במנהגי ישראל. אבל אצלנו שאופין קודם הפסח אין טעם למנהג זה ולכן באמת האידנא רק קצת מהמדקדקים נוהגים בזה וכל ישראל אין יודעין מזה כלל [כנלע"ד]:

ערוך השולחן אורח חיים סימן תנח סעיף ג

*The Aruch Hashulchan describes the transition from fresh, warm, thick matzot to cold thin ones. There is a halachic benefit to baking matza after chametz is prohibited, but this minhag is now rarely practiced, except by the Yemenites<sup>38</sup>.*

## G5] GEBROCHTS

- The origin of the modern minhag not to eat gebrochts<sup>39</sup> can be found in the teshuvot (siman 6) of the Alter Rebbe of Lubavitch<sup>40</sup> at the end of the 18C. He has two concerns: (i) unbaked flour which may remain in the middle of the matza. Although there a dispute whether this is a halachic concern, he recommends being strict. He writes that this became more problematic as people began to bake matzot more quickly; (ii) a second and more serious concern is flour dust which may coat the matzot in the factory. He invokes the injunction of the Arizal to be machmir where possible in issues concerning Pesach.
- Some commentators suggest that the increased speed of kneading coincided with the switch from softer wetter matza, where the dough was very well worked, to harder dryer matza, which was prepared very quickly<sup>41</sup> with less kneading.
- As such, although one would expect more potential gebrochts problems in the wetter thicker dough, the real concern was caused by the accelerated kneading process!

## G6] THE END OF THE THICK MATZA

- At the start of the 1800s, R. Avraham Danziger was urging bakers to make matzot thinner. His Chayei Adam was published in 1819.

35. .... ומכל מקום ימהר לעשותן. ויש לעשות המצות ריקין ולא עבה טפת. ומכל מקום יש מקומות שעושים אותם קצת עבה. אך צריך לזהר הרבה שלא יוציא מן התנור, עד שתהיה נאפה יפה, ושיהיה התנור מחומם הרבה, שלא תבא לידי חימוץ.

חיי אדם חלק ב-ג (הלכות שבת ומועדים) כלל קבח סעיף ב

- The Chatam Sofer writes<sup>42</sup> that most Ashkenazi communities had issued a ban on thick matzot.
- In 1858 a New York magazine was advertising two types of matza - thin (around ¼ cm) and thicker and darker (around ¾ cm)<sup>43</sup>.

36. ועכשיו מנהג ק"ק אשכנזים פה עיר הקודש ירושלים ת"ו לעשות מצות מלוח וכן צמלות שעושים לטוחן ריקין ממש ... יש קלת מן הספרדים שעושים גם כן מצות מלוח ריקין ממש. וכל הנזכר לעשות יותר דקין ולא עבים הרי זה משוּבָּח. וצ"ע מצות כולי עלמא נוהגין עתה לעשות אותן ריקין דקין משום דהמנהג עתה לאפות הכל קודם פסח ולהנייעם לכל הפסח, ואם לא יהיו ריקין דקים קשה לאכול.

כף החיים על או"ח סימן תס ס'ק מד

*By the early 20th Century, the R. Ya'akov Sofer writes that both the Ashkenazim and Sefardim in Israel were making their matzot as thin as possible!*

37. Matza must be something that could have become chametz in the baking process. This is only possible after noon on Erev Pesach

38. Rav Yosef Kafich (commentary to Rambam Hilchot Shvitat Yom Tov 1:1 (n. 15) and Halichot Teiman, 1987 ed. p. 19) quotes his grandfather, Rav Yihye Kapach, as making the following wry observation: The Torah prohibited work on Yom Tov and then provided (Shemot 12:16) an exemption for food-related work. In the Torah this exemption is explicitly mentioned only regarding Pesach. Why? He suggested that God knew that later generations would keep adding chumrot on Pesach, until they would totally prohibit baking matzah on Pesach and bake it all before the holiday. The Torah therefore was not only permitting, but mandating to bake and eat fresh "bread" each day of Pesach!

39. For a detailed shiur on the minhag of gebrochts see <https://rabbimanning.com/index.php/audio-shiurim/chagim/>

40. Reb Mendel of Vitebsk is cited by some early Chasidim as attributing the minhag not to eat gebrochts to the Magid of Mezerich. The Besh't himself may have eaten gebrochts!

41. The Chatam Sofer was said to aim for 3 minutes from the mixing of flour and water until the matza emerged baked from the oven!

42. Shu't Chatam Sofer OC 121. The Chatam Sofer died in 1840.

43. Presumably rib-matza for making matza meal.

## G7] MACHINE MATZA

• Once machine matzot<sup>44</sup> were introduced in the mid 1800s<sup>45</sup>, this brought a uniformity to matza size and thickness. Nevertheless, the early matza machines did not necessarily produce the thinnest matzot.

## H] CAN ASHKENAZIM NOW EAT SOFT MATZOT?

• Even though it is very clear that matzot used to be softer and thicker, it is now many centuries since Ashkenazim (and indeed most Sefardim) ate that type of matza. Can they choose to ignore the more recent practice and return to older traditions?

## H1] PROS AND CONS

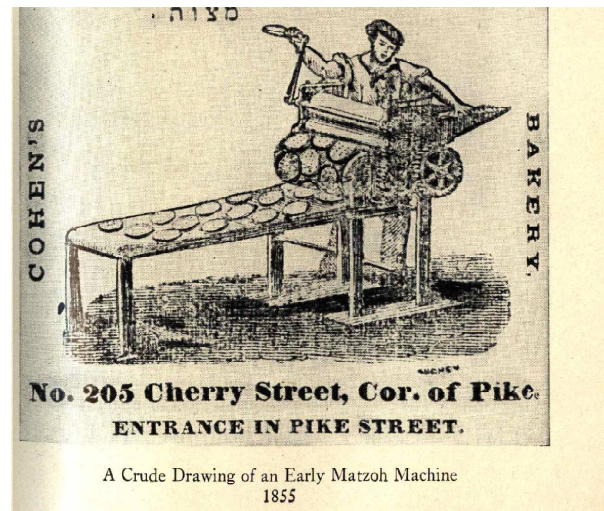
- There is no question that soft thick matzot have a much higher chance of containing unbaked dough than hard thin matzot. Any such matzot must be made under strict hashgacha by experts at this baking style.<sup>46</sup>
- On the other hand, soft matzot are made much more quickly. There is no rolling or *reddling*; the dough is simply kneaded and placed into the oven. In this respect, the concerns for chimutz are lessened.
- Soft matzot also resolve the halacha concern that very thin brittle matzot may not be *hamotzi* and thus would be invalid for matzot mitzva.

## H2] SOFT MATZA OPTIONS IN EARLIER TIMES

• Although most classic poskim over the last 200 years strongly recommend thin matzot, they nevertheless also include the halachot of how to calculate the volume of soft matza - in particular whether large airpockets in thick matza and small airpockets in spongy matza are included in the volume<sup>47</sup>. Although all to these poskim almost certainly ate only thin matza, they do not state that softer matzot are prohibited<sup>48</sup>.

## H3] MODERN POSKIM

- Some contemporary poskim have clearly prohibited soft matzot for Ashkenazim. R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach rules<sup>49</sup> that, although thick matzot are permitted according to the letter of the law, since there is now a custom for Ashkenazim to make matza as thin as possible, they may not depart from this custom<sup>50</sup>. Some communities<sup>51</sup> have issued an official ban on soft matza.
- Other poskim have permitted soft matzot.



37. **שאלה:** האם מותר לאשכנזים לאכול מצות רכות?

**תשובה:** אמנם יש אוסרים ומודים שבעבר היו אוכלים, אבל חדלו (הגרשו"א הליכות שלמה פ"ט הערה פ), ואין מסורת להתיר. אבל אין גם מסורת לאסור. ומוזכר ברמ"א, שהמצות היו עבות (ת"ד), אז בהכרח היו רכות. וכן בשערי תשובה שם כתב שהיו מגררים את המצות עם מין פומפיה, סימן שהיו רכות. הג"ר אשר וייס מתיר מעיקר הדין, רק חושש כי אין בקיאים ברכות (בסוף ההגדה ס' טו). אבל עדות המזרח כן בקיאים. וכן הג"ר צבי שכטר מתיר.

**בסיכום:** מותר.

*Rav Shlomo Aviner<sup>52</sup> permits soft matzot made under proper hashgacha by experts.*

44. For a detailed shiur on machine matzot see <https://rabbimanning.com/index.php/audio-shiurim/chagim/>

45. This also coincides with the increased urbanization of Jewish communities and centralization of bakeries. Unlike Yemenite communities which retained the traditions of home-made matzot for a family, the large Jewish cities of the 19th centuries mass produced matza and shipped to smaller towns. This required earlier baking and longer lasting matzot.

46. R. Yosef Eliyahu Henkin (*Lev Ivra* p40) also pointed out a modern problem with soft matzot due to the heat for our ovens. Traditional ovens for baking soft matza were not as hot as modern commercial ovens. As such, use of modern ovens to bake soft matza runs the risk that the crust of the matza will form quickly on the outside, but leave unbaked dough on the inside.

47. Large pockets are not included, but small pockets are. See Shulchan Aruch HaRav 486:2, MB 486:3 and Aruch Hashulchan 486:2. This fascinating discussion is ultimately based around Mishna Uktzin 2:8.

48. Although there were communities in the 19th Century which placed a ban on soft matzot.

49. Halichot Shlomo Chapter 9 note 80.

50. See also R. Moshe Sternbuch in Teshuvot V'Hanhagot 5:131:4.

51. See <https://vosizneias.com/2010/03/25/soft-pita-like-matzah-is-not-kosher/concerning-Melbourne,-Australia>. There was considerable controversy in the Australian case about whether Rav Eliashiv prohibited soft matzot or did not. R. Zev Weitman (Rav of Tenuva) was also involved.

52. [http://shlomo-aviner.net/index.php?title=%D7%9E%D7%A6%D7%95%D7%AA\\_%D7%A8%D7%9B%D7%95%D7%AA\\_%D7%9C%D7%90%D7%A9%D7%9B%D7%A0%D7%96%D7%99%D7%9D\\_\(%D7%9E%D7%90%D7%9E%D7%A8\)](http://shlomo-aviner.net/index.php?title=%D7%9E%D7%A6%D7%95%D7%AA_%D7%A8%D7%9B%D7%95%D7%AA_%D7%9C%D7%90%D7%A9%D7%9B%D7%A0%D7%96%D7%99%D7%9D_(%D7%9E%D7%90%D7%9E%D7%A8))

- Rav Herschel Schachter permits soft matzot to Ashkenazim<sup>53</sup>.
- He argues that the concern in the poskim was not with soft matza but with thick matza. The hardness or softness of the matza is entirely ancillary to the mitzva and is not the subject of a minhag, any more than is the color of the parochet in shul. Hard/soft matzot is no different to a red/blue parochet.

- Rav Asher Weiss<sup>54</sup> takes a middle approach. He rules that soft matzot are definitely permitted for Ashkenazim according to the letter of the law, and there was never really a true minhag NOT to eat them. Rather the minhag is to aim for hiddurim in the baking process. Nevertheless, since there were communities that officially banned them, even though those bans were probably only for the local time and community, he is concerned that there may be an element of 'al titosh torat imecha'. He therefore recommends that Ashkenazim should stick to hard matza, and if someone is sick and cannot eat them, they can be *matir nederto* to eat the soft matza.

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הרה"צ רבי שחטר  
 ראש ישיבה וראש כולל  
 ישיבת רבינו יצחק אלחנן

בארנו קודם שנת תשע"א  
 דשא"צ אולי ס' קס"ה ס"ג כגז המחת  
 שבטיים והיום שלססס אונס קרוב  
 מזונות, אא"כ הקצתם ליתא את הסלדה  
 אולי האשכנזים גמיר נהגו לקחו מצות  
 חרסח שרש כזה, אכנה האחוזנים - שאלו  
 הסדר פשוטא שדרכה המוציא, שהיו  
 הקצות ליתא את הסלדה. והדבר סברתם  
 אולי מצות שרש כיון סוף אלא ט"ו -  
 אולי פשוטא הו' נאה שאלו לאשכנזי מות  
 אולי מצות אלו של הסבדים דמש"ך הרמ"א  
 אה"כ פסח ס' ג"ס ס"ג - שפ"ג וזשא קיקון  
 ע"כ פשוטא א"כ ככוס וקשת אלו שיהיו  
 דיקון - פחית משח, אכנה אולי מאכנה אכ"כ  
 הרמ"א שכן הוא אהדי"א דמש"ך (סוף ס' ג"ס)  
 - שאפ"כ קיים מצות מצה קמיה השליה  
 כס"ג, אולי פשוטא אין דנה קל"א ש' שנו  
 מנהג' כמו המשנה על הערב"ה מאדא  
 זכחו - פ"אין הרמ"א ח"ק מן המנהג' כן פשוט  
 צד"ו שפ"ג

53. R. Schachter later published a clarification: 'My note written last month regarding Sfardic matzos was somehow taken as an endorsement of some specific matzah plant in Queens. Others understood that I was obviously referring to some specific matzah plant in Petach Tikvah. Let it be known that I am not familiar with either plant, and my note was not intended to endorse any specific matzah manufacturer in the NY area or in any other location. One must take care to use only such food products made under strict Rabbinic supervision and approved by one's local Orthodox Rabbi, and especially with respect to Pesach products where the laws of kashrus are much more complicated and much more serious.'

54. Shu't Minchat Asher 3:44-45.