# Vasiliki Kravva*

# The Taste of Belonging:
## An ethnographic approach to the study of commensality and collectivity

> "Well the Jews in Thessaloniki had in the past some kind of power because they were thousands. Nowadays there are only a few families left. But you know we still cook. The only thing we have left is our food..." (Interview extract)

The woman I interviewed[1] was Jewish and lived in Thessaloniki, the most important port in Northern Greece. She was eighty-five years old and was born and raised in the city before the Second World War. She had in this sense actually lived in a Jewish Thessaloniki, as before the War, of the population of about 200,000 almost 70,000 were Jews. The War decimated the Thessalonikian Jewry; less than 2,000 people came back from the concentration camps, a loss of 96% of the city's Jewish population. At the time of my research (October 1998-January 2000), there were just under 1,000 Jews in this city with a total population of 1 million. Despite their number, they belonged to "a community" in the sense that they did enjoy participation in common institutions such as the Jewish primary school, the two synagogues and the old people's home. They also had a museum and a gathering centre - the community's administrative centre - which functioned as a place for meetings, communal meals and celebrations as well.

 This article is an analysis of the ways in which food was used by Thessalonikian Jews as a means to state their presence, to highlight or hide their distinctiveness, to differentiate themselves from other non-Jewish Thessalonikians and to construct their multiple identities. It is argued that in this complex process of investing their lives with meanings, cooking, eating and talking about Sephardic-Jewish cuisine played a significant role. Preparing, eating and talking about food were often used by this group as an expression of being and belonging, as channels to stress their cultural distinctiveness and as repositories of food memories and nostalgia connecting them with a distinct, meaningful – and often desired- past.

What is to be found in the first part of this paper is an analysis of the Hellenization processes that took place in Macedonia, especially during the 19th and 20th centuries. My main point is that modern Jewish identities do not exist in a historical and political vacuum. The second part of this paper is concerned with the connections between eating, remembering and building the community and therefore what is being assessed is the centrality of seemingly unimportant, trivial activities such as eating in the construction of everyday politics and identifications. The third part of my analysis aims to deconstruct identity and focuses on the multiple ways through which the Jewish people in Thessaloniki highlight or hide aspects of their complex identities. In the last section, which deals with Jewish culinary

---

[1]     * Dr., Educational Technological Institute of Thessaloniki, Department of Dieting and Nutrition

[1] My fieldwork among Thessalonikian Jews lasted from October 1998 until January 2000. All interviews were conducted in Greek and translated by the ethnographer.

distinctiveness, what is emphasized is the role of food in the process of identity negotiation. It is argued that food, cooking and eating are managed by Thessalonikian Jews as expressions of belonging to a distinct community, as strategies of constructing their cultural boundaries. The role of memory is essential in the formulation of multiple identities and therefore not to be dismissed from the last part of my analysis. The article concludes that all rhetoric employed by the Jews in this Greek city can be seen as survival strategies and function to create flexible livelihoods in a non-Jewish city.

**Hellenization processes in Macedonia and the Jews of Thessaloniki**

National identity is a long-term process often related and informed by personal life experiences that take place over the lifetime of individuals. There is nothing "natural" or "given" in ethnic ascription, which is often subjected to other kinds of everyday processes like interpretation, negotiation and selection. In certain cases, ethnic identity seems to be a matter of personal political choices that are themselves influenced by lifetime incidents. As Cowan (2000) noted, identity is produced through the interplay of social dynamics such as "difference". Ethnicity is thus not only constructed but it is also shown to be rather fluid and salient and the differences that are considered to be "real" might be so because they are conceived as such. National identities are highly contested and often challenged or rejected. The term "inflections", as used by Cowan to describe national identity, is indicative of the various relations involved, including that of power. Macedonia is an area of contested and often conflicting discourses of belonging and as such it continues to be the locus of real and imagined identities and aspirations.

Anthropological studies concerning populations in the area of Macedonia by scholars such as Karakasidou (1993, 1997), Agelopoulos (1997), Cowan (1997, 2000), Verenis (2000) and Danforth (1995, 2000) have pointed to some interesting aspects in the construction of national identities.[2] For example, Cowan's book *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference* (2000) argued that individuals are not always passive recipients of a national program imposed by state apparatuses like education and religion but on the contrary should be approached as active creators, sometimes shaping or even questioning their own national belonging. This literature drew upon everyday levels of belonging and highlighted the fact that private aspects of life, including family values, can become loci for the promotion of certain national aspirations. This shift from official, public processes to more everyday and intimate dimensions suggested that the imposition of national identities is rarely harmonious; it consists of tensions, fractions, shifts and negotiations.

The history of the Jews in Thessaloniki was strongly affected by the double processes of Hellenisation and Christianisation of the city. Thessaloniki's Jews are mainly descendants of Spanish Jews, who were expelled from their country of origin from the 15th century onwards and settled in Ottoman Thessaloniki. The city during the Ottoman era actually remained a multicultural, multi-ethnic place in the sense that

---

[2]     *Emic* voices heard in a book that is recently published in Greek entitled "Identities in Macedonia" are much more sceptical on naming the distinct groups in the area as "ethnic" or "ethnicities" (Veremis, 1997, Gounaris 1997). According to the authors it is a methodological mistake to call the distinct groups living in Macedonia ethnic or ethnicities because such terms are recent historical constructions that do not correspond to previous historical periods. In particular, they disagree with some foreign publications, namely Karakasidou 1993 and Danforth 1995.

all ethnic (or rather religious) groups living in it (Christians, Jews and Armenians) were afforded some kind of religious autonomy as long as they paid the Sultan's taxes. This is known in historiography (Clogg, 1992, Roudometof, 1998) as the *millet* system. Within the Ottoman administration, secular and religious autonomy was given to the Patriarch over all the Empire's Orthodox subjects, the *Millet-i Rum* or "Roman Millet". As traders, merchants, businessmen and professionals, the Greeks had emerged as a powerful economic and intellectual group throughout the Empire by the end of the eighteenth century. Thus, the Jewish population remained numerically a significant part of the overall city population for most of the Ottoman period in Thessaloniki.

With the undermining of Ottoman authority in Macedonia during the nineteenth century and the eviction of the Turks during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), the neighbouring newly born nation-states, namely Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, strengthened their efforts to incorporate Macedonia into their territories. Balkan nationalisms, the processes that have shaped the history of the region in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries until today, were mainly the outcome of such conflicting claims. Anderson (1991 [1983]) traced the emergence of national ideologies to the development of print capitalism. Wealthy proponents of the middle-class, mainly the intellectuals, were able to systematise and centralise knowledge and along with other national mechanisms like language, the museum, the census and the map, the national body of history was formulated. He used the example of Greece and the "regeneration" of the Greek nation-state from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, a historical, linguistic and ethnic "regeneration" that was mainly fabricated during the nineteenth century by middle-class intellectual Diaspora of Greek origin.

Similarly, Kitromilides (1989) searched for continuities between the European Enlightenment and the development of Greek and other Balkan nationalisms. Thus language, geography, history, education and religion (including the institution of the Church) became nationalised and in turn served as channels for the promotion and perpetuation of national identities. In the case of Greece, the Macedonian mosaic of linguistic and religious groups consisted mainly of Orthodox, Greek-speaking Greeks but also groups using other local vernaculars: Jewish Greeks speaking Ladino and Greek, Muslims speaking Turkish and Greek, Muslim-Jews[3] speaking Turkish, Macedonians speaking Slavo-Macedonian, Vlachs speaking a Latin-derived vernacular known as *Vlachika* and many others that were gradually undergoing the processes of nationalisation and homogenisation. Within this complex ethnological picture, "The Macedonian question in the second half of the nineteenth century essentially involved the conflicts generated by the frantic attempts of the new national states to incorporate local ethnic groups into the 'imagined communities' they represented in order to lay claim to the territories these groups inhabited" (Kitromilides, 1989: 169). Kitromilides in his analysis of Balkan nationalisms drew on the work of Anderson (1991) concerning the process of nationalist constructions in Europe and his concept of "imagined communities" that all nations inspire; the concept actually referred to the similarities between the abstract idea of the nation and the ideas of brotherhood or kinship. For the scholar, the "Macedonian Question" gradually emerged as a problem in national, political and diplomatic relationships not only for the Balkan nation-states but also for the whole of Europe.

---

[3] During the eighteenth century 300 Thessalonikian Jewish families converted to Islam whilst practising Judaism at the same time. These Muslim-Jews where named *Donme* and where exchanged after the Asia Minor "disaster" in 1923 with Christians from that area.

Thessaloniki after the end of the Balkan Wars in 1913 became Greek and the process of Hellenisation of the city had begun. This process was reflected in measures such as the abolishment of the Saturday holiday in 1924 and its replacement by Sunday and the compulsory introduction of the Greek language in primary education. The picture changed radically with the Asia Minor disaster in 1922 and the arrival of 10,000 refugees from Asia Minor. Thessaloniki was not only a Greek city but became a Greek city in which Orthodox Christianity prevailed. The city did not have the infrastructure needed in order to accommodate this massive wave of refugees. Unemployment and urban deprivation were the conditions the newcomers had to cope with, conditions that often led to tensions and discrimination against groups such as the Jews, the most numerous non-Christian population. In 1931, anti-Semitic riots, known as the Campbell- riots, took place. Yet the Jewish population remained numerous and prosperous. The deportation of approximately 70,000 Thessalonikian Jews to the concentration camps during the Second World War led to the complete destruction of the city's Jewry. Only 2,000 came back and many of them were killed during the Civil War (1945-1949).

**Eating, remembering and building the community**

The fact that food functions as a marker of both sameness and difference is a key concept of recent anthropological approaches on food. The acts of preparing, serving and sharing food enhance sociality and strengthen the experience of a group's boundaries. Food is a code, a language that communicates complex social messages, such as belonging to an ethnic group. Yet the realisation that our food is "ethnic" comes from contact with other culinary worlds; cuisine, like ethnicities, is not fixed but a contextual process constantly shaped by human interdependencies. Ethnic cuisine becomes a successful vehicle for crossing ethnic boundaries and at the same time serves as a reaffirmation of a group's cultural and historic distinctiveness. Cooking and eating are effective ways to reinforce, re-construct and revive ethnic communities. What we call "ethnic cuisine" is not only perpetuated on the basis of already existing tastes but most interestingly it is the outcome of a reconstruction and stands as a symbol of common descent (Van Den Berghe, 1984). As such, it strengthens and perpetuates social bonds. Food is one of the main arenas where "ethnic revivals" are realised, mainly because food tastes are easily acquired and transmitted in contrast with other social phenomena like language or ideology.

Hence, national identity and eating habits are both modular and flexible, permitting the attachment of powerful feelings and sentiments; they both convey hidden messages, apolitical on the surface, but deeply ideologically loaded and politicised. There is a strong relationship of complementarity between food and nation since the malleable and modular nature of national identity is often in accordance with the flexibility and ubiquity of food and eating patterns. Thus, diet and eating habits could well be used as expressions of national identity (Murcott, 1995). The process of creating a national cuisine is most relevant to the production and reproduction of ethnic identities and nationalist ideologies. What has been noted is that "gastro-nationalism" is an important resource for identity making (James, 1997: 73). To show clearly the intrinsic links between food and the sense of belonging to a "bounded" and "homogeneous" nation, I will discuss some ethnographic cases, which deal with the national dimensions of food choices in different parts of the globe.

Zubaida (1994) analysed the promotion of a static ethnic identity in relation to the nationalist, communal and global dimensions in Middle Eastern food cultures. The

author suggested that nation-states are increasingly interested in "maintaining", "creating" and sometimes "inventing" a static national culture and culinary tradition. He also underlined the role of cookbooks and broadcasts in creating a sense of the homogeneity of any national cuisine but he did not view the people who live in a nation-state formation as passive recipients of the imposition of demands for static national characteristics. On the contrary, the process of ethnicisation is a bilateral process: the "nationalistic project" constructs national cuisine but in turn global expectations perpetuate the process of nationalisation. "Countries and nations are expected to have things national, including a cuisine" (Zubaida, 1994: 44).

The contemporary Indian situation can be summarised by the term "gastro-politics" involved in creating and maintaining several localised and ethicised versions of identities (Appadurai, 1981). A process of "fabrication" of a national cuisine in the Indian case has been identified, in which the role of contemporary cookbooks is central. This process is also evident in other societies, which have complex regional cuisines and have recently achieved nationhood. The creation of a national cuisine in contemporary India is a process that does not exist in isolation; it should be compared with similar post-colonial situations in other countries. This process involves not only regional and ethnic specialisation but at the same time the creation of intersecting national cuisines.

In an ethnographic study in Naples, Italy (Goddard, 1996) it was noted that preparing, serving and eating food enhanced family bonds and sustains feelings of belonging to a Neapolitan community. Emotional attachments are perpetuated through the power of food to evoke memories, in this case of family and community. The family was the main locus where such experiences were realised and motherhood the basic channel for their transmission. Food and eating were sensory channels for the transmission of sentiments, memories and wishes, for example being a person with particular values, belonging to a family or being a member of Neapolitan society. Thus, "eating" becomes synonymous with "being" through the enactment of sentiments and memories and as such it has the power to permit participation in a selected, treasured past. She suggested that food constructs and marks history. However, the picture is not always a harmonious one. An ethnographic example from another Italian city, Florence (Counihan 1998) indicates that women in contemporary Italy are caught between two powerful discourses: being proper housewives, nurturers of family life and bearers of traditionality and on the other hand, being full-time wage labour workers. This double role is held responsible for a female identity crisis and challenge to traditional femininity, as Florentine women are responding to changes in society and economy.

In particular, the role of memory, the management of the past and the act of cooking and eating as sensory experiences have been extensively discussed by scholars such as Seremetakis (1994), Lupton (1996) and Sutton (2001). Attention has been given to the emotions associated with eating which strongly affect personal likes and dislikes. Food preferences or avoidances are shaped and marked through recollections from childhood attached to certain food items. Yet such recollections are rarely a matter simply of individual experiences but rather a symbiosis of individual experiences with shared cultural experiences, values and events.

In the case of Thessalonikian Jews, the sense of belonging to a distinct community was partly achieved through the celebrations that took place at the community's institutions such as the primary school, the synagogue and the old people's home. In my experience, food sharing - especially on ritual occasions - proved an effective channel for the reworking of Jewishness and Jewish belonging. Of

course, I am not claiming that all discourses revealed the same degree of belonging. On the contrary, there was a great deal of differentiation mainly based on age; the first and the second generations of Thessalonikian Jews expressed a strong association with their Sephardic past, whereas the third generation was quite reluctant to make such associations explicit. For them 'not being different' was a statement that was often employed in order to express their ambiguous sense of belonging. By tasting food, the Jews of the city tasted, transmitted and selectively evoked their pasts: their Spanishness, their Jewishness, and their attachment to Thessaloniki.

## Deconstructing identity: Being Sephardic, Jewish, Greek and Thessalonikian

It is important keep in mind that 'identity' is not an empty category that exists in a vacuum. On the contrary, it is a matrix of flexible identifications found in processes sometimes harmonious and sometimes plagued by divisions and conflict. Furthermore, identity is always affected by historical and economic conditions and socio-political expectations. Therefore, we can talk about multiple subjectivities and identifications of the self as a result of provisional belonging to multiple communities. The notion of "community" is subject to deconstruction as well. It has been aptly noted that: "Culture becomes a multicoloured, free-floating mosaic, its pieces constantly in flux, its boundaries infinitely porous" (Lavie and Swedenburg 1996: 3).

Thessalonikian Jews were not the victims or the representatives of their living conditions but more the agents, those who constructed – often via selection – their multiple and frequently contrasting subjectivities. According to this view there is no univocal and essentialist notion of identity; rather there are plural identities, plural selves, which are dependent on the situation. The Jews in Thessaloniki mobilised those aspects of their complex and shifting belonging to achieve flexible livelihoods. By the same token, there was no "community" in the sense that my informants expressed viable subjectivities and identifications of the self as a result of their belonging to multiple communities. Thus, Jewishness was perceived in many different ways. For them the term "Jewish" encompassed memories, past and present experiences, current preoccupations and future fears.

It is important to underline that Jewishness was understood in a variety of ways by the different generations: War survivors, the middle aged and young people. It is important to note that the term "generation" is not an empty category; on the contrary it encloses dynamics of the past, positioning towards present conditions and often emotional reactions due to a traumatic situation. There was a general consensus among older and middle-aged Thessalonikian Jewry that they were not religious and thus they attended the synagogue rarely. However, their constant reference to "authenticity" revealed a certain need to belong and to feel Jewish.

Suzette, a camp survivor, admitted that she never went to the synagogue and did not consider herself a religious person. According to her all religions are good because all of them "preach nice things". Suzette believed that you have to carry religion and faith inside of you. Her religious behaviour was characterised by a process of religious adaptation to meet individual needs and experiences. For example, *Yom Kippur*[4] apart from being the most important High Holy Day in the Jewish calendar, was the only occasion when she came to terms with her Jewishness:

---

[4] The Day of Atonement, a major fast in the Jewish calendar.

"Nowadays I practice the Kippur, the day of Forgiveness, in memory of all those people that died during the War. On this day I concentrate much more. This is because after the War I never found the time to devote properly to my lost family.

The situation was more or less similar with people in their forties and fifties. Albertos, a man in his forties, claimed that his feeling of being Jewish had changed over the years with a conscious effort to maintain and even create differences that could distinguish him from others. For him, Jewishness was to be understood by contrast with non-Jewishness and Jewish identity was perceived through the process of sharpening and in certain cases creating differences with other non-Jews:

I remember when I was a child and went to school, I was learning Hebrew. At that time, Jewishness for me was no more than a game and a leisure pursuit. I felt Greek and Jewish. I have had this feeling since I was very young. As I grew older, I tried to elaborate my differences much more. Everyone was smoking, so I decided not to smoke, the others studied classics whereas I decided to study modern literature instead of the classics. I always had the feeling that my identity was special."

For most people, Jewishness was highly personalised and influenced by family memories and childhood. Yet for the majority of older and middle-aged people, "being Jewish" often remained private, something kept in the domestic sphere and the realm of the family. For Linda and other Holocaust survivors, Jewishness was encapsulated in highly treasured domestic items[5] like photos of parents and children. The ritual of showing the photographs of their family was an almost indispensable part of my regular visits.

For others, their identity was enclosed in the memories from the War, about which they had written and published in the last few years. Sharing their experiences and giving me their memoirs were effective ways to express their Jewishness. On several occasions I was given magazines like *La Lettre Sepharade*,[6] *Los Muestros*[7] and *Chronika*.[8] Most homes I visited had something that reminded the visitor of the Jewish identity of its members. In most cases, people kept *menorah,* the seven-branched candlesticks, either in "open" and "public" areas like the living room or in more "private" rooms like the bedroom.

However, among the younger people there was no single acceptance and identification with Jewishness. Although most of them had attended the primary school, they were very reluctant to identify themselves with anything "Jewish", especially those in their mid-twenties. Thus, some remarked that they were "fed up" with discussions of Jewishness and others said that they did not believe in bounded ethnic identities. For them "Europeanism" and "globalised identities" were the

---

[5] Lovell (1998) argues that domestic objects can be "objects of mnemonic desire". She notes that "These objects very much serve as mediating elements in the recreation of (the memory of) place, and act as surrogates for a memory-time-space which can never be fully recovered, yet which is also precisely recreated through the use and display of the objects themselves" (Ibid, 1988: 16). Thus objects, especially personal belongings, carry life-histories, life-cycles and personal trajectories.

[6] In English it means "The Sephardic Letter".

[7] In English it means "Our Own". Both *La Lettre Sepharade* and *Los Muestros* are written in Ladino.

[8] This is published in Greek by the Central Greek-Jewish council that is based in Athens every two months. Literally it means "Chronicles".

paramount values and in our discussions they avoided any association with Jewish identity.

Thessalonikian Jews proved to be very keen to provide me with different interpretations of the meaning and the usefulness of practising kosher. Interestingly enough, they used the kosher diet rather selectively and even idiosyncratically. In fact, most of them preferred to buy kosher meat from the kosher butcher's shop in Thessaloniki and avoided eating pork or mixing meat with dairy products[9] at least when cooking or eating at home. Yet it must be noted that the kosher diet is part and parcel of a religious Jewish lifestyle. Some of my informants, especially people in their thirties and forties, tried to keep some of the dietary rules prescribed by Judaism. For example, they avoided eating rice, bread or pasta during *Pessah.* Some middle-aged people were even consciously trying to reintroduce a kosher diet into their lives, although they all admitted that kosher products were far more expensive than non-kosher foodstuffs. However, when eating out -in restaurants-[10] they used to order dishes that were compatible with kosher laws like for example *pasticcio* without mincemeat. Their request often annoyed and confused the waitresses.

In contemporary Thessaloniki, kosher was a very sensitive issue, especially for the younger generation. The schoolteachers talked about the Judaic dietary rules at school and tried to persuade children to choose a kosher diet but they avoided exerting much pressure on them. In discussions, they argued that the influences on the children's diet were so many and so complex that they did not expect them to keep kosher strictly. According to Barbara, who was a schoolteacher, keeping kosher had become much easier because of the European Union and the opening of the supermarket; it was now possible to find a number of kosher products including sweets, ice cream and chocolate. The teachers at the primary school suggested children prefer these products.

Yet even for the teachers themselves, a strictly kosher diet was not feasible and it often generated humorous and even self-sarcastic comments.  I remember that I once went to a cafeteria together with Barbara and some of her friends who were Orthodox Christians. I was surprised that although they had been close friends for more than fifteen years, they knew nothing about kosher or the fact that Barbara used to buy meat from a kosher butcher's shop. When Miltiadis asked Barbara if she kept these dietary laws she replied: "I am eating toast with bacon and cheese. What do you think?" and everyone laughed.

Thessalonikian Jews claimed to be Sephardic Jews and descendants of the Spanish Jewry that had settled in the area from the end of the fifteenth century onwards. During my fieldwork, I witnessed people's tendency to make associations with their Spanish past. This past stood for something not distant, but rather familiar and privatised. Memories of Spanish ancestry formulated a common point of reference, a starting point for differentiation from the rest of the population of Thessaloniki. Remembering this specific past was not only a way to denote distinctiveness but also a source of communal pride. References to Spanish ancestry were discursively tied to the multi-ethnic past of Thessaloniki where many famous Rabbis, scientists, scholars and local rulers were born. This strong affiliation with Spanish civilisation of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries covered many aspects of

---

[9]        Avoiding eating dairy products with meat is a basic Jewish dietary prohibition.
[10]        Eating outside the domestic context is gaining increasing popularity in the "modern" era and it is considered a component of contemporary urban life and the pleasures associated with it. But eating in a restaurant is not a thing in itself. Harbottle (1997) argues that the restaurant should not be treated as a static environment but as a social process involved in change.

life and various cultural products, including language, music and cuisine. Mary, a working woman in her late thirties, said to me:

> "Spanish music feels closer to us and the same applies to the Spanish language. These are familiar sounds we all recall from our childhood and family life."

According to my informants, the Sephardic identity was the supreme expression of Judaism, the most liberal expression of Jewishness and what is more, the Sephardic were the most cultivated people. On the other hand, the Ashkenazi, the Jews from central Europe were thought to be vulgar and backward. On numerous occasions, people made comments about the uniqueness and the "superiority" of the Sephardic. The rest of the Jews had to "bow" - as they vividly put it to me - in front of the Sephardic who constitute the "elite of Judaism".[11] This perception was even more persistent as far as language was concerned. This is *Judaeo-Espagnol* and the local version of it, *Ladino,* a vernacular derived from ancient Spanish[12] and subsequently influenced by several languages that were used in the area.[13] It was commonplace among people over thirty-five that:

> "This cultural element was the only property that Spanish Jews took with them when they left their homeland."

A common expression was *Los Muestros,* which means "our own", used even by people who could not speak Ladino properly. This expression was employed in order to stress that language was a shared point of reference for them. Leon, a middle-aged man, commented:

> "We avoid using terms that the rest of the Jews impose on us. You see, even in Judaism there is some kind of internal racism. We are Sephardic. Our language derives from Spanish. This is the only thing that we managed to rescue when they kicked us out of Spain. Modern Spanish is not far away from us. We used to say Los Muestros. We don't want any Ashkenazi additions to our language. For example we say cacher (a Ladino word) not kosher."

Of course, there was no univocal acceptance of the Sephardic identity. The age factor was decisive. Notably, there was a strong dividing line between the young generation and middle-aged people as well as the older[14] generation. Among the people I talked

---

[11]     Thessaloniki's Jews repeatedly argued that: "the Sephardic are the elite of Judaism". During my fieldwork, I also had the opportunity to talk to some Thessalonikian Jews who lived in Israel. According to them: "In Israel, Sephardic Jews are considered backward and are looked down upon by Ashkenazi Jews who are considered the more civilised people".

[12]     Ladino is a version of the ancient Castilian dialect and has many similarities but also many differences from modern Spanish (Filippis 1997, Molho 1994, 1998). Spanish-speaking friends, whenever I gave them a poem in Ladino to translate, always found unknown words.

[13]     According to Molho (1998), the Jews brought from Spain their language, a version of ancient Spanish. This language was subsequently influenced by Turkish, Italian, Greek and Balkan languages and created the local version of Spanish-Hebrew or *djudezmo*, which is widely known as Ladino. The scholars agree that initially Ladino had nothing to do with the Hebrew language but the population of the Ottoman Empire recognised Ladino as the language of the Jewish people in Thessaloniki. Thus, they used to call it *yahudidje*, which means in Turkish "Jewish language".

[14]     People over fifty-seven were born during or before the Second World War. I believe that the Holocaust has marked their lives in a direct way and has divided time and memories quite sharply between life in pre-War Thessaloniki and life after their return from the concentration camps.

to, especially those who belonged to the first and the second generation, there was a noticeable consensus about what constituted their past. They were aware of the exact period and the historical reasons for their expulsion from Spain. Young people were aware of the Sephardic past, but they avoided –at least in public- any direct identification with it and as such they refused cultural distinctiveness. They insisted that they were "the same" as other Thessalonikian Greeks they just had a "different religion".

Rosa who was also a Holocaust survivor explained to me that for her, "feeling Thessalonikian" was more important than any other identity. She could have chosen to live in Israel but instead after the War she returned to her native city, which was her "home". Above all, she felt she belonged to Thessaloniki and her past and present were tied to this city:

> "After the War, many things kept me here. Now I know that I could not live anywhere else. I feel so attached to Thessaloniki and I think that I would suffer very much by leaving here. These are not just personal feelings. All the Jews who were born here love Thessaloniki. I feel that this is my home. I feel that every change that happens in this city also happens in my home. Thessaloniki is *to spiti mou* (in English: my home). It was the right decision to return to Thessaloniki."

Jacob objected strongly to the term "double identity". He explained that he fully experienced his loyalty to Greece and that Jewishness for him was only a matter of religious identification. He added that being a Greek–Jew does not mean that he or his family "lack" some aspect of Greekness:

> "I am Jewish only as far as my religious identity is concerned. But every other aspect of my identity is purely Greek. I am a Greek citizen, my passport is Greek, my children will complete their military obligations towards this country, I work as a civil servant and I pay taxes. You know I fully realise my identity when I happen to be abroad. I realise then that I am absolutely Greek."

Many old people that I interviewed had sent their children to study and live in Israel. This was the case for Caroline, who had spent three years in a concentration camp during the War. For her, Israel was not only a place of security but represented the "proper" place in which the Jewish people should live. Despite the fact that she talked so positively about the state of Israel she refused to leave Thessaloniki and go there after the War. No evident reasons for this decision could be found in her words apart from a strong emotional attachment to the city of Thessaloniki:

> "My son, who lives in Israel, fought in the Six-Day War.[15] I was so worried for him. I told him to come back and work with his father. I remember he looked at me and said: 'Mother how can you say such a thing after all you went through?' He was right. Even now when I think about that incident I blush. I raised my children with the idea that when they grow up they must go and live

---

[15] In 1967, Israel became involved in a war with Egypt and its Arab allies. The Israelis captured the walled Old City of Jerusalem which had been in the hands of Jordan before the war: "The man who led Israel to victory over Egypt and its Arab allies, defence Minister Moshe Dayan, told the soldiers, 'We have returned to the holiest of our holy places never to depart from it again.'" (Chronicle of the World, 1996: 1062).

there together with other Jews. I go there almost twice a year. I care for that country a lot. I am interested in its news and development. It is the country of the Jews. They should all live there. But of course you will ask me why I am living here. Well many reasons have kept me in Thessaloniki."

Thessalonikian Jews did not perceive Jewishness as a homogeneous umbrella that lacked differentiation. 'Being Jewish' evoked some kind of sympathy and commonality but yet different interpretations of "other Jews" resulted in different versions of Judaism. Israeli Jews were considered very strict and Orthodox Jews were thought to be "obsessed" with Judaism. For Sara, Israeli Jews were different, even their eating habits were different:

> "They have humus and falafel whereas we don't even know these dishes. We certainly eat differently."

## The voices of Thessaloniki's Jews: Culinary differences as cultural distinctiveness

It is difficult to define "authenticity", the term used to describe most culinary worlds. On the surface authenticity entails several other notions like "being old", "being original", "being uncontaminated" and thus "real" and "pure". Yet the more concepts we employ in order to explain claims to authenticity, the more complex the issue becomes. Questions like why and when authenticity is claimed remind us that "being authentic" is not a natural fact or a given description, but a conscious construction and a deliberate identification used by individuals. By this token, it becomes increasingly difficult to define the criteria that identify something - food in this case - as authentic because there is a constant process of authenticating. Bakalaki (2000) argued that in relation to food, these criteria multiply and change sometimes with unpredictable outcomes. People are active controllers of such discourses because they tend to search for and cherish authenticity. Thus, "authentic" food is in a process of constant redefinition without having fixed and prescribed boundaries.

The issue of authenticity could be linked to the question regarding the construction of identity. Gupta and Ferguson (1997) explored the connections between culture, power and the centrality of place and asserted that identity is often involved in the process of authentication. This process could be described as an endeavour to legitimatise and justify social choices. If we take into account the double forces of legitimisation and authentication it becomes easier to explain why specific cultural differences are sometimes considered important in the creation of identities and others are less so.

An analysis of cuisine should enable the deconstruction and the critical re-reading of discourses on originality and authenticity. Interestingly enough, Thessaloniki's Jews did not employ discourses of authenticity and originality in relation to their cuisine. Thus, they performed cooking so as to enable 'silent' comparisons. By employing discourses of authenticity in relation to cooking, Thessalonikian Jews managed and manipulated in various ways the discourse of cultural distinctiveness. I was often offered the opportunity to taste this difference:

> "This is the way our mothers and grandmothers used to cook. Our cuisine has been influenced by theirs. You know most dishes seem the same as yours, but they are not. I don't know why but they taste different…"

The Jews in Thessaloniki attributed great importance to the issue of authenticity. The regular references to this quality of their cuisine strengthened their discourse of cultural origins. They constantly employed their Sephardic past to describe their cultural presence and food was seen as an important part of their cultural make-up. For most of my informants their Spanish past was still alive, viewed as an experienced, incorporated and shared past; food often functioned as a means to participate and experience this sharing. As Seremetakis (1994) notes, every journey (real or imaginative) is marked by its taste and moreover, food is always the starting point for discussions about "a past", which is always treated with a kind of nostalgia. For my informants this process of incorporation and embodiment was "consumed" actually and symbolically through food.[16]

The relationship between food and memory according to Lupton (1996) should be treated as symbiotic, as food has the power to create a desired and highly treasured past and food memories also shape our present tastes and preferences. This strong association between food and memory was a topic that often emerged while I was in the field. "Good" and "authentic" food was only the food that mother had prepared as in the case of Nelli, aged 75, who still provided her two sons with her home-made food, although they had their own families and non-Jewish housewives. Nelli's explanation was that people never stop loving the tastes they were brought up with. Her non-Jewish daughters-in-law would certainly not appreciate Sephardic food because they were not familiar with it. There is a strong connection between taste and childhood and remembering tastes is often a recollection of a harmonious past. Thus tastiness becomes synonymous with familiarity and childhood (Kravva, 2001).

Sutton's (2001) work is quite stimulating because food is not seen as a store of memories but food and memories are found in a dialectical symbiosis. There is a lack of the embodied apprenticeship of cooking and eating, however they should both be treated as "embodied practices". Drawing from his fieldwork on the Greek island of Kalymnos, Sutton concludes on the connections between cooking, eating and belonging: "*In telling me to use the transitory and repetitive act of eating as a medium for the more enduring act of remembering, they were, in fact, telling me to act like a Kalymnian*" (2001: 2, emphasis in the original). Thus, memories are not passive, stored images but found in a constant process of past and present interaction.

The process of authenticating was not a given but an active strategy in which individuals were contributors and controllers. The fact that most dishes echoed Spanish names was the ultimate proof of this cultural and historical association. I recall phrases like:

> "Sfougatico is of Spanish origin
> Or
> Maronchinos is a sweet dish we prepare and this is definitely a Spanish word
> Or
> In Greek you call this sweet loukoumades and in Ladino we call them boumouelos"

---

[16]     Seremetakis in her book *The Senses Still,* an exploration of perceptions and memories as material culture in modernity argues: "Commensality here *is not* just the social organisation of food and drink consumption and the rules that enforce social institutions at the level of consumption. Nor can it be reduced to the food-related senses of taste and odour. *Commensality can be defined as the exchange of sensory memories and emotions and of substances and objects incarnating remembrance and feeling.* Historical consciousness and other forms of social knowledge are created and then replicated in time and space through commensal ethics and exchange" (Seremetakis, 1994: 37, emphasis in the original).

Spanish origins were invested with such cultural importance that some Jewish people in Thessaloniki attributed Spanishness to certain food items even where no equivalent word can be found in the Spanish language. One of my informants explained: "Haminados eggs are named like that by the term *hamin,* which means oven in Spanish". But another, Albertos, strongly objected to this explanation. For him *hamin* is not Spanish but a Hebrew word and it doesn't mean oven but it is used to describe the food that is cooked on a Friday night and metaphorically means "warmth" and "embers". Sephardic identity was justified through certain dishes but depended much on personal interpretations; Spanish associations were highly treasured and yet they were subject to individual translation and thus negotiation.

There were repeated attempts to define Otherness, so that Jewish cuisine often stood in contrast to Christian cuisine. In fact, Sephardic cuisine often employed to stress this dividing line. Although I was given different interpretations of the historical factors that influenced Sephardic cuisine there was a noticeable consensus - especially among the first and the second generations - on separating Greek from Jewish cuisine. As Sara explained to me:

> "In general Jewish food is different from Greek cuisine. You have too much heavy food and you fry it a lot. Of course, this can be explained historically. Our ancestors were poor and always persecuted so that they had to move quite often. Our diet mainly consists of vegetables and bread."

Defining Otherness and drawing a dividing line between Jewish and Christian cooking was a topic I came across a number of times. Most housewives were keen to emphasize the differences between the two cuisines and stressed that although most ingredients were the same, Sephardic culinary culture involved different "techniques". Linda, who lived with her husband, had associated the reunion of the family with cooking Sephardic dishes. Her daughters and grandchildren were not living in the same house. Although she initially argued that she cooked only on the occasion of a family reunion I realised - after a number of visits - that preparing and consuming Sephardic dishes was an everyday reality for her and her husband. After several visits, she invited me to her kitchen:

> "I am preparing our bean soup. Here, taste some. You know our bean soup differs from yours. We fry the beans with fresh onions until they become brown. See? It must be served thick."

Linda's husband added to our discussions afterwards:

> "I have never tasted your bean soup but my wife is much more flexible. She can eat it."

The distinction "Us" versus "Them" frequently arose, especially when Jewish cooking was compared to non-Jewish cooking. While I was in the field, I went to a coffee shop with Andreas, a Christian friend who was very interested in Jewish cuisine, and Nicki the director of the old people's home. Our discussion centred on the topic of Jewish cuisine. Andreas said that the other day some friends had gathered and cooked the Jewish bean soup and he remarked, "We added some tomato juice as the cookbook recommends". Nicki remarked quite surprised:

"But why? We never put tomato in this soup. Some recipes in this book are not exact. I have noticed it with other recipes as well. For example sometimes it suggests many eggs. No, I never cook this way."

It is indicative that in her words she made use of both "We" and "I", as if the way she cooks is representative of what Jewish cuisine is, or as if Jewish cuisine was something fixed and strictly prescribed. A fixed culinary order was employed by her and other informants. For James (1997) the belief in a fixed, static and prescribed culinary world sustains and promotes fixed cultural identities. Therefore the thought of a culinary order becomes a powerful statement of being and belonging.

Apart from the different techniques of Sephardic cuisine and the different repertoire of recipes, the use of different ingredients in cooking is what made dishes different. Thessalonikian Jews translated difference in terms of tastier, lighter and healthier cuisine. Thus, my informants drew my attention to the frequent use of unleavened bread *(matzah)* in their cooking. *Matzah* is mainly associated with the Passover and it is purchased during those days from the community centre. As explained:

"In the past, friends or relatives who went to Israel returned here laden down with food items. There was no way of finding matzah here. But nowadays, we buy it from the community centre."

The unleavened bread was the basic ingredient for most Sephardic dishes associated with the celebration of *Pessah.* According to Ruth:

"We use matzah as the basic ingredient in many of our dishes. We use it instead of bread or filo pastry in order to prepare fried balls, pies, and sauces, almost everything. So the dishes become tastier."

A number of authors have stressed the fact that there is an increasing preoccupation with the health effects of the modern high-fat and high-sugar diet (Lupton, 1996, Bradby, 1997, Caplan, 1997). Some of them consider the agenda of food information and view it as a powerful political medium through which food producers often construct notions of "healthy eating" in order to maximize their profit. Keane (1997) notes that commercial considerations, in particular advertising, have been shaped to a great extent by the concept of healthy eating. Thus, the concept becomes a political issue and the information concerning healthy food enacts political influence and power.[17]

The discourse of "healthy eating" is a powerful political tool not only for the reason described above. In the case of the Jewish people in Thessaloniki, the rhetoric of 'healthy eating' was evolved in order to serve desired political ends. Jewish cuisine was considered to be healthier than non-Jewish, Greek in general.[18] Susan asserted that:

---

[17]    Reilly and Miller (1997) discuss the central role of the media in the emergence of food as a social issue. However they argue that it is "important to go beyond media-centric explanations and understand that the way in which the media operates is a product of complex interactions between the media, the social institutions on which they report and the public" (1997: 249).

[18]    The major food classification scheme that emerged from interviews with adolescent women in Toronto divided foodstuffs in two categories: "junk food" and "healthy food". Each category was

> "You have too much heavy food and you fry it a lot. Our cuisine is much lighter. Our ancestors' diet consisted mainly of bread and vegetables, quite light and simple things."

Even the use of *matzah* to make pies, fried balls or sauces was thought to make the food "tastier" and "lighter" and thus, different. However, the preparation of some dishes with *matzah* still involved unhealthy culinary practices like, for example, frying with olive oil. The point I want to make is that Thessalonikian Jews employed the notion of healthy eating, most of the time idiosyncratically in order to point to the distinct and more positive qualities of their own cooking.

The issue of proximity between Sephardic and Greek cuisine or more correctly between Sephardic and Thessalonikian cuisine was a recurrent theme in most food discussions I had with middle aged and older people. In these discussions the boundaries between Greek, Thessalonikian and Sephardic cooking was constantly shifted and negotiated. Sephardic dishes were considered Thessalonikian dishes at the same time and were seen as part and parcel of the history of the city. When I asked Rosa to briefly describe the origins of Sephardic dishes she replied: "These dishes are taken from the cuisine of Thessaloniki". Her friend Rene added that:

> "The culture of Thessaloniki has been strongly influenced by Jewish culture. You can't study Sephardic cuisine if you don't study Thessalonikian and Mediterranean cuisine."

In some cases, people treated Sephardic cuisine as an integral part of Greek cuisine. Some of their comments were conscious or unconscious efforts to stress the "Greekness" of several of the ingredients they used. Linda once commented: "Our olive oil is the best in the world". In her words, the term "Our" referred to Greece and Greek cuisine as opposed to other non-Greek cuisines. The fact that the Jews had lived in Greece for hundreds of years provided the justification for the local adaptation of their cuisine:

> "All these are Greek dishes. There is no 100% Jewish cuisine. You know we have been living here for more than 400 years."

The dynamic processes of negotiation and synthesis were even more evident among younger Thessalonikian Jews. In particular, families with younger members seemed to follow willingly some Christian festivities and the customs that accompany them. Dinah explained the situation as follows:

> "I could say that along with the Jewish festive days I also celebrate some Christian festive days and the same applies especially to the younger members of my family. And during Easter we eat *mageiritsa,* the Christian Easter soup (laugh). We like it. You know it's inevitable."

The following incident illustrates this quite clearly. Maria, a young Christian woman, when asked about a Jewish friend, answered:

---

vested with symbolic meanings. Hence "junk food" was associated with weight gain, friends, independence and guilt whereas "healthy food" was associated with weight loss, parents and being at home (Chapman and Maclean, 1993).

> "She is Jewish but not like the others, she is modern. Lilly follows our customs. For example during the Christian Easter she eats our *mageiritsa*."

Young people often express their resistance and their resentment of parental culture through their bodies. Refusing to eat what the parents provide or eating the 'wrong' food could be seen as an embodied rebellion (Lupton, 1996). This was the case for the younger generation of the city's Jews. Most young people I talked to emphasised the fact that their diet nowadays was not restricted by any rules and that fast-food, the food that they preferred, could be easily found and consumed.[19] In their attitude, I witnessed a strong emphasis on sameness: Thessalonikian Jews were not thought as different from other Thessalonikians and the food they consumed was beyond doubt the same. Lucille, a young woman commented:

> "We eat ready-made food and go to fast-food places. For example, we eat at McDonalds. Things are the same now. We all eat the same."

Isaac, an educated man in his mid twenties was one of them, "a very free and open minded spirit" as his mother commented. Isaac, his mother and I had a very illuminating discussion regarding the "modern" shift in food preferences and the youth's perceptions of Sephardic cuisine.

> "Isaac: As far as cooking is concerned I don't think that Sephardic cuisine exists anymore and of course there is no such thing as Jewish identity.
> Isaac's mother: What about the *prassokeftedes* that I cook for you? You do like them…
> Isaac: Okay, probably there is something left. But as far as the younger generation is concerned things have changed. For example I am a vegetarian.[20]"

His mother explained to me when he left:

> "I am sure that my son won't create a Jewish family. I can't say the same about my other son. I mean that Isaac will not seek to marry a Jewish woman and bring up his children according to the Jewish principles. I try not to press him. He is a very free spirit. I think inevitably, as time goes by our identity will be lost."

For some younger people the emphasis on the cultural distinctiveness of Thessalonikian Jews was a sign of stagnation, backwardness and incompatibility with modern life. Thus, they emphasised that life in contemporary Thessaloniki was freer and so were their food habits. Nevertheless, a significant number of them participated in Jewish celebrations and ate at least some of the "traditional" dishes that the women

---

[19]   As Watson (1997) argues there are no clear-cut boundaries between the local and the global but they are constantly in processes of adaptation, antagonism and translation.

[20]   Vegetarianism is an important issue related to food choices and general lifestyle. According to Lupton (1996), the vegetarian philosophy is based on major objections to meat; its consumption is unhealthy, unnecessary and immoral. Abstinence from it also enhances spirituality and purity. In this case, I believe that vegetarianism has another dimension: rebellion against parental culture and therefore refusal to consume "the same" food as parents do.

in their families had prepared. Isaac's mother explained to me that what had changed is not the actual food but the contexts in which these foods are consumed:

> "I prepare *keftikes* and freeze them. So, whenever my sons feel hungry they can find something to eat. You know they love having them for breakfast."

The tension between the eating preferences of the older and the younger Thessalonikian Jews showed a noticeable degree of differentiation. The reaction of the younger people in relation to the food attitudes of the older and the middle-aged generation varied considerably. I remember once when I visited Sara's home and she was desperately trying to find the booklet that the community centre sends on the occasion of important Jewish celebrations. On the last page one could find many 'authentic' Sephardic recipes. Sara apologized:

> "I am sorry but I can't find it anywhere. You know I hide it somewhere because when I cook I look at the recipes of this booklet. But my children laugh at me. They think I am too obsessed. I don't think I'll find it. I have hidden it for good."

Other young people held a more positive attitude towards Jewish celebrations and rituals. For Sutton (2001), the senses of taste and smell are embodied in and the power of food memories derives from what he calls synaesthesia, which is the intersecting of different sensory experiences. As far as Kalymnos is concerned, this concept is central in order to understand food practices; Synaesthesia makes the experience of "returning to the whole" possible. The "return to the whole" used by Fernandez in contexts of religious revitalisation is used by Sutton in the context of Kalymnian migration. Thus, islanders who live away from their native land, mainly in America, experience a physical and symbolic return to their home country through experiences with food. It is as if ethnic boundaries are transported along with travelling food.

For example, Andreas a man in his late twenties was studying in Paris. His grandmother argued that the celebration of *Pessah* was a strong attraction for him:

> "Whenever he phones me he asks me if I intend to celebrate *Pessah*. I keep this tradition and he seems to enjoy it very much. Whenever Andreas comes I cook for him a pie made with *matzah* and meat with peas. You know just to remind him of our *Pessah*."

Although Andreas' food preferences probably had nothing to do with the food prepared for *Pessah,* he nevertheless consumed it as a sign of family reunion. Food for him became a metaphor of return physically and symbolically among his own people.

**Conclusions**

The Jews in Thessaloniki used food and eating as repositories of being and belonging. Through the act of commensality, a whole rhetoric of cultural distinctiveness was constructed and perpetuated. Food was invested with powerful past and present identifications and by this token, the Jews who live in this Greek city in Macedonia created a sense of commonality and collectivity. Food enacted memories and nostalgic recollections of a lost world. As such, it stored and constructed membership of a distinct group. The Jews of Thessaloniki ate food and talked about it while at the same

time they perpetuated or, at times, rejected discourses of cultural distinctiveness and highlighted their Jewishness, Thessalonikianess, Sephardicness and Greekness according to the situation they found themselves in. Thus, identities whether Jewish, Sephardic, Thessalonikian, Greek or all of them together shifted and were subjected to translation, negotiation and transformation.

In the case of Thessalonikian Jews, the sense of belonging to a distinct community was partly achieved through the celebrations that took place at the community's institutions like the primary school, the synagogue and the old people's home. In my experience, food sharing - especially on ritual occasions - proved an effective channel for the reworking of Jewishness and Jewish belonging. Of course, I am not claiming that all discourses revealed the same degree of belonging. On the contrary, there was a great deal of differentiation mainly based on age: the first and the second generations of Thessalonikian Jews expressed a strong association with their Sephardic past whereas the third generation was quite reluctant to make such associations explicit. For them, "not being different" was a statement that was often employed in order to express their ambiguous belonging. And yet by tasting food, the Jews of the city tasted, transmitted and selectively evoked their past, created flexible livelihoods in the present.

## References

Agelopoulos, G., 1997, "From Burgarievo to Nea Krasia, from 'Two Settlements' to 'One Village': Community Formation, Collective Identities and the Role of the Individual", in Mackridge P. and Yannakakis E. (eds.), *Ourselves and Others. The Development of a Greek Macedonian Cultural Identity since 1912,* Berg, Oxford, pp. 133-151.

Anderson, B., 1991[1983], *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and the Spread of Nationalism,* Verso, London.

Appadurai, A., 1988, "How to make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30(1): 3-24.

Bakalaki, A., 2000, "Ghefstika Taksidia, Sinantiseis kai Diakriseis", in Kaftatzoglou R. and Petronoti M. (eds.), *Oria kai Perithoria, Entakseis kai Apokleismoi.* EKKE, Athina, pp. 67-90.

Barthes, R., 1975, "Towards a psychosociology of contemporary food consumption" in Foster E. and R. (eds.), *European diet from Pre-industrial to Modern times,* Harper Row, New York, pp. 46-59.

Bauman, G., 1999, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic and Religious Identities,* Routledge, London.

Bradby, H., 1997, "Health, Eating and Heart Attacks: Glaswegian Punjabi women's thinking about everyday food", in Caplan P. (ed.), *Food, Health and Identity,* Routledge, London, pp. 213-233.

Caplan, P. (ed.), 1997, *Food, Health and Identity,* Routledge, London.

Carabott, P., 1993, "Politics, Orthodoxy and the language Question in Greece: The Gospel Riots of November 1901", *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 3: 117-138.

Chapman, G. and Mclean, H., 1993, "Junk Food and Healthy Food: Meanings of Food Adolescent Women's Culture", *Journal of Nutrition Education* 35(3): 108-113.

Clifford, J. and Marcus, G. E., 1986, *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography,* University of California Press, Berkeley.

Clogg, R., 1992, *A Concise History of Greece,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Clogg R. (ed.), 2000, *The Greek Diaspora in the twentieth century,* McMillan, London.

Cohen, A. P., 1985, *The Symbolic Construction of Community,* Routledge, London.

Cohen, R., 1997, *Global Diasporas. An Introduction,* UCL Press, London.

Connerton, P., 1989, *How Societies Remember,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Counihan, C. (ed.), 1999, *The Anthropology of Food and the Body,* Routledge, London.

Counihan, C. and Van Esterik P. (eds.), 1997, *Food and Culture: A Reader,* Routledge, London.

Cowan, J., 1990, *Dance and the Body Politic in Northern Greece,* Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Cowan, J., 1997, "Idioms of Belonging: Polyglot Articulations of Local Identity in a Greek Macedonian Town", in Mackridge P. and Yannakakis E. (eds.), *Ourselves and Others. The Development of a Greek Macedonian Cultural Identity since 1912,* Berg, Oxford, pp. 153-171.

Cowan, J. (ed.), 2000, *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference,* Pluto Press, London.

Danforth, L., 1995, *The Macedonian Conflict. Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational World,* Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Danforth, L., 2000, "How Can a Woman Give Birth to One Greek and One Macedonian? The Construction of National Identity among Immigrants to Australia from Northern Greece", in J. Cowan (ed.), *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference,* Pluto Press, London, pp. 85-103.

Filippis, D., 1997, "An Introduction to the Sephardic Language and Literature of the Spanish-speaking Jews of Thessaloniki", in Hassiotis I. K. (ed.), *The Jewish Communities of Southeastern Europe from the fifteenth century to the end of World War II,* Institute of Balkan Studies, Thessaloniki, 23-145.

Fischler, C., 1988, "Food, Self and Identity", *Social Science Information* 27(2): 275-292.

Goddard, V., 1996, *Gender, Family and Work in Naples* Berg, Oxford.

Gounaris, V. K., Michailidis, I. D. and Aggelopoulos, G. V. (eds.), 1997, *Taftotites sti Makedhonia,* Papazisis, Athina.

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J., 1997, *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in critical anthropology,* Duke University Press, London.

Hall, S., 1996, "Who needs Identity?", in Hall S. and Du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity,* Sage, London.

Harbottle, L., 1997, "Fast Food/ Spoiled Identity: Iranian migrants in the British catering trade", in Caplan P. (ed.), *Food, Health and Identity,* Routledge, London, 87-110.

Herzfeld, M., 1997, *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics of the Nation-State,* Routledge, New York.

Hirschon, R., 1989, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: the social life of Asia Minor refugees in Piraeus,* Oxford University Press, New York.

James, **A.,** 1997, "How British is British food?", in Caplan P. (ed.), *Food, Health and Identity,* Routledge, London, pp. 71-86.

Just, R., 1989, "Triumph of the ethnos", in Tonkin E., Chapman M. and McDonald M. (eds.), *History and Ethnicity,* ASA Monographs 27, Routledge, London.

Karakasidou, A., 1993, "Politicising Culture: Negating Ethnic Identity in Greek Macedonia". *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 11(1): 1-28.

Karakasidou, A., 1997, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood: Passages to Nationhood in Greek Macedonia 1870-1990*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Keane, A., 1997, "Too hard to swallow? The palatability of healthy eating advice", in Caplan P. (ed.), *Food, Health and Identity*, Routledge, London, pp. 172-192.

Kirtsoglou, E. and Sistani, L., 2003, "The Other then, the Other now, the other within: Stereotypical images and narrative captions of the Turk in Northern and Central Greece", *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 13(2): 189-213.

Kitromilides, P., 1983, "To elliniko kratos os ethniko kentro", in **Tsaousis (ed.)** *Ellinismos kai Ellinikotita,* Estia, Athina.

Kravva, V., 2001, "Food as a vehicle for remembering: the case of Thessalonikan Jews", in Walker (ed.), *Food and Memory,* Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2000, Prospect Books, Totnes, Devon, England, pp. 136-144.

Kravva, V., 2003, "The construction of otherness in modern Greece: the state, the church and the study of a religious minority", in Caplan P. (ed.), *The ethics of anthropology: debates and dilemmas,* Routledge, London, pp. 155-171.

Lavie, S. and Swedenburg, T. (eds.), 1996, *Displacement, Diaspora and Geographies of Identity,* Duke University Press, Durham.

Lovell, N. (ed.), 1998, *Locality and Belonging,* Routledge, London.

Lupton, D., 1996, *Food, the Body and the Self,* Sage Publications, London.

Madianou-Gefou, D., 1992, *Alchohol, Gender and Culture,* Routledge, London.

Molho, R., 1994, "I Evraiki Parousia sti Thessaloniki", *O Paratiritis* 25-26: 13-51.

Molho, R., 1998, "Ta Ispanoevraika: mia mesogeiaki glossa stin kathimerini zoi tis Thessalonikis tou 20ou aiona", *Ta Istorika* 15 (28-29): 123-146.

Morley D. and Robbins, K. (eds.), 1995, *Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries,* Routledge, London.

Murcott, A., 1995, "Food as an expression of national identity", Paper presented at the Jubilee Symposium: The Future of the Nation-State, Uppsala University.

Murcott, A., 1997, "Family meals–a thing of the past?", in Caplan P. (ed.), *Food, Health and Identity,* Routledge, London, pp. 32-49.

Papataxiarchis, E., 1991, "Friends of the heart. Male commensal solidarity, gender and kinship in Aegean Greece", in Loizos P. and Papataxiarchis E. (eds.), *Contested Identities, Gender and Kinship in Modern Greece,* Princeton University Press, Princeton, pp. 156-179.

Reilly, J. and Miller, D., 1997, "Scaremonger or Scapegoat? The role of the Media in the emergence of food as a social issue", in Caplan P. (ed.), *Food, Health and Identity,* Routledge, London, 234-251.

Roudometof, V., 1998, "From Rum Millet to Greek Nation: Enlightenment, Secularization, and National Identity in Ottoman Balkan Society, 1453-1821", *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 16(1): 11-48.

Seremetakis, N., 1994, *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity,* Chicago University Press, Chicago.

Stewart, C., 1998, "Who owns the Rotonda? Church v/s State in Greece", *Anthropology Today* 14: 3-9.

Stoller, P., 1989, *The Taste of Ethnographic Things. The Senses in Anthropology,* University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.

Sutton, D. E., 2001, *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory,* Berg, Oxford.

Trigano, S., 1994, "The notion of a 'Jewish Community' in France: a special case of Jewish Identity", in Webber J. (ed.), *Jewish Identities in the New Europe.* Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, Oxford, pp. 179-188.

Van den Berghe, P. L., 1984, "Ethnic Cuisine: Culture in Nature", *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 7(3): 386-397.

Veremis, T., 1997, "The Revival of the 'Macedonian' Question, 1991-1995", in Mackridge P. and Yannakakis E. (eds.), *Ourselves and Others. The Development of a Greek Macedonian Cultural Identity Since 1912,* Berg, Oxford, pp. 227-234.

Vereni, P., 2000, "Os Ellin Makedonas: Autobiography, Memory and National Identity in Western Greek Macedonia", in Cowan J. (ed.), *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference,* Pluto Press, London, pp. 47-67.

Webber, J., 1994, *Jewish Identities in the New Europe,* Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, Oxford.

Zubaida, S. and Tapper, R. (eds.), 1994, *Culinary Cultures of the Middle East*, Tauris, London.

**OTHER SOURCES**

1984, *Chronika* (monthly magazine of the Central Jewish Council), Timi sti Thessaloniki (special edition), Kentriko Israilitiko Sumvoulio, Athina.

1996, *Chronicle of the World: a global view of history as it happened,* Dorling Kinderslay, London.

*Kiriakatiki Eleftherotipia* (Greek Sunday newspaper), 2 July 2000.