

The culinary state: On politics of representation and identity in Israel

ZEYNEP SERTBULUT

ABSTRACT

In the past three decades, the Israeli food scene has become more diversified. Beginning in the 1980s, cookbooks and narratives on Israeli cuisine, targeting a non-Israeli audience, started to emphasize and celebrate the new multiethnic nature of the cuisine and of Israeli identity in general. Yet, few scholars have considered the structure of this new national rhetoric on Israeli cuisine and its relation to earlier representations or considered why it appeared only in recent decades. The ways Israeli cuisine is represented to the outside world is very much historically specific and therefore has changed over time as the articulation of Israeli collective memory and national identity shifted at particular historical moments. Through a historical analysis of the narratives of food in Israeli discursive formations, this study examines the imaging and imagining of the contested Israeli identity prior to the establishment of the state, as well as in light of the emergence of conflicting national desires throughout Israel's history. Drawing on an analysis of diverse sources and modes of representation pertaining to food that target the outside world, including cookbooks, pictures, posters, postcards, songs and articles published in the media that span over a century, this paper analyzes the genealogy of symbolic meanings assigned to food and its changing role in fashioning Israeli identity. The essay illustrates that, over the last century, food shifted from being a tool for defining the nation, to being the symbol of a unified national culture, and, finally, to being proof of Israel's multicultural identity.

Introduction

"What's cooking in the melting pot?" reads the introduction to *The Book of New Israeli Food: A Culinary Journey*, a cookbook published in 2007 by Janna Gur, introducing the new Israeli food to the world. "Food here is so...everything. It's politics, culture, aesthetics, history and I just love the whole thing," Gur told ISRAEL21c Innovation News Service (Brinn, 2007).

The Israeli media welcomed the book, which was “purposely geared toward a non-Israeli audience” (Roth, 2008), for its depiction of Israel’s contemporary food scene and as evidence of its “multiethnic” identity. Inspired by Gur’s book, the Israeli consulate in New York persuaded The New York Times Knowledge Network to organize a one-week online seminar with Janna Gur on “The New Israeli Cuisine.” The course claimed to educate the world about the historical and cultural evolution of Israeli food and to celebrate the diverse ethnic cuisines of contemporary Israel.¹

Yet, it is only in the past three decades that Israeli food has come to be represented as “multiethnic.” Beginning in the 1980s, cookbooks about diverse ethnic recipes of Israel flourished (e.g., Bacon, 1986; Gur, 2007; Kaufman, 2002; Nathan, 2001; Roden, 1996; Soans, 2004; Steinberg, 1996). While the media has been celebrating the “new” multiethnic character of the Israeli cuisine, few scholars have analyzed the structure of this new national rhetoric on “Israeli cuisine” or considered why it is only in recent decades that one sees an emphasis on this ethnic diversity and the contribution of non-European Jews and Arabs to the Israeli cuisine.

Israeli narratives on food that target a non-Israeli audience are intertwined with and reflective of the shifting anxieties and preoccupations of the Israeli nation at particular historical moments. Hence, the ways Israeli national food is represented is historically specific, as it is directly related to how the national identity and collective memory are imagined in the present. The novel narratives of the multiethnic Israeli cuisine should therefore not be read as new distinct narratives, but rather analyzed in light of the ones that preceded them.

By drawing upon Carol Bardenstein’s concept of the “present-orientedness of collective memory” (1999:149), that the construction of collective memory is inextricably linked with the construction of collective identity and imagined community in the present, this paper analyzes three important historical moments crucial to the formation (and re-formation) of Israel’s representation of its national identity in general and cuisine in particular: (1) the pre-state period; (2) post-independence (1948–1980s); and (3) the 1980s and their aftermath.

Food functioned in different ways during these three eras. During the pre-state period, the use of food was linked to the preoccupation of Zionist leaders with creating a novel existence and identity for Jews in Palestine and restoring the long-absent link between the land and the Jewish people. Food narratives of this period belong to the literature of “return” and “national renewal.” The culinary texts and images of the period directed to the outside world aimed to negate the Diasporic Jewish identity as passive and rootless while establishing a novel identity for Jews in Palestine as self-sufficient, productive and rooted in the land.

After the establishment of the state and the influx of thousands of Jews into Israel, Zionist leaders became less concerned with establishing their roots in the land than in fostering the image of a unified Israeli nation out of an ethnically

diverse group of immigrants. During this period, food narratives targeting outsiders aimed to “flag the nation” by presenting a homogenous identity and authentic national culture through food. Certain dishes were hurriedly transformed into “national icons” which served to downplay the peculiar nuances and differences among a diverse group of immigrants.

After the 1980s, the period of what Sami Shalom Chetrit calls “the Mizrahi cultural renaissance” (2010:135), and the “peace process” of the early 1990s, which created a moment where Israeli national identity could be re-imagined as “multicultural,” new meanings were assigned to food. During these last three decades, food came to represent Israel’s “multiethnic” identity by serving as a marker of ethnic difference within the frame of the nation. Over the last century, food shifted from being a tool for defining the nation, to the symbol of a unified national culture to, finally, proof of Israel’s multicultural identity.

Performing the nation through food narratives

Influenced by historical changes, as well as political and ideological shifts, food narratives open a window into the illusive concept of national identity. According to Appadurai, cookbooks “belong to the humble literature of complex civilizations.... They reflect the boundaries of edibility...and the structure of domestic ideologies” (1988:3). Nationalism, being the dominant ideology of the international system of states, is one of the most commonly reflected domestic ideologies in cookbooks geared towards the outside world.

Sami Zubaida defined the nationalist attitude towards food as characterized by “pride in authenticity” and “being deeply concerned with history”: aware that similar genres of food are shared by other nations, a nationalist attitude is concerned with having a unique and exclusive claim to food as “theirs” (Zubaida and Tapper, 2000:9). Similarly, Barthes argued that food frequently carries “notions of representing the flavorful survival of an old, rural society that is itself highly idealized” and becomes the “accumulated wisdom of our ancestors” (1997:24). Hence most modern cookbooks have an introduction that alludes to history, where claims for antiquity and originality are made. The modern understanding of the past as origins leads to an emphasis on similarity and continuity in national culinary texts. A national claim for historical continuity serves to confirm this authenticity and creates the image of an authentic national cuisine that emerged in an immemorial past (Zubaida and Tapper, 2000). This search for origins and historical continuity becomes more problematic in Israel’s case, as identities made complex by the Diaspora and Palestinian presence on the land are implicitly presented as having been previously intact, authentic and unproblematic since the time of the ancient Hebrews.

Usually read for instructions on how to prepare this dish or that, cookbooks may be considered a category of literature limited to practical purposes; yet, in

fact, there are more fictional elements in them than are commonly supposed. Cookery books are produced with a specific readership or readerships in mind (Barthes, 1973:73–78). Fragner even claimed that “cookbooks contain more information and messages from their authors than instructions of how a certain dish is prepared” (2000:63). Cookbooks targeting an outside audience mostly function as what Fragner called “ethnographic cookbooks”; that is, their author’s intention is to explain the character and highlights of a “homogenous” national culture to Westerners through the perspective of the cookbook genre. Such cookbooks tell us less about actual culinary conditions than about “collective imaginations, symbolic values, dreams and expectations” (Fragner, 2000:71). Appadurai (1988) pointed to the selective nature of such cookbooks, which includes “easy-to-grasp” dishes in order to eliminate the most distinctive differences among ethnic cuisines within the nation. The most exotic, distinctive and domestic nuances of a particular cuisine are given up for the sake of creating national culinary images. As certain dishes are transformed into “national dishes,” the very mention of these reinforces any sense of national identity (Cusack, 2000:216).

Yael Raviv (2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2003) has written about the ways in which the Zionist movement used food, between the early twentieth century and the late 1960s, to homogenize immigrants from numerous countries of origin into a unified nation. She showed that apart from being a means for survival, food is also a site for “performance of the nation” (2002b:94). The current article, in contrast, focuses on how food was utilized to perform the Israeli nation to the outside world, from the arrival of the first immigrants to Palestine to contemporary times.² While culinary texts and images aimed at the outside world do not directly help construct a nation in Israel, they do reflect the structure of domestic ideologies and reinforce the modern view that every nation must have its own cuisine.

Transnationalism and the increased interaction within and across national borders has further added complexity to the relationship between food and nationalism (Crang and Cook, 1996). Zubaida and Tapper (2000) argued that, under the impact of global processes, food becomes “a marker of ethnic difference” within the frame of the nation. Appadurai (1988) claimed, on the other hand, that national culture, aware of ethnic nuances, makes an effort to invent and codify overarching categories (e.g., Bengalis, Tamil, Sephardi) which make sense only from a cosmopolitan perspective. Hence, while food becomes a marker of ethnic difference, authors of such cookbooks usually grope for a theme that unifies these differences and lump the most peculiar nuances under a single title (Appadurai, 1988:19). This interplay of regional inflection and national standardization reflected in the new cookbooks is one of the central focuses of this article. During the last three decades, discourse on Israeli cuisine incorporated Mizrahi³ and Arab food into a broader conception of “Israeli food.”

It is clear that similar ways in which culinary texts help construct national identity can be mapped for Israel.

Methodology

This article historically traces the uses of food as national identity constructors in the representation of Israeli identity to outsiders. In order to analyze data that would reflect the different elements highlighted during different periods, I looked at diverse sources and modes of representation pertaining to food that span over a century. My aim in critically reading these sources was to establish the main themes and national rhetoric representative of each period.

With regard to the pre-state era, I aimed to determine how the Zionist elites presented the contours of the envisioned identity of the time through culinary texts and images related to food. Most data analyzed for this period consisted of visuals, since most of the pictures and posters circulated by the Zionist Agency were intended for the outside world. Food-related images of the pre-state era from the Israeli National Photo Archive, the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, JewishGen Photo Archives and the Central Zionist archives⁴ were particularly useful in determining how the Zionist Agency presented the new Jewish existence in Palestine to the outside world through food. In order to understand how Zionist leaders determined the boundaries of edibility and the new Jewish identity in Palestine, I analyzed sources that educated the new immigrants (who were “outsiders” to the envisioned identity at the time) on how to become “local” through proper food consumption in the new land. The first cookbook in Palestine written by Jews, *How to Cook in Palestine* (1935), radio programs on foods of Palestine, the *Dictionary of Kitchen Terms* (1937), as well as Zionist posters that used food-related themes, were particularly useful for this purpose. All these publications were produced by the Zionist Agency and determined the boundaries of national identity by establishing boundaries of edibility.⁵

With respect to the first three decades of post-independence, my aim was to explore the structure of the national discourse on “Israeli cuisine,” as well as the significance of cuisine in flagging the Israeli nation in the international arena. I analyzed culinary texts and images that presented the newly established Israeli nation through food. I looked at postcards, cookbooks, materials distributed by the national El Al airlines and visuals targeting outsiders. All of these sources were prepared and distributed post-independence and intended to present the image of a homogenous and authentic Israeli nation through food. In order to explore the tensions between the actual culinary practices on the ground and the national standardization in culinary representations, I incorporated personal food stories that reflected the culinary practices of Mizrahi immigrants, as well as the interaction between immigrants and Israel’s non-Jewish inhabitants.

Finally, in the last historical period, I analyzed seven “multiethnic” cookbooks published after the 1980s in an attempt to explore the themes and discourses of earlier food narratives on which the “new” discourse of multiethnic Israeli cuisine drew. These works, which specifically target a non-Israeli audience, are without exception written in English. I also attended a one-week online course entitled “The New Israeli Cuisine,” organized by the Israeli Consulate in New York and The New York Times Knowledge Network during March 2010. The course claimed to educate the world about the historical and cultural evolution of Israeli food, as well as the diverse ethnic cuisines of contemporary Israel. The structure and the rhetoric of these recent cookbooks and the course on the “New Israeli Cuisine” clearly reflected the new national repertoire of Israeli cuisine and its relationship with earlier narratives on food.

A historical study of the narratives of food reveals the shifts, continuities and discontinuities in the articulation of Israeli national cuisine to the outside world and sheds light on the power relations in the (re)production of these narratives. In this way, it shows the connections between the contemporary representation of the Israeli cuisine and the ones that preceded it. Such an analysis enables a better understanding of the nature and formation of the contemporary food narratives in Israel and its “politics, culture, aesthetics, history” in general.

The pre-state period: “We are here”

Return and national renewal

Yael Zerubavel, in her account of collective memory and national tradition in Israel, states that “the power of collective memory does not lie in its accurate, systematic, or sophisticated mapping of the past, but in establishing basic images that articulate and reinforce a particular ideological stance” (1995:8). The first Zionist immigrants came to Palestine in the late nineteenth century with the aim of reestablishing a Jewish nation and forging a new Jewish identity, one that was physically connected to a specific geographical location and rooted in its land. The Zionist view of Jewish history constructed the period of exile as “a long, dark period of suffering and persecution” (Zerubavel, 1995:18), while imagining the biblical period as a bright and positive era in which the ancient Hebrews were rooted in their land. Within this narrative, the arrival of the first Jewish immigrants to Palestine was depicted as the return of the rightful inhabitants of the land.

Yet, reality was far from ideology. Some Jews did not have a direct connection to the land prior to the arrival of the first Zionist immigrants to

Palestine, and the land had been occupied by Palestinians for centuries. Within this context, Zionist leaders were concerned with justifying their presence on the land. This led to the creation of certain images that both evoked a symbolic connection with the ancient Hebrews and shut out the Palestinians’ presence and history on the land. The leaders wanted to show that this was “a land without people for a people without a land.” This process was mainly based on downplaying the existence of a local population and demolishing other perspectives on the meta-narrative. Israeli literature on food was no exception.

Food was used in this period in keeping with the Zionist leadership’s preoccupation with creating a link between the land and modern settlers, as well as differentiating the new Jewish existence in Palestine from the Diaspora (which implied that all Jews of the world were a single entity). Food served as a tool for negating the Diasporic Jewish identity as passive and rootless, while establishing a new Jewish identity in Palestine, that of a self-sufficient Jew, productive and rooted in the land.

Images from this period exemplify this attitude. Most of the pictures circulated by the Zionist Agency during this time were targeted for the outside world and aimed to prove that the Jews were “making the desert bloom,” depicting that the land was thriving because of the return of its “rightful” inhabitants. A poster from the 1940s designed by the Jewish National Fund to encourage immigrants to buy land for settlement used food-related biblical themes to establish a symbolic connection between the modern settlers and ancient Hebrews (<http://www.zionistposters.org/>, accessed March 4, 2009).



Figure 1: “Land of wheat and barley, of vines and figs and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey.” Deuteronomy 8 (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

Pictures showing Jewish immigrants as they planted fruit in the old/new land became one important symbol of Jews striking roots in the ancient homeland. Such pictures not only served to establish the image of a productive and self-sufficient Jewish identity, one that knows how to cultivate the land, but also presented the land as empty and played down the interaction of the Jewish immigrants and local Palestinians.



Figure 2: Workers in the orange grove of Kibbutz Na'an, 1938 (Israeli National Photo Collection).



Figure 3: Young woman working in an orange grove, 1947 (Israeli National Photo Collection).

A photograph displayed on a website dedicated to the Jewish families of Poland shows the Halachmi family, who immigrated to Palestine in 1906, planting oranges in Palestine. The owner of the website chooses this picture to finish the website, with a caption that reads, "We must plant in the minds, and in the hearts and in the souls of people...planting as a symbol... We are here."⁶



Figure 4: The Halachmi family, who immigrated to Palestine in 1906 (JewishGen Photo Archives).

Yet, in the early 1900s, it was the local Palestinian population that provided the first Jewish settlers with necessary food for home consumption. The need to purchase basic foodstuffs from the Arabs was a result of the farming characteristics of moshavot (Jewish villages of privately owned individual farms), which grew commercial agriculture such as aromatic herbs and tobacco rather than the basic foods necessary for home consumption.⁷ As a result, the Jewish immigrants of the first Aliyah (1882–1903) were dependent on the Arabs for certain basic foods (see, e.g., Bernstein, 1992:37; Buskala-Guttman, 1966:34; Eliav, 2008).

Under the realization that an independent Hebrew existence in Palestine could not be established without an independent economy, Zionist ideology determined the content of national cultural products through consistent encouragement to change former eating habits and consume local "Hebrew" products. The campaign for Totzeret ha-Aretz (Produce of the Land), launched by the Zionist Agency in the 1920s, aimed for every food produced by Jewish labor in Palestine to be tagged as "Hebrew" with the stamp of Totzeret ha-Aretz.

Posters distributed by the Zionist Agency encouraged settlers to buy only agricultural products that were produced by Jewish labor.



Figure 5: Hebrew watermelon, “only with this insignia” (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

Although initiated for material concerns of economic and national survival in Palestine, the propaganda acquired the symbolic value to form and present a new Israeli identity. Unlike the Jews of the Diaspora who relied on money and products from abroad, the new Jewish existence in Palestine would be based on self-sufficiency. Use of the term “Hebrew” served again as a symbol to establish a link between the modern settlers and ancient Hebrews in biblical times, both rooted in the land, knowing its nature and cultivating it. It also set them apart from the Jews of the Diaspora, as it emphasized a national affiliation rather than a religious one.

Establishing the boundaries of edibility

In 1935, Erna Meyer, a German middle-class immigrant, wrote the first cookbook in Palestine written by Jews, *How to Cook in Palestine (Eikh le-Vashel be-Eretz Israel)*. The book was written under the auspices of the Palestine Federation of WIZO, the Women’s International Zionist Organization, and was published in a trilingual edition, in Hebrew, German and English. Two years

later a *Dictionary of Kitchen Terms* was published, also in Hebrew, German and English.⁸ During the early 1940s, Lilian Cornfeld, a nutritionist and cookbook author from Montreal, wrote and narrated a series of Zionist programs on ethnic foods for the Palestine Broadcasting Service, which was founded in 1936.

Common to all these publications was emphasis on the importance of abandoning the cooking habits acquired in the Diaspora and adapting to local Hebrew agricultural products for “economic and national concerns.” They attempted to make the local foods appealing to immigrants by addressing concerns of health and efficiency, while depicting the foods of the “dark” Diaspora period as heavy and unhealthy and their cooking habits as crude. For example, Ms. Cornfeld contrasted the heavy, meat-based cuisine from the “dark” Diaspora era with healthier “Hebrew” products of Palestine, referring to the former’s cooking methods as “crude” (see Nathan, 2001:18).

Erna Meyer stressed the importance of adapting to a kitchen suitable for Palestine, encouraging housewives to attempt to free their kitchens from European customs which are inappropriate to Palestine and to stand “wholeheartedly” in favor of healthy Palestinian cooking. In line with Ms. Cornfeld’s narrative, Meyer tried to make these foreign products look familiar by presenting them as highly beneficial and practical. In this attempt, her book focused on fruit and fresh vegetables, teaching the immigrants of Eastern and Central Europe, for whom vegetables such as zucchinis and eggplants were foreign, not only “what to cook,” but also “how to cook” in Palestine. “One learns to eat olives quite easily when they are used as a spread on bread” (cited in Raviv, 2002b:89), she wrote, encouraging immigrants from Berlin and Warsaw to include “exotic” vegetables like olives, courgettes, eggplants, okra and leeks in their menus. “This is one of the most important means to establishing our roots in the old/new land,” the author claimed (cited in Raviv, 2002b:88).

Through radio programs such as Lilian Cornfeld’s, as well as through posters, dictionaries, cookbooks and advertisements, the Zionists tried to promote a new Jewish existence in Palestine. By encouraging the new immigrants to purchase and use only local “Hebrew” foods, the Zionist Agency attempted to end the immigrants’ dependence on the local Palestinian population. While initially done for material concerns, they acquired a symbolic meaning as they served to promote a new Jewish identity, one that was productive, self-sufficient and connected to the land. This further served to play down the Palestinian existence on the land, as well as the existence of any interaction between the immigrants and the local Palestinian population.

Post-independence: Flagging the nation through food

Within three years after the establishment of the state, Israel became the primary immigration destination for Jews in the Diaspora, and the Jewish population in

Israel doubled with the arrival of some 664,038 new immigrants, of whom 330,400 were Mizrahi and 329,051 were Ashkenazi (Chetrit, 2010:53). The influx of thousands of Jews into Israel altered the Zionist leaders' imagining and representation of the Israeli identity. After the state was founded, the leaders focused less on establishing roots in the land and more on fostering the image of a unified Israeli nation out of an ethnically diverse group of immigrants. The "melting pot" ideology, the idea that Jewish immigrants from various backgrounds should assimilate into Israel and form a "homogenous" Israeli national identity, would dominate this period up to the 1980s.

National icons

During the post-independence era, icons such as the orange and the falafel were adopted as national symbols. Representing Israel by a few "characteristic" dishes served to eliminate most nuances between ethnic groups and to present the image of a thriving Israeli nation. However, within the context of a lack of previous connection to the land, the way they gained their symbolic status in society was abrupt and artificial and required ignoring the history of these foods with Palestinians. Rather than gaining their symbolic position in society by developing naturally, these foods were hurriedly transformed into codes of national significance.

In 1975, Ruth Sirkis, the food editor of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of New York and of *AT* (the foremost Israeli women's magazine), published *Gourmet Food from Israel*, which aimed to educate "the would-be tourist" about the contemporary food of Israel. Sirkis claimed that, despite the variety of immigrants, Israel is a melting pot of many cooking methods and eating styles due to the existence of some popular food liked by all Israelis. She further claimed that dishes such as falafel, tahini, hummus, Israeli salad and pita were "national foods" of Israel without providing any historical background on the emergence and spread of these dishes in Israel, except for a quick note that they were "influenced by the Mediterranean cuisine." The association of these foods with Mediterranean rather than Middle Eastern culture served to disassociate these foodstuffs from their Arab history.

Initially, the orange was the "national symbol," due to its association with the pre-state accomplishment in agriculture. Disregarding the Palestinian experience with this fruit, Israelis chose the orange as the symbol of the new Israeli Jew—productive, active in nature and connected to the land. During the 1960s, the flight attendants of Israel's El Al national airlines wore a bright orange uniform and round cap, which were meant to resemble an orange (Raviv, 2002b:245). The design of the uniforms could have been blue and white, as they are today, but during the 1960s, the orange invoked much more pride than the

national flag as the symbol of a thriving Jewish nation and was chosen to represent Israel's image to the outside world.



Figure 6: Flight attendant Zahava Shilon models the orange designer uniforms introduced by El Al in 1969 (Raviv, 2002b:245).



Figure 7: Cover picture of the LP record "EL AL: Hava Nagila Festival—Volume 2," 1974.

Falafel was also seen as the perfect national icon of a proud, mixed and unified Jewish nation, as it was not directly related to any community in the Diaspora and was suitable for the local climate. A highly nationalistic representation of the foodstuff, depicted on postcards, cookbooks and posters, is a photo of falafel balls in pita bread embellished with an Israeli flag, which is situated as if to symbolize Israel's dominance over this falafel landscape.⁹ This picture is displayed on postcards and posters, as well as on the cookbook, *The Melting Pot: a Quick and Easy Blend of Israeli Cuisine* (Lehman-Wilzig and Blum, 2000), which can be found in any tourist shop in Israel. There is even a song, "Ve lanu yesh falafel," written in 1958, which included the lyrics: "Once when a Jew came to Israel, he kissed the ground and blessed the Creator. Today, he just gets off the plane, and already goes to buy falafel.... Only we have falafel.... For this is the national food of Israel" (Almagor, 1958).¹⁰



Figure 8: "Falafel—Israel's national snack." Photograph by Nisim Lev, Palphot Ltd., Israel © 2003.

National pride in authenticity

Most modern Israeli cookbooks have an introduction that refers to the history of ancient Palestine and the Bible as a historical text; it is here that claims for authenticity and originality are usually made. The Israeli narrative claimed that "the land of Israel, the ancient homeland of the Jewish people," was "blessed with the Seven Species of the Bible: wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, pomegranates, olive trees and honey."¹¹ The Seven Species were portrayed as the authentic foods of Israel, without making any note of the Palestinians who had

been harvesting these foods in Palestine for 2000 years before the arrival of Zionist immigrants. These foods, which could be traced back to biblical times, served to enforce the claim of "familiarity" between the new Israeli Jew and the biblical Hebrews. In this way, Zionists claimed ownership of these foods by redefining them as heritage, as objects with a specific cultural-historical significance, as emblems of identity.¹²

For example, Joan Nathan starts her 1979 cookbook, *The Jewish Holiday Kitchen*, with a long introduction setting out the background of Israeli food, mostly referring to the "ancient food traditions" of the "nomadic Israelites." She gives a fascinating account of the formation of the food culture and eating habits of ancient Hebrews, who she describes as "the ancestors of modern Israelis." The general impression created by this narrative is one of cumulative continuity. In her introduction, she remarks:

...foods mentioned in Deuteronomy—wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, honey made from bee nectar, jam—are still produced in abundance today. In the marketplace of Jerusalem's Old City, they have altered only slightly in form over the past two thousand years (Nathan, 1979:1).¹³

The same theme and narrative recur in "Dining in the Holy Land 2000 years ago," an article published by the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2000. The author, Daniel Rogov, uses the Bible as a historical document for studying the Israeli national cuisine. At one point, he describes "The Last Supper," the last meal shared by Jesus and the twelve disciples, remarking that

Although it is impossible to know precisely what dishes were served, both the New Testament and historical records give us many clues. ... There is no reason to believe that the meal upon which Jesus dined would have been different than that enjoyed by other Jews at the onset of this first millennium (Rogov, 2000).

As the historical stories cannot be derived from the present, the biblical text fills in the missing information to forge a presumed historical continuity of the national Israeli cuisine originating in an immemorial past that can only be "derived" from the Bible.

The state-led melting pot ideology and its emphasis on similarity and continuity between the ancient Hebrews and Israeli Jews, separated from each other by two thousand years, was made possible by downplaying the modern roots in exile, as well as denying Palestinian roots in the same land. Hence, it was less about actual culinary conditions than about "collective imaginations,

symbolic values, dreams and expectations” (Fragner, 2000:71) of the Zionist leaders.

Yet, there was another kind of melting pot that was developing by itself within the private sphere and had nothing to do with the one that was being sponsored by the state. The times of austerity and rationing of food necessitated the interaction of different Jewish communities. Because their cooking habits were not suitable for the climate of the region, Ashkenazi immigrants especially looked to Mizrahi Jews and Palestinians to learn how to modify their cooking habits in Palestine.

In an interview on Israeli cuisine,¹⁴ Joan Nathan relates how the first Zionist immigrants, who were used to cooking kasha (buckwheat used by Eastern Europeans and Russians) and “who did not know anything about the land,” looked to their “Arab neighbors” to learn what to substitute for kasha in Palestine. Seeing that their Arab neighbors were using large bulgur for their rice, “they started doing exactly what they would have done with kasha with bulgur.” Ruth Jordan, in her 1983 book, *Daughter of the Waves*, in which she describes her life growing up as a Jewish woman in British Mandate Palestine, wrote, “My mother was a wizard with eggplants, having learned the art of cooking them from the Arab peasant women who came to help with the weekly wash and the housework...” (cited in Nathan, 2001:52).

The same interaction continued with Mizrahi Jews after the establishment of the state. “The European immigrants learned from the old, established Sephardim how to use the local produce, especially vegetables ... which were new to them” (Roden, 1996:204). Ethnic dishes were modified:

eggplant and courgettes made to taste like chopped liver for the East Europeans; kubbeh made from frozen fish instead of ground meat for the Iraqis; kicheri, a stew of rice and lentils now eaten with pitim (known in the United States as Israeli couscous), toasted pasta flakes invented as a substitute for rice.¹⁵

Yet, this “melting pot” was confined to home spaces, operating separately from the public arena.

Since each Jewish community had a different cooking style tied to their different ethnic identity, their expression in public meant the opposite of the state-led “melting pot” ideology and was strongly discouraged. In *Forget Baghdad*,¹⁶ Ella Shohat notes that Jewish children of Mizrahi origin were expected to bring lunch to school that imitated what Ashkenazis ate at the time. She recalls her first trauma as a child when her mother prepared her egg with *amba*,¹⁷ an ethnic Iraqi meal with a strong smell. When she took it to school for lunch, she was called “*Iraqit masriha*,” which meant “stinky Iraqi.” She was so traumatized by that experience that she often threw away her lunch in the morning on her way to school for fear of being shamed.

Therefore, during this period, Mizrahi immigrants were forced to perform their ethnic cuisines within their homes and not in public. While children were taught in their textbooks that on Friday night the family meal was gefilte fish and chicken soup, most were eating couscous or fish with egg and lemon sauce and rice. Many were so ashamed of their ethnic food that, when they were asked what they ate, only admitted to falafel and “steak with chips” rather than admitting to the variety of foods they ate (Roden, 2000:153). “You have to have been here to believe what it was like thirty years ago,” says Rena, an Israeli woman, in an interview with Robin Soans, the author of *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook*. “It was dire. When people talked about typical Israeli food, what they meant was Ashkenazi food...: chicken soup, pot roast, chopped liver, salt beef, stuffed cabbage...” (2004:60).

Note the apparent paradox between the ideology and the reality of what people really ate at home. A significant tension existed between the ideological principles promoted by the Ashkenazi Zionists—melting pot, integration, one people and one national Israeli cuisine—and their social and cultural practice, which created an entire social environment that marginalized the Mizrahim and their ethnic cuisines.

Post-1980s: The “new” Israeli cuisine—Multiethnic Israeli food

Imagining and representing the Israeli identity as “multiethnic” started in the 1980s, during the period of the revival and reshaping of the Mizrahi culture in Israel (Chetrit, 2010:133). Since the foundation of the Israeli state in 1948, Ashkenazis were dominant in public media, culture, academia and government, determining the contours of the envisioned “Israeli identity” (Chetrit, 2010:133). The expression of Mizrahi cuisine and Arab food especially posed a threat to Zionist aspirations of distancing Israelis from the Diasporic Jew and the local Palestinian population to create a novel, self-sufficient and unified Jewish existence in Israel.

The “Mizrahi cultural renaissance” ended the cultural silence of Mizrahim, who had lived under the dominance of the Ashkenazi culture for almost three decades. Beginning in the 1980s, the dominant Ashkenazi discourse on the Israeli cuisine began to unravel in the face of challenges from various quarters. During this period, the Mizrahim began singing, playing, performing, writing, presenting, discussing and documenting their culture in Israel (Chetrit, 2010). According to Dov Noy, professor of folklore at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem,

as the Oriental and Sephardic intelligentsia emerged in Israel, the idea of a kind of multiculturalism developed and Israelis became aware that the

Jewish people and other peoples in Israel have many languages and cultural ways. Then the melting pot idea was given up. Now we think of Israeli food as a mosaic within the frame of the nation, where each dish is a different color and stands by itself (cited in Nathan, 2001:9).

The Oslo Accords of 1993 and the “peace process” also created a moment where Israeli national identity could be re-imagined as “multicultural.” Increased normalization with neighboring Arab states and the new geopolitical imagery of the New Middle East as a “borderless” region, for a brief moment, made it possible for Ashkenazi Israelis to “view the Middle East as a unified geography of leisure” and to perceive, desire and consume spaces, cultural tourist experiences and culinary traditions associated with Arabs in neighboring countries and with its own Arab community (Stein, 2008:25).

This change in the imagining of the Israeli identity manifested itself through narratives of food. After the 1980s, the Israeli food narratives incorporated Mizrahi and Arab food into a broader definition of “Israeli food.” Food came to symbolize the multiethnic nature of the Israeli cuisine, serving no longer as the symbol of a unified national culture, but rather as a tool for differentiating one ethnic culinary culture from the other within the frame of the nation.

Forming the new discourse on the multiethnic Israeli cuisine without threatening the legitimacy of the Israeli national cuisine required that the new discourse be based on the earlier narratives of origins and historical continuity. While new cookbooks incorporated the culinary habits Jews acquired in the Diaspora, the authors groped for a theme that unified these nuances. When it came to the incorporation of Arab food into the national repertoire, they continued to ignore any reference to the history of Palestinian cooking and to de-Palestinize Arab food in their representations of contemporary “multiethnic” Israeli cuisine.

In March 2010, the Israeli Consulate in New York City organized a one-week online seminar entitled “The New Israeli Cuisine” in collaboration with the New York Times Knowledge Network. The outline of the course is a perfect representative of the new discourse on the Israeli cuisine. The lessons were divided into three parts: The Origins, The Return to the Land of Israel, and The Birth of New Israeli Cuisine. As apparent from the lesson plan, the course focused more on justifying the origins and establishing the “continuity” of the Israeli cuisine than on the “new Israeli cuisine,” which was based more on the foods of Mizrahi Jews and the influence of Arab cuisines. Only after establishing the connection of Israelis to ancient Hebrews, and thus their claim to the land, did the course teach about the different cooking habits of Jews in the Diaspora, with a specific emphasis on the importance of Kashrut laws “in maintaining Jewish communities to be separate and self-sufficient, thus helping preserve their identity throughout the ages.”¹⁸

Incorporating Arab food

An important difference in the Israeli narratives on food between the pre-1980s and post-1980s is the increasing visibility of Arab food and Arab culture in the general Israeli media. Starting in 1998, the Food Trail Festival became an annual event, offering culinary tours through Palestinian and Jewish villages, inviting tourists to enjoy “the authentic taste of breakfast in the Arab village of Kawkab” and “the *baqlava* of Dayr Hannah” (Stein, 2008:117). Magazine articles such as “The great hummus comeback” (Tagist, 2004) and “Secrets of the Galilee kitchen revealed” (Barzilay, 2005) “educated” Ashkenazi Israelis about the history, culinary habits and ethnic cuisines of non-European immigrants and Arab citizens of Israel. The recent course on the new Israeli cuisine listed the following foods as the street foods of Israel, all of which are of either Arab or Mizrahi origin: falafel, shawarma, bourekas, sabich (a type of sandwich of Iraqi origin) and hummus. In *The Book of New Israeli Food*, Janna Gur (2007) includes recipes for Ramadan under the section on holidays. “I wanted to tell the story of modern Israel,” Gur says, “There is this image of Israel that comes directly from Jewish Agency posters.... It’s a book about Israeli food.... Twenty percent of Israelis are Arabs” (cited in Roth, 2008).

Cookbooks started to emphasize the Arab origins of certain foods, such as tabuleh and falafel, and the fact that Arabs were better than Israeli Jews at cooking some foods. For example, the course on the new Israeli cuisine made the point that the best hummus restaurants in Israel are invariably owned by Arabs and that they are considered Israeli national treasures (Roth, 2008). Magazine articles profiled Arab restaurants alongside other renowned restaurants. In one such article, published in *Eretz Magazine* as “The great hummus comeback” (Tagist, 2004), the author documented the contemporary proliferation of hummus joints in Israel and presented a sample of them, four of which were owned by Arab Israelis. In his book, *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook*, Robin Soans writes, “Everyone in Israel is passionate about hummus, but the general consensus is that the best hummus is made in the Arab villages” (2004:19). In her 2000 cookbook, Sherry Ansky makes the same point: “Everybody makes hummus in Israel, and there is little doubt that the Arabs make the best” (2000:42). She admits that falafel was introduced to Israel by the Arab population, despite the widely held belief that “it was a purely Israeli invention, introduced by Yemenite Jews...” (Ansky, 2000:44). To support her point, she mentions a nineteenth-century photograph of an Arab vendor serving falafel and the fact that, although falafel stands throughout Europe and America have been given Israeli names, in fact their vendors may be Egyptian, Lebanese or Jordanian.

Nonetheless, what seems to be a “new,” “inclusionary” and “multicultural” identity for Israel carries with it traces of the past Zionist narratives on food. Yes, they include more Arab and Mizrahi recipes, and some authors even admit the

“Arab” origins of some foods. However, this is done so long as the Arab culture and culinary are “de-Palestinized” and the long historical interaction between pre-state Jews and the Palestinians for food are framed in terms of “first contact narratives.” Hence, while Ansky acknowledges that, although many falafel vendors of what is known as Israeli falafel stands in the West might be “Egyptian, Lebanese, or Jordanian,” she makes no note of the fact that they might also be Palestinian.

The online course on the new Israeli cuisine includes a section that one sees only rarely in the cookbooks: “Food and Politics,” in which the authors state,

Much of what all Israel favors are in fact Arabic foods, and Jewish Israelis are well aware of it.... However, besides a few iconic Arab dishes, most Israelis, even food professionals, have a very vague idea about what Palestinian cooking really is.¹⁹

The course attributes the new emphasis on Arab foods in Israel to the recent proliferation of “authentic Palestinian home cooking” which “only recently” started to make up for Jewish Israelis’ “lack of knowledge” of Palestinian cuisine by showcasing traditional Palestinian dishes.

Moreover, although the narratives emphasize Arab cuisines, they do not include any chapters on the history of Arab cuisine in Israel. This historical amnesia serves to prevent a threat to the legitimacy of the Israeli presence in the land and the earlier narratives on the originality and continuity of Israeli food. Compared to the long chapters included in contemporary Israeli cookbooks describing the history of eating in the ancient period and in the Diaspora, the absence of the history of Arab cuisine in Israel is highly salient.

Incorporating Diaspora food

Another novelty is the acknowledgment of the contribution of Jews from the Diaspora to the Israeli cuisine, which is almost always accompanied by a unifying theme. Unlike the earlier period, when the invention of a national identity necessitated playing down the various cooking habits of different Jewish immigrants, contemporary cookbooks incorporate more and more material on Jewish history in the Diaspora and emphasize their distinct ethnic cuisines. For example, Janna Gur’s 2007 cookbook includes a chapter entitled “Diaspora,” in which she tells the reader about Jewish life in the Diaspora and how it shaped the cuisines of these groups. She admits that Jewish immigrants were “deeply influenced by the foods and cooking of the cultures in which they lived” (Gur, 2007:8).

This chapter comes right after the one entitled “The Roots,” in which Gur asserts the “authenticity” and “originality” of Israeli cuisine by employing the earlier national narrative of that cuisine going back to an immemorial past. She starts with the cliché that almost all Israeli cookbooks include: “Israel is a young state, but its roots go back thousands of years.” She also makes sure to underline the fact that “Jewish communities maintained autonomous lifestyles” although they lived in different countries (Gur, 2007:8). Employment of the earlier national cuisine narrative of “authenticity” and “originality,” alongside the “distinctiveness” of the Jewish identity of immigrants before admitting the influence of Diaspora on the cuisines of Jewish immigrants, makes the latter less threatening to the legitimacy of Israeli national cuisine.

In line with Janna Gur’s book, the introduction of Sherry Ansky’s cookbook, *The Food of Israel: Authentic Recipes from the Land of Milk and Honey*, reads: “The arrival of immigrants from around the globe has produced a diverse yet distinctive national cuisine” (2000:5). She writes:

Each group has contributed flavors and delicacies to the creation of Israel’s present-day cuisine. From the Yemenite Jews come aromatic breads and spicy Zhoug sauces; from the Arabs, freshly ground Hummus and pomegranate salads. Gefilte fish is a favorite of Ashkenazi Jews while Sephardic Jews savor the garlicky, peppery Hraymi fish (Ansky, 2000:5).

At another point she remarks,

Having absorbed the eating customs of the communities into which they had wandered (whilst, of course, maintaining their own traditions and prohibitions), the Jews brought their acquired tastes back to their roots and their own ancient culture (2000:9).

Within this novel narrative of the “multiculturalism” of Israeli identity, food and culinary habits, as well as other cultural codes, become markers of ethnic difference, rather than a unifying national icon that serves to distinguish the Israeli nation from other nations. They serve to distinguish one ethnic community from the other and to stress the differences amongst them. Ethnic boundaries are drawn, but within a field of common knowledge. Claudia Roden, a Sephardi Jew of Egyptian origin, writes

In street markets, as in the frozen and chilled food sections, you see a variety of foods of different origins. You find Bulgarian yogurt-and-cucumber salad and Bulgarian palamida (marinated bonito), Iraqi kubba and Syrian kibbeh, Turkish borek, Yemeni flaky and spongy breads...

Moroccan cigars, Polish lokshen pudding, Russian piroshky, Hungarian blintzes and Viennese tortes (1996:209).

Ethnic recipes under titles such as “Spicy Moroccan Carrot Salad,” “Laffa (Iraqi Pita),” “Moroccan Chickpea and Lamb Soup” and “Yemenite Calf Leg Soup” (Gur, 2007) only serve to stress the differences among the ethnic communities, yet at the same time they lump the most peculiar nuances together under one heading, such as Moroccan, Russian, Yemenite.

It is important to note that the chapters on Diaspora and Arab culture come only after long chapters on the history of the culinary culture of the ancient Hebrews, in which the authors assert the “authenticity” and “originality” of the Israeli cuisine by employing the earlier narratives of a national cuisine going back to an immemorial past. Only after establishing the image of an “authentic” national cuisine dating back to antiquity does it become possible to remodel it in novel forms that create the image of a “superior” national cuisine without threatening the validity of established national narratives. Within this narrative, the distinct cooking habits of Jewish and Arab immigrants are cited as “contributions” to contemporary national cuisine of Israel. So the “old” does not just disappear; rather, it operates side by side with the earlier narratives, creating the image of a superior nation with a superior cuisine.

Conclusion

Through an analysis of the narratives of food, I have attempted to sketch the processes by which the Israeli nation and cuisine came to be imagined and, once imagined, to be modeled, adapted and transformed in line with the changes in domestic ideologies. I have suggested that the ways the Israeli national cuisine is represented to the outside world is very much historically specific and has therefore shifted over time as the articulation of Israeli collective memory and national identity shifted at particular historical moments.

My historical analysis revealed that the use of food in Israeli narratives reflects the structure of domestic ideologies and the preoccupations of the Israeli nation in each period analyzed. During the pre-state era, the period of “national renewal,” food served as a tool for redefining the Jewish identity as one that is self-sufficient, productive and rooted in its land. After the establishment of the state and the arrival of thousands of Jewish immigrants to Israel, food came to serve as a symbol of a unified national culinary culture which originated in an immemorial past. By referring to the Bible and biblical Jews, the Zionists claimed certain foods as Israeli heritage by attributing cultural-historical significance to them as symbols of an authentic national culture.

Transnationalism and the increased interaction within and across national borders added complexity to the relationship between food and nationalism after the 1980s. Over the last three decades, food has come to symbolize the multiethnic nature of Israeli cuisine, as a tool for differentiating one ethnic culinary culture from the other within the frame of the nation. Food narratives in the new cookbooks reflect the twin processes of regional inflection, on the one hand, and national standardization, on the other.

These ideological representations of Israeli cuisine do not reflect some of the diverse food practices within Israel that were taking place at exactly the same historical moments. The pre-state narratives of a novel, self-sufficient and productive Jewish existence in Palestine do not reflect the interaction of pre-state Jews with the local Palestinian population in order to learn what and how to cook in Palestine. The image of “one Israeli national cuisine,” promoted during the post-independence era, does not reflect the fact that, during this period, various ethnic communities interacted as they modified their cooking habits in their old/new land by learning from each other. Nor does it reflect the fact that the social environment created by the state-led melting pot ideology of the time discouraged the articulation of Mizrahi culinary habits in public and therefore marginalized them.

A historical analysis of the narratives of Israeli identity through food enables us to see the connections and shifts between the envisioned Israeli identities during the pre-state, post-independence and post-1980 periods. From this perspective, the distance between contemporary Israeli food narratives and the preceding ones analyzed here seem much closer; for since the arrival of the first Zionist immigrants to Palestine, Israeli (national) cuisine, if one can speak of one, was already multiethnic, already Diasporic, already Jewish, already Arab, already Palestinian....

NOTES

¹ “The New Israeli Cuisine” (one-week online seminar), The New York Times Knowledge Network and the Israeli Consulate in New York, March 23–29, 2010. See <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3850942,00.html> for a course description.

² As my main focus is the ways culinary texts help construct national identity in the international arena, it is clearly beyond the scope of this article to address the voluminous bibliography of writings on food and national identity and collective memory. For further reading, the following partial list might be a good starting point: Bell and Valentine, 1997; Charsley, 1992; Counihan, 1999; Counihan and Van Esterik, 2008; Curtin and Heldke, 1992; Feeley-Harnik, 1994;

Goody, 1982; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1999; Kugelmass, 1990; Mintz, 1996; Morton, 2004; Tannahill, 1988.

³ I use the term Mizrahi to refer to the Eastern Jewry that immigrated to Israel, while I use the term Sephardi in a broader sense to refer to Jews of Spanish and non-European origin who did not necessarily live in Israel.

⁴ Israeli National Photo Archive, <http://147.237.72.31/topsrch/default.htm> (accessed April 8, 2009); "Images of a state in the making," a selection of posters of the Zionist movement, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Modern%20History/Centenary%20of%20Zionism/Images%20of%20a%20State%20in%20the%20Making-%20Page%202> (accessed April 1, 2009); JewishGen Photo Archives, <http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Plonsk/plonskPHOTOpageIMAGES/index.htm> (accessed March 15, 2009). For images from the Central Zionist Archives, I drew on Yael Raviv's (2002b) work.

⁵ Some of the data analyzed for the pre-state period may seem oriented towards a local audience, such as the posters of the Totzeret Ha-Aretz (Produce of the Land) campaign. While such events were locally initiated as a result of material concerns, their propaganda acquired a symbolic value, presenting the envisioned Jewish identity of the period to new immigrants who needed to be educated about this identity. Therefore, these immigrants were treated as "outsiders" to the identity promoted by the Zionist elites at that time.

⁶ JewishGen Photo Archives, <http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Plonsk/plonskPHOTOpageIMAGES/index.htm>.

⁷ For a discussion of commercial farming characteristics of moshavot as opposed to subsistence Arab agriculture, see Aaronsohn (1992, 1995).

⁸ The fact that these two books were written in three languages shows that the Zionist Agency wanted to reach a larger immigrant audience.

⁹ Image available at <http://www.veggiswelt.de/images/falafel.jpg> (accessed March 9, 2010).

¹⁰ See also the video, "Israel: Always worth it for the falafel," by Lara E. Wagner, which depicts an Israeli guy swimming to the US to take a pita of falafel to an American girl to prove that "Israel does look good." The Israel Government Tourist Office chose this as the winner of The Best Reason to Visit Israel Video Contest in 2008.

¹¹ *CookinIsrael*, <http://www.cookinisrael.com/> (accessed April 15, 2009).

¹² For a discussion of attributing refashioning objects as heritage, see Abu El-Haj, 2001; Clifford, 1988; Dominguez, 1986; Fabian, 1983; Handler, 1988.

¹³ Interestingly, the author does not note that most inhabitants of Jerusalem's Old City are Arabs.

¹⁴ From "The New Israeli Cuisine" (one-week online seminar).

¹⁵ "The New Israeli Cuisine" (one-week online seminar), "Lesson 2: The Return to the Land of Israel."

¹⁶ Samir, *Forget Baghdad* (Arab Film Distribution, 112 min., 2002), videocassette.

¹⁷ A pickled mango condiment popular in Iraq and among Iraqi Jews in Israel.

¹⁸ "The New Israeli Cuisine" (one-week online seminar), "Lesson 1: The Origins: The Age of Diaspora."

¹⁹ "The New Israeli Cuisine" (one-week online seminar), "Lesson 3: The Birth of the New Israeli Cuisine."

REFERENCES

- Aaronsohn, Ran. (1992). "Through the eyes of a settler's wife: Letters from the moshava." In Deborah Bernstein (ed.), *Pioneers and Homemakers: Jewish Women in Pre-state Israel* (pp. 29–49). Albany: State University of New York.
- _____. (1995). "The beginnings of modern Jewish agriculture in Palestine: 'Indigenous' versus 'imported'." *Agricultural History* 69,3:438–453.
- Abu El-Haj, Nadia. (2001). *Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Almog, Dan. (1958). "Shir ha-falafel." <http://www.hebrewsongs.com/?SongID=2801> (accessed April 3, 2009).
- Ansky, Sherry. (2000). *The Food of Israel: Authentic Recipes from the Land of Milk and Honey*. Boston: Periplus.
- Appadurai, Arjun. (1988). "How to make a national cuisine: Cookbooks in contemporary India." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30,1:3–24.
- Bacon, Josephine. (1986). *Cooking the Israel Way: Easy Menu Ethnic Cookbooks*. Minneapolis: Lerner.
- Bardenstein, Carol. (1999). "Trees and forests reconsidered: Palestinian and Israeli acts of memory." In Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe and Leo Spitzer (eds.), *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* (pp. 148–168). Hanover: University Press of New England.
- Barthes, Roland. (1973). *Mythologies*. London: Paladin.
- _____. (1997). "Towards a psychology of contemporary food consumption." In Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik (eds.), *Food and Culture: A Reader* (pp. 20–27). New York: Routledge.

- Barzilay, Gail. (2005). "Secrets of the Galilee kitchen revealed." *Eretz Magazine* 97:56–61.
- Bell, David, and Valentine, Gill. (1997). *Consuming Geographies: We Are Where We Eat*. New York: Routledge.
- Bernstein, Deborah (ed.). (1992). *Pioneers and Homemakers: Jewish Women in Pre-state Israel*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Brinn, David. (2007). "Introducing Israeli food to the world: One recipe at a time." *Israel 21C*, July 22, http://www.israel21c.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1648&catid=60:people&Itemid=110 (accessed November 5, 2009).
- Buskala-Guttman, Miriam. (1966). *Two Couches*. Tel Aviv: Mahbarot Le'Sifrut (Hebrew).
- Charsley, Simon R. (1992). *Wedding Cakes and Cultural History*. New York: Routledge.
- Chetrit, Sami Shalom. (2010). *Intra-Jewish Conflict in Israel: White Jews, Black Jews*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Clifford, James. (1988). *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art*. Boston: Harvard University Press.
- Counihan, Carole M. (1999). *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning and Power*. New York: Routledge.
- Counihan, Carole M., and Van Esterik, Penny. (2008). *Food and Culture: A Reader*. New York: Routledge.
- Crang, Philip, and Cook, Ian. (1996). "The world on a plate: Culinary culture, displacement, and geographical knowledge." *Journal of Material Culture* 1:131–154.
- Curtin, Deane W., and Heldke, Lisa M. (1992). *Cooking, Eating, Thinking: Transformative Philosophies of Food*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Cusack, Igor. (2000). "African cuisines: Recipes for nation-building?" *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 13,2:207–225.
- Dominguez, Virginia R. (1986). "The marketing of heritage." *American Ethnologist* 13,3:546–555.
- Eliav, Aryeh Lova. (2008). "The 1950s: Fighting a war for survival." *The Jewish Daily Forward*, May 1, <http://www.forward.com/articles/13284/>.
- Fabian, Johannes. (1983). *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Feeley-Harnik, Gillian. (1994). *The Lord's Table: The Meaning of Food in Early Judaism and Christianity*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Fragner, Bert. (2000). "Social reality and culinary fiction: The perspective of cookbooks from Iran and Central Asia." In Sami Zubaida and Richard Tapper (eds.), *A Taste of Thyme: Culinary Cultures of the Middle East* (pp. 63–73). London: Tauris.

- Goody, Jack.. (1982). *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge.
- Gur, Janna. (2007). *The Book of New Israeli Food: A Culinary Journey*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Handler, Richard. (1988). *Nationalism and the Poetics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- "Israel: Always worth it for the falafel." Israel Ministry of Tourism. Video, http://www.tourism.gov.il/Tourism_Eng/Articles/Newsletter/Always+Worth+It+for+the+Falafel.htm (accessed December 4, 2009).
- Kaufman, Sheilah. (2002). *Sephardic Israeli Cuisine: A Mediterranean Mosaic*. New York: Hippocrene Books.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. (1999). "Playing to the senses: Food as a performance medium." *Performance Research* 4,1:1–30.
- Kugelmass, Jack. (1990). "Green bagels: An essay on food, nostalgia, and the carnivalesque." *YIVO Annual* 19:57–80.
- Lehman-Wilzig, Tami, and Blum, Miriam. (2000). *The Melting Pot: A Quick and Easy Blend of Israeli Cuisine*. Herzlia, Israel: Palphot.
- Meyer, Erna. (1935). *How to Cook in Palestine*. Tel Aviv: WIZO.
- Nathan, Joan. (1979). *The Jewish Holiday Kitchen*. New York: Schocken Books.
- _____. (2001). *The Foods of Israel Today*. New York: Knopf.
- Mintz, Sidney W. (1996). *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Morton, Timothy. (2004). *Cultures of Taste/Theories of Appetite: Eating Romanticism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Raviv, Yael. (2001). "The Hebrew banana: Local food and the performance of Israeli national identity." *Journal for the Study of Food and Society* 5,1:30–35.
- _____. (2002a). "National identity on a plate." *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 8,9:164–172.
- _____. (2002b). "Recipe for a nation: Cuisine, Jewish nationalism, and the Israeli state." Ph.D. dissertation, New York University.
- _____. (2003). "Falafel: A national icon." *Gastronomica* 3,3:20–25.
- Roden, Claudia. (1996). *The Book of Jewish Food: An Odyssey from Samarkand to New York*. New York: Knopf.
- _____. (2000). "Jewish food in the Middle East." In Sami Zubaida and Richard Tapper (eds.), *A Taste of Thyme: Culinary Cultures of the Middle East* (pp. 153–159). London: Tauris.
- Rogov, Daniel. (2000). "Dining in the Holy Land 2000 years ago," Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Facts+About+Israel/Israeli+Cuisine/Dining+in+the+Holy+Land+-+2000+Years+Ago.htm>.

- Roth, Matthue. (2008). "A taste of Israel: Cookbook shines new light on food of the Holy Land." *The Jewish Daily Forward*, October 16, <http://www.forward.com/articles/14386/> (accessed April 5, 2010).
- Sirkis, Ruth. (1975). *Gourmet Food from Israel*. Jerusalem: Zanora, Bitan, Modan.
- Soans, Robin. (2004). *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook*. London: Aurora Metro.
- Stein, Rebecca L. (2008). *Itineraries in Conflict: Israelis, Palestinians, and the Political Lives of Tourism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Sternberg, Robert. (1996). *The Sephardic Kitchen: the Healthful Food and Rich Culture of the Mediterranean Jews*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Tagist, Yosef. (2004). "The great hummus comeback." *Eretz Magazine* 96:88–90.
- Tannahill, Reay. (1988). *Food in History*. New York: Crown.
- Zerubavel, Yael. (1995). *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Zubaida, Sami, and Tapper, Richard (eds.). (2000). *A Taste of Thyme: Culinary Cultures of the Middle East*. London: Tauris.