

**“Can Home Come in a Tin Can?”:
How Jewish-Israeli Women Savour Home in New Zealand**

Hadas Ore

A Dissertation Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Auckland

The Department of Anthropology

February 2014

Thesis Abstract

This ethnography studies the everyday experiences of twenty-five Jewish-Israeli women following their migration to New Zealand, questioning how they remember the ‘homes’ they left behind and how they constitute ‘home’ anew in Auckland. The analysis examines the changes that the women engender in their food practices, focusing on the domestic activities of grocery shopping, cooking, baking, casual hospitality, festive hosting and dieting. My findings suggest that the ‘homes’ these women remember and reconstitute after migration are composed of five dimensions: homelands, ancestral homes, communal homes, spiritual Jewish homes and the personal body as home. The women use their everyday domestic food practices to actively negotiate social boundaries with lands and people, connecting with homes across space and time as they claim multiple belongings. Their engagements with food trigger their nostalgic emotions, memories, and imaginations, traversing through homes near, far, past, present and future. In the process, they revise their collective pasts in order to claim they are ‘good enough’ Jewish-Israeli women in New Zealand.

This study contributes a gendered perspective to the anthropology of home, showing how migrant women negotiate social relationships through their domestic food practices. Engaging with current theoretical works on nostalgia, I illustrate how women enact intimate relationships through nostalgic food production and consumption that invoke their pleasure, pride and the feeling of being ‘at home’. I also suggest how women use food to enact social tensions, expressing criticism through self-irony, ambivalence, anger and disgust towards particular facets in their domestic lives and identities. In sum, this study demonstrates Jewish-Israeli migrant women materialise building home anew in New Zealand, employing their engagements with food and their everyday domestic food practices to foster the feeling of being ‘at home’ within themselves, amongst their kin, and, more broadly, across their social networks.

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my family: my partner and most ardent supporter and critic for the last twenty years, Yossi Ore; my daughter Livné, who improved my English skills and took great interest in my writing; my son Itamar, who by now, I hope, knows what anthropologists do for a living; and my daughter Morag. As she was born in the midst of the research project, Morag made the whole process of writing a PhD as a mother an interesting and challenging journey home.

Acknowledgments

This study would have been impossible to conduct without the Top Achiever Doctoral Fellowship (2007), funded by the New Zealand government. I am indebted to my three dedicated supervisors Dr Susanna Trnka, Dr Phyllis Herda and Professor Maureen Molloy at the University of Auckland. They shared their knowledge, wisdom, and professional and personal experience as they offered advice and support. I wish to acknowledge the departmental seminars and conferences that I attended in New Zealand and Australia where I presented parts of this dissertation at various stages. The PhD writing group of the department, where I was able to enjoy the generous and collegial commentary of my fellow PhD students, as well as those of the scholars who convened the discussions, was a vital arena for developing my thinking and writing. Over the six years I have been enrolled on and off in the PhD programme the people who made contributions to my writing and supported me are numerous. Hence, I will mention by name only a few of them whose support was substantial: Marama Muru Lanning, Jane Horan, Michelle McCarthy, Sarah Krose, Kathryn Scott, Rachel Scott, and Katriona Longmuir. Finally, and importantly, I wish to acknowledge the Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study for their generosity and depth of thought. The responsibility for the analysis of their behaviours lies with me.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction	1
Entry to Fieldwork.....	1
Historical Backdrop: Women as Home-Builders and Cooks in the Jewish-Israeli Context.....	3
The First Phase: The <i>Sabra</i> and the <i>Polania</i> in Zionist Home-Building	4
The Second Phase: the Myth of the <i>Bashlanit</i> in Life after Second-Wave Feminism	8
Changes through Migration.....	10
A Shift in the Study of Home and Memory: Towards Transition and Multiplicity	10
Shifting Approaches to Nostalgia: From an Emotive Escapist Reaction to a Critical Everyday Practice..	13
The Social Theory of Everyday Food Practices: Cultural Continuity and Change.....	18
Changing Outlooks on International Migration	21
Bringing Home the Study of Women’s Constitutions of ‘Home’ through Everyday Food Practices .	25
The Study Group	27
Methodology	28
Ethical Issues.....	33
Chapter Overview.....	34
Chapter Two: Consuming Homelands	38
Mapping Out Responses towards Groceries.....	39
Pragmatic Acceptance	40
Cynical Pessimism	41
Sustained Optimism	43
Red Meat Consumption.....	49
Activism and Nostalgia for a Future Home in New Zealand	54
“Can Home Come in a Tin Can?”	55
Shopping for Iconic Kiwi Fare to Become (like) New Zealanders	58
Interweaving Longing by Home Gardening.....	61
Converting Groceries into Homemade Foods in New Zealand.....	65
Commoditising Food Nostalgia.....	68

Nostalgia in Dairy Food Advertisements	71
Conclusions	74
Chapter Three: Cooking and Kinship	77
Food Journeys to Familial-Ancestral Homes	78
Home-Cooked Dishes as Metonyms for Close Female Kin.....	82
Negotiating Feminine Stereotypes in Nostalgic Recollections	88
Grappling with the Myth of the <i>Polania</i>	91
Grappling with the Myth of the <i>Bashlanit</i>	93
Remembering Iconic Dishes	95
Commemorating Close Female Kin through Home Cooking	100
Conclusions	102
Chapter Four: <i>Gam Yafa vegam Offa</i> [She is Pretty and She Bakes Too].....	104
Longing for Baking and ‘Baking’ Out of Longing	106
The Pleasures and Intimacies of Home Baking.....	109
Extending the Meanings of Comfort Foods	111
Employing a Jewish-Israeli Hierarchy of Baking	113
Baking Memories: The Kindergarten Experience.....	118
The Baking Hands and the Accuracy of Baking	120
Baking and Remembering Ambivalence.....	123
The Baking Oven: Generating Discontent and Self-Irony	128
Baking in the Kiwi Way.....	131
The Portrayal of Baking in the Kiwi and Israeli Media	134
Shifting Nostalgic Consumption in Jewish-Israeli Advertisements for Baking.....	135
Conclusions	141
Chapter Five: Constituting Home Anew – Casual Hospitality and the Communal Home	144
Pleasure and Pride in Nostalgic Casual Hospitality	146
Extending Feminine Care in Food Provision	150
Gendered Social Tension in Casual Hospitality.....	157
Grappling with the Myth of the <i>Sabra</i> in the Communal Home.....	159

The Gender of <i>Dugri</i> Speech.....	161
Imitating Casual New Zealand Manners of Hospitality: Barbeques and ‘Bring a Plate’	165
‘Bring a Plate’ in Casual Hospitality.....	167
Conclusions	169
Chapter Six: Returning to the Spiritual Home through Festive Cooking and Kashrut Observance ...	172
Pleasure and Choice in Festive Cooking	175
Realising Jewish Spirituality through Pleasure and Pride	177
Commemorating Close Kin via Festive Cooking.....	182
When the <i>Polania</i> meets the <i>Bashlanit</i>	184
Ambivalence and Guilt towards Jewish Tradition	189
Ambivalence toward the Labour of Festive Cooking and Feelings of Guilt.....	190
Ambivalence in the Return Home	194
Ambivalence in <i>Kashrut</i> Observance.....	196
Conclusions	200
Chapter Seven: The Body as ‘Home’– Dieting and Weight Management	203
Is There a Jewish-Israeli Appetite?	205
The Pleasure and Pride of Feeling ‘at Home’ in One’s Body	207
Weight Management as the Gendered Enactment of Care.....	209
Cultural Intimacies between Self and Other through Weight Management.....	214
Ambivalence and Disgust on the Road to the Personal Body as ‘Home’	219
The Loss of Pleasure in ‘Senseless’ Eating.....	219
Disgust with ‘Fat’ as Ambivalence in Kinship Relations and Beyond	223
Living with and Breaking Free from a Feeling of Inadequacy after Migration	228
Conclusions	231
Chapter Eight: Concluding Remarks on Savouring Home	234
Glossary	245
Bibliography.....	249

Chapter One: Introduction

Entry to Fieldwork

A Recipe for a Blissful Home

Ingredients: 2 cups of understanding, 4 cups of love, 3 cups of forgetting, 1 cup of friendship, 2 spoonfuls of hope, 4 pieces of faith, 1 barrel of joy

Method of Preparation: Mix love with understanding and add the pieces of faith wholeheartedly. Knead the kindness and patience with warmth, and sprinkle with friendship and hope. Finally, season to taste with joy and cook with the rays of the sun. Serve plentifully every day.

(Hebrew source unknown; trans. mine)

Thirteen years ago, I received this recipe, a poignant metaphor for an ideal home, from my eldest daughter's kindergarten teacher in Israel. This is the opening recipe in a collection of practical baking recipes that the children, their parents and their grandparents had enjoyed during the school year, especially on Fridays and festive occasions. When my daughter moved on to preschool, the teacher gave the parents this collection as a reminder of the class' favourite recipes. One Wednesday afternoon, about four years after migrating to New Zealand, I felt like baking *challah*¹ and rediscovered this collection among my cookbooks. Turning to the recipe for *challah*, I was reminded of the small, almost bite-sized version sprinkled with sugar that my daughter would share with us every Friday during her time at kindergarten. Usually we ate that *challah* on the car trip home, leaving crumbs on the seats. There was not much point in saving it for the special Friday night meal (Kiddush), as we did not observe this practice, only partaking in it when we visited my parents or parents-in-law.

I realised that the *challah* my daughter baked in Israel was the last freshly home-baked *challah* I had eaten. I rejoiced in my *challah* that Wednesday, but the warm smell of yeast bread as it was baking, and later the *challah*'s sweet taste, made me weep. The sweet *challah* that I was eating became 'salty', and my sobbing made it hard to finish it. I stopped to wonder if these were normal reactions. Did other Jewish-Israeli migrant women in New

¹ Challah is a rich bread, often plaited, used in the ritual of welcoming the Shabbat, called in Israeli-Hebrew the *Kiddush* or *Kabalat Shabbat*, at the Friday night meal. Challah has various symbolic meanings and is also eaten at other festive meals that occur on Shabbat. Traditionally, the eldest man in the family blesses the wine and the challah before the meal begins. In Israel, Jewish-Israelis normally buy savoury, ready-made challah (Barer-Stein 1999:247), unlike the sweet challah that marks other festive occasions. I discuss baking challah in Chapter Four, as well as in Chapter Six, which revolves around festive cookery, including the Friday night meal.

Zealand feel and act in similar ways? Why did I decide to bake *challah* in the first place, given that we do not observe the Friday night meal and in any case would never have done so on a Wednesday? I was also surprised at the tears that accompanied my momentary return to my past life in Israel. As a secular woman, I felt these tears manifested a connection to Jewish spirituality that I did not realise I was capable of. I did not know I had this spirituality in me, or what it meant. In addition, I could not understand why I was saddened; after all, I had chosen to emigrate from Israel – no one had forced me to.

Later I noted in my diary that I started to feel an “insatiable hunger” which led me to eat, cook, and feed others the familiar foods of ‘home’ that I had never much cared for, but suddenly found myself craving, specifically those dishes cooked in Israel by my Polish-Russian (Ashkenazi) family and by my Egyptian (Sephardic)² mother-in-law. Despite the fact that I shed many tears (and still do) and started gaining weight, the strong grip of these conflicting emotions that materialised through *challah* baking – pleasure, longing (*gaagoim*³), sadness, hope – had neither a name nor an explanation. This experience propelled my deep desire to explore the experiences of Jewish-Israeli women following their migration to New Zealand, as materialised through their everyday domestic food practices.

This study focuses on the ways Jewish-Israeli women remember and reconstitute home after migrating to New Zealand. I suggest that home can be imagined as a house that is divided into different rooms, each room representing a dimension that women realise through their everyday domestic food practices and the memories, senses and emotions that engaging with food provokes. This ‘house’ shifts to a new cultural context after migration. The ‘house’ is obviously not ruined or demolished by international migration, but shifting it leads to transformations both in its exterior and in the interior design of each room. This study examines what happens to, and in, each of the ‘rooms’ or dimensions in women’s everyday experiences of reconstituting home. In examining how and why these transformations occur I look into the ways Jewish-Israeli women negotiate social boundaries with lands and people,

² The Jewish population of Israel is grossly divided into three main ethnic groups: Ashkenazim, literally meaning ‘from Ashkenaz’; Mizrahim, literally meaning ‘oriental’; and Sepharadim, literally meaning ‘from Spain’. Ashkenazim are Jews who migrated to Israel in the first two waves before 1948, the year Israel was established, and are the descendants of the Jews who migrated from 900 C.E. to Central and Eastern Europe. Mizrahim are generally Jews from North African countries who immigrated to Israel after the establishment of the state. Sepharadim are descendants of Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal (1492), some of whom lived in Palestine for centuries, and are usually perceived as an elite minority centred in the four holy cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberius and Zefat (Barer-Stein 1999:246-247). Some elaboration on differences between these groups is found in the discussion about the Jewish-Israeli context in this introduction; I do not discuss other Jewish groups that immigrated to Israel mainly from the USSR and Ethiopia.

³ *Gaagoim* in Israeli-Hebrew is an onomatopoeic word that suggests the call of geese, which are seen as the epitome of maternal care and domesticity. Since geese are animals that migrate, encapsulating their call in a word that means ‘longing’ implies recurring departures and homecomings.

as they reconstitute five dimensions: homelands, ancestral spaces of homes that materialise kinship relationships between four generations, communal places of belonging, ‘homes’ as spiritual Jewish sites and as the personal feminine body.

I begin this chapter by giving a historical background of Jewish-Israeli women as home-builders and their food practices in the Jewish-Israeli context. Then, I situate my analysis within the anthropological literature on home, nostalgia, food and migration, and state my main argument. Finally, this chapter ends with a discussion of methodology, ethical issues and an overview of the thesis.

Historical Backdrop: Women as Home-Builders and Cooks in the Jewish-Israeli Context

The Jewish-Israeli society is a migrant-settler society that was subject to fluctuating waves of immigration before and after the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948. Despite the great importance given to the experience of womanhood in this context⁴, little social research examines the everyday experiences of women in the domestic sphere over the past three generations, let alone through the prism of their food practices (but see Gil-Tin 2005, Rosin 2005, Shine-Rakavy 1999, Tene 2005).

The discussion below is dedicated to identifying the important trends that secular⁵ Israeli society has seen since the 1920s in terms of their impact on the everyday experiences of women and on food production and consumption in the familial home and the nation-state. This discussion is divided into two main historical phases that correspond with the constitution of three main mythical figures. The first phase runs from the 1920s, the Yishuv (settlement) time of the Jewish ‘pioneers’, to the 1960s. During this phase, two significant figures emerged: the *sabra* (lit. prickly pear – sweet on the inside and rough on the outside), a Jew born in Israel, and the *polania* (Polish woman), the Jewish-Israeli equivalent of the American Ashkenazi ‘Yiddish Mama’ or sacrificial mother. The second phase runs from the 1960s onwards and revolves around a third myth, that of the *bashlanit* (cooking woman), the

⁴ There is prolific research on the experience of motherhood in the context of Jewish-Israeli society that mostly relates in one way or another to the pro-natalist Israeli state policy (e.g. Bloomfield 2009, El-Or 2001, Haelyon 2006, Kahn 2000, Remennick 2000, Sigad and Eisikovits 2009). Studies from the 2000s show that Jewish-Israeli women posit alternatives to mainstream Zionist ‘familism’ (Fogiel-Bijaoui 2002:38), just as lesbian and queer women, for example, challenge the ideal of the heterosexual family and the traditional gender division of labour within it (Tamir and Cahana-Amitay 2009:546).

⁵ This discussion relates to the so-called ‘secular’ majority of middle-class Jewish-Israelis who form the study group. Secularity being not an absolute but rather a spectrum, some women in the study chose to refer to themselves as Jewish atheists, others professed a non-specific belief in a (Jewish) God, while still others self-attested to traditional Jewish conduct. By ‘secular’, I mostly refer to women who maintain some connection with Jewish traditional religious practices by celebrating some Jewish festivals at home and the Bar Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah of their children.

Jewish-Israeli equivalent of the western (and American) modern ‘superwoman’ – i.e. an all-rounder who is successful both in her career and as a home-builder.

The First Phase: The *Sabra* and the *Polania* in Zionist Home-Building

Like most national ideologies of their time, Zionism, the primary political force that propelled the establishment of the state of Israel, integrates socialist and liberal ideals (Kimmerling 1992, 2001). Zionist ideology is also premised on a unique nostalgia⁶ that recasts prominent Jewish values and messianic beliefs as secular, modern and civilised, and as a means of ensuring the survival of the Jewish people through political upheavals and transformations (Gurevitch and Aran 1994).

The main aim of Zionism was to turn the new Jewish state into a modern nation-state, like any other of the world’s nation-states (Ben-Ari and Bilu 1997, Loss 2010). All life spheres were included by Zionists in the quest to free, and indeed redeem, the Jewish people from the melancholic, effeminate and demeaning self-images that they had internalised in recent European history (Biale 1992, Gluzman 1997). These negative images were specifically associated with diasporic Jews in east and central Europe (Weiss 2001, 2005) who constituted the elite of Jewish-Israeli society, known as the Ashkenazim.

The Ashkenazi Zionists replaced the Jewish belief in God with the redeeming powers of the nation-state, the state army (Gurevitch and Aran 1994) and food (Raviv 2001, 2002, 2003, Rosin 2005), and in this way constituted the iconic masculine figure of the *sabra*, the native-born Israeli. The *sabra* is characterised as the antithesis of the diasporic Jew: bearing a European, virile and healthy body, he is a self-reliant, resourceful, innovative, hard-working, spontaneous, open, direct and confident man (Ben-Ari 2009, Kaplowitz Ben-Mordechai 1982, Katriel 1986, Yadin and Zuckermann 2007). According to these images, Jewish-Israeli men working the land were seen as ‘impregnating’ the barren soil and bringing about abundance by the physical and symbolic powers vested in their labouring bodies. There is prolific literature on the mythical figure of the *sabra* (see for example, Almog 1997, Ankori 2003, Ben-Ari 2009, Boyarin 2000, Kaplowitz Ben-Mordechai 1982, Katriel 1986) and he

⁶ Ella Shohat (1991:39 in Talmon 2001:16) notes that the Zionist project employed what Walter Benjamin called “revolutionist nostalgia” through which the idealised biblical past served to constitute a future utopia. The first two lines of the Israeli national anthem, ‘Hatikvah’ (The Hope), are sufficient to demonstrate the depth of this nostalgia: “As long as in the heart, within / A Jewish soul still yearns”. The lyrics of the anthem were adapted from a poem written in 1878 by the Jewish poet Naphtali Hertz Imber from Złoczów (now Zolochiv), Galicia, then a province of Austro-Hungary. The melody chosen for this anthem is exceptionally mournful despite (and perhaps to emphasise) the hopeful meanings the anthem conveys.

continues to figure in popular discussions of Israeli identity (Sela-Sheffy 2004:479, Talmon 2001).

Another aspect of this ideological formation was the establishment of a broad social hierarchy based on perceptions of gendered bodies, labour and food practices. Even before the establishment of Israel, the spiritually transforming power accorded to food and eating practices drove Zionist policy makers to introduce new foods to new Jewish immigrants, rather than promote the consumption of local Arab foods. In this way the production and consumption of food in the familial home was a prolific site for redesigning the eating and feeding practices of the Jewish population in a way that excluded Arabs from the national collective. The '*tozeret haaretz*' (product of the land) campaign, launched in the 1920s during the Yishuv period, further promulgated this boundary (Raviv 2001:30).

In the process of creating ethnic and class boundaries within the Jewish population in Israel, Mizrahim were colonised and marginalised by the Ashkenazi elite (Khazzoom 2003, Shenhav 2004, 2007, Shohat 1997, 1999)⁷. While the Ashkenazim mobilised the Zionist movement via modernisation and secularisation (Loss 2010:86 borrowing from Shenhav 2003), Mizrahim were and still are considered to be more 'traditional' than Ashkenazim.

Simultaneously, Zionist ideologues epitomised middle-class Jewish-Israeli women as housewives, viewing them primarily as mothers and depicting their labours of bearing and rearing children and cooking for the family as fundamental for the survival of the family and the building of the nation (Rosin 2005:177, Tene 2005:95, 127). Women were also seen as bearing the main responsibility for the health and well-being of the family (Berkovitch 1997, Bloomfield 2009). These labours were, however, perceived as less prestigious than, and secondary to, the manual and militaristic labours associated with men (Rosin 2005:190).

Mizrahi women faced the double burden of ethnic and class discrimination. During the food scarcities of the rationing period (1949–1951), new Mizrahi migrant women and their families commonly inhabited the *maabarot* (temporary camps), sometimes for years (Rosin 2005:190-195). Because of discrimination, these women were accused by Zionist ideologues of prioritising food provision for their husbands or themselves while neglecting their children. As a result, state supervision separated women from infants and children up to the

⁷ A review of early Israeli anthropology uncovers patronising and ambivalent perceptions towards Mizrahim who were constituted as the exotic 'other' from within or as "the other as a brother" (Goodman and Loss 2009:477).

age of twelve during mealtimes under the guise of protecting children's welfare (Rosin 2005:194).

In practice, however, because of the severity of the food rationing, lower- to middle-class Ashkenazi and Mizrahi women alike put their children first when feeding and cooking (Rosin 2005:179-181). Jewish-Israeli womanhood came to be modelled on a premise of problematic care: the 'excessive' care of over-anxious, but 'good', Ashkenazi women and the 'poor' level of care by Mizrahi women. State demands for food abstinence, and the associated sacrifice of pleasure on the part of lower- to middle-class women, not only contrasted with the fundamental value in Judaism that celebrates life by eating (Anderson 2005:107)⁸, but also conveyed a sense of threat by depicting Jewish women as providing unsatisfying levels of care. Without a doubt, these models intensified the hierarchy of gender, class and ethnicity among the Jewish population that had already begun to form before the establishment of the state (Bendrihem 2006, Rosin 2005, Tene 2005).

The sense of threat to survival is strongly evident in the stereotypical Jewish feminine figure of the *polania*, formulated by Zionists as a sacrificial sufferer who enacts guilt and attempts to control others through blame. Studies that examine the socio-historic conditions in the lives of Jews in Britain and the USA prior to the First World War relate to the formation of an equivalent myth, the 'Yiddish Mama' (see Antler 2007, Prell 1992, Ravits 2000, Samuel and Thompson 1990:17-18). Historically it is hard to pinpoint the period when this stereotypical figure arose, yet some studies suggest that the *polania* may have been a response to the gendered denigration of Jews in Europe as effeminate (Gluzman 1997, Khazzoom 2003), while earlier studies imply that continuous Jewish concerns with civilising the body may have contributed to this stereotype⁹. The figure of the *polania* depicts class aspiration through its emphasis on education and economic mobility and the desire for

⁸ Anderson (2005:107) compares Christianity with Islam and Judaism and asserts that Judaism in particular endorses the pleasure of eating to celebrate life.

⁹ An early anthropological study on memories of life in the *shtetl*, small market towns in pre-Second World War Eastern Europe with a large Yiddish-speaking Jewish population, clearly portrays these concerns (Zborowski and Herzog 1962 [1952] cited in Shine Rakavy 1999:49-50). In that study, Jewish women are depicted as closely linked with domestic cooking and feeding and as eating by snacking rather than at regular mealtimes like men. They are also associated with specific foods such as noodles and sweets, the same foods that are associated with children. In the broadest sense, Jewish perceptions of a civilised body are taught through the concerns addressed by the priestly *kashrut* rules (established between the fifth and sixth centuries) in the books of Leviticus and Ezekiel (Eilberg-Schwartz 1992:21-23). These rules dictate abstinence from specific types of food in order to become Hebrew or Israelite. This targeted abstinence from food is a vehicle for 'civilising' the body, a tactic employed to maintain a cultural boundary that differentiates the Hebrews, Israelites and Jews from other peoples (Rosenblum 2010).

respect. This desire is manifested by the importance placed on making a good impression, table manners and appearance.

To this day, the figure of the *polania* remains distinctly overlooked in social research on the everyday life of women in the Jewish-Israeli society, despite its prevalent role in popular culture, particularly in humour and in the media. A few minor exceptions are found in the seminal work on Jewish cooking by Claudia Roden (1996:207) suggesting that the Israeli national sense of insecurity is one reason for the current [i.e. since the 1980s] propensity for “constant noshing or grazing”. Roden explains this propensity as the manifestation of the motherly worry of the *polania*, a manifestation that she regards as a national phenomenon. Similarly, in the recent and popular Jewish-Israeli cookbook *Parents are Cooking* (Shechner-Rochman 2005:13, 27), the women authors link their worries about feeding children with the figure of the *polania*.

Two MA theses (Bendrihem 2006, Gil-Tin 2005) also stand as exceptions in showing that the *polania* is a persistent figure against which Jewish-Israeli women measure themselves, regardless of their ethnicity and class. In her ethnographic work, Reut Bendrihem studied the lives of second-generation Moroccan-Israeli women in a southern Israeli town through the prism of motherhood. Bendrihem (2006:61-63) depicts the ability of her key informant, Yochi, to contest the Israeli ethnic hierarchy of motherhood and belonging. Yochi challenges the myth of the *polania* as the ‘good mother’ by identifying her own mother’s devotion and hard work while at the same time rejecting the model of motherhood her mother chose to follow. Yochi prefers her own hybrid mothering practice that shows both her care and her power to exert control over the family economically and symbolically.

Anecdotal evidence regarding the everyday lives of Jewish-Israeli women hints at how they keep up nostalgic food practices in their private-familial sphere, evoking ‘little’ Moroccan/Iraqi/Polish “homelands” in the familial home through cooking and upholding distinct Jewish traditions (Domínguez 1989:102-105, Shine-Rakavy 1999, Shohat 1997:16-17). At the same time, since the 1960s state policy discourses of Zionist ideologues had led to the constitution of an Israeli national cuisine by detaching certain Mizrahi and Palestinian-Arab foods from their specific ethnic and class associations and turning these dishes into national iconic foods (Gvion-Rosenberg 2000, Gvion 2006b, Raviv 2002, 2003). Falafel, hummus, *labane* (yoghurt-based soft cheese) and *shakshukah* (a cooked egg and tomato dish) are four prominent examples of popular and cheap foods often commercialised as ‘ethnic’

(i.e. Mizrahi and Arab) that Jewish-Israelis enjoy eating, mostly as street foods or in other ready-made commercial forms. Street foods in Israel are provided by ‘Mizrahi’ restaurants kept by Mizrahi Jews and Israeli-Palestinians, both lower-class groups, and the foods they sell also symbolise a relatively low status, despite their popularity (Gvion-Rosenberg 2000, Gvion 2006b)¹⁰.

The Second Phase: the Myth of the *Bashlanit* in Life after Second-Wave Feminism

Life after second-wave feminism in Israeli society (from the 1960s) was subject to important changes concerning gender and ethnic power relations among the secular Jewish population in relation to domestic food practices. These changes also contributed to the growing legitimacy of expressions of nostalgia for diasporic homelands and Jewish traditions in the public sphere that were previously considered taboo (Shohat 2002:241).

The rise of multiculturalism from the 1980s replaced the social-culinary metaphor of the ‘melting pot’ for the national Jewish home and acknowledged the importance of the ‘preservation’ of heritage and legacy dishes of various Jewish ethnic groups. By this time, third-generation, middle-class Ashkenazi Jewish-Israelis had begun expressing nostalgia for Ashkenazi traditions as they began cooking the dishes of the *shtetl*: *chulent* (a meat and grain dish for Shabbat), gefilte fish (fish patties), *tzimmes* (a dish of cooked, sweetened carrots), and *kreplach* (stuffed dough pockets) (Gvion 2006b:175, Shine-Rakavy 1999). In doing so, they caught up both with Jewish-Israelis from other ethnicities and with Jews in other locations (Jochnowitz 2004, Rotkowitz 2004, Siporin 1994). This process encouraged the perception of specific dishes, spices, eating practices, modes of hospitality, festive celebrations, culinary styles, and food preferences as strong ethnic markers in the public arena. For example, each Jewish ethnic group has its own festive and Shabbat dishes cooked slowly on residual heat overnight to be eaten on Shabbat morning – *chulent*, *hamin*, and *d’fina* are variations on the same dish with different names and nuances.

In the 1980s, two Ashkenazi women, Ruth Sirkis and Nira Rousso, became renowned role models for Jewish-Israeli women in regards to food production in the domestic sphere (Calò 2005:50-53). Sirkis and Rousso cast a new figure, the *bashlanit* (Cooking Woman), which echoes at least two earlier Jewish feminine myths, Eve in the Garden of Eden and *eshet*

¹⁰ For a comprehensive ethnography and a feminist Marxist analysis of the transformations in Palestinian-Israeli food in the past 60 years see Gvion (2006a, 2006b). This ethnography briefly refers to some of the nostalgic food trends of Israeli-Palestinians since the 2000s (Gvion 2006b:170-177).

chayil ('a woman of great valour'). Sirkis and Rouso¹¹ published cookbooks and other forms of culinary texts that were, and still are, highly popular among Israeli domestic cooks, including the women who participated in my research. They deliberately based their model of the *bashlanit* on the American success of Julia Child (Calò 2005:66), targeting middle-class women who work in paid employment and cook on a daily basis.

The myth of the *bashlanit* is the result of the unique coalescing of Jewish values with Zionist ideology in response to second-wave feminism. The *bashlanit* epitomises feminine prowess and modernity: not only is she technically able, well equipped, and pragmatic (she uses convenient ingredients such as tinned food and makes one-pot meals), she is also capable of successfully synchronising her womanly obligations, all the while emanating love¹². This ideal is premised on the wish for an omnipotent femininity depicted through the pleasures of cooking and feeding.

If the model of Julia Child revolutionised American middle-class domestic cooking by emphasising the personal-visceral pleasure in cooking for the sake of cooking (Hollows 2007:33-36), then the model of Sirkis and Rouso created an idealised image of a family woman. The *bashlanit* is a woman who hosts spontaneously and warmly, but is also capable of planning lavish and impressive hospitality around Jewish festive meals, and keeps to kosher rules, in contrast to the elitist model of Israeli male chefs (Calò 2005:50-59). These male chefs cook complicated and non-kosher dishes in expensive restaurants for rich customers and have gradually entered into the heart of the public culinary elite (Calò 2005:56-59); in particular, Mizrahi, homosexual and queer men gained high profiles through upmarket restaurants, cookbooks and the Israeli media. As these men became Israeli icons, presenting a new form of national belonging through their 'softer' or more effeminate masculinities, the love of cooking and eating became a vital marker of Israeli masculinity.

In practical terms, with the rise in individualism, increased Americanisation and consumerism, more middle-class women became career-oriented and worked outside the home (Perez 2008), and more women gained tertiary education. Gil-Tin (2005) and Shine-Rakavy (1999) argue that from the 1980s there has been a rise in the number of middle-class men acting as the 'key kitchen person', a term coined by Mary Douglas (1984:8 and

¹¹ In general, the commercial production and consumption of hummus in Israel became a cultural site imbued with the politics of identity negotiating its 'Arabness' (Hirsch 2011:617).

¹² A recent and more challenging feminine role model in the vein of the *bashlanit*, that of the 'domestic goddess', is embodied by the British-Jewish chef Nigella Lawson (Duruz 2004b). Lawson epitomises femininity and sexual desire, as well as great cooking abilities and the pleasures of eating and cooking.

henceforth KKP). This term describes the person who invests the most time and energy in procuring, preparing, serving and cleaning up food within the household unit. In accordance, among the 25 women in this study, four were not the KKP in Israel, a division of labour that did not change after emigrating.

Changes through Migration

This study examines the impact of the changes that emerge through migration. Focussing on Jewish-Israeli women who have immigrated to New Zealand since the late 1990s, I analyse how they remember home and reconstitute home after migration. The prism of their everyday domestic food practices and engagements with food sheds light on how they use their senses, memories and emotions in order to enact social relationships. I use the self-irony that nostalgic food production and consumption provokes in the women in this study to articulate how they derive pleasure from self-deprecating humour. I show that self-irony by definition requires an act of distancing for self-reflection, generating an introspective look at the self often conveyed through ambivalence. Through their self-irony the women in this study not only criticise themselves, but also pass on collective ‘commentary’ about who they are as they recast their shared past through twisting, exaggerated images. The women convey self-irony by acknowledging their own ‘faults’ publicly; they may parody themselves for their exemplary Jewish behaviour, criticise ‘rude Israeliness’ or mock themselves for being overanxious or neglectful mothers. As I will show, they use their self-irony as a situational reaction, recuperating normalcy by joking or laughing about what revolves around food and related concerns. At the same time, they take pleasure in pointing out social boundaries and attest to their Jewish-Israeli identity. The following literature review situates their experiences within the broader literature on home, memory, nostalgia, food and migration.

A Shift in the Study of Home and Memory: Towards Transition and Multiplicity

Over the past 50 years, social scientists have addressed the perennial question of what is a home. The disciplines of psychology, sociology and cultural geography, for example, have approached this question by referring to home as the female body and the womb, the family (usually within the domestic dwelling space), community, society (commonly understood as the nation-state), the world, or any combination thereof. During this time, the social anthropology of home shifted towards a greater awareness of the multiple meanings borne by ‘home’ by considering the increase in international migration as cultural groups transit between nation-states.

Until the 1970s concepts of home that were predominant in social anthropology assumed a bounded territory and fixed identities, often using the prevalent metaphor of the ‘root-tree’ to depict home as an exclusive place of origin from which people stem (Douglas 1966, Lévi-Strauss 1966, 1978, Zborowski and Herzog 1962 [1952]). Mary Douglas (1991) later explicated her ideas of stability and fixity, regarding the familial home as a genesis, a familiar entry point to the world. Douglas focuses on the solidarity created by the spatial and temporal proximity between kin in their ordinary lives at home, through their routines and habits, which connote intimacy, privacy and the negotiation of a fair division of labour (1991:299-303).

During the 1970s and the 1980s the examination of the ‘home’ in social sciences shifted to a focus on the domestic dwelling and the gendered power relations within it, regarding tensions and conflicts as an integral part of the cultural constitution of this locus (Farb and Armelagos 1980, Hewlett 1987, Hochschild 1985, Mallett 2004:74-77, Oakley 1974, Rich 1986 [1976], Saunders 1989, Saunders and Williams 1988). For example, Ann Oakley’s work (1974) views the domestic role of women as housekeepers as paramount to family life. According to Oakley, the gendered work of women, as unpaid labour, is valued less than the paid labour of men due to systemic inequalities in patriarchal social orders that are perpetuated by the traditional division of labour in the family. Women’s labour within the home is discussed in these studies by focussing on the conflicting responsibilities that are often encapsulated by the women’s role in caring for others. This literature also examines the common dilemma faced by women who work both at home and in careers, known as ‘the double shift’ or ‘the double burden’¹³. Similarly, other works elaborated on how the perception of labour reflects the value system in society at large (Davidoff 1973, Hartmann 1976, 1981, Leacock et al. 1978, Luxton 1980, 1987).

Feminist literature from the 1990s extends the debate about power relations, identifying the familial home as the primary place for developing feminist consciousness. This is often done by authors who reflect on their own experiences within the family (see for example, Giard 1998, Narayan 1997, Young 1997). In this literature the notion of identity difference is explored by considering diverse types of feminism that depend on the cultural context and the social positioning of women with regards to the major social categories of generation,

¹³ It remains unclear who exactly coined the term ‘double shift/burden’ to describe the situation of women who work both at home and in paid employment. Jennifer Somerville (2001:363) refers to the work of Betty Friedan, *The Second Stage* (1981), as well as the works of other second-wave feminists in this regard.

ethnicity, class, race, religion and nation (Ferber and Raabe 2003, Foner 2005, Helman and Rapoport 1997, Hill Collins 1998, hooks 1992).

The idea that women negotiate various power relations within the family that constitute multiple identities coincides with the idea that cultural groups may perceive multiple associations between home and land. This idea emerged during the 1980s as social anthropologists became aware that cultural groups were increasingly crossing national boundaries (Appadurai 1981, 1986, 1996a, 1996b, Jackson 1995, Rapport and Dawson 1998, Rosaldo 1989). Works in this area note the effects of the transition of cultural groups on their identity, developing the concept of 'home' as a trans-cultural place, which I discuss further in the section on migration in this chapter.

In the 1990s, studies that dealt with the memory of home drew attention to the active and gendered processes through which individuals in various cultural groups embody the memory of a house or the landscape of a homeland as they materialise their perceptions of time and space differently (Bahloul 1996, 1999, Bardenstein 1999, Read 1996, Sered 1992, Sugiman 2005, Yue 1999). For example, studies by Joëlle Bahloul (1996) in social anthropology and Peter Read (1996) in history focus on memories of home in two different groups after the Second World War: Algerian-Jewish migrants in France and European migrants in Australia, respectively. Bahloul and Read demonstrate that women remember home in relation to the house (a domestic dwelling) – the yard, garden and kitchen, and associated practices of home cooking, as well as events related to birthing and festivities – whereas men remember home in relation to the neighbourhood and work outside of the house. Their engagement with everyday practices and work/labour thus affects the size of the space remembered as home and the nature of remembered events, reflecting norms or social prohibitions/permissions that are associated with gender roles (see discussions in Fenster 2005:244-245, and in Mallett 2004:74-77).

Many of these studies show that remembering a home is a process that changes over time as people accumulate or diminish their attachments to places (Bahloul 1996, 1999, Bardenstein 1999, Fenster 2005:244 citing de Certeau 1984:117, Jackson 1995, Read 1996, Sered 1992, Sugiman 2005, Yue 1999). For example, in his ethnography of the Warlpiri of the Tanami Desert, a nomadic tribe indigenous to Australia, Michael Jackson (1995) demonstrates that attachments to places as homes transform according to life conditions. The Warlpiri's notion of home derives from the activity that occurs in a place, rather than the

feeling of being grounded in a place (1995:148). A change in their life conditions might thus turn a secure place to a confining one, instigating a nomadic transition (1995:122-123). Therefore, Jackson posits that home for the Warlpiri is a metaphor for social relationships, which derives from the dialectic tension between real and ideal places.

Since the 2000s Shelley Mallett (2004) and Nira Yuval-Davis (2006) have taken two complementary approaches towards understanding the cultural constitution of home. In her review article, Mallett (2004:62) posits the ‘self’ at the centre, focussing on the lived experience of home. Mallett concludes that home is associated with multiple meanings and perceptions: place(s), space(s), feeling(s), practice(s), and (an) active state(s) of being-in-the-world (Merleau-Ponty 1968). Yuval-Davis (2006) promotes awareness of the negotiation of power relations in the constitution of home, thus accounting for the politics of belonging. According to Yuval-Davis cultural belonging derives from social locations and positionings, identifications and emotional attachments, whereas the politics of belonging are the power relations that ethical-political value systems and social orders realise.

In sum, research in the social sciences offers specific concepts of ‘home’ as scholars identify the multiple meanings that cultural groups assign to this locus by considering the importance of both power relations and everyday practices of constituting homes. Works examining the memory of home draw attention to temporality and spatiality that derive from gendered ways of interacting with space and time. From the 1990s scholars began to recognise the ramifications of recurring transitions in global space on the constitution of home, focussing on the importance of the formation of social relationships. As shall be seen next, this paradigmatic shift links with important developments in the theory of nostalgia, i.e. the pain of longing to return home (Holtzman 2006, Mallett 2004, Salih 2003).

Shifting Approaches to Nostalgia: From an Emotive Escapist Reaction to a Critical Everyday Practice

Nostalgia, in Latin, denotes the pain (*algia*) of longing to return home (*nostos*) (Boym 1996, Boym 2002, Rosaldo 1989:108)¹⁴. During the first half of the twentieth century, influential studies on memory by Maurice Halbwachs (1992 [1952]) and Walter Benjamin

¹⁴ In psychology and psychoanalysis, nostalgia was regarded as a medical disorder until around the 1960s (Köneke 2011, Nikelly 2004, Sedikides 2008). This was in line with Johannes Hoffer’s 1688 medical dissertation, in which he coined the term nostalgia to describe a depressive reaction to war trauma based on his observations of psycho-physical symptoms among overseas Swiss male soldiers who longed to return home (Boym 2002:4-5, Turner 1987). For extended analyses of Hoffer’s dissertation that consider some of the effects of his own nostalgia on his analysis, see Boym (2002:4-5), Boyer (2006:363-368) and Köneke (2011).

(1969 [1936]) highlighted the importance of nostalgia as an idealisation of a collective past¹⁵. In the 1970s scholars who built on these works conceptualised this emotive phenomenon as a common escape from reality that attempts to transcend the irreversibility of time (Barthes 2013 [1972], Davis 1979, Lowenthal 1975, Williams 1973). In these studies, nostalgia figures as a selective remembrance of only positive experiences ('the good old days'), without any critical engagement with the present.

Throughout the next two decades, studies on nostalgia extended their regard of collective-national memory, focussing first on the impact of cultural context on nostalgia, and then on power relations between cultural groups (Battaglia 1995, Duruz 1999, Hage 1997, Probyn 1996, Rosaldo 1989, 1999, Stewart 1984, Turner 1987). In the first stage, Kathleen Stewart's (1988) influential essay is notable for regarding nostalgia as an emotive practice dependent upon one's cultural belonging and manifested through intergenerational relations. While Stewart posits that nostalgia is redemptive and revives a past home, she also emphasises its paradoxical nature, first professing painful mourning, and then belief in and hope for a better future (1988:262-264). Michael Herzfeld (1997) took this understanding a step further, defining 'structural nostalgia' as a politically significant force (Silverstein 2004). In Herzfeld's words, structural nostalgia is a "longing for the Golden Era, whereby time scales and events are collapsed into generic, imagined ... collective representations of Edenic order, a time before time..." characterised by balanced relations, prior to the disintegration of sociality and moral decline (1997:109-110).

In the second stage, power relations between cultural groups are examined through the works of Ghassan Hage (1997) and Leo Spitzer (1999), both of whom draw attention to the context of migration. Hage's (1997) work examined the food memories of first-generation Lebanese migrants that settled from the 1970s in West Sydney, Australia. Hage (1997:102) demonstrates that through their nostalgia for their past homeland of Lebanon, these migrants foster four key feelings in order to build home anew: security, familiarity, community, and a sense of possibility or hope, as later studies elaborate (see for example, Duruz 1999, Fortier 2000, Yuval-Davis 2011). Spitzer's (1999:89) work examined the experience of first-generation Austro-German Jewish migrant-refugees who settled in Bolivia during the Second World War. By addressing their nostalgia for past homelands as acts of collective remembrance that contest persecution by the Nazis, Spitzer foregrounds the resistant or

¹⁵ Mircea Eliade (1991[1952]:11, 16-18, 55, 166) articulated a similar idea in religious studies as the panhuman "nostalgia for paradise" in religious rituals, myths and symbols that are secularised over time.

critical memory embedded in nostalgia, a facet that many other studies later confirm (see for example, Berdahl 2009, McDermott 2002, Sugiman 2005).

Since the late 1990s and into the early twenty-first century, three new ideas in the literature on nostalgia developed: nostalgia as part of power relations between genders, the idea of multiple nostalgias, and issues of citizen–state relations and nostalgia. Works until the 2000s that addressed the first issue of power relations between genders understood nostalgia as necessarily subordinating women (Greene 1991, Hage 1997:105-107, Robertson 1988, Young 1997, Yue 1999). Hage (1997:105-107) writes that Lebanese migrant women in Australia are subordinated to the powerful white majority due to racism coupled with the widespread notion that the role of women as home cooks is to feed the family and the wider society (cooking in restaurants). However, the experiences of these women are unlike the experiences of Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study who are neither faced with the same level of racism nor feel subordinated to the white majority in New Zealand. In this literature nostalgia is regarded as an idealised memory that perpetuates traditional family values and binds women to the familial home as the providers of food and as home-makers. From the 2000s onwards, studies regarding the issue of gendered power relations make an opposite claim, emphasising power and resistance as inherent in nostalgia (Bardenstein 2002, Duruz 2001:29-30, Duruz 2004b, McDermott 2002, Parla 2009, Radstone 2010, Rubenstein 2001, Salih 2003, Sugiman 2005). Women are portrayed as liberated by their nostalgia, as a case study by Pamela Sugiman (2005) exemplifies. Sugiman (2005:49) examined the life stories of Japanese-Canadian migrant women who suffered the deliberate destruction of their communities and families in Canada in a form of “cultural genocide” during the Second World War. She claims that these women’s expressions of nostalgia for their youthful pre-war lives in Japan were a means of reclaiming their power, dignity and positive identity (2005:65).

The second idea of multiple nostalgic stances that exist within the scope of a single cultural context is demonstrated in the work of Jean Duruz (1999), and later articulated in the work of David Berliner (2012:769). Duruz’s theory is credited for depicting nostalgia as a means for national myth-making in the context of Australian urban food and memory during the 1990s (Bajic-Hajdukovic 2013, Holtzman 2006, Supski 2006, Sutton and Vournelis 2009). Duruz’s (1999:249-250) work presents a nuanced analysis of the contrasting stances within and between two main social groups in depicting longing for the simplicity and predictability of life in the 1950s and 1960s. The first group, composed of chefs and food

writers, celebrates ‘retro’ Australian food in their memories, and those within the group who are also migrants remember the food of their former homelands even more fondly. The second group, composed of women who were suburban housewives of the 1950s and 1960s, describes the burdens and constraints derived from the gendered division of labour in the family, although they convey this rigidity as liberating in comparison to the even more conflicting expectations of middle-class women in the 1990s. The idea of multiple nostalgias is also clearly articulated by Berliner (2012:769) in a case study that examines groups taking part in establishing a heritage/tourist site in Luang Prabang (Lao PDR). Berliner identifies a tapestry of “multiple nostalgias” that derives from the involvement of interest groups, which varies according to their lost pasts. The groups manifested longing for a certain way of living, represented by a relic, a monument or an event as they re-connected with their national past.

The third important development in the literature of nostalgia pays close attention to the formulation of citizen–state relations by looking at the results of the disintegration of the USSR in 1989 and the subsequent political changes in east and central Europe (Bach 2002, Berdahl 2009, Bohlman 2000, Boyer 2006, Boym 2002, Haukanes and Pine 2004, Haukanes and Trnka 2013, Nadkarni 2010, Palmberger 2008, Parla 2009, Trnka 2011, Volčič 2007). This thriving area of studies in post-socialist and post-communist nostalgias considers how changes in the life conditions of ethnic minorities and national majorities, classes, genders and generations are affecting the ways people realise connections with nation-states. Most of this literature suggests that it is the critical engagement of people with their present that leads them to recast their past, idealising the memory of a national home in order to articulate a desire for solidarity while expressing social critique.

Much of this scholarship builds on the work of Svetlana Boym (2002) and Daphne Berdahl (2009) on different forms of nostalgic cultural production and consumption. Boym’s (2002) work in literary studies focuses on the nostalgia of post-communist Russians relating to their literary and photographic texts. Boym (2002:xviii) contrasts two nostalgic powers: one that enables people to “restore” and conserve the past, and another that aims at “reflections” on the past. Boym argues that it is through the tension between these conflicting powers that people enact their national belonging, at the same time as they negotiate myths and traditions. Berdahl’s (2009) work in social anthropology is based on the everyday

ritualised consumption of middle-class East Germans after the shift to post-socialism¹⁶. Berdahl (2009:xviii-xix) identifies three consecutive emotive steps in their nostalgic return home: first, East Germans long for and idealise their socialist past; second, they articulate social critiques by contesting westernisation and capitalism; and third, they express self-irony or self-parody as they embrace the consumption of things that represent their socialist past home. Through these three steps, East Germans assert their national identity, Berdahl argues, whilst reconstituting *heimat* or a feeling of being ‘at home’ and recuperating and validating their shared past.

Berdahl’s work on nostalgic consumption is mainly associated with an emphasis on counter-memory and resistance. Other scholars expand on this by focussing on self-irony as a way of reviving one’s collective past pleurably (Peperkamp et al. 2009, Rethmann 2009). These scholars note that nostalgic consumption suggests irony, arguing that despite their initial criticism of westernisation, capitalism and consumerism, East Germans engage in innovative ways of consuming and displaying things that epitomise the pleasures of their life prior to the traumatic political shifts of 1989. In particular, Petra Rethmann’s (2009) case study of nostalgic consumption demonstrates that through jokes and anecdotes¹⁷ East Germans use the “critical edge” of irony to transform their “history into a consumer spectacle” (2009:21, 23).

Engaging in nostalgic consumption for the purpose of pleurably remembering the collective past brings to the fore an element of playfulness and poking fun that was first demonstrated by Jack Kugelmass (1990) with regard to food nostalgia, though his contribution to its theory has been largely overlooked (see also, Harris-Shapiro 2006, Holtzman 2006, Mintz and Du Bois 2002). Exploring the subversive humour that is conveyed through the nostalgic production and consumption of food, Kugelmass’s case study focuses on a Jewish restaurant in Manhattan, New York. Kugelmass identifies ‘schmaltz’ as the nostalgic substance that patrons consume in the restaurant as Jewish dietary laws are subverted intentionally to evoke the pleasure inherent in Jewish-Ashkenazi ironic humour. Acknowledging this element of playfulness suggests that producers and consumers alike are

¹⁶ Berdahl’s first article on the topic was published in 1997, and most of her articles are collected in the book *On the Social Life of Postsocialism: Memory, Consumption, Germany* (2009).

¹⁷ There is always a possibility that one may not ‘get’ the irony in the joke as part of the social interaction, as Rethmann (2009:21) notes, in consideration of James Clifford’s point on the matter (2001).

aware of the role they play in creating a mirage of the collective past, which they purposely recast in an exaggerated, twisted or subverted way to produce enjoyment.

In sum, over the past six decades or so, approaches to nostalgia in social anthropology have been radically transformed; in contrast to past approaches that emphasised the idealisation of the past without any critical engagement with the present, studies from the 2000s emphasise the power of resistance that is inherent in nostalgia, indicating how cultural groups critically engage with their present life conditions as they revise the memory of a past national home through their nostalgic consumption.

The Social Theory of Everyday Food Practices: Cultural Continuity and Change

Since the 1980s, studies in social anthropology as well as related disciplines have built on structuralist, materialist or figurational approaches in order to expand scholarly understandings of how cultural groups convey meaning and negotiate power through everyday food practices (Ashley et al. 2004, Caplan 1994, Mintz and Du Bois 2002, Murcott 1983, Wood 1995). Each approach is briefly examined below.

Figuralism is represented by the work of Norbert Elias (1994 [1939]), who theorised 'figurations' as networks of interdependent individuals. Based on his historic study of European table manners since the Middle Ages, Elias argues that a growing alienation from the human body is depicted through negative attitudes towards natural phenomena that relate to eating such as belches and flatulence. Elias suggested that in the course of history European societies developed table manners, increased specifications for cutlery, plates and foodstuffs and established differentiation in the presentation of food as a means of civilising their cultures (Elias 1994:262). This idea was later elaborated on in the work of sociologists Stephen Mennell (1985) and Joanne Finkelstein (1989). Mennell (1985:322) argues that the higher classes developed an identity through the consumption of "good food" presented and eaten with "good manners" while "increasing varieties in food habits and culinary tastes". Finkelstein (1989) claims that customers 'sell' their pleasure in exchange for a civilised eating experience by dining out in restaurants which are predesigned to capitalise on the desire for a civilised eating experience (Finkelstein 1989:183). Figuralism focuses on the means of production and consumption of food as key processes that propel cultural change, as people turn food from sources of incivility into the means of 'civilising' everyday experiences.

Studies following structuralist approaches focus on the meanings that various cultural groups derive from food practices and their relations to promote social order. Structuralism is represented by Claude Lévi-Strauss' seminal work (see for example, 1969, 1978, 1981), and by the highly influential work of Mary Douglas (see for example, 1966, 1984, 1996) and Roland Barthes (1972 [1957]). These scholars share an understanding of food production and consumption as reflecting symbolic systems of communication or forms of languages that accord with the social and cosmic orders. Studies by Douglas (1966, 1972), for example, are well recognised for explicating the taxonomy and logic behind the Hebrew priestly rules of *kashrut* in the book of Leviticus, focussing on the food categorisations and combinations in the meal. Structuralism is characterised by assumptions of universality and rationality in the ways that cultural groups create complete and stable meanings through the continuous associations they ascribe to food.

In contrast, works since the 1980s have developed a materialist approach to food by addressing issues of power in the creation of social differentiation. The works of Jack Goody (1982) and Sidney Mintz (1985), for example, demonstrate how national and class-based power relations are materialised through food historically, tracing the changing meanings that food bears over time in the service of domination.

Other studies of food emphasise the division of labour between genders within the family and between classes within society. The emphasis on gendered divisions alongside class divisions is demonstrated by the works of Anne Murcott (1982, 1983) in the context of British society, and Pierre Bourdieu (1984) and Claude Fischler (1988) in the context of French society. The work of Murcott (1982) focuses on the significance of the cooked dinner for pregnant women in southern Wales, elaborating on the seminal work of Douglas (1972). Murcott (1982) highlights that the role of the cooked dinner is central to the well-being of the family in the dietary and symbolic terms that frame women's domain of power, an idea that is extended by many later studies on food (see for example, Charles and Kerr 1988, Counihan 1988, 1999, DeVault 1991, Lupton 1996, 1998, McIntosh and Zey 1989, Mennell, Murcott, and van Otterloo 1992, Valentine 1999). These works illustrate that women view home cooking as a way of deriving power in the family, and expressing love, care, pleasure, desire, devotion and burden according to their cultural context.

The works of Fischler (1988) and Bourdieu (1977[1972], 1984) analyse taste, cooking and eating habits in terms of the social divisions of gender and class (see also, Caplan 1997,

Harbottle 2000, Lupton 1996, 1998, Mennell, Murcott, and van Otterloo 1992). While Fischler's work (1988) is well known for his claim that by eating, people incorporate food as well as the system of values and myths that the food reflects, the work of Bourdieu on taste (1984) is exemplified by his analysis of art, music, clothing and food. Bourdieu developed the term 'cultural capital' to designate the cultural knowledge or 'know-how' that each class possesses by virtue of its socio-economic position. Cultural capital delineates a hierarchy of taste between classes, and among each class, between genders. Bourdieu also developed the concepts of "habitus" and "hexis". "Habitus" is defined by the set of dispositions that directs social agents to act and react in certain ways which are durable and generative, and considers that the inculcation of these dispositions begins in early childhood (1984:169-175). "Hexis" relates to the enduring embodied faculties of the senses and emotions that constitute the overall ways people sense, do, feel and think (1984:153, 193, 420).

Some feminist critiques of Bourdieu's theory note the differences between food habits and the 'doing' of cooking, i.e. engaging with a mentally complex practice for the provision of food (Blunt 2005, Giard 1998, Heldke 1992, Lane 2000, Reed-Danahay 2005). These scholars emphasise the mental processes that are required in cooking which account for its innovative and creative nature. For example, the work of Luce Giard (1998) examines the home-cooking practice of middle-lower-class French women, drawing attention to both cooking's liberating pleasures and its inherent innovative improvisations.

Since the mid-1990s, food studies have extended understandings of the power relations between and within cultural and national groups by looking at processes of homogenisation, in particular the loss of taste and identity that result from assimilation (Anderson 2005, Diner 2001, Glennie 1995, Gvion 2006b, Harbottle 2000, Inness 2006, Levenstein 2003 [1993], Mehta 2004, 2005, Meyers 2001, Ray 2004)¹⁸. These works emphasise the power of migrant populations to resist assimilation by challenging the pressures that emanate from health authorities, the schooling system and the mass media. In many of these studies women's domestic cooking is regarded as an intergenerational means of maintaining cultural continuity that transmits knowledge and resists assimilation by shoring up ethnic identities. As it is mostly women who are home cooks, they are usually depicted in these studies as powerful figures in the familial home despite being powerless in the wider societal context.

¹⁸ There are several works in food studies that address the idea of the homogenisation of taste by examining the rise of national cuisines (Raviv 2001, Wilk 1999, Zubaida 1994) and of the mass consumption of fast food (Finkelstein 2003, Gottschalk 2008, Kershen 2002, Ram 2004, Ritzer 1996).

In contrast, a few studies suggest that women use home cooking in the family for conflicting purposes, as they “resist, manoeuvre, change, express, and even reinforce the sexual division of labour” (Devasahayam 2005:1). Though this claim is based on a case study of middle-class South Indian (Hindu) migrant women in urban Malaysia, it reflects the everyday experience of women in other cultural contexts (see for example, Halkier 2009, Haukanes 2007). Moreover, since the 2000s the idea that external forces compel the loss of identity as reflected by changes in the food practices of migrants has been replaced by the idea that identity is reformulated in migration as implied by food studies that focus on memory and the senses in the migrant experience, which I discuss in the next section on migration (Holtzman 2006, Jochnowitz 2004, Kravva 2001, Longhurst 2009, Meyers 2001, Osella 2008, Sutton 2001, Valeri 2001).

In sum, academic research on everyday food practices focused first on how food is embedded with meaning. Then, turning to the power relations between genders and cultural groups, scholars began to reconsider how cultural continuity and change are materialised. The conflicting nature of power in the everyday experiences of food was first demonstrated through the idea that food practices reflect both assimilation of and resistance to mainstream identities. Since the 2000s, there has been an emerging understanding that through home cooking women may both resist and reinforce the division of labour in the family. This recognition is coupled with an interest in the role of memory and the senses in everyday experiences of migration and food, as elaborated in the following section.

Changing Outlooks on International Migration

The traditional understanding of migration is that it is a crossing of national boundaries, constituting a departure from one’s physical home and homeland with the intent of settling in a new location. This understanding has been expanded upon since the late 1980s and the 1990s, as studies on migration expand in three main directions: first, by revisiting the notion of diaspora; second, through a growing awareness of transnationalism, linked to a focus on changes in migrants’ identities as they localise in their new socio-material environments; and third, through a growing interest in the sensations and emotions of migrants as part of their everyday experience. These concerns are reflected in the works of many scholars who look into the everyday food practices of migrants, questioning how these food practices help to constitute home anew.

Prior to and during the 1990s, research on migrants in social anthropology, sociology and cultural studies drew attention to the formation of changing identities by employing metaphors such as ‘hybridity’, ‘creolisation’ and ‘hyphenated identity’ (Appadurai 1981, 1986, Bhabha 2004 [1994], Rosaldo 1989). These terms were chosen in order to emphasise the cultural *mélange* that occurs with transitions across national borders. For example, works by Stuart Hall (1998 [1990]), Paul Gilroy (1991, 1993) and Homi Bhabha (2004 [1994]) promoted the idea of cultural hybridity against the backdrop of the ‘melting pot’, and later ‘multiculturalism’, in national discourse. Others have also used the term ‘hyphenated identity’ to enunciate an understanding that identities are always the incomplete result of multiplicity and fluidity (Caglar 1997, Clifford 1994, Gupta and Ferguson 1992, Shohat 1992).

From the late 1990s, migration studies revised the traditional understanding of diaspora and reconsidered the ways cultural groups constitute connections between home and land in the course of their migratory history (Amit 2002, Buckser 2011, Cohen 2008, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1994, Levy and Weingrod 2005, Shuval 2000). One of the most prominent works in this direction was by James Clifford (1994), comparing the historic experiences of Jews, ‘black’ Africans, and South Asians as migrants. Clifford understood diasporas as the central (i.e. not marginal) homelands for these groups. Diasporas for these peoples became places characterized by long-lasting communal connections that are formed through struggles with nation-state ideologies and sometimes with indigenous populations, especially tribal peoples. Clifford (1994) goes on to identify a common dialectic tension that is embedded in the migrant experience: the tension between discrimination and inclusion, or loss and hope, that results in ambivalence.

The second direction of research on the experience of migrants built on the influential philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1980) to examine how people reformulate their identities as they settle in new locales (see for example, Beck 2002, Ong 1999, Werbner 1999). Often inspired by studies in cultural geography, this line of scholarship focuses on processes of localisation by paying attention to the everyday lived experiences that migrants share (Ahmed 2000, Ahmed et al. 2003, Brah 1996, Fortier 1999, 2000, 2003, Probyn 1996). Building on the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari (1980:9-10), these studies applied the concepts of ‘deterritorialisation’ and ‘reterritorialisation’ to revise the connection between culture and space or territory to highlight transformation. They suggest that cultural changes occur when, for example, local cultures turn into global cultures, and

when people who immigrate disembody some cultural connections in order to emplace themselves as they embody new connections (see for example, Fortier 2000:173).

Other works in this direction employ the term ‘transnationalism’ to further separate the notion of identity from the confining grasp of the mother/fatherland (see for example, Beck 2002, Ong 1999, Werbner 1999). Transnationalism emphasises the accumulation of cultural affiliations that occurs through the process of migration, a process that may in fact result in a new-found sense of cosmopolitanism. Many of the studies in this literature borrow on the seminal work of Arjun Appadurai (1990, 1996a, 1996b), suggesting the use of the suffix “-scape” and the idea of deterritorialisation in order to draw attention to “the woof of human motion” since the 1980s (1990:302). Changes that result from different flows of people and material cultures across national boundaries are captured by Appadurai’s five “scapes”: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, finanscapes, technoscapes and ideoscapes (1990).

Works in this field are inspired by scholars in cultural geography, who consider how migrants manifest cultural change through their engagements and interactions with their new socio-material environments (see for example, Ahmed 2000, Ahmed et al. 2003, Brah 1996, Fortier 1999, 2000, 2003, Kearney 1995, Probyn 1996). These works highlight cultural change by depicting identity as being continually “in transition, always producing itself through the combined processes of being and becoming, belonging and longing to belong” (Yuval-Davis 2006:202). For example, in her work on Italian-British and queer migrants Anne-Marie Fortier (2003:173-174) emphasises the unsettling and resettling process of the ‘self’ after immigration, corresponding symbolically with departing and arriving home. Fortier describes the emotive shift that occurs in this process as “motion of attachment”, instigated by momentary sensate engagements with the material world. In Fortier’s (2003:131) view, this engagement is “fostering intimations of imagined homely experiences from the past or projected from the future – a taste or smell of ‘home cooking’...”. Similarly, other studies taking this approach assert that after immigration “the greatest movements often occur within the self, the home or the family, while the phantasm of limitless mobility often rests on the power of border controls and policing of who does and does not belong” (Ahmed et al. 2003:5). These scholars also understand the process of regrounding after immigration through forms of mourning, nostalgia, remembrance, physical sickness or nausea as a sign of rejection of the new culture and language and expressive of the experience of trauma.

The third development in migrant studies ties in with a growing interest in social anthropology in the senses and memory that developed in the late 1980s to early 1990s, but has markedly intensified since the 2000s (Almagor 1990a, 1990b, Avieli 2005, Berliner 2005, Bordi 2006, Bubandt 1998, Choo 2004, 2007, Classen 1992, 2005, Dawkins 2009, Duruz 2004a, Ferrero 2001, Geurts 2002, Howes 2003, 2005, Kravva 2001, Law 2005, Long 2004, McKay 2005, Osella 2008, Seremetakis 1994, Stoller 1989, Sutton-Brady, Davis, and Jung 2010, Sutton 2010, Thomas 2004a, 2004b). In these works, scholars examine the role of the senses through the engagements of migrants with their new socio-material environments, emphasising the immediate, visceral and unconscious nature of the senses as embodied ways of knowing that imbue specific spaces with meaning.

Many of these studies also demonstrate the heightened sensate and emotional awareness of migrants who aim to actively change their *habitus* to fit in with their new socio-material environment (see for example, Ben-Ze'ev 2004, Bozic-Vrbancic 2004, Choo 2004, 2007, Dawkins 2009, Kravva 2001, Law 2005, Matt 2007, McKay 2005, Osella 2008, Park and Morris 2004, Raine 2000, Supski 2006, Thomas 2004a, 2004b). Numerous studies examine the corporeal interaction of migrants with food in constituting a transnational identity. For example, a study by Lisa Law (2005) on Filipina domestic workers in Hong Kong emphasises regional differences in their home cooking and national differences between Filipina migrant workers and their Chinese employers. Law shows that their transnational identity is constituted through the sensorial evocations of familiar Filipino foods that reterritorialise urban public and familial spaces.

Throughout this period (i.e. since the 1980s), most research on Jewish and Jewish-Israeli communities living outside the boundaries of Israel has retained the traditional understandings of diaspora (Cohen 2007, 2005, Cohen and Gold 1997, Gold 1997, 2001, 2004, Kaplowitz Ben-Mordechai 1982, Korazim 1985, Leiserowitz 2003, Shokeid 1988). According to this perspective, 'diaspora' is a concept that derives from Jewish theology, connoting places of dispersal from a centre, an original or ultimate homeland and a central place of reference across generations. Since this dispersal is perceived as the result of voluntary transitions, it is complemented by an understanding of forced transition as 'exile', i.e. the dislocation and uprooting of cultural groups which results in their compulsory relocation beyond the boundaries of their homeland.

The majority of these studies focus on the on-going connections of Jewish-Israeli migrants with the state of Israel (Cohen 2005, Cohen and Gold 1997, Gold 1997, 2001, 2004, Sabar 2000, 2002). These studies suggest that migrants' enduring nostalgia for Israel hinders their integration and assimilation into their new, wider societies. In these studies, Israeli women in comparison to Israeli men and women from other migrant groups are depicted as manifesting the highest level of ambivalence toward their new countries (Gold 1997, 2001, 2004, Kaplowitz Ben-Mordechai 1982, Korazim 1985, Leiserowitz 2003). Their critiques are explained as being associated with a sense of guilt over having betrayed close kin by leaving them in Israel and raising their children away from their homeland.

Finally, studies that focus on Jewish diasporic groups often deal with these communities' means of ensuring cultural continuity (Bahloul 1999, Bardenstein 2002, Connerton 1989:41-46, Duruz 2004b, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1986, 1990, Nora 1989:8, Siporin 1994, Spitzer 1999). These studies suggest that such groups employ festive food rituals or *kashrut* observance to keep alive their collective memory. For example, Steve Siporin (1994) claims that Jews in Italy have reinforced Jewish identity through cookbooks that, since the 1980s, have conveyed longing for the foods they ate in the ghettos during the Second World War (1994:278).

In sum, in the past six decades the study of international migration in social anthropology has highlighted the re-formation of identities due to connections forged with new socio-material environments. From the 1990s onwards, migration studies boomed and the traditional understanding of diaspora was revised, emphasising transnationalism. Reconsidering the interrelations between changes in migrants' identities, some studies have recently begun to address the changes that migrants undergo in their new socio-material environments, while many others focus on migrants' everyday food practices.

Bringing Home the Study of Women's Constitutions of 'Home' through Everyday Food Practices

In this study I argue that Jewish-Israeli women remember and reconstitute home as a multidimensional space following their migration to Auckland, New Zealand. I suggest that their sense of being 'at home' enacts the five dimensions of 'home': homelands, ancestral homes, communal homes, spiritual Jewish homes and their personal bodies as homes. These dimensions are materialised through their everyday domestic food practices as well as their

engagements with food, as the women negotiate social boundaries with lands and people, claiming multiple belongings to homes past, present, future, near and far.

I draw attention to the familial home and the way in which women transform their everyday food practices after migration. I build on various studies of migrant groups to discuss how women articulate their emotions, memories and imaginations, thereby enacting social relationships in the family and beyond (see for example, Bahloul 1996, 1999, Bardenstein 1999, Meyers 2001, Stowers 2003, Sutton 2001). Demonstrating how food triggers nostalgic emotions, memories and imaginations for the migrant women who participated in this study, I highlight some of the ways these evocations are used to revise their collective pasts. I show that through their engagements with food and their everyday food practices, the women grapple with gendered myths and values that relate to both their lives in Israel and their new lives in New Zealand, making claims to being ‘good enough’ Jewish-Israeli women in New Zealand.

Through an analysis informed by works in social anthropology as well as cultural geography (see for example, Ahmed 2000, Ahmed et al. 2003, Brah 1996, Duruz 2004a, Fortier 1999, 2000, 2003, Hage 1997, Law 2005, Locher 2005, Ray 2004, Stowers 2003, Sutton 2001), I discuss how the smells, tastes and textures of food, in combination with the memories and emotions they evoke, are used by the women to mitigate the dislocation of migration and enact their identity, reinforcing their familial identities as Jewish-Israeli immigrants who wish to build home anew in New Zealand. I illustrate how the women use their senses, nostalgic memories and emotions to travel across space (i.e. across homelands) and through time, bringing together past, present and future homes. I show that through their everyday engagements with food and their domestic food practices, women make claims for and against various facets of their identity and domestic life, enacting both intimacy and social tension while expressing a range of emotions such as longing, pleasure and pride as well as ambivalence, anger, blame, guilt and disgust. In doing so, I build on the scholarship of Daphne Berdahl (2009) on the everyday nostalgic consumption practices of East Germans after the shift to post-socialism. Berdahl argued that East Germans ‘return home’ through the consumption of material goods, going through the three steps of longing, ‘oppositional solidarity’ and self-irony. My study shows how a similar return home of Jewish-Israeli migrant women is realised through a nostalgic food production and consumption that mostly revolves around the familial home.

Before moving on to my ethnographic analysis, I will now describe the demographic profile of the study group and discuss the methodology employed as well as the ethical issues that arose. This section also clarifies my positioning as a social researcher and a Jewish-Israeli migrant woman.

The Study Group

Jewish-Israeli immigration to New Zealand began in the 1980s and increased around 2003, apparently as a result of the second intifada (Lustick 2004:11,13). However, the number of emigrants who resettled in New Zealand remains relatively small, around 1,600 (see footnote 19). During the 1980s Israeli immigrants to New Zealand were mostly male and (eventually) married New Zealand women. From 1991 to 1996 there was approximately a 50% growth in the number of Jewish-identified people residing in New Zealand. This number reached a peak around 2001 and has remained steady ever since. The majority of these immigrants work in white-collar jobs, e.g. property and business services, education, health, and community services. Jewish-Israeli immigrants comprise an estimated 560 families¹⁹. The study's core population was drawn from this group. These families immigrated to New Zealand under the 'point system' set up in 1991 in order to attract highly qualified migrants. This is a relatively young group who came to New Zealand as families composed of educated and skilled middle-class people. Consequently, two-thirds of the women in this study are tertiary-educated and were trained in white-collar professions before emigrating. All the women had a higher level of education than that of their mothers.

Families of these emigrants usually consist of two heterosexual parents and two or three children. The majority are Israeli-born and have been through the Israeli education system and army service. Most define themselves as secular Jews, and for the most part, this is their first experience of migration. Their ages range from 30 to 55 years. The profile of this population, therefore, is similar to that of other middle-class migrant groups from western nations (Cohen 2007:270). The profile of my study group correlates with these characteristics. It is a mixed group of Ashkenazim and Mizrahim, in some cases the offspring of already mixed marriages²⁰. Eleven women in this study are Ashkenazi, five women are

¹⁹ Census information on the Israeli population in New Zealand has not been available since 2006 due to their low numbers after that year (SNZ: 2001; 2006 census, <http://www.govt.nz/census>; pers. comm., 30 May 2008).

²⁰ For brevity and unless mentioned otherwise I use the terms Mizrahi, Ashkenazi, and Sephardi to indicate the women's Jewish cultural ethnic references. I use the formal name 'Israel' in my analysis whilst acknowledging the problem of the Palestinian minority and the Arab-Jewish conflict in Israel (Kimmerling 1992).

Mizrahi, and the remaining nine women claim mixed ethnicity. Several women are also in mixed marriages.

In addition, most women in this study used the terms ‘Kiwis’ and ‘New Zealanders’ when referring to the local population and their friends. However, the relationships they formed due to their class aspirations, European affiliations and the locations of their homes around the city of Auckland were usually with upper- and middle-class New Zealanders of European origin, who are associated with the white dominant group and are also called in local parlance “Pākehā”. As this term bears some negative connotations, in my analysis I alternate between the term “New Zealander/s” and “Kiwi/s”.

Methodology

The Jewish-Israeli network is dispersed mostly around the city of Auckland, which is by far the largest city in New Zealand. I contacted interviewees via the ‘snowball’ method – using social networks and personal contacts with people who then led me to more participants. At the first stage of my fieldwork, after I had met 15 women, I felt I had exhausted my own circles and was about to publish an advertisement in the Jewish-Israeli website and at the Jewish library. Many potential participants understandably did not make participating in my study their first priority as they managed families here, as well as undertaking long and recurring trips to Israel. I then decided to include Jewish-Israeli women who became mothers for the first time in New Zealand (10 women) and eventually I did not need to advertise. Most of the women I contacted showed interest in participating, yet I realised that there was little uniformity in what was motivating them to participate. This varied between enjoying being the focus of my attention as a kind of ‘therapeutic exercise’, seeking supportive friendships, asserting their status in their social network, ameliorating familial tensions, self-reflection, as well as doing me a favour, or a ‘mitzvah’ (a Jewish ‘good deed’). The women all requested to receive an ‘executive summary’ of the study results; in contrast, none selected the option of receiving a transcript of their interview.

In order to produce a ‘thick description’ of women’s everyday experiences – one contextualised through analysis – I used five complementing research methodologies. The first tool I used, usually during the first meeting, was the in-depth open-ended interview. Interviews were in the format of conversations and were followed by participant observation, my second main tool. In addition, I made digital recordings of conversations and activities as well as written summaries of meetings immediately after they took place, spending the same

amount of time on these summaries as in the meetings themselves. I also kept a separate diary in which I recorded my reflections, which allowed my analysis to emerge. I also took photographs and analysed various cultural texts that are relevant to the everyday food practices of these women. Below, I briefly explain each method and assess its outcomes for my analysis.

I conducted in-depth interviews with 25 mothers with dependent children who had initially planned on a long-term move to New Zealand. In the course of the study, the intentions of five of these women changed. Four of them returned to live in Israel, one being forced to do so as a result of bureaucratic immigration issues and economic problems. The fifth woman moved to Australia by reason of employment. Leaving her grown children and husband in New Zealand, she visited often for Jewish festivals, and in 2013 returned to live in New Zealand. In addition, three other women in this study went through divorces, and one woman – who had not signed a consent form before her interview – decided to withdraw from the research after the first six hours of meeting.

The open-ended nature of my interviews allowed participants to highlight the experiences and processes they felt were particularly salient. Anderson and Jack (1991:23) argue that an interview that takes this shape shifts the focus from asking the right questions to interactions “where the focus is on process, on the dynamic unfolding of the subject’s viewpoint”. The spontaneous exchange in the interviews offered women the possibility of raising their own core themes in their narratives. Through repeated in-depth interviews, I collected migration stories and life narratives. Often participant observation intermingled with interviews which taken together encompassed over 300 hours of recording, mostly in Hebrew. This study reports on the memories and experiences of these women through verbatim extracts of interviews, paraphrasing and descriptions of occurrences I registered in my fieldwork diaries.

Sharing my own immigration story and experience, something I was asked to do repeatedly by participants, helped build rapport between us and create intimacy. As a result, this study incorporates some of my own personal narrative and experiences. This allowed me to identify reasons for the differences and similarities between my experiences and the experiences of other women; in addition, including my experiences serves as another

investigative tool, one that encourages reflexivity²¹. As Stanley (1993:41) suggests, the role of a feminist study is to acknowledge that “the active inquiring presence” of researchers is “constructing, rather than discovering, knowledge”. I relied on my own memories and experiences, which I report as extracts from my personal diaries, since I believe that to understand the emotions of others, the ethnographer must share the basic life experiences that evoke those emotions (Rosaldo (1984) and Bourdieu (1977) in Lutz and White 1986:415).

Through their immigration stories, the women in the study articulated their motivations for emigrating, which varied considerably. While most of the women had established professional careers and had worked in full-time paid employment prior to emigrating, some women initiated emigration as a vehicle for ending their husband’s unemployment in Israel. However, the ways in which the women changed their everyday domestic food practices followed similar patterns, regardless of whether the move was fully planned or decided upon after a stint in New Zealand as tourists, and regardless of the nature of their motivations for emigrating, be they economic, political–ideological, etc.

I accompanied these mothers in their lives as they shopped, cooked, baked, hosted, ate and fed others, and as they compared themselves with me and other women and their past lives in Israel with their present lives in New Zealand. My own comparisons also included the experiences of other migrant women in the world, based on secondary analysis. I compared what participants say about what they did in Israel to what they say they do – and what they actually do – in New Zealand. As I worked to place their explanations, pleasures, dislikes, grievances and resulting ambivalences into context, I learned that laughter is only sometimes indicative of happiness and tears only sometimes indicative of sadness. This process of contextualisation allowed me to explicate their behaviours and their actions with and reactions toward food, as paradoxes and contradictions emerged.

During participant observation and in my written summaries and reflections I took a holistic approach that not only positioned me as part of the research field, but also brought to the fore the everyday experiences of women from their points of view (Ardener 1985:24, Wasserfall 1993:32). These points of view are conveyed by the discourses, practices, situations and memories they use in order to explain their motivations, reasoning and purposes for their actions and feelings. At the same time I am aware that even the holistic

²¹ For an excellent example of an anthropologist who incorporates the method of auto-ethnography into a study of Jewish-Israeli international migrant women, see Kuntsman (2003). Kuntsman refers to the work of Liz Stanley (1993, 1995) in her analysis of her own migration story in juxtaposition with other Russian lesbian migrant women’s stories in Israel.

approach is an anthropological ‘ideal’ which may yield only partial understandings (Bird 1992:254); people’s lives are too complex to be explained in one research project or theory. This awareness also derives from the fact that my own identity as a Jewish-Israeli feminist, leftist and Ashkenazi woman is inextricable from my anthropological investigation; the ways in which I perceive myself in comparison to the ways others perceive me are interrelated and impact on how I conduct research, and observe and interpret my findings. This awareness is also articulated by the fact that because of my social positioning, other women’s feelings of being ‘at home’ (i.e. that they belong and connect well with people), may be different to mine.

Indeed, five Ashkenazi women in my study used a strategy of avoidance of participant observation that asserted their power to manage the threats that I unintentionally posed to them due to my social positioning as an Israeli Ashkenazi feminist, leftist and academic woman. While I respect and protect the privacy of these women and their choice of avoiding being part of participant observation the very fact of their having declined participant observation, serves to inform my analysis: in using this strategy these Ashkenazi women attested to the myth of the *polania*. The first woman is the one who initially withdrew her participation from the study, despite calling me in order to participate in the research. After we had spent our first meeting in four shops that were part of her usual shopping excursion, she remarked that there is “nothing interesting to observe”. The next day she phoned me to say that she was “too busy hosting people” to continue participating. Two other women decided to invite my family for dinner on a weekend rather than allowing me to observe them. A fourth woman linked her refusal to reaching a “stage in life” where she did not do what was “*lo naim* (unpleasant)”. A fifth woman invited me to observe her while feeding her children a dinner that was cooked by her husband, and preferred meeting with me at her favourite café. She testified repeatedly that she disliked cooking and lacked any interest in food apart from eating. She noted that her husband is attached to the past and to cooking much more than she is. Unlike her, he is attuned to his emotions and to the past, whereas she feels exceptional in drive to remember.

In addition, women who manifested “admiration” or “envy” towards me in their rhetoric often mixed their comments with contestations and critique, a *mélange* that started from day one. For example, Shoshana encouraged me to “do a PhD” and volunteered to be one of my first participants. Shoshana suggested I should join her for the whole day and that my family would then join in for dinner. Considering I had only met Shoshana twice before, I was struck

by her kindness. Yet during our meeting, she often rejected the notion of conducting a qualitative study: my “sample”, she claimed, would not enable me to generalise about all the Jewish-Israeli migrants in New Zealand. She had specific suggestions about whom I should include in the study to make it more comprehensive, since she felt (like most women) that her experience was exceptional. I assured her that I was not using a sample and that my intention was to understand and explain the experiences of the women in the group. Other women made a point of contesting my political and feminist agendas, none of which I ‘hid’ from them. Nava, as another example, deliberately gave my younger daughter a Barbie doll as we were leaving her home, even though she knew I objected to it.

During fieldwork, I took photographs when permitted, mostly of kitchens, the cooking process, the final products, and the working hands of the women who took pride in their labour. Again, the reactions of women to my request to take photographs were not uniform. A couple of women requested that I not include their children in the photographs, as they feared these would accidentally get into “the wrong hands”. One woman refused to have her photograph taken, saying that food is a sensitive matter that feels “very private”. Among the women in this study, she was the woman who expressed the highest level of concern with respect to keeping her son well-fed. In contrast, several women requested that I take photographs of them and their children while baking together; others enjoyed posing for the camera by standing next to the food they cooked; still others shied away because they felt they did not “look good”. I learnt that the photographs of the women also triggered nostalgia. Some women asked permission to take photographs of my own child who took part in some of my fieldwork for their family photo album. In particular, the photography that involved children enabled reciprocity and the establishment of trust between the women and me. Avoiding or allowing these photographic moments were indicators of anxiety, pride and pleasure, and of the importance of remembering and capturing everyday practices that would create the future memories of life at home for their children.

In addition to my fieldwork, I investigated any relevant social food events and cultural texts, such as Jewish-Israeli public events, mass media and advertisements, cookbooks and government publications on health and food in Auckland. The community events I refer to were mostly put on by the Jewish Orthodox community in Auckland, namely, the Auckland Hebrew Congregation (henceforth, the AHC). The AHC occupies a set of buildings in the city centre and includes the Greys Ave Deli, a café and *shul* (synagogue) shop that opened in 2009 as part of the only Jewish school in Auckland, Kadimah College. My decision to

include mass media, television food programmes and advertisements, as well as cookbooks the women used, informed my analysis of the ways women used their food nostalgia in the public arena, and the ways the media employs nostalgia in comparison. I analyse the texts of cookbooks in comparison with the everyday experience of women where these add to an understanding of these experiences.

Ethical Issues

While most anthropologists employ intimacy as an investigative tool in order to open up familiar experiences for inquiry, there is one main difference between doing fieldwork at home and in homes, and doing fieldwork in another setting “far from home”, as Amit-Talai (2000:67) puts it. This difference is a matter of switching one’s consciousness, rather than crossing a physical and spatial boundary in entering and exiting fieldwork. Time and space are the main dimensions that both disable and enable the presence of the anthropologist in fieldwork. At times, my family and friends, some of whom were participants, still ask during a meal, “Are you doing your research now?” asserting how the boundary between ‘research’ and ‘life’ might blur. Anthropologists who do fieldwork at home, often among friends and family, wish to challenge the “compartmentalised archetype” of ethnography undertaken among strangers in unfamiliar lands (Amit-Talai 2000:67). An anthropologist who researches ‘home’, like me, takes a recurring and twisted course of analysis, starting with the familiar self, family and friends, then moving to relative estrangement through participant observation in fieldwork, comparisons and analysis. I synthesise theory with my analysis of the data gathered in ethnographic fieldwork, all the while reflecting on my own life. I use these reflections to inform my understandings of the study group, and to point to similarities and differences between my experiences as a researcher and a Jewish-Israeli migrant woman in New Zealand, and those of my participants.

There are always means of resetting boundaries between fieldwork and one’s everyday life. Separating my own anxieties from those of my participants, and respecting and acknowledging them, is one such way – a way of conducting ethical research. The observer’s anxieties, as noted by Devereux, are the “basic and characteristic data of behavioural science and are more valid and productive of insight than any other type of datum” (Devereux 1967:xvii quoted in Lutz and White 1986:430). As Devereux contends, it is important to explore these anxieties as signals of potential observer distortion, personal and cultural assumptions about the self, and the special characteristics of social relationships both in the field and at home. Throughout my writing, for example, I was anxious not to ‘forget’, and not

to write an unimportant dissertation. My desire to produce political statements made me highlight findings that I felt made the analysis more important. However, I realised that writing a dissertation about what I found in fieldwork and am able to explain in cultural terms – as opposed to what I had imagined I should write – was the key for my success.

Chapter Overview

Chapter Two discusses the dimension of connection with homelands that is realised by women's experiences of grocery shopping in New Zealand as they confront their longing for Israeli groceries, specifically for dairy products, certain fruits and vegetables, herbs and even salt. The chapter examines their responses to and their choices in grocery shopping, fostering intimacies and tensions with homelands that interweave with longing for the taste of their past homeland (Israel) and with longing for a future home in New Zealand. Their responses to the quality of groceries in New Zealand and their actions, such as beginning to home-garden Israeli herbs and vegetables, trigger memories and imaginaries of lands that grapple with two biblical myths: the 'land of milk and honey' (applied to Israel) and the 'meat pot' (applied to New Zealand). The chapter also describes the various ways in which women become active in contesting local tastes in New Zealand, and how some women choose to commercialise their nostalgia for Israeli groceries. The chapter ends by comparing the uses of nostalgia in food advertisements for selling dairy products in Israel and New Zealand according to their particular state ideologies.

Chapter Three discusses the way women realise the home as a familial-ancestral place of belonging through the dimension of kinship relationships, while overcoming challenges in the practice of home cooking due to their longing for the home-cooked dishes of close female kin, foods that are also specific to Jewish-Israeli ethnicities. Women turn these dishes into the metonyms of their close female kin to relieve longing, returning to ancestral homes by remembering and imagining the Jewish diasporic homelands of their close female kin through their iconic ethnic cooking. Negotiating kinship relationships in such ways, women both idealise and denigrate close female kin, mainly their mothers and mothers-in-law, according to the nature of their kinship relationships, as they grapple with the feminine mythical figures of the *polania* and the *bashlanit*. The nature of their kinship relationships determines whether the culinary talent and teachings of close female kin are acknowledged, how they are acknowledged through the memories and culinary practices of women in this study, and whether women choose to imitate their dishes and improvise on them. Memories of eating iconic home-cooked dishes manifest the dimension of gender more than that of ethnic

difference, materialised by the nature of the cooking skills that women associate with their close female kin. In some cases, when close female kin died, women turned culinary practices, gestures, objects and dishes into ways of commemorating them.

Chapter Four discusses the ways women realise their sexuality and their femininity as part of their gendered selfhood, which relates to their perception of the personal body as home. Women materialise their sexuality and their femininity by overcoming challenges in home baking due to their longing for Israeli baking through their visceral engagements with the practice of baking and their consumption of the resulting morsels. Women return to their kindergarten experience and early motherhood in Israel through memories and practices by engaging with baking, while they grapple with the myth of the *bashlanit*. They employ a hierarchy of baking to enact ‘good’ Jewish-Israeli care, elaborating on the comforting meanings attached to home baking to make up for losses and relieve tensions re-instigated by immigration. Yet materialising these intimacies through home baking is steeped in ambivalence on three accounts: the labour that baking involves, the sense of confinement that recipes and measurements impose on some women, and the trauma that some women experienced in Israel. Hence, just as their pleasure emanates from the heat of the oven, so does their angst. Through memories, home baking provokes ambivalence towards their mothers just as women criticise their motherland. This critique reinstates a sense of threat, which often triggers self-irony. The chapter ends by comparing the uses of nostalgia in the food media: a Kiwi television baking competition, as well as two Israeli advertisements for baking from the 1980s and the 2000s, which are deployed by a shift from the myth of the *polania* to the myth of the *bashlanit*.

Chapter Five discusses the ways women realise the dimension of the communal home by overcoming challenges in the realm of casual hospitality due to their longing for spontaneity and informality in commensality, which epitomise the Zionist mythical figure of the *sabra* – the native-born Israeli. This chapter demonstrates how women use the provision of food and drink as a means of remembering and imagining their sociality, strategically employing a Jewish hierarchy of the quality and quantity of food in order to derive power from caring for guests and assert their Israeliness. In time, by turning casual hospitality into a means for binding people together and constituting home anew in New Zealand, women are able to ‘substitute’ guest-friends for absent close kin. However, women express competition, ambivalence and social tensions through the amount and nature of food and drink in casual hospitality according to their successes in establishing social alliances. While grappling with

the myth of the *sabra*, women critique imbalanced reciprocity by noting the amount and nature of food and drink as a means of articulating social tensions according to the gender and the national affiliations of the participants in the event. Their ambivalence may also trigger self-irony since women convey their desire for respect for and acknowledgment of what they consider to be ‘good’ Jewish-Israeli hospitality. The chapter ends by examining the ways women incorporate two New Zealand hospitality practices, ‘bring a plate’ and barbeques, in order to substantiate their self-attested role as the ‘Minister of Foreign Affairs’ in New Zealand.

Chapter Six discusses the way women realise the dimension of Jewish spirituality, a prominent aspect of their communal ‘home’, by overcoming challenges in festive hospitality and cooking. While women may decrease/increase *kashrut* observance in New Zealand depending on their level of religiosity before immigration, most women increase their involvement in Jewish-Israeli festive celebrations in New Zealand for which they learn to cook more foods that are Jewish. In New Zealand, women incorporate New Zealand festive periods (fitting the Gregorian calendar) festive food practices and dishes into their Jewish-Israeli festive calendar and actual celebrations. As the women become the focal points of such celebrations, they transmit cultural knowledge to the next generation, enacting ‘good’ Jewish-Israeli care by conveying pleasure and pride in their choices in terms of the hospitality they proffer, and in taking on responsibility for festive events. In the exceptional case of one woman, a decline she sustained in cooking festive foods and *kashrut* observance triggered guilt over improper care that only intensified her longing for Jewish traditions. *Kashrut* observance and cooking festive foods become two means of asserting respect towards close kin for some women, materialised through festive or Shabbat dishes. Yet since the women in this study are mostly secular, they share a feeling of great antipathy that result in their ambivalence toward Jewish religiosity. This ambivalence triggers guilt about religious ignorance for some women, who then seek its reparation by asserting their own centrality in the family during festive events. For these women, festive foods and *kashrut* observance signify a burden due to the increased labour these imply; this also triggers the memory of having been oppressed by ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel. As these women seek to resist the constraints posed to them in Israel by ultra-Orthodox Jews in their choices to eat – and derive pleasure from eating – non-kosher foods, a sense of social tension lingers in their relations with close kin and the Jewish Orthodoxy in New Zealand.

Chapter Seven discusses the ways women realise the dimension of the personal body as home, materialising their gendered selfhood by overcoming challenges in weight management to enact care for their own well-being and health. Examining changes in women's practice of weight management and attitudes towards the body is of high importance considering the problematic relationship women have with food in Israel, as suggested by the soaring rate of anorexia nervosa and other eating disorders in comparison to other western nation-states (Latzer 2008, Mitrany et al. 1995). The majority of the women in this study increase their food intake and gain weight after immigration, and hence, reattach themselves to Israeli diets. In so doing they administer self-care toward their body to emulate the feelings of self-contentment, pride and pleasure in their youthful and sexy bodies that they experienced while living in Israel. In most cases, their nostalgia for the food in Israel triggers negative feelings toward the body that derives from eating without pleasure, as women commonly overeat foods that signify home. In fewer cases women undereat and express the feeling of being stranded – not 'at home' in their own body. In many cases, the resulting ambivalence is manifested as disgust is triggered at having overeaten and at fat attached to the bodies of either themselves or their children, while attesting to their desire to civilise the body. The chapter ends by discussing the different experiences of women who have suffered from feelings of inadequacy since childhood in Israel and the effect of emigration on them in terms of their weight management.

Chapter Eight offers concluding remarks that evaluate the contribution of this study to understandings of the intersection between the anthropology of home and nostalgic memory, and the everyday experiences of migrant women as these are materialised through food and domestic food practices.

In focussing my analysis on the implications of international migration for the everyday lives of Jewish-Israeli migrant women in the domestic sphere, this study draws greater awareness to 'multiplicity': namely, the multiple dimensions of home that migrant women realise through everyday food production and consumption. The analysis identifies 'home' as homelands, familial-ancestral places, spiritual sites, and communal places of belonging as well as the personal feminine body, demonstrating that these women reconstitute home as a multidimensional space by negotiating social boundaries with both lands and people. In returning to the metaphor of the 'house' for the home and its dimensions, each of the following chapters discusses the ways women build the house anew while changing the interior and exterior designs of each of its rooms, renegotiating social boundaries through the prism of everyday domestic food practices.

Chapter Two: Consuming Homelands

Tinned okra in tomato sauce from the Syrian's shop tastes like 'home'. (Inness)

In this chapter I explore how Jewish-Israeli migrant women realise connections with their homelands through the everyday experiences of purchasing groceries and preparing meals at home. As they reconstitute the dimension of home as 'homeland' after migration, women engage with senses, memories and emotions that express their longing for the taste of the Israeli homeland at the same time as they establish new connections with New Zealand. Their experiences of procuring and making use of groceries are a response to the ready-made food products that are available (and unavailable) in supermarkets, greengrocers and 'ethnic' shops around the city of Auckland and reflect significant changes in their shopping practices after migration.

During fieldwork I identified five ways women's grocery shopping practices had changed after migration to New Zealand. First, women's shopping practices indicated a decline in the consumption of dairy products, which are staple foods in Israel (in particular cottage cheese and quark), while there was a distinct rise in their consumption of fresh red meat. Second, as women began shopping for groceries on special forays to 'ethnic' shops around Auckland they increased their buying of imported tinned foods, as the opening quote by Inness indicates, many of which were foods they never bought in Israel. Third, women began buying local iconic Kiwi groceries such as sausages, Marmite, pies, and fish and chips, mostly to feed to their children and husbands. Fourth, women began using Israeli spices, and began to grow herbs and vegetables common in Israel in home gardens. Most women also stated that they now buy large amounts of vegetables and fruits. In fact, fruit and vegetables were the highest food expense for each family. Fifth, several women entered the commercial food arena in New Zealand by selling Israeli groceries or foods.

Regardless of whether or not migration is a factor in women's lives, studies that focus on the everyday practices of grocery shopping among middle-class western women argue that women express care and love for their family through their choices at the grocery store and in the supermarket (see for example, Miller 1998 in Ashley et al. 2004:111-112, Cook 2009, Webber, Sobal, and Dollahite 2010). I argue that Jewish-Israeli migrant women turn grocery shopping in New Zealand into an everyday nostalgic practice of consumption (Berdahl 2009) that enacts the dimension of home as homeland. I furthermore suggest that their nostalgic

consumption follows the four emotive modes of reaction that Anthony Giddens (1990:137) has identified in response to modernity: pragmatic acceptance, cynical pessimism, sustained optimism, and activism. Specifically, the women in this study depict longing for the taste of the land of Israel, at the same time as they express ambivalence toward the tastes of the land of New Zealand. In their reactions to groceries, they often upset the local hierarchies of taste and locally acceptable feeding and eating practices. Due to their nostalgia for the qualities of dairy products, certain fruits and vegetables and salt that epitomise the land of Israel, women convey pragmatic acceptance and cynical pessimism towards the qualities of these groceries in New Zealand. However, they also ‘sustain optimism’ towards red meat consumption in New Zealand turning such consumption into a means of critiquing the land of Israel, and in some cases, their husbands who wish to decrease red meat consumption.

In doing so, the women grapple with two complementary biblical myths representing their homelands, the ‘land of milk and honey’ for Israel and the ‘meat pot’ for New Zealand, while articulating their ambivalence towards both of these homelands respectively. They express the threat of being ‘devoured’ by the Israeli homeland by using carnal metaphors that convey their anger and ambivalence. They also actively contest local consumption practices as they express hope for a future home by both beginning to home-garden and to recreate commercial staples that are common groceries in Israel as domestically-produced dishes in New Zealand. As a result of the pleasure and pride they derive from such nostalgic consumption, a few women decide to commercialise the taste of the Israeli homeland in New Zealand.

In the last section I compare everyday enactments of nostalgia in women’s domestic food production with the deployment of nostalgia in advertisements for groceries in Israel and New Zealand. I show that these advertisements enhance stereotypic perceptions of women through which the pleasure of consumption becomes a route to an ultimate and idealised home.

Mapping Out Responses towards Groceries

Nostalgia for the taste of groceries of the homeland as the culture of ‘departure’ is common to groups of international migrants in the world. El Salvadorian migrants in the USA, for example, manifest longing for the taste of cheeses (Stowers 2003:147-157). Ecuadorian migrants to Spain complain that the local products in urban supermarkets, usually fruits and vegetables, taste like “plastic”, articulating non-pleasurable odourless and tasteless

consumption while longing for the taste of their homeland (Codesal 2008:14)²². In addition, studies on women's grocery shopping generally argue that the women manifest love, care and worry by engaging in this everyday domestic practice of consumption (see for example, Miller 1998 in Ashley et al. 2004:111-112, Cook 2009, Coveney 2000, Webber, Sobal, and Dollahite 2010).

This section examines how and why Jewish-Israeli migrant women realise the dimension of the homeland through their nostalgia for the taste of groceries in Israel, dealing with the first three modes of emotive reactions to multiple choices that Anthony Giddens identifies: pragmatic acceptance, cynical pessimism and sustained optimism (190:137, also in Webber, Sobal, and Dollahite 2010:301). I leave Giddens' fourth mode, activism, for a discussion in the second section.

Pragmatic Acceptance

According to Giddens, 'pragmatic acceptance' corresponds with passivity or indifference towards choice of consumption (190:137, also in Webber, Sobal, and Dollahite 2010:301). Women in this study conveyed their pragmatic acceptance of local groceries with the notable exception of local dairy products, complaining about their taste, smell, textures and unhealthy features such as fat content and added preservatives, and reducing their consumption accordingly. They used dairy products in Israel as their main reference point in depicting their disappointment with the properties of local dairy products in New Zealand. This disappointment triggered criticism, manifesting dissatisfaction towards the market economy of New Zealand: they claimed that the market economy creates a "misleading" impression or image of New Zealand given its emphasis on dairy farming. The general qualities of dairy products and the variety available in New Zealand were perceived as "poor" in comparison with Israel while the price was considered as higher. In time, complaints dulled to passivity. Rachel, for example, stated that after about four years of living in New Zealand she no longer "cared about or noticed" the different qualities of cottage cheese. Thus Rachel, like all women in this study, asserted the difference between the cottage cheese in Israel and the cottage cheese in New Zealand, while she also expressed indifference to it. The pragmatic acceptance of groceries was realised by most women when they felt that they had to

²² This ethnographic article cites several examples of other international groups migrating from rural to urban centres that feel this way and articulate their ambivalence in a similar manner.

“compromise” and identify “substitutes” in New Zealand for familiar dairy products from Israel.

Often retaining Israeli-Hebrew names for dairy products was enough to provoke longing for these groceries and criticism towards their local equivalents. For instance, I had observed Naama prepare Marmite sandwiches for her children with “yellow”. ‘Yellow’ is a generic Israeli-Hebrew term for cheeses that are hard with a yellowish colouring (like Edam in New Zealand), which are differentiated from white cheeses like quark and soft French cheeses. The most well-known ‘yellow’ cheese in Israel, which Naama referred to, is called Tal Haemek, ‘the dew of the valley’. The simple meaning of this name was a reminder of nature and the landscape of Israel, enough to provoke longing for an idealised cheese that materialised the connection with that land. The mentioning of the colour as a generic term for hard cheeses in New Zealand conveyed this memory, which provoked longing for Tal Haemek’s admired qualities. Above all, in the consumption of dairy products nothing triggered as much longing as the specific names of dairy products. Other examples of names for dairy products that lingered in memory of Israeli everyday life were “Danny” for any dairy chocolate pudding; “Gamadim” (lit. dwarves) for any small-size dairy puddings; and “Philadelphia” for any cream cheese²³. Women who noted this practice of mentioning Israeli names in their rhetoric often manifested self-irony, which derived from the fact that they had realised that as they spoke they imagined themselves in the land of Israel through the memory of these tastes, or as some women put it, “In my mind I’m still stuck in Israel”. As I pointed out in the introduction of this study, self-irony by definition requires an act of distancing for self-reflection, which generates an introspective look that is often conveyed through ambivalence in speech. Here, the women parodied their attachment to Jewish-Israeli tastes of dairy products in publicly acknowledging their ‘backward’ behaviour for being ‘stuck’ in Israel in their mind, and thus, attested to their national identity.

Cynical Pessimism

According to Giddens (190:137, also in Webber, Sobal, and Dollahite 2010:301) the emotive response of ‘cynical pessimism’ in consumption corresponds with marking certain choices as dangerous. As such, the notion that one has to accept and cannot change the

²³ This generic name for cream cheese is a reminder of the cheese brand that is named after the city of Philadelphia in the USA, which is renowned for its population of Ashkenazi Jews and the popularisation of their eating of bagels with cream cheese and *lox* (marinated and preserved fish). The production and distribution of cream cheese as ‘Philadelphia’ in Israel started during the 1990s, and was followed by a variety of low-fat ‘cream’ cheeses (no longer made of cream) in different flavours – through the addition of olives or chives, for example – which remain unavailable in New Zealand.

qualities of the chosen food product often led women to avoid such groceries completely while they intensified their criticism towards New Zealand dairy products. For example, in response to compliments from her husband while using 'yellow' to bake, Naama felt she could "teach those 'Kiwis' what could really be done with their measly cheeses". In this way she set herself to re-educate New Zealanders as consumers, a point I discuss later in this chapter. Rachel, as another example, described in great detail her daily practices as an adolescent; she used to wake up at 5:00 am to work in the cowshed and milk the cows in their *meshek halav*, the Israeli equivalent of a dairy farm. She denigrated the qualities of all milks in comparison to those of the milk on the farm of her past by saying: "These days you cannot find milk that tastes like that anywhere".

Rachel's obvious pleasure and nostalgic feelings towards her memory of drinking that milk and skimming off its creamy skin with her finger spurred a discussion between us in relation to the qualities of dairy food products in New Zealand. Rachel explained that as a result of the poor qualities of New Zealand milk in comparison to the excellent qualities of the milk of her Israeli past, she encourages her children to drink soy milk and buys long-life milk for her husband's coffee and for guests, she herself refraining from drinking milk. Rachel asserted that she only drinks milk in a hot chocolate when eating out. I suggested to Rachel that she could buy raw whole-cream milk in New Zealand, but my suggestion only provoked her ambivalence towards me; half-smiling, Rachel said, "You, with all your food research, you will spoil my memories". It was clear that Rachel was interested in retaining the qualities of milk from her Israeli past as an ideal that materialised her connection with that homeland.

Rama, who felt that all milk sold in plastic containers in New Zealand "tastes of plastic", by which she implied the milk tastes altered and artificial, shows another example of mistrust towards dairy products. Plastic containers of two or three litres are a form of packaging and storage of milk that prevails in New Zealand, compared with cardboard containers that were more common in Israel at the time of her immigration (2009). Rama avoids buying milk in plastic containers, despite the larger quantities and lower prices associated with these containers. The local taste of milk conveys a threat to her: sometimes when shopping and observing people buying milk in plastic containers she feels the urge to yell and warn them, "Can't you taste that it is wrong?", but she never says anything. Rama transformed her mistrust into action by finding milk that tastes 'safer', closer to the taste of her homeland.

Similarly, Shoshana and Geffen attested that they refrain from buying cottage cheese in New Zealand due to its disgusting taste and texture. They buy and eat cottage cheese only when visiting Israel to “make up” for their deprivation in New Zealand. Shoshana said that her mother-in-law prepares Shoshana’s favourite foods when she visits. Awaiting her arrival on each visit is cottage cheese. Since cottage cheese cannot be easily sent over to New Zealand or made at home these women eat great amounts of it on their visits. When they visit, memories of Israeli cottage cheese are confirmed and the cottage cheese is re-idealised. These women formed such a strong attachment to cottage cheese in Israel that because of their recurring visits to Israel with their daughters, they claimed they had passed on this attachment to their daughters who only like Israeli cottage cheese. Their daughters’ strong bond with Israeli cottage cheese as an epitome of the ‘taste of the homeland’ had formed despite their growing up in New Zealand for the major part of their lives. In the last section of this chapter I discuss how the Israeli media employs nostalgia to sell cottage cheese.

Sustained Optimism

Women’s hope to consume quality groceries as in the past, i.e. ‘sustained optimism’ towards choice in groceries, corresponds with three modes of their actions: shopping online, the least common one; bargain hunting, more often; and most commonly freezing large amounts of vegetables in season. I begin by exploring the experience of women towards certain fruits and vegetables, in particular cucumbers, and the place of a vegetable salad as epitomising the taste of the homeland. My examination focuses on their responses, conveying pleasure and dissatisfaction that result in ambivalence, in addition to their reasons for the changes they undergo in grocery shopping. Since without a doubt the most prevalent example of sustained optimism among these women is their attitude towards the consumption of fresh red meats in New Zealand, I demonstrate and explain their motivations in this regard separately. I show how these are realised with regard to sources of red meat, means of processing and distribution and manner of consumption.

Beginning with optimism in shopping online, Rachel and Geffen are two self-employed women with high incomes who each began shopping online after the birth of their second child to “make life easy” and better manage their time. Rachel found that the fruit boxes she received at her doorstep every delivery day tasted “wonderful” and encouraged her and her children to eat seasonal produce. In such a way, she felt that she cultivated a healthy eating

habit among her children and relieved the stress of grocery shopping with children, a feeling common to most women in the study.

In terms of the consumption of fruit, most women in the study felt that in particular, olives, grapes, fresh dates, fresh figs and pomegranates taste better in Israel and are cheaper and more available. These fruits are known as part of the biblical²⁴ ‘seven species’ – grape, fig, pomegranate, olive and date palm, plus wheat and barley – for which the land of Israel was blessed, localised and mythologised fruit that several women expressed strong longing for. For their consumption in New Zealand women relied largely on trees that were already planted in other people’s gardens. Thus, Shoshana enjoyed remembering the taste of figs in Israel every year when she received figs from her Dalmatian neighbour across the street. Instead of figs, Shoshana planted olive trees on her section for future consumption, while another woman planted a date palm. Rachel, for her part, said that the fig tree growing on the section of the house she had decided to buy in New Zealand was her main reason for buying it. While she acknowledged that the figs she tasted in New Zealand are different from the figs in Israel, she still enjoyed eating them.

In his ethnography on food and memory of Kalymnians (on the Greek island of Kalymnos), Sutton (2001:55-8) terms such anecdotes ‘fig narratives’. He argues that on Kalymnos, such narratives portray memories that emphasise sociality via fig gifting and humorous stories of fig stealing between neighbouring women. In my study, however, the taste of the Israeli homeland is specifically conveyed in nostalgia for its typical vegetation, the taste of figs in the case of Jewish-Israeli migrant women that materialises a connection with the land. Unsurprisingly, memories of the taste of figs and of fig trees are a common way of conveying nostalgic attachment to this same land by Palestinians, a strong reminder of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Bardenstein 1999, Ben-Ze’ev 2004). I elaborate on this point in the next section by examining the cases of the ‘Israeli-Arab’ vegetable salad and hummus. At this stage I suggest that for women in this study the choice of naming a dish ‘Israeli’ or ‘Arab’ was sometimes enough to manifest their recollection of the political tension in their contested homeland.

Furthermore, when considering sustained optimism in bargain hunting, one should note the women’s great dissatisfaction with the qualities and price of vegetables, the food category representing the greatest expense in New Zealand. Their dissatisfaction triggered critique towards the price and properties of vegetables by the women who also portrayed strong

²⁴ See for example Deuteronomy 8:8–9.

attachment to vegetables in Israel, in particular to those vegetables that are required for a vegetable salad: cucumbers, tomatoes, capsicums and lettuce. In Auckland, vegetables were the first groceries to be reduced in economic hardship, and their consumption increased when women dieted to lose weight. Thus women who wished to save money shopped in the outdoor markets some of the time. However, shopping at the market was usually a temporary (short-lived) and rare practice, mostly because large and cheap outdoor markets in Auckland are held on weekends in locations that are distant from their homes, while closer 'farmer's markets' are expensive. In addition, shopping at the market requires much physical labour in carrying groceries. Thus the majority of women preferred buying local produce at greengrocers. For example, Nora said, "I have an amazing Chinese greengrocer not far from my house, and I do all my fruit and vegetable shopping at his place". She praised the variety of his produce, the orderly fashion in which it is presented, the reasonable prices and the taste of the courgette he sells in season. Due to the differences in the price of zucchini between Israel and New Zealand, Nora began freezing grated courgette for later use, specifically for making her son's favourite quiche. She often prepares this quiche by following a recipe from her mother-in-law, which she was compelled to modify with the frozen, off-season courgette.

In order to underscore their discontent towards the local price of vegetables, many women described making "mistakes" shortly after arrival as part of their migratory experience. Such stories prompted their criticism as they described their utter disappointment, or "disillusion" as some women put it. While New Zealand prides itself on its horticultural produce, to the migrant women the local price of staple vegetables seems expensive compared to Israel. Merrie's story illustrates this common narrative of the "mistake" that stirs their critique towards the local market: sometime after her arrival in New Zealand she longed for capsicums stuffed with meat. However, only after she had paid had she realised her "mistake": the price of capsicums was per piece, and not per kilogram. To convey her self-irony she laughed that since then her husband "took over grocery shopping". Yet Merrie ridiculed his "stingy" approach to shopping, as well as his "poor awareness" in making healthy choices. She described her part in grocery shopping by saying that "if I need special or organic groceries I buy them myself". While Merrie criticised some of her husband's purchases, most of the women's critique was directed towards the price and quality of vegetables in New Zealand. Miriam, for example, claimed that the family's high outlay on vegetables and fruit was "tearing" the family economically, but that she was "unwilling to compromise" on the amount and quality they consumed. Many other women in the study concurred with Miriam's assessment.

Longing for Israeli Cucumbers

Women's discontent with the qualities and price of local vegetables and the resulting ambivalence were manifested in particular in the case of cucumbers. Women took extra care in choosing cucumbers because of differences in taste and price between cucumbers in Israel and New Zealand: 'telegraph' cucumbers were thought to be watery, tasteless, expensive and too big and bulky compared with 'Lebanese' cucumbers. The latter were difficult to find and even more expensive, but their taste, smell and texture were said to resemble the cucumbers in Israel. Shellie, who explicitly related "abundance" to the land of Israel in relation to the variety and price of vegetables and fruits, stated that "there is not a day that goes by without a big vegetable salad" in her house. She refused to allow me to join her for grocery shopping. Stating that "I don't want anyone watching how long I take and how I choose each cucumber". Thus, Shellie indicated the sense of threat she felt at my presence because of the importance she attached to the qualities of vegetables, and cucumbers in particular, in her grocery shopping.

Lebanese migrants in West Sydney, Australia portray similar longing for the taste of cucumbers (Hage 1997:109-110). Lebanese migrants in Australia continued to long for such cucumbers until the late 1970s when they started importing the seeds and growing them. Most probably, the Lebanese cucumbers in New Zealand originate from these cucumbers. Hage demonstrates convincingly how the absence of these cucumbers emphasises "negative intimation" in the nostalgia of these migrants that may grow into depressive homesickness, whereas memories of the initial presence of cucumbers later in Australia manifested "positive intimation" (Hage 1997:109-110). Women in this study who either occasionally buy these cucumbers or begin growing them in their home gardens also manifest the attachment Hage found to the specific qualities of cucumbers from the Middle East. Hage shows that the taste of Lebanese cucumbers eaten by migrants in Australia becomes an "imagined metonym" for 'homely feelings' that foster hope in their reconstitution of home, similar to that of the women in this study. All earlier departures from homes, the parental home, village, city and nation conflate into this intimacy (Hage 1997: footnote 14, p. 148). As a 'homely' experience of intimacy with the homeland, this is also true for Jewish-Israeli migrant women in New Zealand, since they taste their Israeli homeland through the consumption of groceries, such as cucumbers, manifesting their connection with Israel while returning home metaphorically and viscerally.

Longing for an ‘Israeli-Arab’ Salad

While shopping with Valery and her daughter I inquired about any regular criteria Valery employs in her decisions about groceries. She replied that she looks for “special tastes”, which are not necessarily more expensive, when planning to prepare food for her family, such as salad dressings that her husband can take to work. At home she uses the “usual salad dressing of lemon juice, olive oil and salt”. She then remembered watching with her daughter a television programme that encourages contestants to lose weight, *The Biggest Loser*, a couple of nights before. After the programme her daughter (eight years old) asked to make a big salad. She felt “very proud” that “this little thing [her daughter] makes a salad” which requires considerable labour and preparation time: chopping tomatoes, cucumbers and capsicum finely, mixing them and adding lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper to taste. She added, “We took all the vegetables we had in the fridge: lettuce, tomatoes, spring onion, etc., and my daughter asked to make the dressing herself by taking a lemon to squeeze”.

Like most women in this study who are in charge of grocery shopping and/or actually do the shopping, Valery is in search of ‘special tastes’ that would please her husband, signs of care and love that are typical of middle-class women in western societies who practice grocery shopping (Miller 1998 in Ashley et al. 2004:111-112). Yet Valery’s search for special and new tastes is complemented by ordinary, familiar and much-loved tastes that for Valery, like the other women in this study, are reminders of their homeland, Israel. The vegetable salad, as described above, epitomises the taste of the land and the attachment to this Israeli staple signifies this connection. The salad materialised healthy eating and prosperity through the qualities associated with the vegetables as a healthy eating practice that contributes to weight management.

As a marker of Israeliness, this salad holds for the migrant women the taste of the Israeli homeland at a better and healthier level than the food practices they associate with New Zealanders. In particular, eating a vegetable salad for breakfast was noted by several women as one of the “peculiarities of Israelis” in the eyes of New Zealanders; they showed pride mixed with ambivalence and self-irony when mentioning this oddity from the perspective of others. In addition, women articulated ambivalence because this salad requires considerable labour to prepare since vegetables are chopped finely. Mothers of young children or those who were temporarily alone often preferred eating whole or sliced vegetables instead. Women concerned about their weight or those with more leisure time, like Shellie, were more prone to prepare and eat a vegetable salad every day. Rachel, for example, said she “strives”

to eat a vegetable salad a day. She lamented that often she finds time to prepare such a salad only after her children are in bed.

The case of Valery also demonstrates the pleasure women derived from instilling healthy eating practices in their children through their attachment to that salad (see Chapter Seven). Similarly to Valery, who took pride in her daughter's desire to prepare and eat such a salad, other women in this study felt their children are fed better and healthier foods compared with children in New Zealand, specifically thanks to eating the salad. What is more, women were quick to learn that prestige may be derived from preparing such a salad in New Zealand when hosting or bringing a plate for any kind of event, including Israelis and New Zealanders. For example, Rachel said that "when it comes to hospitality" she regards herself as "an expert in making two types of salads – a vegetable salad and *borghol*" (an Arab cracked-wheat salad). Indeed, I attended several of her casual hospitality events in which her finely chopped salad with the usual dressing was highly commended.

If, like Rachel, women who before their immigration "did not know how to cook" regarded preparing such a salad for a light meal as taken for granted, not really viewed as 'cooking' per se, then after their migration the salad was ascribed new meanings. This salad is part of a meal commonly known as the 'Israeli' breakfast or dinner. While cooking or frying an egg (omelette, scrambled, boiled or 'sunny side up'), assembling, cutting and mixing a vegetable salad, and spreading various spreads on sliced bread are part of this culturally particular, taken-for-granted food provision, immigration changed their appreciation of this meal and the salad in particular. In New Zealand this meal became more appropriate for casual hospitality events, many of which I was invited to, while the qualities of the salad itself demonstrated the connection with home as epitomising the taste of the Israeli land. In New Zealand, the 'Israeli' breakfast²⁵ and the salad were often shifted to late breakfast on weekends and light weekday dinner, when people are usually more at leisure.

In fact, as a manifestation of the connection with the land in the national Zionist imagination, this meal and the salad in particular epitomise the spirit of the pioneers in rural settlements (*kibbutz* and *moshav*) in Israel, those who are seen as embodying the value of manual labour. This meal materialises the prosperity brought to the land of Israel by the

²⁵ Yael offers this iconic 'Israeli' breakfast in her restaurant. In order to provide the vegetables for the salad, Yael shops at local markets.

generation of *sabra* who saw to the fruition of the land, and epitomises the renewed and revived Jewish collective despite its close resemblance to Arab-Palestinian staple meals.

Red Meat Consumption

The consumption of red meat, i.e. lamb and beef, was mentioned by all the women in this study – they increased their practice of barbequing and roasting meat in cooking dishes that they had learned in New Zealand²⁶. Women expressed consistently positive attitudes towards red meat consumption, mainly by buying fresh red meat in supermarkets and, in a few cases, cultivating face-to-face relationships with butchers. In Israel red meat is purchased mostly as frozen and/or kosher. Though the differences between red meat in Israel and New Zealand may have other explanations, I deal with the main factors mentioned by women in explaining their responses and choices: the source – how cattle and sheep are raised; the manner of processing – kosher or non-kosher; and the manner of distribution – fresh compared with frozen. As the case of Yvette in the quotation above demonstrates, when comparing the consumption of red meat in New Zealand with that in Israel women often gave a kind of ironic snorting laughter, called in Israel-Hebrew ‘gichooch’. Gichooch means to ridicule or mock and figured as part of the irony women expressed in their ambivalence towards the land of Israel, as well as, in some cases, to contest husbands who wished to reduce the consumption of red meat in New Zealand for various reasons.

Most women identified the way cattle and sheep are raised in New Zealand – “free to roam in the meadows” and “grass-fed” – as attributes that affected their senses and the pleasure they derived from eating red meat. They argued that these conditions for raising cattle and sheep are “more ethical” and “healthier” than the conditions under which cattle are raised in Israel. Rina, for example, added that at familial visits to dairy farms on display in New Zealand, she noticed that cattle are kept in clean and spacious conditions, unlike the “terrible stench and disgusting filth” she experienced on visits to dairy farms in Israel. This attribute made her enjoy eating red meat and feeding it to her children in New Zealand all the more. In fact, several women mentioned that in Israel they felt reluctant to eat lamb because of its very distinctive and “heavy” taste and smell that they characterised as “stench”. They claimed that the taste of the lamb in New Zealand is not “as strong” or “lighter” than the taste of lamb in Israel. They related these differences to the foods lambs are fed and the grazing conditions of sheep. These yielded qualities that were perceived as reminders of the animal

²⁶ In Chapter Five I discuss barbequing as a manner of cooking red meat.

source for the red meat and diminished women's previous aversion, as well as demonstrating their perception of having arrived to a more natural and rural, and thus more desirable, life in New Zealand, articulated in the images they held of cattle roaming freely in the meadow.

The pleasure that five Mizrahi derived women from the consumption of red meat was raised in particular thanks to the qualities associated with red meat and their preference for red meat as a fresh staple since childhood. Rina, for example, acknowledged that her pleasure in eating and feeding her daughters red meat derives from her Mizrahi upbringing, as did the other women. She stated her preference for red meat in New Zealand when dining out by claiming that her husband knows that her "most favoured" and "real" food choice is red meat. A meal containing red meat is the most nourishing and satisfying meal in her view. Rina asserted that in New Zealand her husband developed an "obsession" with eating healthily and demanded they decrease their consumption of red meat. Although Rina did increase cooking fish to satisfy his request, she challenged him on it and made fun of it. She challenged him not only in continuing to buy and cook red meat and in making sure to feed it to her daughters, but also in her rhetoric. In addition, Rina expressed a nostalgic recollection of her own mother, which she described as a caring and devoted woman in feeding her children red meat on a daily basis while overcoming the difficulties of being a mother who also worked from home. Her nostalgia materialised by feeding her daughters red meat in "real" and "satisfying" meals in New Zealand, claiming she is a 'good enough' Jewish-Israeli woman like her mother.

Another example is illustrated in the experience of Yvette. She questioned her husband's masculinity by repeatedly joking that since he avoids eating red meat in New Zealand (in this case due to his preference for observing *kashrut*), his sexual desire is diminished and he is physically weaker. She mocked his "obsession" with healthy eating and his practice of a weekly fast to maintain good health. By asserting her great pleasure in eating red meat and feeding their son red meat, Yvette challenged her husband's masculinity.

In light of the more ethical and better qualities that all women in this study associated with red meat in New Zealand, the five Mizrahi women in this study showed a particularly strong preference for red meat. They enjoyed and promoted the general increase in red meat consumption all the more, realising a connection with the New Zealand homeland by feeding their children healthier red meat than in Israel. Interestingly, this preference on the part of these Mizrahi women, as a materialisation of a national connection with New Zealand for red

meat consumption, figured even when they were vegetarians. Mona idealised her Iranian mother in memories of her practice of preparing a hot cooked lunch for her children. She described the “simmering freshly cooked pots” as “awaiting” her arrival after every school day. Yet she rejected operating in a similar manner to her mother, by saying that it is “unrealistic” and “stressful” for her as a migrant without family support. What is more, despite her vegetarianism she proclaimed that in New Zealand she encourages her children to eat red meat and her husband to cook it; she believes that the consumption of red meat is necessary for healthy growth. Mona proudly announced that since they had moved to New Zealand her husband grilled red meat over coals. Recently they had delighted their children by buying a gas grill for barbequing, “like everyone else in New Zealand”.

Most women in this study commended the higher quality of red meats due to being sold fresh in New Zealand and not frozen as they would be in Israel. They applauded the fact that they could easily access a variety of good-quality red meat cuts more cheaply in New Zealand, unlike in Israel where mostly people cooked defrosted expensive red meat. A preference for fresh red meat sometimes went along with developing a face-to-face relationship with a local butcher. Ninnet proudly stated that after several attempts to buy and eat red meat from the supermarket which led to unpleasant experiences of becoming physically ill, her husband established a personal relationship with the local butcher. The two men became friends in their mutual appreciation of skill and knowledge in cooking red meat, and the butcher began offering her husband “special cuts at reasonable prices” or “saving” him certain red meat cuts at his request. Though this was a relationship between two men, Ninnet and her son enjoyed the results – eating good quality red meat cooked according to her wishes. Ninnet asked that her husband to roast red meat until it is “burnt, hard and completely dead”. Her request made sense since, as all women in this study were well aware, red meat in New Zealand is not kosher. As the study subjects thought that New Zealand red meat tasted more tender and less salty, Ninnet’s reluctance to eat it constituted an exception.

The women of this study repeatedly mentioned the taste and textural qualities of red meat in New Zealand as advantages that enhanced their pleasure in its consumption. Inness, for example, announced that she “celebrates” in New Zealand by cooking red meat every day because of its freshness, cheaper price and better qualities when compared with the red meat in Israel. She claimed she had turned her family into “cannibals”. I was confused by this assertion for quite some time. Inness was not eating human flesh and obviously used ‘cannibalism’ as a metaphor, but for what? Eventually I realised that in this metaphor Inness

was articulating a symbolic 'eating' of the land since the connection with the homeland of New Zealand figured through the power and prosperity that red meat consumption stands for. As food geographers Bell and Valentine (1997) argue, we are "where we eat", and therefore, connections with both homelands figured through the consumption of groceries in a complementary way: the connection with land of Israel figured through the memories and the taste of dairy products, while the connection with the land of New Zealand figured through the increased consumption of red meat. The new attachment to red meat mostly increased the pleasures women derived from eating it and feeding it to their children; some women even used this attachment to contest husbands who wished to reduce red meat consumption, which would reduce such pleasures.

The Manner of Consumption

My best friend took me to eat meat in the finest restaurants in Israel, and you know how much I love red meat. The meat was chewy, gooey, hard and too salty. The meat in New Zealand is so much better. On coming back here, I bought a BBQ, and I am becoming a Kiwi (snorting), doing my meat on the 'barbi' as often as I can. (Yvette)

The symbolic-imaginative acts of consumption that are realised through red meat in New Zealand are also evident in increased salt consumption. I watched Inness add about four heaped teaspoons of salt to a family-sized red meat stew she was preparing. When I wondered about the amount of salt and the resulting taste, she argued that the salt in New Zealand is less salty than in Israel, similarly to other women in this study. Miriam decided to compare the saltiness of the common salt sold in Israel with that sold in New Zealand, and reached the same conclusion. Some women preferred grinding rock salt, a more expensive but deemed-healthier option (because rock salt contains iodine) than the common salt sold in New Zealand. Salt has long been significant in Jewish religious food rituals that mark the connection with the land of Israel, such as the dipping of the *challah* or 'bread' in salt while saying the blessing over it during the Friday night Kiddush.

While the preference for Israeli dairy products, cucumber and salt signified a positive metaphoric return to the homeland, the preference for red meat in New Zealand signified a negative return one, since women used red meat metaphorically to convey their ambivalence toward Israel. Similar to several of the women, Yvette articulated her utter disappointment in the state of Israel and its failure to take proper care of its citizens as her motivation for

emigrating. As the quote above suggests, her disappointment materialised in her experience of the taste and other qualities of red meat in Israel during visits back home after emigration. Yvette's ambivalence was also articulated by a claim, common to other women, that since she is the "salt of the earth" – what she fundamentally understood as a "citizen who served in the army, pays tax, and wishes to work to make a living" – she does not "deserve" to be neglected by her homeland.

When women articulated a nostalgic attachment to the land of Israel through the consumption of dairy products, certain fruits and vegetables and salt, this attachment was conveyed by reviving the mythical metaphor '*eretz zavat halav udvash*' 'land (oozing) of milk and honey'. The 'land of milk and honey' is a myth that derives from repeated biblical references to the Promised Land, the epitome of abundance (Exodus 3:8, 33:3, and Ezekiel 20:6). Women fostered their homely intimacy with this land, conveying national pride in their healthy eating and feeding practices of their children. They employed their nostalgia as a relationship of positive intimacy with their homeland that they wished to transmit to the next generation, as suggested, for example, in the case of cottage cheese.

Yet when contesting their Israeli homeland, their memories provoked criticism as they blamed Israel for the lack of care, often by using images of carnage. Such blame was manifested in the biblical metaphor "*eretz ochelet yoshveha*" (Numbers 14:36, 37), or 'land that eats up its inhabitants', employed by several women to describe Israel. In this biblical verse women articulated their deep fear that their homeland would "devour" them. Just as the Israeli homeland was associated with positive and negative feminine attributes, women dissociated this land from the pleasurable and powerful consumption of red meat they attached to the land of New Zealand, their new homeland. If they increased the consumption of red meat because of the more ethical and fresh qualities they associated with red meat in New Zealand, then they also increased their own pleasures in eating and feeding in such way. In this way the women revived the myth of the 'meat pot' as identification with a happy homeland. This notion is based on the nostalgic biblical metaphor in Ezekiel 11:1–13. The 'meat pot' has been commonly known in the Jewish consciousness throughout its long migration history (Diner 2001, Israel 2008). This myth conveys the longing of the Hebrews/Israelites for the abundance and comforts they experienced when they were in the diaspora epitomised by their hedonistic behaviour and the high status associated with red meat consumption. In this case, their longing for the comforts they experienced in Egypt served to point out the difficulties of inhabiting the Promised Land. Though women in this

study did not employ this metaphor explicitly, it does encapsulate their feelings for the qualities of red meat in New Zealand that epitomise their pleasure of eating red meat and feeding their children. This is especially true in the case of five Mizrahi women who used their nostalgia for their mothers to legitimise an increase in red meat consumption, sometimes in opposition to their husbands. In the second section I elaborate on how women sought to reinforce the revival of these two myths for homelands in practice through the proactive choices they make when shopping for groceries.

Activism and Nostalgia for a Future Home in New Zealand

This section elaborates on Giddens' fourth mode of reaction towards choice in consumption, activism, in which people as consumers employ "discursive consciousness" in modernity (Giddens 1990:137). In the case of the women in this study, their discursive consciousness is manifested in their response to the qualities of local groceries leading them to begin to challenge common taste hierarchies in New Zealand, by asserting intergenerational and international differences that contest local eating and feeding practices. This is the other side of the coin of studies that emphasise the relations between dominant majorities and migrant minority groups as represented through unequal symbolic roles of 'eaters' and 'feeders' respectively (Cook and Crang 1996, Gvion 2006b, Hage 1997, 1998). These studies assert that 'white' majorities symbolically 'eat' minorities as they consume their foods in ethnic restaurants as well as appropriate and exploit their culinary knowledge, especially those of migrant women who provide food and maintain ethnic culinary knowledge at home. As I show in the last section, such symbolic consumption is indeed illustrated by the food media in the way it employs nostalgia. Yet, I also show how migrant women's activism, which is motivated by their nostalgia for their Israeli homeland, enables them to contest local practices on the one hand, while asserting connections with homelands on the other. I suggest that Jewish-Israeli migrant women are the 'eaters' of their homelands and the deliberate 'feeders' of the majority of the population by pointing to their desire to re-educate and transform the taste of 'the other', the New Zealand majority population, while they establish themselves economically.

The section shows that the women's activism is portrayed in four main ways. First, women convey opportunism by the special travel to ethnic shops and in the consumption of tinned foods imported from the Middle-East. Women may also use the choice of where to shop for groceries and which imported groceries to buy in order to manifest their political agendas, an important way to engage with the boundaries of taste and the Zionist state-

ideology. Second, women cater to their children and husbands by buying typical Kiwi groceries, while at the same time mostly portray a dislike for these foods, which they avoid eating personally. Third, women begin to grow Israeli vegetables and herbs, an activity that provokes pleasure and pride. In their new practice of home gardening, they employ the Zionist value of manual labour to imitate New Zealanders, enabling them to connect with their new homeland. This is complemented by their fourth activity, namely, the conversion of foods that are generally commercially prepared in Israel into homemade foods in New Zealand. I specifically demonstrate this common practice in the case of hummus. Similarly, contesting local eating practices is portrayed by a few women who acted upon their desire to re-educate ‘the other’ – ordinary New Zealand consumers – teaching them the pleasures of real and good Israeli foods.

“Can Home Come in a Tin Can?”

The title of this section implies that tinned foods, which are easily portable and imported from the Middle-East, epitomise for these women their savouring of the taste of the homeland and their transition towards, between and from homes. Due to longing for particular Israeli foodstuffs, most women in this study chose to travel to specialty shops in Auckland – usually owned by Jews, Jewish-Israeli migrants, Arabs (Iraqis, Syrians and Lebanese) or Indians – to buy quark, cottage cheese, *labane*, tinned foods and Israeli spices. These special trips require planning and sometimes paying a high price that can either enhance or detract from their pleasure in the consumption of the groceries they bought. The quotation in the title is taken from a shopping trip I went on with Yvette to the *shul* (synagogue) shop. As we entered the shop she expressed her deep longing for Israeli food as well as her worries over her economic difficulties. In response to her frantic accumulation of tins and concerned about the price she would have to pay, I asked her, “Do you think home can come in a tin can?” Yvette replied without hesitation: “Of course it can!” We both laughed, somehow relieved at the advantage of tins in allowing us to taste the land we call ‘home’.

Indeed, for women in the study, tinned foods has become an acceptable and practical ‘shortcut’ to cooking dishes as reminders of home. Some women preferred tinned vegetables, claiming they tasted better, while others preferred tinned foods to save time, money and labour in the kitchen. The tinned foods women buy in New Zealand include olives, pickled cucumbers, stuffed grape vines, roasted eggplants, pre-cooked chickpeas, broad beans and okra, all foods they either did not eat or did not buy in tins in Israel. Women also began to

buy sweetened beetroot, tomatoes and baked beans in New Zealand. The consumption of tinned foods as staple groceries demonstrated complementary sentiments of nostalgia for Israeli groceries and longing for a sense of home in New Zealand. In addition, in deploying their nostalgia for Israeli groceries, as depicted by their incorporation of tinned foods into meal preparation, women negotiated the ‘sacrificial duty’ imposed upon them of labouring in the kitchen. This womanly duty to feed others is manifest in the expectation that middle-class women feed their families homemade foods cooked ‘from scratch’ as the most devoted enactment of kinship love (Moisio, Arnould, and Price 2004:375).

Usually in the early years after immigration women ‘mapped’ the city of Auckland as a Jewish-Israeli migratory foodscape (Law 2005:239). They articulated opportunism as they “discovered”, in their words, commercial foodstuffs that are similar to typical Israeli foods, such as the Indian *paratha* (fried flatbread) that resembles the Yemenite *melawach*, adopting these foodstuffs as staples. This information and other practical food shopping knowledge, such as the ability to translate Hebrew terms to English, was accumulated by women who enjoyed passing on and sharing this knowledge in social gatherings, emails, phone calls and even internet ‘chat rooms’ that host migrant women, women considering migrating and visitors alike. Many women tapped into my accumulated knowledge in this study for such purposes, asking where to buy specific food products like spices and what certain groceries are called in English, as they looked for suggestions and alternatives for cooking processes where certain ingredients were not available in Auckland. When remembered and passed on, their knowledge of the city of Auckland was deployed through their practice of grocery shopping, usually in a ritualised manner and substantiating their connection with their homeland by embarking on special trips to shops far out of their way.

Another reason for the newly assigned meanings to groceries derived from the women’s way of materialising their political agendas through their shopping choices. I opened this chapter with a quote from Inness, who engaged in a nostalgic trip home that was materialised by her physically travelling to “the Syrian’s shop”, as she put it, to buy tinned okra and other groceries. The trip to the shop and the consumption of the tinned okra illustrated a common nostalgia among the study participants for Israeli groceries that figured through the increased consumption of tinned foods imported from the Middle East in general. In Inness’ case, the qualities she attached to tinned okra in tomato sauce were that they were “just like ‘at home’”, also referring to her grandmother’s home as a Turkish migrant to Israel, who regularly served this food. This mentioning hints at a revived connection with Jewish

diasporic homelands with regard to home cooking that I discuss in the next chapter. Because of her economic constraints, Inness turned shopping “at the Syrian’s” into events, “special trips” by which she wished to “spoil” her family. Similarly, Naama began to regularly buy a variety of tinned foods, imported from Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Turkey. Naama buys these groceries on special trips that require planning, using them for casual meals and hospitality events. Women identified and made planned trips to where one could shop for specific groceries that are reminders of their homeland, manifesting their activism in incorporating these groceries into their cooking as they re-integrated their own map of the city of Auckland. In these shopping trips the qualities of tinned groceries signified returning to the homeland, a practice employed by many other international migrant groups in the world (Codesal 2008, Law 2005, Stowers 2003).

The particular array and dispersal of food products from Arab countries in New Zealand demanded decisions about the country of origin of food products in relation to their perceived qualities and the women’s political agendas. A few women separated the desired qualities of such products from national politics by shopping opportunistically for ‘Arab’ groceries in Arab shops which could serve as reminders of their homeland of Israel. Yet most women viewed product qualities as vehicles for materialising their connection with the homeland, consuming according to their political agendas. Valery, for example, refrained from buying any foods imported from Arab countries or manufactured in them, regardless of taste, because she saw them as “enemy states” to Israel and “countries that support terror”. She prioritised her conservative Zionist values over considerations of the qualities of the groceries. In contrast, Yael and Naama prioritised the qualities of Arab groceries and foods in enacting their leftist political agenda, using the consumption of these groceries for symbolic ‘peace-making’²⁷. Yael, for example, explicitly claimed that her favourite meal is the “*fallach* meal”: *labane*, pita, vegetable salad, olives, onions and pickles, foods that she “craves the most when hungry”. A *fallach* in Arabic is a horticultural worker and this reference articulates that the taste of the Israeli homeland is materialised as an Arab taste through her connection with the Palestinians. As she conveyed her nostalgic longing for the land of Israel through the taste of her favourite meal, she materialised her memory of the conflict, or “belonging to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict” (Chaitin, Awwad, and Andriani 2009:207). In the case of Yael, this attitude also figured in her choice of a new name for her business; when

²⁷ This idea was also conveyed in the public culinary arena first by the Israeli-Arab Husam Abbas and the Jewish-Israeli Nira Rouso (2006:24) and later Sami Tamimi and Yotam Ottolenghi (2012:122-113). In particular, the love for hummus is perceived as a potent materialisation of this connection.

Yael chose a Palestinian business partner for her restaurant she changed its name from *Ima* ('mother' in Hebrew) to *Ima* and *Ibn* ('son' in Arabic).

Shopping for Iconic Kiwi Fare to Become (like) New Zealanders

Ninnet was in full-time employment at the time of this study. As in the case of three other women who did not cook on a daily basis, she had three main daily responsibilities for food provision: grocery shopping, serving and cleaning up. She felt that while grocery shopping with her son, about 3 years old at the time of the study, she shared "quality time" with him. To allow each other to sleep in, Ninnet and her husband alternate grocery shopping every Saturday morning at the cheapest local supermarket. When it is her turn, before doing the shopping Ninnet has two "morning rituals": she buys a takeaway cup of coffee for herself and a Marmite roll for her son from the bakery adjacent to the supermarket. She explained that she rejoices every time she sees him enjoying this food and eating well, but feels she should avoid eating it herself because of her "weakness for yeast baking". Hence she does not join him in eating a Marmite roll, despite her liking for them. After the shopping, all three enjoy going out for a "big Kiwi breakfast" that consists sausages, toasts, bacon and egg, grilled tomatoes and mushrooms, baked beans plus coffee, at their "regular café", a place in which they had established a sense of "*bney bayit*" (lit. 'the sons of home', conveying the feeling of being 'at home'). When we discussed breakfast Ninnet conveyed her deep disappointment upon her visits back to Israel as she had realised that 'a full Kiwi breakfast' is "by far better than the Israeli one" offered in cafés and restaurants.

Ninnet was the exception to other women in this study in one way: she emphasised her pleasure in shopping with her son and the "quality time" it afforded them, in contrast to most women who felt that grocery shopping with young children is a "nightmare", as at least three women put it. However, since most middle-class women rely heavily on grocery shopping for eating and feeding, she conveyed care in a way that is common to women, converting her economic power into care through the buying of food. Her wish to turn grocery shopping and food consumption in general into a nostalgic practice was evident in her experience, which is similar to that of other women in this study; attaching to iconic Kiwi foods for the consumption of their children in order to reconstitute home in New Zealand. This practice demonstrates the hope of establishing a feeling of being 'at home' in New Zealand, a hope that Ninnet depicted through her emphasis on a habitual sequence of ritualised and intimate consumption. Ninnet shifted from caring for herself, by buying and drinking coffee, to caring

for her son by buying a Marmite roll. Then, after completing the grocery shopping, she finished off the morning by going out to eat, engaging in intimate consumption with her family by eating a full Kiwi breakfast. The escalating order may not be intentional, but the enhancement of intimacy in the hope of feeling ‘at home’ is intentional, a hope that manifested nostalgia for a future sense of home in New Zealand. This nostalgia is articulated through her claim that her family feels “at home” in their “regular café” where they eat a ‘big Kiwi breakfast’, a phenomenon common to many of the women; indeed, several of them explicitly told me about, and demonstrated to me when we ate out together, that they had established similar connections with local eateries.

Ninnet, refrained from consuming an iconic staple of the Kiwi breakfast, namely bacon, due to her *kashrut* observance, and like most of the women, she also avoided eating a Marmite roll due to her concern with her weight. Hence Ninnet affirmed national and intergenerational differences through avoiding consuming of certain foods for a variety of personal reasons, while simultaneously conveying care by providing these forbidden foods to her son. Such practice was common to all women in this study who shopped for iconic local foods, such as sausages and meat pies, as snacks or light meals that save on food preparation time and labour. Women were usually unfamiliar with these foods before immigration and despite buying them, commonly disparaged them based on disgust at their qualities, and, more rarely, on religious belief. For example, Marmite was denigrated for its black colour, saltiness and strong smell. All the women in this study felt that Marmite is an “acquired taste” that one has to develop in childhood, and all except Ninnet were disgusted by it. Naama, for example, reported that when making Marmite sandwiches for her children she “spit[s] out the Marmite stuck to my fingers when I accidentally lick them”. Miriam, who wished to belittle the symbolic status of Marmite, said, “Even Kiwis are now beginning to suspect that Marmite is not as healthy as they were made to believe”. A strong attachment to Marmite (or Vegemite) is conveyed by international Australian migrants (Lupton 1996:49-52) and in many popular media accounts of New Zealanders as expatriates or those on long-term trips.

Women often saw the ordinary sausages, which are sold in school fairs for fundraising, as another example of typical Kiwi fare that is “suspicious” because of their “unknown content”, despite detailed ingredient lists on their labels; they avoided consuming them even if, for the most part, they did not refrain from eating pork, which they commonly associated with sausages. Only five women in this study wished their children to refrain from the

consumption of sausages due to the pork content. Shellie, for example, said she does not enjoy eating sausages “because you never really know what is in them”, and depicted distrust and disgust despite the fact she eats pork and was aware of the list of ingredients, issues that did not arise with regards to pure cuts of meat. Such feelings indicated cultural boundaries in the consumption of groceries through tastes, smells and the appearance of foods regardless of the specificity of ingredients that already enhances maternal worries about feeding children a healthy and nutritional diet (Coveney 2000:176).

Nevertheless, most women who were themselves disgusted by sausages, Marmite and other typical Kiwi fare felt these were suitable for feeding to their children occasionally as a light meal or as snacks. By allowing their children to eat these foods and by buying them as groceries, they acted in contrast to their own taste, health, religious and weight concerns as they cultivated the autonomy of their children (Cook 2009:297). At the same time they were aware that in so doing they enhanced intergenerational as well as international differences. These groceries were not perceived as major threats to the care of their children that they asserted by providing healthy nourishment, since these foods were limited to occasional consumption, usually as ritualised exceptions in their diets, often as responses to time constraints in the kitchen. Women consoled themselves by the fact that their children did not eat these unhealthy foods very frequently. Shoshana stated that “Israelis can teach New Zealanders what ‘healthy eating’ actually means”, as she recounted with exasperation how she learned very quickly from experience that if she wants to eat well in New Zealand she should stick to her own home cooking. This feeling did not weaken even after twelve years of living in New Zealand, and in spite the fact that Shoshana often fundraised for her daughter’s school activities by cooking and selling sausages at the ‘sausage sizzles’ that are common in New Zealand. As well as understanding the consumption of foods groceries through the lens of intergenerational differences, the practice of consuming iconic Kiwi fare was acknowledged as symbolic and embodied routes for becoming (like) New Zealanders. In this regard, for example, Rachel said, “I want my children to know that whatever is good for other children in New Zealand is good for them”. Sausages, Marmite sandwiches, baked beans on toast and pies were common foods that children and women in this study were introduced to by the local food industry, as well as by New Zealand friends, the New Zealand home-carers two women employed, and representatives of childcare institutes such as Plunket nurses who deemed these staple foods as acceptable and healthy choices. Their newly established

connection with their New Zealand homeland materialised through feeding children local foods that are deemed acceptable as staples for children.

In sum, by buying Kiwi groceries for the domestic consumption of children (and husbands), and in many cases preparing them at home, women refrained from enforcing their own food preferences on their children, enhancing intergenerational and international differences. The consumption of these local foods was acknowledged as providing children with an opportunity to find acceptance in wider society and materialised a route to feeling ‘at home’ in New Zealand. Against recent attempts (from the 2000s) of health policy makers to instil self-governance in New Zealand citizens, specifically portraying pies and fish and chips as unhealthy food choices, the rejection by women in this study of such foods was on the basis of suspicion, disgust, weight and health concerns that derived from their ‘Israeliness’, rather than as a response to official government messages. Through this rejection the women manifested their negative perception of the Kiwi culinary culture, which stirred their ambivalence towards the consumption of typical Kiwi foods. As theorised by Miller (1997:50 in Lupton 1998:35), “Disgust helps define boundaries between us and them and me and you. It helps prevent *our* way from being subsumed into *their* way. Disgust, along with desire, locates the bounds of the other, either as something to be avoided, repelled, or attacked, or, in other settings, as something to be emulated, imitated or married” (emphasis in original). The case of Jewish-Israeli migrant women who evince disgust with most of the many typical Kiwi foods they feed their children shows that the women used such consumption to convey kinship care in order to constitute their home anew in New Zealand. On the one hand, women implicitly articulated their longing for Israeli groceries, which led them to manifest ‘good’ mothering through objecting to these unhealthy eating practices that are fostered in their newer homeland. On the other hand, they conveyed their longing for a future in New Zealand as they fostered their children’s intimacy with Kiwi culture through consumption practices.

Interweaving Longing by Home Gardening

In this section I show that at the same time that women ‘nationalise’ their cooking through their instance on using spices and herbs to emulate Israeli tastes and smells in evoking their homeland, they adopt a new local belief by imitating New Zealanders. Rather than abandon or forget traditional dishes and tastes, as Giard (1998:212) suggests, in their activism women remember their national past all the more, as they uphold the value of manual labour in order to forge connection with their new homeland. I use a short extract from my fieldnotes with

Miriam and compare it with the experiences of other women to illustrate the pleasure and ambivalence women derive from beginning a home garden in New Zealand.

I visited Miriam's home one Friday morning to observe her cooking and baking. Miriam planned to make oven-cooked rice that required a great deal of dill, following a recipe from a work-mate in Israel. This year Miriam explained that she "gave up" raising dill in her garden. Being unemployed and in constant search of "work to do" she planted herbs too early, before Labour Weekend (at the end of October). Unfortunately most of her plants died in a frost. Since she could not buy any dill in greengrocers' shops, she decided to buy flat-leaf parsley and use it to cook the rice instead.

Most women portrayed activism in the consumption of vegetables and herbs by beginning to grow them in small kitchen gardens. Women who made such gardens felt that their garden produce tastes better and is healthier than the commercially sold, high-priced produce imported from outside New Zealand off-season in supermarkets. The difference in the experience of eating vegetables and herbs they grew in their own gardens was due to the labour they had personally invested in their production, the freshness embedded in their qualities (taste, smell, size and look), their sense of choice in what, how and when to grow, and the fact that these were usually organic gardens. As with Miriam, the practice of raising vegetables and herbs acted as a specific reminder for some women of their childhood and adolescence in a *moshav* (rural settlement) or a kibbutz. Yet the realisation of the return to a "dream" home with a vegetable and herb garden, as some women put it, figured regardless of such memories, since all women who engaged in growing kitchen gardens derived pleasure and pride from consuming their garden produce. This is despite the fact that the amount of vegetables was hardly enough to sustain household consumption and required supplementing through shopping, for example in cases where crops had failed to yield. Some women specifically noted that with gardening they enjoyed teaching their children "where our foods come from". Indeed, one of the most meaningful realisations of their metaphorical return to the homeland was the return in time to a more natural and rural life in New Zealand, manifested in their choice to immigrate and buy or rent a house in Auckland with enough land for a garden. This sense of return was commonly complemented by a regard for New Zealand society as less materialistic and technology oriented compared with Israel, the USA and Australia, and based more on self-production rather than consumption.

Miriam's case demonstrates her intent to use dill from her own garden, a herb that is typical of Ashkenazi pickling and cooking. In her failure to produce dill Miriam was driven to substitute dill with flat-leaf parsley. Other women in this study employed a similar strategy in substituting flavourings in their cooking. These herbs were used as seasonings in home cooking in dishes that are generally perceived as Israeli, as well as that imitate specific dishes of close female kin, which I will discuss in Chapter Three. Some women began using *hawayij* (a spice mix) for Yemenite cooking, others *bzar* (a spice mix) for Tripoli-style dishes, and others *zaatar* or sumac for Israeli and Palestinian dishes. Apart from these herbs and spices, women used special mint, coriander and flat-leaf parsley, which they preferred to the 'curly' parsley common in New Zealand, which they saw as lacking in flavour. In addition, women began to buy spices in speciality and ethnic shops around Auckland. Many women received spices sent from Israel by close kin and friends, and women sometimes brought spices back to New Zealand when returning from visits to Israel.

Women who raised herbs in their gardens expressed great pride and sensate pleasure in cooking with their garden produce as reminders of their homeland, since herbs and spices operate viscerally by evoking powerful memories and strong feelings of nostalgia. By using these herbs as spices in New Zealand for cooking Israeli dishes women portrayed their longing for the 'taste of the homeland', as shown by Shivon who paid me a visit. On this visit I offered her lemon verbena tea from my garden. I was a proud home-grower of this small plant, which I had bought in the local market, and often offered this tea to my guests. I had not anticipated Shivon's reaction to the tea, just as I had not analysed my drive to seek out the plant and cultivate it or to drink the tea. The tea brought tears to her eyes and she commented that it had been a while since she had had some. Shivon was then reminded of her beloved aunt, who lives on the outskirts of Jerusalem. She lowered her eyes to the mug, taking the time to overcome her nostalgia, slowly sipping the tea. I noticed that Shivon 'hugged' her mug between her fingers as if she was hugging her beloved aunt, taking comfort in it while she told me of the many pleasurable childhood summers she had spent in her aunt's classy Jerusalem house. The heat of the drink seemed to materialise their intimacy as Shivon travelled back in time and space to her aunt's home. For a few moments, in drinking the tea, Shivon recaptured past occasions of drinking it, and its smell and taste caused time to stand still (Hazan 1987, Seremetakis 1994:119). Later I realised that lemon verbena is considered by women in this study as hard to find and difficult to grow in New Zealand, which increased my pleasure and pride in my success. As such, despite the fact that in some aspects the

market economy and globalisation homogenise the availability of food products and eliminate seasonal differences (Law 2005:235), these same economic powers also provide many migrant groups in the world with access to spices as they are driven by their nostalgic consumption back to their homelands (Katrak 2005, Matt 2007).

Shivon's nostalgic journey was triggered by the lemon verbena tea and transported her back to the land and her childhood visits to her aunt's home. This return is manifested physically through the manual labour of home gardening in the case of Miriam, who sought to occupy herself with early planting, as if to hasten the rhythm of time. The early frost that killed her plants prematurely convinced her of the importance of planting on Labour Weekend as a "necessary, useful and credible" practice (Giard 1998:203). Like Miriam, several women in this study, as well as me, began planting on Labour Weekend as a secular ritual that marks the beginning of spring, thus imitating middle-class New Zealanders. Here I wish to point out that while nostalgia for Israeli food provoked the use of herbs, spices and vegetables that indicate an attachment to the homeland, it is through manual labour that this attachment was realised. Historically, Zionist ideology constituted planting by Jewish-Israelis as a means of legitimising land tenure, and as epitomising the national longing for a return to the land. *Avodat capaim* (manual labour) in the *moshav* and *kibbutz*, conveying the spirit of the pioneers, was perceived as a masculine means of 'impregnating' the barren land into fruition (Gurevitch and Aran 1994, Raviv 2001). Since Miriam and other women are familiar with the practice of planting to return to the land, they employed this practice to realise their hope for a future home in New Zealand. In cases where women failed to yield crops they expressed great frustration at the labour they had 'wasted', which resulted in their ambivalence towards their home gardens. This ambivalence articulated a hope to succeed in growing produce, while acknowledging the local rhythm of the changing seasons. Similarly, albeit in a different cultural context, urban Papua New Guineans convey nostalgia through yam gardening, according to Battaglia (1995). Battaglia (1995:77-78) defines their longing as 'practical nostalgia': "transformative action with a connective purpose by which urban Papua New Guineans portray longing for a sense of future". Rather than require "withdrawal" of former belief, or the breaking of "ancient balances in... the management of time", as Giard suggests (1998:212), Jewish-Israeli migrant women used the Zionist value of manual labour to constitute home anew in New Zealand by attaching to the land.

Converting Groceries into Homemade Foods in New Zealand

All in all, the practice of converting familiar Israeli groceries into homemade foods in New Zealand by the women in this study derived from their nostalgia for Israeli foods. This practice was deployed for personal and familial consumption, as well as for receiving guests, gifts, and for ‘bring a plate’ events. Most women were quick to pick up on the potential prestige embedded in this practice, and in some cases of its economic potential in saving money and in selling food. The conversion of common Israeli groceries into homemade foods in New Zealand can be divided into two main categories: national iconic Israeli groceries such as quark, labane, hummus and bhabha ganush (grilled eggplant salad), which are often Middle Eastern foods, and baking, which I describe in Chapter Four. Conversions varied in frequency, degrees and forms of participation; while most women prepared these foods themselves, four of them participated mainly via shopping for the ingredients that such foods required and, later, eating the foods once they had been prepared by someone else, mostly their husbands.

By undertaking to prepare these Israeli foods from scratch, many women came to realise that they are in fact simple to make, as well as healthier and tastier when made at home. The majority of women emphasised the labour they had put in and the pride, achievement and pleasure they derived from preparing these foods “*bemo yadai*” (lit. ‘with my own hands’). Women who only bought the ingredients as their husbands prepared the foods, noted their part in the process of production and consumption by saying “*kaniti bemo yadai*” (‘I bought it with my own hands’). Through the emphasis on their hands they articulated the manual labour or work invested into turning these foods into legitimate tokens of connection with the homeland. Below I use hummus to elucidate the experience of women, starting with a short ethnographic extract from the shopping experience of Valery and her daughter.

The Nostalgic Taste of Hummus

Valery, her daughter and I moved to the supermarket refrigerators, where Valery spotted a new hummus product labelled “Israeli hummus”. She remembered tasting a previous hummus product marketed under this brand at one of the food shows she had attended. At that tasting, she had spat out the hummus in disgust and surprise (it contained sugar), aware that she had offended the Kiwi company representative. As we were discussing the taste of hummus, Valery wondered: “Why do they put sugar in hummus in New Zealand?” Without

any intention of buying the product, she put it back on the shelf, then turned to look for the ready-made falafel mix that she usually buys.

As demonstrated by Valery's disgust, she – like other women in this study – assessed the taste of commercial hummus in New Zealand by comparing it with the familiar and remembered taste of hummus in Israel. At the time of this study, at least nine of the women were engaged in preparing hummus on an everyday basis because they disliked the common hummus sold in New Zealand, which they deemed “too sweet” or “too salty”, “full of preservatives” or “nothing like” the hummus in Israel. Most women reported that while they lived in Israel, the availability of hummus as ‘street food’ (Gvion-Rosenberg & Trostlerb 2000:161) or in other commercial forms (which included a variety of fresh and distinctive tastes) at cheap prices contributed to its low status. Nevertheless, upon immigrating to New Zealand, hummus appeared in the “cravings”, “longing” and “fantasies” of many women in this study, as had occurred with cheese and many other Israeli foods. If eaten at all in Israel by these women, hummus – and, for that matter, other Middle Eastern dishes that women converted into homemade in New Zealand – was usually eaten as commercial pre-prepared products purchased in supermarkets or as snacks in restaurants and kiosks in urban centres. Yael summarised what other women in this study felt in one fell swoop “No one in their right mind bothers making hummus or falafel at home in Israel”. In this way, Yael articulated the nostalgic return to the land that women take by ‘bothering’, i.e. investing time and labour, in making such common Israeli foods at home after migrating.

Undeniably, taste, price, the location of shops and labour were the most common factors in the decision of women to buy hummus or prepare it themselves. Geffen, for example, had realised after several attempts at preparing hummus from scratch that by using pre-cooked tinned chickpeas her homemade hummus tasted much better. This method was also followed by several other women in the study. At the other end of the labour spectrum were women like Nellie who went on a quest for a great hummus recipe, but did not share their successful recipe with others. Nellie had established “the best recipe” for hummus after several attempts and variations. She took much pride in using this recipe when hosting. The affective labour Nellie invested in converting hummus into a homemade dish correlated with her physical labour, sense of achievement, pleasure and prowess. Likewise, the vegetarian Mona, who was involved with her children's school community through fundraising, made about 12 kilograms of hummus and was crowned “the Queen of Israeli Hummus” by the school's Parents Teachers Association. By making hummus at home, these women actively challenged

the boundaries of taste in New Zealand, while they boosted their prestige as skilled in cooking healthy and vegetarian Israeli foods in New Zealand.

Moreover, hummus production and consumption became an instant nostalgic reminder of the Israeli homeland that included a reference to the Jewish-Arab conflict, as Arab hummus is commonly held up as the most delicious and authentic. Nellie felt that her hummus tasted “better than” the commercial Arab hummus in Israel, let alone the commercial hummus sold in New Zealand. Like some other women in this study who had invested great labour in purchasing the ingredients for hummus, finding a recipe and preparing it, Nellie dismissed the taste of Arab hummus on her first visit back to Israel. Instead, she idealised the taste of her own homemade hummus in New Zealand; it became the ‘real’, authentic taste. Like Nellie, when visiting Israel, other women reported disappointment in eating hummus or other foods which they did not find “as good as” they remembered. In contrast, Mona and Rama idealised the taste of Arab hummus, which lessened their pleasure in eating the hummus they made in New Zealand despite of their labour. They regarded the taste and texture of their own hummus as “irregular” and “uncontrolled”. For them the taste of ‘real’ hummus remained the taste of hummus made by Arabs in Israel.

The materialisation of nostalgic remembrance through the production and consumption of hummus at home in New Zealand was strongly evident in many “hummus competitions” that Jewish-Israeli migrants held at casual hospitality events and festive meals. One particular Hanukah celebration that I attended (November 2011) exemplifies an occasion in which a Jewish-Israeli migrant woman brought a plate of her homemade hummus that caused much excitement and was gone in a matter of minutes. A man who wished to compliment the woman for the great taste of her hummus called her name while his mouth was still full, then simply said, “Arab!” With this one word he conveyed the pleasure he got from the Arab hummus in Israel and the metaphorical return to the homeland that her hummus had provoked in him. On hearing his exclamation the guests burst into laughter, moved by the power of just one word to convey pleasure and respect the cook’s skill while also encompassing the political complexity of home.

A similar reference to longing for the taste of hummus was made by a Jewish-Israeli migrant student in a study by Locher et al. about comfort foods (2005:12), suggesting the enactment of the ethnic identity of Israeli migrants. Yet as I demonstrated, longing for hummus and the preparation of hummus at home is part of the enactment of national

belonging and connecting with the taste of the homeland. In fact, the consumption of ready-made hummus in Israel in recent years was subject to a return to its 'Arabness' (Hirsch 2011) and politicised all the more. Unsurprisingly Jewish-Israeli migrants convey attachment to hummus both in their grocery shopping and in their own preparation of it. However, rather than ignore the political tension that is embedded in their contested homeland, Jewish-Israeli migrants employ hummus to materialise a connection that enhances the enactment of their national belonging. Women in this study, for example, turned to those who 'know how' to produce 'real' hummus and enjoy its consumption thanks to its metonymic value as a reminder of this homeland. What is more, even middle-class Palestinian-Israeli women no longer make hummus at home, but buy these as staple groceries locally for familial consumption (Gvion 2006b:87, 146). The inter/intra-national public debates about hummus include direct reference to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and contribute to its iconic status, preventing its neutrality as a political 'substance', since hummus, like other 'Arab' foodstuffs that women longed for after migration, is "entangled in the webs" (Law 2005:235) of their contested homeland²⁸. This entanglement enabled women to materialise their political agenda through the consumption of specific foods while they used this return to challenge the accepted taste in New Zealand.

Commoditising Food Nostalgia

Most women in this study were motivated to re-educate ordinary New Zealanders, hoping to teach them about the pleasure of consuming 'real' Israeli foods through the New Zealand practice of 'bringing a plate' to casual hospitality events for practical reasons; the foods they cooked from the groceries they had bought were familiar, tastier and healthier choices in their view than the foods most New Zealanders had offered them. Though teaching Kiwis the pleasure of and appreciation for these foods was often a peripheral reason for cooking them, some women acted on this hope in order to establish themselves economically by entering the commercial food arena. The following analysis of the cases of Yael Shochat and Simcha Tur-Shalom shows how these women mobilised themselves economically while challenging accepted eating and feeding practices as social boundaries. This is in contrast to the pessimist

²⁸ A brief look at the long debates on 'hummus' on the English-language Wikipedia site demonstrates how political thinking intertwines with the affective and emotive labour of Jews and Arabs alike in selling, cooking and eating hummus, as well as in writing about it. The American comedy *You Don't Mess with the Zohan* (2008) hilariously portrays a Jewish-Israeli fetish for hummus: hummus is used to brush teeth, dip one's glasses, douse a fire, and as a hair-care product. In recent years the international discourse on hummus continuously retains close associations with the Israeli-Arab conflict. A newspaper article from the *New Zealand Herald* (10.5.2010) reported that "Lebanon accuses Israel of stealing traditional Arab dishes like hummus and marketing them worldwide as Israeli".

claims of scholars who claim that migrant minorities are ‘consumed’ by the majorities (Hage 1997; Gvion 2006a; hooks 1992). Instead, these Jewish-Israeli migrant women assumed a stronger position by commercialising their nostalgia.

Simcha and Yael’s brochures and websites and commentaries offered by the local food media, as well as the several food television programmes which featured their establishments, all included the stories of their emigration to New Zealand as significant to understanding their culinary ventures. Love of family and love of food are at the centre of these narratives, justifying their desire to create “traditional” and “authentic” Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Israeli foods and leading to the many awards and positive commentary they received. For example, Yael’s website tells the story of her emigration and her motivation for opening her restaurant:

When I arrived in New Zealand during the late '90s, I couldn't find the food I loved, so I opened a bistro called The Lunch Box with the desire to make food that would lift people's daily life. The name embodied "food made with love" like a mother sending her little boy off into the world with a parcel of goodness, nourishment and of course a few little treats. In keeping with my philosophy, when I later opened for dinner and The Lunch Box was no longer an appropriate name, we rebranded as Ima Cuisine – where Ima means "Mother" in Hebrew (<http://ima-ibn.co.nz/>, last accessed on 1 January 2011).

This description demonstrates Yael’s longing for the taste of foods in Israel, with the sentence “I couldn’t find the food I loved” revealing her main motivation for creating and selling Israeli foods in New Zealand. This is where nostalgia for Israeli groceries fits in. Yael’s nostalgia is tied in with a hope to ‘mother’ – care, educate and teach ‘others’, i.e. New Zealanders, the pleasures of the great qualities of ‘real’ Israeli foods. For Simcha this desire is shown by producing cheeses that bear similar qualities and names to common and staple cheeses in Israel.

Both women rely on and direct their efforts to sell their Israeli food to New Zealanders. Having established upmarket food businesses, their products are usually unappealing to the Jewish-Israeli women in this study for two main reasons: first, most women felt that they can cook these foods better at home; and second, in passing judgment on their food products, women compared their qualities and price to groceries and foods in Israel, which were experienced as “better” and certainly “cheaper”. Competition and envy between women also

figured, as some women remarked that Yael cooks “excessively sweet and Ashkenazi foods”. In this way Yael’s ethnicity and class were articulated to justify the rejection of her foods in asserting that such foods are mainly produced for New Zealanders, who are known to have a sweet palate or “do not know any better”, as some women put it.

Second, text and photographs on Simcha’s brochures convey a strong message that her migrant family is labouring manually together to produce the cheeses. Simcha’s hands are shown working without gloves on the front of the brochure, reaching out to the cheeses, while she is dressed in a white gown and wearing a plastic head cover. The quotes that relate to Simcha emphasise her “love for cheese” and her “passion”, and in particular that caring for cheeses is like caring for “babies”. In comparison, Yael’s restaurant conveys a nostalgic longing for the tastes of the Israeli motherland, which epitomise warmth, care and love; first, through the décor that includes her Israeli family photos that portray Yael as a mother for her three daughters; second, through the warm red colours on the ceiling and in the lighting; and third, through a mural that depicts a woman with covered black hair in a Mediterranean landscape, holding a bowl of steaming hot soup on which the Hebrew writing says “*ein kmo ima*” (there is nothing/nobody like mum).

Third and most obviously, their businesses’ names, Canaan Cheese and Ima, are not incidental. With Canaan Cheese, Simcha returns to the biblical myth of Canaan as the Promised Land. The cheeses, manufactured from local cow’s milk, are given Israeli and Arabic names, such as *Labane* and *Elat*, *Galilee* and *Zefatit*. The first name is the original name in Arabic for a yogurt-based cheese, while the three others are named after geographical places and cities in Israel. The name ‘*Ima*’ – as opposed to ‘*Mame*’ in Yiddish and ‘Mother’ in English, for example – clearly connects with images of feeding others with warmth and care, as does the text on her website.

The cases of Yael and Simcha show that some Jewish-Israeli migrant women in New Zealand employ their nostalgia for Israeli foods to contest local eating practices as they are motivated by their longing for Israeli groceries to engage in activism. They convert their emotive capital of gifting and nourishing through feeding others food of their homeland in order to establish themselves economically in their new homeland (Russell 2001:7 in Bell and Hollows 2007:34). Motivated to sell the tastes of their homeland, they emphasise their emigration stories that depict the land of Israel nostalgically, and use their labouring hands, the décor and the text about their businesses to claim a powerful position. Their choices of

names both for their businesses and their products manifest a pride- and pleasure-filled return to the Israeli homeland. As such, through commercialising their nostalgia for Israeli foods, they challenge the conservative hierarchy of tastes, claiming that their home cooking is better than commercially available foods. This is in contrast to several scholars who argue that the consumption of ‘ethnic’ or ‘national’ foods of migrant minorities by white majorities is a way of consuming ‘the other’ symbolically, specifically appropriating the culinary knowledge of women from ethnic minorities (Cook and Crang 1996, Gvion 2006b:32, Hage 1997, 1998). In support of this hierarchy women are depicted as immobile homemakers through the cooking of ‘ethnic foods’ in the current western food media by television programmes (Bell and Hollows 2007). In these programmes women embody traditional lore through their domestic kitchen labour compared with the masculine and mobile kitchen labour of commercial elite chefs.

Nostalgia in Dairy Food Advertisements

In this section I compare an advertisement on Israeli television for Israeli cottage cheese and milk by the cooperative Tnuva²⁹ with milk advertisements, both in Israel and New Zealand, to reveal the ways nostalgia and food are employed by the media. This analysis sheds light on why a few women in this study remain exclusively attached to Israeli dairy products and how the national-ideological power that drives the return to the homeland is played out in Israel and New Zealand. While in theory, there is no reason why people should not develop attachments to the tastes of milk and cottage cheese in both Israel in New Zealand, in practice, such simultaneous attachments did not exist amongst women in this study.

Imagine the sounds of violins, a piano and drums playing music that sounds like a march. The view descends past a tree-house and zooms in on a ginger-haired girl, about four years old, standing near a sand castle and placing an empty container of cottage cheese upside-down on top of the castle. In the background the viewer can see a child in the tree-house and another walking about below. The viewer is transported into a house pictured on the cottage

²⁹ Tnuva is the largest-scale Israeli cooperative for buying, selling, and marketing dairy products, poultry, meat and eggs. The word ‘*tnuva*’ in Israeli Hebrew means fruit or yield with specific reference to agricultural produce, including milk. The cooperative was founded in 1926 by the Kibbutzim Movement and, until 2006, was owned by members from *moshavim* and *kibbutzim* (rural settlements), which were required to market all their produce exclusively through Tnuva.

In June 2011 a consumer protest began in Israel over increases in the price of cottage cheese and dairy products over the preceding years, known as the ‘Cottage Protest’. For one month, 75,000 Israelis boycotted cottage cheese. The boycott was initiated through Facebook and provoked great discussion in the media and in the Israeli parliament. The protest was later expanded to include other social justice issues, coinciding with the ‘Arab Spring’ in other Middle Eastern countries.

cheese container as it is reversed to right side up, and a song in a mature woman's voice³⁰ begins "Come (masculine form) home". A young man dressed in a green shirt and green pants (reminding the viewer of a soldier in his late teens) and carrying a large kitbag enters a house, similar to the one in the logo, possibly in a *moshav* (rural settlement). The singer sing, "I shall not say a word" as a woman wearing black turns and, surprised to find that her beloved son has returned, drops the mug she was holding. She stretches out her arms to hug him. She is standing in front of a kitchen, and in the background another figure moves about. The singer continues, "I shall not be mean/bad (feminine form)" as the woman is seen smiling while hugging her son (whom the viewer can only see from the back). Next, the singer sings, "Come (masculine form) home" as the son is seated at a dining table with his younger sister on his lap – the ginger girl – while eating cottage cheese from the container with a teaspoon. A man, possibly the father, whose torso in a checked shirt and hands are the only features shown, appears and touches the young man's arm lightly. The view moves towards another cottage cheese container placed on the dining table as the man bends over and taps his son on the shoulder. The singer continues, "Look, it is already so late", and the camera focuses on four children, the ginger girl and three boys who are closely observing the sand castle shown before. The singer sings "It is nearly tomorrow" as the camera shifts to the upside-down cottage cheese container and the house on the container is reversed upright. The singer finishes with "So come (masculine form) home", and a woman speaks: "Tnuva cottage – the cheese with the home". Writing appears below Tnuva's logo, against a background of blue skies with some white clouds: 'Tnuva, life according to nature'.

Tnuva launched this advertising campaign in the 2000s as part of a larger campaign that exploits the nostalgic idea of 'returning home'. Since Tnuva remains focussed on reinventing the taste of the homeland in the Israeli collective consciousness, around the year 2010 the slogan changed again to "Tnuva, growing up in an Israeli home", emphasising the familial home. On a milk container by Tnuva (in 2010), the following text appears: "The Tnuva home is everyday love for the tastes and smells of a family meal, for the familiar call: 'The food is ready!', for sitting together around the table. The Tnuva home has scent and taste, it is the home we all grew up in, it is endless experiences that accompany our lives, it is the home in which we would wish to raise our children."

³⁰ The song, 'Come Home' is a 1969 recording by Shula Chen, sung by unknown female-singer. Due to the success and popularity of this advertisement, Chen released a compilation of her most famous songs in 2002 featuring the song. The song is a Hebrew-language cover of the 1967 song 'Sunday Morning' by the US singer Margo Guryan. The translation into Hebrew was done by Chen's husband Avi Koren around 1969 and the Hebrew lyrics allude to the Six-Day War.

The television advertisement for cottage cheese was launched after the Israeli army withdrew from Lebanon under the rule of Prime Minister Ehud Barak (the Labour government in May 2000). Barak justified the withdrawal by repeatedly announcing that it is “time to return the sons to their mothers”. Considering this militaristic context, the choice of the male-figure dressed in green and carrying a military kitbag, the theme of the advertisement, and the song all appeal to a strong national sense of nostalgia. This nostalgia is depicted by the twisting camera motion that shifts the viewers between the past and childhood to the present is a carefully planned strategy. The return home of the young man echoes the return home of the real soldiers in the collective consciousness of Jewish-Israelis. At the same time the figure of the mother in the advertisement is the only one that remains rooted in place, symbolising the wait for his return. The mug she drops in surprise as she swivels her torso enhances her rootedness. Her motherly pleasure in their reunion, the amazement and joy written on her face and her arms reaching in a warm hug are linked to her son’s pleasure in eating the cottage cheese. While the father becomes an obscure torso passing by with a light touch, the warmth of her embrace and the pleasure in their intimacy are emphasised by the pleasure in eating cottage cheese as an act that demonstrates intimacy and homeliness. The most evident emotions, which evoke strong empathy, are those of the joy in the mother–son reunion and the pleasure of eating cottage cheese in casual commensality, directly from the container and among family members around the dining table. The presence of the future generation in the advertisement is strongly felt through the ginger-haired sister and the three other children who are playing about in innocent, idealised nostalgic depictions of transient and temporary childhood homes – the tree-house and the sand castle.

Ironically, the voice of the singer promises self-silencing – “I shall not say a word” – implying that critique or complaint will disrupt the ideal of unconditional motherly love – “I shall not be unkind”. At the same time, these hint at the mythical *polania*, renowned for complaints, dissatisfaction, over-anxiety and self-sacrifice. As such, the reaching and embracing arms of the mother embody the feminine embrace of the land (Irigaray 1985), which is supported by its feminine linguistic and mythical representation as the ‘land of milk and honey’, the ultimate home for Jewish-Israelis. The message the advertisement conveys is clear: you may leave as long as you return to your homeland and remain loyal to ‘the taste of home’.

In comparison with this advertisement by Tnuva, Anchor, part of Fonterra Brands in New Zealand, included the following text on their standard milk container: “We love mornings. Clash, clatter... bags picked up, shoes on, doors slam. What are you going to do today?” And on the other side, “Little feet running, lunch boxes packed, scramble for the door, another day just begun”.

The text on both the Israeli and New Zealand milk containers are in a similar vein of idealised nostalgic return to childhood by drawing strongly on family values. In these advertisements everyday experiences depict images from family life linked to the taste and smell of home while growing up in a happy, ‘busy’ family. The Israeli milk advertisement draws on the pleasure of familial commensality, in particular conveyed by “sitting together”. In comparison, the New Zealand advertisement conveys a strong sense of mobility and activity; the hands that labour over packing lunch boxes or picking up bags and clutter disappear into the emotive and inclusive statement “we love mornings”, directing towards activities outside the home, only to return later to this safe haven that is epitomised by the ‘natural’ taste of milk.

Altogether, these attempts to direct Jewish-Israelis and New Zealanders alike to the consumption of dairy products as staple groceries draw on nostalgia linked to pleasure in familial settings. The Israeli dairy company is clearly doing the ‘work’ of the Zionist ideology in signifying the land of Israel as the ‘land of milk and honey’ by inculcating national and exclusive attachment to local dairy products through a return home. In comparison, the Kiwi company is concerned more with ‘being active’, which implies a longing for the ‘conquest’ of unfamiliar territory outside the home, while securing home as a safe haven to return to. In both cases, these advertisements encourage attachments to the tastes of dairy products through an idealised nostalgic return home that emphasises family values, either in depictions of a stagnant mother-figure in the Israeli advertisements or by her total absence in the New Zealand home.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have argued that Jewish-Israeli migrant women reconstitute home after immigration by invoking a sense of connection with their homelands that materialises through their experiences of selecting, buying and preparing groceries. In this process women interweaved longing for the taste of Israeli groceries and longing for a future home in New Zealand. Nostalgia for Israel can be seen in the idealisation by women of mainly Israeli dairy

products, certain fruits and vegetables and salt, while they grappled with the myth of the 'land of milk and honey'. Their longing and memories and the experience of pleasure in the consumption of these foods not only epitomised the taste of their Israeli homeland, but also instigated a rejection of the taste of their New Zealand home which resulted in great ambivalence. Their New Zealand homeland is, moreover, criticised for its lack of care in fostering unhealthy eating practices, towards which women conveyed disapproval.

At the same time, the second nostalgia, that of articulating longing for a future home in New Zealand, is fostered by a newfound attachment to red meat consumption in New Zealand. Women articulated criticism of the Israeli homeland through this new attachment to red meat consumption by using carnal metaphors to depict the threat of being 'devoured', a reference to the Jewish-Arab conflict. In expressing their preferences for the local origin of red meat, systems for processing and distributing the meat, and the manner of meat consumption in New Zealand, they expressed their criticism of the Israeli homeland. In doing so, women revived the Jewish diasporic myth of the 'meat pot', which was also manifested through their attachment to the sensate experiences of consuming red meat in New Zealand.

Moreover, by challenging local tastes and consumption practices, women constituted home anew in New Zealand. Women's most common form of engagement in their grocery shopping was to contest local tastes by recreating Israeli groceries as homemade foods and by cultivating home gardens with Israeli herbs and vegetables. As they imitated New Zealanders in taking up home gardening, women also upheld the Zionist value of manual labour to return to the land. They opportunistically made special trips to ethnic shops and increased the consumption of tinned foods to remember the taste of their homeland. While a few women suspended national politics when grocery shopping, most women used their choice of groceries and shops to materialise their political agenda, be it in support of or to contest Zionist values. This is also evident in their cravings for foods that, for them, represent their national home. At the same time women also began to shop for typical Kiwi foods to feed to their children. Though most of the women refrained from eating these Kiwi foods for various reasons, they regarded their children's consumption of them as a route to becoming (like) New Zealanders.

Women's agency in choosing what kinds of food to prepare and how to do so is represented by the five Mizrahi women who challenged their husbands' requests to decrease red meat consumption in New Zealand, and in the cases of the women who chose to

commercialise their nostalgia by entering the public food arena in New Zealand. The latter group chose to sell Israeli foods out of the desire to teach others, i.e. New Zealanders, the pleasure of consuming real Israeli foods. In contrast, advertisements for dairy staples in Israel and New Zealand attempt to shape consumption by deploying nostalgia as a means of inciting exclusive national loyalty.

In the next chapter I discuss the everyday experiences of women in home cooking and the changes they engender in their practices after immigration, as I examine how women realise the intergenerational dimension of kinship relationships in the kitchen.

Chapter Three: Cooking and Kinship

When I left Israel, I went back to my roots. (Yael)

The quote above illustrates how following immigration women in this study returned to their 'roots' through home cooking. As Yael indicates, paradoxically, when women physically left Israel they returned home emotionally through home cooking. 'Roots' in the Israeli-Hebrew culture³¹ signify familial-ancestral homes grounded in various Jewish diasporic homelands: Poland, Morocco, Iraq and so on. In this chapter I examine how women realise the dimension of the kinship relationships in their home after migration through their everyday experiences of home cooking. Women return to their familial-ancestral home through their deliberate nostalgic recreation of dishes that represent close female kin. A multitude of studies demonstrate that home cooking by lower- and middle-class women is, first and foremost, about the realisation of kinship relationships, whether these women are migrants or not (see for example, Halkier 2009, Harbottle 2000, Haukanes 2007, Haukanes and Pine 2004, Ray 2004). By examining the interplay of senses, memories and emotions that materialise through women's everyday experiences of home cooking, my analysis demonstrates just how complex, nuanced and far-reaching – in terms of the places and time periods that relate to home – this realisation of kinship relationships may be.

In order to understand home cooking as the enactment of intergenerational kinship relationships, I elaborate on Berdahl's (2009:56, 122) theory of nostalgic everyday consumption that identifies three consecutive steps en route home: longing, ambivalence and self-irony. I demonstrate that immigration to New Zealand triggers nostalgic remembrances and emotions among Jewish-Israeli women, who turn home cooking into a gendered means to realise kinship relationships that span four generations: grandmothers, mothers, mothers-in-law and aunts, the women themselves and their children. While negotiating such relationships through the practice of home cooking and associated memory-making, women grapple with two Jewish-Israeli feminine myths: those of the *polania* and the *bashlanit*. These mythological figures are evoked through the ways female kin are idealised and denigrated as home cooks, depending on the nature of the kinship relationships in question. The nature of these relationships determines if and how the home cooking lore of close female kin is

³¹ Children at the Bar Mitzvah age (12-13 years old) in the Israeli education system, for example, are often required to carry out a 'roots project', in which they research and delineate their family history by drawing up their family tree, going back as many generations as they can.

acknowledged, and whose dishes women in the study improvise on after migration. As women travel in imaginative journeys to familial-ancestral homes they revive connections with Jewish diasporic homelands by turning home-cooked dishes, cooking equipment and gestures into metonyms of close female kin. Some women acknowledge that they begin to imitate their tastes, recipes and cooking gestures in order to materialise intimacy, love, pleasure and care. Other women, out of a sense of competition and a feeling of threat, do not recognise the older generations' teaching; their return to ancestral homes is often fraught with ambivalence towards female kin. In consequence, some women in this study 'skip' a generation by turning to their grandmothers' home cooking.

Moreover, the ways in which female kin are mythologised through home cooking is affected by ethnicity and class to some degree, since they are idealised and denigrated accordingly, for example, in the association of Ashkenazi women with domination and of Mizrahi women with poverty. Finally, when migration and the death of female kin coincide, women in the study may commemorate the dead by home cooking iconic Jewish-Israeli dishes that evoke nostalgic memories all the more. As a reminder, Zionism in Israel shunned nostalgia for past Jewish diasporic homelands until the 1980s and modelled womanhood based on the enactment of care, denigrating Ashkenazi women as good but 'over-caring' mothers and Mizrahi women as 'neglectful' mothers. In comparison, this chapter demonstrates that Jewish-Israeli women may both materialise such critiques through home cooking and memories of female kin after immigration to New Zealand, and contest these critiques by employing home cooking as "reconstructive ways of remembering individually and collectively" (Siporin 1994:92) their well-caring familial-ancestral homes.

Food Journeys to Familial-Ancestral Homes

This section illustrates that the most important difference after immigration for women's home-cooking practice is the absence of close female kin. A host of anthropological studies have shown that the home cooking of lower- and middle-class women is, first and foremost, about the realisation of kinship relationships (see for example, Halkier 2009, Harbottle 2000, Haukanes 2007, Haukanes and Pine 2004, Ray 2004). For example, in her study on the home-cooking practices of middle-class Danish women, Bente Halkier (2009:374) demonstrates that these women negotiate power relations in the family as they grapple with normative perceptions of femininity. The Danish women in Halkier's study challenge the cultural expectation that the female home cook prepare dishes 'from scratch', as they convey dislike towards the labour involved in cooking. Similarly to the Danish women, most women in this

study in their cooking practices fluctuated between six themes, as identified by Halkier: “planned” cooking, which I demonstrate using extracts from my fieldnotes about cooking with Miriam in comparison to the experiences of other women; cooking as “variation on pleasure” and cooking as a “craft”, which I illustrated through the experience of Inness; cooking for “healthiness”, which I touched upon in the previous chapter; and cooking as a “manageable” chore and “out of necessity”, which I illustrate through the experiences of Miriam, Rachel, Ella and Shivon.

Rather than focus on the ways in which women perceive their everyday home cooking practices and their dislike towards the labour of cooking, I focus on the realisation of complex and nuanced intergenerational kinship relationships through the interplay of senses, memories and emotions that reconstitute familial-ancestral homes. These are manifested by women through their experience of home cooking while also conveying strong nostalgia for close female kin that is triggered by their absence after immigration. The tension between cooking out of ‘necessity’ while conveying resentment of the labour involved, and cooking out of ‘choice’ while conveying great pleasure is retained. However, as I show, this tension is realised in a culturally particular way in the experience of women, as when home cooking they grapple with two Jewish-Israeli mythical figures: the *polania* and the *bashlanit*. Grappling with these feminine myths is depicted through memories and practice as personal-collective ways of remembering close female kin that materialise in home cooking and home-cooked dishes.

Miriam was raised in a *moshav* (a rural settlement) by an Ashkenazi-Scottish mother and an Ashkenazi-South African father, and she married an Iraqi man. She is of moderate build and has short greyish hair, and when cooking in her kitchen she usually wears a baggy old T-shirt and pants, her “work clothes”. Miriam was over 50 years old during the study, and told me that even after eight years in New Zealand she cooks mostly poultry because she still regards herself as unfamiliar with cooking red meat. Miriam emphasised that in her view, there is not much variety in her cooking, which she compares mostly with that of her mother-in-law, a “real talented” and “amazing” cook, despite not being much of a baker, “because (Jewish) Iraqis do not eat much sweet baking”. In following her mother-in-law’s cooking preferences, Miriam’s children mostly prefer savoury foods, red meat and rice rather than potatoes and poultry. Miriam planned that for the dishes I was to witness her cooking, she and her two children would eat them the coming weekend and on the weekdays that followed.

She thus intended to refrigerate some of the food and freeze the rest, as most women in this study do in New Zealand.

Miriam was getting ready to cook beef *borekas*³² by following a recipe from her mother-in-law, which she had by now memorised, and a chicken and potato dish by following a 'recipe' "in her head". These are Miriam's favourite foods, in particular potatoes, which were a staple in her Ashkenazi parents' home. After thoroughly cleaning what she referred to as "the marble" – an Israeli turn of phrase to refer to the bench – she placed upon it all the ingredients she required for making these two dishes.

She then began chopping onions on a cutting board to fry with the meat. Though she had a gas stove in her kitchen, I quickly understood that she was going to fry the onion and meat on a gas stove in the shed, Miriam's only exceptional practice in regard to other women in this study. As she was aware that I was going to follow and record all her actions and that her practice is exceptional, self-irony as triggered, which she articulated with the comment, "You will die when you see me cook". I simply asked if she had a trolley to carry the pots and pans. She snorted and responded that she "just walks a hundred times", what her husband calls her "daily exercise". She then told me that she chooses to fry food in the shed because of splattering oil and odours; frying eggplants. At one stage she had refused to fry eggplants in the kitchen even though her husband loves fried eggplants. Only when he came up with this solution did she resume frying eggplants. Despite it being more work, Miriam preferred this method to having to clean oil from the kitchen tiles and withstand the lingering odours in the house.

The shed had no windows and the gas cooker was placed on an old table about hip height under very strong spotlights. Miriam said she sometimes weeds the garden while waiting for the food to fry. After she finished frying the onion (which involved opening the shed door, turning the lights on, turning on the gas, lighting it with a lighter, and frying the onion for about ten minutes) we returned to the kitchen to add the meat, then went back to the shed to fry it some more. Then it was back to the house, where Miriam added the seasonings: salt and pepper, plus raisins and chicken stock powder imported from Israel, which she uses in most of her savoury cooking. Miriam cooked the meat some more in the shed and said that usually she likes to add walnuts instead of the almonds that her mother-in-law uses, but since her

³² *Borekas* are individually sized savoury puff-pastry or phyllo turnovers. They may be filled with various fillings, most commonly cheese, spinach or meat. *Borekas* are usually associated with the Turkish, Greek and Balkan Jewry. For an extensive historical review of *borekas* and some recipes see Roden (1996:278-84).

daughter does not like walnuts she skipped them. Handing me a clean teaspoon, Miriam requested that I taste the meat mixture, asking, “What is missing? Salt, pepper?” I said: “I don’t really know what it should taste like, but it is tasty.” She wanted me to verify that it was tasty without tasting it herself.

Miriam cut each of the big squares of the ready-made puff pastry into four quarters, then picked up a quarter, half-folded it and squeezed it shut on three sides with her opposite thumb and index finger. Then she filled the “little dough pocket” with about four spoonfuls of the meat mixture and closed off the top by squeezing it again. She placed it on an oven tray lined with baking paper. While she demonstrated to me how she fills the quarters, Miriam said she often “fails” in her cooking due to “lack of patience” and not following recipes “properly” as she continuously looks for “shortcuts”. For example, with these *borekas* she did not wait long enough for the meat to cool down. Her main concern, however, was that the *borekas* lack in salt and flavour and are “too dry” compared with those of her mother-in-law, who unlike her has good *hushim* (senses). Her mother-in-law is a gifted cook who does not need books: “She is one of those people who can go to a restaurant or an event, likes something she eats there, and then will know how to make it at home”. Miriam laughed in mockery again, saying that her *kartziut* (blood-sucking ticks) children complain about her cooking and her husband usually complains about the lack of spices. But in general her daughter loves any food that would make Miriam “go out of (her) way” and require extra efforts.

Miriam cooked the *borekas* for her children and did not intend to eat them herself as she regarded them as “*stam mashminim*” (simply fattening). Then, smiling ironically, she remarked “*yazto li yeladim Iraquim*” (I bore Iraqi children) because her mother-in-law used to “*lefatem otam beochel*” (stuff them with food, like goslings raised for *foie gras*) since they were young”. She never made *borekas* in Israel because her mother-in-law would make them. Then Miriam remembered that though her mother-in-law lived only about half an hour’s drive from their house in Israel, she felt that every visit they paid her was a *sippur* (a story, meaning an ordeal and a mythological narrative). She compared these visits to their trips to Jerusalem, well-planned affairs for which they would prepare sandwiches and drinks, as if going on a long journey. Miriam argued that after immigrating to New Zealand she had realised that distances “lengthen” and time “stretches”, as she sets out on longer journeys, more frequently and with greater ease. Pointing at the plasticity of time and space made both Miriam and I laugh.

Home-Cooked Dishes as Metonyms for Close Female Kin

After immigrating, most women in this study learned to cook dishes from various sources. As they extended their cooking repertoire they increased their home cooking in general. Yet during fieldwork I observed that about half of the women in this study began consciously imitating the practical gestures of close female kin while improvising on their recipes regardless of the women's Jewish-Israeli ethnicity. This practice of imitation and improvisation is exemplified as the Ashkenazi Miriam began cooking *borekas* by following the recipe of her Iraqi mother-in-law and adjusting it according to her needs, as a token of kinship love and intimacy to materialise a return to her mother-in-law's Iraqi home.

Most importantly, this journey of return figured for all women in this study who depended on close female kin, in some form or another, for the everyday provision of home cooking in their past while they lived in Israel, either as single women or as mothers. Enmeshed in strong kinship relationships, they conveyed connections with familial-ancestral homes through home-cooked foods regardless of the level of pleasure and their actual practice of home cooking. The only exceptions in the practice of imitation of cooking are two women who rarely cooked in New Zealand as their husbands were in charge of all the cooking. These two women claimed that they “never learned to cook” since they “always had someone who cares for and loves” them to cook for them, and both considered their husbands as “chefs”. Though they conceptualised home cooking as the realisation of kinship care and love, as did other women, they conveyed a complete lack of interest in the practice of home cooking that did not change after they migrated. They noted that they use their husbands' cooking skills ‘by proxy’ by asking their husbands to cook foods they enjoy and foods from their childhood homes, such as fried eggplant dishes. The high prestige they ascribed to their husbands as gifted home cooks was intended to encourage them to carry on with this role and refrain from offering them any form of competition in terms of this form of family care. During periods when their husbands were away, they relied more on takeaway foods or recruited the help of Jewish-Israeli migrant women-friends. Similarly to those women, three other women who were in the process of divorce also often cooked out of necessity and relied more on takeaway foods. Some of their experiences in home cooking are described at the end of the second section, illustrated by the experience of Shivon. Hence, what I am about to describe and analyse applies to all the women in this study, including the two who rarely cook and the three who went through divorces. They expressed pleasure and ambivalence in a similar way

for all the women via the qualities they associated with home cooking that triggered nostalgic memories of close female kin as home cooks due to their migration.

One may detect that Miriam is frustrated with the various qualities of her *borekas* as they materialise her sense of failure to imitate those of her Iraqi mother-in-law. This frustration results in ambivalence that figured among women in this study who engaged in attempts to recreate the dishes of female kin, regardless of the ethnicity and the level of pleasure in the kitchen or cooking skills of the women in this study. The complaints of Miriam's family members reinforce her poor regard for her own cooking and lead to feelings of guilt over her perceived lack of ability in the kitchen, which provoke her self-irony. Miriam is aware of her "lack of patience" and the practical price of her "shortcuts", which imply that she is cooking 'out of necessity'. Miriam also mentioned the lack of saltiness in the taste of salt and the different qualities of red meat and puff pastry in New Zealand, as other main reasons she feels her *borekas* do not taste like her mother-in-law's. However, Miriam, who is aware of these inevitable reasons for these differences, remains dissatisfied. As Miriam regards *borekas* as "fattening" food and does not eat them herself, her dissatisfaction is intensified. Eating *borekas* poses a direct threat to her healthy weight, a point that I elaborate on further in the second section of this chapter In Chapter Seven I discuss, a commonality shared by women through eating: that of viewing their body as a home to be cared for by maintaining a healthy diet and weight.

In our conversation Miriam used the metaphor of a 'journey home' repeatedly. On the one hand Miriam stated that her daughter prefers food that makes her "go out of her way", thus articulating how time spent in the kitchen is a means for her to care for and confer love upon her kin. On the other hand, considering that home cooking conveys deep kinship intimacy, it is clear that Miriam felt unable to match the cooking abilities of her Iraqi mother-in-law, which she idealised. Miriam feels highly indebted to her mother-in-law thanks to her feeding Miriam's children while living in Israel. Yet, through her ambivalence towards her mother-in-law Miriam proclaimed her own centrality in the family while asserting her desire to free herself of this sense of indebtedness or obligation. This ambivalence is conveyed by the metaphors Miriam uses for her children who she says resemble "stuffed" farm animals or goslings due to her mother-in-law's feeding. As I mentioned in the introduction, the reference to geese is also embedded linguistically in the Israeli-Hebrew term 'longing' (p. 2). Here, Miriam's claim that her children were overfed by her mother-in-law also provokes feelings of self-irony, made evident in her statement that she "bore Iraqi children". In addition to

applying this grotesque metaphor to her children, Miriam articulates annoyance by referring to them as ‘ticks’, sweeping aside worries over satisfying her children’s demands via home cooking and ridiculing their complaints. Women in this study often used the metaphor of ‘ticks’ in reference to close kin whom they felt nag and pester them with unjustified demands. The term *nudnik*, from Yiddish, ‘someone who nags or pesters’, was also commonly used to express annoyance with children and husbands. By applying these terms to children, and sometimes husbands, who nagged them to cook in certain ways or criticised their cooking, and also by admitting that they too behave in similar ways – for example, telling me that they often complain their husbands’ cooking is too spicy – women asserted themselves in their kinship relationships. Clearly, the practices of complaining about home cooked foods or kin’s behaviour is reserved for family members.

Moreover, nostalgic remembrance was not unique to Miriam; it was triggered amongst all the women through their engagement with home cooking, as they enacted kinship relationships through the metaphor of ‘travel’. Miriam obviously ‘travelled’ metaphorically in remembering the frequent journeys to her Iraqi mother-in-law’s home in Israel. In her nostalgic imaginings, Miriam drew a parallel between the spiritual centrality of her mother-in-law in Israel and that of Jerusalem as two focal points. Visits to her mother-in-law and to Jerusalem were both an “ordeal” and a “journey”. In some of the narratives of other women, such imagined returns home were deployed through remembering short journeys during childhood in Israel, such as leaving home to spend the day at school, a memory evoked in Mona’s narrative (p. 51) in the previous chapter and by the text included by Yael on her website (p. 75).

Importantly, in a manner akin to other women in this study, Miriam contrasted the span of space and time in Israel with that of New Zealand. By increasing their home cooking as a means of returning to the familial home, women ‘stretched’ time or slowed down time as a response to the sense they felt in New Zealand of having a lot of space and breathing room, as compared to the “hectic”, “crowded” and “intense” life in Israel. In this way women materialised the plasticity of time and space. In their memories of daily life in Israel, short physical distances were imbued with intensity, whereas in New Zealand they were able to expend time and space through everyday activities, such as home cooking and trips around the country, which signified a more leisured life. In addition, by cooking more in New Zealand women enacted their centrality in the family, setting themselves relatively free of the emotional intensity of the “pressured” and “stressful” family life that they described as

having experienced in Israel. After immigration they were able to diminish some of the intensity of kinship relationships that had often faced them in Israel. In such a way, women articulated their disenchantment towards 'life in Israel' and kinship obligation, since most women felt that in New Zealand they had more control over their ability to activate or deactivate, "shut down" and "turn on" in their words, various means of communication with close kin. For example, they could decide about visits to Israel and the visits of kin and when to call them on the phone and use electronic means of communication.

Furthermore, using home cooking after immigration as a means of returning to familial homes was all the more meaningful due to the great geographical distance between New Zealand and Israel, made obvious by the experience in travelling between the two countries. Most women visited Israel on a biannual basis due to the high cost of airfares. The more well-off women engaged in yearly travel between the two countries. Interestingly, the relatively high frequency of physical returns to familial homes in Israel sometimes acted to renew the sense of longing rather than attenuate it. Such longing was temporarily addressed by home cooking as women increased cooking before and after their visits, or upon visits to New Zealand of close kin from Israel. For example, like many women in this study Rachel felt that her longing for her mother materialised through home cooking and could be temporarily relieved by her own cooking, as Rachel imitated the tastes, dishes and recipes of her mother. Rachel said that her "voids" intensified at specific times: after her visits to Israel. She lamented in irony that to get her mother to visit her in New Zealand she "needs to have a baby" as the only time her mother agreed to come was when Rachel gave birth. Since giving birth to her second son Rachel felt that whenever she goes through a couple of days without homemade foods, foods that to her epitomise "being cared and loved", she starts to feel "lonely, grows weak, sad and depressed"; her "emptiness grows". In order to relieve her longing, Rachel "needed a coping strategy", as did other women. While talking about herself in the third party voice, emphasising her self-reflexivity, she argued that "the Rachel before the visit to Israel cooks and freezes homemade foods for the Rachel after the visit". She then emphasised that in her home cooking she creates a conscious "mix", cooking Israeli dishes by following recipes from both her Moroccan mother and her Romanian (Ashkenazi) mother-in-

law. In cooking *hamin*³³, for example, Rachel “took the best of both women”, and the combination of ingredients, spices and methods of cooking suits her own aesthetic and tastes.

Rachel argued that home cooking in general has to fit her “life philosophy”: that one should get by with whatever is “most convenient and easy without stress and pain”. In terms of satisfying tastes and health requirements, if using frozen mixed vegetables for cooking as a “shortcut” is “good enough” for her mother, whom she explicitly regarded as a “good mother”, she claimed that it is “good enough” for her. In such a way Rachel rejected the importance of home cooking ‘from scratch’ as a daily expectation to feed the family that conveys the care and devotion of women. She refused self-sacrifice in cooking and legitimised “shortcuts” for the sake of “convenience”, as most women in this study do. In fact, in her claim of feeling that she is a ‘good enough’ mother by imitating her Moroccan mother’s cooking practice and employing “shortcuts”, Rachel contested the Israeli gendered hierarchy between Ashkenazi and Mizrahi women (Rosin 2005, Tene 2005). At the same time, in a manner akin to other women in this study, Rachel enacted kinship love via home cooking by remembering her close female kin – her mother and mother-in-law – through the conscious imitation of their signature dishes, cooking gestures and use of spices.

As for other women’s nostalgia, they returned to familial-ancestral homes in their imaginations as they journeyed metaphorically to the diasporic homelands of their close female kin, specifically Morocco and Romania in the case of Rachel, and Iraq and Poland in the case of Miriam. If Miriam began to cook Iraqi dishes after migration – dishes favoured by her children and husband and no longer available to them due the absence of her mother-in-law – then other women began cooking dishes typical of the Jewish-Israeli ethnicities of their close female kin for a similar reason. The practice of home cooking and the dishes themselves were employed as metonyms for close female kin as home cooks and the familial-ancestral homes they represented. As the cases of Miriam and Rachel demonstrate, via home cooking these dishes and through the dishes themselves, women hoped to relieve the voids created by the absence of kin, triggered by migration. As women in this study returned to their ancestral homes they cooked foods in order to comfort themselves, their children and husbands, offering familiar tastes as homely intimacy that enact kinship love and care, and

³³ As mentioned in the introduction (p. 8), *hamin* is also known as *chulent*, *t’fina*, *dafina* and other names according to the languages spoken by particular Jewish communities around the world. It is a dish slowly cooked overnight on residual heat in respect of the prohibition to light the fire and work (cook) on the Sabbath. The dish mostly contains meat, eggs and pulses. It is traditionally eaten on Saturday morning and perceived as very heavy and filling (Roden 1996:248-9).

specifically during period that women felt guilty of “depriving” children from the presence of their kin, as women put it.

For Miriam, Rachel and other women in this study, warding off longing through home cooking is a new strategy in which they imitate the cooking gestures, tastes and recipes of close female kin and improvise on their dishes, regardless of ethnicity and level of pleasure. This nostalgic practice has been shared by various groups of international migrants and refugees around the world for quite some time (Choo 2004, Codesal 2008, Hage 1997, Law 2005, Longhurst 2009, McKay 2005). Jewish-Algerian migrant women to France in the mid-twentieth century (Bahloul 1996), for example, mostly longed for dishes that signified the time of familial-communal religious celebrations, the Shabbat, Jewish festivals and important life cycle events, which materialised kinship intimacy and communal solidarity. In their nostalgia for home-cooked dishes these Jewish migrant women turned close female kin into heroines that overcame dearth; at the same time, by migrating to France they liberated themselves from the relative constraints that life in Algeria imposed on women (1996:132).

In comparison, Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study imagined journeys to familial-ancestral homes through their nostalgic practice for home cooking, which enabled them to revive their attachments to various Jewish diasporic homelands due to their mixed ethnic make-up. Altogether, these nostalgic journeys evoked the ancestral homes of the mothers and mothers-in-law of the women in the study, their aunts and grandmothers, which are tied to specific locations in the Jewish migration history. These locations may also include cities, villages and districts mentioned by the women that are located in homelands from which their close kin had migrated to Israel. By cooking dishes that women closely related to close female kin, in imitating their specific tastes, smells, recipes and practical gestures they turned these into metonyms, tangible reminders that provoked metaphoric imagined returns home in time and space.

In addition, Rachel’s case demonstrates that in their home-cooking practice women often contested the myth of the *polania* as they professed favouring “shortcuts” and refused to sanctify cooking ‘from scratch’ as a means of negotiating time spent in the kitchen. This point brings me to discuss how women engaged in negotiations of feminine stereotypes in regards to female kin as home cooks through their experience of home cooking and memories of home-cooked dishes.

Negotiating Feminine Stereotypes in Nostalgic Recollections

In this section I show that as women grapple with the myths of the *polania* and the *bashlanit* through home cooking, they articulate the different ways that close female kin are both idealised and denigrated as home cooks, while also conveying intimacy, competition in care and ambivalence. Research that relates to iconic ethnic foods shows these are mythologised by ethnic groups over time as identity markers (Fischler 1988:287, Williams 1984:114-115). In comparison, I demonstrate that those who embody these foods by cooking them at home, i.e. female kin, are also mythologised. Hence Jewish-Israeli migrant women may either home-cook their dishes as they enact kinship relationships in this way or reject doing so as they express negative feelings that result in their ambivalence. I first demonstrate how women grapple with feminine stereotypes by following the experience of Inness based on extracts from my fieldnotes in comparison to other women, and by returning to Miriam's experience. I then analyse the experiences of Ella and Shivon to illustrate how some women use their nostalgic home cooking to commemorate close kin.

Notwithstanding, apart from Inness who defined herself as “chef”, women in this study usually conveyed their love for cooking by referring to themselves as *bashlanit*. Alternatively women rejected such an association to emphasise their dislike of home cooking. The three women in this study who are, in fact, professionally trained chefs or cooks emphasised their personal choice and pleasure in the practice of home cooking by saying “I was always a *bashlanit*” or “I have loved cooking for as long as I can remember”. These women remembered cooking meals for close kin from adolescence in Israel. Refraining from using professional self-address as chefs enabled them to express their great love for cooking that instigated their professionalism (and not the other way around). For these women to claim the prestige of a professional chef was problematic as it would threaten their status as *bashlanit*.

Inness was proud of her choice to become “more of a mother” in New Zealand by increasing home cooking and learning to cook new dishes that her children and husband like and long for. Inness emphasised her “love” for cooking – love that drove her to turn cooking into a craft in which she demonstrated great skill. These attributes are exactly those that turn an ordinary person into a *bashlanit* (or a *bashlan* for a man), an idealised and mythologised “cooking woman” (Duruz 2004b). In fact, by claiming the status of “chef” without such professional training Inness challenged the Israeli gendered hierarchy of prestige, success and pleasure in cooking between men as chefs and women as home cooks. ‘Professionalism’ was commonly a compliment to women (or men) on the basis of the taste, texture, aesthetics and

sometimes the mere smell of the dishes they produced, dishes that provoked great pleasure in those who ate them, and often invoked nostalgic memories of familial homes, as I will also demonstrate in Chapter Five with regard to casual hospitality.

Among the new foods that Inness learned to cook by imitating her close female kin were dishes she acknowledged that she had learned to cook from her Ashkenazi mother-in-law and Bulgarian and Turkish grandmothers (both Sephardic). These foods became greatly desired by her children after their migration, and she mostly kept cooking them for festive occasions and casual hospitality events. I visited Inness while she was cooking for a hospitality event during the festival of Hanukah on a Friday morning in December 2009. In our conversation on the phone prior to that visit, she told me that twice before in that same week she and her family had been guests and ‘brought a plate’ of *levivot* (potato fritters) and *sufganiyot* (doughnuts filled with jam and iced)³⁴. Inness, who was “sick of frying”, decided to repay her friends for their hospitality with a meal with which she would “spoil” them by cooking all the food without asking them to ‘bring a plate’. Since she was under great “pressure”, she said in self-irony, “I lazed out and decided to watch a movie the night before, and left everything for the last moment”. She warned me she will “not be nice”. I was puzzled by her warning and assured her that I would not mind her ‘niceness’. Indeed, towards the end of my visit, after we had spent about six hours cooking, I asked her for a glass of water and she apologised by reminding me triumphantly of her warning: “You see! I told you I will be disgusting”. However, the visit was crowned by a sense of satisfaction and success, on my behalf as well as Inness’, and she complimented me for my “great intuition” in choosing that day to observe her cook and bake for both her family and guests all together.

Rather than describe the whole of these six hours of intense cooking I will focus on her cooking *blintzes*³⁵, which was the last dish she made. She had learned it from her Ashkenazi mother-in-law on her last visit to New Zealand. While Inness was cooking she remembered and compared the behaviours of her mother-in-law and her mother during their separate visits to New Zealand. She depicted her mother-in-law as a loving, caring, supportive, knowledgeable and accomplished cook, contrasting her behaviour with that of her mother, who always cooks quickly to get it over with, “to be exempted from an obligation”. During

³⁴ These foods are commonly eaten in Israel to signify this festival. These dishes are national-Ashkenazi foods; other Jewish ethnicities have other dishes for signifying this festivity.

³⁵ *Blintzes* are thin, crêpe-like, pan-fried pastries stuffed and rolled with various fillings, usually eaten on the festivity of Shavuot, and are another common national-Ashkenazi dish.

her visit, her own mother “hid” quietly behind her husband (Inness’ father) for two “stifling” months while offering little financial help and hardly any help in the kitchen. In contrast, her mother-in-law bought Inness a special blintz-sized frying pan, watched her “over the shoulder” while she learned to make them, and warned Inness not to despair over the first two, which usually spoil (stick and tear) and “do not count”. This truism appears as the “Rousso Rule” (p. 30) in the cookbook “Secrets from the Kitchen of Nira Rousso” (1984) and acts to protect the iconic status of the *bashlanit*: an initial and relative ‘failure’ in cooking is required to secure future success in mastering the skill.

In cooking her blintzes, Inness followed the advice of her Polish mother-in-law: she used the first two blintzes to check on the consistency of the batter, then corrected it by adding some water. She then let her children eat the torn ‘practice’ *blintzes*. Since her family loves *blintzes*, Inness made about fifty in an hour and a half for that hospitality event and to feed her family in the week to follow. She swiftly dipped the ladle in the batter and then spread its contents around the frying pan in circular motion while tilting the pan to spread the mixture evenly. She then waited for the edges to detach from the pan before moving the *blintz* to a plate nearby. Undoubtedly, Inness had mastered new practical gestures, which she had recently embodied through observing and imitating her mother-in-law³⁶. In a manner akin to other women in this study, by learning new practical cooking gestures Inness enacted kinship relationships and conveyed intimacy, an emotion that figured in home cooking by women regardless of their ethnicity, cooking skill or level of pleasure in cooking and eating. Intimacy materialised thanks to the practical cooking gestures, dishes and equipment of close female kin, which provoked nostalgic remembering.

In the case of Inness, the nostalgic memories of her mother-in-law triggered by imitating her cooking gestures, using the cooking object she had given her and the belief in the two first *blintzes* as ‘tokens for success’ sustained Inness perception of herself as a “chef” in home cooking and as “more-of-a-mother” in New Zealand. As such, by her own admission she not only idealised her mother-in-law, but also denigrated her own mother who cooks hastily. Her use of the Israeli-Hebrew idiom “to be exempted from an obligation” means cooking to get it over with, as a way of criticising her own mother in order to articulate an accusation of false or none-genuine care and express her bitterness and anger. This was

³⁶ The American children’s book *How Mama Brought the Spring* (2008) by the Ashkenazi-Jewish writer Fran Manushkin describes a similar sequence of gestures, while mythical cooking lore is passed on between three generations of Jewish migrant women in close association with their power to effect seasonal change. In the story, rather than a frying pan, the object that epitomises this transference and the memory of the grandmother is a blue tablecloth.

common to many women in this study: while they idealised themselves as caring women through home cooking, they denigrated close female kin to whom they compared themselves – mothers and sisters, and in some cases female New Zealand friends. With this denigration, women attested to competition in care and fraught relationships, as they often ‘skipped’ a generation by imitating dishes of their grandmothers instead of their mothers. They refrained from acknowledging their own mothers’ teachings while magnifying the intensity of relationships with their grandmothers through their nostalgic home cooking. This kind of behaviour is demonstrated in the next section by Shoshana and Yvette, as it has been by Inness. In fact, when talking about her Bulgarian grandmother’s home cooking and how she and her grandmother resembled one another, and while also acknowledging her teachings, Inness shed a few tears out of the intensity of her nostalgia.

Grappling with the Myth of the *Polania*

The case of Miriam in the first section illustrates that women usually employed complaint, avoidance and humour, often in self-irony, as discursive and situational strategies in relation to home cooking. These strategies are historically and culturally associated with the myth of the *polania* (see for example, Gil-Tin 2005, Rosin 2005) who is renowned for self-sacrifice, over-caring and emotional manipulation. In this study women often contested this characterisation by cooking food for their own enjoyment and according to their own preferences, such as the chicken-potato dish that Miriam made. Both identification with and contestation of the myth of the *polania* figured in women’s cooking practice, in addition to rhetoric that typically used three terms:

First, the term *nachat*, meaning pleasure and satisfaction (in Hebrew and Yiddish), was used by women to convey the pleasure of feeding their children and watching them grow healthily and do well, especially those children who were underweight and triggered their anxiety. Ninnet, for example, claimed that every time her underweight son is eating well her “*nachat* barometer is on the rise”.

Second, women commonly referred to the *polania* in direct self-reference to either affirm or contest the myth. For example, Yasmin asserted: “I am a very aware mother, but I am a *polania* and I am a sensitive Polish mother to the extent that if my child tells me she is still hungry after eating two *pitot* (sing. *pita*), I have difficulties saying ‘no’ (to requests for more food)”. Yasmin argued that her concern with maintaining a healthy weight is challenged by her *polania*-like anxiety, and thus manifested great self-irony as a mother. Yasmin conveyed

her anxiety and care by referring to the *polania* in relation to feeding children and worry. In contrast, Yvette, for example, blamed her husband of having become a *polania* by saying: “I am not a *polania*! If anyone is a *polania* it is my husband; he worries about our son’s eating and still spoon-feeding him at the age of five”. In such a way, Yvette warded off the worry over feeding her son and mobilised it towards her husband, similarly to a few other women in this study.

A third term through which women remembered the *polania* was *makne mame* (literally ‘to make a mother’ in Yiddish). This term was used by Inness to enhance her centrality as a home-builder and to convey care. A similar mentioning of this term was made by a Jewish-Israeli mother who participated in a study conducted by Gil-Tin (2005) on middle-class dual-income families. In this study the informant argued she prioritises feeding herself each morning before feeding her children by following the principle of *makne mame* (2005:22-23). Historically this term was debated in political discussions in the Israeli parliament during the 1960s and 1970s as the parliament sought to legalise abortion for the sake of securing “healthy mothers” (Bloomfield 2009:254-255). The logic was that securing the health of women as mothers would contribute to the security and survival of the family and the nation.

The denigration of mothers by women in this study was also articulated via the practice of cooking as they explicitly conveyed resentment and anger in “haunting memories” (Duruz 2004b:58) of their *polania*-like behaviours. Here I offer a comparison of the experiences of Yvette and Shoshana. These women shared in common a claim of having been ‘forced’ to learn to cook by their mothers, since they are the first-born who “had to care” for younger siblings while their mothers went to work. Yvette and Shoshana described fraught relations with their mothers, while Yvette “hated” cooking simply since she “hated” her mother. She expressed great resentment toward her mother by explicitly associating her with the myth of the *polania*; she argued that since her mother prioritised her career, education and economic interest she had “turned Ashkenazi”. After migration, rather than acknowledge or admit to appreciating what her mother had taught her, Yvette began imitating the dishes of her Yemenite grandmother. Shoshana derived prestige and a sense of achievement through home cooking, which she turned into a pleasurable craft in New Zealand. Rather than acknowledge what her Ashkenazi mother had taught her, she confined her dishes to festive meals and emphasised her own cooking skills, pleasure and pride. In addition Shoshana articulated her anger towards her mother, whom she felt had insulted her by accusing her of betrayal. This accusation originates in her mother’s reaction to Shoshana’s announcement of her decision to

immigrate to New Zealand: her mother stated that she had “failed in educating” Shoshana. Shoshana thus proclaimed that she does not want her mother to visit her in New Zealand, and prefers her mother-in-law from whom she adopted several dishes. Indeed, silent associations of the myth of the *polania* figured as women denigrated their mothers by disregarding their input in their education and avoiding acknowledging their teaching and influence, even in cases where they had clearly taught their daughters to cook, as these two women demonstrate. This was certainly the case when women argued that they themselves were *bashlanit*, as the following experience of Geffen illustrates.

Grappling with the Myth of the *Bashlanit*

Though Geffen proclaimed she has been a *bashlanit* since an early age, she did not acknowledge any influence from her Ashkenazi mother, instead claiming that she has always been disgusted by gefilte fish because she hates her mother and her mother cooked it often for festive meals. In accordance, Geffen felt that her “home cooking is a love tainted by other emotions” and an “obsession” because she can only cook from scratch. At the same time, Geffen commented about her best friend in New Zealand, whom she treats as family: “They have this appalling thing (chuckling), they can have a can of spaghetti on toast for dinner! And she (her friend) is looking at me and thinking I’m *cholat nefesh* (crazy or mad, literally meaning ‘sick in the soul/spirit’)”. Because Geffen felt that she always has to cook a full meal ‘from scratch’, she critiqued mothers in New Zealand while ridiculing herself for her obsessive approach in home cooking. In addition, she acknowledged to me that to open a can of spaghetti to spread on toast for dinner is a practice that “makes your life easy as a mother” and that there is “something magical” in opening a tin in the eyes of children (as if a powerful genie appears in the form of food). Yet by characterising her own approach to cooking as ‘obsessive’ she reinforced her own self-image as a *bashlanit* and rejected an action typical of women in New Zealand who are responsible for feeding their family. At the same time, as Geffen conveyed love and care for her family by feeding them dishes she cooked ‘from scratch’, her home cooking worked to her advantage. Home cooking became a personal point of difference that she had turned into a means of claiming who she is in comparison to other New Zealanders, a ‘good enough’ Jewish-Israeli mother.

Often when women in this study described a close female Ashkenazi relative as a *bashlanit*, they emphasised her vast knowledge, drive for perfection, use of written European recipes and very accurate measurements. Some Ashkenazi *bashlaniot* (sing. *bashlanit*) were

remembered as “artistic” and even as culinary “pioneers”, on top of memories of diasporic Jewish communities in Europe that Ashkenazi dishes stirred. These memories resulted in ambivalence when women felt threatened by the high cooking ‘literacy’ of their female kin. Hence Ashkenazi dishes were mostly constrained to festive meals, as demonstrated by the experience of Inness and Shoshana. As self-made skilled cooks women usually emphasised their own creativity, choice and skill in creating a hybrid fusion of dishes.

In comparison, Mizrahi-Sephardic female home cooks were remembered and idealised differently, as previously illustrated by the experience of Miriam with regards to the cooking skills, techniques, dishes and abilities of her Iraqi mother-in-law. Mostly, these cooks were remembered and described as women with distinctive abilities to “feel” foods, spices, textures and measurements, and cook by “intuition”, “instinct” and “senses” without using recipes and cookbooks. One may even identify their dishes according to their unique “smells”, “colours” and “tastes” as personal signatures. These depictions emphasise cooking gestures and knowledge that are embedded in the senses and the body of the cook. Expressions such as “add as much flour as the dough can take” or “put a handful of” are common examples of unfamiliar gestures and measurements that made it difficult to imitate their dishes and required improvisations, a situation that contributed to their process of idealising these cooks. Their abilities to improvise resourcefully and overcome poverty were remembered and admired by women in this study.

This was also the case when the cooking lore of close female kin posed a threat to women in this study due to their great cooking skill, regardless of ethnicity, expressing competition between female kin. For example, because Shellie perceived her Syrian mother-in-law as *bashlanit*, she deliberately refrained from imitating her cooking. In her perception of her mother-in-law Shellie conveyed irony and ambivalence. She regarded her mother-in-law’s seventieth birthday cookbook as “the bible”. This cookbook, containing her mother-in-law’s private recipe collection of “the most favoured dishes by her children and grandchildren”, was to “to be preserved and observed respectfully, but left untouched”, as Shellie explained. She contrasted that cookbook with her own “dirty and messy” recipe collection, well-loved and -used. Shellie emphasised that she has no intention or desire to imitate the cooking of her mother-in-law or learn from her. Shellie was afraid of not being able to produce the same results as her mother-in-law and expressed resentment of her mother-in-law in this way.

The desire to imitate or improvise on the gestures of a Mizrahi-Sephardic *bashlanit* was common among women through learning their recipes, but made such endeavours difficult and risky. For example, Merrie said that she phoned her mother three times to ask for the recipe for her favourite *ugah karah* ('no bake-cake', requiring only chilling), and every time her mother forgot to mention something, causing Merrie to fail repeatedly in her attempts to recreate it. She planned to write the recipe down on her mother's next visit to New Zealand by watching her make it in person. Nellie described her Moroccan mother's way of cooking similarly to Miriam's description of her Iraqi mother-in-law. Nellie said that her mother's 'recipes' result in recurring failures in New Zealand. In a manner akin to Miriam, Nellie, Merrie and other women in this study often complained about difficulties and failures they experienced in imitating the practical gestures and tastes of dishes of close female Mizrahi-Sephardic kin.

Remembering Iconic Dishes

The example of Geffen above with regard to her disgust with gefilte fish brings me to discuss the mythology of iconic ethnic Jewish dishes as part of the mythology of close female kin home cooks. These dishes were usually available to women at specific times – Friday night or Shabbat meals and festive meals – mostly cooked by close female kin in Israel. In the nostalgic journey that was provoked by these home-cooked dishes as memories, the importance of gender and kinship relationships overrides the subtle differences of ethnicity and class. As the case of Geffen demonstrates, women in this study used their disgust with iconic ethnic Jewish-Israeli dishes to convey ambivalence towards kin regardless of ethnicity. The act of talking about these homemade dishes was enough to provoke negative memories and bring out unpleasant feelings. However, subtle ethnic and class-based differences were depicted in the two following ways:

First, disgust with iconic Mizrahi dishes was associated with poverty and fatness, as demonstrated earlier in the case of Miriam cooking *borekas*. As another example, Rina ruled out the possibility of learning to cook the dishes of her Egyptian mother and grandmother because of her association of these foods with "poverty", "jailhouse", and "crudeness", characterisations which depicted her "disgust" with their tastes, textures and odours. The dishes Rina was referring to are Egyptian and Turkish (Sephardic) foods that require typical seasoning and ingredients, such as *malukheya* (a dish with a soup-like consistency made with the leaves of the *malukheya* plant), fava beans, okra and lentil soup. Similarly, Geffen ruled

out imitating her father's Yemenite dishes, since they are rich in fat and the "food of poor people" despite their appeal. For example, the smell of *hilbeh*³⁷ permeates strongly through sweat and acted as a deterrent to her eating it despite her great fondness for its taste and for the healthy qualities she associated to it.

In comparison, disgust with iconic Ashkenazi foods usually related to the hegemonic status of the Ashkenazi in Israel. In such a way, some of the women in this study employed their nostalgia for home cooking to contest the ethnic hierarchy in Israel that posited the dominance of Ashkenazim in the Israeli society. These women explicitly stated their disgust with iconic Ashkenazi dishes, adding that "non-Ashkenazi dishes taste by far better than Ashkenazi dishes". Thanks to the mixed ethnic make-up of the women in the study group, disgust for these foods also realised kinship relationships as women conveyed competition with close female kin. For example, Ninnet regarded her Ashkenazi mother-in-law "as the mother of all Polish women". She emphasised her disgust with the *klups* (meatloaf) her mother-in-law cooks for Passover, even while attesting for her mother-in-law as a knowledgeable *bashlanit*. According to Shine-Rakavy (1999:98-108) the ritualistic and mythical values associated with Ashkenazi dishes are sustained despite great changes in the symbolic meanings, cooking gestures and tastes of dishes between three generations of Ashkenazi (Polish) women in Israel. In her study, dishes such as *blintzes*, gefilte fish, *kneidlach* (soup dumplings), chicken soup and *kreplach* that are iconic to the Polish group are longed for mostly by the generation of Jewish-Israeli grandmothers. These same dishes are detested for representing the diaspora and the domination of specifically Ashkenazi women in Israel as they instigated memories of 'forced feeding' in the family by the generation of mothers, while women from the generation of granddaughters professed to longing for these dishes and romanticised them.

Second, keeping the manual-practical cooking gestures for making iconic ethnic dishes in the memory was enough to provoke a nostalgic journey to the Jewish diasporic homelands of close female kin amongst women in this study. For example, Nellie stated clearly that the couscous she cooks is quite different from that of her mother, which in turn is quite different from the couscous of both her Moroccan grandmothers, one a city dweller and the other from a village. Differences were perceived in relation to shape (appearance), aesthetics and taste, as well as in the technique of preparation required when one is "rolling the couscous by

³⁷ *Hilbeh* is a jelly-like dip made of fenugreek, mostly eaten by Yemenite and Indian Jews as a relish with bread (Roden 1996:244).

hand". Since most women in this study who began cooking couscous in New Zealand preferred using ready-made products instead of "rolling" couscous to shorten the preparation time, this practical gesture lingered on only in memories. Shoshana, for instance, remembered learning to roll couscous from her Ashkenazi mother, who in turn learned from "a poor Moroccan (female) neighbour in the *moshav*". She prided herself in her knowledge of the techniques for making couscous and its taste, yet also associated these with the poverty of 'the other', her Moroccan neighbour, and with how Shoshana first "became acquainted with real poverty as a child". By remembering this technique Shoshana conveyed her skill and prestige, as well as feeling sorry for that poor Moroccan neighbour.

In comparison, while remembering being poor during their childhood, the Mizrahi Nellie and Sarah cherished and savoured the taste of their mothers' couscous, their techniques for making it, fostering intimacy between female kin: themselves and their mothers. They portrayed their mothers as triumphant survivors, skilful improvisers against poverty who became renowned for their couscous in Israel. When I wondered why Nellie feels nostalgic towards the poverty of her childhood, she explained that her longing is for a time that "will never return", the relative "simplicity and worry-free life of a child" and the intimacy she shared with her mother. In contrast, Nellie repeatedly described great kinship tensions on the basis of gender and ethnicity in her relations 'back home', specifically after she married an Ashkenazi man. These tensions figured through cooking, feeding and eating by painting a picture of 'piety', of laying her "curly head" on her mother's lap in idealisation of her love and devotion. In Nellie's narrative, the image of kinship intimacy stood in stark opposition to her critique towards her parents and parents-in-law. On the one hand, Nellie depicted her mother's devotion and innovation as *bashlanit* who sold her cooking and baking to supplement the family income. On the other hand, she attested to remembering her mother as subordinate to her father's authority. Her father immigrated to Israel from a big urban centre in Morocco and is more educated than her "villager" mother. Describing her mother's self-sacrifice in home cooking, Nellie remembered her feeding the family and guests lavish meals from big pots without eating herself in order to ensure that the food would not run out. This depiction is very similar to the way Yochi related to her mother as a key informant in an ethnography of Moroccan mothers in Israel (Bendrihem 2006:61-63).

However, Nellie also claimed that to remain slim and pretty, her mother smoked as a means of reducing her appetite and avoided eating her own cooking. She also quoted her mother teasing her on her last visit to New Zealand for using "Barbie doll pots", small and

elegant in size and shape compared with the big and generous pots that her mother uses to feed the family and guests. The cooking pots represented kinship love according to their size; the bigger the pot, the more 'love' was materialised. Moreover, Nellie's idealisation of her mother was tainted by ambivalence due to the hierarchy 'within the home', a hierarchy that Nellie was well aware of, in addition to her own experience in marrying an Ashkenazi man. She contested this hierarchy by mocking her Ashkenazi mother-in-law as a "career woman that never had time to learn to cook", noting scornfully that her Ashkenazi mother-in-law (and her husband) never accepted her on equal terms and "always looked down" on her. In short, Nellie's frustration and anger were expressed through home cooking on the basis of gender, ethnicity and class, starting from her complex kinship relationships, and resulted in great ambivalence. At the same time, via her nostalgia for her mother and her own childhood, Nellie contested the Zionist hierarchy that depicts Mizrahi women as 'lacking' in their care while also criticising the emphasis on the desired 'look' of women for the 'consumption' of men.

Notwithstanding, after immigration women in this study recreated the home cooking of specific Jewish-Israeli ethnicities that they are not related to, and several women began to imitate Palestinian-Arab dishes by improvising on dishes such as hummus, falafel, *malukheya* and *labane*, as demonstrated in Chapter Two. Women also imitated practical gestures and improvised on recipes from television cooking shows, Internet websites and cookbooks, other Jewish-Israeli migrants and sometimes New Zealanders. Gender-wise, they applied the strategy of idealisation-for-imitation to men only in the case of renowned Jewish-Israeli chefs, like Haim Cohen, Erez Komarovsky and Yotam Ottolenghi. For instance, Rama (Ashkenazi) began cooking Iraqi *kube* (cooked or deep fried wheat or semolina patties filled with meat) following a recipe from her favourite renowned Jewish-Israeli (Turkish-Kurdish) chef, Haim Cohen, who was mentioned by several women in this study as a "warm" and "affectionate" chef. Two women in this study incorporated his "tips" – practical techniques such as freezing the meat filling of semolina-coated *kube* to make it easier to coat and create perfectly even balls. Similarly, the Moroccan Nellie began baking bread following the recipes of the renowned (Ashkenazi) chef Erez Komarovsky, whom she admires for the taste of his breads, as several other women in this study do. In such a way, women sustained their perception of their own a highly sophisticated and rich culinary culture from Israel, which substantiated their claim as *bashlanit*.

In sum, by the nostalgically remembering close female kin as home cooks and via their associations with iconic ethnic Jewish foods, women in this study enacted kinship relationships as they remembered familial-ancestral homes, returning to Jewish diasporic homelands that included those of their grandmothers' generation. In some cases dishes were cooked and eaten only at festive meals and savoured with great pleasure and pride. In other cases these dishes were avoided in disgust and triggered great feelings of disdain. As iconic ethnic and gendered markers, these dishes also reminded women of the dominant status of Ashkenazim versus the pronounced poverty of Mizrahim, reminders that led some of them to utter rejection on the grounds of disgust.

In accordance with women's interactions with these home-cooked dishes, the portrayal of Ashkenazi close female kin as home cooks emphasised their great cooking knowledge and prestige. Alternatively, women's portrayals of close female kin lined up with the myth of the *polania*, since some close female kin were remembered through home cooking as dominant and overbearing and acknowledgement of their cooking lore was denied. In comparison, when Mizrahi and Sephardic close female kin were remembered and idealised as home cooks they were accorded the power to overcome the difficulties of poverty. The difficulties women in this study encountered when attempting to imitate their cooking techniques and recipes due to practical reasons and their unique abilities to cook contributed to their mythology. On the whole, women in this study cooked and ate on a daily basis more iconic Middle-Eastern and Arab dishes than Ashkenazi dishes. At the same time, some of these Mizrahi and Sephardic iconic dishes were denigrated by women as being 'fattening' and representing poverty. In cases where close female kin's home cooking posed a threat to women in this study, they avoided imitating their cooking altogether, regardless of ethnicity. The importance of gender overrode ethnicity and class, mainly since by cooking such dishes (or not) women enacted kinship relationships, grappling with the Jewish-Israeli feminine myths of the *bashlanit* and the *polania*.

Moreover, the memories of close female kin that were provoked by iconic Jewish-Israeli ethnic dishes, cooking gestures, practices, recipes and gifted cooking objects enabled women to negotiate their kinship relationships by feeling relatively free of kinship obligation. Their longing and pleasure often appeared alongside frustration and anger, which resulted in their ambivalence. The nature of the kinship relationships was expressed through home cooking in intimacy as well as competition in care, factors that motivated or discouraged the women to extend their cooking 'know-how' by including their female-kin's dishes. Extensions

materialised through imitations of and improvisations on familiar dishes only when women did not feel threatened by the cooking lore of their female kin. As I discuss next, the nostalgic remembrance that materialises in cooking ethnic dishes is enhanced when migration coincides with the death of a beloved close female relative.

Commemorating Close Female Kin through Home Cooking

The following section demonstrates how women further employ the nostalgia that they express through home cooking for the purpose of remembering close female kin who passed away, regardless of their attitudes towards the practice of home cooking or ethnicity. From the point of view of the secular women in this study, cooking such dishes are reminders of close female kin, acts of cultural recall enacting kinship relationships. These acts of recall are manifested in the pleasures and pride in everyday personal-secular cooking rituals of women as a means of commemorating close female kin. These are acts of choice in home cooking that convey love and longing as an aspect of the mourning process that employ Jewish spirituality without the overbearing ‘necessity’ of formal-religious rituals. This manner of remembrance is demonstrated first by the experience of Ella, and second, by the experience of Shivon. The experience of the latter in particular exemplifies the experience of women who expressed dislike for home cooking at the time of this study while relying on take-away foods, alongside their pleasure in commemorating close female kin through home cooking.

Ella idealised her Moroccan mother-in-law similarly to the way Miriam idealised her Iraqi mother-in-law in the previous accounts. She also defined her “general relations” with the practice of home cooking as explicitly “unfriendly”, and emphasised that she is always in search of “shortcuts”. Yet unlike Miriam, Ella portrayed great pleasure, pride and joy when cooking the Moroccan dishes she associated with the memory of her late mother-in-law. Ella described her previous failures to learn to cook from her mother-in-law before she passed away: “For the Moroccans it is like this – put in a little bit of this, and a little bit of that... *tachles* you are not told what”. *Tachles* was a reference to imprecise cooking instructions as the reason for Ella’s failed attempts to cook like her mother-in-law. *Tachles* is a colloquial Israeli-Hebrew term from Yiddish that means ‘in practice’ or ‘in doing’. It is religious in origin and connotes redemption through the study of the Torah. However, most Jewish-Israelis are unaware of this meaning, and use the word in a secular context to connote prioritising ‘doing’ over ‘talking’, a value promoted by Zionist ideology to contrast the diasporic Jewish emphasis on ‘talking’ and the study of scripture (Katriel 1986, Weiss 2001, 2005).

By contrasting the teachings of Moroccans with *tachlit* Ella portrayed self-irony since she did not share the same cooking lore or knowledge, skills and gestures with her mother-in-law. Ella's failed attempts in learning to cook from her mother-in-law while she was alive led to her insistence, after her death, on learning to cook from her mother-in-law's sister in Israel before immigrating. Ella wrote down the measurements that "the aunty" demonstrated while estimating and observing her actions in making three Moroccan dishes: *matbuha* (cooked tomato and chilli salad), *hraise* (cooked spicy fish) and *hamin*. Then she imitated her as well as she could in cooking these dishes herself with the supervision and assurance of "the aunty". By cooking these dishes every Friday in New Zealand since the death of her beloved mother-in-law, Ella turned cooking into an act of mourning, recalling in longing through an everyday ritual that commemorates her mother-in-law's memory and their spiritual bond in continuity with a Jewish tradition.

Shivon conveyed similar sentiments in cooking *kube shwandar* according to her late Iraqi grandmother's recipe, though in a less ritualised manner as she did it less frequently than Ella did. In cooking the dish, Shivon expressed great spiritual connection with her grandmother through her memories of distant times, places and events from her childhood through to her maturity as a woman in Israel. Shivon felt that her grandmother "guided" her spiritually through her love of knowledge and "courage", which Shivon contrasted with the general message she had received at home from her mother as "not being good enough". Shivon took pleasure and pride in her spiritual connection with her grandmother, and, provoked by the smell of the dish, she pined that "for some reason the taste of the dish always comes out like my grandmother's". Hence in commemorating her grandmother's spirit in a secular everyday context in which she cooked this dish whenever she pleased as she pleased, Shivon enhanced her sense of choice. The practice of commemorating the spirit of deceased close kin by home cooking specific dishes is common for a few women in the study, who usually did so by cooking specific dishes they associated with the deceased. Interestingly, these few women shared strong New Age beliefs³⁸ and self-help philosophies that enhanced their Jewish spirituality, and sometimes coincided with cooking Jewish festive foods, which I discuss further in Chapter Six.

³⁸ Similarly, in my MA thesis on the life narratives and practices of Jewish-Israeli women who are modern clairvoyants in Israel, I found that New Age beliefs and practices conflate with Judaic religious beliefs (Wasserman 1999). This finding is supported by later studies that argue for a particular Jewish-Israeli secular-religious match between New Age and Jewish beliefs in modernised everyday practices such as practising meditation and yoga or shopping in New Age shops (see for example Loss 2010:86, Zaidman 2007). A full discussion in the implications of this phenomenon is beyond the scope of this study.

Shivon cooked the *kube shwandar* while at the same time experienced home cooking with great resentment as a site of gendered oppression at the time of the study, commenting that after her divorce she felt that she had been “stuck enough years in the kitchen” and that her “life is not about cooking anymore”. This dislike towards home cooking contributed to commemorating her grandmother’s spirit in cooking *kube shwandar* for everyday consumption all the more, and enhanced their bond through her nostalgia. Shivon, like the two other women in this study who rarely cook, emphasised cooking ‘out of necessity’. Similarly to these women who cook only when their husbands are away, Shivon relied on take-away foods. In such a way, Shivon and these two other women negotiated the gendered expectation of women to be home cooks that express devotion to their children by providing them with freshly cooked foods on daily basis, at the same time as they contested the myth of the *polania*. Their nostalgia for home cooking figured regardless of the pleasure they derive in home cooking themselves or their daily engagements with this practice.

In sum, the commemoration of deceased close female kin through memories that provoke the senses by cooking certain dishes, and using certain techniques and equipment is a gendered form of Jewish nostalgic remembrance. This is the case since close female kin are usually the home cooks, a practical fact that is even truer of previous Jewish and Jewish-Israeli generations. This nostalgic remembrance is common to Jewish migrant women around the world in embracing the power of life (see for some example, Bardenstein 2002, Duruz 2004b, Harris-Shapiro 2006, Spitzer 1999, Steinberg 1998).

Conclusions

This chapter demonstrated that Jewish-Israeli women in New Zealand realise complex and nuanced generational kinship relationships through their experiences of home cooking and the memory of home-cooked dishes after migration. Migration leads to one important and inevitable change in the practical conditions of home cooking that challenge women: the absence of close female kin, which triggers nostalgia. As women overcome this challenge through beginning to emulate the home cooking of close female kin, they return to their familial-ancestral homes in their memories. Longing after emigration leads them to home-cook more in order to make up for the absence of close female kin, as they become more ‘self-reliant’ in home-building, breaking away from overbearing kinship obligation. Their nostalgia allows them to fit in with the New Zealand culture thanks to the high status accorded to homemade foods in New Zealand (Herda 1991, Leach 2008, 2003, Wright-St Clair et al. 2005).

Despite the geographical distance between Israel and New Zealand, most women in this study managed to learn to cook like their close female kin by imitating, improvising and inventing new ways of cooking their signature dishes, and thus, adding and incorporating new beliefs, practical gestures and recipes into their own repertoire. Rather than mythologise practical gestures and ethnic dishes due to unexplained or mysterious ingredients (Fischler 1988:287), the mythology of these dishes is, in fact, the mythology of the women who cook them at home, a means of realising kinship relationships. This phenomenon is seen in Ashkenazi Jewish-Israeli women in Israel (Shine-Rakavy 1999:64-68) and other ethnic groups around the world (e.g. Gvion 2006b, Williams 1984:114-115), considering how dishes that are iconic for ethnic groups are usually understood as cooked 'from scratch' in terms of the methods of the previous generation of women, as the case of rolling couscous illustrates.

As home cooks female kin are remembered through their cooking skills, gestures and cooking objects by women in this study, while their intentions, efforts and emotional investments in the labour of cooking are either idealised or denigrated, depending on the nature of the kinship relationships. While, on the one hand, women express intimacy and pleasure through home cooking, on the other hand, they might also express competition, a sense of threat and the blaming of female kin for denials of care and love. Moreover, sour kinship relationships is often expressed as disgust provoked by iconic Jewish-Israeli ethnic dishes, regardless of the particular ethnicity represented by these dishes. As such, ambivalence towards home cooking and the denigration and idealisation of female kin as home cooks become the building blocks of the myths of the *bashlanit* and the *polania*. Women grapple with these myths as they travel in their imagination to the Jewish diasporic homelands of female kin. The tastes, smells and textures of home-cooked dishes and the women's practical gestures thus evoke and materialise their desire to journey home in time and space (Law 2005, Seremetakis 1994). More importantly, women embody these journeys as they cross the social boundaries of ethnicity and class while realising the kinship relationships that constitute Jewish-Israeli familial-ancestral homes.

In the next chapter I explore the experiences of women in home baking and in longing for Israeli baking, returning to their childhood and early motherhood experiences in Israel. I show how in home baking women realise the dimension of sexuality and femininity as they relieve absences to foster intimacy and express ambivalence after immigration.

Chapter Four: *Gam Yafa vegam Offa* [She is Pretty and She Bakes Too]

Baking is something I love... especially playing with the dough and touching the flour like this. (Naama, while mixing and kneading yeast dough for *challah*)

This chapter examines how the Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study enact a sense of home by expressing their femininity and sexuality through everyday experiences of baking. Most women increase the production and consumption of home-baked goods in form, variety and frequency after moving to New Zealand due to their longing for Israeli baked goods. They begin to bake bread, *pitot*, *challah*, cakes, cookies, *borekas*, pies and *pashtida*³⁹. As the quote above suggests, several women who only learned how to bake in New Zealand experience home-baking as a more playful and skilful form of food preparation than home cooking. Yet the women in this study also experienced home baking negatively compared to home cooking for two main reasons: first, the results of baking are rarely considered a meal in themselves, and second, the consumption of baked goods presents a threat to weight management by posing a “temptation”, as many women put it, to indulge in high-calorie foods. Despite these constraints, women consider baked goods to be the ultimate comfort food, similar to findings from other western cultures (see for example, Halkier 2009:370, Locher 2005, Meyers 2001:83-103, Warde 1997:153).

In analysing the senses, memories and emotions that the Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study express through their everyday experiences of home baking, my examination elaborates on Daphne Berdahl’s work (2009) on everyday nostalgic consumption. I argue that through their longing for Israeli baked goods and baking practices, women remember their childhood, kindergarten experiences, and period of early motherhood in Israel, in effect undertaking a visceral and metaphoric journey to their past homes and homelands. My examination demonstrates how and why women manifest emotions such as longing, pleasure, comfort and pride, as well as ambivalence and self-irony, through baking. My analysis also discusses the motivations of women to begin baking products in culturally distinct ways that intermix Israeli baked goods with New Zealand ones. At the same time, however, many of the women refrain from eating baked goods themselves as they are seen as high in calories

³⁹ *Pashtida* is an Israeli-Hebrew term referring to a crust with a meat or dairy filling similarly to quiche or pie. *Pashtida* may have been incorporated into Israeli-Hebrew culture from Ladino as well as from Yiddish, German, and Italian (<http://www.balashon.com/2010/01/pashtida.html>, last accessed 2 May 2010).

and can contribute to unwanted weight gain – a concern expressed by most of the women in this study.

I argue that women employ baking to make up for some of the physical and emotional absences created by migration and the economic pressures that derive from their choice to become “full-time mothers”. The choice of ten women to become “full-time mothers” in New Zealand might also lead some women to their diminished sexual interest. Generally, the migrant women in the study employ the standard Jewish-Israeli hierarchy of baking – first, bread; second, *challah*; and third, cakes and cookies – in order to satisfy their appetites and desires for baked goods as well as to establish a name for themselves and assert themselves through the mythic figure of the *bashlanit*. Their take on this mythic figure enables some women to link their femininity with their sexuality. Thus ten women substitute the nostalgic pleasure derived from the consumption of baking for sexual pleasure with their husbands, at the same time as they accentuate their sexy appearance by wearing sexy clothes during baking for example. Ironically, they often deny their own pleasure in eating the baked goods in order to maintain their sexy appearance. Overall, women who engage in the practice of baking convey varied pleasures, with the satisfaction and pride of creating a desirable food and the pleasure of satisfying hunger being the most prominent. However, some women also enjoy the playfulness of touching and moulding the dough and improvising on recipes as they reject accurate measurements. This is in contrast to other women who find baking rewarding precisely because of its accuracy, a means of emphasising sophistication as part of their class aspirations.

At the same time, the baking experiences of women are fraught with ambivalence for five reasons, each of which relate to their femininity and sexuality. First, baking provokes memories of some women’s childhood sense of inadequacy as daughters who over- or under-ate. Through these memories, women convey ambivalence towards their mothers and critique their preoccupation with weight management. For three women this kinship tension is realised through their aversion to butter. When women become aware that they imitate their mothers’ attitudes with regard to baking, either by encouraging children to eat well or by avoiding baking to reduce their weight, this awareness triggers self-irony, where they mock themselves for being overly concerned. Second, a few of the women experienced bread baking in New Zealand as a reminder of childhood poverty in Israel. Third, for three women baking instigates memories of trauma from the period of their early motherhood in Israel. These women wish to relieve their trauma by beginning to bake with or for their children. As

they become ‘heroines’ in their own narratives they also denounce the Israeli health system that regarded them unjustly as overanxious mothers in accordance with the myth of the *polania*. Fourth, since home baking is the ultimate realisation of feminine comfort, those few women who do not bake mourn this as a feminine failure. Rather than emanate pleasure, the heat of the oven for these women emanates ambivalence and can generate self-irony. The fifth reason for their ambivalence is that the women fear social rejection by women in New Zealand, on account of regarding the practice of home baking as a basis for feminine competition. However, this situation is the least common since usually their home baking is highly appreciated and desired by New Zealanders, engendering a feeling of social desirability that most women enhance by beginning to bake in the Kiwi way.

Home baking, as a site for competition between women, is strongly encouraged by the food media in New Zealand, as I discuss in the final section of this chapter. In that section I examine a television show in New Zealand and two Israeli advertisements for baking products from the 1980s and the 2000s. My analysis illustrates that the food media in both cultures promotes stereotypical perceptions of femininity and domesticity by eliciting specific types of nostalgia. These nostalgias articulate the middle-class feminine myth of each culture that manifest in the collective memory. The New Zealand media provokes the nostalgia of middle-class New Zealanders for the “innocent and homely pleasure” of rural life (Brookes 1997:210). Similarly, the Israeli advertisement from the 1980s, from which the title of this chapter is drawn, encapsulates femininity and sexuality. The simple rhyme (in Israeli-Hebrew) “she is pretty and she bakes too” links physical feminine attractiveness and baking. By comparing this advertisement with another Israeli advertisement from the 2000s, I demonstrate an important shift in approach to the promotion of ready-made baked goods. This shift portrays collective acts of remembrance as it moves from a nostalgia based on the myth of the *polania* in the 1980s to one based on the *bashlanit* in the 2000s. These acts change in correlation with changes in Israel’s national campaign aimed at emigrants since the 1990s, promoting longing for the sake of homecoming (Cohen 2007:275-276).

Longing for Baking and ‘Baking’ Out of Longing

The meanings of baking have not been explored by studies on Jewish-Israeli women. Hence in my analysis I draw on comparisons with studies of women from other western cultures, mostly European and American. In these studies home baking appears as the ultimate comfort food. In Miriam Meyer’s research (2001:83-103) on middle-class mother-daughter relations in the USA, women’s most favoured comfort foods were sweet baked

goods. As adults, many of the daughters remembered baking with their mothers as the first of all their comforting food-related memories. Research that examines the category of ‘comfort food’ among students in the USA claims that comfort foods could be divided into ‘nostalgic food’ and ‘indulgence food’, foods of high with caloric value of levels of fat and sugar (Locher 2005). Baking is also a prominent and pleasurable practice of middle-class British women: for them, home-baked cakes and bread represent emotional comfort (Warde 1997:153). Other studies show that middle-class Danish women usually bake bread, buns and cakes at home (Halkier 2009:370) and lower- and middle-class French women bake in general (Giard 1998). These food studies and others (see for example Haukanes 2007:9, Kalka 1991, Shine-Rakavy 1999:98) establish the fact that while more western men cook today, home baking is still primarily the domain of western women, and thus a distinctly gendered practice⁴⁰.

This section examines how Jewish-Israeli migrant women employ the distinctly gendered food practice of home baking to negotiate their femininity and sexuality, focussing mainly on the registers of pleasures in their actions, senses and memories. Emigration from Israel instigates women’s nostalgia for Israeli baking. As women long for Israeli baking they denigrate the quality of the local commercial Kiwi baking. By beginning to engage with the practice of home baking in New Zealand they are transported back to their childhood home in Israel and their kindergarten experiences. In their choices of what to bake, when to bake, for whom and how, women extend the meanings of comfort food in order to make up for absences that are caused by immigration. By negotiating their femininity through home baking they express kinship intimacy to enact being a good mother and wife. In several cases women express their sexuality through home baking and visceral pleasures which they use as a substitute for sexual pleasures.

The following analysis is based on extracts from my fieldnotes on baking with Rina who is a mother of two children (ages two and four). At the time of our meetings Rina had been living in New Zealand for over eight years. Rina is a proud homeowner. Another informant rightfully described her home as the epitome of “the middle-class dream” in New Zealand: immaculately clean and tidy, it has a lovely sea view from the kitchen and the bedrooms on the second floor, a grassy outdoor backyard with a portable spa, and an organic vegetable and herb garden. The lower floor was full of indoor and outdoor toys for her daughters. The

⁴⁰ In the current study, 21 women home-bake regularly, plus two of the four women whose husbands are the home cooks.

kitchen is situated to the left of the main entrance, next to an open-plan dining area and living room.

On a hot Friday afternoon in the summer of 2010, I visited Rina's house during her younger daughter's three-hour-long daily nap. Her elder daughter was in crèche and her husband at work. Her long, frizzy, blond-tinted hair was down. Rina was dressed in tight black clothes on each of the times we met. The low-cut top accentuated her small breasts, and she did not change her clothing upon coming home after her morning errands⁴¹. As she started her baking she noted that although she has an apron "somewhere in the house" she never wears it. Her elder daughter, who bakes in the kindergarten in New Zealand, "nags" her about wearing it, saying "they do a lot of baking wearing aprons in kindergarten and their teachers wear them".

Rina intended to use a bread maker⁴² to make *challah*, as well as a yeast-based chocolate cake, using her mother's recipe, as a surprise for her husband, who loves it. Her mother had left the recipe on her last visit to New Zealand. According to Rina, this cake was tremendously successful as at 'bring a plate' event at Mainly Music, a toddlers' activity to which she had taken her daughters: "It was devoured in seconds". She contrasted this success with the relative failure of her mother's famous orange cake, which Rina also baked for the Mainly Music group, only to find that the orange peel pieces she had crystallised in sugar to decorate the cake got picked off. Rina demonstrated her sense of being rejected by a 'pinching' action, hinting how the orange cake was upstaged by the orange peel she had used to decorate it. While offering me some of the leftovers, she said, "When my husband saw these he was really touched; the sugared orange peels reminded him of his childhood and his grandmother. He said, 'You made my day!', and he ate quite a few".

To bake *challah* Rina uses a recipe given to her by her eldest daughter's kindergarten teacher in Israel. The bottom of the printed recipe read, "One second on the lips, years on the hips!" I read the warning out loud and Rina responded: "Ah, this is one of many common sayings in Israel about weight. They don't mind weight in New Zealand so much." Rina said she would not have baked the *challah* or the cake without using the bread maker. "It makes

⁴¹ I note these details since I relate them to the meanings of women's appearance while home baking. In general, my findings suggest that most women in the study felt that women of New Zealand "have no sense of fashion" and that everyone dresses in a very "casual" manner. For years after migration, many women would buy their clothes in Israel and/or Europe, and expressed strong preference for the "more feminine" clothes available for women in Israel. The issue of whether, why and how these women change their attire with immigration requires further research.

⁴² Bread makers entered the home-baker market in the 1990s in Israel and are quite expensive there compared with those in New Zealand. Hence several women in this study that used bread makers purchased them in New Zealand.

my life easy. I can bake without getting my hands and dress dirty – the dough doesn't stick and I can attend to my daughters in case they need me or if something happens". Rina does not like putting her muscles through the hard work of kneading and said would rather develop "pretty muscles". She mentioned that the "irresistible" smell and taste of yeast baking that her husband so enjoys when he comes home on Fridays makes all the bother worthwhile – withstanding the heat of the oven on a summer's day, plus the hard work. She was delighted at the thought that when her younger daughter wakes up, she would eat freshly baked *challah*, worrying that her daughter had not eaten enough earlier as she had rejected her lunch due to being too tired. Though Rina remembered that her mother was anxious and obsessed about her own eating and meagre weight as a child, in the face of her second daughter's similar lack of interest in eating, Rina could not help but worry.

The Pleasures and Intimacies of Home Baking

Rina is part of the 'subgroup' of women in this study who could "hardly make an omelette" before migrating, as they put it; hence Rina learned to bake only after arriving in New Zealand and having babies. Such sweeping sentences are a common way for Jewish-Israeli women to convey their previous limited practical knowledge, experience and often lack of interest in home cooking or home baking. Their logic is that "there is no need to bake if you have your mother or other close female kin around, or you can buy all this tasty baking so easily". This attitude implies a perception of baking out of a 'need' to fill an absence, an absence that is created by migration and stands for other absences, which are then relieved by baking.

Indeed, immigration to New Zealand and the perceived poor quality of local commercial baking instigated women's 'need' to bake as a response to longing for Israeli baking that all women in this study articulated. They perceived commercial and often home-baked foods in New Zealand as either "too sweet" or "disgusting" mainly due to the use of condensed milk, icing as well as lard (animal fat), which they perceived as "smelly". Local commercial breads in particular are considered to be neither robust nor satisfying, and many women began to crave Israeli yeasted baked goods, with some admitting they had developed an "obsession" for it. Hence their first reason to increase the production and consumption of home baking in New Zealand is to allay longing for the distinct tastes of Israeli baking triggered by the unsatisfying quality of commercial baking in New Zealand.

Rina's longing for Israeli baking provoked her desire to bake a yeast-based chocolate cake and an orange cake according to her mother's recipes. The production and consumption of the cakes triggered for Rina childhood memories of her ordinary life in Israel in the familial home. By baking her mother's recipes Rina enacted kinship relationships – between herself and her mother, her husband (since she was baking his favourite chocolate yeasted cake), and her sleeping daughter (who would consume the baking and make up for a lost lunch). This intimacy was enacted through feminine care and comfort that was extended by her baking for 'bring a plate' events at playgroups. At such events Rina manifested her Jewish-Israeli identity by baking in the Israeli way, establishing an image of a 'good' woman, similarly to most women in this study.

Moreover, Rina's husband's reaction to the orange peel on the orange cake clearly articulated his nostalgia for his childhood, reminding him of his beloved grandmother⁴³. Through her Israeli baking and its nostalgic powerful hold on his senses, Rina wished to lure him to 'come home' and offer him love. The smell and taste of the baking on coming home after a working day exuded 'temptation', just as it did for Rina, as she asserted. Hence both Rina and her husband are lured by the evocation of nostalgic memories for their childhood in a return home that binds them in intimacy. Yet here, Rina, as did several other women in this study whose sexuality emanated from their dress and appearance while baking, wished to make up for another loss. On our first meeting Rina explained that she stopped breastfeeding her second daughter at the age of nineteen months because her husband wanted "his breasts back" (meaning, her breasts). She admitted that these days, regrettably, she has little sexual interest; her "head is elsewhere" and she is "too tired"; due to sleepless nights and the preoccupation with mothering and feeding, she joked in self-irony (in English), "I've got nappy brain". She said that she continuously discusses cooking, baking and feeding with her women friends. Although she remembered finding pleasure in sex in the past, her choice to become a "full-time mother" in New Zealand takes precedence. Now, Rina wished to evoke her femininity and sexuality by baking and provoking nostalgia in her husband. Rina made up for her relatively low sex drive by substituting the pleasure of sexual consummation with the pleasure of the consumption of baked goods that her husband so loves.

⁴³ Homemade candied citrus peel, which provokes instant nostalgia for the Ashkenazi close female kin who used to prepare them and for one's childhood are mentioned in the book *Parents are Cooking* (Shechner-Rochman 2005:219) regardless of the presence of the food. This is a nostalgia that "sometimes, in the middle of the day, without connection to anything (unprovoked)" appears in the memory of Tair, one of the two women authors of this recipe and memories collection.

In a manner akin to nine other women in this study, Rina equates sexual pleasure with the pleasure derived from consuming baked goods. As they linked these pleasures, women used metaphors such as “temptation”, “addiction” and “orgasmic” to convey the pleasure they derived from their consumption of baked goods, often relating to images of ‘rising to the heavens’ that hint at the nostalgia for the Garden of Eden since modernity (Eliade 1991[1952]). Their wish to substitute these pleasures derived from their perception of pleasure as an emotional ‘homecoming’ or as arriving at the “end of the road”, as some women exclaimed. Their wishes and imaginings reminders of the biblical figure of Eve, who in the mythical story of the Garden of Eden, illustrated the link between various pleasures. In Chapter Seven I will show how these wishes relate to the Jewish-Israeli perception of ‘appetite’.

Moreover, though not all women confided in me concerning diminished sexual interest, several of the women who did, as well as those who did not, shared in common a striking wish to look sexually attractive and inviting while baking as much as at other times. These women accentuated their sexuality through their attire, often wearing low-cut tops, tight clothing and make-up while doing kitchen work such as baking or cooking. Rather than foster sexual attractiveness, which they desired, wearing an apron while baking would signify an act that is ‘too’ motherly for women like Rina. One such woman even expressed sexual fantasy as she exclaimed that she “would not mind having the sexy Gordon Ramsay as her private chef”, whereas others expressed envy of the “sexy” female celebrity chef Nigella Lawson.

Extending the Meanings of Comfort Foods

Another common way for women in this study to use home baking and the pleasure of its consumption is to relieve absences caused by migration, accentuating their femininity all the more and inferring home baking as comfort food. Women baked to overcome two main challenges: first, kinship tensions that related to their past in Israel, and second, deteriorated economic status, either in general due to migration; the need to find a job in an English-speaking culture and establish financially, or specifically due to having become “full-time mothers” in New Zealand, as they put it.

In the case of reliving and relieving kinship tensions, for example, Miriam clearly baked to “satisfy” herself and her husband’s constant desire for sweet baked goods in addition to enacting her femininity and prestige. As early as the age of 10 Miriam remembered being invited to decorate birthday cakes for Bar/Bat mitzvah and decorating wedding cakes in the

moshav. Since then, home baking has been her favourite domestic food practice, and serves her well for ‘bring a plate’ events, hosting, family events and festive meals in New Zealand, as it does for many of the women in this study. Miriam adored the recipes for baking that she had collected since childhood, similarly to other women who “love” baking and expressed their attachments to old recipe collections, usually kept in a folder or written in a notebook that some had kept since adolescence. Many of the women, including Miriam, went to great lengths to overcome challenges in adapting recipes to local measurements and ingredients, since Israeli recipes often used American measurements, and included ingredients that are hard to find in New Zealand, such as the fresh yeast that women typically used in Israel, unlike the dry yeast they used in New Zealand.

Yet my question about acquiring baking skills led Miriam to a brief mention of her mother, whom Miriam “supposed” had taught her to bake. In this regard Miriam did not recall much more than the fact that she disliked her mother’s signature shortbread cookies. Shortbread is made with a lot of butter, and Miriam said that she has “hated” butter since childhood. So she never ate her mother’s shortbread cookies and to this day uses only margarine in her baking. In addition to her disgust with butter, Miriam ignored her mother’s love of baking as contribution to the development of her own baking skills since childhood. In this way Miriam articulated tension in their kinship relationship while enacting her femininity through her love for and skill in baking.

Like Miriam, at least two other women in this study mentioned hating butter since childhood. As well as hating butter, all three remembered baking at home in pre-adolescence, yet they did not acknowledge the involvement of their mothers in teaching them. As a reminder of tensions between themselves and their mothers, the journey back to their childhood home enacted by these women through their home baking and their acquisition of the skills involved was a means for them to express their pleasure and enact their femininity. While after migration most women in this study reported initial difficulties in “getting used to” the taste of butter in New Zealand, they all did eventually get used to it, except for these three women. As another example, Nora said that by the time she had finished her tertiary studies in Israel she had “made peace” with her mother and they became “best friends”. She reported that in Israel she was known and respected in her circle for her delicious yeast baking and had even been offered money to bake for others. In this way, these three women attested to their baking talent, skill and pleasure while asserting their feminine autonomy and the status they had gained among friends in New Zealand. At the same time, butter signified a

threat to their femininity, expressed as tense relations with their mothers. The link between butter, a by-product of milk, and femininity sits well with the feminine image of Israel as a motherland ‘(oozing) of milk and honey’, which I discussed in Chapter Two.

Baking at home as a response to a deteriorated economic status after migration is exemplified by the experience of Naama, who only learned to bake in New Zealand. She stated that she enjoys baking for three reasons: apart from the visceral pleasures of engaging with baking depicted by the opening quote of this chapter (which I discuss in a separate section), Naama argued that she likes to bake to pamper her children (*pinuk*) and as a means of “compensating” her husband for having become the household’s main breadwinner after the birth of their second child in New Zealand, when Naama gave up paid employment and became a full-time mother. By baking to make up for a loss in economic status, Naama enacted being a ‘good’ wife to her husband while also realising her femininity by caring for her children, like several other women in this study.

In sum, the general increase in home baking in New Zealand was primarily due to the nostalgia for Israeli baking provoked in the women after migration. The cases of Rina and Miriam illustrate that through the practice of home baking women could go on metaphorical journeys back to their childhood homes in Israel. Some women enacted their sexuality in home baking through maintaining attractive looks and substituting sexual pleasure with the pleasure of consuming ‘Israeli’ baking. As they travelled home in their imagination they recalled the myth of Eve in the Garden of Eden, marked by the temptation and the pleasure of food consumption, namely the apple, represented by baked goods in the lives of women in this study. In general, however, nostalgia for Israeli baking enabled women to enact their femininity as good mothers and wives by making up for absences. They also enacted their femininity in their ability to relieve tensions typically caused or reinstated by migration, tensions articulated through emotional and economic channels. Next, I describe the most prominent way of relieving economic dearth through home baking and explain how and why women employed a Jewish-Israeli hierarchy of home baking in New Zealand.

Employing a Jewish-Israeli Hierarchy of Baking

Within the numerous Jewish-Israeli cookbooks on home baking⁴⁴ and specifically in yeast-based, it is common to find references to Torah scriptures in titles of chapters, recipes and

⁴⁴ A recent example incorporates the baking of pita bread by Husam Abbas and Nira Rousso (2006:72) in their Jewish-Arab cookbook *Lamb, Mint and Pine Nuts*.

articles (either directly or as play on words), which evoke Jewish religiosity. These titles often borrow on “Not by bread alone will man live...” (Deut. 8:3). Traditionally, *challah* stands for bread, the most important source of nourishment for Jews, the epitome of sustenance, work, Torah and life itself⁴⁵. The Israeli-Hebrew lexicon that relates to dealing with yeast dough found in cookbooks, recipes and daily jargon is explicitly evocative of the ways a parent is told to care for a newborn baby. The dough should be addressed with care, warmth, “feel”, patience and practical measures such as keeping it away from draughts. Dry yeast is seen as “coming alive” and “waking up” and the resulting dough is often described using animated metaphors of a live creature. When cooled in a closed bag, baked bread, for example, “sweats” or “breathes”. This lexicon borrows on biblical and gendered terms: ‘*se-or isa*’, the fermented yeast starter for the dough, also signifies family, masculine potency and even a negative potential for destruction (Even Shushan 1969b:1000). Clearly, in the Judeo-Christian nexus the labour of baking bread is regarded as ‘production’, which is equivalent to ‘reproduction’, bearing children and giving life. The Hebrew expression ‘*mehabatsek haze lechem yetze*’, literally meaning ‘from this dough bread will come out’, means that mixing the ingredients and kneading the dough for successful baking is similar to bearing children or ‘mixing’ in sexual intercourse. The sayings ‘to have a bun in the oven’, ‘a half-baked idea’ and ‘breadwinner’ are parallel usages in English.

In practice, all the women in this study (except two) increased their home baking in New Zealand, and in so doing, materialising a Jewish-Israeli hierarchy whereby baking bread comes first, *challah* second and sweet baking third. They did this in parallel with, and as a response to, their unfavourable assessments of commercial baked goods in New Zealand, expressing some anti-commercial sentiments.

Bread baking features first in this hierarchy as it stands for sustenance out of necessity. Three women began baking wholemeal and sourdough bread regularly in New Zealand, while a fourth, who used to bake sourdough bread only occasionally in Israel, turned her bread into a staple food for daily consumption in New Zealand. Sourdough and wholemeal recipes yield dense textures and different tastes, and usually require a longer rising time than recipes based on white flour and commercial dry yeast. Women who began using such recipes demonstrated a propensity for natural, healthier and rural lives in New Zealand, an

⁴⁵ The sacredness of bread is also echoed in the refusal by two of the women in this study to throw away any leftovers. In New Zealand they began feeding leftovers to birds, ducks and chickens, which are more commonly encountered in their daily lives than in Israel.

attitude paralleled in their statements concerning shopping for groceries and home cooking. Along with the association of home-baked sourdough and wholemeal breads with health and nourishment, these women manifested an anti-commercial sentiment since they claimed not only to have saved money by baking their own bread, but also to have provided their family with breads of better quality. In addition, three other women began baking bread in New Zealand using bread makers. They manifested a similar anti-commercial sentiment since they felt more in control of the ingredients and the quality of their bread compared with the commercial products. The quality of their homemade breads, recipes and methods became reminders, through their labour, of the breads available in Israel. At the same time by following Israeli recipes for bread they articulated pride and pleasure in their sense of national belonging.

In particular cases where women baked to overcome a severely limited or deteriorated economic situation, the production of home-baked Israeli breads enacted their femininity to the extent of direct mythical associations with the *bashlanit*, which fit in with traditional Jewish beliefs. For example, Sarah noted her husband's admiration for her ability to overcome their lack by baking *pitot* skilfully on a daily basis: "My husband says to me, 'I don't know how you manage to bring food to our table every day with such little means. It's a miracle'". This is a clear case of the husband associating mythical power with the baking-wife. As a resourceful and 'good' mother and wife Sarah was capable of sustaining the family according to Jewish belief epitomised by the term *eshet chayil*, a woman of valour, great deeds, bravery and triumph⁴⁶. While poverty is certainly considered a threat to one's being, by highlighting her husband's praise and her own pride and pleasure in baking Sarah alluded to her triumph over poverty through enacting the role of 'good' mother and wife.

Simultaneously, baking *pitot* on an everyday basis in New Zealand to save money and overcome economic dearth provoked in Sarah memories of childhood poverty and the realisation that she had adopted her mother's way of "making something out of nothing". Sarah felt that in baking *pitot* in New Zealand, "*nihiyeti kmo ima sheli*" she became like her mother, who had also baked *pitot* to save money. Sarah attributed similar magical powers to her mother to that which her husband attributed her, overcoming economic hardship by cooking and baking resourcefully and relentlessly. Describing her mother's cooking and

⁴⁶ The term refers to a poem that is recited or sung in praise of the wife during the Friday night Kiddush ritual after the Shabbat candles have been lit. 'Eshet Chayil', as Proverbs 31:10–31 of the Hebrew Bible is known, describes the ideal wife and is also considered an allegory of the Shabbat, the Torah and even the soul. The 32-verse poem takes the form of an alphabetical acrostic.

baking as “warm, versatile and rich”, Sarah stressed the practical and clever ways in which her mother ensured there was always enough and varied food to eat. The characterisation of home baking as sustenance for the family that creates ‘*yesh me-ain*’ (creating something out of nothing) is similar to the Jewish metaphysical principle of God having created the world through constraint to expansion⁴⁷. In fact, the association of bread baking with creation articulates a Jewish nostalgic formula of remembrance, namely, redemption in the face of threat. In the case of some women in this study, this nostalgic formula takes the form of dearth as a threat: the women’s current poverty provoked memories of childhood poverty in Israel. These women enacted their femininity in home baking by as a means of sustaining life in the face of such threat, as they, like their mothers, became mythical ‘heroines’.

Since sustaining life by home baking suggests creating life in giving birth, women who baked bread regularly in New Zealand asserted themselves as *bashlaniot*, the modernised version of the *eshet chayil*. These claims were manifested through the pleasure, pride, satisfaction and prestige they derived from the production of breads with healthy and nourishing qualities. Since any yeast baking is perceived by women in this study as “bothersome”, “laborious”, “requiring skill” and “time consuming”, women baked mostly on long weekends in New Zealand. Their success in bread-baking was quickly noted in their social milieu, and these women were admired and envied for their skill. They created a name for themselves, usually baking from scratch, since the consumption of baked goods and bread in particular may take hold of people’s imagination and instigate their longing to return home. Taking their bread to ‘bring a plate’ events or gifting it were important means of substantiating their prestige, and women often mentioned other women who baked well, pointing me towards “a real *bashlanit*” as a potential study participant. Four women created a name for themselves as *bashlanit* among their Jewish-Israeli and New Zealand friends by engaging in all three kinds of baking in the hierarchy. These were the women who enjoyed the aspects of baking relating to paying attention to minute details and measurements, in three cases drawing a parallel with their graduate studies in science. One of the three women, Shoshana, is the only woman in this study who shares family food provision in rotation with

⁴⁷ In some Judaic traditions like the *Kabbalah* and the *Hassidot*, ‘*yesh me-ain*’ is a nostalgic mythical construct that refers to the creation of the world (Schwartz 2004:13-14). *Yesh me-ain* posits that constraints and limitations enable intensive creativity and miraculous powers – in other words, overcoming dearth and threats leads to redemption. Schwartz (2004:13-14) discusses *tzimtzum*, the contracting of God, as an example of this principle. Before God created the world, everything was filled with ‘the light of the Infinite’. From the empty space that was created by his contraction, God emanated the world into being. This is a Kabbalistic concept based on the ideas of Rabbi Isaac Luria (1534–1572). His main disciple, Rabbi Hayim Vital (1542–1640, elaborated on this in his book *Etz Hayim* (Tree of Life). The purpose of this myth is to explain how God’s presence is epitomised by infinite light and how it pervaded the universe and made room for creation. The answer is explained in the principle of *tzimtzum* or the ‘self-contraction’ of God.

her husband. In articulating the difference between her baking and her husband's cooking, she said, "I bake the more sophisticated and complex things where you have to follow the recipe and get involved with a lot of *shmontzesim* (Hebrew and Yiddish, indicating complexity through a multitude of small things/steps)". Shoshana joked that her "baking projects" are as complex as "a PhD", an academic degree she holds in science. She became renowned for baking a multi-layered apple cake for Rosh Hashanah, apple strudel made from scratch with puff pastry, doughnuts twice every Hanukah, as well as *challot* and breads. The emphasis on precision and complexity in the process of baking connoted her sophistication. In a manner akin to the other women in this study who liked the accuracy of baking and saw it as a demonstration of skill, Shoshana conveyed sophistication in baking in European-Jewish-Israeli ways, hinting at class aspirations.

Challah baking features second in women's baking hierarchy, as demonstrated earlier by Rina, who baked *challot* and chocolate yeast cake. Similarly to Rina, four other women began baking *challah* regularly on Fridays in New Zealand, while another four women admitted they had attempted to bake *challah* and failed for various reasons. In baking *challah* for the Friday Kiddush, which requires the use of yeast, women enacted their Jewish-Israeli identity while remembering the Jewish temporal cycle. Rina's case demonstrates that women returned home through their memories of early motherhood in Israel as well as their own kindergarten experiences, which I demonstrate in the section below.

Featuring thirdly in women's baking hierarchy are cakes, cookies and other sweet baking, which symbolise luxury or excess and special occasions. Through sweet baking women expressed pleasures, care and comfort, which tied in with the decision of several women in this study to become full-time mothers in New Zealand, like Rina. This decision allowed women to take on learning to bake as a practice that signified their ability to balance life "more sanely" in New Zealand than in Israel, as some put it; had they stayed in Israel they would be in full-time paid employment and would have felt pressured to join "the rat race". They remembered Israel as a place that prevents women from fully engaging with caring for children and the leisured pleasures they associated with home baking, depicting life there as constraining and overbearing. In this way women critiqued other middle-class Jewish-Israeli women – close kin left in Israel (mothers, sisters and mothers-in-law) as well as friends –who "prioritise materialism" and "invest more time" into their "career" than what they saw as the feminine practice of caregiving. Through such depictions, these women expressed their view

that the culture in Israel burdens middle-class women with pressures to achieve materially and related Israeli society to attributes of the over-bearing *polania*.

Baking Memories: The Kindergarten Experience

When examining the social relations realised through food in a middle-class kindergarten in Israel, Deborah Golden found that female kindergarten teachers “mark and underpin the centrality of the state as the main arena for sociality and identity” by baking (Golden 2005:185). Golden described how such underpinnings manifested in highly gendered ways as the kindergarten teacher went about the process of baking: “As she [the teacher] kneaded the regular dough, she explained that she was laying a baby to sleep – wrapping it in a cloth, as if wrapping a baby in a blanket and talking to it softly and tenderly, as if lulling it to sleep” (Golden 2005:185). This illustrates that the model of womanhood as a caring mother in Israel symbolised by the work of baking, the kindergarten teacher also representing the caring state since she bakes according to a Jewish-Israeli temporal cycle fostered by the state. In other words, the centrality of the state is consecrated by baking according to Jewish festivities, and the state viewed as a nourishing mother. In such a way, baking is instilled in the minds of Israel’s youngest citizens as enacting feminine care and love and equating mothers with the motherland. Thus, it is no wonder that *challah* recipes are often transmitted as cultural lore by kindergarten teachers, and that these recipes trigger women’s memories of childhood experiences in their own kindergarten. These recipes are later used to bake at home by Jewish-Israeli migrant women yearning for Israeli baking, as the experiences of Rina, other women and me (illustrated in this thesis’s opening vignette) demonstrate.

However, when women use these recipes in New Zealand to bake, they enhance their own feminine centrality over that of the state in two ways: through the sweet taste of the *challah*, and through two issues that relate to the body: weight management and the women’s appearance while baking.

First, the sweet taste of the *challah* manifests ordinary life and childhood in Israel in a paradoxical way, since traditionally sweet *challah* connotes festive periods and special life cycle events. In most Jewish households in Israel it is savoury commercial *challah* that is consumed at the Kiddush and on the weekends. Despite this, when women in New Zealand took up baking *challah* it tended to be the sweet version, a “treat” as they called it. In Israeli kindergartens, where most children first learn to bake *challah*, sometimes as

early as three years old, they bake it sweet so that it will hold more appeal for the children; at the same time, the *challah* reinforces the Jewish conception of the week, clearly demarcating the start of the weekend. As Rina and my own case demonstrate, this remembrance is materialised by baking sweet *challah* as a positive connection with one's own childhood and early motherhood in Israel. Yet by home-baking sweet *challah*, which is baked in kindergartens in Israel, women in New Zealand not only return to their Israeli past, but also assume centrality as they provide their children in New Zealand the comforts of this food for their future sweet memories of their childhood.

Second, women negotiate their centrality through the issue of weight management and the clothes they wear when baking. If in Israel kindergarten teachers reinforce bodily surveillance, issuing warnings about the danger of weight gain for those who consume baking, then women in New Zealand, like Rina, deflected such warnings as they contested the overbearing form of 'care' by their motherland that is represented by the kindergarten teachers. As for women's clothing, like Rina I observed that none of the women in this study bake or cook wearing an apron. Several women remained in their ordinary 'sexy' clothes, while some wore "work clothes", as they put it. Work clothes were used specifically when engaging in planned cooking or baking and denote their purpose – domestic labour. Thus women delineated the practice of baking as mundane by refraining from a symbolic temporal differentiation that consecrates this practice – the apron – regardless of what they actually baked, be it bread, *challah*, cakes or cookies. By refraining from wearing an apron, in contrast to kindergarten teachers who usually wear aprons in New Zealand, women created a feminine identity that departs from the one perpetrated in Israeli society. In addition, through the mundane nature of their baking practice in New Zealand they divorced this practice from the ritualised baking performed by kindergarten teachers in Israel who consecrated the love and care of the state. I return to the significance of wearing an apron for marking baking as a ritualised feminine homely practice when I discuss Israeli advertisements for commercial baking at the end of this chapter. In Chapter Six I discuss how women enact Israeli secular belonging by managing children's appearance at the table at the time of the Kiddush, for which *challah* is usually baked, and by the content of the Kiddush meal itself. Now, I move to a demonstration of the implications for women in this study of engaging viscerally in the practice of baking.

The Baking Hands and the Accuracy of Baking

[H]ands that slowly knead pastry dough with symmetrical movements, a sort of restrained tenderness (Giard 1998:151).

As the quote above suggests, while revisiting her childhood through nostalgic memories, Giard (1998:151) remembered the comforting rhythm and motion that her own mother generated when kneading the dough. Giard then overlooks the complexity of the nostalgic memory that is provoked by remembering baking when she generalises that “with their high degree of ritualization and their strong affective investment, culinary activities are for many women of all ages a place of happiness, pleasure, and discovery”. The cases of Rina and other women in the study illustrate that through their visceral engagement with baking women articulate both pleasure and discontent, both in memory and in practice and in culturally particular and opposite ways, manifesting ambivalence towards the labour of baking or the constraints of recipes.

Women emphasised playfulness and sensuality in their engagements with baking, the feel of the dough or the ingredients, and in enjoying sweet and tasty ingredients, such as chocolate and cream. Most of their explanations of their pleasures were confined to sentences like “because this is fun” and “because baking is something I’ve always enjoyed since kindergarten”. For example, Rina’s case demonstrates that some women manifested their displeasure at the manual labour involved in the production of home baking by using a bread maker to mix, knead, and proof the dough. Rina used the bread maker in order to keep her hands clean and thus remain attentive to her daughters and available for them, as well as wishing to develop only “pretty muscles”. Other women used a bread maker in order to shorten the production process and increase their success. They regarded using a bread maker as a shortcut that does not detract from the symbolic homemade qualities of their baking, manifesting care and comfort in a way that enhances their own pleasure. At the same time, in preferring the shortcuts that baking with bread baker offer or fast “mixing” recipes (for quick breads, like banana bread), these women reconciled the antinomy of convenience–care (Warde 1997), since as long as their baking is done at home by them it is imbued with love. Also in accordance with this mode of engagement was the experience of women who derived pleasure from the practice of home baking for its “immediate rewards” and the “simplicity” of following a recipe. These women included those who enjoyed baking by paying attention to minute details, since they felt that accuracy yields success, as the earlier case of Shoshana

suggests. As with New Zealand women, Rina and other women in this study maintained baking as the validation of care and the practicality of being ‘self-reliant’ women (Wright-St Clair et al. 2005) who bake in the ‘Israeli’ way.

An opposite but common experience of engagement with baking was conveyed by those women that I observed baking who defied precision and considered accurate measurements and lists of ingredients as constraining. These women enjoyed improvising, cutting down on the amount of sugar as they saw fit, ‘feeling’ the amount of flour with their hands and substituting ingredients they did not have for others they did. Their defiance is probably best conveyed by the famous Jewish-Israeli term *dafka*, which means to do things in spite of or despite everything. The following dialogue illustrates such an approach as I watched Mona pour the flour into the mixing bowl for a yeasted chocolate cake without using a measuring cup.

Mona: My husband hates it when I do this.

Hadas: Why?

Mona: Because he says the taste is never right and I always miss something. He actually baked this recipe himself to prove me wrong.

Hadas: And was he right?

Mona: Well... it tasted better, but I just can't be bothered. And besides, that's how I like to bake, to 'feel' the flour with my hands.

I got a strong sense of hands (attached to a body) that resisted the constraints of the recipe and accurate measurements, defied the husband’s expectation of a certain taste that is typical of this Israeli cake, and manifested autonomy and pleasure by engaging physically in the act of baking. Rachel, as another example, said that she enjoys making food with her “play dough” regardless of the quality or taste of the result. Hence, through the production of baking women enacted their Israeli femininity in two opposite ways: just as some women enjoyed precision and operating modern kitchen equipment that reduces their manual labour and helps guarantee their success in ‘making a name for themselves’, other women enjoyed improvising and defying the constraints of the recipe and the expectations for specific tastes and textures. The latter group of women in particular used their sensate pleasure in baking as reminders of childhood playfulness – playing with their “play dough”, as some women put it.

Accordingly, in my visits to kindergartens in New Zealand with women and their children I observed that these mothers encouraged their children to engage their hands in ‘messy play’

in the sand pit and in making pretend cakes with sand and water. Indeed, the renowned Jewish-Israeli domestic food writer Ruth Sirkis purveys similar ideas in what was one of the first Jewish-Israeli children's cookbooks, *Children are Cooking* (1975:7). Not only is this book familiar to many women in this study from their childhood, several of the women nostalgically returned to it for cooking and baking as adults in their New Zealand homes, in some cases with their children. In her introduction to the book Sirkis argues the many educational and emotional benefits that baking offers for children and their mothers. In the first lines of the introduction, directed explicitly at the mothers, Sirkis refers to the sense of creativity and satisfaction in making "something out of nothing", which I discussed earlier. This agrees with her claim that children experience enjoyment when mixing, kneading, pouring and stirring in the process of baking, and derive the visceral pleasures from these actions. The great pleasure experienced at kindergarten in making mud-cakes in the sand pit and playing with "play dough" that Sirkis notes explains the common nostalgic return to childhood through baking as a playful activity that women in my study experience and encourage.

To conclude, after immigration the practice of baking and its consumption provoked and materialised yearning for Israeli baking, specifically invoking the remembrance of childhood and the kindergarten experience. Women's yearning drove them not only to increase their baking, but also to enact 'good' Jewish-Israeli femininity through baking to make up for economic and emotional absences instigated by migration, as they elaborate on the Jewish-Israeli hierarchy of baking to extend on its comforting meanings, and while they establish their own prestige in their circles in New Zealand. In several cases where home baking was used to relieve kinship tension with husbands, women substituted the comforting meanings and pleasure of the consumption of baking with sexual pleasures to enact their Israeli sexuality. In overcoming real economic shortage by baking, women attested to the myth of the *bashlanit*, a myth concretised by a Jewish belief that associates the miraculous feminine power to create and sustain life with baking. These powers relate to an older myth, that of Eve in the Garden of Eden, which links the pleasures of consumption with sexual pleasure. Moreover, by enacting their femininity through baking at home in Israeli ways, women asserted their autonomy and reclaimed their centrality in the family, as shown in the case of their choice to bake *challah* – when, why and what and how to bake – while they return metaphorically to their ordinary childhood life in Israel. 'Baking' their femininity in Israeli ways was also depicted through the attitude of some women towards the labour of baking and

the sense of constraint experienced by some women when following recipes. Most women also wished to pass on to their children the sense of pleasure in baking similar to engaging with “play dough”, followed by the pleasure of eating cakes and *challah*, for example, while other women conveyed their class aspirations by claiming to bake with great sophistication and accuracy, which, they said, had won them status among friends .

Next I demonstrate how ambivalences become part of the enactment of femininity that is realised through women’s home baking as they return home to their experience of childhood and early motherhood in Israel.

Baking and Remembering Ambivalence

According to Meyers (2001:83-103), who researched the materialisation of mother-daughter relations through food in the American context, memories about baking as comfort food activate a common intertwining of three basic human needs, love, food and security, which often get confused in attempts to fill inner emptiness, a confusion Meyers believes degenerates into eating problems⁴⁸. This explanation, however, overlooks the ability of women to use home baking and the memories this practice provokes to manifest ambivalences that enact social relationships, and in the case of women in this study, relationships embedded in memories of their Israeli home and life after migrating to New Zealand.

In this section I examine how home baking triggers and materialises ambivalences that are an inseparable part of their enactment of social relationships as they constitute home anew in New Zealand. I do this by referring to the case of Rina, which features three of the five primary tension points provoked in women in this study. First, there is Rina’s worrying in regard to her sleeping daughter, whom Rina described as an under-eater. Rina reassured herself by arguing that her daughter would gladly eat the *challah* she had baked and thus make up for her missed lunch. Despite remembering having been an under-eater herself in her childhood, Rina played down her mother’s own worries over the problem and said it had been an “obsession”, revealing mother-daughter tension (as the case of the hatred of butter in the first section showed). This source of tension, however, provoked women’s self-irony,

⁴⁸ Notably, on this point Meyers (2001:103) agrees with M.F.K. Fisher (1908–1992), a renowned American food writer. To the best of my knowledge the writing and life of this important figure in the gastronomic history of the USA has not been researched anthropologically, and certainly not through the lens of food nostalgia. This is a valid issue for further research since, as Markos (2006) argues, by the end of the twentieth century, M.F.K. Fisher’s understanding of food as a source for fundamental pleasure became highly popular, legitimising the manifestation of physical appetites and desires in the American culture.

with regards to their own worries about their children's under-eating. A second issue is articulated by the memories home baking reported by three women who experienced childhood poverty, as the earlier case of Sarah illustrated. A third issue arises in regard to maternal trauma in Israel in regard to a severe problem they experienced with the health care system in Israel around their pregnancy or early motherhood. A fourth issue is made clear by three women who avoid home baking. As I will show, these women experienced baking as evidence of 'failed' femininity, the heat of the oven provoking anguish rather than pleasure. This anguish provoked self-irony on account of the potency of the oven's heat, which I discuss in a subsequent section. A fifth primary source of tension emerges as women draw national boundaries through their home baking in the process of reconstituting home in New Zealand by beginning to home bake in the Kiwi way. This issue is discussed in a following section, again by referring to Rina's experience.

Concerning the first reason for women's source of frustration, children who under-ate in comparison with the expectations of their mothers caused the mothers to worry, often resulting in self-irony (towards their own worrying) in ways that both supported and contested the myth of the *polania*. On the one hand, self-irony towards their own worrying was a means of self-mockery that helped them stop worrying by laughing about it, and transformed their worry into pleasure. Instead of allowing children perceived as 'poor' eaters to avoid eating, women usually preferred that they eat their nourishing baking rather than not eat at all, as Rina's case demonstrates. Alternatively, I observed women use baking as a dessert and a reward to encourage such children to eat well, threatened to withhold the reward unless the children complied. Indeed, a similar practice of rewarding children for good behaviour with sweets is documented in the memories of Ashkenazi migrant Jews in the USA of the *shtetl* life before the First World War (Zborowski and Herzog 1962 [1952]:37, 372 in Shine Rakavy 1999:49-50). They remembered children being rewarded for success with sweet foods, usually fruits and baking, foods with which both the children and women were closely associated. During my study I noted that such rewards were used by women in general. On the other hand, worries over children eating well instigated a form of self-parody in which women denounced their own worry as unreasonable and *polania*-like as they rendered their experience normal in this way. This self-parody was manifested often as women stated that they had "survived well" or "came out all right" despite vivid recollections of being 'poor eaters' in their childhood and of their mothers' pestering. In some cases their

self-irony was manifested by the claim that their children were “manipulating” them, as some women put it.

In particular, women like Rina who had vivid recollections of being “chased” and “nagged” by their own mothers with continuous pleas to eat, harboured negative feelings towards their mothers. Interestingly, such feelings materialised in memories of childhood in laying blame on the women’s mothers for problematic relationships with eating regardless of their actions; some women denigrated their mothers as overanxious about their underweight, whereas others denigrated their mothers as overanxious about their daughters’ overweight. In their memories women often evoked the myth of the *polania* by explicitly blaming their mothers for attempting to control their weight. Valery, for example, remembered that her mother only baked on Fridays, after her father had bought her an oven. She described having been intensely pestered by her mother about being overweight, which Valery argued led to her first diet at the age of eight. Valery identified her own baking as a way of “compensating” for her sense of inadequacy as an overweight child in an effort to refrain from making the “same mistake” in her relations with her daughter. In New Zealand Valery began baking in abundance and allowed her daughter to eat baking freely and consume sweets from her “treat drawer” as a reward for any good behaviour. Hence the production and consumption of home baking provoked women’s ambivalent feelings and encouraged them to reflect on their own behaviours as mothers, which, in turn, instigated their self-irony.

Moreover, since the consumption of baking poses a threat to one’s maintenance of bodily weight and appearance and connotes luxury, excess and gluttony, sweet baking was the first type of baking to be excluded from the women’s own diets as they attempted to maintain or reduce their weight, and often women enforced these constraints on their overweight children and husbands. For example, Shivon argued that she “hides her biscuits” in her cupboard to help her overweight son “avoid temptation”. He often asks that she bake for him like she used to. Geffen bemoaned that she and her husband eat the baking they buy “just because it is there” and they are tempted by it. Miriam, as another example, hesitated for quite some time as to whether to buy a bread maker. She worried that the smell of freshly baked bread in the morning would lure her to eat more and result in weight gain. Though I had observed and participated in Miriam’s cooking, I did not have the chance to participate in her baking; as she was unsure whether she would host that weekend, she decided to cancel the baking as she feared that she would end up eating the cake if there were no guests. Miriam usually bought biscuits that she kept in her cupboards “just in case”, and felt that she and her husband have

“always been overweight”. Whenever I visited Miriam she explicitly urged me to eat more of the baking so that she would have less left to be tempted to eat. I elaborate on women’s desire to manage their weight through domestic food production and consumption, and that of their close kin, in Chapter Seven. It is clear, however, that just as home baking triggered great pleasure in consumption, this practice also triggered ambivalence on account of the potential to gain weight.

The second reason for women’s tension derived from bread baking in particular, which epitomises home and caused discomfort in women who had experienced poverty in their childhood to various degrees. Nellie, for example, felt ambivalent towards her own bread production and consumption despite having increased her baking of bread in New Zealand. On the one hand, she still does not feel satisfied unless she eats bread at every meal, a staple in her diet since childhood – but one that reminded her of poverty, and what she called her *dfeka*, a slang word meaning ‘a fault’. On the other hand, her craving for bread and longing for home increased her need to eat bread in order to feel satisfied, but disrupted her attempts to reduce and manage weight.

As for the third reason for women’s ambivalence, at least three women claimed to have experienced a maternal trauma related to their pregnancy or a new baby, which was not adequately addressed by the health care system. They employed home baking in attempts to fill the resulting emotional void and relieve the tension that materialised from such a direct threat to the lives of their babies by blaming the Israeli health care system for perceiving them as over-worried and anxious mothers and treating them as *polaniot*. By beginning to bake with or for their children in New Zealand, these women rejected having been treated as *polaniot* by the Israeli health care system. In their narratives of their past lives in Israel they became ‘heroines’ who fought for the survival of their children against the professional opinions of doctors, listening to their “screaming inner voices” or “feminine intuition”, as they put it. Though their experience of trauma might seem completely removed from the realm of domestic baking, they claimed that the trauma left their children with a general lack of interest and pleasure in eating. Engaging with the taste, smell and textures produced by baking helped generate kinship intimacy that women used as a means to two ends: to encourage children to find pleasure in eating and to relieve their own trauma by enacting ‘successful’ femininity. The comforting materialisation of kinship intimacy and love figured in their actions since none of the everyday domestic food practices were favoured by Jewish-

Israeli women and trusted to yield pleasure, intimacy and satisfaction as much as home baking was.

The feelings of these three women are illustrated by the experience of Nava, whose daughter suffered from an undiagnosed sickness as an infant. Nava challenged the Israeli doctors' dismissals and accusations that she was worrying excessively managed to get a diagnosis of her daughter's sickness and subsequent treatment through vigilance and persistence. This was also the case for the other two women. Eleven years later in New Zealand, after "a mid-life crisis", as Nava termed it, she decided to quit her paid employment to reflect on her life and what she would do next. In the course of her reflections she remembered a moment in her childhood (when she was around four years old) when she felt she had failed her mother, and had promised herself (and her mother, subconsciously) to always be "good enough". Nava, then, reached the conclusion that up until that point she had been motivated by her fear of failure in life – interestingly, an attribute she associated with the competitiveness of Jewish-Israelis compared with the continuous search for love that she associated with New Zealanders, whom she views as feeling that they are "not loved enough". This memory and her reflection on her childhood and early motherhood prompted Nava to begin baking with her daughter (about 12 years old at the time) in order to spend "quality time" with her, since, as Nava argued, baking is a practice her daughter enjoys, and the time they spent together baking caused her daughter to "thrive".

Furthermore, Nava, who does not particularly like baking, prefers "no-fuss recipes". She thus leaned towards baking newly acquired "Kiwi recipes" like cupcakes and muffins with her daughter. She noted that New Zealanders share the love of baking as a dessert to accompany every main meal, a habit that she explicitly did not recall from her childhood and her mother's ways at home. In our conversations Nava argued repeatedly that now that her daughter has grown and begun puberty she realised that "there is no need to worry anymore" about her weight and survival, since her daughter now shows interest and pleasure in eating – which Nava had specifically wished to generate by baking with her. As with the other two women, by baking with her daughter Nava sought to relieve her own trauma as a younger mother. In the face of negative memories of the Israeli health care system, these women emphasised their own triumphs as 'good enough' and caring women by home baking. They asserted their claims either by baking for their children or by baking with them. Moreover, it was clear that by baking with her daughter Nava wished to compensate for the intimacy they lost while she engaged in her career and acted as a 'competitive' Jewish-Israeli, as she

perceived it. The shift in her general approach, epitomised in beginning to bake with and for her daughter, is also marked by an emotive enactment of national belonging, as Nava began baking in the Kiwi way. Nava used her perception of New Zealanders as feeling ‘not loved enough’ to describe their motivation in life in general in order to explain the great importance New Zealanders associate with home baking, seeing it as an act that manifests care and love, a point I return to in the section on the fifth reason for women’s ambivalence.

The Baking Oven: Generating Discontent and Self-Irony

The fourth source of tension in home baking for women, the heat of the oven, is an important part of the symbolic materialisation of feelings that evoke nostalgic memories through engaging the senses and constituting femininity. Usually the heat of the oven in home baking emanates emotional warmth, intimacy and the feminine caregiving of the home baker through the domestic transformation of ingredients into food. Research into the memories of Jewish women who migrated to France from colonial Algeria (1937–1962) shows their nostalgic memories of the familial home whereby the heat of the oven stood for intimacy and communal solidarity (Bahloul 1996:36-37). The heat of the oven used for cooking, baking and heating the home was consistently evoked in these women’s memories to compensate for material lack, generating symbolic abundance and conviviality against scarcity in their living conditions and the constraints they themselves experienced as women at that time.

In comparison, I examine the experience of women in this study who for whom the heat of the baking oven was a source of tension, which triggered ambivalence and self-irony. In their journey to the past women remembered failed baking as a failing of their femininity, acts of recall that evoked their personal-collective past. I examine these memories and feelings by using extracts from fieldnotes pertaining to the experience of Geffen, who was a full-time mother and self-employed at the time of the study and had lived in New Zealand for the 12 years. She is one of the three women in this study who do not bake. She explained that her past failed attempts at baking were due to her “ideology”; her inability to follow recipes to the letter. In this claim Geffen expressed self-irony by making fun of her desire to be a successful baker and generalised on successful baking as a matter of feminine ‘principle’. This self-irony becomes all the more evident in the extracts I analyse below. They show that Geffen took great pride and pleasure in her cooking skills, in sharp contrast to her baking

failures, for which she blamed herself. Geffen was able to reject a career as a chef because she felt it to be “laborious”, “economically degrading” and a “stressful” job.

On our second meeting I arrived as agreed at around 4:00 pm to observe Geffen cooking. It was the beginning of the school year and she had just returned from “picking up the girls and shopping for some groceries”. She is usually the first parent to arrive home. Before starting to cook, Geffen showed me around her spacious, sunlit and well-equipped kitchen set at the back of her home, overlooking a green backyard fenced with trees. Geffen felt the kitchen is “hard to work in” during the afternoon hours because of the blinding sunlight and heat and had the blinds pulled down. She felt she never has the “right things” to fulfil her purposes in the kitchen, and when she last voiced this feeling to a New Zealand friend who she was hosting, the unintentional result was a new ice-cream scoop appearing in her mailbox.

These feelings extended to her oven. The oven was one of the main reasons she had bought the house a couple of years earlier. It was an antique (mid-last century) griddle charcoal oven cast in iron and set under a chimney with a brick hood to collect the cooking odour and grease, built by the inner wall between the kitchen and the living room. The oven had ceramic white tiles decorated with images of fruit and vegetables commonly associated with the Mediterranean and the Middle East – artichokes, eggplants, grapes and pomegranates – which were probably added by the house’s prior owner. I was surprised and enthused about such a beautiful and stately antique piece in a modern-looking and well-equipped home kitchen. I had been to a demonstration of such an oven at a historic villa at a public park the previous winter and was a little familiar with it. On that drizzly day the organisers had offered the visitors hot vegetable soup cooked on the griddle and freshly baked scones and buns. I shared my enthusiasm about the oven and my memory of this demonstration with Geffen. Rather than showing pride in her oven, she emphasised her discontent with baking and her disappointment in her failures. She told me she intended to “get rid of the oven” and move the kitchen into the current dining room. She had hoped to use the oven often for baking and make it into “a centre of heat” to keep the big house warm, but had managed to use it only once and the outcome was “hard as bricks”, which she put down to not having set the oven at the right temperature.

I noticed Geffen has also a modern built-in oven with gas hobs, and asked whether she baked in that oven instead. Geffen hastened to explain that she hates baking and that recent

failed attempts had become “a family joke”. After several attempts, mainly baking cakes for her daughters’ birthdays, Geffen had made up her mind never to bake again, which only increased her ambivalence. In the absence of close female kin in New Zealand who bake and by being unable to bake birthday cakes for her daughters Geffen was faced with a recurring challenge that she solved by usually buying birthday cakes and other baking at local and rather expensive bakeries. Only once had she had the pleasure of a visiting female relative baking her daughter a birthday cake. Though I thought she might be happy about it, instead she lamented, “Who would have thought that a girl, 21 years old, would have to bake my daughter a birthday cake!” That occasion was consecrated in an enlarged framed photograph that hung in the house’s entry corridor, which ironically acted as a constant reminder of her continual failure in baking.

When I returned home that night I realised that Geffen and I share an iconic feminine enactment of love and intimacy, having hung a similar photograph in a similar place in our homes. A photograph of my eldest daughter, aged two, blowing out the candles on her birthday ‘train’ cake, with my face serving as the photograph’s background, was ‘staring’ back at me. Though I baked that cake with great pride and pleasure, enlarged the photograph and decided where to hang it at home, until that moment I had not noticed the meanings in my acts and decisions. This revealing moment is one of many which showed me in what ways I am similar and different to other women in my research: while I felt pleasure and pride in looking at my photograph, Geffen felt discontent in looking at hers, conveying ambivalence towards baking, which culminates in self-irony for reminding her of the experiences of disappointment and of her sense of failure with regard to home baking. Geffen had hoped to use the symbolic and physical heat generated by the oven as a vehicle for her to distribute warmth, love and care to her family, using the oven to ‘bake’ her successful femininity, so to speak. Despite material abundance in her kitchen, she was not satisfied, since the baking oven had turned into a symbolic obstacle that she wished to remove from the house. In fact, when Geffen bakes, it is without a sense of pleasure. She explained that lately she had begun using baking as a means of managing her daughter’s daily routine. The four-year-old tended to sleep in in the mornings, which created “a nightmare in the evenings”. Since her daughter enjoys baking, Geffen realised that she could prevent this “nightmare” by luring her out of bed with the prospect of baking, inviting her into the kitchen to help with stirring, mixing, sprinkling, etc. In this way she gets up earlier and her daily routine is better. If in the memories of other women the oven generated heat that extended symbolically into

care, comfort and intimacy, then in the case of women like Geffen, who refrained from baking, an empty and cold oven stood for a sense of failure as a woman and provoked self-irony in order to restore some normalcy and derive pleasure.

Another event that yielded much humorous self-irony demonstrates how the heat of the oven can generate a particularly Jewish-Israeli form of personal-collective remembrance. This event is worth mentioning despite its rarity as it illustrates the power of baking ovens to instigate self-irony as a means of transforming horror into pleasure. As she bent down to place the *pitot* in her oven, one woman joked, “We’ll have to stop talking for a while as I am about to stick my head in the oven”. Considering her state of mind at the time –she had just told me in detail about her major difficulties as a career woman – I thought it might be possible that she was hinting at the option of committing suicide out of despair. Yet when I asked her to explain her joke, she argued that her sense of humour perplexes New Zealanders who do not understand the “Holocaust jokes of Israelis”. I realised that in her self-irony this woman asserted not only her Jewish-Israeli identity in the recollection of past traumatic atrocities in the collective memory, but also the extent to which baking and ovens may trigger self-irony in humour.

Baking in the Kiwi Way

The fifth issue in women’s home baking relates to the specific meanings associated with home baking by New Zealanders who acknowledge the practice of home baking as an enactment of kinship love and care that emphasises the value of the family, in accordance with the values placed on home baking for British women (Herda 1991, Leach and Inglis 2003, Warde 1997:148-149, Warde and Martens 2000, Wright-St Clair et al. 2005). Since this everyday domestic practice is important for the negotiation of femininity and the autonomy of middle-class New Zealand women as ‘self-reliant’ and pragmatic home makers, engaging in it contributes to the ease with which women in this study are usually able to ‘pass’ into being like New Zealanders and fit into this culture.

However, in the previous extracts I also described how Rina had conveyed mild ambivalence to baking as she depicted the reaction of local mothers towards her orange cake at her daughter’s playgroup. These women “pinched” the sugared orange peel off the cake she had baked according to her mother’s recipe, as if pinching Rina’s social skin according to her perception, which Rina took as turning home baking into a ground for feminine competition. This moment represented a relative failure in Rina’s memory specifically in

contrast to her other recollections of success, exemplified by her yeast chocolate cake, which was “devoured in seconds”, and in comparison with her husband’s nostalgic reaction to the very same sugared orange peel. Rina depicted her wish to reconstitute home in New Zealand in regarding the undesirable reaction of the local women to her home baking as the ‘pinching’ of her social skin, a symbolic membrane of her femininity. Her longing to belong in New Zealand was also expressed through baking by the fact that Rina is one of several women in this study who in New Zealand began baking and decorating cakes with icing for their children (for birthdays or as lunch box food), as women in New Zealand do in their domestic baking. While discussing changes in her baking experience after immigration, Rina exclaimed:

Would you believe me if I told you I did not know what ‘icing’ was before I got to New Zealand?... since we live in New Zealand and I have children, only once a year I get crazy with colourful and complex icing designs on my daughters’ birthday cakes... I lack any shemetz [grain, speck] of artistic talent, but I try my best. I know that mothers in New Zealand care about icing... they talk about it a lot and invest hard work into it.

This statement demonstrates that using icing to decorate her daughters’ birthday cakes as part and parcel of baking carries great significance for Rina. Twice a year, Rina puts her utmost effort into icing her cakes. Aware of the significance of icing for New Zealand women, Rina imitates them by baking and decorating with icing and, at the same time, conveys care towards her daughters. Rina repeatedly emphasised that she is prepared to make an exception to the family’s usual healthy diet by using artificial colouring and sugar, as well as investing in artistic planning, work, time and money in order to produce “a proper” New Zealand birthday cake. Her need to emphasise this point stems from the fact that icing and condensed milk are unpopular in baking in Israel compared with New Zealand, and denote unhealthy excessive amounts of sugar. By baking such a New Zealand-style cake on special occasions, Rina, as well as other women in this study, demonstrated their willingness to compromise for the benefit of their children, since the consumption of sweet baking might pose a threat to maintaining one’s health and figure. In breaking away from the family’s healthy eating routine by baking like New Zealand women, the women articulated their aspirations to become like New Zealanders, at least for important occasions like a child’s birthday. Indeed, after their move to New Zealand, birthdays that in Israel are less significant

in the lives of children and their parents gradually became more significant occasions marked by elaborate cakes and baking lore evidenced in decorating books such as the one Rina had acquired in New Zealand. I noted that women baked special birthday cakes or asked other Jewish-Israeli women they had befriended to bake for them on a child's fifth birthday, which marks entry into primary school, an occasion marked on the seventh birthday in Israel. In addition, in New Zealand they celebrated the twenty-first birthday, which marks entry to adulthood, compared with the Bat or Bar Mitzvah birthdays (aged 12 and 13) and the eighteenth birthday in Israel that marks entry into adulthood and the military service.

Another example of women who began to bake in the local way is provided by Naama. She created a unique hybrid of a secular baking ritual whereby every Sunday night she enjoys baking cupcakes and muffins for her children's lunchboxes and for 'bring a plate' occasions on weekdays. She named this ritual "*Moztaei (exit) Yom Rishon (Sunday)*", drawing a parallel with "*Moztaei (exit) Shabbat*". Ending the day of rest in Israel is marked by more traditional or religious Jewish-Israelis with a ritual called *havdalah* (separation) which acts to separate the sacred from the mundane. Secular Jewish-Israelis at that time engage in ordinary entertainment and leisure. Thus by naming this ritualised baking session in this way, Naama attested to her secular Jewish-Israeli identity by implementing a proxy for a Jewish-Israeli weekly ritual that connotes leisure and pleasure, and substituting its content with a specifically New Zealand ritualised practice, that of baking in the Kiwi way .

Women began decorating birthday cakes with icing or baking cupcakes, muffins, scones and pavlovas as an indication of their longing to belong in New Zealand. They demonstrated their desire to constitute home anew by enacting their femininity through beginning to home-bake like New Zealanders. Pavlova, for example, is an iconic Kiwi meringue dessert (Leach 2008, Longhurst 2008, Symons 2010) that several women took pride in being able to bake well. Like Rina and Naama, other women in this study are aware of the importance of home baking for New Zealanders as a significant act that conveys feminine care and comfort. As such, these women conveyed care in New Zealand in accordance with the local and long-time practice of 'bringing a plate', a practice that developed from rural morning and afternoon teas into a national tradition of hospitality (Maynards 2008:76-7). 'Bring a plate' strongly links the domestic production and consumption of baking with femininity and middle-class family values as an incarnation of the older expectation of 'ladies, a plate'. The term 'ladies, a plate' in rural community-gatherings denoted feminine competition and achievement, which are consolidated in the pleasure of returning home with an empty plate (Herda 1991:170).

Interestingly, as such, morning and afternoon teas are mealtimes that for adults in Israel exist mostly in the context of family life in the rural settlements, such as the kibbutz and the *moshav*. Morning teas, on the other hand, are held in kindergartens and throughout the school years at 10:00 am. As such, morning and afternoon teas are held more commonly by women in this study after immigrating to New Zealand for the sake of feeding their children.

The Portrayal of Baking in the Kiwi and Israeli Media

Feminine competition on the basis of the social expectation of women to master baking at home has been portrayed by New Zealand media in a recent popular television show, *New Zealand's Hottest Home Baker*. While the reality show depicted home baking as a site of feminine competition and achievement, it also pointed to certain emotions as indicative of particular traits seen as essential to middle-class femininity by choosing a modest mother as the winner. During the final episode of the show's first season (March 2010), the emotional powers of nostalgia enveloped participants when faced with the host's final question, "What does baking mean to you?" While the male judge appeared unmoved, the female judge and the last two women contestants, a slim mother and a bigger-bodied single woman, all choked back tears. For the contestants, the accumulation of tension was clearly manifested in their tears as they voiced memories of the great efforts they invested in winning and the support of their family and friends – a return home through the love and pleasure that baking conveys. As the judges themselves pointed out, there was little difference in their baking performance in the finals. Yet as the final winner the judges chose the slim mother who seemed more insecure and had appeared less success-driven throughout the programme. This contestant preferred to bake by using wholemeal and vegan recipes, which, combined with her weak drive for success, her trim figure and her status as a mother, allowed her to win over her competitor. The message was clear: home baking is about feminine competition and achievement, and a woman who refrains from exhibiting an 'excessive' desire to win or eat is a 'good' woman, and the 'real' deserving winner. Obviously performing such desires on the small screen breaches the self-constraint and modesty expected of good middle-class Kiwi women. More than anything, the show portrayed the nostalgic longing of New Zealanders for home baking as the epitome of femininity and homeliness. In other words, home baking became the epitome of 'simple and homely pleasure' of New Zealanders' mythical-rural past. The image of women baking in the show's home-like kitchen articulated the "innocent homely pleasures" in the nostalgia of middle-class New Zealanders for rural life, a nostalgia which had already taken shape by the 1960s (Brookes 1997:242). At that time, New

Zealanders' nostalgia for the rural life acted to settle their upheaval in the face of the rapid urbanisation of rural Maori and commoditisation of the local economy. This nostalgia had an element of racial tension that continues to be expressed in the consumption of food in the public arena of New Zealand restaurants (Morris 2010). By way of comparison, I next analyse how gendered values in baking and nostalgia are played out in Israeli food advertisements.

Shifting Nostalgic Consumption in Jewish-Israeli Advertisements for Baking

The epigraph in the title of this chapter is a reminder of a famous advertisement from the 1980s for ready-made cake mix produced by Elite, the main company producing coffee and sweets in Israel. Though the product range promoted by this advertisement failed commercially, the catchy slogan epitomising femininity and success became part of Israeli jargon. Women who recommended I include other women in my study specifically due to their baking used this phrase as part of “*lefargen*”, promoting women’s success, as they said. *Lefargen* is a modern Israeli-Hebrew term that derives from the Yiddish verb *farginen* – to wish well, to not begrudge/envy, to indulge, and to afford to. In such a way, women attested to the ‘name’ and status other Jewish-Israeli women had achieved in their social network as home bakers. The following is a comparison between two baking advertisements: the first by Elite from the 1980s, and the second by a competitor, Osem, from the 2000s onwards. I identify an important shift in the ways nostalgic consumption and pleasure are employed to promote sales for baked goods in Israel, compared with the ways women in this study use home baking. Before describing and analysing the first advertisement from the 1980s, it should also be noted that in Israeli-Hebrew the word *Isha* means a wife as well as a woman.

In the Elite advertisement for the cake mix “The King’s Cake”, the model and actress Heli Goldenberg plays the beautiful but helpless wife of a somewhat neurotic knight in shining armour, played by the notoriously ugly comedian and actor, Dubi Gal. The knight rides hastily to his castle somewhere in Europe. Upon arrival, he hurries down the stairs, slips on the floor, then turns to his wife and says, “My dear wife, my dear wife, the king will arrive in an hour! If there are no *kibudim* (food for guests) we are *avudim* (lost)”. The whole advertisement is dialogued in rhymes. The wife is wearing a bonnet, a shirt, and an apron, all in white, overtop a long dark skirt, and sits at a floured kitchen table with eggs and vegetables around her. As she holds a rolling pin in despair and she says: “Oh knight of dreams, I know not how to bake, and have no time to prepare! What to do, what to do?” The couple argues

over this life-and-death matter as the knight accidentally crushes an egg. The knight says, “What to do? The king will have our heads! While they are deliberating, to their amazement a fairy appears and declares, “You want cakes, no problem... An Elite cake – baked by you!” The wife, surprised, responds “Me?”, her face now pictured near the knight’s. The fairy magically suggests a range of four ready-made cake mixes by Elite. The fairy uses her magic wand and a modern oven appears in the castle’s kitchen, along with the various mixes that are pictured as fairy dust moves in time with the music. The cakes are then baked by the knight and his wife, with only their hands shown adding eggs and water to the mixes. The cakes are pictured baking and rising in the oven ‘magically’ (the same magical music signifies this miracle throughout the advertisement). The cake rising in the oven is alternated with the couple’s adjacent, amazed faces. Finally, as the knight stirs cake batter in the background, the wife takes a cake out of the oven, holding the hot tin with a towel, and says, “What a wonderful aroma... the cake is already done”. She then places the towel over a chair, looking somewhat tired but satisfied as she wipes her hands on her apron for no particular reason. She adds the cake to a long table laden with cakes. The fairy disappears along with the music.

In the next scene, the arrival of the king’s carriage is announced by two horns. The music changes to a Medieval style as the overweight king is pictured seated on his throne under a marquee outside the castle. The king hums in pleasure while eating a slice of cake from a small plate, bringing the cake to his mouth with his hand then wiping it on a white paper serviette. The wife, who is now wearing dignified clothes befitting of her status, and the knight, who did not change his clothing, are seated on either side of the king around a table and conversing:

The knight says to his wife: “He likes it.”

The king: “A real elite cake – did you bake it (to the wife)?”

The wife (modestly): “Yes, sir (which also translates as ‘my master’)”.

The knight (lowering his head modestly): “I helped her.” The knight is then seen bringing a teaspoon to his mouth as if eating cake.

The king (reaching towards the wife and putting his arm around her shoulders):

“What a wife/woman... she is pretty and she bakes too.” The wife leans slightly towards the king. She has not touched the cakes.

The knight (fearfully, as he chews): “He will snatch/kidnap her (the wife/cake) from me!”

Finally, the king ventures off in his carriage, kissing the cake mix package and laughing loudly.

This advertisement reflects the myth of the *polania*, portrayed in the use of baked goods as compensation for a feminine ‘lack’: the failure of the wife to fulfil her wifely duties, indicated by her despair (in putting down the rolling pin) at not knowing how to bake. The advertisement clearly exploits the intimacy between the wife and husband while depicting home baking using cake mixes as an accomplishment, as a key to being a good wife, and suggesting competition between classes, aristocracy and monarchy. The whole advertisement is presented as a fairy tale. It uses slapstick humour as the knight slides in the wrong direction in his haste upon entering the castle, and breaks an egg in his distress. The actual baking of cakes in the oven and the couple’s wonder at the phenomenon of the cake physically transforming in shape through the heat of the oven as it rises are closely linked to magic. This magical element is perhaps designed to appeal to children as consumers, given that they are often a driving force in the consumption of their parents. The main characters in the fairy tale are presented stereotypically. The wife’s beauty, stature, femininity and sexuality stand out in contrast to the knight’s ugliness and short size, while the overweight body of the king, as well as the way he eats with his hand and no cutlery, epitomise gluttony. The stirring hands of the knight and wife and later the wife’s hands as she places the kitchen towel on a chair and wipes them on her apron are portrayed as signifying the end of the baking ritual, while the pleasure of the aroma and taste of baking are evoked. The wife is not seen putting any cake in her mouth and eating; this avoidance becomes an embodied cultural marker that contributes to her successful performance as a good and pretty wife and reinforces her civilised femininity. The wife bakes to become attractive for the consuming desires of both men while refraining from eating the baking herself to stay attractive. Avoiding the consumption of baked goods, which are seen as undesirable and epitomise the danger of weight gain is characteristic of most women in this study. The frustration of the wife who does not how to bake is demonstrated by only two women in this study; all the others expressed pleasure, pride and a sense of autonomy in knowing how to bake.

Moreover, similarly to Giard’s findings in her study of French women and home baking (1998:193), in this advertisement the practice of baking is what ‘forges’ love between the knight and his wife, since after arguing they physically come closer in their shared amazement at the baking product that minimises their labour and anxiety. At the same time as they enact this kinship intimacy, they also enact their designated gendered roles, which are

magnified and exaggerated theatrically since it is, after all, a fairy tale; the wife ‘home bakes’ and the husband ‘helps’.

Finally, the advertisement plays on the double meaning of the word ‘elite’ as the brand name signals high quality and evokes class tension. This tension is materialised in a critical look at monarchy. On the one hand, hosting the king with cake is presented as a ‘life and death’ issue. The nostalgic temporal-spatial choice of a backdrop of European manners with Medieval music and a castle setting, hinting at the aspiration to civilise the body, is also designed to evoke class. On the other hand, class tension is materialised by presenting baking for hosting as a gendered matter that binds two carnal and masculine appetites – hunger and sex. The husband fears losing his wife to the king as his authority is threatened by the king’s consumption of the cake. This fear is allayed when the king leaves by his obvious delight with the ready-made cake rather than the wife.

In sum, this advertisement depicts a traditional class and gender hierarchy that emphasises the role of the commercial cake mix in constructing femininity, beauty and baking as desired attributes of a ‘good’ wife. This fairy-tale-like advertisement demonstrates how baking and its consumption are linked to visceral pleasures, drawing upon the stereotypical discontent and anxieties of the middle-class, if one is to consider the stress and despair shown by the knight and his wife. In the 1980s, Israeli commercial cake mixes relate to a middle-class feminine ‘lack’ that emphasised class aspiration by referring to the myth of the *polania*. A more recent advertisement by Elite for white and brown chocolate brownies makes an explicit return to the myth of the *polania*, this time presented through the use of animation to depict the figure of a dark-skinned woman with a voice of a well-known Yemenite singer and a richness of Yiddish expressions in the song’s lyrics.

Yet one would be mistaken in assuming stasis in these presentations that are aimed at enhancing consumption. With the commercial failure of cake mixes, the two leading companies, Elite and Osem, turned to producing ready-made cakes. Osem’s advertisement (from the 2000s) demonstrates a turn towards the intimacy between mother and child (daughter) by presenting a commercial chocolate cake as the ultimate comfort food. Similar cakes are produced by Achva, a smaller-scale company whose products are privately imported into New Zealand and available around Auckland, mostly in greengrocers’ shops. I assume that the main reason I had not observed Achva’s cakes being consumed by my participants or their families is that they mostly bake cakes themselves or rely on their friends

to bake for them. However, as the women reported to me, they do occasionally buy them, usually as novelty to remember the tastes of their Israeli home.

The Osem advertisement begins with the 1980s rock ballad “Yesh lach otti” (you [female] have me)⁴⁹. While it was originally conceived as a love song sung by a man, in this advertisement it is sung by a young girl.

Go, beloved girl, to far away beaches, different dreams.

There are more trails [passages] none has been [through], go there.

No, no, don't forget, when you are sad – you have me.

No, no, don't forget – I am here.

The advertisement used unknown actors who are silent throughout and whose actions are led by the singing, tied in with their behaviour and manifesting their emotions. The girl is about six years old and has recently lost her two upper-front teeth. She observes her face reflected in the bathroom mirror, then in a glass of water as she touches her toothless gum with her hand. It is raining outside and she touches a fogged-up window with her finger, holding a ginger-haired doll. Then, at the dining table, she examines at her toothless gums reflected on the back of a shiny spoon. Alone on the living-room sofa, she bows her head, saddened by her loss. Her mother peeks out from the back kitchen as the camera fades out and cuts to the girl, then briefly focuses on the mother observing her daughter's sadness (at this point the singing culminates: “Even when you are sad – you have me”). The mother appears in the frame, sits by the daughter on the sofa and places her hands on her crossed knees. The daughter smiles at her. The mother smiles back and exposes two ‘missing’ upper-front teeth. For a moment the daughter is surprised, and then laughs happily at the newly found similarity between them. The mother wipes chocolate from her two upper-front teeth with her finger, then offers her daughter a moist slice of ready-made chocolate cake. They each eat a big slice of cake from the same plate. At this stage the singing stops and a female voiceover says, “Sometimes a small slice of attention is enough. Osem presents chocolate cake for children reduced in saturated fat and saturated with attention. It's good – it's Osem”. The advertisement ends with voluptuous chocolate cream poured into and filling a yellow vessel.

⁴⁹ Lyrics by Tzof Filosof and vocals by Yizhar Ashdot, lead singer of the rock band Tislam.

The Osem advertisement conveys ‘familism’ (Fogiel-Bijaoui 2002), which posits the conventional traditional division of labour in the family, a strongly persistent pattern in Israel that co-exists with alternative divisions in families. The advertisement constitutes the middle-class Jewish-Israeli family values by reasserting the role of women as homemakers through the intimacy of mother–daughter relationships and humour. The daughter’s movement through the house evokes a sense of restlessness and loss further developed by the sense of nostalgia conveyed by the lyrics, the music and the girl-singer’s voice. Childhood and home are depicted in nostalgia for an imagined haven, a warm, secure and dry place. In this advertisement the cake reinforces the mother’s attention (“saturated with attention”) and care for the child’s health with its reduced saturated fat content. A slice of cake is equated to a ‘slice’ of maternal love and care that epitomises home.

The flowing chocolate at the end evokes comfort and compensation for the lack the daughter is experiencing due to her fallen teeth through the act of consumption, a notion that the whole advertisement promotes. By the filling of an empty vessel with flowing chocolate, the advertisement symbolically conveys both the girl’s emotional embodied loss and its transformation from sadness into renewed pleasure and joy. The joy is depicted through mother-daughter intimacy stemmed from sharing the cake. Again, the mouth is constituted as the main orifice for consumption of food that ‘makes’ kinship love (Giard 1998:193) and triggers anxiety for losses, only this time the chocolate cake stands for a mother’s love to comfort and assist her daughter in her restless search for a homely feeling stemming from her lost teeth. The pleasure of sharing cake denotes femininity by linking motherhood and women’s bodies with home to manifest kinship intimacy and love. The enticing voice of the singing girl and the song’s lyrics both encourage the girl-actress and Israeli consumers into movement within the confines of that home. This kind of constrained mobility is triggered by a general air of nostalgia, so long as they remember where the ‘real’ home is: “Don’t forget... you have me... I am here.” Here, the mother’s body is turned into the ultimate home and the equivalent of the motherland (Irigaray 1985), allowing only stagnant and confined mobility. Thus, from the 2000s ready-made cakes stand for intimacy and care, conveyed by a mother–child union to make up for a daughter’s ‘lack’, deploying an emphasis on comfort and pleasure in evoking the myth of the *bashlanit*.

In sum, both advertisements convey kinship intimacy through the consumption of different baked goods that deploy different nostalgias as they constitute femininity by evoking a sense of longing to return home through the consumption of baked goods to make up for specific

feminised lacks. These lacks are presented according to the social role designated for women in home baking, either for prestige or for comfort, as stereotypical representations of feminine care of their time, depicting women as relying on ready-made products since they cannot or do not home-bake. In the first advertisement from the 1980s, the intimacy that is triggered relates to wife–husband kinship relations, which stands for a class tension deployed by longing for a civilised body and suggesting that women bake for prestige according to the feminine myth of the *polania*. In comparison, in the 2000s advertisement the consumption of baked goods stands for pleasure and comfort and longing for a safe haven, demonstrated by mother–daughter intimacy in support of the myth of the *bashlanit*. In particular, the latter advertisement is linked to imagery in the service of national nostalgia for the motherland that accords with a change in Israel’s policy towards emigrants since the 1990s (Cohen 2007:275-276). This policy came out to encourage Jewish-Israeli emigrants to return to their caring, ‘embracing’ and ultimate motherland, and the emphasis on the enticing power of nostalgia as an act of idealised and collective recall serves this interest all the more.

Conclusions

Through their experiences of home baking in New Zealand, the Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study negotiated their sense of femininity and sexuality. They employed their visceral engagement with the production and consumption of baking to convey longing for Israeli baked goods, and articulated memories that manifest pleasure, pride, ambivalence and self-irony. Their longing for Israeli baking was obviously instigated by their geographical distance from Israeli culture, and prompted most women to increase baking in the Israeli way, as well as engaging with baking in general. These engagements enticed remembrances, particularly memories of kindergarten experiences and of early motherhood in their past life in Israel. They conflated this retrospective look at their past homes and lives in Israel with their perspectives on the future, the latter expressed by baking like New Zealanders and thus constituting home anew in New Zealand.

Women elaborated on the comforting meanings of home baking by embracing a Jewish-Israeli hierarchy of bread, *challah* and sweet baking through which they gained feminine prestige in New Zealand. Through home baking, some women chose to make up for losses instigated by immigration, such as deteriorated economic situations or lower sexual interest due to their having become full-time mothers in New Zealand. Several women wished to lure their husbands into nostalgic consumption, substituting the pleasure of sex with the pleasure of consuming home-baked goods, while still maintaining their attractive appearance. In such

ways women enacted their Israeli femininity and made claims that align with the myth of the *bashlanit*. In particular, while relieving the threats of poverty women accentuated their femininity through the sensate pleasures of baking with yeast, in particular by baking bread, *pitot* and *challah*, since yeast baking manifests the mythical transformation underlying the creation and sustenance of life. Some women conveyed sophistication as class aspiration through the pleasure they derived from engaging viscerally with the demands of baking with accuracy. In contrast, other women derived pleasure from their improvisations and the simplicity and playfulness of baking that they associated with handling and shaping dough, thus defying the constraints of recipes, measurements and expected qualities. This visceral engagement denoted a reminder of childhood play, which contributed to women's sense of returning to their kindergarten experiences both through their memories and their desires to pass these experiences on to their children.

Apart from their sense of pleasure and pride, women expressed tensions and through home baking that resulted in ambivalence, often to the extent of self-irony. Home baking provoked childhood memories of women's sense of inadequacy as over- or under-eaters. Over-eaters argued that their mothers avoided baking or constrained their daughters' consumption of baked goods to manage their weight, while under-eaters criticised their mothers for being over-anxious. Three women also expressed this kinship tension through an aversion for butter. Women's awareness that they often treat their children similar to their mothers triggered self-irony as they mocked their own preoccupations in worrying over their children. Self-irony was their way of normalising their experience by relieving their worry. Nevertheless, they criticised their mothers by describing them as *polania*. A few women criticised the medical system in Israel in a similar manner while rejecting the threat their motherland posed to their femininity. These women sought to relieve past trauma as they began to bake for and with their children in New Zealand. A few other women relived memories of their childhood poverty by baking bread despite feeling threatened by the potential implications of consuming it on weight management. Several others remembered failed attempts to bake and consequently avoided it. Further associations with the heat of the oven gave rise to self-irony in humorous acts of cultural recall in remembering the collective past of the Holocaust. Since women acknowledged that baking in the Kiwi way is a way of becoming like New Zealanders, the emotions provoked in baking for 'bring a plate' events and social gatherings expressed, for the most part, the pleasure and pride they derived from

their successful femininity, and in some cases their dissatisfaction with this local form of feminine competition.

Juxtaposing how women used their home baking with the way that the food media in New Zealand and Israel portray baked goods demonstrates that the latter assert stereotypical feminine images of middle-class women ensconced in domesticity, albeit in different ways. In a television show on baking in New Zealand, femininity is depicted according to the nostalgic notion of a modest woman who is a caring mother that prefers whole and healthy ingredients, but is insecure in her baking abilities. The television advertisements in Israel use baking to draw attention to deficiencies in femininity that enhance the perception of women as dependant, moving from an emphasis on aesthetics and class aspirations in the 1980s to an emphasis on care and comfort in the 2000s. In the 1980s middle-class women are portrayed as dependent on their beauty and hospitality, and the nostalgic consumption that is triggered attests to class tensions by exploiting wife–husband intimacy according to the myth of the *polania*. From the 2000s, commercially baked goods in Israeli advertisements encourage nostalgic consumption for the omnipotent but immobile mother who epitomises ‘the land’ and ‘the origin’, not only in reference to the myth of the *bashlanit*, but also by conflating this myth with changes in Israel’s policy towards emigrants. Thus, the stereotypical and idealistic presentations of women in the food media with regard to their femininity and sexuality serve nation-state ideologies in luring citizens to return home.

The next chapter examines how the women in this study enact the communal home through their experiences of casual hosting. In order to examine the senses, memories and emotions women associate with food and drink at casual hospitality events I look at the changes that they engender in their hospitality practices after immigration.

Chapter Five: Constituting Home Anew – Casual Hospitality and the Communal Home

When it comes to hosting, I am a real polania; in case guests arrive unexpectedly the freezer is full of my baking and foods that children like, such as chips and burgers.
(Nora)

This chapter examines the experiences of the Jewish-Israeli migrants in this study while engaging in casual hospitality events, such as weekend dinners, morning teas, brunches, lunches, afternoon teas (also called ‘coffee’ events⁵⁰), on weekdays or weekends. Casual hospitality events entail sharing food and drink with guests and culminate in conversation. The chapter demonstrates the ways women realise the dimension of home as ‘communal home’ through casual hospitality. As the quote above implies, although casual hospitality events usually begin with an invitation to one’s home, whether calculated or spontaneous, they may also be prompted by the unexpected arrival of guests, which necessitates improvisation in food provision. Without a doubt, the women in this study realise pleasure and pride by feeding others in a *polania*-like manner. I therefore analyse how and why women derive such feelings from their experiences in casual hospitality. My examination looks at changes in their hosting practices after migration, the meanings assigned to the food and drink they offer, and the sensate experiences of food production and consumption in the context of hosting.

Studies in the anthropology of domestic hospitality and gift exchange suggest that intimacy and inclusion materialise in casual hospitality via the largesse and obligation by which participants suspend social tensions (see for example, Andrews, Roberts, and Selwyn 2007, Douglas 1990, O’Gorman 2005). Participants may also realise the potential for humiliation, shame and even enmity in such social exchanges (Miller 1995:22-27). Disgust expressed on such occasions is theorised as a way of asserting a social hierarchy that articulates morality through embodied boundaries (Ahmed 2004, Miller 1998). A recent journal issue on hospitality sums up the main social themes that arise in hospitality as guest-host relations, “like gift-giving, involve reciprocity, a tension between spontaneity and calculation, generosity and parasitism, friendship and enmity, improvisation and rule”

⁵⁰ The women in this study incorporate the expression ‘a cup of coffee’ into Hebrew when inviting other Jewish-Israeli migrants to their homes for morning/afternoon tea. When inviting guests in English, they may replace this expression with ‘a cup of tea’ for a mid-morning or mid-afternoon visit. In the evenings, when inviting for a full dinner usually around 6 pm, they may use the term ‘tea’.

(Candea and da Col 2012:S1). Candea and da Col thus suggest that these themes be studied through a range of ambivalences, which, I argue, derive from the desire of the migrant women in this study to constitute the communal home anew in New Zealand.

In this chapter I draw on Candea and da Col's suggestion in order to demonstrate the intricate negotiation of social relationships through women's rather contradictory feelings in casual hospitality. I argue that Jewish-Israeli migrant women in New Zealand express longing and derive pleasure, pride and ambivalence from their experiences in casual hospitality as a way to negotiate social relationships with others. They use longing for Israeli hospitality in order to reconstitute the dimension of the communal home. While negotiating relationships with other Jewish-Israeli migrants and with New Zealanders, women express longing for the solidarity epitomised in informal and spontaneous Israeli hospitality. I therefore elaborate on Berdahl's (2009) theoretical work on nostalgic consumption by demonstrating the metaphoric, visceral and highly emotive route home employed by the women in this study. The emotions they articulate come across through the meanings ascribed to the qualities and quantities of the food and drink offered in casual hospitality events. The attributes of this food and drink trigger sensate experiences that women use as a measure of their success or failure in the realisation of the communal home.

Through their pleasure and pride in casual hospitality women attempt to emulate the informality and spontaneity that they associate with distinctly "Israeli" manners of hosting, as they strategically aim to extend their feminine care in order to constitute the communal home anew. By employing a Jewish-Israeli hierarchy of hospitality, women assert three main Jewish values: respect, provision and support. These hospitality-related Israeli-Hebrew concepts convey an escalating order of importance that derives from the complexity and the amount of food offered in hospitality. Women use this hierarchy to manifest an aspiration for receiving acknowledgment and respect, offering guests specific nostalgic foods and drinks in abundance. When hosting New Zealand guest-friends, women play to the guests' longing and their desire for homely places. By realising the pleasure of these guests women articulate a claim for transforming New Zealand women-friends into 'good' women like them, establishing their status as role models by asserting the myth of the *bashlanit*. Moreover, in order to assert this myth women manage casual hospitality while governing social relationships of importance beyond the realm of the family. Their self-ascribed role in this regard is as the family's "Minister of Foreign Affairs". In time, most women employ repeated casual hospitality events to transform guest-friends into familial 'substitutes' that relieve the

absence of close kin, as they come to feel 'at home' in New Zealand. In addition, women imitate New Zealanders' ways of hosting casually to enhance spontaneity and informality, readily accepting and issuing invitations for barbeques and 'bring a plate' events. As they are able to assert their care and centrality in small but tightly knit social networks they constitute the communal home anew in New Zealand.

Women's experiences in casual hospitality convey social tensions between Jewish-Israeli migrants and between Jewish-Israeli migrants and New Zealanders that generate their ambivalence toward the communal home. By criticising the amount and the nature of food and drink on offer, women manifest this ambivalence. These feelings depend on the gender and the national affiliations of guests and materialise according to their success in establishing important alliances with different groups. When women criticise the overt rejection of food at casual hospitality events by some guests, mostly male Jewish-Israelis – who are infamously offensive and impolite – they are expressing anger, disgust and even shame at their disgraceful behaviour. Similarly, they might voice criticism of the local practice of New Zealanders of offering little and poor food compared with a large amount of alcohol at casual hospitality events. In particular, the social tensions that are realised in casual hospitality lead women to self-irony as they grapple with the myth of the *sabra* (the native-born Israeli). This is the case since informality, spontaneity and *dugri* speech, i.e. straightforwardness, are three of the core attributes of the myth of the *sabra*.

Pleasure and Pride in Nostalgic Casual Hospitality

Any form of domestic hospitality derives from cultural conditions (Douglas 1990, O'Gorman 2005, Scott 2006). Research on migrant women's domestic casual hospitality practices emphasises that offering food and drink materialises cultural intimacy, initiates and maintains social relationships, and substantiates familial, communal and national solidarity by setting up obligations through reciprocity that depicts respect and inclusion (Harbottle 2000:26, Ray 2004:164, Warde and Martens 2000:208). The theory of domestic hospitality discusses uncertainty by arguing that the hostess offers food and drink as a means of transforming social relations aimed at quieting social tensions (Andrews, Roberts, and Selwyn 2007). Andrews and Selwyn (2007:260) maintain that the "transforming qualities... grounded and defined in social, moral and cultural structures" that are embedded in food consumption at an event are ways to engage the senses in order to provoke intimacy and inclusion. This claim makes clear that food consumption is used as a means of materialising the solidarity between hosts and guests and alleviating tension. In comparison, the theory of

gift exchange (Candea and da Col 2012:S1) emphasises the risk the host/ess runs by creating an obligation that might not be reciprocated by the guests, which might provoke feelings of having been exploited and anger. In addition, social tension is further deployed by a sense of obligation on behalf of the guests that might provoke shame, humiliation and even enmity due the fear of being unable to match this largesse through future reciprocity. These common tensions are part of competition in social exchange, as the classic case of the potlatch shows (Miller 1995:22-27). Such tensions may be manifested through disgust and the rejection of food, which suggest that social hierarchies are articulated in moral claims at the event (Ahmed 2004, Miller 1998), also through the provision of food and its consumption. The realisation of rather contradictory feelings through hospitality is summed up eloquently in a recent call for anthropologists by Candea and da Col (2012:S1) to return to the study of hospitality through identifying and explicating ambivalences.

In this section I draw on these ideas in examining how and why such complex feelings are specifically provoked in the experiences of casual hospitality by Jewish-Israeli migrant women after immigration. That is to say, both hostesses and guests, mostly other Jewish-Israeli migrants and New Zealanders, may also convey longing through the meanings and pleasures they associate with food and drink and casual hospitality practices, albeit in different ways according to gender and national affiliations. I focus on how and why women express pleasure and pride through casual hospitality and the pleasure of their guests while realising a return to the communal home, leaving an analysis of competition, ambivalence and disgust mostly for the second section.

Notably, the only ethnographic research to date on casual hospitality events in Israel mentions, but does not focus on, the implications of nostalgic consumption and the complexity of feelings that may be realised through such events (Kalka 1991). In her case study of middle-class, middle-aged Ashkenazi couples, Iris Kalka analyses 'coffee' events during the late 1980s in an urban suburb of Tel Aviv. Kalka (1991:119) shows that 'coffee' events were carried out in one or two stages, mostly featuring hot/cold drinks and cake/cookies, and, sometimes, preliminary savoury snacks accompanied with dips/salads. Kalka concludes that food and drink at 'coffee' events in Israel are a means of reiterating class distinctions that facilitate multiple "escapes". The first escape is from the routine of a healthy and lean diet to rich and "sinful" consumption that is specifically epitomised by the cake, and the second escape is from the hardship of life in Israel and mundane paid employment to the leisure time of trips abroad (1991:129-130).

However, Kalka's analysis ignores the nostalgia of participants in longing for different times and places from their past. It also ignores the gendered values embedded in the practice of offering food in casual hospitality as a feminine domain that is played out, for example, by the importance of the home-baked cake. The women in Kalka's study confessed that from the point of view of their reputations, they could not 'afford' to stop baking, and acknowledged the difficulties of being 'caught' serving a bought cake.

I analyse extracts from fieldnotes I made while observing Sarah prepare couscous, which she spontaneously invited guests to share with her, and compare her experience with that of other women in the study. After seven years in New Zealand she had experienced major economic difficulties and was about to go back to Israel. During fieldwork I visited Sarah in three out of the four homes in which she and her family had lived⁵¹. However, in Sarah's case, every one of my visits was to a house that was more modest than the last, an opposite trend to the pattern for most women in this study. On my arrival to the last of those homes Sarah noted that the house was "small and messy, but warm and cosy, since we all feel closer to each other now". She added that lately she had not been her usual self; "consumed by worry" and sleepless nights, she had no wish to eat or cook, since this time her husband, who was often away for long periods, was unable to return to New Zealand due to immigration issues. She had lost weight as a result of "neglecting" herself and felt depressed. She felt "pity" for her two older children who had to prepare "fast foods" for themselves, such as eggs or baked beans on toast, which are typical meals in New Zealand. My visit "prompted" Sarah to cook their favourite food, couscous.

During my visit Sarah cooked couscous "Tripoli-style", as she and her mother cook it, demonstrating the procedure as though we were on a television cooking show. She noted that during her childhood her mother was famous for her couscous around the northern part of Israel. Sarah laid all the ingredients on "the marble" in advance. She began by chopping onion and garlic to fry with tinned tomatoes as the "basic sauce" for the many and versatile dishes that she cooks according to her mother's recipes. To this sauce she added chopped carrots and potatoes, red meat and *bzar*, a mixture of ten spices that her mother sends her from Israel. But when I asked to photograph the ingredients, Sarah moved away a tin of tomatoes labelled "Budget", embarrassed by the brand name which signalled her economic difficulties.

⁵¹ It is common for Jewish-Israeli migrant families to move several times over their first few years in New Zealand.

Then, someone knocked at the door unexpectedly. It was Merrie, who is another participant in my study. She peeked through the door and handed Sarah a bag of groceries: milk, chicken and some more of the instant couscous that Sarah was about to cook. Sarah was happy to receive the spontaneous gift of groceries. She said to me later that these were exactly the groceries she had omitted when shopping just before we met; she had forgotten to add the milk to her shopping list, and since the chicken was too expensive she had decided not to buy it. The couscous that Merrie brought meant that the meal Sarah was cooking would feed two families. Right away, Sarah invited Merrie over for dinner that night, a Friday. Merrie declined, saying that she was in a hurry to pick her daughter from school and that since her husband was working late that night they would not be able to come. After Merrie left, Sarah told me that she had invited Merrie for couscous in the past to “return a favour and help her”, but to no avail. She explained that Merrie’s newly bought home is currently going through major renovations, and that at some stage Merrie “did not have a kitchen and cooked on a camping stove”. Merrie lent Sarah her old car, and Sarah was currently living for free in the family home of a “remote relative” of Merrie. Only when Merrie celebrated her daughter’s fifth birthday (which marked the beginning of the child’s formal schooling in New Zealand) was Sarah able to repay her by making fresh falafel for the guests. Though Sarah had never cooked falafel before, her “improvisation” on this first attempt proved very successful.

At our first meeting Sarah lamented that Jewish-Israelis in New Zealand do not reciprocate her hospitality. She assumed that they feel threatened by the “abundance of food” she offers, though, as she said, she just “cannot help but host in this way”. At that point, Sarah felt that other Jewish-Israeli women “compete” with her and since they cannot “be bothered” to repay equally they do not invite her back. In comparison, during this meeting Sarah recounted the progression of her social relationships since her economic situation deteriorated. While the Jewish-Israelis with whom she was acquainted drifted away, her Kiwi friends, whom she had already regarded “like sisters” before her drop in status, remained loyal. Right from the start, New Zealand women appreciated Sarah’s cooking and casual hospitality, “amazed” by her ability to improvise a nourishing, “flavoursome” and “warm meal” of couscous in no time. By now, Sarah argued, she had inspired them to become “more motherly” like her; her Kiwi friends began to enjoy cooking at home more and started vegetable and herb gardens, and one of them had even decided to have a third child, as Sarah had done. When she told them that she had to leave New Zealand they burst in tears. In telling me about this, Sarah quoted Mika,

another participant who had chosen to return to Israel about that same time and had befriended Sarah: “At least you have friends that cry when you announce you are leaving. No one cried when I announced it.” While consoling Sarah for the nearing departure from New Zealand, Mika had obviously felt sadness and envy at the strength of Sarah’s New Zealand friendships.

At that stage Sarah’s son came into the kitchen and inhaled the aroma of the simmering couscous stew with great delight, which Sarah pointed to as a proof of her repeated claim that her children loved her cooking. Her son’s obvious appreciation, the notion that she will have a good nourishing meal when she gets back home from visiting her Kiwi friend and my interest gradually consoled Sarah for her economic difficulty and nearing departure; as she smelled her thick meat stew, she said, “What a joy!”

Extending Feminine Care in Food Provision

According to Jewish tradition the hostess materialises the sacredness of food as she shares being ‘blessed’ by having the food and her good fortune with guests to convey inclusion and solidarity, specifically at festive meals (Douglas 1966:Ch.6)⁵². This Jewish value is embedded in Israeli-Hebrew terms that deploy a hierarchy: first, ‘respect’ is connoted by the term ‘*kibood*’, glossed as refreshments and only a little amount of food; second, ‘provision’ is connoted by the term ‘*eruach*’ that derives from the term ‘*arucha*’, a casual but full meal; and third, ‘help/support’ is connoted by the term ‘*seudah*’, which relates to a feast or a full festive meal with an abundance of food, and often denotes a three-course meal. These values remain embedded in the Israeli-Hebrew language despite the fact that the Zionist hegemony secularised such values strategically for the constitution of a modern and civilised nation-state (Yadin and Zuckermann 2007). The result of this secularisation was that women’s domestic labour in casual (and festive) hospitality was portrayed merely as part of their familial and taken-for-granted obligation to feed others (Rosin 2005).

Yet, Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study extended their feminine care by feeding others to help and support them in casual hospitality while they used this hierarchy strategically as they saw fit. The claim of extending feminine care to guests is clearly depicted by Sarah when cooking couscous through the pleasure she derives from feeding

⁵² An example of the importance of the Jewish value of hospitality in ritualised festive meals is the religious obligation to host seven or nine (according to the ethnic affiliation) *Aushpizin* (guests in Aramaic) on the festival of Succoth.

others, echoing a similar practice enacted by her mother in Israel⁵³. At this point I wish to highlight that by remembering her mother's practical ways and tasty cooking as part of both familial meals and casual hospitality, Sarah, like other women in this study, not only idealised her mother as a *bashlanit* but also attempted to foster communal solidarity. Sarah's pleasure and pride in doing so materialised through cooking couscous and was confirmed by two olfactory evocations: her son's pleasure at the aroma of the couscous stew, and later, her own pleasure as she smelled the nearly-ready simmering dish. The aroma reassured Sarah that she had prepared a hearty, warm and much-enjoyed meal that she is proud to offer guests, a meal that consoled her and promised the potential of fostering solidarity by hosting others. Hence, thanks to the pleasure and pride that Sarah took in preparing the couscous and by issuing an informal and spontaneous invitation to join her family for dinner, she extended her care towards others – Merrie and her family – as her potential guests.

The practice of issuing informal and spontaneous invitations to guests was common to all women in this study. Sarah's case demonstrates that by inviting others for casual hospitality events women wished to reciprocate respect. Women often characterised casual hospitality as 'doing good' and emphasised their sympathy for others experiencing difficulties, mostly newcomers and people suffering from emotional and economic hardship. This empathy is also shown in Merrie's help through her gift of food and her relative's offer that Sarah and her family live in the family home until their situation improved. Merrie's gift of food suggested that women offer food and drink to offer others some relief from hardship, similarly to the way they were helped in the initial stages of their immigration. Women also stated that they helped others in a manner akin to the way in which they might wish their children be helped, perhaps on arrival in a new land or when in need. Their help acted as a form of spiritual 'insurance' for the future, a way of 'paying it forward', that demonstrated a belief in general reciprocity, "just in case they need help", as some women put it. The food itself, i.e. couscous in the case of Sarah, provoked nostalgia for communal solidarity in Israel, caring for others in feeding and life in Israel in general, since the food Sarah offered her guests is similar to the food she cooks for her family and her mother had cooked for the family and guests in Israel. Indeed, all the women in this study offered food when inviting people for casual visits that communicated their care and expressed their longing for

⁵³ I discuss the remembrance of childhood poverty, the idealisation of female close kin as *bashlanit*, and the materialisation of the memory of close kin in foods and spices that are associated with them in chapters three, four, and six, respectively.

communal solidarity. Sarah even added that at difficult times such as these, she “yearns for any connection with Israel”.

The quality and quantity of food and drink women offered in casual hospitality and their casual hosting practices were understood by all as “Israeli”, depicting pleasure and pride, regardless of what and if they actually cooked. Ninnet, for example, hardly ever cooked and never baked, but idealised her own casual hospitality practices in a similar manner to women who do cook and bake. Ninnet felt that every meal they eat at home is a “celebration”, and when hosting each event is a “*hafakah*” (a production). She emphasised that her casual hospitality practice is “very Israeli”, conveying warmth through the abundance and quality of the “hearty” foods she served. She illustrated the extent of her generosity and Israeli casual hospitality by retelling a joke her friends in New Zealand often directed towards her: that one must come “prepared” when she and her husband host, as if breaking a fast, so that there is enough “room” and “appetite” to eat all the tasty foods they served. Through this joke, she made fun of herself, but at the same time demonstrated a sense of achievement and pride in what the joke signalled about her Israeli hosting style. Because of the hard “*avodah*” (work or labour) that Israeli casual hospitality events require, after she became a mother in New Zealand, Ninnet reduced the frequency of these events to once every three weeks.

Hafakah, which literally means a ‘production’, implies pride and pleasure in the labour of producing meals for casual hospitality events, including their management as social events. In this case *hafakah* also denotes a gendered national difference, since, like Ninnet, women felt that New Zealanders do not “care” and “fuss” about food for casual hospitality as much as Jewish-Israelis do. They typically described the New Zealand casual hospitality as well-planned, measured and lacking quality and quantity, in contrast with the Israeli practice of casual hospitality. These differences enhanced women’s advantage in extending their care through their hospitality and in deriving feminine prestige. Nava, for example, claimed that it is easy for her to “impress Kiwis” with her usual family Friday dinner food: chicken and potato baked in the oven, a couple of salads, some breads for her favourite eggplant dip, and possibly a soup in the winter. Nava idealised “Israeli hospitality” to the extent that there is no comparison for it by saying repeatedly *ein kmo eruach yisraeli*, “there is nothing like Israeli hosting”.

Women in this study who befriended New Zealanders did not expect them to reciprocate with similar manifestations of abundant food. Instead, they claimed that their friends show

their appreciation for their hospitality and friendship in other ways, such as teaching English, helping with childcare, finding paid employment and helping them get ready for job interviews, and supporting them emotionally. They emphasised the importance of these close friendships for helping them feel ‘at home’ in New Zealand and contributing to their well-being and lauded these friends as “open” and “warm”. For example, Naama argued, “I connect very much with New Zealand culture... my friend Helen simply took my older sister’s place, even though she’s Christian and in lots of ways isn’t perfect. Her openness is just great. She is wonderful and she is straight-talking like an Israeli at the level that I like, the Israeli level... ”. Naama talked about all her close New Zealand friends as being wonderful and open/straightforward. She said that Helen had begun baking *challah* every Friday according to her recipe. Pointing to admiration of their cooking skills, and even the adoption of their Israeli recipes, on the part of their New Zealand women-friends was a common way for the women to assert that they had “inspired” and “influenced” those friends to become like them. Sarah, for example, said she had inspired her friends as a female role model because of her cooking ability. Rina, as another example, said that her friend was going to publish her “flag cake” in a cookbook, crediting Rina for the recipe.

All women revealed their desire for respect and recognition in describing their friends’ various forms of acknowledgment of their casual hospitality, despite the fact that most of the food they offered is no different from the food they cooked or bought for their families. In describing the pleasurable reactions of their New Zealand guests to the food women offered at such events, they referred to the materialisation of social inclusion: the desire their food provokes in New Zealanders to learn more about Israel, develop friendships with their Jewish-Israelis hosts, eat more of their Israeli food and even travel to Israel. They claimed that New Zealand friends considered their Israeli dishes as “exotic” and “unfamiliar” foods of which they instantly grew fond. Nellie, for example, asserted that her best friend feels that Nellie’s couscous is the “best food she had ever eaten in her life” although she had no idea what it was made of and had never before eaten couscous. Many women mentioned the admiration they had received for their Israeli vegetable salad, hummus, *borekas* and other common dishes they cooked for their families. The extent of the pleasure derived by New Zealanders as guests suggested that the food had provoked in them an experience of longing. I watched many of them (as well as many of my own guests) respond by expressing a desire to visit Israel, as some did eventually, often by joining their Jewish-Israeli friends. Upon eating these foods these guests envisioned homely places with warm hospitality and

homemade food that they imagined themselves visiting one day. Women in this study invoked their guests' expressions of admiration as a means of demonstrating their ability to transform social relations into deep friendships as they gradually turned these friends into "familial substitutes".

All women in this study referred to people they had closely befriended as "extended family", "sister" and "aunty" or "uncle" for their children, regardless of their national affiliation. Through their casual hospitality Yael and Naama, for example, both became good friends with their New Zealand neighbours. Yael characterised this set of friendships as a "little miraculous kibbutz", a small and tightly knit network, while Naama said she will not move house out of fear of losing these friendships. Shellie, in contrast, befriended only other Jewish-Israeli migrants in New Zealand. As she was in her late forties, she felt like a "young grandmother" to other women's children. Those who turned into 'familial substitutes' were usually those with whom women celebrated festive meals, often taking turns with the hosting on such occasions. Those who befriended New Zealanders began celebrating Christmas with them. I elaborate on the matter of celebrating festive occasions, Jewish and otherwise, in the next chapter.

While Sarah claimed that she had become a *bashlanit* in the eyes of the New Zealand women she befriended through her lavish and warm food provision in casual hospitality, it was clear that she longed for a greater sense of communal solidarity with them in the face of her difficulties in New Zealand. In contrast, in her social relations with other Jewish-Israeli migrant women, Sarah emphasised that she suffered from competition and tension, depicting them as highly competitive while she recounted her repeated failure to host Merrie to repay her. I discuss the playing out of tensions, ambivalence and competition through casual hospitality in the next section. However, it is worth first elaborating on the realisation of positive feelings such as pleasure and pride in these relations, depicted by Sarah through her success in making falafel to partly repay Merrie for her favours.

At that time Sarah had also made it clear she was aware that Jewish-Israeli migrant women are the ones who decide on hosting friends and not their husbands. Women, as the 'makers' or 'breakers' of social relationships through their casual hospitality, claimed initiative and responsibility since compared with their husbands it was usually them who "picked up the phone" to invite people. At least half of the women in this study admitted that their husbands "nag" or "prompt" them to phone and invite guests. Though women were the main

coordinators of these social exchanges, they confirmed that they also considered the opinions of their husbands and children, while often admitting that if husbands “dare” to invite guests without consulting with them or forget to notify them in advance they accuse their husbands for crossing the line. Husbands could aggravate women by “disregarding” other commitments, creating “inconveniences” and “unnecessary pressure”, as many women put it.

Referring to themselves as their home’s “Minister of Foreign Affairs” was the most prevailing and profound way that women asserted their autonomy in casual hospitality. Through this reference women created a strong link between the governance of social relations beyond the realm of the family and the realisation of sociality through the communal solidarity that casual hospitality fostered. This link clearly indicates their understanding of their political role in casual hospitality. At times when they felt their domain was threatened and they had failed to substantiate close friendships, women expressed “loneliness”, which enhanced their longing for communal solidarity as they had known it in Israel. Their importance as coordinators of casual hospitality events was emphasised through their comparisons with their lives in Israel, whereby the continuous flow of people and food between homes stood for social solidarity between kin. Enmeshed in their kinship relations in Israel, most women had shared the responsibility for casual hospitality with their close female kin, especially on weekends. As noted by Kalka (1991:119), “it is common for parents to invite their adult children for a Friday night meal, a Saturday lunch (or both), and these occasions are mainly reserved for family members”. Yasmin’s description clearly illustrates this common practice of casual and familial hospitality in Israel that denotes spontaneity and informality in establishing solidarity:

[In Israel] we would go to my parents’ on Fridays and the ‘party’ would begin with salads, and my mum would chase us by offering food all the time. I would get there in the afternoon so that they would help me a little with the children, and I would have some peace and quiet to sit with my sisters and chat, and it was fun.

After immigration, the physical distance from close kin in Israel brought a significant shift. As women gained more responsibility for coordinating casual hospitality events they changed the meanings they ascribed to the food and drink they offer, and their casual hospitality practices. In New Zealand these now centred around longing to return to the communal home, with women’s main aim to create “familial substitutes” that would make them feel ‘at home’.

Longing for the solidarity of closely knit social relations was often suggested by women characterising guests who became friends as ‘substitute’ close kin as they asserted their success in establishing such relationships. Shellie summed it up by saying that “in New Zealand your friends become your family”. Nora suggested to me while she was cooking that in her exchange with another Jewish-Israeli migrant woman Nora is the one who does most of the cooking/feeding in the relationship while the other friend is content to remain the recipient; in this way, Nora derived pride while the friend reminded Nora of her younger sister. Shellie asserted that Inness became an “aunt” to her children since she brought them cooked meals while Shellie was away, in a manner akin to the relations that formed in Mona often feeding Mika’s children. Again the flow of food and people between homes stood for solidarity, only this time the communal solidarity between friends that replaced kin. In such ways women conveyed nostalgia for the informality and spontaneity of casual hospitality in Israel. What is more, as I will show in the next section, just as the intimacy between siblings or other close kin in Israel was transferred to the realm of friendships in New Zealand through casual hospitality, so did any potential rivalry and competition.

In sum, all the women employed the Jewish-Israeli hierarchy of hospitality – respect, provision and support – according to their interests. They reciprocated respect through casual ‘coffee’ events at which they offered light refreshments, nourished others through casual meals, and offered sustained support through lavish festive meals or food gifts, which I discuss in the next chapter. By binding and obligating people via their casual hospitality they governed social relationships that realised the communal home. The pleasure and pride these women experienced in providing food and drink through casual hospitality demonstrated an extension of their care in feeding others towards guests. These emotions were prompted by the sensate evocations of pleasures on the part of those who consumed the food and drink offered by the women. Casual hospitality is a means women employed strategically to form solidarity, as women are the ones responsible for coordinating these social exchanges. In this manner they governed social relationships beyond the family realm as they asserted their self-designated role as the “Minister of Foreign Affairs”. In this process women gradually and symbolically turned guest-friends into “familial substitutes” as they constituted home anew in New Zealand.

Importantly, all women made such claims insofar as they received acknowledgment from guests in the form of the emotions that their casual hospitality provoked, according to the gender and national affiliation of their guests. Other Jewish-Israeli migrants conveyed

pleasure through their nostalgic consumption of Israeli foods that reminded them of home, since the food and drink women offered and their manner of casual hospitality are no different to those in Israel, enacting warmth and inclusion as part of their Israeli identity. Understandably, this nostalgia contrasted with the nostalgia conveyed by middle-class, middle-aged Ashkenazi Jewish-Israelis in ‘coffee events’ in Israel, who longed for times outside their routine and places they had visited overseas (Kalka 1991:129-130). In comparison, when hosting New Zealanders, women emphasised the pleasure and pride they derived from the positive feedback of their guests, which they applied to claims of becoming a *bashlanit* in New Zealand. Since women typically contrasted New Zealanders’ hospitality with theirs, those who befriended New Zealanders could claim that they had transformed them to ‘good’ women, and highlighted their ‘influence’ by pointing out acts of imitation.

Gendered Social Tension in Casual Hospitality

Ambivalence, enmity, competition and the risk of shame, as well as humiliation at losing face are part and parcel of social exchanges in casual hospitality, as many studies on gift exchange and reciprocity show (see for example, Candea and da Col 2012, Miller 1995:22-27). This section demonstrates how and why Jewish-Israeli migrant such feelings materialise in women in casual hospitality events. They grapple with the myth of the *sabra*, while their ambivalence depicts social tension that may lead to self-irony as well as their disgust with the behaviour of guests. For this purpose I return to discuss Sarah’s experience and compare it with that of other women. I then analyse what happens when women’s care in their casual hospitality is deliberately disregarded. This analysis illustrates how women use the myth of the *polania* to challenge the myth of the *sabra* as they condemn the typical *dugri* (direct) speech they usually associate with Israeli *sabra* men and express their desire for respect. For this purpose I analyse a narrative by Nora that depicts a common experience. In the last section I analyse the ways and reasons for which women imitate the casual hospitality manners of New Zealanders. I show that through casual hospitality women enhance spontaneity and informality, as two of the core attributes of the *sabra*, at the same time as they maintain their central role in constituting home anew in New Zealand.

In Sarah’s case, a situation of imbalanced reciprocity provokes in her a sense of competition and discontent vis-à-vis other Jewish-Israeli migrant women. In addition, Sarah obviously experienced economic scarcity, as illustrated by her reaction of shame to my attempt to photograph the tomato tin. However, her disgrace at the face of her economic scarcity was the only exception in her cooking practice, as, like other women in this study,

she prided herself on and took pleasure in her cooking for casual hospitality. Ambivalence was clearly articulated through her sense of competition with regard to Merrie who ‘blocked’ Sarah from repaying her by avoiding Sarah’s repeated invitations for couscous, in addition to the explicit competition Sarah professed with regard to other Jewish-Israeli migrant women who did not repay her for her hospitality. By arguing that Jewish-Israeli migrant women do not reciprocate equally, a common claim of other women in this study, women conveyed their discontent towards them. For example, Rachel admitted that after she had been to a hospitality event given by a New Zealander on Christmas day she had “cried her heart out”. She expressed guilt at denying her children these communal and familial intimacies because of her decision to leave Israel. Though she described that hospitality event as replete in warmth between family and friends, the event signified the absence of such convivial social relationship in her life. This incident prompted her to a strategic decision: to stop *heshbonot* (keeping accounts) and host more Jewish-Israeli migrants in New Zealand in order to “make friends”. ‘*Heshbonot*’ is a common term for any act of balancing of accounts that may generate criticism (in Chapter Seven I show that *heshbonot* includes balancing food intake). *Heshbonot* is typically associated with the myth of the *polania*, the figure who manages social relations in this way. Rachel’s specific hope of securing ‘real’ friendships with Jewish-Israeli migrants in New Zealand was provoked by her participation in a Kiwi familial meal. Similar hopes were common to other women’s intentions, but also served to express feelings of dissatisfaction. Sharing food and drink at informal hospitality events and the intimacy of these events reminded Rachel of the absence of ‘real’ friends, triggered her longing for the solidarity of the communal ‘home’, and caused her to reflect upon the potentially good qualities of Jewish-Israeli migrants, thus her resolve to begin hosting them without keeping accounts. Rachel felt that she had failed to secure friendships in New Zealand, as she had sabotaged such alliances thus far by keeping accounts, which alludes to memories of having been exploited in the past.

On the one hand, Rachel’s case demonstrates that for Jewish-Israeli migrant women the food and drink which convey conviviality in hospitality are imbued with care and communal solidarity. Hence, those women who expressed guilt over “secluding” their children because of their decision to migrate did so only when they felt they had failed to establish alternative social relations for themselves and their children in New Zealand. On the other hand, Rachel’s case also illustrates that realising the communal home is an on-going process fraught with difficulties. In the first years after migrating, in particular around four or five

years, women described grievances specifically with other Jewish-Israeli migrants as they reported frequent shifts in their social alliances. Their intense casual hospitality activities were aimed at forming a “*havurah*” or “*hevre*” – a small group of friends in close solidarity. By commonly describing this initial period as “trial and error” in social relations they emphasised their frustration with the hardship in achieving their aim. As Ella said, “Five or six years ago, when we first arrived in New Zealand, we held the *seder* (Passover meal) at our place. Today that *havurah* has disbanded; we went our separate ways. You find your friend-family slowly here. We formed a new *havurah*”.

Women’s wish to establish a *havurah* as a social support network implied their longing for the communal solidarity they imagined they had known in Israel. This taps into the myth of the *sabra*. For those women in this study who felt they had failed to secure a feeling of being ‘at home’ in New Zealand, the communal intimacy that the women associate with the notion of casual (and festive) hospitality events might also trigger guilt at any given time. This feeling of guilt, in turn, provoked reflection on the decision to immigrate, who to befriend and how to go about it, as they assessed the ‘there’ and ‘then’ in comparison to the ‘here’ and ‘now’ and acknowledged their “mistakes”. Guilt often drove women to attempts at reparation in various ways, as Rachel’s case shows. At the same time, on occasions where that guilt emphasised social exclusion, loneliness or ‘not belonging’ in New Zealand, depression and despair increased longing for the communal home.

Grappling with the Myth of the *Sabra* in the Communal Home

If through casual hospitality women conveyed implicit longing for informality and spontaneity, this longing was coupled with explicit ambivalence when they grappled with the myth of the *sabra* (the native-born Israeli), according to their success in establishing social alliances with members of each national group; New Zealanders and Jewish-Israelis, and their gender. The *sabra* is renowned for his directness, spontaneity, informality and straightforward manner. These attributes turned into faults in the eyes of women, specifically those who befriended New Zealanders. Furthermore, in general women used the response of guests to food and drink in casual hospitality events as metaphors for behaviours they did not approve of, which they disparaged, mostly by regarding Jewish-Israeli migrant men.

Women’s ambivalence was commonly expressed by their rejection of social relations with other Jewish-Israelis because of competition and self-stigmatising, as encapsulated by the myth of the *sabra*. They criticised Jewish-Israelis for being excessively brash, i.e. rude, bad-

mannered, and strategically taking advantage of others. For example, on my first visit to Rina she asserted that another Jewish-Israeli migrant couple became “aunt and uncle” to her children. On my second visit several months later, I mentioned them. Rina’s reaction was to blush. She could not speak of the matter, her face flushed, her breath hurried. She needed a drink of water to calm down. This visceral response suggested that she had suffered great hurt and grievance. She expressed anger at having been “exploited” and merely said that they are “no longer friends”.

Often, while describing relations with other Jewish-Israeli migrants, women expressed having been taken advantage of as “burns” on their social skin. Such claims were vividly articulated by Naama as she recounted the nature of her general encounters in casual hospitality events with other Jewish-Israelis in New Zealand: “I have gotten to know Israelis whose teeth I could kick or that I would gladly send back to Israel, because I think they are not creating a good name for us. They are very direct and they say whatever is on their heart, never mind who is listening”. Though most women associated closely with other Jewish-Israeli migrants, they did not necessarily regard them as “genuine” or “real” friends. On the one hand, women expressed antagonism towards the sense of “segregation” or “ghettoisation” that comes with associating with other Jewish-Israeli migrants. They often described such solidarity as “artificial” and stated their intention to “stay away” from Jewish-Israelis. On the other hand, they manifested shame for their collective behaviour, which triggered self-irony as they mocked themselves for occasionally acting in a similar shameful ways.

As suggested earlier, women who had befriended mostly Jewish-Israeli migrants in New Zealand idealised their directness and lack of restraint as “sincerity”, suggesting a secure ground for forming friendships. They denigrated New Zealanders as “insincere”. In such depictions women used the great amount of food and its qualities in Jewish-Israeli casual hospitality as metaphors to convey warmth and openness in contrast to the abundance of alcoholic beverages in the casual hospitality of New Zealanders. This difference became an important marker of social tension and ambivalence. Such ambivalence was depicted in regard to table manners, for example, when New Zealand guests at casual hospitality events urged their children to thank their hostess, following local manners by asking them to say “thank you for having me”. Those women who befriended only Jewish-Israelis decried this practice as “artificial”, “ridiculous” and “robotic”.

The realisation of ambivalence through food and drink in casual hospitality became a clear form of oppositional solidarity towards New Zealanders. Ella's comments illustrate a common way this sentiment is manifested:

Israelis are "straightforward" [in English]. Yes, at least the ones that are close to me. I guess that I have shaken off others already by now, because they are not what I expect Israelis to be...What is zar [foreign] you have to learn, to know different things. What I have learned is that if I want to know what Kiwis think of me or feel towards me, I have to give them a bottle of wine, and then they will allow themselves to be honest and dare say things they would not dare to say if they were sober. For us, it does not make a difference, because we will say it whether we are asked or not... [laughing ironically].

Ella felt that wine drinking for New Zealanders is an artificial mechanism that substitutes for the level of straight talk and warmth that Jewish-Israelis share naturally. At the same time her description of herself and her laughter suggested self-irony, indicating the common understanding among women that the manner of communication and behaviour of Jewish-Israelis might hinder their ability to form social relations locally. While all women contrasted their form of casual hospitality with that of New Zealanders as well-planned, measured and usually insufficient but with great emphasis on alcohol, those who befriended New Zealanders no longer considered these differences as obstacles. Rather, they turned those differences to their advantage; they were able to form communal solidarity through their casual hospitality while they realised feeling 'at home' in New Zealand.

The Gender of *Dugri* Speech

As Ella's comment above illustrates, when grappling with the myth of the *sabra*, women referred explicitly to *dugri* speech or 'straightforwardness'. *Dugri* speech is a manner of direct communication that often conveys the 'forthrightness' and sincerity of people. During the first three decades of the establishment of the state, *dugriyut*, which literally means 'straightforwardness', was seen as an "anti-style" of speech based on the negation and denigration of the Jewish European diaspora as compared to the desired attributes of the native-born *sabra* (Katriel 1986, 2004). This mode of communication wished to rebuke the self-stigmatisation of the East and Central European Jews by emphasising deeds over words, rendering politeness as unnecessary and thus rejecting European codes of communication

(Blum-Kulka 1990:262). The direct speech of *dugri* may function for Jewish-Israelis as a positive mode of respect that denotes familiarity, sincerity and communal solidarity. Indeed, women who wished to draw attention to their 'Israeliness' asked my permission to be direct when they spoke in regard to a certain matter in self-irony. At the same time women poked fun at their "becoming a New Zealander" where they felt they needed to go to extreme lengths to be polite and considerate in order to be on the "safe side". Yet the following case demonstrates that *dugri* speech is not gender-neutral, but relies on culturally gendered expectations associated with 'politeness' (Hoar 1992:127-128). This claim is illustrated by a typical 'food moment' in casual hospitality that articulates social tensions, obstacles in recreating the communal home that played out the gendered values embedded in *dugri* speech as well as in the food women offered.

Nora engaged in casual hospitality to help and support new Jewish-Israeli migrants. Simultaneously, she portrayed great ambivalence by expressing her desire to "stay away" from them. Before she told me about the following incident, I had wondered about this contradiction. Nora then explained that she regards her help in casual hospitality as "bringing stray dogs home from the street as she used to do as a child". She added that "one does not get any poorer by offering four or five pizzas" to guests. Nora described her relations with several families she had helped, then related the following 'food moment':

I will just give you an example of [a Jewish-Israeli] couple that was here... They went looking for a house. In this regard I'm very 'flowing' (informal and easy going), so I told them, "Come and leave your children with us", because I know that when we go out with our children to look for a house... it is a nightmare... The children were hungry, so I fed them. Then the parents came back and I asked them, "Are you hungry? Have you had anything to eat? ... You know, it's Israeli to host". They said, "No [mimicking hesitation]... it will be alright". I said, "OK. I will offer something to eat". I didn't have much at home, I took cheese and olives and made a dip... and put it on the table with some crackers, and the woman ate. The husband said, "Just a minute, is this for us? The olives and the cheese? – Yuck, I hate olives with cheese."

Nora: "So what did you want me to make you? Would you like spring onion [in the dip]?" The husband: "Yuck, spring onion, I hate it." Nora: "Would you like

vegetables?” *The husband: “No... Who eats these things anyway? It’s shitty, disgusting.”*

Everything I brought out he complained about ungratefully. I would have said “I’m not hungry” just to avoid hurting someone’s feelings, even if I’d die of starvation. Nora: “Would you like tuna?” The husband: “No! Tuna? It’s yuck, it will make me vomit right now on the table...” Such barbarianism! I was shocked. [After the incident] the woman kept ringing me in such distress and telling me about her troubles... I listened to her out of pity, and because the children liked to play together... then I asked her to babysit my children once, and she asked for payment. I was shocked. I paid her, thanked her with a card and understood who I’m dealing with. And that’s it! After that, every time she called, I said we were busy. I don’t think she has a clue what’s the reason, but for me, it ‘raised an eyebrow’.

As this chapter’s epigraph shows, Nora articulated her class aspirations in her claim to be a *polania* when it comes to hosting, always prepared to care for guests by feeding them even in unexpected visits. Yet, in describing to me this particular ‘food moment’, Nora unintentionally contradicted her claim, as she reported that she “did not have much [food] at home” and therefore had some difficulty in improvising light refreshments. The cheese and olive dip accompanied with crackers and hot drinks are certainly close reminders of the dairy-based light dinner/breakfast offered at familial meals in Israel, in particular since Nora used olives and quark⁵⁴. By offering such nostalgic food and drink in an informal and spontaneous manner Nora conveyed respect to her guests and enacted care, embarking on a journey of returning to the communal home. In assuming that her guests were hungry, tired and stressed, Nora emphatically engaged with her guests while asserting her ‘Israeliness’; as she stated, “it is Israeli to host”. She assumed her guests were merely being courteous in their refusal to eat and drink. Notably, the female guest ate the food offered by Nora, and thus reciprocated respect and acknowledged her care, suggesting the potential of realising a friendship. In the case of the male guest, however, Nora could not be any further away in her assumption, since in contrast to his wife, the more she tried to please him the more emphatically he expressed his disgust, with the effect of establishing distance and enmity. The male-guest was literally and figuratively ‘out of place’ as he transgressed Nora’s social boundaries and challenged her domain with his *dugri* speech. If Nora’s attempts to please him and her offers of food

⁵⁴ This cheese was manufactured by Simcha Tur-Shalom, the owner of Canaan Cheese, which I discussed in Chapter Two.

conveyed her care and Israeliness, then his disgusted *dugri* speech contested it, rejecting her care as threatening. Nora's shock and rage in response to his performance of disgust, in which he did not touch the food and over-dramatised his reaction of disgust, provoked Nora's moral aversion over his behaviour.

Disgust, as Ahmed (2004:92) argues, is ambivalent; it requires proximity for the sake of distancing. As a "speech act, disgust ignites rage and operates performativity". The disgusted utterances of the male guest articulated his gendered sense of threat. In response Nora made a moral judgement of his uncivilised behaviour ("such barbarianism"). Her strong commitment to civilised politeness and saving face is evident by her symbolic invocation of death: "I would have said "I'm not hungry" just not avoid hurting someone's feelings, even if I'd die of starvation". Thus, Nora used her commitment to being 'polite' in order to affirm the myth of the *polania* and reject his *dugri* speech by challenging the myth of the *sabra*. Nora's moral aversion was later coupled with a sense of being financially exploited by the female guest in relation to childcare, causing her to articulate the weaker position of her guest and emphasise her own superior position through pity.

As stated earlier, competition between Jewish-Israeli migrants is deployed via casual hospitality as a common means for women to convey tension that results in the ambivalence of women, which is depicted as wounds to their 'social skin' in New Zealand. Inness articulated this social tension through her understanding that hosting Jewish-Israelis in New Zealand is a "sensitive issue". Often competition between Jewish-Israeli women was expressed through the passing of comments on the amount and nature of food in casual hospitality or the extent of the labour involved as metaphors for undesired behaviours they encountered that triggered difficulties in forming solidarity with others. Their rejection of the spurning or criticism of food in casual hospitality events by mainly Israeli male guests was coupled with aversion at the disregard of the nostalgic food that was being offered. Though these incidents were never the only obstacles to social relations between Jewish-Israeli migrants, comments on food in casual hospitality events made their impact.

Nevertheless through critique of the amount and nature of food as indicators of people's behaviours women articulated social tensions on the basis of the gendered value embedded in such social exchange. As seen above, explicit criticism and rejection of food triggered disgust and blame and was interpreted as disrespectful by women. On such occasions women affirmed the myth of the *polania* in rejecting friendship with people who offended them, and

conveyed their class aspirations in their desire for respect. I encountered in fieldwork several other examples of such occurrences when a soup or a meal of *borekas* was criticised at an event by Jewish-Israeli men. In all of these cases criticism of the quality or quantity of foods that were reminders of the Israeli home contributed to the ending of friendships. Women argued that in such situations *dugri* speech was not an acceptable means of communication. The apparent gender neutrality of *dugri* speech, which aims to convey friendliness and honesty, was understood as malicious communication that challenged their care. Undoubtedly, casual hospitality “involves multi-stranded relationships between physical bodies and social boundaries” (Andrews, Roberts, and Selwyn 2007:260). Yet since in sharing food and drink through domestic casual hospitality Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study also risk losing face and attracting enmity, the transformation of social relationships through such events depends on the acceptance and recognition of their care and on the respect accorded to them as hostesses.

Imitating Casual New Zealand Manners of Hospitality: Barbeques and ‘Bring a Plate’

In ethnographies on Jewish-Israeli emigrants elsewhere (Leiserowitz 2003:2, 34, Sabar 2002:81) the myth of the *sabra* is used to explain cultural enclosure that blocks the way for Jewish-Israeli immigrants to integrate with their new societies as they manifest their Israeli belonging. This section, however, shows that the specific attributes associated with this myth, namely spontaneity and informality, are at the hub of the changes that women engender in their casual hospitality manners, by which they constitute home anew in New Zealand. Despite some initial reluctance, these attributes are enhanced through the newer forms of casual hospitality, namely, invitations to ‘bring a plate’, barbeques and picnics, which women adopt after immigration.

Barbeque meals and picnics were employed by women in a similar fashion to invitations to ‘bring a plate’, whereby guests often bring wine, salad/dessert and some meat, which are shared among the participants. While imitating New Zealanders in this way, these forms of casual hospitality reinforced the centrality of women in food provision and their ‘Israeliness’, which contributed to their realisation of the communal home. For example, Inness talked about hosting on an everyday basis as central to her personal identity. She claimed *hitamti et atzmi* – she ‘adjusted herself’ to the hosting style in New Zealand, epitomised by a “relaxed lifestyle” and “slower rhythm” of life, because these “suit” her and feel “very right”. Inness hosted on most weekends, which is also the most convenient time to call friends and family

in Israel due to the time gap. Hence, soon after her migration, when her family and friends in Israel noticed the high frequency with which she hosts in New Zealand despite the smaller number participants, they began to joke that if they phoned her on a weekend “and Inness is not hosting, she is probably feeling unwell”. By referring to this joke in self-parody, Inness conveyed casual hospitality as part of her well-being and asserted its great importance for establishing her sense of feeling ‘at home’ in New Zealand.

Notably, Inness understood the changes she made in her hosting as part of her choice to “adjust” to her new social environment in New Zealand by creating “a mix in the ways” she hosts. Inness claimed that she does not *mevatelet et atzmi*, or ‘erase/cancel’ herself, meaning Inness did not make a complete about-face, i.e. she changed some things and retained some things, also meaning she did not short-change herself. Yet, unlike in Israel, when she hosts casually in New Zealand, it is no longer a big event with many participants and intensive labour, the way Inness portrayed the intensity of social relationships in Israel in general. Instead, she described her casual hospitality in New Zealand as “a small event with aperitifs of some cheeses, grapes, and some good salads that people bring”, adding that she likes it here when people ‘bring a plate’. Then she said, “Usually there are three kinds of meats for the barbeque and desserts, two to three hours and that’s it”. Thus, as with other women, Inness shifted the pace of her life after migration by adopting the casual hospitality manner of barbequing to achieve a more relaxed fashion of hospitality and life.

Inness’ case shows that women engaged in barbeque meals and picnics in New Zealand, especially since those enabled spontaneity and informality, which enhanced their centrality in their social network even as they imitated New Zealanders. Such events reinforced informality by lowering costs, pooling labour and sharing food. At the same time, their emphasis on spontaneity and informality conveyed their longing for the Jewish-Israeli communal solidarity that the myth of the *sabra* epitomises. What is more, if red meat consumption at barbeque meals was common in Israel signalled ethnic and class distinctions, this was not the case in New Zealand, since women in this study understood the social event of the barbeque as a standard New Zealand casual hospitality practice. This understanding was illustrated in Chapter Two by Yvette’s account, typical of the women in this study, of her growing love for the barbeque in New Zealand. In her ethnography on the Jewish-Israeli casual hospitality practices of middle-class Ashkenazi couples, Kalka (1991:121) argues that red meat is consumed at barbeques is employed by the Ashkenazi couples she researched for the purpose of making ethnic and class distinctions. The Ashkenazi couples conveyed

criticism of the ‘uncivilised’ high red meat consumption at barbeques associated with Mizrahim, while another study on Ashkenazi women in Israel suggested that the most common ingredients used by these women in preparing the main cooked meal, including the Friday nights, are poultry and potatoes (Shine-Rakavy 1999:25, 90). As suggested in Chapter Three on cooking, the preference for poultry and potatoes was maintained by 11 Ashkenazi women in this study for familial meals; however, this was not the case for casual or festive hospitality, since most women in this study attested that they had learned to cook red meat in New Zealand and had increased their appreciation of barbeques since migrating. Hence, if their preference for poultry was maintained, this preference was complemented by a growing preference for red meat consumption in New Zealand. They professed a similar increase in barbeque meals to that of Mizrahi women and women from mixed ethnicities in New Zealand. At the same time, the importance of red meat consumption at barbeques increased as a marker of their longing to recreate the communal home in New Zealand.

‘Bring a Plate’ in Casual Hospitality

‘Bring a plate’ events are forms of casual hospitality, often used at family events and in schools and work places in New Zealand, to facilitate communal solidarity and reduce costs and labour. ‘Bring-a plate’ events are also known as ‘potlucks’ or ‘shared meals’ whereby guests bring at least one dish: entrée, main course, dessert and/or a drink in an amount that feeds ‘an average’ family. Such events are usually reserved for morning or afternoon tea or lunch. For light meals, which may exclude meat or cooked foods, ‘bring a plate’ commonly involves cold finger foods that are easily divided between participants. The organisers/hosts arrange the venue (which may be decided on communally), the utensils and the labour before and after the occasion. The labour of cleaning up may also be shared among participants or diminished in advance by using disposable plates and utensils. Often after the event women in this study enjoyed dividing up the leftovers and exchanging their favourite dishes, as well as preparing plates of food to send for those absent.

Most significantly, after immigration ‘bring a plate’ events began to feature in Jewish-Israeli women’s casual hospitality events as an approach to casual hospitality that they could manage by requesting or assigning to participants what they should bring, and where and when to meet. ‘Bring a plate’ stood out as a form of casual hospitality that created a sense of equality by sharing both responsibility and food to make up for the shortage in support and help of close kin who would have been available to help had the women still lived in Israel.

Some women used ‘bring a plate’ to ask others to bring foods that they specifically disliked preparing, but enjoyed eating. Nava related to the common understanding by Jewish-Israeli migrant women that hosting is a means for women to enact their care, and with the responsibility of hosting comes the respect and acknowledgement of guests. Hence, she characterised her initial response to the shared responsibility and labour in hospitality of ‘bring a plate’ events as threatening:

At first I would get offended by their [guests’] query of “What can I bring?”, as if I wasn’t capable or good enough a hostess to care for and feed them... you see, in Israel the hostess takes care of everything, whereas here Kiwis regard food as bothersome – but Israelis like to host...

As did other women, in time Nava embraced ‘bring a plate’ events for casual and festive hospitality. Rather than viewing the practice as a threat, Nava began understanding it as a means of supporting her as a food provider. By asking others to ‘bring a plate’ of food – foods that women felt less confident or fond of preparing, such as baking desserts in the case of a couple of women – they enjoyed the benefits of this form of hospitality. This form also diverted potential competition from their own cooking since the women could ask friends to cook foods that they did not feel confident enough to cook themselves. By enjoying their success at such events they were able to lower costs and alleviate the work while maintaining their claim to being a *bashlanit*.

The experience of Nora, who had recently bought a large home, provides another example. On our last meeting Nora said that it took her three moves over three years to understand that she could reduce her labour in hosting by getting people to ‘bring a plate’, which is what she did successfully for her house-warming. She hosted twice, two groups of about 20 people each, and since she “organised everything well with plenty of food, a nice variety, and much less work and stress” she felt that the events went very well. The children entertained themselves and she was proud and satisfied, joking that she could “open a holiday programme”. In telling me about the compliments from her guests on her cooking, and their suggestions that they open a restaurant, café or catering service, Nora conveyed her pleasure, pride and triumph in casual hospitality as a *bashlanit* without detracting from her care as a food provider and capable hostess. She realised the benefits of having friends to help in such events and attested to feeling ‘at home’ in New Zealand.

In sum, by orchestrating and coordinating each player's role at 'bring a plate' events and holding frequent barbecues and picnics, women evinced feelings of spontaneity and informality in casual hospitality as constant reminders of the communal home. Imitating New Zealanders, who themselves acknowledge the informality and intimacy facilitated through such events (Herda 1991:167), not only reinforced their Israeliness but also facilitated their becoming (like) New Zealanders.

Conclusions

Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study manifested their feminine modes of care towards guests through food provision in casual hospitality after immigration, as they embarked on a journey of recreating the communal home by negotiating social relationships that realise solidarity and express spontaneity and informality. The emphasis on spontaneity and informality was a means of conjuring up the image of the communal home in Israel and of contributing to a sense of being 'at home' in New Zealand. Changes in the meanings the women associated with food and drink in casual hospitality and in their hosting practices pointed to their motivations to host as well as the feelings such events evoked. In this process women manifested their longing, pleasure and pride, along with their ambivalence as the result of tension on the account of competition that in some cases led to guilt, a sense of threat, and aversion over the sense of having been exploited.

The feelings of pleasure and pride women experienced in casual hospitality enabled them to extend their care to guests. In extending warmth towards others through casual hospitality women employed a secularised Jewish-Israeli hierarchy of hosting strategically: smaller quantities of food and drink as refreshments to convey respect, a full meal to convey provision and nourishment and to create a sense of obligation in others, and a festive meal or food gifts for support. The extending of care and sense of inclusiveness that casual hospitality stands for supported women's engagements with food preparation and their guests through the food they offered, though the emotions they expressed depended on the national affiliations. Jewish-Israeli women manifested nostalgia for the communal home through casual hospitality that enhanced informality and spontaneity, and for the Israeli-familial food they offer. New Zealanders, as their guest-friends, expressed longing and desire for exotic and unfamiliar, yet homely foods as stand-ins for the place they are yet to visit, i.e. Israel. In these ways women used their pride and pleasure in order to assert their Israeliness. They used the pleasurable sensate experiences of their food and drink to provoke New Zealanders to confirm their status as good Israeli hostesses, attesting to the myth of the *bashlanit*. Hence,

those women who befriended New Zealanders claimed to have made them ‘better’ women, instigating their attempts to imitate their cooking and behave like them, as the latter rewarded them with acknowledgement and admiration. Moreover, their common, self-ascribed role as the “Minister of Foreign Affairs” in their family asserted the myth of the *bashlanit* and attested to their political understanding of governing and realising social relations of importance beyond the realm of the family. By more frequently incorporating ‘bring a plate’ events, barbeques and picnics into their casual hospitality practices in New Zealand women enact their Israeliness as good food providers while they become like New Zealanders.

Importantly, extending feminine care and warmth to those in need through casual hospitality and food gifts is a practice shared by New Zealanders according to Christian values. Lauraine Jacob, a renowned Kiwi food writer, exemplifies this notion with *Comfort: Food for Sharing*, a recently released collection of recipes which she edited. In an article on the book in popular local newspaper, she is quoted as saying, “It’s the sort of food you could take to someone who is a bit needy. It’s soups, salads, all sorts of savoury main courses, casseroles, lasagnes and pies”⁵⁵. Thus, extending care through gifts of food is a form of communal solidarity with the ‘needy’, a common practice that helps facilitate a relatively easy passage for Jewish-Israeli migrant women into their new society. Other research, mostly on elderly New Zealanders, reinforces the importance of food gifts and festive hospitality as the everyday ‘making’ of national-communal and familial solidarity through ‘good doing’ (Herda 1991, Wright-St Clair 2004).

At the same time, in their experiences of casual hospitality events women in this study articulated social tensions that are part of their realisation of the communal home. These tensions were played out in criticisms of the nature and amount of food and drink on offer, while the women grappled with the myth of the *sabra*. Women conveyed ambivalence through anger, shame and sometimes self-irony according to their success in establishing supportive social networks. As they articulated their desire to establish strong friendships in order to feel ‘at home’ in New Zealand, they idealised openness and warmth in those they befriended regardless of their national affiliations. Criticism of the amount and nature of food became a means of highlighting undesirable behaviours and expressing competition, as

⁵⁵ The book is a collection of recipes from “top chefs” in New Zealand. It was issued as fundraiser for Starship, a children’s hospital in Auckland. Rhiannon Horrell covered the book in *Central Leader* (24.11.2010) and interviewed Jacob. Horrell’s article and the book were published in the lead up to Christmas when many NGOs fundraise to convey solidarity with people in need. Unlike in Israel, the publishing of cookbooks by school PTAs and other groups of volunteers is a common means of fundraising in New Zealand.

women condemned Jewish-Israelis who they felt had exploited them. In other cases women conveyed class aspirations via the bids for respect by asserting the myth of the *polania* to contest the acceptability of the gendered *dugri* style of speech, specifically when employed in threatening ways by some Israeli men. Other women who befriend mostly Jewish-Israeli migrants criticised New Zealanders using a metaphor based on food and drink as proof of insincerity, in particular, on the basis of alcohol consumption.

The next chapter examines the realisation of the Jewish spiritual home through women's experiences of festive cooking and *kashrut* observance, the common changes they engender in these practices after migrating and their longing for Jewish tradition.

Chapter Six: Returning to the Spiritual Home through Festive Cooking and *Kashrut* Observance

After a full day of work on Fridays, I run to buy challot, prepare the children and cook dinner before the Kiddush, all in three hours max... It's stressful, but what don't we do to preserve the zikah [lit. spark]? (Nora)

This chapter examines the experiences of Jewish-Israeli migrant women in the study, who are mostly secular, in regard to the practices of festive food production and consumption and *kashrut*⁵⁶ observance. These food practices are women's ways of realising the dimension of the Jewish spiritual home. I refer to festive cooking and *kashrut* observance as domestic food practices since traditionally they are centred on food rituals that women conduct at home (Sered 1992). The quote above describes the choice of Jewish-Israeli women to engage with more ritualised responsibility after migration to New Zealand than in Israel in order to maintain *zikah* (lit. a spark) that denotes a connection with Jewish tradition and a spiritual home. These efforts are encompassed by what Rina Cohen, for example, identifies as becoming 'more' Jewish in her studies on Jewish-Israeli migrants in North America (Cohen 2005, Cohen and Gold 1997). Similarly to other scholars who have studied these communities since the 1980s (Kaplowitz Ben-Mordechai 1982, Korazim 1985, Leiserowitz 2003), Cohen articulates this behavioural change as part of the 'myth of return', and as an obstacle in their integration into the new socio-cultural environment. Cohen explains that in this way, first generation Jewish-Israeli migrants maintain a distinctive national identity while they articulate a tension with the longstanding local diasporic Jewry. Indeed, this tension is manifested in the relations between women in this study and the Auckland Hebrew Congregation (henceforth the AHC) a communal organisation of the local New Zealand Jewry that is associated with Ashkenazi Orthodoxy. Due to this association, some of the women who sent their children to the AHC's Jewish school, Kadimah College, increased their ambivalence towards *kashrut* observance and the AHC all the more.

In her statement at the start of this chapter, Nora deliberately put on a stereotypical heavy Ashkenazi accent for the final rhetorical question. In this way, Nora made fun of herself, role-playing the myth of the *polania* to complain about the extra effort and responsibility called

⁵⁶ I acknowledge that the Jewish dietary rules, *kashrut*, are more comprehensive and complex than the rules most of women in this study observe and are aware of. Accordingly, in *kashrut* I refer to the most well-known Jewish prohibitions and separations regarding the production and consumption of food: the prohibition on eating pork and crustaceans, any mixing of dairy foods with meat and cooking on Shabbat; and the requirement for kosher slaughtering and processing of meat.

for in her efforts to uphold the Kiddush. Nora articulated some of the intense and mixed emotions women convey towards the labour and responsibility that festive and Shabbat food rituals require. In what follows, I demonstrate that Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study facilitate their integration into their new socio-cultural environment through their nostalgic practice of festive cooking and by grappling with *kashrut* observance, two spiritual practices that forge women's strongest connection with Jewish tradition. Accordingly, I juxtapose women's articulations of pleasure and pride with those of ambivalence, guilt and self-parody while examining their experiences of cooking festive food and *kashrut* observance.

All the women in this study convey nostalgia for Jewish tradition through an increase in cooking festive food, and in some cases, an increase in *kashrut* observance after immigration to New Zealand. I elaborate on the theory of Daphne Berdahl (2009) on nostalgic consumption in order to identify the main emotions that women express in these practices and to understand the main contradictions in their behaviours. The dimension of home as Jewish spirituality is realised through their festive food practice and *kashrut* observance, whereby festive food rituals reiterate the centrality of women in the family. The complexity of their feelings and behaviours are the result of their shift in the cultural context after migration. This shift contributes to the pleasure and pride women derive from their active choice to remember and assume responsibility for celebrating festive meals. Women articulate their choice through decisions about the form and timing of their celebrations and by promoting full family attendance in a relaxed fashion, in addition to hosting guests and learning to cook more festive food. Through the production and consumption of festive food, women become focal points in these celebrations and transmit cultural knowledge to their children while they embody a Jewish-Israeli temporal cycle. Women constitute Jewish spirituality anew in New Zealand as they integrate the New Zealand way of timing, form and food content into their Jewish festive celebrations. They manifest intimacy with their grandmothers, who also represent Jewish homes in the wider Jewish diaspora, by learning to cook festive foods, which evoke memories of close kin. In some cases, women may use festive foods and form new rituals to commemorate close kin who have passed away.

Furthermore, the complexity of women's feelings and behaviours are the result of the fact that they are part of the generation brought up after second-wave feminism in Israel and their experiences in Israel that realise the tension between secularism and religiosity. This tension lingers in their relations with the AHC and with close kin such as husbands and mothers who pressured them to cook. Women's journeys back to the spiritual Jewish home are fraught

with ambivalent behaviours that contest their sense of religious oppression. In some cases their guilt over their Jewish religious ignorance as secular women triggers attempts at reparation by associating with the AHC, which mostly ends up increasing their sense of ambivalence toward *kashrut* observance. In other cases women directly challenge the expectation of *kashrut* observance through their conscious choice of non-kosher and typically Kiwi foods for festive celebrations, a practice that triggers self-irony. In their choice to consume non-kosher food at such times, they also articulate “hate” toward ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel as symbols of religious oppression, i.e. the denial of choice or pleasure, which they wish to challenge. These contestations are manifested in the way they elicit certain senses and are provoked to convey a newly acquired or enhanced pleasure from the consumption of non-kosher foods, and even through their disgust with non-kosher foods.

Notably, in Israel most Jewish festive times are remembered and celebrated as national holidays, state-sponsored moments in which the rhythm of life changes. These changes are marked by street foods and groceries that are either sold or prohibited at these times, along with learning about festive celebrations at secular educational institutes and through familial festive meals at home. Since the meal on Friday nights epitomises all routinely eaten meals, this meal manifests the least degree of change in structure and content in familial celebrations at home (Gil-Tin 2005:35, Shine-Rakavy 1999:32-38, 99). In contrast, many secular Jewish-Israelis refrain from *kashrut* observance and demonstrate great opposition toward this practice not only by knowing where to buy non-kosher foods such as pork, crustaceans or leavened flour products on Passover, but also by actually buying and eating them in practice⁵⁷. The anthropologist Michael Ashkenazi (2002:47), for example, notes that many of his Jewish-Israeli friends greatly resent the Passover meal and try to avoid it. He notes their ambivalence in their choice to observe this meal anyway, despite the fact that the meal involves many traditional requirements that they find burdensome. This meal, as Ashkenazi argues, incites all the senses and the four tastes in order for participants to embody the collective memory of the experience of Exodus as it is transmitted to the next generation. Yet in his analysis Ashkenazi ignores the fact that some of the antagonism secular Jewish-Israelis feel towards this meal might derive from the fact that as a familial food ritual the meal

⁵⁷ In January 2010 Dr Eli Landau, a retired cardiologist, self-published the first Jewish-Israeli cookbook dedicated solely to pork recipes, which he named ‘The White Book’. The book’s name echoes the well-known euphemism for pork in Israel, “white meat”. Alternatively, in non-kosher kibbutzim pork is called *davar acher*, meaning “something else”. The book attracted worldwide media attention. In it Landau called on secular Jewish-Israelis to be honest about their sources of pork in Israel and their taste for pork. I thank Maureen Kandler for bringing this information to my attention.

epitomises the heavy weight of kinship relations that Jewish festive food rituals endorse and the intensive cooking labour these rituals require.

By examining changes that mostly secular Jewish-Israeli women bring about in New Zealand in domestic festive cooking and *kashrut* observance after immigration, one may be able to further explain their great dissatisfaction and ambivalence in these regards. Considering scholarly claims that depict Jewish-Israeli migrants as turning ‘more Jewish’ in other diasporic locations (Cohen 2005, Cohen and Gold 1997), one wonders what changes these women engender in festive cooking and *kashrut* observance in an environment dominated by mostly non-kosher food and Christian celebrations, and what these changes mean. In addition, traditionally Jewish women are considered as experts on festive food rituals and *kashrut* observance (Sered 1992). Therefore, considering earlier research on the nostalgic remembrance of other Jewish diasporic groups (Bahloul 1996, Bardenstein 2002, Duruz 2004b), one wonders if the women in this study remember the spirits of their dead close kin through festive cooking and *kashrut* observance similarly to women in other Jewish diasporic groups.

Pleasure and Choice in Festive Cooking

This section is based on two common findings concerning the women in this study: first, women begin to cook iconic Jewish festive foods that are no longer available to them, and second, they learn to cook new dishes for festive meals. Some of these festive foods are unavailable because of the physical distance from close female kin who have been in charge of cooking them. In addition, other foods and drinks that are manufactured industrially for Jewish festivals are no longer available to them due to the distance from Israel and the impossibility of exporting them to faraway countries like New Zealand. These include, for example, *challot*, *matzos* and non-alcoholic kosher grape juice for children, which are easily purchased in Israel. Second, most women begin to put more effort into Jewish festive meals at home than in Israel, including the Kiddush, the Friday night meal that welcomes the Shabbat. At the time of this study, 17 women maintain this familial weekly food ritual, a ritual they did not uphold regularly at home when they lived in Israel. Amongst these are four women who feel they became “less traditional” by “compromising” on observing *kashrut* compared with their previous practice in Israel. Eight other women carried on with non-kosher eating as they done in Israel, increasing it under the influence of the non-kosher food environment in New Zealand. At the same time these women also increase upholding festive food rituals at home in New Zealand compared to their practice in Israel. These findings

suggest seeming contradictions as one wonders, for example, about the emotions that women who eat non-kosher foods may experience in increasing their participation in Jewish festive celebrations in New Zealand and their purpose in doing so.

Most women manifest pleasure and pride as they negotiate their Jewishness, returning home to Jewish tradition in three common ways. First, they turn some festive foods into routine edibles to draw attention to their cooking skills. Second, they make decisions about the timing of the celebrations, as women mostly increase their sense of choice and responsibility in festive celebrations in New Zealand. In this manner, women often integrate Jewish festive cooking in timing, form and content in local celebratory contexts in New Zealand. For example, they use roast meat for Jewish festive meals or organize a barbeque at Christmastime to celebrate Hanukah. Third, they commemorate close kin while learning to cook festive foods that women associate with life in Israel and the other diasporic lands of the generation of their grandmothers.

From the outset it is important to note that in festive meals, including the Kiddush, women cite that involving their children and guests is their main purpose for holding these celebrations. At least three women, out of whom one is highly ambivalent towards Jewish tradition, stated that they would “rather die than be alone” during festive celebrations. Accordingly, women who begin maintaining Kiddush regularly in New Zealand feel there is “no point” in doing so unless their children and, usually, guests are present. Through their symbolic readiness to “die” women convey self-sacrifice in order to ensure the celebration of Jewish festive meals in the company of others, since in celebrating ‘alone’ women cease to exist spiritually. In other words, some women feel it would be self-sacrifice to celebrate festive meals alone, since by celebrating festive meals in the company of others they feel alive. The reference to a symbolic sacrificing of the self, signals women’s deep desire to connect with others on festive occasions, mixed with a deep fear of social exclusion, i.e. loneliness. The fear of loneliness stems from festive occasions epitomising communal solidarity and familial intimacy. Their deep fear of social exclusion at these particular times provokes longing to unite with others convivially, specifically since sharing food at these times epitomises the Jewish spirituality that women wish to achieve in order to make them feel ‘at home’ in New Zealand.

Moreover, their symbolic readiness for self-sacrifice is a reference to the myth of the *polania*. In contrast to the previous chapter, where the experience of Nora illustrates the

readiness of women to “die” rather than refuse to eat food offered by a hostess, here, women articulate the extent to which they are willing to disregard matters of respect. This disregard is manifested in order to avoid celebrating festive meals alone; indeed, these women say they prefer to take on large amounts of work and high levels of responsibility to hold these celebrations, if only to prevent that from happening. In the following section I discuss how and why pleasure and pride are articulated by women with respect to their general readiness to increase their responsibility and effort on such occasions.

Realising Jewish Spirituality through Pleasure and Pride

Some women gradually turn festive dishes and specific dishes into foods that are eaten routinely after immigrating to New Zealand, as they assert their centrality in the family and social network. They attest to their Jewishness by manifesting their longing for Jewish tradition and demonstrating their cooking skill. Rina, for example, had turned a typical “Passover cake” into her *ugat habayit*, her “house cake” for casual hospitality events. Passover cakes typically do not contain flour, but contain many eggs, various nuts (e.g. coconut, peanuts, almonds) and often chocolate. She made this cake so often for ‘bring a plate’ occasions that it became her “flag”, as women put it, and her friends came to refer to it as the ‘Rina cake’. Ella, as another example, had perfected her recipe for chicken liver pâté to the point that she makes it every Friday and it has come to be referred to as the ‘Ella pâté’ at at hospitality events and festive meals. Similarly, in her restaurant and at home Yael began to offer chicken liver pâté on *challah* every Friday. Clearly these women are able to manage social networks in New Zealand through cooking skills that connote their Jewish spirituality, but often at ordinary non-festive occasions. These dishes personify them and support their claim to the status of *bashlanit*.

In addition, women integrate local festive cooking practices with Jewish ones to constitute home anew in New Zealand. For example, many began roasting lamb and beef for festive and Shabbat meals, imitating a practice they had learnt from New Zealanders. Naama, for example, claimed that she “announces the beginning of wintertime” in New Zealand each year through her roast lamb and beef dishes cooked in a family-size crockpot for the Kiddush. This was a practice she adopted from her local hostess, despite initially feeling very hesitant about such an unfamiliar cooking method. Several women combine barbeque meals and the Hanukah period that usually occurs during the summertime in New Zealand (December), and three women combine Christmas and Hanukah celebrations. In these celebrations they follow

a Jewish-Israeli temporal cycle through their cooking, shared eating and hospitality, while they enhance their sense of choice and pleasure. By creating and maintaining local social connections in such ways, women employ highly regarded local meat dishes such as roast lamb or beef to mark Jewish-Israeli festive times.

Interestingly, all women feel that they are more involved in festive celebrations based on food rituals (including the Kiddush) than New Zealanders. They view the greater number of festive meals, combined with the ostensibly higher quality and quantity of foods in these meals, as a marker of national difference that is cause for pleasure and pride. Such claims are particularly true for women with professional food aspirations, both those who trained as food professionals and those who fantasise about such a career in New Zealand. Yet regardless of such aspirations, this national marker often raises opportunities for self-parody. A Jewish-Israeli chef and caterer provided an example of such a view at a community cooking session I attended at the AHC. Although it was just before Rosh Hashanah, as the ingredients required for a Rosh Hashanah recipe were mostly not certified as kosher in New Zealand, the chef decided instead to demonstrate how to bake a Tu B'Shvat cake, filled with nuts and dried fruits. The chef equated it with the traditional Christmas cake, joking that "Kiwis only fuss once a year over food – before and for Christmas". The chef then suggested that Kiwis learn from "us" about the importance of food and how to celebrate. The participants at the session, who were all women, laughed in approval while poking fun at themselves as Jewish-Israelis for their "fuss" over cooking in festive celebrations and the great importance they ascribe to the pleasure of eating. In this way, the participants asserted the importance of festive food and their pride in the pleasure of eating compared with New Zealanders. A similar claim was repeatedly made by women in this study, regardless of their share in the practice of festive domestic cooking. These women derive visceral pleasure from eating and remembering Jewish festivals, which they themselves organise. In such a way, they emphasise their centrality in the family while enacting their Jewishness.

Moreover, many women separate the timing of the Jewish festivals in New Zealand from their actual date for a practical reason: they synchronise these occasions to fit in with other responsibilities such as paid employment. In this way women conform with Jewish diasporic custom, since in any case, it is customary in the Jewish diaspora to celebrate every festive meal a day earlier than in Israel, so that 'real' traditional time matches the Hebrew calendar. Women assert the centrality of these festive occasions through their labour in the kitchen, but in ways that accommodate their paid employment obligations, often beginning to cook

several days before the event in order to ensure all the necessary dishes that traditionally mark these occasions. They also share some of the work with the others with whom they celebrate at these festive times, usually on the basis of rotating the hosting family, which does not necessarily imply rotating the responsibility for cooking specific dishes, since many women become renowned over time amongst their friends for cooking specific festive dishes.

However, some women shift the date of the festive celebration more freely in New Zealand, usually to the closest weekend. Separating the festivities from their actual time would never occur in Israel, since these celebrations take place on set dates that follow the Hebrew calendar, which combines lunar and solar calculations differently from the Gregorian calendar that is followed in Christian-based states. The events are usually celebrated in Israel in the company of the extended family in the homes of mothers/mothers-in-law. As an example I take the case of the Kiddush. According to various Jewish traditions the Kiddush should be held on Friday nights, after three stars appear in the sky. During the Kiddush married women light and say a blessing over two Shabbat candles before the ceremonial meal begins. Next the *challot* (sing. *challah*) are broken and dipped in salt to be shared and consumed by all participants. Along with the drinking of wine and the blessings, there is often some singing before the actual meal. During festive periods that begin on Friday night, *challot* may be dipped in honey or sugar, depending on the Jewish-Israeli ethnicity of the participants.

Children at kindergartens in Israel rehearse this familial festive ritual, among many others. Most children who attend secular kindergartens celebrate ‘*kabalat Shabbat*’ (welcoming the Shabbat) before the school day is over on Fridays at around 1 pm, and children bake *challot*, *matzos* and other Jewish typical festive foods to eat or take home. The Kiddush in Israel, just like other festive meals, is ‘felt’ in the streets of cities and facilitated by the management of time and people’s behaviour. This weekly spiritual event is legitimised and encouraged by the state through a halved working day for people in paid employment, known as *erev-hag* or *erev-Shabbat* (the evening of the festive/Shabbat). The institutionalised designation of time in the public sphere enables adults and children to prepare in the public and domestic spheres for the anticipated festivity as part of a collective remembrance that embodies the Jewish-Israeli temporal cycle. In comparison, in Auckland, children, like their parents, lack the state-designated times and places that promote the embodied remembrances of festive times in rehearsals and the preparations for these rituals. Unless women decide to send their children to Kadimah College (and the Zionist youth movements Habonim and Bnei Akiva), no such

rehearsals are available apart from at home. The ‘absence’ of these rehearsals promotes women’s longing and sense of choice and pride in upholding such rituals. At the same time many women, like Nora in the opening quote, complain about the greater effort and responsibility they are required to undertake in order to prepare and uphold such rituals.

During fieldwork I observed that the Friday night meals are often signified by women as different from the other weekday meals because of the type of food, the full family’s attendance, the presence of guests and the form of dining, all of which they foster. Women use the practical, contextual difference between Israel and New Zealand to indicate their ability to overcome challenges in order to uphold these occasions and manifest pleasure and pride. Most women would travel far to purchase expensive *challot*. The *shul* shop in the AHC in Auckland’s city centre only sells kosher *challot* on Fridays. In addition, three relatively expensive bakeries in wealthy suburbs sell *challot*. Only a few women who live near these locations, like Nora, make a regular effort to buy *challot*, since most women who celebrate the Kiddush prefer to bake *challot* at home. For these women, migration, along with the visceral pleasures they derive from baking, eating and feeding their children and guests *challot*, are important ways to manifest longing for Jewish tradition by which they remember and embody the Jewish-Israeli temporal cycle.

Since upholding such celebrations requires cooking and baking and/or travelling afar, as well as planning and other physical preparations, women feel that through their actions they *actively* choose to remember Jewish tradition. The active nature of this choice, expressed through the Hebrew term *lizcor* (to remember), is articulated by women when they claim that in contrast, in Israel one is passively reminded of the Shabbat and festive times. In having to make “conscious efforts” in the “production” of these events, as women put it, they are aware that they have more responsibility to actively remember Jewish festivals. This awareness translated into conscious efforts to reconstitute the Jewish home by invoking connections with Jewish spirituality. Along with the increase in their sense of responsibility and effort in remembering festive times, women also increase their centrality in the family, and the pleasure and pride they derive from transmitting festive cultural knowledge to their children. Naama, for example, like the majority of the women in this study, claimed that she feels eating festive foods convivially, singing and giving presents are the most important and “pleasant” aspects of Jewish festivals that she wishes to promote and teach her children. Rather than rely on the AHC for this, through her festive cooking Naama promulgates what I term, borrowing from local parlance, ‘DIY (Do-It-Yourself) Judaism’, as most women in this

study do. Like Naama, they continuously emphasise their preference for choosing how to “be Jewish” by celebrating festive occasions at home and cooking festive foods as they see fit, regardless of their level of *kashrut* observance.

The following experience, Miriam’s, is the exception that proves this rule. Miriam is the only woman in this study who took time off work to celebrate the High Holidays in New Zealand. Rather than expressing pleasure and pride in the sense of increased choice and responsibility and in upholding Jewish festivals, Miriam expressed guilt. She is one of four women in this study who decreased their *kashrut* observance after migration. As they put it, each of these women had grown up in a “traditional home”. Miriam claimed that she became “less traditional” in New Zealand for a practical reason: that it is simply not “realistic” to observe *kashrut* and carry out all festive celebrations in such an environment. Yet while the other three women felt that, considering their non-Jewish environment in New Zealand, they were doing the best they could to observe festive times and *kashrut* to convey respect specifically for their mothers, Miriam regarded her situation in the following way.

Miriam proudly and fondly remembered that when her children were younger in Israel she used to cook festive foods with them at home for “educational purposes”. She also described in great detail the strict *kashrut* observance she knew from her childhood home. She asserted repeatedly that she would “go back to live in Israel at the drop of a hat” and blamed her husband for their choice to emigrate. Miriam claimed that emigration “threatens” their children’s Jewish identity. While her husband does not care, Miriam is “proactive” and does her best to “return” their children to intimacy with the Jewish tradition. In this way Miriam expressed the great importance of her efforts in the realm of domestic festive cooking and *kashrut* observance as a feminine means for the transmission of cultural knowledge. At the same time, Miriam expressed longing for those idealised times in her Israeli past whereby she fulfilled her role as a ‘proper’ Jewish mother. Now, Miriam felt guilty for not living up to that same standard, and the decline in the family’s *kashrut* observance epitomised her failure, which in turn triggered her feelings of guilt and her blaming her husband. In contrast to Miriam, who is an exception, most women enact their Jewish spirituality by cooking festive dishes to the same extent as Miriam in New Zealand, but feel pleasure and pride at their increased sense of choice and responsibility. In fact, Miriam’s experience of guilt at having failed, as she perceived it, is in accordance with the experiences of religious Jewish-Israeli women in Israel who understand cooking festive foods and *kashrut* observance as their most important religious feminine responsibilities (Sered 1992, Shine-Rakavy 1999). As experts of

festive food rituals these women employ such food practices to enhance kinship relations while enacting their centrality in the family through a Jewish spirituality that imbues food with sacredness.

Commemorating Close Kin via Festive Cooking

After migrating all women extend their cooking repertoire by learning to cook typical Israeli festive foods and seeking recipes and advice from the following sources in descending order of importance and frequency: close female kin, other Jewish-Israeli migrants or friends who live in Israel, Hebrew web sites and cookbooks, New Zealand Jewry and non-Jewish New Zealanders. As confident cooks who enjoy cooking, some women commemorate beloved close kin by reconnecting with the spiritual Jewish home through their efforts in festive cooking and the ‘soulful’ meanings such foods are imbued with. This section elaborates in particular on the nostalgic qualities of festive cooking that women engage in for commemorating close kin, as opposed to everyday cooking, which I discussed in Chapter Three. By analysing the experience of Yasmin by way of example, I articulate the main difference between the behaviours of women in this study and those of longstanding Jews in other diasporic locations in regard to festive cooking (see for example, Bahloul 1996, Bardenstein 2002, Duruz 2004b, Steinberg 1998).

As part of the process of commemorating the death of her younger brother, Yasmin learned to cook *sufganiyot* (doughnuts) in New Zealand. Yasmin said that while in mourning for her brother who passed away suddenly, she decided to commemorate him by inviting friends for a Hanukah celebration for which she would cook *sufganiyot* for the first time. His unexpected death and her deep sorrow prompted her to learn to cook, then eat, *sufganiyot*, as well as light Hanukah candles and sing in the company of Jewish-Israeli migrant friends who had never known him. Yasmin “returned home” to New Zealand, as she put it, and through these practices she also realised her spiritual connection with Israel as a ‘return home’ to her Jewish homeland. Since Hanukah was the nearest Jewish festival upon returning to NZ from Israel for the funeral, Yasmin turned her festive cooking efforts and the pride and pleasure she took in it into an informal event for his commemoration. By sustaining life through feeding her guests Yasmin commemorated her brother while she united with his spirit.

The case of Yasmin stands for other cases, some of which I discussed in Chapter Three, whereby Shivon cooks *kube shwandar* (Iraqi dumpling soup) to commemorate her grandmother and Ella cooks Moroccan dishes every Friday to commemorate her mother-in-

law (p. 100-101). These cases show that women in this study interweave cooking festive foods and the remembrance of close kin with the remembrance of their connection to everyday life in Israel in order to materialise a return to the spiritual Jewish home. In Yasmin's case *sufganiyot* are a typical Ashkenazi-European Hanukah dish of yeast doughnuts, deep-fried then filled with jam and iced with sugar. They require great skill, patience and time to prepare. In Israel, *sufganiyot* appear as street food every year before Hanukah. Several women in this study learnt to make *sufganiyot* in New Zealand as a result of their nostalgia for this Jewish tradition. These women became well known for their *sufganiyot* among their Jewish-Israeli migrant friends, who often referred to the *sufganiyot* by the names of the cooks. The book *Parents are Cooking* recommends making *sufganiyot* at home, which are depicted as a "big miracle" (Shechner-Rochman 2005:190) in reference to the great pleasure that kin specifically, but also anyone else, may derive from their aroma and taste. *Sufganiyot* are imbued with kinship love when eaten fresh and made at home, since, as the writer claims, they are "filled with soul", in contrast to those that are easily bought commercially in Israel.

By beginning to prepare *sufganiyot* and other specific festive dishes, women like Yasmin who commemorate their deceased close kin through festive foods intermix their feelings of sorrow and loss with nostalgia for Jewish traditions carried out in an Israeli way. In other words, in their imagined journey home they used the spiritual power of Jewish-Israeli festive foods and their labour in the kitchen to foster intimate memories of life in Israel and with these kin. Since in New Zealand such festive foods are not easily bought ready-made and must be made at home, one has to purchase the ingredients to make them. Grocery shopping is thus an integral part of this practice of remembrance. Yet these festive foods are imbued with the 'soul' of both their creators and of the person commemorated by them, demonstrating women's ability to enact kinship love through 'soulful' food-making that merges death with life by feeding others.

In comparison, in his memoir (1998), Steinberg, as a Jewish Ashkenazi man, depicts his nostalgic remembrance of his grandmother in the USA through memories of her *challah*. Steinberg described the sense evoked by the *challah* that his *bubbie* (an endearing term for grandmother in Yiddish) used to bake for her close kin. His memory of the *challah* becomes a site for her idealised commemoration, while the memoir not only recreates the spirit of his grandmother and unites him with her, but also brings about the symbolic 'burial' of her recipe that was lost with her death. As such, Steinberg's memoir shows that longstanding diasporic

Jews employ their nostalgia in similar but different ways to the Jewish-Israeli women in this study. While both groups express their sense of loss and remember their deceased close kin via typically Jewish festive foods, the latter also long for and remember ordinary life in Israel in their return to the spiritual Jewish home, as they often choose to recreate festive or Shabbat dishes in a ritualised manner⁵⁸.

When the *Polania* meets the *Bashlanit*

The claim above is discussed further in the following analysis of women's experiences as they engage in learning and teaching how to cook typical festive dishes, such as gefilte fish. I observed the teaching and learning of cooking gefilte fish at a community event held at the AHC in a session called 'Gefilte Fish for Dummies' that I attended before Rosh Hashanah in September 2011. The session was organised by a non-professional Jewish-Israeli Ashkenazi migrant woman who had lived in the USA before she immigrated to New Zealand. Hence she did not fit the profile I set for participants in this study. As I will show, she used this session to challenge the participants in my study and convey her critique of the women in the study.

The criteria for the choice of recipe and cooking technique of the demonstrator included "a simple process, in an hour, which involves few skills and dishes to be cleaned later, fulfilled by all the ingredients being ground up in a food processor". Of the 11 participants at the event, there were four Jewish-Israeli migrant women, two of whom participated in this study; one man; and two children, those of the woman conducting the session, three New Zealanders and myself. I recognised the man as Allen Jaffe, a Jewish Ashkenazi New Zealander and the son of migrant Jews. Jaffe was interviewed and photographed by Kim Knight for the book she compiled, *Home Made: Stories and Recipes from New Zealand Stove Tops* (2008). Although he did not voice his opinions during the session, in his memoir and that cookbook he declared that gefilte fish "is not for the faint-hearted" because of the strong smell of fish (2008:32). He also related to the nostalgia that gefilte fish stirred in the Jewish Sir Dove-Myer Robinson, mayor of Auckland for eighteen years (1959-1965, 1968-1980), who was at the "fringe of Judaism" (2008:32), as he did not observe Jewish traditions. The mayor's nostalgia was triggered on account of eating gefilte fish at a social gathering, also attended by Jaffe. As I will show, the women who participated in the gefilte fish cooking session took an

⁵⁸ This difference applies to findings in many other studies on Jewish diasporic women and food (see for example, Bahloul 1996, Bardenstein 2002, Duruz 2004b). This difference also applies to Deb Filler, a Jewish New Zealand comic actor who baked challah on stage on her show "Filler Up". In the show she explored how people take the recipes they are given by their close female kin and make them their own. The show was performed in New Zealand in 2000 and 2003 (<http://www.fillerup.ca>, last accessed on 28 May 2007).

approach to Jewish tradition similar to Jaffe's while evincing their pleasure and pride in asserting their Jewishness.

Indeed, right at the start of the session, a Jewish-American migrant woman complained about the strong smell of the fish. This woman joked that she would have to "evacuate" her household members before cooking gefilte fish, and declared that her children "believe that gefilte fish only comes from a jar", causing much laughter. She later bemoaned the fact that "as immigrants our children do not get to know and eat their grandmothers' foods". This realisation prompted her, towards the end of the session, to suggest that the session and the gefilte fish should be "dedicated in respect, appreciation and love to all our grandmothers". Inness, who was also participating in the session, responded to this call by proudly announcing that in order to fulfil the continuous requests of her children, since she and her family had immigrated to New Zealand she recreates the festive foods of her grandmothers. However, Inness, who was a close friend of the demonstrator, was unhappy with the taste of the recipe, which included fish, egg, *challah*, and 70 grams of ground almond, plus salt, pepper and sugar to taste and optional cooked carrot for garnish. Greatly concerned, Inness insisted on finding a substitute for the ground almonds, prompting a lively discussion from the participants about other options, a discussion that was eventually stopped by the demonstrator who said she knew of no other options, since ground almonds are part of the "original recipe" that was passed on to her by her grandmother.

During the session the demonstrator encouraged the participants to "dig into the mixture" and form fish patties. This sensate activity created instant bonding between the participants, who laughed as they formed the patties. Meanwhile, the demonstrator remembered and compared the taste of both her grandmothers' gefilte fish in conjunction with their diasporic Jewish localities: her Argentinean grandmother made her fish patties spicy, while her Polish grandmother from Warsaw made hers sweet. In her demonstration she chose to follow the sweet recipe, with which she was more familiar and of which she was fonder, based on her memories of Rosh Hashanah and Passover celebrations during her childhood in Israel. She discussed the amount of hapuka – a common type of fish in New Zealand – that she used in place of the carp, which is commonly used in Israel, and was asked how much fish would be needed to feed a certain number of people. She responded that "in the *shtetl* people were poor" and argued that depending on the money available, one should vary the ratio between the ingredients by adding more bread, *matzo* meal or *challah* instead of fish, or the other way around. At that stage her children, a girl aged 14 and a boy aged 12, asked her if the gefilte

fish “will come out tasty”, and she said: “My grandmother would always say: I don’t know – with God’s help it will”. Towards the end of the session her daughter called out that by smelling the gefilte fish she “can smell Rosh Hashanah is coming”. All the participants ate the finished fish patties, some spontaneously complimenting their taste.

During the session the demonstrator told six jokes about gefilte fish that she had found earlier on the internet, “because Israelis like to joke about Jews”. While cooking, she emphasised “cheating” and “shortcuts” and described compromises she made out of respect for her guests, such as how “out of consideration” she usually cooks gefilte fish less sweet than she would like. She had decided not to “compromise” on that day and prepared the dish as sweet as she likes it. Much to her dismay, the dish did not turn out as she expected; laughing gaily, she admitted that she had “failed” and the result was “disgusting”. Finally, I approached her to thank her and to find out whether her complaints about the lack of sweetness stemmed from reasons similar to those of some women in this study who perceived that salt in New Zealand as less salty than in Israel. She responded, “I have no such problems”, adding, “I know that in your research you often hear women say these things, but I moved to New Zealand wholeheartedly; you will not hear me saying such things”.

It was the nostalgia of women for Jewish tradition that prompted them to sign up to learn to cook gefilte fish, enhancing their pleasure and pride in cooking and evoking remembrances of close female kin, specifically grandmothers. These kin were commemorated by these acts of recollection that materialised through the cooking of an iconic Ashkenazi festive food, while through the pleasure and pride the women felt in carrying out these acts, they enacted their Jewish spirituality. This form of personal-collective remembrance called for the substitution of some of the ingredients in recipes received from kin with local ones, as illustrated by the demonstrator whose grandmother’s recipe had called for carp but who had had to use the local fish. This was true in the case of most women in this study after migration who began cooking festive foods by recreating the recipes of their grandmothers’ generation. The women used the Jewish cultural knowledge they had thus received in the reconstitution of the spiritual Jewish home in New Zealand.

At the same time, just as the demonstrator did, other women in this study reduced their time and effort spent cooking in comparison to their grandmothers and in consideration of flavours, money, available ingredients, the technology available to them and their own tastes. The demonstrator negotiated these aspects by her emphasis on “cheating” and taking

“shortcuts” in the cooking process. The title of her cooking session, “Gefilte Fish for Dummies”, plus her life history, were in line with the efficient and simplified American versions of cooking gefilte fish she embraced. By embracing efficiency and simplicity she acted in a manner akin to that advocated by Julia Child in domestic cooking for the sake of pleasure and epitomising the American values of modernity (Hollows 2007:37-48). The Jewish-Israeli Ruth Sirkis and Nira Rousso also exemplified this approach to cooking in their popular cookbooks for the home cook (Calò 2005:50-53).

As did some of the women in this study, the demonstrator associated domestic cooking labour with visceral pleasures in the production and consumption of festive food to remember and idealise her grandmother. These idealisations were articulated through their senses, mainly smell and taste. The smell triggered revulsion and self-parody while the gefilte fish was cooking. However, just as the self-parody of women turned their revulsion into pleasure at the beginning of the cooking process, so did the taste and aroma of the gefilte fish by the end of the process, facilitating the transmission of this festive culinary knowledge to the next generation. This point is demonstrated by the daughter of the demonstrator who remembered that “Rosh Hashanah is coming”, embodying a Jewish-Israeli temporal cycle through her pleasure in smelling the final result, while her mother enacted her Jewish spirituality by transmitting this festive culinary knowledge to her daughter.

Meanwhile, Inness had played the role of the *bashlanit*. This was obvious since by portraying her cooking proficiency Inness enacted her Jewish spirituality. After immigration she was not only able to cook, and cooked for her children the favoured festive foods of their great-grandmothers, but also knowledgeable and confident enough to articulate her concern for the taste of the gefilte fish at the demonstration. The discussion about the ground almonds became an important ground for creating competition between her and the demonstrator. The demonstrator enacted the myth of the *polania* to establish her own status through her complaints and self-sacrifice in hospitality, two common attributes of this myth (Gil-Tin 2005:23, Rosin 2005:169-174). The demonstrator not only performed her Jewish-Israeli identity by her prominent usage of jokes that distinguished between American-Ashkenazim as diasporic Jews and Jewish-Israelis, but also enacted her Jewish spirituality by negotiating the sacrifice, for the benefit of her guests, of her own pleasure in the taste of gefilte fish. Compromising on the seasoning of the gefilte fish was so deeply embedded in her cooking practice that she had ‘forgotten’ how to cook gefilte fish as she liked it, which provoked her self-irony in stating that her gefilte fish came out “disgusting”.

In addition, by recruiting the “help of God” to ensure that the gefilte fish would be enjoyed, the demonstrator depicted her class aspirations, similarly to other women in this study who linked memories of past poverty in diasporic Jewish lands with current fears of poverty. In the making of gefilte fish, poverty could bring about adaptations to the recipe in the changing of the ratio of fish to the *matzo* meal or bread which cements it according to the economic means available to the domestic cook. Because the labour of cooking increases in festive times, cooking festive (and Shabbat) dishes epitomises prosperity; one needs leisure time to engage in the cooking of such foods. Yasmin, for example, said that she “prays to God” that her “economic situation” will improve in New Zealand, so that she could be freed from the need to work in paid employment on Fridays in order to prepare for Shabbat. As poverty poses a threat to one’s being, by cooking festive and Shabbat dishes, women in this study hoped to deter that threat, at the same time that they idealised their close female kin who overcame such poverty in past generations. Feelings of pleasure elicited by the taste of gefilte fish, as in the case of other typical festive dishes, implied prosperity and pointed to class aspirations. These aspirations were also depicted by Allen Jaffe (Knight 2008:32) through his association with Auckland’s Jewish mayor and his memory of Jewish tradition, exemplified by his pleasure in eating gefilte fish as a way to remember his Jewishness.

Indeed, in the mythology of close female kin as home cooks and idealised as having overcome threats of poverty, festive and Shabbat dishes featured highly, regardless of women’s ethnicity. In truth, gefilte fish epitomises Jewish-Ashkenazi identity for Americans and Poles alike (Jochowitz 2004:109), as well as for Jewish-Israelis (Shine-Rakavy 1999:98). Yet thanks to the variety of ethnicities of the participants in this study, a wide ethnic variety of dishes were mythologised, such as couscous⁵⁹ and *kube*. Festive and Shabbat dishes are still mostly home-cooked dishes in Israel, while the spiritual power vested in these dishes to overcome dearth is materialised in memories of past Jewish generations. This spirituality enables women in this study to journey metaphorically to the diasporic homelands of their close female kin, since food is an inextricable part of any Jewish festive celebration. Cooking and learning to cook festive and Shabbat foods enables them to manifest their strongest connection with Jewish tradition.

In sum, through the increase in festive cooking and by learning to cook festive foods in New Zealand women in this study derive pleasure and pride as they realise their Jewish

⁵⁹ The film *The Secret of the Grain* (2007) beautifully portrays a similar belief, held by Muslim Tunisian migrants in France, that poverty may be deterred by women’s couscous and lead to economic prosperity.

spirituality, asserting choice and responsibility for such cooking. Through cooking iconic festive dishes and by upholding these festive periods, women materialise a Jewish-Israeli temporal cycle, transferring this cultural knowledge to their children. They constitute their home anew in New Zealand by changing timing, celebration practices, food content, food preparation methods and ingredients, according to their own tastes and their new cultural context. Since immigration provokes their nostalgia for Jewish tradition, after immigration to New Zealand women enunciate the special meanings of the familial Friday night meal and festive meals to enhance their centrality in the family. By upholding these meals, women become a focal point in their social network, organising and determining these food rituals at home. As a result, in New Zealand they transform the pleasures they derive from their choices of cooking and eating festive foods into an identity marker that enacts their Jewish spirituality.

Ambivalence and Guilt towards Jewish Tradition

Nostalgia for Jewish tradition triggers great ambivalence and discomfort amongst women in this study, which often leads to self-irony and, in some cases, a sense of outright guilt. This section shows that through such feelings women negotiate the dimension of Jewish spirituality while portraying ambivalences that are common to secular women of the generation born and brought up after second-wave feminism in Israel. I explain their reasons for articulating discontent that results in ambivalence and self-irony through festive cooking and *kashrut* observance, which epitomise Jewish tradition.

As I examine their motivations for their actions and their rhetoric, I show that several women enact their belonging to the Jewish-Israeli secular group through resistance toward *kashrut* observance that comes across through evocations that kosher versus non-kosher foods trigger. Moreover, I demonstrate that some women depict guilt over their ignorance of Jewish religious traditions and practices as they recast themselves as those who travel with an ‘empty wagon’ with respect to Israeli collective memory. The ‘empty wagon’ is a term that was coined in 1952 with regard to secular Jewish-Israelis. That year, a meeting was initiated by David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, with Chazon Ish⁶⁰, the Ashkenazi leader of the Orthodox Jews, to convince him to allow Orthodox women to serve in the army. In his answer Chazon Ish compared secular Jewish-Israelis to an “empty wagon” that must pay respect and make way for the “full wagon”, which cast Orthodox Jews as Torah sages.

⁶⁰ Chazon Ish is the penname of Rabbi Abraham Karlitz. For details about this historic meeting see Cohen, Hellinger, and Susser (2010:1) and Marmorstein (1972:89, 163).

The metaphors of the ‘empty wagon’ versus the ‘full wagon’ articulate a national division of labour that for the most part still remains intact today, despite the fact that, over time more religious Jews have come to serve in the Israel Defence Forces in special units and courses that combine Torah study with military service⁶¹. These metaphors depict a schism between secular and ultra-Orthodox Jews in the Israeli collective consciousness. This schism explains why at least eight women share a deep hatred for Jewish Orthodoxy and how women manifest this feeling through their interactions with non-kosher food in New Zealand.

Due to the increase in labour that festive cooking typically requires, some women challenge their husbands, whom they blame as ‘pressuring’ them to uphold festive rituals, while others challenge memories of being forced to cook by their mothers. In addition I illustrate that women challenge religious “oppression” through the memory of ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel and their views on festive kosher foods in comparison to non-kosher foods. The tension with Jewish tradition lingers in their relations with the AHC in Auckland, with most women acknowledging the schism between Jewish religiosity and secularism in Israel. In some cases, this schism triggers guilt over religious ignorance, which drives women to make amends by learning more about festive celebrations, increasing *kashrut* observance and/or sending their children to Kadimah College, the Jewish school associated with AHC. Other women challenge their sense being oppressed through the emotions that the issue of *kashrut* observance triggers.

Ambivalence toward the Labour of Festive Cooking and Feelings of Guilt

Festive cooking typically requires increased labour, through which the women in this study articulate pleasure and pride in the choice and responsibility they took on to remember and uphold festive celebrations in New Zealand. The ‘absence’ of support from state authorities to remember such celebrations results in increased effort on the part of the women, as the opening quote by Nora suggested. However, this is also a reason for discontent with the festive cooking labour, which some women use in order to challenge the sense of being oppressed by their husbands, and others to challenge memories of oppression by their mothers.

⁶¹ Another change that is taking place amongst secular Jewish-Israelis in Israel with regard to Jewish spirituality conveys their longing since the 1980s for Jewish traditions (Lavee 2006, Loss 2010:85-86, Wasserman 1999). The return of Jewish-Israelis in Israel to the spiritual Jewish home is deployed by various attempts to reclaim Torah study and New Age practices that conflate with their Jewish belief.

Three women in this study feel their husbands pressure them by demanding they uphold festive rituals. Though they contribute to these rituals by providing the food for them, by inviting guests and by participating in the ceremonies, they critique these rituals to negotiate what they perceive as their husband's religious oppression. For example, Yvette claimed that "during weekdays there is no food in the house" since she only cooks for Shabbat. In our meetings she often announced that her husband "loves Friday nights and festive meals" because these are the only occasions for which she cooks and invites guests. Her husband, then, also gets to "perform his idiotic rituals". Thus, though Yvette realises a return to a spiritual Jewish home by spending more time in the kitchen for Shabbat and festive meals, this return is complemented by her feelings of discontent with her husband. In a similar way to the other two women who feel their husbands pressure them, their discontent that results in ambivalence is articulated by verbal contestations that criticise her husband as a representative of religious oppression. This tension is also depicted through *kashrut* observance in relations with the AHC.

Kinship tension is depicted through festive cooking by the experience of Shoshana, who, similarly to two other women, remembered being pressured to cook by their mothers in childhood. As a result Shoshana restricted cooking iconic Ashkenazi foods to festive celebrations while avoided acknowledging how her mother taught her to cook, due to her sense of being 'forced' to learn how to cook as a child, i.e. she felt that her mother had exploited her by teaching her to cook in order to care for her siblings. In addition, Shoshana asserted that she "only" celebrates those Jewish festivals for which she likes the foods, and feels this is "enough" to maintain *zikhah* (a 'spark' of connection) to Judaism. She conveyed great antipathy towards the Jewish Orthodoxy and the AHC in claiming that she only visits the AHC when she "must", that is, when invited to festive events that she cannot refuse of fear of insulting the host.

This claim and the tension of which it was symptomatic were common to many women in the study, resulting in their ambivalent feelings they shared towards the AHC, which in some cases prompted guilt in conjunction with attempts at reparation. Such attempts manifested in two ways: first, in sending their children to Kadimah College, which helped the mothers learn about Jewish traditions, and second, in the celebration of more festive meals at home. Women who learnt about Jewish tradition by sending their children to Kadimah College said they felt compelled to do so as, due to their secularism, they are "unable to constitute Jewish religiosity at home", as one woman explicitly put it. As secular women they feel that they

lack the Jewish religious education required to transmit sufficient traditional knowledge to their children. This feeling was suggested by Shoshana in her use of the term “enough” while asserting an opposite claim: she felt Jewish ‘enough’ merely by cooking and eating festive foods that she liked for celebrating Jewish festivals. In contrast to Shoshana, for the most part women who sent their children to Kadimah College felt that the secularism that was fostered by their education in Israel had estranged them from Jewish traditional practices. Because they express feeling inadequate or ill-equipped for the constitution of Jewish religiosity at home, they are happy to shift some of the responsibility for transmitting this cultural knowledge to Kadimah College to help relieve their guilt in New Zealand.

On the one hand, these women acknowledge that their affiliation with the AHC and the school contributes to “bringing back home the Shabbat and the Jewish festivals”, as Ella put it. Jewish spirituality is materialised through an increase in *kashrut* observance and the cooking of Jewish traditional festive dishes. On the other hand, if children’s attendance at Kadimah College, a school closely affiliated with the Ashkenazi Jewish Orthodoxy, increases the women’s Jewish religious knowledge, it also eventually increases their antagonism towards the local Jewish Orthodoxy. Antagonism was expressed on the basis of differences in economic status between the longstanding local Jewry and Jewish-Israeli migrants, the distinctively Ashkenazi orientation of the AHC in prayers and traditions, as well as their “diasporic conduct” of Jewishness that resembles Christian conduct more than Israeli conduct due to the style of prayers and some of the buildings that are occupied for Jewish practice. Apart from eventually reaching the point of taking their children out of the school, on average after two years, these women articulate their feelings of antagonism by commenting on the school’s *kashrut* observance policy. *Kashrut* observance at the school restricts meals to dairy and *parve* (a non-dairy and non-meat food category), which according to these women is a sign of “hypocrisy” since, as they argue, most Jews do not observe full *kashrut* at home anyway. In this way such women conveyed their ambivalence towards Jewry in New Zealand that represents the Jewish Orthodox home. Such tensions with local diasporic Jewry are reported in research other Jewish-Israeli diasporic communities (Cohen 2005, Cohen and Gold 1997).

The complexity of such emotions is illustrated by the experience of Shellie, who chose to maintain contact with the AHC to alleviate her guilt about her lack of Jewish religious knowledge. The second time I visited Shellie at her home, she showed me around her kitchen and living room. The ‘tour’ included a special cupboard that was conveniently placed in the

wide dining area, adjacent to the large dining table, in which Shellie kept her “special dishes” for any hospitality event. Only a few of the women in this study had set up a presentable cupboard in their homes to house Jewish festive markers, which included Judaic culinary symbols that epitomise traditional remembrance such as a wine cup, a Passover plate or a dish for honey. Other women had none of these items and a few women had them scattered around the house, usually between the living room and the kitchen. These representations of Judaic traditional remembrance reflected the degree of their longing for Jewish tradition and their practice after migration.

Shellie opened a drawer and showed me a *siddur* (a Jewish prayer book) and *kippot* (skullcaps), usually worn by men during Jewish rituals), Judaic objects that are “only put into use when the children and guests arrive” to perform festive rituals. Somewhat embarrassed, Shellie laughed in self-irony while seeking my approval in the form of an acknowledgement that I too follow a similar practice. Then she disparaged secular state education in Israel, generalising that “in Israel we are not taught much about Judaism”. I understood that migration to New Zealand had provoked Shellie’s nostalgia for Jewish tradition, as well as her feelings of guilt for the limited Judaic knowledge she had acquired as a secular woman living in Israel. Noting her use of “we” as she spoke, I realised that Shellie assumed that I too was a secular Jewish-Israeli migrant woman who felt guilty about my ignorance (which was not true in my case).

Furthermore, Shellie admitted to learning and knowing more about Jewish traditions than before leaving Israel, as had some other women, as a means of alleviating her guilt. In this regard, Shellie specifically noted the different festive traditional foods and ritualised manners of Jews from other “*edot*” (the Jewish-Israeli term most similar to ‘ethnicities’), with which she had become familiar in New Zealand. As an Ashkenazi, Shellie is one of the women in this study who began to celebrate the Mimuna in New Zealand to enact her Jewish spirituality while associating with other Jewish-Israeli migrants. The Mimuna celebration marks the end of the Passover through festive hospitality marked by an abundance of sweet dishes made with flour and honey. Since the 1980s, the Mimuna has been revitalised as part of the formation of iconic festive markers of Mizrahi groups, specifically Moroccans in Israel (Domínguez 1989, Goldberg 1978, Levy 1997). This process demonstrates the growing legitimacy of nostalgia for Jewish spirituality in Israel at the time. Celebrating the Mimuna in New Zealand implied that after Shellie migrated she stepped outside her social milieu by

befriending Jewish-Israelis from other ethnicities, as other women did for the purpose of enacting Jewish-Israeli solidarity.

Ella poses another example of the guilt some women wished to alleviate by attending Jewish festive celebrations as part of their return to the spiritual Jewish home. While I was seated next to Ella at a festive celebration, she claimed that she had not visited Israel to celebrate Passover with her family in four years. Then, to manifest her guilt for her poor Jewish conduct, Ella physically slapped her own face, saying, “Here, I’ve been a bad girl, I deserve a slap”, and laughed lightly. Now that these women had emigrated, they wished to revive their connection with the Jewish traditions, and this triggered their guilt. This guilt took on collective significance that derived from their secular Jewish-Israeli upbringing. While the changes they fostered by their choice to engage with the AHC and send their children to Kadimah College were aimed at alleviating guilt over their Judaic ‘ignorance’, this connection also facilitated friendships with other Jewish-Israeli migrants and women often adopted new Jewish festive food traditions.

Ambivalence in the Return Home

Though guilt over poor knowledge of Judaism is mostly common to those women who choose to associate with the AHC, ambivalence toward Jewish religiosity is common to most women in the study to various degrees. Women negotiate their Jewish spirituality by conveying ambivalence through their choice of food and the format of celebrations, especially for the Kiddush, as well as their behaviours at such events. In some cases their ambivalence figures as a way to contest memories of ‘oppression’ from their past in Israel. At the same time, the changes women effect in celebrations illustrate their attempts to constitute home anew in New Zealand while maintaining their centrality in the family and in enacting Jewish spirituality.

Self-irony, for instance, is triggered while women note that they allow young, ‘half-naked’ children to sit at the table at the Kiddush. On the one hand, in so doing they wish to promote full family attendance in a more relaxed fashion. On the other hand, they know that this practice contrasts with the practice of the Kiddush in Jewish religious homes, where children are required to wear their best clothes for this highly regarded and ritualised meal. Geffen, for example, mocked herself while acting in this manner, as she allowed her daughters to sit at the table ‘half-naked’ at such a meal in my presence. Merrie and Rama, as other examples, suggested that in contrast to their pleasure in cooking and eating festive foods they had “great

difficulty” with singing festive songs that praise the name of God. As non-believers, they prefer singing songs that do not mention God on such occasions, but these are much harder to remember. They laughed in irony at their own ambivalent attitude since they felt it was, indeed, a “funny” way of being Jewish, literally and figuratively, due to the paradox that it enunciates.

Moreover, several women began buying and cooking iconic Kiwi fare for the Kiddush. For example, Rachel and Shoshana began buying fish and chips to eat at home for this meal⁶². Shoshana explained, laughing, that she buys fish and chips or takeaways for practical reasons, because “by Friday all the supplies of homemade food run out”. Her self-irony was evoked since she knew that in doing so she is acting against the traditional Jewish manner of making an extra effort to prepare and cook this meal. In comparison, by buying fish and chips Rachel deliberately marked this meal as different from the rest of the meals on weekdays as she refrains from cooking and waits for her husband to come home from work on these occasions. Rachel mocked her own practice by telling me that one Friday night she invited a family of Jewish-Israelis to join her family to sit on the carpet for a meal of fish and chips, as if they were “having a picnic in the middle of the living room”. Rachel claimed that to this day they must think she is *muzarah* (strange/funny). As with the other women, Rachel cared more about full family attendance in a relaxed manner while hosting guests during the Friday night meal, since during weekdays women mostly eat with young children at around five o’clock, separately from their husbands who come home later, usually at around six or seven o’clock. In particular, mothers with young children like Rachel found it difficult to achieve a relaxed meal, since by then children are tired and misbehave. In this manner, women articulated their centrality in family life as well as enacted belonging to New Zealand through their choice of typical Kiwi food. At the same time, by buying and eating fish and chips for this specific occasion women defied the religious practice of ultra-Orthodox Jews, an act that provoked their self-irony toward their Jewishness.

Indeed, some women contested Jewish religiosity, openly defying ultra-Orthodox Jews by deliberately choosing non-kosher foods for the Kiddush. For example, Geffen and Valery cook pork dishes for the Friday night meal to mark its difference from other meals on

⁶² Apparently, fish and chips, a longstanding iconic dish in Britain and New Zealand, was brought to London in the seventeenth century by Portuguese Marranos refugees, Jews who converted to Christianity (Flynn 2002:25). The dish may have resulted from the food left over from the Friday night meals. While the ‘turning back’ of fish and chips into a Jewish Friday night meal means it has come ‘full circle’, women in this study were unaware of this historic trajectory.

weekdays in remembering the Shabbat. Here I wish to note that the consumption of pork is not a new practice specific to their lives in New Zealand – indeed, these women did eat non-kosher foods in Israel. Yet their choice of buying and cooking pork as the content for this particular familial meal figured only in New Zealand. By choosing pork or crustaceans for this meal these women contested their oppression by ultra-Orthodox Jewish-Israelis, expressing their “hatred” of ultra-Orthodox Jews and conveying disgust over their behaviour. On the one hand, the eight women in this study who behave in this manner increase their festive celebrations and responsibility in festive familial meals because these epitomise their centrality in the family and enact Jewish spirituality. On the other hand, through their choice of both the food and the manner of this celebration, they articulated contestation; while their choice to buy, cook, eat and serve typical non-kosher food in New Zealand denoted secularism, it also denoted a challenge to Jewish tradition.

Ambivalence in *Kashrut* Observance

Kashrut observance is a collective means of remembering Jewish identity that is at the same time subject to private choices and is highly personalised for the women in this study (who are mostly secular Jewish-Israeli). The practice of *kashrut* observance elicits self-irony in women who convey ambivalence through both the consumption of pork and crustaceans. While the consumption of pork is an indicator of moral claims, the consumption of crustaceans marks class through its association with French cuisine and refined dining in Israel. Women who enjoy eating crustaceans associate the land of New Zealand with great-quality and great-value crustaceans and fish. These differences are played out by the women’s embodied reactions of pleasure, as well as ambivalence and disgust, to non-kosher foods. They use these emotive reactions to articulate cultural intimacies and tensions that convey their desire to civilise the body.

In this regard, most women in this study felt Jewish ‘by default’ when they lived in Israel as they observed *kashrut* easily and without any particular effort, since usually the groceries that are available for purchase are certified as kosher. Hence in New Zealand a few women communicate their disgust with non-kosher foods through the Jewish religious logic that they claim was ingrained in them by the *kashrut* rules enforced since their childhood: for example, the “mere sight” of foods mixing dairy and meat or crustaceans and food cooked in lard was enough to evoke their disgust. Several of the women feel the same about the smell and taste

of foods containing pork, claiming that they find the smells and tastes of these dishes deeply unpleasant simply since they are unfamiliar.

In addition, disgust with crustaceans is articulated in a Jewish-Israeli gendered manner, with several of the women commenting that they “dislike food that is looking/staring back at them”. The “bulgy eyes” of some of these dead animals acted as a reminder of their life force and of the fact that the animal was once animated, instigating guilt and disgust at their having been killed in order to be transformed into food. A common gendered association that provoked disgust in a few women was between mussels and vaginas. An example is the case of Nellie, who was my friend. I knew Nellie was fond of depilation, and we used to tease each other about it: I teased her for being so concerned with it, she repeatedly offered to depilate my body – legs, arms, upper lip – and so on. So when Nellie pointed out the similarity between mussels and vaginas, I jokingly suggested that she pluck out the mussel’s “hair” if it bothered her, and then eat the mussel. This provoked such disgust in Nellie that she began screaming that I was disgusting while playfully beating me. Her disgust at eating mussels/vaginas had been instantly transferred to me, revealing a culturally gendered attribution (Ahmed 2004:191) whereby eating mussels that resemble vaginas hints at a sexual act that might threaten a woman’s femininity. My provocation also revealed the fact that I have a Jewish-Israeli sense of humour, something I was often reminded of in the course of this study. In Chapter Seven I further discuss the women’s wishes to civilise their bodies through food consumption. In regard to depilation, however, most women in the study share the concern that Nellie articulated. Bodily hair was a topic that often raised self-irony among women, some of whom mocked their “hairy aunties” for their “moustaches”, as well as themselves. However, not all the women in this study share Nellie’s feeling of disgust towards mussels over gender-based interpretations of them.

Some women who feel disgusted by mussels and other crustaceans blame ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel for having instilled in them this disgust by denying them the pleasure of consuming these foods throughout their lives in Israel. For instance, when I went food shopping with Valery she said that she enjoyed going out to “special restaurants”. Talking about and remembering the ostrich kebab at her favourite pub in Auckland was enough to make her “drool”. Valery characterised the pleasure she derived from eating the non-kosher meat platter that she often orders with her husband as “a different world”. She added that she does not eat the crustaceans that come with the platter as she finds them repulsive, blaming “rabbinic brainwashing” in Israel for instilling that reaction in her. Valery noted that even

looking at mussels, let alone touching them, is enough to provoke that reaction. If offered, she might try to eat prawns, but she would not cook prawns herself, a typical response of several women in this study.

In this regard, Inness' case below demonstrates women's wish to manifest feeling 'at home' in New Zealand through their newly acquired pleasure of consuming crustaceans, which secular Jewish-Israelis associate with elite consumption. In this case, Inness stated that crustaceans repulsed her prior to migration in a similar manner to other women. However, after immigrating to New Zealand, Inness befriended a New Zealand woman, who she claimed that had taught her to enjoy cooking and eating crustaceans. Having developed a taste for crustaceans Inness articulated a class aspiration, since in Israel crustaceans are associated with French cuisine and refined dining. By learning to enjoy crustaceans through this friendship, Inness enacted a secular Jewish-Israeli identity and at the same time expressed the importance of both pleasure and their friendship, a friendship that helped transform her 'dislikes' into 'likes'. Hence, just as some Jewish-Israeli migrant women claimed they had transformed their New Zealand guests-friends into 'good' women like them, some women claimed that their friendships with New Zealanders had transformed them. As in many other cases, Inness did not feel a sense of threat in her ability to imitate her New Zealand friend; instead, the situation exemplified a deliberate kind of Israeli open-mindedness and willingness to admit change, while also asserting the importance of deriving pleasure from eating. By changing her eating practices in order to increase pleasure, as other women did, Inness manifested her desire to constitute home anew in New Zealand.

Conversely, women are able to accuse other Jewish-Israeli women of immoral behaviour for eating and enjoying pork, since pork consumption is a much stronger marker of Jewish identity than the consumption of crustaceans. The competition over Jewish morality is exemplified by the following anecdote drawn from my fieldnotes. Yael was filmed for the food programme 'A Taste of Place' about Middle-Eastern migrants, hosted by Peta Mathias in Auckland (2007). Towards the end of Peta's visits to her restaurant, Yael was filmed seated at a dining table with her family eating the "Israeli breakfast" she cooked. The breakfast included the 'traditional' components I discussed in Chapter Two: cheese, egg, vegetable salad, bread, pickles and olives with as well as ham, a non-kosher addition to the meal. At that stage, the camera focussed on Yael's youngest daughter for several seconds and Peta's voice was heard commenting in surprise on the child's obvious pleasure she in eating

the ham. With a slight wink, Yael then replied “I am a balanced person; I like ham on my *challah*”.

In humorous self-irony Yael contests the religious oppression promulgated by ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel. Their sense of having been oppressed in the name of religion provoked several women to employ the strongly emotive rhetoric of “hate”. Ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel were repeatedly remembered as “disgusting” due to their smell of sweat on buses when wearing ill-fitting, dark and heavy clothes in the Israeli summer and were also disparaged for their anxieties. In colloquial Israeli terms, ultra-Orthodox Jews are called ‘*haredim*’, meaning ‘people who are in fear/anxious’ (in awe of God). It seems that for these women this appellation summed ultra-Orthodox up completely; they depicted them in parody as “over-anxious” people in order to express their dissent against the influence ultra-Orthodox wield over people’s everyday lives. Several women felt that ultra-Orthodox Jews monopolise Judaism in Israel and in New Zealand as well, as they are the ones that dictate ‘correct’ Jewish manners and behaviours; as these women put it, they did not emigrate to be told how to be Jewish.

The image of Yael’s daughter eating pork was seen by other Jewish-Israeli migrant women. One woman in particular was angry at Yael because she felt Yael had portrayed Jewish-Israelis as having “faulty morals”. Yet, this woman also admitted to eating ham and crustaceans herself in restaurants in New Zealand. I was puzzled by this contradiction, and I suggested to her that by eating and feeding her daughter ham Yael had deliberately wanted to portray Jewish-Israelis as not always following Jewish law blindly and the woman appeared shocked by this. Although she was the only woman in this study who had phoned me to offer to participate in my research, after this incident she avoided me by saying she was preoccupied with guests and I never heard from her again. Perhaps my suggestion indicated that I too lacked morals, and therefore was inappropriate to associate with. I had already been aware of her antipathy towards my work, which she articulated by using critique to set up a dynamic of competition; before that discussion she suggested that it is “not the elite of Israel that immigrates to New Zealand”, and that “Israelis who cannot find paid employment end up doing a PhD”. I knew that she used my study to advance her desire for respect for her good Jewish-Israeli morals. In the end I realised that her behaviour proved the myth of the *polania*: trying to control others in a bid to raise herself in the eyes of others. This woman criticised eating and enjoying pork in public while eating and enjoying pork herself in restaurants since she envied Yael for the respect and recognition received from New Zealand society. She

criticised other Jewish-Israeli migrants while being one herself since she envied me for doing a PhD.

In sum, women articulate ambivalent memories through the production and consumption of festive food by upholding festive meals as rituals while simultaneously contesting what they experienced as ‘oppression’, i.e. the denial of choice or pleasure. Their contestations are expressed in the form of ambivalent emotions toward husbands, mothers and the ultra-Orthodox Jewry both in Israel and in New Zealand. This tension is present in their relations with the AHC. Attempts to contest the denial of choice and pleasure are depicted by women as an aspect of kinship tensions through their dissatisfaction with the extra cooking labour needed for such occasions. In this way, some women resist pressure from their husbands or mothers to cook, both on a daily basis and for festive meals. In addition, practices of buying, cooking and offering pork, fish and chips and crustaceans at festive meals such as the Kiddush demonstrate their ambivalence towards Jewish religiosity and tradition, and often trigger self-irony. While women are able to constitute spiritual homes anew in New Zealand, they also articulate their centrality in the family through fostering a relaxed atmosphere on such occasions. Moreover, the prohibition against eating pork is more closely associated with ‘proper’ Jewish identity and morality than the prohibition against eating crustaceans, which depicts class aspirations. By contesting oppression by denial of pleasure in eating non-kosher foods or making deliberate decisions about how time they are willing to spend in the kitchen, some women in the study manifest kinship tensions as well as the schism between secular and ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel and New Zealand.

Conclusions

Immigration to New Zealand evokes longing for Jewish tradition among the women in this study, as this tradition is fundamentally based on festive food rituals that enact collective remembrance and constitute the centrality of women in the family as ritual experts (Sered 1992). After migration women materialise their connection with Jewish tradition through festive food and *kashrut* observance, which they use as means to negotiate the dimension of Jewish spirituality in their lives. By fostering intimacy through the conviviality of sharing festive food among family members and guests, women enact their desire to transmit this cultural knowledge to others, including children and friends. They enhance their pleasure and pride in these practices after migration by articulating an increased sense of choice and responsibility for actively remembering Jewish tradition, and upholding festive times that require increased cooking labour. Women choose the form, timing and food content of their

festive food celebrations, with whom to celebrate these occasions, as well as which *kashrut* rules to observe. These decisions become an integral part of their return to the spiritual Jewish home while they implement many practical changes to overcome challenges in this regard. Some women also choose to commemorate deceased close kin through new festive food rituals. Mostly women remember their grandmothers by learning their recipes for festive cooking and by employing the mythical powers of festive and Shabbat dishes to convey kinship intimacy and class aspirations that offset their fear of poverty. Realising the connection with the Jewish spiritual home through festive food becomes a form of gendered ‘insurance’ against the experience of poverty that previous generations experienced in the Jewish diaspora and in Israel.

By asserting their pleasure and pride in festive cooking most women turn the iconic festive foods they learned to cook in New Zealand into their own, dishes that may take on their name in their social network. They adjust their recipes as well as the timing and form of the celebrations to fit in with their current socio-cultural environment in New Zealand, while their senses convey connections that reach as far as the diasporic homes of their close female kin. In this way, as with the lives of Jewish migrants elsewhere, women materialise Jewish tradition (Buckser 1999, Jacobson 2006, Jochowitz 2004, Rotkowitz 2004:182). Modern American Judaism, for example, is often described as “Kitchen Judaism” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1990), indicating the pleasure and pride Jews derive from their sensory experiences that “lock memory into the body” through festive food consumption, and which at the same time “may set them free” (Theophano 2002:70).

However, in comparison to other groups of longstanding diasporic Jews, the women in this study link with their Israeli homeland through the memories and imaginations that are provoked by the consumption of festive foods and the issue of *kashrut* observance. Hence, the ambivalence women convey in their revival of Jewish traditions attests to the cultural schism in Israel between secular and ultra-Orthodox Jews. This schism evokes guilt, in some cases, about inadequate levels of knowledge about Jewish tradition, which some women seek to expiate by associating with the AHC or sending their children to its school. Yet this association usually ends up magnifying their feelings of antipathy towards the local Jewry with women characterising the AHC as encouraging ‘dishonesty’ in *kashrut* observance. Moreover, some women criticise ultra-Orthodox Jews for denying them choice and the pleasure of consuming non-kosher foods. They contest those who represent Jewish tradition in their lives, i.e. the Jewish ultra-Orthodoxy in Israel and New Zealand, as well as close kin

from who they feel pressure to cook traditional festive foods. Their contestation is manifested through their feelings of discontent toward the increased time in the kitchen that Shabbat and festive meals require. Their ambivalence often leads to self-irony and the parodying of others as over-anxious with regard to *kashrut* that are best manifested by the prohibition on non-kosher foods. In the category of iconic non-kosher foods the consumption of crustaceans is associated with class while pork consumption is associated with morality. In addition, ambivalence toward Jewish Orthodoxy is manifested by the evocation of the senses with regard to iconic non-kosher foods. Thus, as they adopt or increase the consumption of pork, crustaceans and fish and chips in New Zealand, some women in the study not only convey their class aspirations, but also remake a home that fosters a widened field of pleasurable consumption.

The next chapter discusses women's perceptions of their personal bodies as 'homes' by examining the changes they bring about through dieting and managing their weight and their appetites after immigration to New Zealand.

Chapter Seven: The Body as ‘Home’– Dieting and Weight Management

I will diet until I feel at home in my own body and regain pleasure in eating. (Kim)

This chapter examines how the Jewish-Israeli women in this study enact the personal body as ‘home’ through everyday experiences, common to most of the women, of dieting to manage their weight after immigration. The epigraph that opens this chapter illustrates women’s aspirations to feel ‘at home’ in their own bodies. This aspiration is accompanied by ambivalent feelings towards oneself due to a lost sense of pleasure in eating, which women hope to regain by dieting. I argue that these women realise feeling ‘at home’ in their own bodies through memories of their past life in Israel, emotions they convey by their actual practice of dieting and in the way their senses are evoked. Women react to the changes that occur in their bodies through weight management after migration in order to negotiate social boundaries. Specifically, connections with homelands change as women disembody Israeli culture to a certain extent in order to assert feeling ‘at home’ by embodying New Zealand culture. This shift is enacted as women associate each homeland with contrasting levels of concern over weight management. Thus the women in this study believe that people in Israeli society are very concerned with weight management, and therefore Israeli eating practices and typical foods are considered by them to be healthier than in New Zealand society, where they feel people tend to neglect these matters while engaging in unhealthy eating practices.

My analysis of the everyday experiences of Jewish-Israeli migrant women with regard to weight management is inspired by scholars who claim that the greatest changes that occur after migration are within the self, the home and the family, emphasising the contradicting ways in which migrants reconstitute feeling ‘at home’ (see for example, Ahmed 2000, Ahmed et al. 2003:5, Brah 1996, Fortier 1999, 2000, 2003, Kearney 1995, Probyn 1996). I elaborate on their analyses by explicating not only the ambivalent feelings of women with regard to their own bodies that result from contradictions which lead to disgust and feelings of nausea, but also pleasures and pride. Traditionally, Jewish women are responsible for the well-being and health of the family (Bloomfield 2009, Marks 1994, Rosin 2005). Hence, examining the ramifications of this traditional responsibility for secular Jewish-Israeli women after migration is of particular importance. This is even more true in light of the salient problematic relationships they share with food in Israel as suggested by the soaring rate of anorexia nervosa and other eating disorders in comparison to other western nation-states (Latzer 2008, Mitrany et al. 1995). According to Golding (2002 in Gvion 2008:84), for

example, the average age of girls becoming anorexic in Israel is 14, with girls' first weight-loss diet at the age of eight, which matched the experiences of four women in this study and the common experiences of women in other western nation-states.

My findings suggest that nostalgia and longing for Israel drives most women to increase the production and consumption of foods that represent their homeland after immigration. However, a close examination of how women use weight management to negotiate the social boundaries that reconstitute their feeling of being 'at home' through food demonstrates that while the majority of women report increased appetite and considerable weight gain, usually around 15 kilograms, in the first couple of years after migration, a few women report a loss of appetite and weight. In fact, the increase in appetite and food consumption triggers another type of nostalgia depicted through women's engagement with dieting for weight management. I define this as longing for self-content with one's own bodily appearance, complemented by a sense of pride and pleasure in one's own body free of a sense of a continuous desire to lose weight in compliance with the ideal of a feminine, slim body. Hence, I expand here on Daphne Berdahl's (2009) theory of nostalgic consumption in order to understand the complexity of longing that women convey through everyday experiences of managing their own weight and that of their family members.

I show that while experiencing the dimension of the personal body as 'home', women maintain an idealised image of themselves in their youthful past in Israel, where they feel that they exuded femininity and well-being. This idealised image of themselves includes a sense having both felt pleasure and pride in their appearance and endorsed self-care to a greater degree in the past. Women attempt to emulate these feelings as they enact Jewish-Israeli weight management diets, and while longing for this idealised image of themselves. These feelings fit well with their traditional role in the family as those responsible for health and well-being, enacting care and intimacy for others. However, at the same time, women also use weight management to articulate discontent that results in ambivalence and self-irony as they express the social tensions in their lives. These social tensions are often realised through self-disgust, feelings of disgust towards others who fail to manage their weight and care for their well-being, and the disembodiment of their connection with Israel. I focus on the role of disgust towards food and excessive 'fat' on the body as I examine the contradictory ways women depict longing to feel 'at home'. I argue that their journey of returning to the personal body as home is steeped with ambivalence that intensified, in particular, for the few women in this study who suffer from a feeling of inadequacy, i.e. feeling 'not good enough', ever

since their childhood in Israel. Along with the usual attempts to balance emotional upheavals through weight management after migration, these women engage in drastic and failed measures to lose weight⁶³, which I examine in a separate section at the end of the chapter.

On a personal note, this chapter was the hardest to write both because of my ethical responsibility as an anthropologist, and since I can clearly relate to every one of the women in this study through my memories from life in Israel and fieldwork in New Zealand. My empathy grew in the face of my own recollections of the critique that my mother articulated and still articulates towards my weight. To this day I cannot forget that ever since adolescence, she has suggested that I “drink water” every time I feel hungry to avoid gaining weight in addition to her pleading that I diet in order to become more beautiful. I also remembered some of my own weight-loss diets, undertaken at times when my weight was on the rise, as well as the very common and explicit comments about my appearance by Jewish-Israeli migrants in New Zealand or people in Israel at any given time. Although my concern about my weight is, indeed, a fluctuating matter, to the best of my understanding I never suffered from a feeling of inadequacy on account of my weight, appearance or intellectual ability, or from anorexia and bulimia. Nevertheless, at the time of writing I became exceedingly worried as to whether my own attitudes were similar to those of some of the women in this study, to the point of having nightmares for a while, in which people close to me died. Without a doubt this chapter touches sensitive nerves, realisations one may laugh about in self-irony, but cringe if and when others do. Though for the most part women in this study shared these realisations as open secrets, in order to protect their privacy I decided to use new pseudonyms and refrain from mentioning details that might help identify them.

Is There a Jewish-Israeli Appetite?

In Israeli-Hebrew, *téavon* (appetite) denotes the desire or the drive to eat or consume, and the pleasure one derives from eating or consuming. Secular Jewish-Israelis often begin meals by calling out “*b'téavon*” as they are seated together. This call signifies both the social permission to begin eating and the pleasure of sharing food in familial or communal meals. The common reply to eaters who comment about how good the food was is “*livriut*” (“to health”), a phrase that both acknowledges the eater’s pleasure and conveys the self-content of the feeder, i.e. the person who is responsible for producing food. Indeed, this reply accords

⁶³ These drastic measures include bulimia, anorexia, the use of laxatives and legal drugs and cosmetic surgery (i.e. the ‘tummy tuck’) to manage weight.

with the traditional role of Jewish women of cooking for the purpose of sustaining the health and well-being of the family (Bloomfield 2009, Marks 1994, Rosin 2005).

Moreover, the word *téavon* connotes hunger, and denotes pleasure, creativity, desire, drive, passion, craving, and even lust, relating to four main kinds of appetites: a visual appetite for the aesthetically pleasing, culinary appetite, sexual appetite, and the appetite for knowledge. Unsurprisingly, the word *taavah*, from which the word *téavon* derives, is mentioned in the myth of the Garden of Eden, when Eve notices the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge prior to her decision to eat the apple and feed Adam (Genesis 3:6): “And the woman saw that the tree is good for food and that it is *pleasing* to the eyes”. In later accounts of this word (Genesis 49:32) it denotes ‘knowing a boundary’, thus hinting at the danger of the transgression of bodily boundaries through gluttony and the transgression of social boundaries by immoral acts such as greed. The mythical narrative of the Garden of Eden connects women’s powerful visceral pleasures derived from looking, eating, knowing, and soon after, when Eve hands Adam the apple, feeding others, as essential for sustaining life. These four pleasures are mixed with three dangers. First, the pleasures of looking at the apple, eating the apple and feeding it to someone else despite God’s prohibition are linked with being expelled from the Garden of Eden. In modernity this explosion leads to what Mircea Eliade (1991[1952]) identifies as a kind of secularised ‘nostalgia for Paradise’ that he regards as a religious practice at heart. Other scholars, such as Michael Herzfeld (1997), elaborate on this nostalgia by regarding longing for the ‘Edenic time’ as a unifying socio-political critique of the present. The second danger is that the pleasure of sexual desire for women is linked with the pain of childbirth, and the third is that the pleasure of knowledge is linked with knowing guilt and shame⁶⁴.

What may be the implications of these pleasures and dangers for secular Jewish-Israeli women after migration to New Zealand, and how do they relate to concerns over weight management? In examining these questions with respect to immigrant populations scholars contend that the greatest changes after migration occur within the self, the home and the family (see for example, Ahmed 2000, Ahmed et al. 2003, Brah 1996, Fortier 1999, 2000, 2003, Kearney 1995, Probyn 1996). As a reminder, Anne-Marie Fortier (2003:173-174) emphasises the unsettling and resettling process of the self after migration, corresponding symbolically with departing and arriving home, while she denotes an emotive shift that occurs in this process as a “motion of attachment”. Here I am also encouraged by social

⁶⁴ A full analysis of this textual myth is beyond the scope of this study.

anthropologists who argue that Jewish-Israeli women create and sustain a deep symbolic continuity between their personal body and the body of their nation as they embody their culture (see for example, Haelyon 2006, Ivry 2009, Kahn 2000, Remennick 2000, Weiss 1998, Weiss 2001). In this chapter, I ask: Is the connection with their nation disembodied to some extent after migration? If so, what are the implications of disembodiment of this connection and what are women's motivations for doing so, as these are manifested by their experiences of weight management after migration?

The Pleasure and Pride of Feeling 'at Home' in One's Body

This section focuses on women's articulations of pleasure and pride through the practice of dieting for weight management. I juxtapose these positive emotions with the ambivalence, disgust and nausea that women express, which I examine closely in the second section. I begin by exploring extracts from my fieldnotes of the time spent with Mira, which I compare to the experience of other women in order to illustrate why and how women long to feel 'at home' in their own bodies after immigration. My exploration considers seven women out of 25 in this study who have never dieted to lose weight, in contrast to four women who vividly recall engaging in failed measures to lose weight, and 13 women who went on and off diets to balance their weight. Understandably, the first and the third groups portray greater self-content and pleasure in their own bodies than the second group. However, all the women in this study emphasise the importance of balanced weight and of healthy relationships with food and eating.

Jewish tradition consecrates women's role of cooking and feeding the family as their main responsibility for maintaining health and well-being (Bloomfield 2009, Marks 1994, Rosin 2005). Previous research on secular Jewish-Israeli women's dieting argues that they are faced with a gendered paradox, i.e. returning to their traditional role as home cooks in the family and yet desiring to feel empowered by being slender (Gvion 1985:45 in Calò 2005:60)⁶⁵. In comparison, I show not only that most secular Jewish-Israeli women never *left* their traditional role as home cooks, but also that thanks to the shift in their cultural context they are able to use their traditional role as home cooks in two major ways: to convey pride and pleasure in memories associated with food, and to practice self-care and care for others,

⁶⁵ Another study on middle-class dieters in England argues that their engagement with low-carbohydrate diets promotes severing from their ethnic-traditional food practices, which ends up provoking in them a sense of "ambivalence" toward the diet (Knight 2011). In her analysis Knight (2011:8) is right in arguing that the self-help books that promote these low-carbohydrate diets, such as the Atkins Diet and the South Beach Diet, convey nostalgia for idealised pre-industrial and traditional "authentic" diets. Yet Knight does not examine the nostalgia inherent in the dieters wishing to rid themselves of excessive 'fat', their main motivation in taking on the diets.

predominantly close kin. Through their memories women articulate pleasure and pride in their youthful looks as they long for their idealised self-image. In practice, their longing instigates re-attachment to Jewish-Israeli diets all the more, and changes in the format and content of their meals in order to better manage their weight following migration. Through these changes women foster intergenerational, national and gendered differences as they reconstitute feeling ‘at home’ in New Zealand.

I joined Mira and her children after her workday on Monday at around 4 pm. As I sat at the dining table preparing to record our interview, Mira offered me a hot drink. She apologised that she had none of her own home-baked cake and offered me “only leftovers” of a lemon tart that her friend baked for the Rosh Hashanah celebration three days earlier. In reply to my comment that she should not feel obliged to host me, she said that this is the usual time for her cup of coffee anyway, and I accepted her offer. When Mira joined me at the table and brought only one slice of tart, I realised that she was “on a diet”, trying to lose her “usual additional winter weight gain of two kilograms”. Mira explained that each winter she gains two kilograms, and “only needs to smell the almond tree in blossom (a sign of springtime in Israel) to shed it”.

Mira, who normally buys cream cheese, began buying cottage cheese for the sake of her diet. When dieting to lose weight, Mira “cuts down on carbohydrates, reduces sweets and eats more greens”. She “likes eating and would eat if there is a hospitality event on the weekend, but *techashben* (will keep track) of what she is eating on the weekdays after”. Mira said, “Do you think I didn’t eat during this festival (Rosh Hashanah)? I ate like *behema* (a beast), like I have never seen food in my life. It is fun and I enjoy every bite, and that’s a problem. I see sweets, it is *maka* (a smack/hit), and there is hardly anything I don’t like”. Then Mira added that once she will be able to afford membership at a gym in New Zealand, she would like to get one in order to exercise “for the soul” and to “look good”, not in order to lose weight. When she had a membership at a gym in Israel she “blossomed” and “looked like a million dollars”.

We entered the kitchen and Mira joked she needs to “feed the children before they eat me”, as she prepared toasted sandwiches. I could not help but see, pinned up on the refrigerator door, a large photograph of Mira and her husband seated at a round dining table. Mira had make-up on and was wearing a tight outfit. Her eyes glistened at the camera in self-content. I asked Mira when the photograph was taken and she replied that it was some time

before they left Israel (over three years earlier), adding that the photograph exemplified the looks she longs to get back to.

Weight Management as the Gendered Enactment of Care

Mira demonstrates how women in this study re-attach to Jewish-Israeli diets in order to manage their weight. By ‘reverting’ to eating cottage cheese instead of cream cheese and eating more salads, and through a general increase in home cooking, Mira materialises her attachment to Jewish-Israeli diets on weekdays, a pattern common to most women in this study when managing their weight. These women understand home cooking for Jewish-Israeli weight management diets as the easiest and most familiar and reliable way to increase control over their caloric intake. In doing so, Mira illustrates the normalised idea of a Jewish-Israeli diet for weight loss or management, a diet that usually entails a high consumption of home cooking in the form of lean cheeses and meat and an ample supply of vegetables, usually steamed or in fresh salads. Often, the vegetables that are eaten are those associated with the colour green, hence called “greens” by Mira, while the consumption of foods that are high in sugar, fat and refined carbohydrates, i.e. sweet baking and foods based on rice, potatoes and flour, is reduced or completely cut out for a while.

By watching her weight on weekdays Mira materialises self-care while she enacts her femininity. Her femininity is manifested through the pride and pleasure she takes in her ideal look and the way she felt in the past in Israel. The memory of these feelings is triggered by the photograph on the refrigerator door in which she felt ‘at home’ in her own body, a feeling she longs to recapture. Mira articulates her pleasure and pride in looking and feeling good through an economic metaphor (looking “like a million dollars”) and a botanic metaphor (“blossoming”, which I discuss in depth in the next section). She contrasts exercising to lose weight in order to be slim with exercising in order to feel ‘at home’ in her own body; she relates to exercising “for the soul” rather than to achieve a slim look. Though her memory took her to this idealised place of self-content, she knows that her well-being is dependent on more than just reducing her weight, an understanding common to all women in this study. Similar to other women, Mira holds in her memory not only the image of being content in her appearance while in Israel, but also memories of being a specific weight. Retaining in their memories such bodily images and even their precise weights as points of reference for personal well-being is common to all the women in this study, and photographs may trigger nostalgic regret at any given time. By facilitating returns to their bodies as homes, such

photographs of their past appearance idealise their view of themselves as women who depict pleasure and pride in their youthful bodies while managing their weight. Mira's experiences were common to most women in this study.

Sometimes women deliberately chose to place photographs on the refrigerators as reminders to avoid overeating. The danger of overeating is evoked by the term Mira used for managing her weight – “*yechashben*”, or keeping accounts. In using this term women relate to keeping track of food in terms of its caloric value, focussing on eating fewer refined carbohydrates and less sugar to balance overeating on weekends. *Heshbonot* (‘keeping accounts’) in Israeli-Hebrew parlance is applied to care towards oneself or others in any way, including through food consumption, money or respect, as well as by considering the feelings and opinions of others. In Chapter Five I discussed the experience of Rachel who stopped *heshbonot* in casual hospitality out of a desire to establish friendships with other Jewish-Israeli migrants, a claim that illustrates women's ambivalence towards associating with other Jewish-Israelis. *Heshbonot* commonly relates to the myth of the *polania* who indulges in self-sacrifice for the sake of enacting care and to receive respect in return. Yet by remembering the pleasure they derived from their idealised appearance and well-being, women used dieting for weight management as a form of self-care driven by self-respect.

In New Zealand many women articulate self-care through weight management by conducting *heshbonot* of food consumption during weekdays to balance overeating at other times. This common practice could be associated with subverting the Jewish value of one of the Great Commandments; rather than ‘love thy neighbour as thyself’, women prioritise and love themselves via weight management just as they wish to care for others in the same way. In her ethnography on Moroccan Jewish-Israeli mothers in Israel, Bendrihem (2006:62) called this behavioural model ‘the Narcissist Mother’. Women who acted according to this model depicted self-respect as a primary source for their ability to care for and love close kin. In this study women demonstrated self-care through offering guests foods regarded as luxuries but refraining from eating them themselves. Mira, in offering me a slice of lemon tart while avoiding eating one herself, illustrates this type of self-care. Most women prompt guests to eat to extend their feminine care through hospitality (see Chapter Five). This was also true in cases where women offered me their own baking so that they would have “less cake left to be tempted by”, chocolate or other foods that mark ‘excess’ and gluttony. In doing so women acknowledge that they derive great pleasure from eating these foods, whilst in refraining from eating them in the company of guests they demonstrate self-restraint and

suggest the pleasure they once took in their appearance and their longing to feel again ‘at home’ in their own bodies.

In addition to the common practice of dieting that Mira’s experience represents, after immigrating to New Zealand five women made conscious efforts to maintain the main cooked meal as a late lunch or an early dinner on weekdays to manage their weight. Four other women divided the form of the main meal between cooking an Israeli light dinner for the parents to manage weight and a Kiwi dinner for their children at the same time. Two other women refrained completely from eating after 4 pm on weekdays or ate a very light dinner usually while they cooked their children the main meal to take to school the next day. Four other women engaged in keeping track of food intake, what they called a “weight watchers diet”; named after the American brand Weight-Watchers. Thus, 16 women in this study, including Mira, deliberately engaged in weight management in various ways, while the remaining nine women attested that they pay close attention to their weight without dieting, in some cases withstanding weight gain throughout the years.

Some women explain their weight gain by their temporary adoption of local eating practice, mostly in reference to eating the main cooked meal of the day in the evening. A light lunch and a large evening meal is, in fact, New Zealand practice; in Israel, is it more common on weekdays to serve a light meal in the evening and have the main meal at lunchtime. The women point to a cultural difference in this regard, claiming that Jewish-Israeli practice is more sensible and healthy. The practice of eating the main cooked meal at lunchtime can be traced to the logic of Zionism that constituted the domestic management of meal time according to the hierarchy of gendered labours, coalescing with traditional Jewish family values (Rosin 2005, Tene 2005). After migration, upholding this healthier eating practice not only turns into a national marker, but also requires extra effort from women in order to fit in with the imperative of synchronising the daily activities of family members. Hence women who make the extra effort for the sake of weight management articulate ambivalence towards the labour required to do so.

Those women who separate the types of foods parents eat versus children stress that they cook “two to three meals at once” in order to care for both themselves and their husbands who follow a diet, and their children who do not. They claimed that their practice of cooking for weight management adds “pressure” to their lives. Gina’s experience exemplifies these claims in addition to the motivations of these women and their aspirations. Gina remembered

looking and feeling good when she was younger in Israel and conveyed her self-content in her claim that she could eat as she “pleased” without “keeping track”. She illustrated this claim by recounting that she used to fry chicken schnitzels as “midnight feasts” for herself from adolescence in Israel. Through her memory of cooking and eating schnitzels at will, Gina expressed her previous lack of concern toward her appearance and weight management while idealising her carefree life and expressing the desire to feel ‘at home’ in her own body as she did in younger days. Gina claimed that pregnancies and ageing triggered her current need to diet, and so she engaged in a “Weight-Watchers-style diet” with her husband during the weekdays.

Gina’s nostalgic return to her idealised youthful body was depicted by her memory of eating a typical Israeli dish, chicken schnitzel. These schnitzels are considered favourites by Jewish-Israeli children, but are also ‘fatty’ as they are fried. Chicken and turkey schnitzels in Israel are cheaper substitutes for Vienna schnitzels, which are made with veal. Yael, for instance, offers chicken schnitzels in pita with pickled cucumbers as an iconic Israeli food in her restaurant, and many other women in this study cook these for their children in New Zealand. The non-professional cookbook *Parents are Cooking* (Shechner-Rochman 2005), used by two women in this study, attests to their popularity among children by offering three different recipes for chicken schnitzel (2005:112, 115, 118). In the second section I examine women’s memories of and response to advertisements for chicken schnitzel in Israel.

On one of my visits to Gina’s home, when she discussed current food programmes on New Zealand television, she claimed that she always “felt like a *bashlanit*”. While many of the women reported they enjoy watching these programmes, as mentioned in Chapter Four, for her part, Gina specifically expressed envy at Nigella Lawson’s “effortless” sexuality, depicting her fantasy with regard to dieting. She claimed that for Nigella it is “enough to appear tasting food by licking it off her finger” to be “*coussit-shel-halife*”. This Israeli slang expression is similar to the term ‘hot babe’, referring to a sexually desirable feminine body. The suffix “*life*” in English indicates exaggeration, in this case emphasising the pleasure one derives from looking at Nigella, and connoting Gina’s admiration and envy. ‘*Couss*’ is an Arabic word that in Israeli-Hebrew is the equivalent of ‘cunt’, but in this case acts as a positive feminine marker of her sexually desirable body and appearance (the word *shel* means ‘of’). While Gina did not care much about Nigella’s cooking skill, Nigella epitomised her fantasy of regaining her image of her body as sexually desirable, in contrast to her current image of her body as aging. In fact, by dieting with her husband on weekdays and cooking

Jewish-Israeli foods for this purpose, Gina aimed to emulate this image by exchanging the pleasure she derived from cooking and the consumption of food with the pleasure of looking good. She revived her femininity and sexuality through her longing to feel ‘at home’ in her own body while fantasising of becoming (like) Nigella. In her fantasy Gina attested to an old Jewish feminine myth, namely, the biblical Eve, but in modern trappings, since this fantasy links food-related pleasure with appearance and sexual pleasure. Similarly to Gina, some women wished to lure their husband home through the sexual provocation of home baking, substituting the pleasure of food consumption, in the form of baked goods, for sexual pleasure, as discussed in Chapter Five.

Notably, since she is dieting with her husband, Gina also demonstrates women’s claims of caring for close kin through weight management while affirming the myth of the *bashlanit*. A similar claim is evident in a short memoir in the Jewish-Israeli cookbook *Parents are Cooking* (Shechner-Rochman 2005:198). In that memoir, Manuela, the narrator, recounts with “great longing” how her mother, Juliana, “an amazing *bashlanit*”, continuously worried about her daughters’ weight, employing weight management diets in feeding them as they were “much too fat for her taste”. In conveying her care by managing her daughters’ weight, Juliana cooked her daughters “modest” and “lean” meals in contrast to the “wonderful” and “sophisticated” dishes that she usually cooked for guests. She worried so much about her daughters’ weight that after they got married she created for each daughter a recipe book, drawn from her own collection, which matched their physical characteristics and personalities. Then, Manuela claimed, that even “by only looking” at the way her mother “tasted what she cooked” the daughters turned into “*bashlaniot*” (sing. *bashlanit*). In this memory, longing for the caring mother is expressed through the idealising of weight management. Rather than resent her mother for imposing weight management diets on her and by creating tensed kinship relationships, Juliana remembers her mother as a *bashlanit*, a mythical portrayal that connotes pleasure in cooking and eating, which facilitate the cultural transmission of the culinary knowledge from mother to daughters. A recipe for a Sephardic semifreddo ice cream that Juliana mostly made for her guests follows this memory to illustrate the mother’s *bashlanit*-like attributes. As ice cream is a food that marks luxury and has high fat and sugar content, in choosing to remember her mother by this recipe, Manuela conveyed self-irony since, on the one hand, she returned to being the daughter who enjoys the care of her mother to emphasise their intimacy, but on the other hand defied being the overweight daughter that requires weight management.

In sum, as in the case of several other women, Gina's fantasy is articulated through her envy of Nigella Lawson's successful image along with her claim of being a *bashlanit* in asserting her ability to cook "two or three meals in one" for the sake of weight management. Yet unlike Nigella Lawson, whose image and success is predicated on sexual desirability, the myth of the Jewish-Israeli *bashlanit*, as epitomised by Ruth Sirkis and Nira Rousso in their prolific writing on cookery, is 'bodiless' and 'faceless', since the two Jewish-Israeli Ashkenazi feminine role models do not appear in photographs; they remain bodiless and faceless in the collective memory of Jewish-Israelis. Hence their image features an empty space which is able to be filled by the imagination of Jewish-Israeli women in this study; in the case of Nigella Lawson, the local food media does not allow for such a space, presenting in its stead the image of the sexy, modern "domestic goddess" (Duruz 2004a:57).

In her MA thesis on *Shumrei Mishkal*, the Jewish-Israeli version of the American Weight Watchers, Gvion (1985:45 in Calò 2005:60) argues that women are required to begin home cooking in order to become empowered slim women. In comparison, my research demonstrates that by re-instigating a connection with Jewish-Israeli diets and by enhancing home cooking for weight management on weekdays, Jewish-Israeli women care for their own bodies, while they manifest longing, pleasure and pride in their return to the personal body as 'home'. Their weight management is aimed at emulating feeling content within and proud of their youthful feminine bodies. They use their cooking skills and the content and timing of the main cooked meal (dinner versus lunch) to express intergenerational, national and gendered differences. In some cases women reconstitute feeling 'at home' by feeding their children a Kiwi dinner, while feeding themselves and their husbands an Israeli one. In general women enact self-care by managing their weight and attesting to the myth of the *bashlanit*. This claim is supported by exchanging the pleasure of food consumption with sexual pleasure and the pleasure of looking good. While some women wish to become (like) Nigella Lawson, more important is the fact that as they exchange such pleasures they conjure up the feminine abilities and pleasures associated with the mythical figure of Eve.

Cultural Intimacies between Self and Other through Weight Management

Women in this study negotiate social relations with others, close kin, people in their social networks and the nation-states that constitute their homelands through their weight management. The following section explores how women convey cultural intimacies through their choices of weight management plans, the connection they maintain with the health

system in Israel, and the timing of their diets. I also discuss how they employ the senses to convey a feeling of being ‘at home’ in their own bodies, while simultaneously embodying their connection with the land of Israel.

Eager to feel ‘at home’ and content in her own body as she did before migrating, while on her first visit back to Israel, Naomi consulted with a friend who is a medical professional who matched her blood type, eating habits, dislikes and likes to a nutritional diet. Over about six months the diet decreased her weight to what it had been before immigration. Naomi’s case illustrates that when visiting Israel some women took advantage of the health system for weight management. They used their Israeli citizenship by “getting the health system to repay” them, as Eleanor put it, after years of paying into that system without making many demands for care.

Maintaining connections with the Israeli health system is particularly appropriate for women who seek weight management, since most women feel reluctant to consult health authorities in New Zealand about weight loss. The infamously high obesity rate in New Zealand – one in five people at the time of the study – made Sima, for instance, regard her own weight gain as relative, stating that “compared with Pacific Islanders I feel slim”. Sima was continually discontented with and concerned about her weight gain and prided herself in her looks in the photographs in her wedding album. For Sima these photographs epitomised an idealised well-being that included having a slim physique, despite her awareness that she had followed the Israeli custom of reducing her weight for the wedding in order to look her best, just as many other women did before return visits to Israel. Tellingly, I received a wedding invitation from Israel with an image of a lettuce leaf, the text above which read, “The bride has been eating lettuce for the past three months...” Below the image was written in brackets: “(the minimum you can do is show up).” The invitation confirmed the feminine practice of dieting before important events, while at the same time parodying it to incite guests to attend. As with other women in the study, Sima saw New Zealand society as granting more legitimacy to being overweight. Women connected the image of New Zealanders as being ‘bigger’ with perceptions of their food practices as less healthy. This further supported their impression of diminished social surveillance in New Zealand. In this way women conveyed disapproval toward the eating practice of New Zealanders, as well as toward social surveillance in Israel over women’s weight, two points that I further develop in the second section.

On those occasions that women talked of effortless weight loss they often referred to the “shedding” of kilograms to describe the apparent transformation in their bodily volume, and also assert that they “shrank”. *Nashroo*, meaning ‘shed’ in Israeli Hebrew, is a passive verb that describes the graceful fall of leaves, indicating a natural process and the passage of time. This expression provoked the self-irony of some women due to circumstances – such as undergoing health-related surgery or divorce – that they experienced as emotional upheavals over and above those inherent to the immigration process. Two such women, for example, argued forcefully that they longed to feel ‘at home’ in their own body by stating in self-irony that “the best thing that came out” of these difficult times is the fact that they lost the extra weight they had gained after immigration.

Mira made a similar reference to effortless weight loss through the realm of the senses. Mira used an olfactory evocation as a metaphor to convey the ease with which she loses weight every spring, referring to the smell of the blossom of the almond tree to connote the ‘organic’ manner in which she “sheds” weight every year after winter. Yet almond trees are not part of Auckland’s botanical landscape. Hence, by depicting herself as having a relatively balanced weight Mira virtually returned home to the land of Israel. In longing to feel ‘at home’ in her own body she embodied an Israeli landscape at springtime. This evocation is a tempo-spatial image in which Mira becomes one with the transformation of time, through the passing seasons that she links with natural changes in her weight and body. In such a way, Mira grounds her body, imagining herself in the Israeli landscape, tied to that land. This naturalist metaphor was repeated when Mira claimed she “blossomed”, at the same time idealising her past looks and feelings through the memory of her past life that the photograph on the refrigerator provoked.

By defining weight management as a natural process, women conveyed effortless transformations using the metaphor of a tree for the personal human body. In the tree metaphor they articulated visceral, apparent and spiritual transformations: the potential to grow and to wither, as well as to establish new roots. The tree is an old Jewish symbol for life and a metaphor for the (human) personal body that is used repeatedly in the Bible⁶⁶. This symbol has long been nationalised and secularised in the nostalgic Zionist vision of returning to the land. Trees, as Egoz (1997:175) argues, became symbols for the Zionist Jewish revival,

⁶⁶ One well-known verse that springs to mind is “Man is the tree of the field” (Numbers 20:19); another is “And when you come to the land you shall plant all manner of trees” (Leviticus 19:23). These verses are often posted in classrooms around Israel at the time of Tu B’Shvat (Bardenstein 1999:160).

epitomising strong connection to the land, while legitimising the Jewish state through the manual labour required for planting and maintaining them. In this Israeli state ideology planting trees signifies land tenure. This ideology also shows through in many cultural domains, such as in Israeli poetry and literature. Zionism turned Jewish tree planting in Israel, and in particular the planting of fruit trees (citruses) and pines during celebrations such as Tu B'Shvat, into the realisation of this nostalgic ideology, advocated by the nation-state, which expressed longing to return home by prioritising manual labour for the purpose of land tenure (Bardenstein 1999, Egoz 1997, Long 2009). Hence, by likening themselves to a tree, women embody the Israeli landscape (Long 2009:61). This embodiment is demonstrated by their nostalgia in weight management as personal-national realisations of feeling at home in one's body. By longing to feel 'at home' in their own bodies women express through their cultural imagination that the growth and withering of humans as trees are two complementing processes of transformation. The Jewish theological discussion assigns values to types of trees, separating trees that bear fruit and are not to be uprooted from trees that do not bear fruit and may be uprooted. This discussion in Judaism suggests the gendered value associated with different types of trees and the values of different types of labours labour – pregnancy and manual work – as means to embody the connection with the land.

In addition, the case of Naomi who contacted a Jewish-Israeli friend in order to match her with a personalised diet illustrates my finding that most women bonded with other Jewish-Israelis through the discourse and practice of dieting for weight management. For example, when Shanon's son (15 years old at the time) wished to lose weight after his last visit to Israel, Shanon referred him to her friend Eleanor, who is very experienced in weight-loss diets. Eleanor constructed a weekly menu for Shanon's son and explained the main principles of the diet that were unfamiliar to Shanon, since neither she nor her son had ever engaged in such diets before. Similarly, after years of "weight-loss struggles", when Eleanor gave up on her familiar diets, she asked if Shira would match her up with an appropriate plan. Shira was renowned for her healthy, organic and well-balanced diet. Shira's advice was based solely on Jewish-Israeli home cooking starting with breakfast, and the bond between the women manifested in hospitality events as for several months, Eleanor travelled around Auckland with tahini and cut vegetables.

Kim, who befriended another Jewish-Israeli migrant woman that had lost about thirty kilograms by following a "no-carbohydrate diet" and taking up running, exemplifies the bond between Jewish-Israelis over weight management. I met Kim several months before she was

due to immigrate back to Israel. Remembering the trajectory of their relationship, Kim explained that eight years ago when she was introduced to the woman soon after arriving in New Zealand, she did not reciprocate her casual hospitality to establish a friendship. At that time both women were overweight. In our conversation Kim linked her decision to reject the relationship to “communal gossip”. Now that Kim was about to return to Israel and desirous of losing weight before going, and the woman had, indeed, been able to “transform her identity” by reducing her weight, as Kim put it, the timing was appropriate to form an alliance. As the woman had dissociated from her excessive fat Kim admitted that she associated with her more readily and had established a friendship. Gossip is certainly a means of articulating cultural intimacy and solidarity, as well as competition and social tension, between women in this study. Gossip about transforming one’s identity through weight loss or gain travels fast, with members of this social network easily kept informed about people who lose ‘fat’ and those who gain it. In the second section I demonstrate the importance of such dis/association for the way women articulate their critique of others, including close kin, friends and homelands.

In sum, the experiences of the women in this study show that they perceive Jewish-Israeli diets – the content and form of meals, such as having the main cooked meal at lunch versus dinnertime – as more suitable for weight management than the diets of New Zealanders. Through weight management they articulate self-care and care for close kin, specifically since they perceive the standard diet of New Zealanders, as well as the diet promoted by New Zealand health authorities, as unreliable. Jewish-Israeli food practices are characterised by the inclusion of plenty of fresh vegetables and lean sources of protein such as low fat cheeses, and what are perceived to be healthier eating practices, such as eating a light dinner while the main cooked meal is eaten at lunchtime. These attributes prompt women to embrace and validate Jewish-Israeli cooking and eating practices for weight management all the more after migration. In this manner they convey longing to feel ‘at home’ in their own bodies while they idealise their appearance and sense of well-being in their youthful past, when they still lived in Israel. Through their pride and pleasure in such memories and their home cooking women attest to the myth of the *bashlanit*. They embody the Jewish-Israeli landscape by using their senses as metaphors of cultural intimacy, namely their connection with their homeland. At the same time, women convey ambivalence toward the state of New Zealand through their critique of the unhealthy diets that they view this culture as fostering, even while they alter their children’s diets to some extent according to local practices. Below I

examine how several other contradictions arise through the ambivalence and disgust that women convey in longing to feel ‘at home’ in their own bodies.

Ambivalence and Disgust on the Road to the Personal Body as ‘Home’

This section focuses on the ambivalence, disgust and self-irony that women depict while realising the dimension of the personal body as ‘home’. I examine how and why women experience these emotions, while considering that most women increase their appetite after migration, with only a few decreasing their food intake. My research demonstrates that women depict ambivalence towards ‘home’ as a means of negotiating care, with Israel figuring as an over-caring homeland fraught with wars, in contrast to New Zealand, which appears as under-caring towards healthy eating practices, but peaceful homeland. In particular, I examine the way women employ their senses by focussing on their disgust over being ‘fat’. For this purpose I return to my fieldwork with Mira and compare her experience with that of other women in order to explain the many contradictions within and between women, as well as the ambivalence that women reveal in their practice and rhetoric.

The Loss of Pleasure in ‘Senseless’ Eating

After immigration most women articulated ambivalence and self-disgust towards what they viewed as overeating. Mira exemplified this experience in her longing to feel ‘at home’ in her own body, which provoked her to self-parody, saying, “I ate... like I have never seen food in my life”, and likening herself to a “*behema*” (‘beast’). Here Mira employs an animalistic metaphor to articulate remorse for her lack of restraint and her resulting enormous appetite and food intake. *Behema* (pl. *behemoth*) is a biblical word that encapsulates animalistic enormity, of a magnitude that implies danger⁶⁷. By referring to her practice of eating in such way on weekends and during casual or festive meals, Mira illustrates the logic of “all you can eat”, as some women put it, which induces guilt.

Some women also described overeating on visits to Israel as an “obsession”, and others used self-demeaning metaphors such as “*litkoa*”, to stuff with food, metaphors used to portray the ordinary experience of migration and homesickness. In addition, Mira’s informal use of the term *maka*, glossed as impairment, disaster and any negative enforced power, such as in the verb ‘to hit’, suggest her ambivalence about overeating. The term *maka* refers to the

⁶⁷ As the plural form of *Behema* the word Behemoth references the creation story in Genesis whereby God created beasts that signify His plurality and magnitude usually relating to whales. The creature Behemoth is mentioned by Jorge Luis Borges (2002[1967]:31-32) in his *Book of Imaginary Beings*. Borges also mentions Bahamut (2002:25-26), linking it to Muslim tradition as a gigantic imaginary fish, an altered and magnified version of Behemoth.

ten biblical plagues inflicted on the Egyptians in the story that preceded the myth of Exodus retold on Passover. Mira used this word to convey gluttony, a threat to spirituality, as implied by the biblical source for term ‘appetite’ in the Israeli Hebrew, ‘*taavah*’. (Genesis 49:32), which denotes ‘knowing a boundary’ and the danger of the transgression of bodily boundaries by gluttony as an immoral act.

While ambivalence and guilt could be instigated by overeating for a whole variety of reasons, the symbolic meanings associated with the foods in which women mostly reported overindulging demonstrate their longing to return home, since these foods represent the Israeli homeland. On visits to Israel many women reported gorging on ordinary foods such as cottage cheese, *pitot*, hummus, *shawarmah* (meat slices grilled on a spit and wrapped in pita with salads), falafel, and *jachnun* (Yemenite baking cooked slowly on residual heat). Those women, whom I met before they departed on such visits, shared with me very specific fantasies of the foods they intended to eat. Family members, as well as friends, often prepare favourite foods for them on their visits to Israel, and all the women reported shopping for such favourites and being sent some of them in food parcels by people in Israel⁶⁸. Women who did not gain weight during their visits to Israel despite gorging on such foods used this fact to assert their claim that Jewish-Israeli food practices are healthier and better than practices in New Zealand. Those who gained weight on these visits attested to their national connection and homesickness by overeating the Israeli foods for which they longed.

Mira’s case illustrates that if nostalgia drove all women to increase the domestic production and consumption of food in general, then for most women nostalgia also triggered an increase in their own appetite, which contributed to their weight gain. This is in addition to their understanding of the links between weight gain and the temporary adoption of Kiwi food practices. As well as overeating during visits to Israel, most women admitted to overeating on weekends, which entailed eating out or casual and festive hospitality events. Mira’s experience exemplifies a process that took place regardless of women’s body shape, size or relationship with food, since immigration provoked strong nostalgia for eating foods that represent the Israeli home. The women in this study described the eating of Jewish-

⁶⁸ For another example of a nostalgic food for Jewish-Israelis see the case of *krembo* (in Hebrew ‘cream is in it’) in the documentary film *Makolet: A Middle Eastern Grocery in Brooklyn* by Ilana Goldberg (2000.). *Krembo* is a European sweet made of egg white (soft and marshmallow-like) coated in dark chocolate on a biscuit base. The Danes and the Dutch have similar versions of this treat, known as ‘winter ice cream’ in Israel since it is only produced during wintertime. The film demonstrates the strong nostalgic attachments Jewish-Israeli migrants in New York share for *krembo*, as they pleurably engage their senses in the many ways of eating it.

Israeli foods in large amounts as ‘senseless’ eating for a loss of pleasure, since this hyper-consumption desensitises the senses and the ability to derive pleasure from the food.

They employ the ‘all you can eat’ logic, either in eating one particular food in great quantities or in eating an overall large amount. The logic of ‘all you can eat’, sometimes known as ‘MacDonaldisation’, is characteristic of hypermodernity, and is epitomised by fast food companies (Gottschalk 2008:55-57). By this logic, consumers receive better value for money when consumption is greater. Yet this logic proves to be ‘nonsense’, since it provoked women’s guilt and self-disgust. For example, Sima thought of employing this logic to help her reduce her weight. Out of her despair not feeling ‘at home’ in her own body Sima decided to switch to her own version of the “all you can eat” diet, as she put it. Sima decided to eat only those foods she liked without limitation as she attempted to regain her pleasure in eating to reduce her weight. Though in the first week she lost two kilograms, her diet did not last long, which ended up increasing her guilt.

While the guilt induced by overeating was manifested in varied bodily sensations, such as the desire to vomit, deep nausea and a sensation of fullness that creeps from the stomach upwards, the Israeli-Hebrew words for all these sensations also invariably connote disgust. Disgust relates to immoral behaviour and poor bodily appearance that signifies lack of care. The expression “*goal nefesh*”, meaning ‘disgust of the soul’, is probably one of the strongest terms to convey self-disgust that several women used in lamenting their overeating.

One contradiction in women’s behaviour appears when women gorge on Jewish-Israeli foods out of nostalgia as they attest to their Jewish-Israeli identity, yet this overeating provokes their longing to feel ‘at home’ in their own body, as well as guilt and ambivalence that they express via self-irony. This contradiction ‘within’ women is in addition to the fact that a few women attested to ‘senseless’ eating due to amplified senses and eating despite a “lack of appetite” and loss of pleasure. To demonstrate the experience of these women, below I analyse extracts from my fieldnotes while visiting Lara. At this stage one should be reminded that nostalgia may trigger a general loss of appetite and weight loss, or what Turner (1987:149) mentions as ‘anorexia’. In this respect Turner refers to the prognosis of Doctor Johannes Hofer already in 1688 about Swiss soldiers who suffered from similar physical symptoms, including nausea and high fever (see for example, Boym 2002:xiv, Spitzer 1999).

I came to visit Lara in the late afternoon. Lara was a thin woman with big sunken eyes. She seemed very unhappy about her “five years too many” in New Zealand, and extremely

busy with cooking, hosting and feeding others, mostly her family and Jewish-Israeli friends, but not herself. Lara asserted that she “likes cooking and baking, but not so much eating”. Though her dissatisfaction having come to New Zealand was omnipresent, every time this topic was raised directly in our conversations she hushed our voices so that her husband and daughter, who were present in the house, would not hear. She visited Israel on a yearly basis, mostly staying with her close family. So as not to upset her daughter she did not disclose the timing of these visits until the last moment. She lamented greatly about her difficulties in finding employment in her vocation in New Zealand and about the fact that she is “tired of staying at home”. For the first couple of years, after leaving her demanding job in Israel in a high-profile office, she found this change “refreshing”, but now she was greatly frustrated. Since migration she ate only what was necessary because “*ani toemet hacol*”, literally meaning ‘I taste everything’, meaning that every difference in flavour or taste is magnified for her. In attempting to explain her problem with taste she realised that she had no appropriate words to describe it. Instead, she gave me examples. If she does not like the food and it “tastes wrong” she does not eat it, even if she is hungry. She eats the three main meals, but she is not “a big eater”. She finds it hard to eat many of the New Zealand foods, and “specific tastes are very important” to her – she is “very picky”. She added as an example that today she did not drink her “must-have morning cup of coffee” because the right kind of milk was missing and she could not stand the taste of any other milk. As a result she had developed a headache from not drinking coffee that day – despite having tried.

As with a few other women who had “lost” their appetite, Lara was not engaged in a weight loss diet to attain an ideal body image; neither was she anorexic. Rather, she suffered from an amplified sense of taste which she described in saying “I taste everything”. She used her strong attachment to specific tastes, smells and textures of foods from Israel, such as milk, to evoke a hypersensitive palate that manifested her depression, feeling trapped and stranded in her dilemmas. Lara materialised the logic of ‘homing desires’ (Brah 1996) in her insistence on the ‘specific’ qualities of many foods that should fit her expectations. Her weight loss also evoked longing to feel ‘at home’, which she depicted as a general sense of discomfort, a loss of pleasure in eating and her disgust with food. Through eating without enjoying her food, Lara indicated that her main motivation in eating was the desire to survive rather than sensate-personal pleasure, which she and a few women like her no longer experienced. They too articulated ‘senseless’ eating, their senses becoming a metaphor for their ambivalence towards their own bodies.

Another example is brought by a woman working in her chosen area, which gave her satisfaction, an indication that this aspect in the lives of women may increase a sense of self-worth but is not sufficient. Through her loss of appetite and pleasure in eating, Limor described being in a “place” where she had “built herself” ten years after migration. As she lost her appetite and “shed” many kilograms, which manifested in her feeling of being stranded in New Zealand, she felt it was “too late to start again” back in Israel, and was under severe economic and marital pressures. Limor articulated her sense of discomfort and of feeling trapped by her loss of pleasure in eating, while asserting her professional success, since she claimed that she had created a name for herself in stating “I built myself”. Other women who articulated similar feelings and worked in their chosen professions claimed that when they feel “stranded” they “unintentionally” lose their appetite and weight.

The cases of Lara and Limor demonstrate that by employing the senses to express the desire to return to feeling ‘at home’ in one’s own body, a few women manifest feeling stranded, i.e. the feeling of being away in their bodies, disconnected and alienated from their bodies that is expressed in the loss of appetite. These feelings are not exceptional, nor the manifestation of lost appetite due to amplified senses which lead to weight loss. Mostly, in these situations the women emphasise “loneliness” as an indicator for their general poor well-being. At such times several of the women also blamed their husbands for the decision to emigrate that led to their downfall. In their loss of pleasure from eating, in spite of caring for others through cooking, they also emphasise self-sacrifice, which attests to the myth of the *polania*.

Disgust with ‘Fat’ as Ambivalence in Kinship Relations and Beyond

In this section I return to my fieldnotes of the visit with Mira to examine the experiences of other women in order to illustrate how they articulate and use ambivalence as disgust. This section explores how women’s behaviour towards children depends on the change in their cultural context after migration, and is realised according to their age and gender. In order to attest to changes in social relationships and in their own self-conduct, women disembodied to some extent the connection with their Israeli homeland as they embodied the connection with New Zealand.

Mira began cooking a meat stew for dinner. As our conversation progressed Mira said that she and her daughter were “on a diet”. She emphasised their excellent relationship since migrating, a relationship in which they had turned anger and yelling “like war” into laughter

and pleasant times. She was pleased that her daughter had lost about 15 kilograms by following her advice, but was concerned by her daughter continuing to be overweight, in her view. Mira felt that her daughter's being overweight at such a young age (around 14 at that time) might become even more problematic after giving birth, a concern she communicated to me. Whispering, she said that her daughter wore a clothing size bigger than her own (size 14) and did not "fit" her (Mira's) "standard". Then, describing her daughter's appearance she pointed at her own rounded, flabby chin, upper arms, breasts, and waistline, and jiggled the flabby extra 'fat' she perceived. Mira added that her daughter "might not be the brightest", but since the initiative to lose weight originated in the daughter, she understands that following her mother's advice is beneficial.

Intensified kinship relations with children were commonly reported by women in this study, as among other Jewish-Israeli migrant mothers and their children elsewhere (Sigad and Eisikovits 2009:82). Yet Mira described her kinship relationship by using national imagery that denotes a shift from the "warfare" of Israel to the peacefulness of New Zealand. If Mira and the other women had previously embodied this form of political tension through their kinship relationships in manifesting their connection with the Israeli homeland, then after immigration they disembodied this tension, transforming these relationships accordingly into something more peaceful and intimate. Despite her dissatisfaction and disgust with her daughter's excessive 'fat' Mira conveyed pride and pleasure in her child's weight loss, also illustrating other women's feelings as part of the realisation of kinship intimacy. As with other women in this study, Mira managed her daughter's weight through a weight loss diet as a way of enacting care while she described her disgust with her daughter's excessive 'fat' to denote a tension.

Gender-wise, Mira compared two separate, but related, feminine bodies and found three main differences: one feminine body is young and before pregnancies but severely overweight (her daughter's), the other feminine body is older and after pregnancies but closer to feeling 'at home' (her own). In light of their current intensified intimacy, Mira demonstrated that her gendered enactment of care through weight management is more problematic. As girls become relatively more separated from their mothers in adolescence they undergo bodily transformations that show a growing similarity between their body and that of their mother. Girls at adolescence begin "looking more like a woman" or "become a woman", as some women in this study put it. Hence daughters who carry excessive 'fat' transgress the contours of their mother's body, as Mira suggested in pointing at the flabby

parts of her own body in criticism of her daughter's looks. As mothers, this excessive 'fat' poses a threat to their gendered enactment of care.

Moreover, in her imagination Mira realised her daughter's future role as a mother. Hence, Mira illustrates a common understanding amongst women that from adolescence Jewish-Israeli femininity is constituted according to the natal status of the female body, i.e. before, during or after pregnancies. Despite the fact that weight gain through bodily transformation is expected during pregnancy, and that none of the women in this study considered not getting pregnant because of this issue, most women implied that considerable weight gain is only legitimate for the purpose of fulfilling their reproductive role, i.e. pregnancy. In addition, when pregnant, women angled for compliments from their husbands about their appearance. Kim, for example, claimed that during her pregnancies her weight gain was legitimate since her "fat was purposeful". She repeatedly quoted her husband as claiming that while she is pregnant she is "the sexiest, happiest and most pleasant woman in the world". Pregnancy legitimised her fat and sexualised her body. Yet Kim felt that she had exploited these pleasures by overeating and conveyed dissatisfaction with her own appearance, as suggested by this chapter's epigraph: I will diet until I feel at home in my own body and regain pleasure in eating. Most women treat 'fat' surrounding the belly after pregnancies as one of the most sensitive targets for criticism, provoking self-disgust and ambivalent feelings. On the one hand, their femininity is materialised through this 'fat', but on the other, this 'fat' represented an undesirable appearance. Rotem is the exception that proves this rule, since she turned her rounder belly after two pregnancies into "a sign of pride". However, she too sought her husband's approval for her attractiveness. Rotem said that she and her husband agreed that in the end her roundness turned her body into that of "a real woman". In such a way Rotem turned her excessive 'fat' around the belly into a visceral reminder of motherhood that idealised her body as that of a 'real' woman.

Importantly, after immigration women expressed kinship tension via their disgust with the excessive 'fat' of overweight close kin. For example, in our conversation, Mira expressed her disgust with her father, whom she claimed was "fat and disgusting" on his last visit. When I wondered whether he had gained weight since she had last seen him, Mira claimed that he had not. Wondering what had changed, Mira realised that since leaving Israel she was the one who had changed, not her father's weight. Mira felt very frustrated at her father's general behaviour towards others, and linked this behaviour to her father's excessive 'fat' in expressing her frustrations. Now, more than before, Mira felt that his excessive 'fat'

epitomised his lack of care, a neglect towards his own body that she associated with his lack of consideration toward others. Like other women in this study, her criticism of her father signalled a distancing, indicating that she, as other women, had embodied her connection with New Zealand culture, since all women attested that they prefer the politer and more considerate manners of New Zealanders. They used the manners they associated with New Zealanders to convey a sense of distance from and criticism of both Israeli culture and the close kin who remained there.

Women associated their children's excess weight with diminished intellectual abilities. Mira is a case in point, since while she emphasised enacting care toward her daughter by engaging her in a weight loss diet, she also regarded her as "not the brightest" child. As with other women, Mira expressed dissatisfaction with her daughter on the basis of her displeasing appearance by regarding her stereotypically in association with intellectual failure. Women managing the bodies of their children through weight loss diets portrayed such an association particularly during and following their children's adolescence.

Moreover, during fieldwork I noticed that often children who are considered overweight by their mothers are presumed to be more "laid back", "pleasant", nicer and politer than their slimmer siblings, who are considered "bright" and successful intellectually, and more assertive. As parallel, New Zealanders are considered "genuinely nice", politer, kinder and more considerate than Jewish-Israelis (see also Chapter Five). Jewish-Israelis are considered assertive, driven by economic success, competitive, nimble and witty, while New Zealanders are "laid back". It seems that the relative advantage their children would theoretically have in New Zealand by dint of being culturally Israeli – as mothers wished for their children upon migrating – was compromised if they were overweight. As they became 'overweight' in their mothers' eyes, they also became 'too much' like New Zealanders, intimately embodying a national connection that provoked irony through jokes and teasing by the women.

Young children, on the other hand, were perceived by Jewish-Israeli women in this study as more intimate extensions of their own bodies than those of their children who had reached adolescence. The bodies of young children were public testimonies to the enactment of 'good' Jewish-Israeli care that may require weight management through weight-increase diets. At an early stage of life, weight gain signified the 'fat' needed for the body's growth, a marker of health and well-being, and it was the lack of weight gain that was viewed as worrying. As with other cultures, "one's love produces fatness and well-being in one's

object” (Durham 2011:145). Hence most women manifested guilt towards those young children whom they regarded as underweight and who lacked interest in eating, in particular healthy foods.

After migration women’s guilt and worry with regard to children’s weight turned into gendered and national markers that trigger self-irony and critique, this time toward the Israeli homeland. For example, Rotem made conscious and continuous efforts to balance the intellectual growth and well-being of her two sons. She had often told me of her worry over her elder son’s physical development (he was about three years old at the time) because he was not interested in eating; she regarded him as underweight, but also very clever. In comparison, she saw her younger son as “lagging behind” in his intellectual and physical development in contrast to his “excellent appetite” and “very pleasant” nature. On one of Rotem’s visits to my house, her elder son was wearing a T-shirt from Israel with an image of Albert Einstein along with the slogan “Who is mummy’s genius?” Watching him eating, the slogan prompted Rotem to comment on the “Israeli obsession” with the intellectual performance of children, saying, “Only Israelis could come up with a T-shirt for children with a message like that”. She was then reminded of a Jewish-Israeli advertisement promoting the consumption of frozen ready-made chicken schnitzels which employed that slogan to depict and soothe a mother’s anxiety for the success of her child. In this way, Rotem signalled the issue of parental worry over the intellectual success of children in Israel as an “obsession”, marking a gendered and national difference, while attempting to dissociate herself from this manner of behaviour. By regarding it as a national Israeli “obsession” Rotem rejected this anxiety and made fun of Jewish-Israelis. In Israel this anxiety is typically associated with the myth of the *polania* and depicted in a multitude of jokes about women’s worry over the successful performance of their children. Many such jokes tell of the *polania* who would not be satisfied with her children unless they became Nobel Prize winners, famous musicians, doctors or lawyers. Yet it was the pleasure of feeding her elder son in combination with the writing on his shirt that provoked Rotem to remember the slogan from the chicken schnitzels advertisement. This was the case since although Rotem mocked this anxiety, she could not help but worry over her elder son. In fact, Rotem parodied herself in order to stop worrying and normalise her experience, and thus, transform her angst into pleasure while self-attesting to her Jewish-Israeli humour.

In sum, when children were young, usually up to adolescence, mothers in this study enacted care through weight management by taking great pleasure in feeding them, as their

weight gain and 'fat' were signs of healthy growth and well-being. When girls in adolescence grew and changed to become 'more like women' their 'fat' was delegitimised through its imagining as a burden, especially considering their future reproductive role as mothers. Manifestations of disgust with 'fat' alluded to shame, guilt and blame, since excessive 'fat' is seen as signalling lack of care. However, thanks to the change in cultural context after immigration these connotations engendered several contradictions in women's behaviours. Sarah Ahmed (2004:87) theorises that "disgust involves a 'time lag' as well as being generative or futural. It does not make borders, but responds to their making through a reconfirmation of their necessity". This necessity is expressed as conveying disgust becomes a way to negotiate the social order and causes contradictions to stand out. On the one hand, the younger body of the child is perceived as more attractive than the older body, depicting the natural progression of life through continuity between generations. Gender roles are maintained through women's feeding as kinship care, which depict desired 'fat' on young children, as well as on female bodies that fulfil their reproductive role. On the other hand, disgust with 'fat' on one's body denotes a moral judgment, since 'fat' connotes a lack of care. In fact, women expressed disgust over 'fat' regardless of the bodies to which it was attached; women's own bodies, the bodies of their close kin, and in some cases the bodies of New Zealanders, including Pacific Island people. Since women commonly associate excessive 'fat' with failure, their move to a new cultural context enhanced this feeling, leading to self-irony and even to self-parody. In this way women articulated their aspiration to civilise their own bodies and materialised social and cultural tensions. They derided children for excessive 'fat' which made them become 'too much' like New Zealanders. At the same time they often spoke disparagingly of the Jewish-Israeli "obsession" with weight management that they wished to distance themselves from, even as they disembody this national connection to some degree. The desire to disembody this connection was particularly strong for women who suffered from a feeling of inadequacy since childhood in Israel, as I illustrate next.

Living with and Breaking Free from a Feeling of Inadequacy after Migration

Understandably, women who suffered from a feeling of inadequacy in being overweight since their childhood in Israel depicted the highest degree of longing to feel 'at home' in their own body. Though their accounts are similar to many New Zealand women who identify food as their "enemy" in achieving a slim ideal body image through long "struggles" and "battles" (Herda 1991:145-150), their concern is manifested differently. This difference derives from their culturally particular and gendered ways of grappling with the myth of the

sabra, renowned for *dugri* (direct) speech, manifested by all women through their experience of weight management. For Jewish-Israeli migrant women the direct speech of the *sabra* epitomises the social surveillance of feminine bodies in Israel that they wished to dissociate themselves from after immigration. In this way they critiqued their Israeli homeland and embodied their connection with their New Zealand home.

By remembering their past experiences in Israel, from childhood to adolescence, women who suffered from a feeling of inadequacy recounted their mothers' attempts to manage their weight, imagining their mothers according to the myth of the *polania*. They articulated daughter-mother kinship tension by blaming their mothers' over-concern for their current weight problems. These women reported memories of their mothers "nagging" and "pestering" them to lose weight, and also contested the *dugri* speech of acquaintances, close kin and friends in Israel who criticised them for their weight and appearance over the years. They blamed these people for transgressing their personal space or "scrambling" their "mind", as Eleanor put it. Discussing one's weight management and bodily appearance to one's face might be a normalised and culturally acceptable manifestation of care among Jewish-Israelis, yet in the context of women's sense of having failed at managing their weight, these discussions fell into the realm of "confrontational", "aggressive" and "rude" manners said to be typical of Jewish-Israelis.

The ambivalent feelings of these women increased, in particular, in the run up to visits to Israel after immigration, during which they expected to face much scrutiny over their appearance. Hence, when these women employed the nostalgic logic of 'all you can eat' by overeating foods that signified home, their guilt soared. For example, when one time Kim employed this logic, she ate about 30 small doughnuts in one sitting. Women were familiar with these "Israeli" doughnuts made with yoghurt and baking soda (a faster and very simplified version of the complicated European doughnuts) since their childhood. Kim's overindulgence caused her terrible nausea and she interpreted her visceral sensation as "utter self-disgust" from her "fat body" and bad behaviour. Kim felt that this occurrence was her "wake-up call", realising that she had lost the pleasure of eating and that she had been desensitised. She began a "no-carbohydrate diet" and has stuck to it ever since. The memory of that moment provoked her to blame herself for neglecting herself and to undertake the weight-loss diet – and she also blamed her mother. If overeating food that represented home desensitised the women in this study, then those who suffered from a feeling of inadequacy reacted with drastic measures. Like Kim, they interpreted overeating as a result of a lack of

care of their own bodies in conjunction with blame for too much care by their mothers. They felt that they ended up eating sweets and other desirable but guilt-inducing foods in hiding, and condemned denials of care in their past.

For these women, the nostalgic idealisation of their self-image in old photographs from life in Israel evoked even stronger feelings of despair toward their past than it did other women, who usually responded with self-irony. By looking at such photographs, these women realised that they had actually looked “fine” before and “had not needed to lose weight”. Since at the time they felt they did need to lose weight, they now bemoaned those lost years when they could have enjoyed relative satisfaction, pride and pleasure in their own bodies. Their self-irony grew in the face of the fact that despite all their attempts to lose weight, they had only succeeded in gaining it. The emotional upheavals that immigration involved for all women in this study brought them to intensify their struggles with weight management. The following extract from an interview with Eleanor is a typical depiction of such feelings:

The first year in every job is kasha [difficult]. I can tell you that in the first job I had, in the first three months I gained about 12–15 kg be'zetz [all at once] that I haven't managed to 'take off'. It is related to a lot of stress, being indifferent to these things [herself and the weight gain], and personal compensation for hardship. Yes... It was very difficult for me. I had to confront a lot of new stuff ... I didn't get much help and a lot was new. I didn't cook much food then: that is very clear. We got into this routine; we lived in the east and I worked in the west. My husband worked in shifts and I personally suffered a lot... After two years when I felt that things had settled down, I decided I was going back to Israel for a 'tummy tuck'. For this reason, I lost weight before going to Israel and went back to 75–76 kg... I could show you a photo. I really looked good!

Though these women related to a period before immigration when they “shopped in their own closets” for clothes that fitted them to express their satisfaction with their weight after intense dieting and temporary “success” in attaining an ideal weight, this was only a stop-over in their fraught journey to feel ‘at home’ in their own bodies. These memories marked their relatively controlled appetite and food intake at that time, while their longing only intensified after migration. Ironically, these women ‘returned home’ by overeating in order to

cope with stress and enacted drastic measures to reduce their weight, thus reinscribing inadequacy.

The experience of Rivah is the exception that proves this rule, since Rivah described her life before immigration as “one long struggle” with food through weight-loss diets. She suffered for years from scrutiny over her weight, especially from her mother. After she turned 35 in New Zealand, she “decided to accept no criticism” over her weight and size in Israel. She had medical reports of her blood pressure, cholesterol levels and other indicators which proved that she was in good health. On her last visit to Israel she threatened to leave a family event on account of such remarks. The physical and cultural distance from Israel provoked Rivah to use her ‘big’ body as a means of protest against the gendered social expectation to look slim. Rivah stopped her attempts to diet and began to feel more ‘at home’ in her own body, conveying self-contentment by accepting her ‘big’ appearance as she disembodied this cultural intimacy. After migration Rivah opted to contest criticism about her weight and the *dugri* speech of Jewish-Israelis. She did so, as did most women, not only through rhetoric and by avoiding dieting to look slim, but also, unlike most women, through her ‘big’ body that manifested her self-contentment.

Conclusions

The Jewish-Israeli migrant women in this study realise the dimension of the personal body as ‘home’ through dieting and managing their weight after immigration. For the most part, immigration results in weight gain, which provokes longing to feel ‘at home’ in their own body and hold up their youthful feminine appearance and well-being in Israel as an ideal. Therefore, they assert gendered care in dieting and managing their weight in New Zealand, aiming to revive feelings of pleasure and pride in their appearance. Interestingly, in her analysis of the culinary memories of Colette Rossant, a notable Jewish-Egyptian food writer, Deborah Bardenstein (2002) describes a somewhat opposite process. She argues that after immigration to France from Egypt (and later to the USA) around the middle of the last century, Rossant decreased her appetite and food intake in order to transform her appearance and lose weight, and, thus, “de-Egyptianise” (2002:374) by disembodimenting her national belonging.

In contrast, to counterbalance the increase in their appetite and weight after immigration, most of the women in this study increase home cooking and enact their attachment to Jewish-Israeli diets on weekdays, articulating intergenerational, national and gendered differences

through dieting. Through the meal structure and food content women enact intimacy with the Israeli homeland, also using other Jewish-Israelis as the source for advice on weight-loss plans, their timing and their partners in such diets to reiterate this connection. Women bond with close kin by managing weight together, while also criticising the local culture in New Zealand for its lack of emphasis on a balanced weight and healthy diet. Though all women make a claim for self-care through weight management, some women also assert the myth of the *bashlanit* in increasing their efforts in the kitchen for this purpose. In this way they depict their fantasy of re-sexualising their body by substituting the pleasure of eating for the sexual pleasure of looking good (or making love). In their fantasy, they call on an older feminine myth, the biblical Eve, which links these feminine pleasures. Yet, these women also envy Nigella Lawson as a modern mythical figure that they substitute for the Israeli figure of the *bashlanit* in order to constitute feeling ‘at home’ in New Zealand.

Furthermore, women use the realm of the senses to convey changes in their connections to their homelands. By beginning to gorge on Jewish-Israeli foods, women engage in ‘senseless’ eating since they often follow the logic of ‘all you can eat’ for those foods that signify the Israeli homeland. This act triggers guilt that induces self-disgust and provokes self-irony for their increased appetites and weight gain. ‘Senseless’ eating is more commonly expressed as desensitisation when overeating; in a few cases, it is expressed as an amplification of the senses when under-eating and a sensation of dissatisfaction and discomfort. The latter express a feeling of being stranded through their loss of pleasure in eating, and might also blame their husbands for their dissatisfaction, claiming self-sacrifice in the manner of the figure of the *polania*. In contrast, most women contest the myth of the *polania* by their practice of avoiding foods that epitomise luxury in casual hospitality events when dieting. In this way, women reverse the Jewish value of ‘love thy other as thy self’, not only to assert self-care, but also pleasure in a form of eating that enacts national belonging.

The role of disgust with excessive eating or ‘fat’ on the body appears as a way to negotiate a moral hierarchy in gendered and culturally particular ways. This negotiation is exemplified after immigration in that most women disembodiment some of their sense of cultural intimacy with Israel by expressing strong disapproval towards the typical *dugri* speech and Jewish-Israeli inconsiderate behaviour. The distancing with Israeli culture also materialises as women dissociate themselves from social surveillance over the female body and warfare. Yet, in their new cultural context after migration, women also articulate their desire to civilise their own body and the bodies of their children – according to their age and gender – through

their shared disgust with 'fat'. The framing of 'fat' on the bodies of girls as excessive, specifically from adolescence, is only legitimised by their future reproductive role as mothers as a time when they are naturally required to gain weight. When younger children become overweight, however, they provoke their mothers' irony and criticism in the form of suggestions that they resemble New Zealanders "too much". Their appearance furthermore threatens the advantage their mothers wished for them in immigrating as children became stereotypically associated with lesser intellectual abilities due to their perceived resemblances to New Zealanders.

Finally, a few women in this study who suffered from the feelings of inadequacy since their childhood in Israel enacted drastic measures to reduce their weight. Accordingly, these women portrayed the highest level of longing to feel 'at home' in their own bodies, along with the highest degree of self-disgust. They also voiced the strongest tendency to blame mothers and Israeli culture, though one of them was able to break free from her feeling of inadequacy by legitimising her 'big' body as she developed feelings of self-contentment after immigration. This is a woman who contested the legitimacy of *dugri* speech, epitomised by the myth of *sabra*, through her physical appearance, whereas most other women only did so through rhetoric and memories.

The next chapter offers concluding remarks that review the main contributions of this study to the anthropology of home and nostalgia, food studies of migrant women and studies of Jewish diasporic groups.

Chapter Eight: Concluding Remarks on Savouring Home

Báyit ('home' in Israeli-Hebrew) 1. A house for dwelling and work; 2. A family; 3. A dynasty and an ancestry; 4. A school of thought, a faculty and a discipline; 5. A tribe and a people; 6. A verse in a poem; 7. An empty space; 8. The Temple; 9. A womb (figurative); 10. The compartment of the head *téfilin* (leather boxes containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah that men strap on their heads for morning prayers). (Even Shushan 1969a:113)

Jewish-Israeli migrant women enact social relationships through their domestic food practices and engagements with food, reconstituting their feelings of being 'at home' after migration to New Zealand while claiming multiple ways of belonging. Every dimension of the home they reconstitute can be imagined as a 'room' in a house, whose interior and exterior designs are changed rather than erased after migration. The multiple meanings for the word 'home' in Israeli-Hebrew indicate the main dimensions in the home that the Jewish-Israeli women in this study reconstitute after migration to New Zealand, starting with the meaning of 'house'. Here I will consider how these meanings are elaborated upon in this thesis.

In Chapter Two, I examined the women's experiences of grocery shopping, which led me to visit their kitchens and food storage areas in their homes: the pantry, for the storage of tins, and the refrigerator, where dairy products and meat as well as fruits and vegetables are kept. Connections with homelands are realised by the women through their experiences of grocery shopping, asserting their belonging to both Israel and New Zealand. Women long for the properties of Israeli dairy products, certain fruits and vegetables, and even salt. They critique the perceived poor quality and high price of these foods in New Zealand as compared to Israel. This longing leads them to turn various Israeli groceries into home-cooked foods and begin growing Israeli vegetables and herbs in kitchen gardens. The women derive pleasure and pride from feeding their children New Zealand red meat, which they view as being of superior quality to that available in Israel.

The women weave together their connections with the lands of Israel and New Zealand in their shopping practices: they shop for New Zealand foods mainly for their children and husbands, as well as for Israeli foods on special trips to ethnic shops around the city of Auckland. Their choices of shops and specific products are often used as a means of manifesting their political leanings in the Israeli-Palestine conflict. In some cases the women

also choose to commercialise their nostalgia for the land of Israel, wishing to educate New Zealanders by enticing them to eat ‘real’ Israeli food that they produce in their businesses. The ways the media in Israel and New Zealand evoke nostalgic consumption of dairy products contrasts with women’s ways of using nostalgic consumption. In Israel, advertisements represent mothers as ‘rooted’ in the familial home to promote longing to return to the safe haven of childhood through pleasurable consumption, whereas advertisements in New Zealand for similar products evoke nostalgia for childhood while erasing the mother’s labour and presence in their portrayal of the family home.

The meanings of home as ‘family’, ‘dynasty’ and ‘ancestry’ are examined through the generational kinship relationships that women negotiate in their experiences of home cooking, discussed in Chapter Three; this can be imagined as another visit to the kitchen, during which the actual practice of cooking takes place. Connections with ancestral homes are realised through women’s engagement with cooking, enacting female kinship relationships across four generations. The women are nostalgic for home-cooked dishes, which they regard as metonyms for their close female kin from the past two generations – mainly grandmothers, mothers, mothers-in-law and aunts. In their home cooking, they derive and convey pleasure and pride from feeding their children foods that are infused with memories of close female kin who they remember as cooking these dishes.

By increasing the amount and variety of the home cooking they do in New Zealand, the women relieve longing and strive to eat well and healthily, enacting their care as they claim their central place in the family. In this way, the women break free from their obligations towards close female kin in Israel who were heavily involved in feeding the family. As the women recreate the home-cooked dishes of their close female kin, they improvise on their recipes and cooking techniques and gestures, while also feeding their children ‘future’ memories. Women’s ambivalence with regard to home cooking is mostly the result of gendered tensions in their relationships with female kin, conveyed through competition and a sense of threat. The senses, memories and emotions that home-cooked dishes provoke in the women become a means of both idealising and denigrating the close female kin who used to cook them. This mythology not only manifests subtle ethnic and class differences, but also provides the basis for the commemoration of kin who have passed away.

The meaning of home as communal relationships is discussed in Chapter Five, which examines women’s experiences in casual hospitality. This discussion leads to the outdoor

area – the porch, deck or backyard, where there is plenty of room for barbeques. Connections with communal homes are realised through women's experiences in casual hospitality events as they build home anew in New Zealand. For this purpose, the women increase their practice of barbequing and hosting 'bring a plate' events that epitomise the New Zealand practices of casual hospitality. At the same time they maintain Israeli hospitality practices in the ways they offer food and drink. They alternate between three 'levels' of hospitality practices – refreshments, a meal or a feast – in order to extend their respect, provision and support of friends.

The women derive pleasure and pride from their Israeli hospitality practices while being aware that through them they manage social relationships beyond the realm of the familial home. They materialise longing for communal solidarity through the kind and amount of food and drink they offer, enacting informal and spontaneous social relationships. The women aim to gradually turn friends into 'substitutes' for absent family members in order to substantiate their own feelings, and those of their children, of being 'at home' in New Zealand. In the process, some women claim to have transformed New Zealand friends into 'good' women like them. Women's ambivalence and self-irony are also provoked in casual hospitality events since food and drink become metaphors for the realisation of social tensions. Ambivalence and self-irony are manifested by the women in accordance with their success in establishing a support network and with the gender and national affiliation of guests (Jewish-Israelis and New Zealanders). The rejection of food by guests, mostly Jewish-Israeli men who are infamously rude, provokes enmity that leads to the women's sense of being taken advantage of and the rejection of friendships. In cases where 'point tallies' are kept of such insulting events, women's guilt for failing to establish friendships arises, often provoking their self-irony, since Jewish-Israelis are labelled as *dugri* (straightforward) people. In cases where women feel that they had failed to establish friendships with New Zealanders, they criticise the quality and amount of food and drink provided by New Zealanders. These women also associate insincerity with New Zealanders by pointing to their apparent inability to open up unless they engage in abundant alcohol consumption.

The meanings of home as 'temple' and '*téfilin*' connote the dimension of Jewish spirituality, as discussed in Chapter Six through the examination of the experiences of women in festive hospitality and *kashrut* observance. In this chapter, the imagined visit to the house is centred on the living room and the dining area, where festive meals mostly take place. A quick visit is also made to the children's bedrooms, where play, in the form of pretend

cooking and baking may also be engaged in. A visit to these rooms encapsulates how the children embody the Jewish cycle of time by eating festive foods, also hinting at the various ways in which women foster their children's feeling 'at home' through food. Connections with the home as a site of Jewish spirituality are enacted by the women as they spend time in the production and consumption of festive foods. In this way they become focal points in festive celebrations while they also grapple with *kashrut* observance. Returning to the spiritual Jewish home for these mostly secular women, who were born after the second wave of feminism in Israel, clearly instigates a contradictory journey that is marked by longing, pleasure and ambivalence as they remember their past in Israel.

Most women derive great pleasure and pride from engaging in festive cooking, but only a few women remember kin by engaging in (partial) *kashrut* observance. In particular, by learning to cook festive foods the women pay tribute to the generation of their grandmothers and their ancestral homes. In New Zealand most of the women take on greater responsibility in festive practices than they had in Israel. For this reason they usually express pride and a sense of freedom in actively remembering and choosing how, when and with whom to celebrate Jewish festivals. The women also express ambivalence, guilt and self-irony in festive cooking and *kashrut* observance due to social tensions that stir up memories of oppression in Israel, be it by ultra-Orthodox Jews or by the women's mothers and husbands. These tensions linger in their relations with the local Jewry and are enacted through their resentment toward the increase in cooking labour for Jewish festivals and the restrictions of *kashrut* observance. The women's desires to defy their oppression, i.e. restrictions on their choice and pleasure, are enacted through their consumption of iconic non-kosher foods, mainly pork and crustaceans.

The meaning of home as 'womb' connotes femininity and sexuality as discussed through the women's experiences of home baking in Chapter Four and weight management in Chapter Seven. Dealing with these practices leads to the house's master bedroom and bathrooms. The master bedroom epitomises the place of sexual relationships between husbands and wives. The bathroom is the room where the women enact and maintain their relationship with their own bodies. In the bathroom women may examine their full bodily reflection in the mirror, put on make-up, or weigh themselves, as well as engage with activities of bodily hygiene. Some of the practices that take place in the bathroom connote bodily care for the purpose of well-being and health, expressing women's self-care and perception of their personal body as their 'home'.

The sense of one's personal body as 'home' is realised by women when baking, as they enact their femininity and sexuality. The women relieve longing for Israeli baking by beginning to bake in the Israeli way, alternating between the three levels of nourishment that bread, challah and sweet baking represent. In this way the women elaborate on the comforting meanings of home baking, deriving pleasure and pride in making up for absences triggered by migration. In certain cases, by home baking the women overcome current poverty, as well as memories of poverty and other past trauma in Israel. Some women enact their sexuality as they substitute the pleasures of home-baked goods and the nostalgic memories these invoke for sexual pleasures. Through baking the women remember their childhoods in Israel and their kindergarten experiences, while several of them engage with the playfulness that is embedded in this practice. Others convey their class aspirations by baking in sophisticated ways.

Most women begin to bake New Zealand fare in order to constitute home anew. For this reason, instances that trigger their sense of social exclusion might also materialise through baking for 'bring a plate' events. What is more, since baking epitomises comfort food that might also pose a threat to one's weight management, often the women do not eat their own baking, and the practice of home baking reminds them of the past diets that their mothers enforced on them when they lived at home. Hence, while the heat of the baking oven usually emanates pleasure as a metaphor for kinship intimacy, for those who fail to bake or who have a feeling of being stranded, it might generate a sense of threat and ambivalence, provoking ironic memories of the Holocaust. Since the Holocaust is remembered as an event that epitomises collective trauma, their ironic jokes convey a sense of survival. In contrast to the women's nostalgia, the media – both in Israel and New Zealand – provokes nostalgic consumption in order to sell commercial baked goods by stereotypically portraying women to evoke pleasure and idealise the collective past. Israeli advertisements for commercial baked goods shift from expressing masculine desires through pleasures in the 1980s to expressing comfort in the 2000s. This shift corresponds with changes in Israel's national policy towards Jewish-Israeli emigrants. A New Zealand television programme portrays women's home baking as a nostalgic means to return to the 'innocent and homely pleasures' of New Zealanders that idealise the domesticity of rural life.

Through dieting for weight management, the women enact their femininity and sexuality, remembering with pride and pleasure their appearance while still living in Israel. The women undertake such diets in attempts to revive an attractive self-image. Their experience in dieting

for weight management is a means to connect with their personal body as 'home' that instigates the common use of the metaphor of the 'tree'. Through this metaphor women invoke a sense of attachment to homelands, as well as of withering with age while increasing in weight or naturally losing weight. By engaging with diets, usually on weekdays, women counterbalance the general increase in their weight and appetite after migration due to their nostalgia for foods that signify home. Dieting requires proficient cooking skills and facilitates bonds with close kin and other Jewish-Israelis when managing weight together, exchanging dietary plans and advice and in some cases maintaining connections with the health system in Israel via doctors and nutritionists.

The increase in nostalgic food production and consumption by women often leads them to overeat and lose their sense of pleasure in food, conveying a feeling of not being 'at home' in their own bodies while they become desensitised to their own feelings. In a few cases, as women under-eat, they express feeling stranded through amplified senses. Most women express ambivalence, self-irony and a sense of self-disgust by overeating and accumulating 'fat' on the body. Their sense of disgust with the fat on the bodies of their children stirs up similar emotions, as by being overweight their children also have become 'too much' like New Zealanders. This stands in contrast with views they profess concerning Israeli society, characterising it as overly concerned with weight management. By increasing their food intake and their weight, the women embody their connection with the New Zealand homeland while partly severing the connection with their Israeli homeland that they criticise for its social surveillance. This shift enabled one woman to stop feeling inadequate on account of her 'big' body, a feeling she had had since childhood in Israel. Three other women re-enacted their feelings of inadequacy by taking drastic measures in weight management that ultimately failed.

This study is situated in a vast and rapidly growing corpus of scholarly works regarding the processes of reconstituting home that highlight transition, i.e. the changes that occur within migrants as they shift to new homelands in addition to the changes in their new socio-material environments. This study demonstrates that Jewish-Israeli migrant women reconstitute a sense of being 'at home' through their domestic food practices after migration to New Zealand. Through food they enact social relationships that realise the dimensions of home as homelands, ancestral homes, communal homes, the homes of Jewish spirituality and their personal bodies as home. Women's domestic food practices and engagements with food

enable them to move between the homes they remember, materialise and imagine, by evoking their senses and their nostalgic memories and emotions.

The home that these migrant women reconstitute after migration, I argue, is composed of multiple dimensions that are realised through social relationships. This idea is based, in part, on Michael Jackson's (1995) understanding of home as constituted through social relationships rather than attachments to particular places. Jackson points out how and why the Warlpiri of the Tanami Desert move between homes, as the tensions between ideal and real homes are realised according to changes in their life conditions. Similarly, as their life conditions change through the impact of migration, the women in the present study reformulate the social relationships that they enact through their domestic food practices and engagements with food. However, their physical transition, migrating from Israel to New Zealand, also instigates metaphoric and visceral journeys 'back' home through their memories and imaginations, as well as traveling to future homes. By interweaving these travels in time and space between homes, women overcome social, emotive and practical adversities, enabling them to relieve the pain of longing, recollections of trauma, economic difficulties and often social tensions.

The idea that home for migrant groups comes to exist through the experience of social tension is at the forefront of James Clifford's (1994) emphasis on the ambivalence of migrants in his examination of the historic contexts of various migrant groups. Clifford claims that ambivalence is the result of the dialectic tension that is provoked by communal struggles to constitute national histories, as migrant groups such as Jews and black Africans shifted between experiences of loss and hope, and exclusion and inclusion. I have elaborated on Clifford's idea by specifically showing that through ambivalence, often to the extent of self-irony, Jewish-Israeli migrant women express social tensions, and more importantly manifest their social criticisms towards the dimensions of home that they reconstitute after migration.

Studies of the migrant experiences of various cultural groups since the 1990s that focus on affect (often undertaken in cultural geography) emphasise that cultural groups transform their attachments to homelands after migration, as they experience longing for past homes, ambiguities and trauma (see for example, Ahmed 2000, Ahmed et al. 2003, Brah 1996, Fortier 1999, 2000, 2003, Kearney 1995, Probyn 1996). I have elaborated on this idea by demonstrating that through food the Jewish-Israeli migrant women to New Zealand in my

study group not only materialise an array of emotions, but also overcome past trauma, specifically by expressing pleasure, pride and self-irony as enactments of their identity. In fact, my findings suggest that where one may identify expressions of social exclusion, trauma and guilt/blame through food, one may also identify expressions of social inclusion, intimacy, pleasure, pride, hope, comfort, care and respect; the women realise these emotions with regard to the dimensions of home they reconstitute.

I have built upon recent studies on the experiences of migrants that focus on emotions and senses, which argue that migration as relocation may lead to heightened sensate and emotional awareness (see for example, Ben-Ze'ev 2004, Bozic-Vrbancic 2004, Choo 2004, 2007, Dawkins 2009, Kravva 2001, Law 2005, Matt 2007, McKay 2005, Osella 2008, Park and Morris 2004, Raine 2000, Supski 2006, Thomas 2004a, 2004b). My analysis demonstrates that a few of the women who participated in this study amplify their senses through under-eating as an expression of their feeling of being stranded, and more women commonly desensitise when overeating. Their sense of feeling 'at home' in their own body is reflected in their sense of feeling 'at home' in their various kinds of homes, manifesting shifts brought about with international migration. The senses, invoked by food and memories, enable the women to connect between homes by provoking their memories and manifesting their emotions while creating a sense of belonging in New Zealand. In other words, the women use their senses in combination with their memories and emotions as means of traveling through time and space.

In this study I also engaged with recent works on nostalgia, which argue that cultural groups negotiate and revise their collective pasts, affirming their feelings of being 'at home' in the present by manifesting their desire for social solidarity through their nostalgic practices (Bach 2002, Berdahl 2009, Bohlman 2000, Boyer 2006, Boym 2002, Haukanes and Pine 2004, Haukanes and Trnka 2013, Nadkarni 2010, Palmberger 2008, Parla 2009, Trnka 2011, Volčič 2007). In particular the work of Daphne Berdahl (2009) is influential in my analysis. Berdahl examined the everyday nostalgic consumption of East Germans after the shift to post-socialism. She identified three emotive steps in their nostalgia: longing, ambivalence and self-irony. She argued that the conflicting nature of their nostalgia derives from the fact that in addition to longing for that which is no longer there – and, indeed, never was – East Germans convey ambivalence toward capitalism and westernisation through consumption as acts of social critique that lead to self-irony. Other works elaborated on the expression of self-

irony in nostalgic consumption that aims to recuperate a pleasurable past (Peperkamp et al. 2009, Rethmann 2009).

As I have shown throughout this thesis and in Chapter One by discussing studies that examine the relations between women and nostalgia since the 2000s (Bardenstein 2002, Duruz 2001, Duruz 2004b, Parla 2009, Radstone 2010, Sugiman 2005), there are many different types of nostalgia in accordance with the kinds of 'home' women are longing to return to. The nostalgia of the Jewish-Israeli migrant women who participated in this study is highly ambivalent and is also used as a means to criticise every dimension of 'home'. In their nostalgic return home the women grapple with the myths that the media in Israel and New Zealand invoke to increase sales. The women deal with the Jewish-Israeli myths of the *sabra*, the *polania*, the *bashlanit*, 'the land of milk and honey' and the 'meat pot'. These gendered myths are animated through their senses, memories and emotions, as well as personalised and relived through their enactment of relationships with lands and between people. As home builders, these women enact their identity and lay the claim to being 'good enough' Jewish-Israeli women in New Zealand by grappling with these myths. In contrast, the media in Israel and New Zealand provokes nostalgic consumption that idealises the past by invoking stereotypical images of 'rooted' women as wives or mothers in order to sell products.

My analysis of the women's experiences, in particular with regards to festive cooking and *kashrut* observance, adds to studies on other communities of Jewish-Israeli migrants (Cohen 1995, Cohen 2007, Cohen 2005, Cohen 2008, Cohen and Gold 1997, Kaplowitz Ben-Mordechai 1982, Leiserowitz 2003). Contrary to the common claim in these studies, my findings suggest that the nostalgia of Jewish-Israeli migrant women facilitates their integration into New Zealand society. While the women revise their cultural shared past in order to make themselves and their children feel 'at home' in New Zealand, through their nostalgic memories and emotions they enact intimacy, also extending care, support and respect towards others.

My material adds to recent studies on migrant women's domestic food practices that discuss their power to resist change (see for example, Harbottle 2000, Inness 2006, Ray 2004, Stowers 2003). I show that the women who participated in this study engendered changes aimed at making themselves and their children feel 'at home' in New Zealand. By implementing these changes the women claim their central role in the family and liberate themselves from past kinship obligations in their lives in Israel. They exercise choice in food

production and consumption that enhances a sense of autonomy in themselves and for their family in New Zealand. The women's conscious efforts to maintain what they perceive to be healthy Jewish-Israeli food practices after migration are aimed at balancing out what they perceive as unhealthy New Zealand food practices. In choosing to imitate less healthy practices of New Zealanders, the women aim to enact the feeling of being 'at home'. In particular, their experiences in cooking and casual hospitality show that women assert their position as role models for their children and their New Zealand friends.

To conclude, through their domestic food practices and engagements with food the Jewish-Israeli migrant women who participated in this study remember past homes and constitute homes anew in Auckland, New Zealand. The memories, imaginations and emotions evoked by their everyday food practices reach as far back as two generations of close female kin, linking together grandmothers, mothers, mothers-in-law and aunts. At the same time, since the women in this study aim to build home anew in New Zealand, they manifest longing for a future home, transmitting their culinary knowledge to the next generation. Enacting five dimensions of home through their everyday food practices, the women reconstitute 'home' as homelands, ancestral homes, communal homes, spiritual Jewish homes and their own bodies as homes. In reconstituting home as a multidimensional place through their food practices and engagements with food, these migrant women negotiate social relationships with lands and people. They claim multiple belongings by traversing across space and time, bringing together homes near and far, past, present and future, while they revise their collective cultural pasts through their nostalgia. In their nostalgic food production and consumption, the women pass through three major emotive steps: longing, ambivalence and self-irony. Through their expressions of longing, pleasure and pride, they enact intimate social relationships, just as in their ambivalence, self-irony and disgust they enact social tensions, criticising particular facets in their domestic life and identity. These mothers realise their desire to feel 'at home' as well as substantiate their children's feelings of being 'at home' in New Zealand by using their domestic food practices to lay claim to being 'good enough' Jewish-Israeli women.

My journey as a Jewish-Israeli migrant woman in New Zealand began around 11 years ago while reflecting on other homes of the migrants in my family, as I am also a granddaughter of migrants, a daughter-in-law to migrants and a mother of migrant children. My journey helped me overcome the entropy of emotions and the ephemeral yet recurring nature of my behaviours. The journey taught me that through the materiality of food I am

able to reach out to the immaterial: the spiritual and metaphysical dimensions of my life and the lives of many others. I now understand more fully the reasons for which Salman Rushdie (1980 [2003]:104) claimed that “food passes across any boundary you care to mention” in his mythical exploration of the Pakistani migrant experience. Rushdie describes in his highly acclaimed literary piece a migrant woman’s increased appetite for foods that epitomise her homeland, which appeases her longing as she is “turning herself into the wide land mass of the subcontinent itself” (1980:104).

This journey changed me. I realise that I am more Jewish than I would ever care to admit, as I have identified the manifestations of ‘historic’ and collective pains of longing, sorrows and hopes of Jewish migration in my own behaviours. I also realise that I am now a different Jewish-Israeli woman to the one I was before migration, and certainly more of a woman than I ever was aware of. In preparing family meals I recognise that my sense of belonging and feelings of being ‘at home’ are realised through the tastes, smells and textures of the food I cook, which encompass homelands for many of the migrant women in this study: Poland, Russia, Egypt, Turkey, Palestine, Israel and New Zealand. Like the experiences of the women involved in this study it is thanks to my longing, pleasures and angst en route to these homes that I am able to share with others who I am and where I come from, as well as the tenacity of my desire to feel ‘at home’ in this world. Savouring home may be a mundane and everyday act, but at the same time has a lasting impact on the ability to recreate a sense of home in memory and behaviour.

Glossary

Arucha (In Israeli-Hebrew) a meal

Avodah (In Israeli-Hebrew) work, labour, toil (also **avodat capaim**, manual labour)

Aushpizin (In Aramaic) guests for the festival of Succoth

Ashkenazi (pl. **Ashkenazim** in Yiddish and Israeli-Hebrew) lit. ‘from Ashkenaz’, Jews from countries in east and central Europe

Bashlanit (In Israeli-Hebrew) a ‘cooking woman’, the mythical figure of a woman who fulfils all feminine duties

Bar Mitzvah or **Bat Mitzvah** (In Israeli-Hebrew) The ceremony that marks reaching the age of 13 for boys and the age of 12 for girls, a rite of passage to adulthood according to various Jewish religious practices

Báyit (In Israeli-Hebrew) home, house, family, dynasty, ancestry, school of thought, tribe, verse in poem, empty space, the temple, the compartment of the **téfilin**, womb (figurative)

Behema (In Israeli-Hebrew) a beast, an animal of husbandry

Bhabha ganush (In Arabic) grilled eggplant salad

Blintzes (In Yiddish) crêpes, thin pancakes

Borekas (In Israeli-Hebrew) turnovers, usually made of puff pastry with various fillings

Bzar (In Arabic) a ten-spice mixture spices for cooking couscous Tripoli-style

Challah (pl. **challot** in Israeli-Hebrew) special rich bread made for the ceremony to welcome the Shabbat and for festive meals that occur on Friday nights

Cholat nefesh (In Israeli-Hebrew) lit. ‘sick in the soul’; crazy, mad

Chulent (In Yiddish) a dish cooked with pulses and meat for Shabbat on residual heat

Couscous (In Arabic) a steamed dish of semolina granules accompanied with meat and vegetable stew

Coussit (In Arabic and Israeli-Hebrew) slang for ‘cunt’

Davar acher (In Israeli-Hebrew) lit. ‘something else’; pork

D'fina (In Arabic) a dish cooked with pulses and meat for Shabbat on residual heat

Dugri (In Arabic and Israeli-Hebrew) direct speech, honesty, straightforward

Edot (sing. **edah**, in Israeli-Hebrew) Jewish-Israeli ethnicities

Eshet chayil (In Hebrew) a woman of great valour

Falafel (In Israeli-Hebrew) deep-fried chickpea balls

Gaagoim (In Israeli-Hebrew) longing, yearning, feeling homesick

Gam yafa vegam offa (In Israeli-Hebrew) literally 'she is pretty and she bakes too'

Gefilte fish (In Yiddish) lit. 'stuffed fish', ground fish patties

Gichooch (In Israeli-Hebrew) snorting laughter, ridicule, mockery

Hafaka (In Israeli-Hebrew) production

Hamin (In Hebrew) a dish cooked with pulses and meat for Shabbat on residual heat

Hatikvah (In Israeli-Hebrew) lit. 'the hope'; the national anthem of Israel

Haredim (In Israeli-Hebrew) lit. 'in awe'; ultra-Orthodox Jews

Hawaij (In Arabic) a mixture of several spices used in Yemenite-style cooking

Havdalah (In Israeli-Hebrew) lit. separation; the ritual that marks the boundary between Shabbat and weekdays

Havurah/Hevre (In Israeli-Hebrew) a small group of friends

Heshbonot (In Israeli-Hebrew) keeping accounts, taking track, calculation

Hilbeh (In Arabic) Yemenite jelly-like dip made of fenugreek

Hraime (In Arabic) Moroccan dish of fish cooked in tomato and spicy chilli sauce

Hummus (In Israeli-Hebrew) a paste made of cooked chickpeas

Intifada (In Arabic and Israeli-Hebrew) the Arabic uprising in Israel

Jachnun (In Arabic) a Yemenite pastry cooked on residual heat

Kabalat Shabbat (In Israeli-Hebrew) the ceremony of welcoming the Shabbat

Kashrut (In Hebrew) Jewish dietary laws

Kibood (In Israeli-Hebrew) refreshments

Kiddush (In Hebrew) the ceremony of welcoming the Shabbat on Friday nights and the prayer recited during the ceremony

Kippot (sing. **kipah**, in Israeli-Hebrew) Jewish skullcaps for men

Klups (In Yiddish) meatloaf

Kreplach (In Yiddish) stuffed dough pockets

Kube shwandar (In Arabic) beetroot soup with meat dumplings

Labane (In Arabic and Israeli-Hebrew) yoghurt-based soft cheese

Lefargen (In Yiddish and Israeli-Hebrew) to wish well, indulge

Levivot (In Israeli-Hebrew) potato fritters

Livriut (In Israeli-Hebrew) lit. ‘to health’

Maabarot (In Israeli-Hebrew) temporary camps

Melawach (In Arabic and Israeli-Hebrew) Yemenite fried flatbread

Makne mame (In Yiddish) lit. ‘make a mother’; refers to prioritising the survival of the mother for the benefit of the family

Matbuha (In Arabic) cooked spicy tomato salad

Mizrahi (pl. **Mizrahim**, in Israeli-Hebrew) lit. ‘Oriental Jew’; Jews from Arab speaking countries

Moshav (pl. **moshavim**, in Israeli-Hebrew) rural settlement

Nachat (In Israeli-Hebrew) satisfaction, pleasure, pride

Pashtida (In Israeli-Hebrew) dough stuffed with filling, similar to quiche or pie

Pinuk (In Israeli-Hebrew) pampering

Pita (pl. **pitot**, in Israeli-Hebrew) round Arabic flatbread filled as a pocket

Polania (In Israeli-Hebrew) lit. ‘a Polish woman’; an overly caring woman and self-sacrificial mother

Sabra (In Arabic and Israeli-Hebrew) literally ‘prickly pear’; native-born Jewish-Israelis

Sephardic (pl. **Sepharadim**, in Israeli-Hebrew) lit. ‘from Spain’; descendants of Spanish and Portuguese Jews

Seudah (In Israeli-Hebrew) a feast

Shabbat (In Israeli-Hebrew) Saturday, day of rest

Shakshukah (In Arabic and Israeli-Hebrew) a stew made of tomatoes and eggs

Shawarmah (In Turkish and Israeli-Hebrew) meat slices grilled on a spit and wrapped in pita with salads

Shtetl (In Yiddish) small market towns in pre-Second-World-War Eastern Europe with large Yiddish-speaking Jewish populations

Shul (In Yiddish) lit. ‘school’; relates to synagogue and *chedder*, the Torah learning room for children

Sufganiyot (In Israeli-Hebrew) doughnuts filled with jam

Tachles (In Yiddish) doing, also tachlit (In Israeli-Hebrew) purpose, cause, aim

Taavah (In Hebrew) appetite, pleasure, lust, knowing boundaries

Téavon (In Israeli-Hebrew) appetite, pleasure, hunger, desire, drive, passion, craving, lust

Téfilin (In Hebrew) Small leather box containing prayer parchments, worn on the head and arm by men

Tozeret haaretz (In Israeli-Hebrew) lit. ‘the produce of the land’

Tsimes (In Yiddish) cooked carrots in honey

Yesh me-ain (In Hebrew) literally (to create) ‘something out of nothing’

Yiddish-Mama (In Yiddish) A Jewish mother

Yishuv (In Israeli-Hebrew) literally ‘settlement’; the historical period between the 1920s and 1948 of Jewish settlement in Palestine

Zaatar (In Arabic) thyme (*Origanum syriacum*), native to the Middle-East

Zika (In Israeli-Hebrew) literally ‘a spark’; connection with Jewish tradition or religion

Bibliography

- Abbas, H., and N. Rousso. 2006. *Lamb, Mint and Pine-Nuts: The Flavours of the Israeli-Arab Cuisine [Hebrew]*. Tel Aviv: Miskal.
- Ahmed, S. 2000. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality. Transformations: Thinking Through Feminism*. London, New York: Routledge.
- . 2004. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh, New York: Edinburgh University Press; Routledge.
- Ahmed, S., C. Castañeda, A.-M. Fortier, and M. Sheller. 2003. "Introduction: Questions of Home and Migration," in *Uprootings/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration*. Edited by S. Ahmed, C. Castañeda, A.-M. Fortier, and M. Sheller, pp. 1-19. Oxford: Berg.
- Almagor, U. 1990a. Odors and Private Language: Observations on the Phenomenology of Scent. *Human Studies* 13(3):253-274.
- . 1990b. Some Thoughts on Common Scents. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 20(3):181-195.
- Almog, O. 1997. *The Sabra: A Profile [Hebrew]*. Tel Aviv: Am Oved Publishers.
- Amit-Talai, V. 2000. *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Amit, V. 2002. "Armenian and Other Diasporas: Trying to Reconcile the Irreconcilable," in *British Subjects: An Anthropology of Britain*. Edited by N. Rapport, pp. 263-280. Oxford: Berg.
- Anderson, E. N. 2005. *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture*. New York and London: New York University Press.
- Anderson, K., and D. C. Jack. 1991. "Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyse," in *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*. Edited by S. Berger-Gluck and D. Patai, pp. 1-29. New York: Routledge.
- Andrews, H., L. Roberts, and T. Selwyn. 2007. Hospitality and Eroticism. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* 1(3):247-262.
- Ankori, G. 2003. "'Dis-Orientalisms': Displaced Bodies/Embodied Displacements in Contemporary Palestinian Art," in *Uprootings/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration*. Edited by S. Ahmed, pp. 59-90. Oxford: Berg.
- Antler, J. 2007. *You Never Call! You Never Write!: A History of the Jewish Mother*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, USA.
- Appadurai, A. 1981. Gastro-Politics in Hindu South Asia. *American Ethnologist* 8(3):494-511.
- Appadurai, A. 1986. "The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective," pp. xiv, 329 p. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1990. Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. *Theory, Culture and Society* 7(2-3):295-310.
- . 1996a. "Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology," in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* vol. 1, pp. 48-65. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Appadurai, A. 1996b. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Vol. 1. Minneapolis, MN: University Of Minnesota Press.
- Ardener, S. 1985. The Social Anthropology of Women and Feminist Anthropology. *Anthropology Today* 1(5):24-26.
- Ashkenazi, M. 2002. "Food in the Passover Seder," in *The Meal: Proceedings of Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, 2001*. Edited by H. Walker, pp. 42-49. Devon, England: Prospect Books.

- Ashley, B., J. Hollows, S. Jones, and B. Taylor. 2004. *Food and Cultural Studies: Studies in Consumption and Markets*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Avieli, N. 2005. Roasted Pigs and *Bao* Dumplings: Festive Food and Imagined Transnational Identity in Chinese–Vietnamese Festivals. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 46(3):281-293.
- Bach, J. P. G. 2002. "The Taste Remains": Consumption, (N)ostalgia, and the Production of East Germany. *Public Culture* 14(3):545-556.
- Bahloul, J. 1996. *The Architecture of Memory: A Jewish-Muslim Household in Colonial Algeria, 1937–1962*. *Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bahloul, J. 1999. "The Memory House: Time and Place in Jewish Immigrant Culture in France," in *House Life: Space, Place and Family in Europe*. Edited by D. Birdwell-Pheasant and D. Lawrence-Zúñiga, pp. 239-249. Oxford, UK: Berg.
- Bajic-Hajdukovic, I. 2013. Food, Family, and Memory: Belgrade Mothers and Their Migrant Children. *Food and Foodways* 21(1):46-65.
- Bardenstein, C. 1999. "Trees, Forests, and the Shaping of Palestinian and Israeli Collective Memory," in *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*. Edited by M. Bal, J. Crewe, and L. Spitzer, pp. 148-170. Hanover and England: University Press of New England.
- . 2002. The Gender of Nostalgia, Transmissions Interrupted: Reconfiguring Food, Memory, and Gender in the Cookbook-Memoirs of Middle-Eastern Exiles. *Signs* 28(1):353-387.
- Barer-Stein, T. 1999. *You Eat What You Are: People, Culture and Food Traditions*, 2nd edition. Ontario, Canada; Buffalo, New York: Firefly Books.
- Barthes, R. 1972 [1957]. *Mythologies*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- . 2013 [1972]. "Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption," in *Food and Culture: A Reader*. Edited by C. Counihan and P. V. Esterik, pp. 23-30. New York: Routledge.
- Battaglia, D. 1995. "On Practical Nostalgia: Self-Prospecting among Urban Trobrianders," in *Rhetorics of Self-Making*. Edited by D. Battaglia, pp. 77-96. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Beck, U. 2002. The Cosmopolitan Society and its Enemies. *Theory, Culture & Society* 19(1-2):17-44.
- Bell, D., and J. Hollows. 2007. Mobile Homes. *Space and Culture* 10(1):22-39.
- Bell, D., and G. Valentine. 1997. *Consuming Geographies: We Are Where We Eat*. London: Routledge.
- Ben-Ari, E., and Y. Bilu. 1997. *Grasping Land: Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Ben-Ari, N. 2009. Popular Literature in Hebrew as a Marker of Anti-Sabra Culture. *Translation Studies* 2(2):178-195.
- Ben-Ze'ev, E. 2004. "The Politics of Taste and Smell: Palestinian Rites of Return," in *The Politics of Food*. Edited by M. E. Lien and B. Nerlich, pp. 141-160. Oxford, New York: Berg Publishers.
- Bendrihem, R. 2006. Hybrid Motherhood: Motherhood as a Faction in the Feminine Identity of Mizrahi Women in a Peripheral Town [Hebrew]. M.A., Ben Gurion University in Beer-Sheva.
- Benjamin, W. 1969 [1936]. *Illuminations*. New York: Schocken.
- Berdahl, D. 2009. *On the Social Life of Postsocialism: Memory, Consumption, Germany*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Berkovitch, N. 1997. Motherhood as a National Mission: The Construction of Womanhood in the Legal Discourse in Israel. *Women's Studies International Forum* 20(5):605-619.

- Berliner, D. 2005. Social Thought and Commentary. The Abuses of Memory: Reflections on the Memory Boom in Anthropology. *Anthropological Quarterly* 78(1):197-211.
- Berliner, D. 2012. Multiple Nostalgias: The Fabric of Heritage in Luang Prabang (Lao PDR). *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18(4):769-786.
- Bhabha, H. K. 2004 [1994]. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge Classics. London; New York: Routledge.
- Biale, D. 1992. "Zionism as an Erotic Revolution," in *People of the Body: Jews and Judaism from an Embodied Perspective*. Edited by H. Eilberg-Schwartz, pp. 283-307. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Bird, S. E. 1992. Travels in Nowhere Land: Ethnography and the "Impossible"; Audience. *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 9(3):250-260.
- Bloomfield, E. 2009. Conceiving Motherhood: The Jewish Female Body in Israeli Reproductive Practices. *Intersections* 10(2):227-269.
- Blum-Kulka, S. 1990. "You don't touch lettuce with your fingers": Parental Politeness in Family Discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics* 14(2):259-288.
- Blunt, A. 2005. Cultural Geography: Cultural Geographies of Home. *Progress in Human Geography* 29(4):505-515.
- Bohlman, P. V. 2000. "To Hear the Voices Still Heard: On Synagogue Restoration in Eastern Europe," in *Altering States: Ethnographies of Transition in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. Edited by D. Berdahl, M. Bunzl, and M. Lampland, pp. 40-69. Michigan: The University of Michigan Press.
- Bordi, I. V. 2006. The "Authentic" Taco and Peasant Women: Nostalgic Consumption in the Era of Globalization. *Culture and Agriculture* 28(2):97-107.
- Borges, J. L. 2002[1967]. *The Book of Imaginary Beings*. UK: Random House.
- Bourdieu, P. 1977[1972]. *Outline of a Theory of Practice* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Oxon: Harvard University Press.
- Boyarin, D. 2000. "Outing Freud's Zionism, or, the Bitextuality of the Diaspora Jew," in *Queer Diasporas*. Edited by C. Patton and B. Sánchez-Eppler, pp. 71-104: Duke University Press.
- Boyer, D. 2006. *Ostalgie* and the Politics of the Future in Eastern Germany. *Public Culture* 18(2):361-381.
- Boym, S. 1996. Estrangement as a Lifestyle: Shklovsky and Brodsky. *Poetics Today* 17(4):511-530.
- . 2002. *The Future of Nostalgia*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bozic-Vrbancic, S. 2004. Celebrating Forgetting: The Formation of Identities and Memories by Tarara in New Zealand. Ph.D., University of Auckland.
- Brah, A. 1996. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge.
- Brookes, B. 1997. Nostalgia for 'Innocent Homely Pleasures': The 1964 New Zealand Controversy over *Washday at the Pa*. *Gender & History* 9(2):242-261.
- Bubandt, N. 1998. The Odour of Things: Smell and the Cultural Elaboration of Disgust in Eastern Indonesia. *Ethnos* 63(1):48-80.
- Buckser, A. 1999. Keeping Kosher: Eating and Social Identity among the Jews of Denmark. *Ethnology* 38(3):191-209.
- Buckser, A. 2011. On and Off the Margin: The Anthropology of Contemporary Jewry. *Religion and Society: Advances in Research* 2(1):72-89.
- Caglar, A. S. 1997. "Hyphenated Identities and the Limits of 'Culture'," in *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe: Racism, Identity and Community*. Edited by T. Modood and P. Werbner, pp. 169-185. New York: Zed Books.

- Calò, E. 2005. Change of Taste in Israeli Food: The Case of 'Italian Cuisine', 1980-2000 [Hebrew]. M.A., Tel Aviv University.
- Candea, M., and G. da Col. 2012. The Return to Hospitality. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18(s1):S1-S19.
- Caplan, P. 1994. *Feasts, Fasts, Famine: Food for Thought. Berg Occasional Papers in Anthropology*. Vol. 2. Providence: Berg.
- . 1997. "Approaches to the Study of Food, Health and Identity," in *Food, Health, and Identity*. Edited by P. Caplan, pp. 1-31. New York: Routledge.
- Chaitin, J., E. Awwad, and C. Andriani. 2009. Belonging to the Conflict: Collective Identities among Israeli and Palestinian Émigrés to the United States. *Social Identities* 15(2):207-225.
- Charles, N., and M. Kerr. 1988. *Women, Food and Families: Power, Status, Love, Anger*. UK: Manchester University Press.
- Choo, S. 2004. Eating Satay Babi: Sensory Perception of Transnational Movement. *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 25(3):203-213.
- Choo, S. 2007. Rasa Rasa Malaysia: Taste, the Senses and the Production of Meaning through an Anthropology of 'Malaysian' Food. Ph.D., The Australian National University.
- Classen, C. 1992. The Odor of the Other: Olfactory Symbolism and Cultural Categories. *Ethos* 20(2):133-166.
- Classen, C. 2005. "The Witche's Senses: Sensory Ideologies and Transgressive Femininities from Renaissance to Modernity," in *Empire of the Sense: The Sensual Culture Reader*. Edited by D. Howes, pp. 70-84. Oxford: Berg.
- Clifford, J. 1994. Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology* 9(3):302-338.
- . 2001. "The Last Discussant," in *Irony in Action: Anthropology, Practice, and the Moral Imagination*. Edited by J. Fernandez and M. Huber, pp. 251-259. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Codesal, D. M. 2008. "Rice & Coriander – Sensorial Re-creations of Home through Food: Ecuadorians in a Northern Spanish City," in *Sussex Centre for Migration Working Paper*, vol. 50, pp. 1-21. Sussex.
- Cohen, A., M. Hellinger, and B. Susser. 2010. The Influence of Participation in Democratic Processes on Religious Parties in Israel.
- Cohen, E. 1995. Israel as a Post-Zionist Society. *Israel Affairs* 1(3):203-214.
- Cohen, N. 2007. From Overt Rejection to Enthusiastic Embrace: Changing State Discourses on Israeli Emigration. *GeoJournal* 68(2):267-278.
- Cohen, R. 2005. "Israeli Diaspora," in *Encyclopedia of Diasporas: Immigrant and Refugee Cultures around the World*, vol. 1, pp. 137-148. New York; London: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Cohen, R. 2008. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Cohen, R., and G. Gold. 1997. Constructing Ethnicity: Myth of Return and Modes of Exclusion among Israelis in Toronto. *International Migration* 35(3):373-394.
- Connerton, P. 1989. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cook, D. T. 2009. Semantic Provisioning of Children's Food: Commerce, Care and Maternal Practice. *A Global Journal of Child Research* 16(3):297-334.
- Cook, I., and P. Crang. 1996. The World On a Plate: Culinary Culture, Displacement and Geographical Knowledges. *Journal of Material Culture* 1(2):131-153.
- Counihan, C. M. 1988. Female Identity, Food, and Power in Contemporary Florence. *Anthropological Quarterly* 61(2):51-62.

- Counihan, C. M. 1999. *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning and Power*. New York: Routledge.
- Coveney, J. 2000. *Food, Morals, and Meaning: The Pleasure and Anxiety of Eating*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Dahbany-Miraglia, D. 2003. "Negotiating Passover: Women, Food and Power," in *Women in Judaism: Contemporary Writings*. Queensborough: Queensborough Community College.
- Davidoff, L. 1973. Domestic Service and the Working-Class Life Cycle. *Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History* 26(Spring):10-13.
- Davis, F. 1979. *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia. The Collective Memory Reader*. New York: The Free Press.
- Dawkins, N. 2009. The Hunger for Home: Nostalgic Affect, Embodied Memory and the Sensual Politics of Transnational Foodways. *The Undergraduate Journal of Anthropology and Archaeology* 1:33-42.
- Deleuze, G., and F. Guattari. 1980. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Devasahayam, T. W. 2005. Power and Pleasure around the Stove: The Construction of Gendered Identity in Middle-Class South Indian Hindu Households in Urban Malaysia. *Women's Studies International Forum* 28(1):1-20.
- DeVault, M. L. 1991. *Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work. Women in Culture and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Diner, H. R. 2001. *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration*. Cambridge, Massachusetts Harvard University Press.
- Domínguez, V. R. 1989. *People as Subject, People as Object: Selfhood and Peoplehood in Contemporary Israel*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Douglas, M. 1966. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- . 1972. Deciphering a Meal. *Daedalus* 101(1):61-81.
- . 1984. *Food in the Social Order: Studies of Food and Festivities in Three American Communities*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Douglas, M. 1990. "Foreword: No Free Gifts," in *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, by M. Mauss, pp. vii-xviii. London: Routledge.
- Douglas, M. 1991. The Idea of a Home: A Kind of Space. *Social Research* 58(1):287-307.
- Douglas, M., and B. C. Isherwood. 1996. *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption*. New York: Routledge.
- Durham, D. 2011. Disgust and the Anthropological Imagination. *Ethnos* 76(2):131-156.
- Duruz, J. 1999. Food as Nostalgia: Eating the Fifties and Sixties. *Australian Historical Studies* 29(113):231-250.
- . 2001. Home Cooking, Nostalgia and the Purchase of Tradition. *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* XII(11):21-31.
- . 2004a. Adventuring and Belonging: An Appetite for Markets. *Space and Culture* 7(4):427-445.
- . 2004b. Haunted Kitchens: Cooking and Remembering. *Gastronomica* 4(1):57-68.
- Egoz, S. 1997. The *Pardess*: An Israeli Symbolic Landscape. *Landscape Research* 22(2):175-189.
- Eilberg-Schwartz, H. 1992. "The Problem of the Body for the People of the Book," in *People of the Body: Jews and Judaism from an Embodied Perspective*. Edited by H. Eilberg-Schwartz, pp. 17-46. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- El-Or, T. 2001. Terms of Love: The Labor of Motherhood Surrounds the Army Camp. *Theory and Criticism* 19(Fall):79-114.

- Eliade, M. 1991[1952]. *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*. USA: Princeton University Press.
- Elias, N. 1994 [1939]. *The Civilizing Process*. Vol. 1. Oxford: Blackwell Press.
- Elias, N. 2006. *The Court Society*, Rev. edition. Dublin: University College Dublin Press.
- Even Shushan, A. 1969a. "Bayit," in *The New Dictionary [Hebrew]*, vol. 1, pp. 113. Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer.
- . 1969b. "Isa," in *The New Dictionary [Hebrew]*, vol. 2, pp. 1000. Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer.
- Farb, P., and G. Armelagos. 1980. *Consuming Passions: The Anthropology of Eating*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Fenster, T. 2005. "Gender and the City: The Different Formations of Belonging," in *A Companion to Feminist Geography*. Edited by L. Nelson and J. Seager, pp. 242-257. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Ferber, M. A., and P. H. Raabe. 2003. Women in the Czech Republic: Feminism, Czech Style. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 16(3):407-430.
- Ferrero, S. 2001. "Comida Sin Par. Consumption of Mexican food in Los Angeles: "Foodscapes" in a Transnational Consumer Society.," in *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies*. Edited by W. J. Belasco and P. Scranton, pp. 194-219. New York: Routledge.
- Finkelstein, J. 1989. *Dining Out: A Sociology of Modern Manners*. Cambridge: Polity.
- . 2003. The Taste of Boredom: McDonaldization and Australian Food Culture. *American Behavioral Scientist* 47(2):187-200.
- Fischler, C. 1988. Food, Self and Identity. *Social Science Information* 27(2):275-292.
- Flynn, M. 2002. Searching for Safe Haven. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 58(6):22-25.
- Fogiel-Bijaoui, S. 2002. Familism, Postmodernity and the State: The Case of Israel. *Journal of Israeli History* 21(1):38-62.
- Foner, N. 2005. *In a New Land: A Comparative View of Immigration*. New York: New York University Press.
- Fortier, A.-M. 1999. Re-Membering Places and the Performance of Belonging(s). *Theory, Culture and Society* 16(2):41-64.
- . 2000. *Migrant Belongings: Memory, Space, Identity*. Oxford: Berg.
- . 2003. "Making Home: Queer Migrations and Motions of Attachment," in *Uprooting/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration*. Edited by S. Ahmed, C. Castañeda, A.-M. Fortier, and M. Sheller, pp. 115-136. Oxford; New York: Berg.
- Friedan, B. 1981. *The Second Stage: With a New Introduction*. USA: Harvard University Press.
- Geurts, K. L. 2002. *Culture and the Senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, England: University of California Press.
- Giard, L. 1998. "Part II: Doing-Cooking," in *The Practice of Everyday Life: Vol. 2, Living and Cooking*. Edited by M. d. Certeau, L. Giard, and P. Mayol, pp. 149-171. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Giddens, A. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gil-Tin, S. 2005. Food and Feeding the Family: An Analysis of the Discourse in Dual Earner Families [Hebrew]. M.A., The Ben-Gorion University in the Negev.
- Gilroy, P. 1991. It Ain't Where You're From, It's Where You're At... The Dialectics of Diasporic Identification. *Third Text* 5(13):3-16.
- . 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. USA: Harvard University Press.
- Glennie, P. 1995. "Consumption within Historical Studies," in *Acknowledging Consumption: A Review of New Studies*. Edited by D. Miller, pp. 164-203. London, New York: Routledge.

- Gluzman, M. 1997. Longing for Heterosexuality: Zionism and Sexuality in Herzl's *Altneuland [Hebrew]*. *Theory and Criticism* 11:145-162.
- Gold, S. J. 1997. Transnationalism and Vocabularies of Motive in International Migration: The Case of Israelis in the United States. *Sociological Perspectives* 40(3):409-427.
- . 2001. Gender, Class, and Network: Social Structure and Migration Patterns among Transnational Israelis. *Global Networks* 1(1):57-78.
- . 2004. From Nationality to Peoplehood: Adaptation and Identity Formation in the Israeli Diaspora. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 13(2/3):331-358.
- Goldberg, H. E. 1978. The Mimuna and the Minority Status of Moroccan Jews. *Ethnology* 17(1):75-87.
- Goldberg, I. 2000. "Makolet: A Middle Eastern Grocery in Brooklyn." New York: Filmmakers Library.
- Golden, D. 2005. Nourishing the Nation: The Uses of Food in an Israeli Kindergarten. *Food and Foodways* 13(3):181-199.
- Goodman, Y., and J. Loss. 2009. The Other as Brother: Nation-Building and Ethnic Ambivalence in Early Jewish-Israeli Anthropology. *Anthropological Quarterly* 82(2):477-508.
- Goody, J. 1982. *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*. Cambridge UK; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gottschalk, S. 2008. "All You Can Eat: Sociological Reflections on Food in the Hypermodern Era," in *Food for Thought: Essays on Eating and Culture*. Edited by L. C. Rubin, pp. 48-66. Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland & Co.
- Greene, G. 1991. Feminist Fiction and the Uses of Memory. *Signs* 16(2):290-321.
- Gupta, A., and J. Ferguson. 1992. Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference. *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1):6-23.
- Gurevitch, Z., and G. Aran. 1994. "The Land of Israel: Myth and Phenomenon," in *Reshaping the Past: Jewish History and the Historians*. Edited by J. Frankel, pp. 195-210. USA: Oxford University Press.
- Gvion-Rosenberg, L., and Trostlerb, N. 2000. "Street Food Vending: The Israeli Scenario," in *Street Foods*. Edited by A. P. Simopoulos, and Bhat, R.V., pp. 155-168. New York: Karger.
- Gvion, L. 2006a. Cuisines of Poverty as Means of Empowerment: Arab Food in Israel. *Agriculture and Human Values* 23(3):299-312.
- . 2006b. *Culinary Bridges versus Culinary Barriers: Social and Political Aspects of Palestinian Cookery in Israel [Hebrew]*. Jerusalem: Carmel.
- . 2008. Dancing Bodies, Decaying Bodies: The Interpretation of Anorexia among Israeli Dancers. *Young* 16(1):67-87.
- Haelyon, H. 2006. "Longing for a Child": Perceptions of Motherhood among Israeli-Jewish Women Undergoing *In Vitro* Fertilization Treatments. *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues* 12(Fall):177-202
- Hage, G. 1997. "At Home in the Entrails of the West: Multiculturalism, 'Ethnic Food' and Migrant Home-Building," in *Home/World: Space, Community and Marginality in Sydney's West*. Edited by H. Grace, pp. 99-153. Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press.
- . 1998. *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*. Sydney: Pluto Press.
- Halbwachs, M. 1992 [1952]. *On Collective Memory*. USA: University of Chicago Press.
- Halkier, B. 2009. Suitable Cooking? Performances and Positionings in Cooking Practices among Danish Women. *Food, Culture and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 12(3):357-377.

- Hall, S. 1998 [1990]. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, vol. 2. Edited by J. Rutherford, pp. 222-237. London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Harbottle, L. 2000. *Food for Health, Food for Wealth: The Performance of Ethnic and Gender Identities by Iranian Settlers in Britain*. Vol. 3. *The Anthropology of Food and Nutrition*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Harris-Shapiro, C. 2006. Bloody Shankbones and Braided Bread: The Food Voice and the Fashioning of American Jewish Identities. *Food & Foodways* 14(2):67-90.
- Hartmann, H. 1976. Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation by Sex. *Signs* 1(3):137-169.
- Hartmann, H. I. 1981. The Family as the Locus of Gender, Class, and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework. *Signs* 6(3):366-394.
- Haukanes, H. 2007. "Sharing Food, Sharing Taste? Consumption Practices, Gender Relations and Individuality in Czech Families," in *Anthropology of Food*, pp. 1-17: Amilien, Virginie.
- Haukanes, H., and F. Pine. 2004. Ritual and Everyday Consumption Practices in the Czech and Polish Countryside: Conceiving Modernity through Changing Food Regimes. *Anthropological Journal on European Cultures* 12(Communities in Transformation: Central and Eastern Europe):103-130.
- Haukanes, H., and S. Trnka. 2013. Memory, Imagination, and Belonging across Generations: Perspectives from Postsocialist Europe and Beyond. *Focaal – Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology* 66(June):3-13.
- Hazan, H. 1987. "Holding Time Still with Cups of Tea," in *Constructive Drinking Perspectives on Drink from Anthropology*. Edited by M. Douglas, pp. 205-219. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Heldke, L. M. 1992. "Foodmaking as a Thoughtful Practice," in *Cooking, Eating, Thinking: Transformative Philosophies of Food*. Edited by D. W. Curtin and L. M. Heldke, pp. 203-229. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Helman, S., and T. Rapoport. 1997. Women in Black: Challenging Israel's Gender and Socio-Political Orders. *British Journal of Sociology* 48(4):681-700.
- Herda, P. 1991. "Ladies a Plate: Women and Food," in *Ladies a Plate: Change and Continuity in the Lives of New Zealand Women*. Edited by J. Park, pp. 144-172. Auckland, N.Z.: Auckland University Press.
- Herzfeld, M. 1997. *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State*. New York: Routledge.
- Hewlett, S. A. 1987. *A Lesser Life: The Myth of Women's Liberation*. London: Michael Joseph.
- Hill Collins, P. 1998. It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation. *Hypatia* 13(Summer):62-82.
- Hirsch, D. 2011. "Hummus is best when it is fresh and made by Arabs": The Gourmetization of Hummus in Israel and the Return of the Repressed Arab. *American Ethnologist* 38(4):617-630.
- Hoar, N. 1992. "Genderlect, Powerlect, and Politeness," in *Constructing and Reconstructing Gender: The Links among Communication, Language, and Gender*. Edited by L. A. M. Perry, L. H. Turner, and H. M. Sterk, pp. 127-136. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Hochschild, A. R. 1985. The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling. *Symbolic Interaction* 8(2):317-319.
- Hollows, J. 2007. "The Feminist and the Cook: Julia Child, Betty Friedam and Domestic Femininity," in *Gender and Consumption: Domestic Cultures and the*

- Commercialisation of Everyday Life*. Edited by E. Casey and L. Martens, pp. 33-48. Abingdon, Oxon, UK: Ashgate Publishing Group.
- Holtzman, J. D. 2006. Food and Memory. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35:361-378.
- hooks, b. 1992. *Black Looks: Race and Representation* Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Howes, D. 2003. *Sensual Relations: Engaging the Senses in Culture and Social Theory*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- . 2005. "Introduction: Empire of the Senses," in *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*. Edited by D. Howes, pp. 1-20. Oxford; New York: Berg.
- Inness, S. A. 2006. *Secret Ingredients: Race, Gender, and Class at the Dinner Table*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Irigaray, L. 1985. *Speculum of the Other Woman*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Israel, D. 2008. "Food, Hunger, and Identity in Jewish Woman Immigrants' Autobiography," in *You Are What You Eat: Literary Probes into the Palette*. Edited by A. Magid, pp. 238-259. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Ivry, T. 2009. *Embodying Culture: Pregnancy in Japan and Israel*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Jackson, M. 1995. *At Home in the World*. England: Duke University Press.
- Jacobson, S. 2006. Modernity, Conservative Religious Movements, and the Female Subject: Newly Ultraorthodox Sephardi Women in Buenos Aires. *American Anthropologist* 108(2):336-346.
- Jochowitz, E. 2004. "Flavors of Memory: Jewish Food as Culinary Tourism in Poland," in *Culinary Tourism*. Edited by L. M. Long, pp. 91-113. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Kahn, S. M. 2000. *Reproducing Jews: A Cultural Account of Assisted Conception in Israel*. USA: Duke University Press.
- Kalka, I. 1991. Coffee in Israeli Suburbs. *Leisure Studies* 10(2):119-131.
- Kaplowitz Ben-Mordechai, R. 1982. Jewish and Israeli Identity and Self-Esteem among Sabras. Ph.D., Berkeley/Alameda.
- Katrak, K. 2005. "Food and Belonging: At 'Home' and in 'Alien-Kitchens'," in *Through the Kitchen Window: Women Explore the Intimate Meanings of Food and Cooking*. Edited by A. V. Avakian, pp. 263-275. Oxford, U.K.; New York, N.Y.: Berg.
- Katriel, T. 1986. *Talking Straight: Dugri Speech in Israeli Sabra Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Katriel, T. 2004. *Dialogic Moments: From Soul Talks to Talk Radio in Israeli Culture*. Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press.
- Kearney, M. 1995. The Local and the Global: The Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24(1):547-565.
- Kershen, A. J. 2002. *Food in the Migrant Experience*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Khazzoom, A. 2003. The Great Chain of Orientalism: Jewish Identity, Stigma Management, and Ethnic Exclusion in Israel. *American Sociological Review* 68(4):481-510.
- Kimmerling, B. 1992. Sociology, Ideology, and Nation-Building: The Palestinians and their Meaning in Israeli Sociology. *American Sociological Review* 57(4):446-460.
- . 2001. *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society, and the Military*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. 1986. The Kosher Gourmet in the Nineteenth-Century Kitchen: Three Jewish Cookbooks in Historical Perspective. *Journal of Gastronomy* 2(4):1-22.
- . 1990. "Kitchen Judaism," in *Getting Comfortable in New York: The American Jewish Home, 1880-1950 [An Exhibition Catalogue]*. Edited by S. L. Braunstein and J. W. Joselit, pp. 75-105. New York: The Jewish Museum.
- . 1994. Spaces of Dispersal. *Cultural Anthropology* 9(3):339-344.

- Knight, C. 2011. "'If you're not allowed to have rice, what do you have with your curry?': Nostalgia and Tradition in Low-Carbohydrate Diet Discourse and Practice," in *Sociological Research Online*, vol. 16 n. pag.
- Knight, K. 2008. *Home Made: Stories and Recipes from New Zealand Stove Tops* Auckland, N.Z.: New Holland.
- Köneke, V. 2011. Nostalgia - More Bitter than Sweet: Are Nostalgic People Rather Sad than Happy after All? Diploma Thesis in Psychology, GRIN Verlag.
- Korazim, J. 1985. Raising Children in Ambivalent Immigrant Families: Israelis in New York. *Children and Youth Services Review* 7(4):353-362.
- Kravva, V. 2001. "Food as a Vehicle for Remembering: The Case of the Thessalonikan Jews," in *Food and the Memory: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, 2000*. Edited by H. Walker, pp. 136-144. Oxford: Prospect Books (UK).
- Kugelmass, J. 1990. Green Bagels: An Essay on Food, Nostalgia, and the Carnavalesque. *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science* 19:57-80.
- Kuntsman, A. 2003. Double Homecoming: Sexuality, Ethnicity, and Place in Immigration Stories of Russian Lesbians in Israel. *Women's Studies International Forum* 26(4):299-311.
- Lane, J. F. 2000. *Pierre Bourdieu: A Critical Introduction*. London: Pluto Press.
- Latzer, Y., Witztum, E., and Stein, D. 2008. Eating Disorders and Disordered Eating in Israel: An Updated Review. *European Eating Disorders Review* 16(5):361-374.
- Lavee, M. 2006. The Eucalyptus Tree and the Talmud: The Return to a Jewish Literary Heritage as a Post-Zionist Jewish Identity. *European Judaism* 39(2):106-128.
- Law, L. 2005. "Home Cooking: Filipino Women and Geographies of the Senses in Hong Kong," in *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*. Edited by D. Howes, pp. 224-244. Oxford; New York: Berg.
- Leach, H. 2008. *The Pavlova Story: A Slice of New Zealand's Culinary History*. Dunedin: Otago University Press.
- Leach, H. M., and R. Inglis. 2003. The Archaeology of Christmas Cakes. *Food and Foodways* 11(2):141-166.
- Leacock, E., V. Abernethy, A. Bardhan, C. H. Berndt, J. K. Brown, B. N. Chiñas, R. Cohen, J. De Leeuwe, R. Egli-Frey, and C. Farrer. 1978. Women's Status in Egalitarian Society: Implications for Social Evolution [and Comments and Reply]. *Current Anthropology* 19(2):247-275.
- Leiserowitz, S. 2003. A Qualitative Study of Israeli Migrant Mothers Raising Children in the United States. Psy.D., The Wright Institute.
- Levenstein, H. A. 2003 [1993]. *Paradox of Plenty: A Social History of Eating in Modern America*, Rev. edition. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Lévi-Strauss, C. 1966. The Culinary Triangle. *New Society. Partisan Review* 33:586-595.
- . 1969. *The Raw and the Cooked*, 1st U.S. edition. New York: Harper & Row.
- . 1978. *The Origin of Table Manners*, 1st U.S. edition. New York: Harper & Row.
- . 1981. *The Naked Man*. London: Cape.
- Levy, A. 1997. Controlling Space, Essentializing Identities: Jews in Contemporary Casablanca. *City & Society* 9(1):175-199.
- Levy, A., and A. Weingrod. 2005. "On Homelands and Diasporas: An Introduction," in *Homelands and Diasporas: Holy Lands and Other Places*. Edited by A. Levy and A. Weingrod, pp. 3-28. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Locher, J. L., Yoels, W.C., Maurer, D., and Van Ells, J. 2005. Comfort Foods: An Exploratory Journey into the Social and Emotional Significance of Food. *Food & Foodways: History & Culture of Human Nourishment* 13(4):273-297.

- Long, J. C. 2009. Rooting Diaspora, Reviving Nation: Zionist Landscapes of Palestine-Israel. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 34(1):61-77.
- Long, L. M. 2004. "Culinary Tourism: A Folkloristic Perspective on Eating and Otherness," in *Culinary Tourism, Material Worlds* pp. 21-50. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Longhurst, R., Ho, E. and Johnston, L. 2008. Using 'the Body' as an 'Instrument of Research': Kimch'i and Pavlova. *Area* 40(2):208-217.
- . 2009. A Visceral Approach: Cooking 'at Home' with Migrant Women in Hamilton, New Zealand. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 34(3):333-345.
- Loss, J. 2010. Buddha-Dhamma in Israel: Explicit Non-Religious and Implicit Non-Secular Localization of Religion. *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 13(4):84-105.
- Lowenthal, D. 1975. Past Time, Present Place: Landscape and Memory. *Geographical Review* 65(1):1-36.
- Lupton, D. 1996. *Food, the Body and the Self*. London: Sage Publications.
- . 1998. *The Emotional Self: A Sociocultural Exploration*. London; Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Lustick, I. 2004. "Recent Trends in Emigration from Israel: The Impact of Palestinian Violence." *The Annual Meeting of the Association for Israel Studies Jerusalem, Israel, 2004*, pp. 14-16.
- Lutz, C., and G. M. White. 1986. The Anthropology of Emotions. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 15(1):405-436.
- Luxton, M. 1980. *More than a Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women's Work in the Home*. Canada: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- . 1987. "Thinking about the Future," in *Family Matters: Sociology and Contemporary Canadian Families*. Edited by K. Anderson, pp. 237-260. London: Methuen.
- Mallett, S. 2004. Understanding Home: A Critical Review of the Literature. *The Sociological Review* 52(1):62-89.
- Manushkin, F. 2008. *How Mama Brought the Spring*. USA: Dutton Children's Books.
- Markos, M. C. 2006. "The Tastes of a Nation: MFK Fisher and the Genre of Culinary Literature," in *Undergraduate Research Symposium, Paper 29*. Colby College.
- Marks, L. 1994. *Model Mothers: Jewish Mothers and Maternity Provision in East London, 1870-1939*. *Oxford Historical Monographs*. Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press.
- Marmorstein, E. 1972. *Heaven at Bay: The Jewish Kulturkampf in the Holy Land*. London and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Matt, S. J. 2007. A Hunger for Home: Homesickness and Food in a Global Consumer Society. *The Journal of American Culture* 30(1):6-17.
- Maynards, A. 2008. Putting the Food on our Table: An Historical Examination of New Zealand Foodways Ph.D., The University of Auckland.
- McDermott, S. 2002. Memory, Nostalgia, and Gender in *A Thousand Acres*. *Signs* 28(1):389-407.
- McIntosh, A., and M. Zey. 1989. Women as Gatekeepers of Food Consumption: A Sociological Critique. *Food & Foodways* 3(4):317-332.
- McKay, D. 2005. Migration and the Sensuous Geographies of Re-emplacement in the Philippines. *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 26(1):75-91.
- Mehta, B. 2004. *Diasporic Dis (locations): Indo-Caribbean Women Writers Negotiate the Kala Pani*. Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press.

- . 2005. Culinary Diasporas: Identity and the Language of Food in Gisèle Pineau's *Un papillon dans la cité* and *L'Exil selon Julia*. *International Journal of Francophone Studies* 8(1):23-51.
- Mennell, S. 1985. *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present*. Oxford, UK; New York, NY: B. Blackwell.
- Mennell, S., A. Murcott, and A. H. van Otterloo. 1992. *The Sociology of Food: Eating, Diet, and Culture*. London; Newbury Park, California: Sage.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. 1968. *The Visible and the Invisible*. USA: Northwestern University Press.
- Meyers, M. 2001. *A Bite Off Mama's Plate: Mothers' and Daughters' Connections Through Food*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Miller, W. I. 1995. *Humiliation: And other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- . 1998. *The Anatomy of Disgust*. USA: Harvard University Press.
- Mintz, S. W. 1985. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York, NY: Viking.
- Mintz, S. W., and C. M. Du Bois. 2002. The Anthropology of Food and Eating. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31(1):99-119.
- Mitrany, E., F. Lubin, A. Chetrit, and B. Modan. 1995. Eating Disorders among Jewish Female Adolescents in Israel: A Five-year Study. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 16(6):454-457.
- Moisio, R., E. J. Arnould, and L. L. Price. 2004. Between Mothers and Markets: Constructing Family Identity through Homemade Food. *Journal of Consumer Culture* 4(3):361-384.
- Morris, C. 2010. The Politics of Palatability On the Absence of Māori Restaurants. *Food, Culture and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 13(1):5-28.
- Murcott, A. 1982. On the Social Significance of the 'Cooked Dinner' in South Wales. *Social Science Information* 21(4/5):677-96.
- Murcott, A. 1983. *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food*. Gower International Library of Research and Practice. Aldershot, Hants, England: Gower.
- Nadkarni, M. 2010. "'But it's ours": Nostalgia and the Politics of Authenticity in Post-Socialist Hungary," in *Post-Communist Nostalgia*. Edited by T. Maria Nikolaeva and G. Zsuzsa, pp. 190-214. USA: Berghahn Books.
- Narayan, U. 1997. *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third-World Feminism*. New York: Routledge.
- Nikelly, A. G. 2004. The Anatomy of Nostalgia: From Pathology to Normality. *International Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies* 1(2):182-199.
- Nora, P. 1989. Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*. *Representations* 26(26):7-24.
- O'Gorman, K. D. 2005. Modern Hospitality: Lessons from the Past. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* 12(2):141-151.
- Oakley, A. 1974. *The Sociology of Housework*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Ong, A. 1999. *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. USA: Duke University Press.
- Osella, C. 2008. Introduction to Special Issue on Food: Memory, Pleasure and Politics. *Journal of South Asian Studies* 31(1):1-9.
- Ottolenghi, Y., and S. Tamimi. 2012. *Jerusalem*. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press.
- Palmberger, M. 2008. Nostalgia Matters: Nostalgia for Yugoslavia as Potential Vision for a Better Future. *Sociologija* 50(4):355-370.

- Park, J., and C. Morris. 2004. Reproducing Samoans in Auckland "in Different Times": Can *Habitus* Help? *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 113(3):227-261.
- Parla, A. 2009. Remembering Across the Border: Postsocialist Nostalgia among Turkish Immigrants from Bulgaria. *American Ethnologist* 36(4):750-767.
- Peperkamp, E., M. Rajtar, I. Becci, and B. Huber. 2009. "Eastern Germany 20 Years After: Past, Present and Future?," in *Eurostudia*, vol. 5 n. pag. Canada: The Canadian Centre for German and European Studies.
- Perez, N. 2008. "A Mother at the Office: Arenas as a Tool in Gendered Analysis of Citizenship," in *Working Paper Series*, pp. 1-31. Israel: Sapir Academic College.
- Prell, R.-E. 1992. "Why Jewish Princesses Don't Sweat: Desire and Consumption in Postwar American Jewish Culture," in *People of the Body: Jews and Judaism from an Embodied Perspective*. Edited by H. Eilberg-Schwartz, pp. 329-360. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Probyn, E. 1996. *Outside Belongings*. New York: Routledge.
- Radstone, S. 2010. Nostalgia: Home-Comings and Departures. *Memory Studies* 3(3):187-191.
- Raine, K. 2000. "Domesticating the Land: Colonial Women's Gardening," in *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History*. Edited by B. Dalley and B. Labrum, pp. 76-96. Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press.
- Ram, U. 2004. Glocommodification: How the Global Consumes the Local—McDonald's in Israel. *Current Sociology* 52(1):11-31.
- Rapport, N., and A. Dawson. 1998. "Home and Movement: A Polemic," in *Migrants of Identity: Perceptions of Home in a World of Movement*. Edited by N. Rapport and A. Dawson, pp. 19-38. Oxford: Berg.
- Ravits, M. A. 2000. The Jewish Mother: Comedy and Controversy in American Popular Culture. *MELUS* 25(1):3-31.
- Raviv, Y. 2001. The Hebrew Banana: Local Food and the Performance of Israeli National Identity. *Journal for the Study of Food and Society* 5(1):30-36.
- . 2002. Recipe for a Nation: Cuisine, Jewish Nationalism, and the Israeli State. Ph.D., New York University.
- . 2003. Falafel: A National Icon. *Gastronomica* 3(Summer):20-25.
- Ray, K. 2004. *The Migrant's Table: Meals and Memories in Bengali-American Households*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Read, P. 1996. *Returning to Nothing: The Meaning of Lost Places*. England: Cambridge University Press.
- Reed-Danahay, D. 2005. *Locating Bourdieu*. USA: Indiana University Press.
- Remennick, L. 2000. Childless in the Land of Imperative Motherhood: Stigma and Coping among Infertile Israeli Women. *Sex Roles* 43(11):821-841.
- Rethmann, P. 2009. Post-Communist Ironies in an East German Hotel. *Anthropology Today* 25(1):21-23.
- Rich, A. C. 1986 [1976]. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. New York: Norton.
- Ritzer, G. 1996. *The McDonaldization of Society: An Investigation into the Changing Character of Contemporary Life*. Newbury Park CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Robertson, J. 1988. *Furusato* Japan: The Culture and Politics of Nostalgia. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 1(4):494-518.
- Roden, C. 1996. *The Book of Jewish Food: An Odyssey from Samarkand to New York*. London: Alfred A. Knopf Inc.
- Rosaldo, R. 1989. Imperialist Nostalgia. *Representations* 26(Spring):107-122.
- Rosenblum, J. D. 2010. "Why Do You Refuse to Eat Pork?": Jews, Food, and Identity in Roman Palestine. *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 100(1):95-110.

- Rosin, O. 2005. "Leben and Lebenia: About Food, Femininity, and Nation-Building at the Rationing Times [Hebrew]," in *A Full Belly: Rethinking Food and Society in Israel*. Edited by A. Kleinberg, pp. 155-204. Jerusalem: The University of Tel Aviv and Keter Books Ltd.
- Rotkovitz, M. 2004. "Kashering the Melting Pot: Oreos, Sushi Restaurants, "Kosher Treif", and the Observant American Jew," in *Culinary Tourism*. Edited by L. M. Long, pp. 157-185. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Rouso, N. 1984. *Table Talk [English] or Secrets from the Kitchen of Nira Rouso [Hebrew]* Tel Aviv: Modan.
- Rubenstein, R. 2001. *Home Matters: Longing and Belonging, Nostalgia and Mourning in Women's Fiction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rushdie, S. Editor. 1980 [2003]. *Midnight's Children*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sabar, N. 2000. *Kibbutzniks in the Diaspora*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- . 2002. Kibbutz L.A.: A Paradoxical Social Network. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 31(1):68-94.
- Salih, R. 2003. *Gender in Transnationalism: Home, Longing and Belonging among Moroccan Migrant Women*. London: Routledge.
- Samuel, R., and P. Thompson. 1990. *The Myths We Live By*. London, England: Routledge.
- Saunders, P. 1989. The Meaning of 'Home' in Contemporary English Culture. *Housing Studies* 4(3):177-192.
- Saunders, P., and P. Williams. 1988. The Constitution of the Home: Towards a Research Agenda. *Housing Studies* 3(2):81-93.
- Schwartz, H. 2004. *Tree of Souls: The Mythology of Judaism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Scott, D. G. 2006. *Socialising the Stranger: Hospitality as a Relational Reality*. M.A., University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Sedikides, C., Wildschut, T., Arndt, J., and Routledge, C. 2008. Nostalgia: Past, Present, and Future. *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 17(5):304-307.
- Sela-Sheffy, R. 2004. 'What Makes One an Israeli?' Negotiating Identities in Everyday Representations of 'Israeliness'. *Nations and Nationalism* 10(4):479-497.
- Sered, S. S. 1992. *Women as Ritual Experts: The Religious Lives of Elderly Jewish Women in Jerusalem*. USA: Oxford University Press
- Seremetakis, C. N. 1994. "The Memory of the Senses, Part 1: Marks of the Transitory," in *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*. Edited by C. N. Seremetakis, pp. 1-18. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Shechner-Rochman, T., and Bar, S. 2005. *Parents are Cooking [Hebrew]*. Tel Aviv: Miskal and Chemed Books.
- Shenhav, Y. 2004. *The Arab-Jews: Nationalism, Religion and Ethnicity*. Tel Aviv: Am Oved Publishers.
- . 2007. Modernity and the Hybridization of Nationalism and Religion: Zionism and the Jews of the Middle East as a Heuristic Case. *Theory and Society* 36(1):1-30.
- Shine-Rakavy, T. 1999. *Food, Symbolism and Group-Identity: Aspects of Perception of Polish-Jewish Food Culture among Israeli Women of Polish Descent*. M.A., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- Shohat, E. 1992. Notes on the "Post-Colonial". *Social Text* No. 31/32:99-113.
- . 1997. The Narrative of the Nation and the Discourse of Modernization: The Case of the Mizrahim. *Middle East Critique* 6(10):3-18.
- . 1999. The Invention of the Mizrahim. *Journal of Palestine Studies* 29(1):5-20.

- . 2002. "A Reluctant Eulogy: Fragments from Memories of an Arab-Jew," in *Women and the Politics of Military Confrontation: Palestinian and Israeli Gendered Narratives of Dislocation*. Edited by R. Lentin and N. Abdo, pp. 262-276. USA: Berghahn Books.
- Shokeid, M. 1988. *Children of Circumstances: Israeli Emigrants in New York*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Shuval, J. T. 2000. Diaspora Migration: Definitional Ambiguities and a Theoretical Paradigm. *International Migration* 38(5):41-56.
- Sigad, L. I., and R. A. Eisikovits. 2009. Migration, Motherhood, Marriage: Cross-Cultural Adaptation of North American Immigrant Mothers in Israel. *International Migration* 47(1):63-99.
- Silverstein, P. A. 2004. Of Rooting and Uprooting: Kabyle Habitus, Domesticity, and Structural Nostalgia. *Ethnography* 5(4):553-578.
- Siporin, S. 1994. From Kashrut to Cucina Ebraica: The Recasting of Italian Jewish Foodways. *The Journal of American Folklore* 107(424):268-281.
- Sirkis, R. 1975. *Children are Cooking [Hebrew]*. Tel Aviv: Zmora, Bitan, Modan.
- Somerville, J. 2001. Germaine Greer Versus the New Feminism: Gender Politics in the United Kingdom and United States. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 8(3):351-385.
- Spitzer, L. 1999. "Back Through the Furture: Nostalgic Memory and Critical Memory in a Refuge from Nazism," in *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*. Edited by M. Bal, J. Crewe, and L. Spitzer, pp. 87-104. Hanover and England: University Press of New England.
- Stanley, L. 1993. On Auto/Biography in Sociology. *Sociology* 27(1):41-52.
- . 1995. *The Auto/Biographical I: The Theory and Practice of Feminist Auto/Biography*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Steinberg, S. 1998. "Bubbie's Challah," in *Eating Culture*. Edited by R. Scapp and B. Seitz, pp. 295-297. Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Stewart, K. 1988. Nostalgia — a Polemic. *Cultural Anthropology* 3(3):227-241.
- Stewart, S. 1984. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. USA: Duke University Press.
- Stoller, P. 1989. *The Taste of Ethnographic Things: The Senses in Anthropology*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Stowers, S. L. 2003. Hungry for the Taste of El Salvador: Gastronomic Nostalgia, Identity, and Resistance to Nutrithink in an Immigrant Community. Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- Sugiman, P. 2005. "Memories of Internment: Narrating Japanese-Canadian Women's Life Stories," in *Diaspora, Memory and Identity: A Search for Home*. Edited by V. Agnew, pp. 48-80. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Supski, S. 2006. "It Was Another Skin": The Kitchen as Home for Australian Post-War Immigrant Women. *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 13(2):133-141.
- Sutton-Brady, C., T. Davis, and M. Jung. 2010. Perceived Cultural Spaces and Cultural In-Betweens: Consumption among Korean Australians. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 9(5):349-363.
- Sutton, D. 2010. Food and the Senses. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39:209-223.
- Sutton, D., and L. Vournelis. 2009. Vefa or Mamalakis: Cooking Up Nostalgia in Contemporary Greece. *South European Society and Politics* 14(2):147-166.
- Sutton, D. E. 2001. *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory. Materializing Culture*. Oxford: Berg.

- Symons, M. 2010. The Confection of a Nation: The Social Invention and Social Construction of the Pavlova. *Social Semiotics* 20(2):197-217.
- Talmon, M. 2001. *Israeli Graffiti: Nostalgia, Groups, and Collective Identity in Israeli Cinema [Hebrew]*. Tel Aviv and Haifa: Open University of Israel Press and Haifa University Press.
- Tamir, M., and D. Cahana-Amitay. 2009. "Hebrew language has not created a title for me": A Legal and Sociolinguistic Analysis of New-Type Families. *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy & Law* 17:545-600.
- Tene, O. 2005. "'This is how we will cook' a House in Israel: A Reading of Cookbooks from the 1930s to the 1980s " in *A Full Belly: Rethinking Food and Society in Israel [Hebrew]*. Edited by A. Kleinberg, pp. 92-130. Jerusalem: The University of Tel Aviv and Keter Ltd.
- Theophano, J. 2002. *Eat My Words: Reading Women's Lives through the Cookbooks they Wrote*. New York, N.Y.: Palgrave.
- Thomas, M. 2004a. "Losing Touch: Theorising Sensory Dislocation in the Migration Experience," in *Migration, Affect and Senses Conference* The Centre for Cross Cultural Research, Australian National University.
- . 2004b. Transitions in Taste in Vietnam and the Diaspora. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 15(1):54-68.
- Trnka, S. 2011. When the World Went Color: Emotions, Senses and Spaces in Contemporary Accounts of the Czechoslovak Velvet Revolution. *Emotions, Space and Society* 5(1):1-7.
- Turner, B. 1987. A Note on Nostalgia. *Theory, Culture and Society* 4:147-156.
- Valentine, G. 1999. Eating In: Home, Consumption and Identity. *The Sociological Review* 47(3):491-524.
- Valeri, R. 2001. "Between their Memories and Mine: Confit Revisited," in *Food and the Memory: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, 2000*. Edited by H. Walker, pp. 287-293. Oxford: Prospect Books.
- Volčič, Z. 2007. Yugo-Nostalgia: Cultural Memory and Media in the Former Yugoslavia. *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 24(1):21-38.
- Warde, A. 1997. *Consumption, Food, and Taste: Culinary Antinomies and Commodity Culture*. London; California: Sage Publications.
- Warde, A., and L. Martens. 2000. *Eating Out: Social Differentiation, Consumption and Pleasure*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wasserfall, R. 1993. Reflexivity, Feminism and Difference. *Qualitative Sociology* 16(1):23-41.
- Wasserman, H. 1999. Knowing through the Body, Knowing with a Difference: The Experience of Mediumship and Women Mediums in Israel [Hebrew]. M.A., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.
- Webber, C. B., J. Sobal, and J. S. Dollahite. 2010. Shopping for Fruits and Vegetables: Food and Retail Qualities of Importance to Low-Income Households at the Grocery Store. *Appetite* 54(2):297-303.
- Weiss, M. 1998. Conditions of Mothering: The Bio-Politics of Falling in Love with Your Child. *The Social Science Journal* 35(1):87-105.
- . 2001. The Body of the Nation: Terrorism and the Embodiment of Nationalism in Contemporary Israel. *Anthropological Quarterly* 75(1):37-62.
- . 2005. *The Chosen Body: The Politics of the Body in Israeli Society*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Werbner, P. 1999. Global Pathways: Working Class Cosmopolitans and the Creation of Transnational Ethnic Worlds. *Social Anthropology* 7(1):17-35.

- Wilk, R. 1999. "Real Belizean Food": Building Local Identity in the Transnational Caribbean. *American Anthropologist* 101(2):244-255.
- Williams, B. 1984. "Why Migrant Women Feed their Husbands Tamales: Foodways as Basis for a Revisionist View of Tejano Family Life," in *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity*. Edited by L. K. Brown and K. Mussell, pp. 113-126. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Williams, R. 1973. *The Country and the City*. Vol. 423. USA: Oxford University Press.
- Wood, R. C. 1995. *The Sociology of the Meal*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Wright-St Clair, V., W. Bunrayong, S. Vittayakorn, P. Rattakorn, and C. Hocking. 2005. Older New Zealand Women Doing the Work of Christmas: A Recipe for Identity Formation. *The Sociological Review* 53(2):332-350.
- Wright-St Clair, V., Bunrayong, W., Vittayakorn, S., Rattakorn, P., and Hocking, C. 2004. Offerings: Food Traditions of Older Thai Women at Songkran. *Journal of Occupational Science* 11(3):115-124.
- Yadin, A., and G. Zuckermann. 2007. "Blorít – Pagans' Mohawk or Sabras' Forelock?: Ideologically Manipulative Secularization of Hebrew Terms in Socialist Zionist Israeli," in *The Sociology of Language and Religion: Change, Conflict and Accommodation. A Festschrift for Joshua A. Fishman on his 80th Birthday*. Edited by T. Omoniyi, pp. 84-125. London; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Young, I. M. 1997. "House and Home: Feminist Variations on a Theme," in *Intersecting Voices: Dilemmas of Gender, Political Philosophy, and Policy*, pp. 134-164. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Yue, G. 1999. *The Mouth that Begg: Hunger, Cannibalism, and the Politics of Eating in Modern China*. USA: Duke University Press Books.
- Yuval-Davis, N. 2006. Belonging and the Politics of Belonging. *Patterns of Prejudice* 40(3):197-214.
- . 2011. *The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations*. USA: Sage Publications Limited.
- Zaidman, N. 2007. The New Age Shop – Church or Marketplace? *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 22(3):361-374.
- Zborowski, M., and E. Herzog. 1962 [1952]. *Life is with People: The Culture of the Shtetl*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Zubaida, S. 1994. "National, Communal and Global Dimensions in Middle-Eastern Food Cultures," in *A Taste of Thyme: Culinary Cultures of the Middle East*. Edited by S. Zubaida and R. Tapper, pp. 33-48. London and New York: Tauris in association with Centre of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.