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**The Naomi Cook Book:
A Narrative of Canadian Jewish Integration**

Abstract

Canadian Jewish integration was a social process that took place in the political sphere, but was also driven by everyday practices such as preparing and consuming food. Despite this, Jewish food history and the history of Canadian Jewish integration have been mostly investigated separately. This essay ties in with the work of Franca Iacovetta et al. and Donna Gabbaccia, who examined ethnic identity politics and food history in Canada and the USA as interrelated fields. To add to this research, this paper examines a Jewish community cookbook as a moment of Jewish-Canadian integration. By analyzing the Naomi Cook Book, published from 1928 to 1960 by Hadassah-WIZO in Toronto, this paper offers the alternative of exploring integration history as a history of everyday life. It argues that the cookbook is more than a recipe collection. By presenting specific ingredients, menus, and advertisements, it is promoting a narrative of Anglophone Canadian Jewish integration to a larger sociocultural frame of North American consumer culture. In doing so, it presents the history of Jewish-Canadian integration not as a linear sequence of steps on a ladder leading to completion, but as a process with both new and recurrent challenges, contradictions, and contestations.

Résumé

L'intégration des Juifs du Canada est un processus social qui s'opère dans la sphère politique, mais qui est également le produit de pratiques quotidiennes telles que la préparation et la consommation des aliments. Pourtant, l'histoire de la cuisine et de l'intégration des Juifs canadiens ont surtout été étudiés séparément. Cet essai s'inscrit dans le cadre des travaux de Franca Iacovetta et al. et de Donna Gabbaccia, qui ont examiné les politiques d'identité ethnique et l'histoire de l'alimentation au Canada et aux États-Unis en tant que domaines interdépendants. Plus précisément, le présent article considère un livre de cuisine de la communauté juive en tant qu'outil d'intégration pour les Juifs canadiens. En analysant le Naomi Cook Book, publié de 1928 à 1960 par Hadassah-WIZO à Toronto, cet article propose d'explorer l'histoire de l'intégration comme une histoire de la vie quotidienne. Il fait valoir que le livre de cuisine est plus qu'un recueil de recettes. En présentant des ingrédients, des menus et des publicités spécifiques, il fait la promotion d'un récit de l'intégration des juifs canadiens anglophones dans le cadre socioculturel plus large de la culture de consommation nord-américaine. Ce faisant, il présente l'histoire de l'intégration des Juifs canadiens non pas comme une séquence linéaire d'étapes sur une échelle menant à une forme de finalité, mais comme un processus comportant des défis, des contradictions et des contestations à la fois nouveaux et récurrents.

With the beginning of the 20th century, Jewish cookbooks started to enrich the Canadian cookbook publishing landscape, bringing to the table not only a new taste palate but fruitful accounts of the everyday struggle of Canadian Jewish integration. A cursory look into Canadian cookbook publishing of that time suggests an increasing number of volumes by Jewish authors for a Jewish audience, among which community cookbooks, such as the *Naomi Cook Book* with its four editions over five centuries, functioned as effective vehicles of Canadian Jewish integration, which is shown by the eventual inclusion of Jewish recipes as regional Ontario dishes into the canonical *Nellie Lyle Pattinson's Canadian Cookbook*.¹

From the first edition of the *Naomi Cook Book* in the 1920s to the inclusion of Blintzes into the Canadian cookbook classic in the 1950s, the story of Canadian Jewish integration took several turns, as changed socio-cultural environments such as rising anti-Semitism in the 1930s and the experience of the Holocaust called for rearranging the integration narrative. Both the fields of Canadian Jewish integration history and Jewish food history have been mostly examined separately.² This essay ties in with works collected by Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, and Marlene Epp in their publication on cultural politics and food history in Canada, and with Donna Gabaccia's research on ethnic food and the making of Americans, aiming at bringing integration history and food history together.

This article asks for the integration-related insights of the *Naomi Cook Book* and what work such cookbooks did for the people attached to it. To answer this question is to provide an in-depth analysis of the first edition of the *Naomi Cook Book* from 1928, in which members of the Naomi Chapter of the Zionist women's organization Hadassah in Toronto shared their recipes for Maple Waffles, Ukrainian Orphan Candy, South American Fried Chicken, Blintzes, Matzo Balls, and Chop Suey with their culinary kinship. This article argues that the cookbook is more than a recipe collection because it is promoting a narrative of Anglophone Canadian Jewish integration into a larger sociocultural frame of North American consumer culture. This narrative is based on the key points of Jewish traditions and North American upper-middle-class practices, Jewish interests at that time and Ashkenazi heritage, and the industrialization of the home. Within this field, the authors of the *Naomi Cook Book* actively constructed a powerful integration narrative as they proposed an image of what an integrated North American Jewish life should look like in Canada during the first half of the 20th century by selecting the featured dishes, their ingredients, and presentation as well as by recruiting sponsors whose products appeared as advertisements next to the recipes. The women's upper-middle-class backgrounds, their Eastern European heritage, and their Zionist activism played a vital role in the authors' vision. Concluding, the essay shows the changes of their integration narrative over time by tracing it through the later editions of the *Naomi Cook Book*.

Merging “The Old” and “the New”: A Desired Canadian Jewish Life

One of the authors is Anna Selick, founder of Canadian Hadassah in Toronto, who wrote the foreword to the *Naomi Cook Book*, which predated the recipe collection as the cookbook’s conceptual basis:

Here in this book are the Old and the New. Here are Strudel and, in the same breath, icebox cakes. Here, the homely dishes that Sarah must have prepared for angels, and here, too, the things that angels upon earth may prepare for modern and critical husbands. [. . .] To the ladies of Naomi Chapter of Hadassah we must extend our congratulations [. . .] for conceiving an idea so original as a cook-book which will preserve those dishes which are old, as well as set forth the tried and tested recipes of modern American culinary art. In this book are hundreds of recipes. [. . .] And those recipes for Passover will bear the strictest scrutiny. For that reason, there can be no suspicion of a charitable enterprise in offering this book to the Jewish women of Canada. It is practical in the last degree. Which is as it should be, because the funds raised by the sale of this book will be employed in the immensely practical work of Hadassah in Palestine.³

Two overarching themes emerge as the central axes around which the Jewish integration narrative revolves: “the Old” and “the New,” establishing icebox cakes as a symbol for “the New”—modern American food ways that are intertwined with an emerging consumer culture—and linking strudel to “the Old”—Ashkenazi culinary heritage and Jewish religious traditions. Icebox cake was introduced to the US during World War I and became popular throughout North America in the 1920s and 1930s.⁴ The dessert is named after the “icebox,” an insulated compartment filled with ice and the predecessor of modern home refrigerators, because of the layered ladyfingers, chocolate wafers, and whipped cream required chilling instead of baking. When the *Naomi Cook Book* first came out in 1928, the icebox cake stood for efficiency in the kitchen, brought forward by a more and more rationalized everyday life, which also included the modern and engineered home. Not as modern as the icebox cake, but in return loaded with Jewish heritage rooting in old Europe, the Strudel brought long passed-on memories into the *Naomi Cook Book* and to the table. This old-time favourite evokes the coffee houses of Vienna and Budapest in the 18th and 19th centuries, where Jews would lounge and indulge in delicate pastries as well as in intellectual debates.⁵ Ashkenazi Jews of various origins adopted the pastry-making traditions of those who came from the Austro-Hungarian Empire and brought them to the United States and Canada. As cake making and baking for the holidays were a substantial tradition for American and Canadian Jews, pastries such as the strudel became important parts of any festive family gathering.⁶

The scope of “the Old” and “the New” did not, however, stop at the combination of modern American desserts and heirloom Jewish pastries, but encompassed further aspects: “the Old” in the *Naomi Cook Book* also entailed references to British culinary traditions, which were still prevalent in Ontario, as well as to practices introduced by WASP-women’s charitable organizations, such as holding meetings over luncheons or a game of bridge. Finally, as Anna Selick underlines in her foreword, the Hadassah women’s enterprise of creating such a cookbook itself is included in “the New,” as well as the idea to use this enterprise to raise funds for a then relatively new political aim: Zionism. Both overarching themes, “the Old” and “the New,” are deeply intertwined in a dynamic tension that is related to the historical socio-cultural conditions it unfolds in. For the *Naomi Cook Book* that is the late 1920s in Toronto, Canada.

When, at that time, the Torontonians Hadassah women created their first cookbook, they blended Jewish traditions with American and Canadian upper-middle-class practices to describe an image of a desired Canadian Jewish life. Having read the foreword and turning the page, the reader beholds a table of content that reveals dishes referencing the Canadian upper-middle class as well as the observant Jewish household. The Hadassah women arranged their recipes as an order of service for a formal dinner. To kick off this event, cocktails were served. The mundane American invention of serving mixed drinks before dinner caught on in Canadian cities in the 1920s. According to the *Naomi Cook Book*, the cocktails were followed by “Entrees or Appetizers.”⁷ For the subsequent main course, the authors offered various dishes and side dishes to choose from, such as sauces and stuffing for meat and fish, which were common foods for the established middle class, who would then sophisticatedly finish the meal with dessert and coffee or tea. The kashrut observant Jewish dinner guest did not have to miss out on this feast, as *The Naomi Cook Book* maintained kosher standards, never mixing meat and dairy, and never including forbidden foods like pork.

That was not self-evident. In 1920s North America, observant yet culinary and socially ambitious Jews had to decide to either abide by the Jewish dietary laws and content themselves with dishes deemed primitive by their middle—and upper-class peers, or go for the sophisticated meals and formal settings whose originators did not care about religious compatibility and traditions of Jewish cooks and diners. Kosher and primitive or treyf and sophisticated: living a life integrated in the upper-middle-class with an observant Jewish identity within this dichotomy was not easy. Most Jewish cookbooks published prior to the *Naomi Cook Book* followed this binary structure, as they suggested refined dishes without referencing specifically Jewish dietary practices or laws.⁸ By that, they underscored the goal of Jewish assimilation into American or Canadian mainstream society. Historian Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett remarked that such treyf cookbooks of the interwar-era “reveal how much Jewish identity was constructed in the kitchen and at the table through

the conspicuous rejection of the dietary laws and enthusiastic acceptance of culinary eclecticism. [. . .] Jewish diners would not be estranged from their non-Jewish friends by what they considered irrational or foreign practices.”⁹ The Torontonians Hadassah women, in contrast, displayed their Jewishness openly and confidently not only by presenting all the recipes kosher-style but also by including a section for Passover adding a specific Jewish procedure to the book. Looking into the luncheon menus and the Passover section, we find an interesting mash-up of Anglo-American and Jewish traditions and practices.

In North America, English-speaking Protestant women from the middle class had been getting organized for charitable and religious purposes since the 19th century. Getting together at formal luncheons at a member’s house was an integral part of their organizational work. These Protestant women’s associations and their activities added stimulus and served as a model for Jewish women’s organizations.

When the *Naomi Cook Book* first suggested luncheon menus in 1928, Canadian Hadassah was already a Dominion-wide organization with a membership approximating 7500 women organized in 110 chapters contributing more than \$100,000 annually to Zionist work in Palestine, which was the main purpose of the organization.¹⁰ To support their endeavours, the Hadassah women organized fairs, rummage sales, dances, theatre nights, public bridges and teas, pageants, bazaars, as well as raffles, and obviously published their cookbook.¹¹ To plan all these activities thoroughly the Hadassah women met at regularly held luncheons. Adopted from the Protestant women’s associations, these luncheons became an important aspect of their engagement. That was possible as the prosperous Hadassah members did not need to spend their days earning money for a living. The Hadassah luncheons were a strictly upper-middle-class activity.

Having embraced the practice of common luncheons, the Hadassah women adapted them to their own needs by not only filling their stomachs but also the format of luncheons with Jewish delicacies. Consequently, many of the dishes in the *Naomi Cook Book* that were suggested to be served for this occasion included foods associated with Jewish Ashkenazi cuisine such as pickles, borscht and gefilte fish, which can be prepared kosher-style.¹² Thus, the cookbook’s luncheon section represented a mixture of practices as pursued by Anglo-American women’s organizations and Jewish food traditions, which described a lifestyle desired for the Canadian Jewish upper-middle class.

Kosher-style Protestant luncheons were not the only way for the authors of the *Naomi Cook Book* to display their lifestyle as a successful path of integration that combined “the Old” and “the New.” The cookbook’s Passover section presents the Hadassah women’s Jewish heritage and observance and meshed this Jewish tradition

with Anglo-American food trends giving them a North American twist.

Since the Passover Seder called for specific rituals and foods, Anna Selick assured her readers in the foreword that “those recipes for Passover will bear the strictest of scrutiny” emphasizing that the Hadassah women took these Jewish traditions seriously.¹³ And yet, of the 27 Passover dishes, only seven were originally Jewish. Besides farfel kugel, blintzes, and the inevitable matzo balls, the segment comprehended a study of “modern American culinary art,” which would still stand up to said scrutiny.¹⁴ Sponge cakes, which were not prepared with yeast, were a popular choice for the feast of the unleavened bread and stood in the tradition of British TeaTime. According to *Tea Time Magazine*, Queen Victoria, known for establishing lifestyle fashions that the British middle class would adopt diligently, enjoyed sponge cakes for her five o’clock tea.¹⁵ In the late 1920s and during the 1930s, this originally British custom of indulging in strong teas and light cake in the afternoon became popular among upper—and middle—class women in North American urban centres, where ladies would get together in public tea rooms absorbing culinary trends to include them into their domestic routines, for example serving sponge cake for Passover.¹⁶ Picking up on the latest North American food trends quickly, the Hadassah women proposed no less than six recipes for this sweet treat in their cookbook. After having filled the format of the charity luncheon with Jewish foods, the Passover section of the *Naomi Cook Book* shows how its authors turned things around by filling a traditional Jewish format with culinary trends of the North American upper and middle classes to draft an identity of their own that combines elements of both, “the Old” and “the New.”

This section has shown how the Hadassah women used the *Naomi Cook Book* to merge various formats, traditions, and practices from distinct spheres to create and propose a particular lifestyle imagined to be suited for the Canadian Jewish upper-middle class. Therefore, they did not only bestow their readers with a course order for formal dinners; they also selected the dishes and ingredients they deemed to be adequate for their peers. Furthermore, they linked their recipe collection to Jewish heritage and the contemporary concerns of Zionism to construct their narrative of Jewish integration into North American consumer culture.

Building a Collective Identity

This act of merging different spheres is a powerful process as the Hadassah women exert agency of building a collective identity through conceptually connecting the contemporary Jewish concerns of Zionism with Ashkenazi heritage in a North American setting which they relate to. This is remarkable since the authors of the *Naomi Cook Book* created an ambit for Jewish upper-middle-class women at a time when the question of whether women were considered “persons” before the law was still under heated discussion. Accordingly, women were usually banned from pub-

lic professions such as politics, academia, or journalism.¹⁷ Consequently, a cookbook was an unsuspecting but capable tool for women to reach their fellow females and engage in fields of common interest with them. To better understand how and why the Hadassah women connected Zionism and Ashkenazi heritage in a cookbook to participate in public discourses and processes of identity building by carving out what integration meant to them, it is fruitful to consider the socio-cultural context of the Hadassah organization and its members.

Hadassah was not the only Jewish women's organization in Canada, but the one that integrated traditional Jewish foodways, Zionism and North American consumer culture most obviously. The women who founded and coined Hadassah came from Eastern European Jewish families with conservative religious backgrounds who had settled in Canada in the 1880s and 1890s. Them and their daughters conversed in English and had risen into the ranks of the middle class. Yet, they saw themselves apart from their acculturated, leisured, and reform-oriented counterparts.¹⁸ Whereas the latter—organized in the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)—concentrated on the benefit of Canadian Jewry, Hadassah focused on the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine by engaging local Jewish women in communal activities and fundraising campaigns for Zionism.

One of the women coining Hadassah was Anna Selick, founder of the organization's first chapter in Canada and author of the cookbook's foreword. Born in New Brunswick to Emanuel and Rebecca Kovel in 1891, Anna Selick grew up with roots in the Eastern European Jewry as well as with a strong sense of the imperial tradition of her Canadian homeland.¹⁹ According to her Jewish upbringing at home and her Anglophone education at Rothesay Ladies college, she later belonged to the conservative synagogue Goel Tzedec in Toronto as well as to the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, an organization of women devoted to British imperialism.²⁰ Despite the hurdles for women who wanted to engage in policy-making, Anna Selick got invested not only in communal, but also in public matters: in 1918, one year after she founded Canadian Hadassah, Anna Selick achieved the position of notary public for the Province of Ontario and engaged in works of the Joint Board of Sanitary Control of Toronto.²¹ Whereas the then-current legal situation prevented her from occupying federal positions as a woman, the Hadassah organization allowed for Dominion-wide influence, which she claimed when she devoted the *Naomi Cook Book* to the "Jewish women of Canada."²²

Then there is Rose Dunkelman: An influential comrade-in-arms of Anna's, initiator of the Naomi Chapter of Hadassah in Toronto and the cookbook's leading editor. Born in Philadelphia to Harry and Dora Miller in 1889, she shared with Anna Selick the Eastern European Jewish background of her maternal ancestors.²³ At the age of twenty-one, she married Polish-born,

American-raised, and Toronto-based businessman David Dunkelman. Even though they were prosperous and well acculturated, Rose and David dedicated themselves to Zionism at a time when their upper-middle-class peers in Canada and the United States generally favoured assimilation over Jewish nationalism.²⁴ Rose's family belonged to a conservative synagogue in Toronto, through which she got engaged in local community work. In 1921, Rose was elected president of Hadassah Toronto. She held this position for many years, which, among other achievements, encouraged her contemporaries to describe her as "one of the outstanding Jewish communal workers of Toronto."²⁵ In the same year, Rose Dunkelman founded the Naomi chapter "to engage in Hadassah work the energies of the married and the going-to-be-married young ladies of her acquaintance."²⁶ The chapter aimed at teaching young Jewish women of Toronto in homemaking and honouring Jewish traditions while using the latest achievements of consumer culture as well as encouraging them to engage in current Jewish affairs by educating them about Zionism. For the passionate cook—Rose Dunkelman was known for having built a remarkable collection of more than 100 cookbooks—it was consequential to popularize her educative objectives through a Hadassah recipe collection, the *Naomi Cook Book*, and thus to contribute to forming the collective identity of the Hadassah women and their readership, traditional upper-middle-class Jews in Toronto.

To this end of building a Hadassah group identity, Selick, Dunkelman, and their co-authors introduced to their readers Strudel and other Ashkenazi recipes as *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, of the Old Home in Eastern Europe, from where their parents had emigrated. To most of the Hadassah women, their relatives' memories of pre-migration experiences in Old-Europe—such as events, practices, or tastes—were second-generation memories and, with decades lived in the United States or Canada, endangered of fading out in the New World. This process of fading memory and the emergence of specific sites of memory was problematized by French historian Pierre Nora, who conceptualizes *lieux de mémoire* as objects, practices, or sensations "where memory crystallizes and secretes itself."²⁷ Interest in *lieux de mémoire*, Nora explained, occur at particular historical moments, turning points—for example experienced through migration—"where consciousness of a break with the past is bound up with the sense that memory has been torn—but torn in such a way as pose the problem of the embodiment of memory in certain sites where a sense of historical continuity persists. There are *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory."²⁸ In Canada, far outside of the "their real environment of memory," Eastern European Jewish immigrants embodied memories in "sites of memory"—which could come in the form of a steaming plate—to gain a sense of continuity that is essential to secure a coherent narrative of the self.

Even more than the traditional Ashkenazi dishes, Rose Dunkelman's unique recipe for "Ukrainian Orphan Candy" provides such an identity-securing continuity by linking an Ashkenazi past to a Canadian Jewish present, and to an imagined Zionist future. It is the only recipe with a brief anecdote attached:

This candy was made in the Ukrainian orphanages during wartime with the condensed milk sent by American Jews to the children. This candy was considered the best way to distribute milk.²⁹

The story of this recipe refers to the bond between the Hadassah women and the *milieu de mémoire* of their ancestors in Eastern Europe, which got many of them engaged in war-relief-programs for European Jews during World War I. In 1920, shortly after the end of the war, in addition to its work focused on Palestine, Toronto Hadassah participated in the Ukrainian Orphan Relief campaign with Anna Selick touring Ontario in the interest of Eastern European Jewish children who had lost their parents during World War I.³⁰ In her anecdote, Rose Dunkelman referred to the philanthropic tradition of mutual support within the Jewish community, which derived from the Jewish diaspora being scattered all over the world. By that, she underscored the responsibility to support Jewish women and children in Palestine to contribute to the future realization of a Zionist utopia.

Even though supporting the idea of a Jewish nation in Palestine is a central purpose of the *Naomi Cook Book*, Zionism remained an absent centre in the publication. The authors admittedly claimed the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine to be their publishing purpose, but then did not substantiate this claim with any Palestinian or Yishuv content, such as images, recipes or educational anecdotes.³¹ To understand this paradox, it is crucial to, first, carve out the Hadassah women's understanding of Palestinian cuisine in the 1920s and, second, to comprehend the function of Zionism for the Hadassah women's organization.

The absence of Palestinian or Yishuv content in the *Naomi Cook Book* is connected to a Zionist sense of superiority towards Arab culture. During the fifth convention of Canadian Hadassah, held in 1927 in Winnipeg, the delegates passed a resolution to encourage the import of Palestinian products into Canada to stimulate the agricultural development in Palestine. The resolution was a further step for Hadassah to promote Palestinian products, after having started organizing Palestinian fairs in Toronto in 1921, where they promoted Yishuv agricultural goods such as nuts and oranges.³² That shows that the Hadassah women very well had an idea of Zion's culinary offerings.³³ Yet, they did not want to include them in their recipe collection. Food anthropologist Yael Ravi explained the difficult relation between North American Zionists and the local culture of Palestine. Products, such as oranges, first needed to be stripped of their Arab heritage and then reinterpreted as Jewish cultural

accomplishments, before they could be marketed as Zionist export products abroad. This way, “[t]he orange, which preceded falafel as an Israeli culinary icon,” Raviv noted, “was seen as a symbol of the success of Jewish agriculture in Palestine.”³⁴ This is related to the way, Zionists justified the creation of a Jewish homeland in the Middle East. They imagined this region as a devoid territory to which Jewish settlers would bring culture: Only “by ‘estranging’ the orange from its Arab past,” Raviv clarifies, “the Zionists were able to adopt it as their own while presenting Palestine as empty and desolate before their arrival.”³⁵ Therefore, Yishuv cuisine consisted mostly of Ashkenazi food, brought to Palestine by Jewish settlers who were eager to “cultivate” the new homeland with their hard work and their culinary preferences.

Since local Arab food ways were deemed primitive and in need of Jewish acculturation, Hadassah established a school lunch program in the mid-1920s to both feed hungry children and educate the Yishuv on the importance of proper nutrition.³⁶ In the Hadassah school kitchen in Palestine, students prepared dishes such as spinach borscht, vegetable soup, fish steamed with vegetables, mushroom-shaped eggs, potato pie, devilled eggs, spinach pudding (made with bread, butter, eggs, and cheese), green bean and tomato stew, stuffed zucchinis or tomatoes, fruit salad, prune soup, and nut cake with chocolate frosting.³⁷ Variations of all of these recipes could be found in the Hadassah *Naomi Cook Book*. Against the backdrop of a devalued Arab culture, it made sense for the Hadassah women to export their culinary traditions as cooking lessons to Palestine without including any Middle Eastern recipes into their cookbook for Jewish women in Canada in return. For them, Palestine was a devoid territory awaiting to be re-cultivated by inventing a Jewish community identity through food traditions being imported from Eastern Europe by the detour of North America.

If the Hadassah women did not want to transmit any Zionist content with their cookbook, then why did they emphasize Zionism so prominently in the foreword as their motivation in the first place? Zionism appealed to many ambitious Jewish women. Not only did they feel attracted by the movement’s objectives, but it also offered them opportunities to build and maintain female organizational structures on their own. For many of the Hadassah women—and thus for the authors of the *Naomi Cook Book*—Zionism functioned as a framework, a vehicle and a catalyst that enabled them to participate in economic and political endeavours that they were otherwise debarred from.³⁸ Indeed, Selick, Dunkelman, and others had created an activist haven for themselves in the field of Jewish nationalism open to women, who due to their societal roles as upper—and middle-class housewives did not pursue any kind of wage labour and who, until 1928, when a constitutional ruling finally established the right of women to become members of the Senate, were not allowed to get invested in national policy-making but who were yet not satisfied by homemaking alone. Already in 1926, a contemporary of Anna Selick and Rose Dunkelman noted

that particularly the Zionist organization's institutional structures and their scope of action were beneficial for women and thus for Zionism. In a commemorative publication, the author asserted that "the significant feature of the Hadassah movement in Toronto is that it has taken a large number of women away from a continuous round of household and personal considerations and has made them aware of their relation to the group of which they are members and has fired them with the desire to contribute their share towards the welfare of their people, both in the realm of the reconstruction of Palestine and in the field of local communal work."³⁹

The organizational structures the Hadassah women had established in the field of Zionism allowed them to entertain and link various social frameworks, which promoted a feeling of a shared identity for the readers and authors of the *Naomi Cook Book* alike. According to sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, shared identities emerge of shared memories and all memories are socially constructed: "It is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories."⁴⁰ These memories do not necessarily refer to events and situations people have experienced directly but find their way into individual minds as "historical memories" passed on through sites of memory.⁴¹ Individuals access this historical memory through different social frameworks, which consist of different social groups. Many of the Hadassah women shared a symbolic repertoire of memory, within which they could recall, recognize, and localize phenomena like the emigration from Eastern Europe and what was left behind or Zionism and its significance for the Jewish people. To do so, they accessed their historical memory through different social frameworks, such as their families, their local peers who shared their migration history, and their local and international communities of Zionism. All of them were tied into the *Naomi Cook Book*.

The cookbook served as a platform to merge different social spheres including the Hadassah women's Ashkenazi heritage, contemporary Jewish concerns of Zionism, and their local communal work. By bringing together these distinct elements, the authors and activists created and exerted their agency of building a collective identity they offered to middle-class Jews in Canada. North American consumer culture formed another—contemporary—identity-forming framework that the authors and readers of the *Naomi Cook Book* engaged in.

Buying into North American Consumer Culture

By including advertisements for household appliances and industrial processed foods, which are catering to a Jewish upper-middle-class audience, the Hadassah women inscribed themselves into North American consumer culture and invited their readers to do the same.

It was at the turn of the 20th century when the industrialization of the home and mass consumption increasingly reached North American households. Accelerating in the 1920s, this development altered broad sections of North American day-to-day life and of the *Naomi Cook Book*, which was first published in 1928. After WWI and before the Great Depression, US-American and Canadian consumers were tempted by a range of flashy products such as electrical appliances for the home and automobiles as well as new banking services. “The appearance of these items, of the credit to afford them, and of the advertising used to sell them,” historian Andrew Heinze wrote in his study on Jewish immigrants, mass consumption, and the search for an American identity, “has prompted historians to speculate that Americans suddenly acquired a consumption-oriented state of mind.”⁴² Within this state of mind, the Hadassah women framed their recipe collection by acquiring advertisers for different electrical cooking ranges, for garage-door hardware, and Canadian banking services. In the *Naomi Cook Book*, the advertising for the Acme Electric cooking range promised to be at the same time beautiful, efficient, and economical adoring “every home kitchen and kitchenette, at prices that put them within reach of all.” To obtain the “3-burner Compact Cabinet Model Standard” with its cooking units made of “speedy Chromalox (patented)”, the consumption-oriented reader of the *Naomi Cook Book* had to invest 86,50 dollars, which he or she could liquidate with deferred payments.⁴³

Once the kitchen was equipped with the new range, a variety of processed foods entered the homely theatre of dinner preparations to play their role in making cooking in the 1920s “an easier, quicker and cleaner job.”⁴⁴ The industrialization of the home, respectively of the *Naomi Cook Book*, did not stop at the newest electric stove but also included industrially processed foods that the consumption-oriented Jewish household manager should integrate into her well-established cooking routines. In this spirit, enterprises such as the B. Manischewitz Company or Procter and Gamble started as early as in 1900 to develop products and advertising strategies aiming specifically at Jewish customers, whom they recognized as a potent yet neglected target group.⁴⁵ Therefore, both businesses nationally promoted their Matzo Meal and shortening both in Anglophone and Yiddish Newspapers, as well as in the *Naomi Cook Book*. Already on the first pages of the Hadassah women’s recipe collection, the B. Manischewitz company called upon the reader to get hold of the company’s Matzo Meal, Matzo Cake Meal, and Matzo Farfel to conjure kashrut-abiding, crispy and delightful delicacies.⁴⁶ The idea behind this enterprise was to expand the market for their product by deceremonializing a ritual food, Matzo, and to offer new ways to use Manischewitz Matzo products all year round.⁴⁷ Indeed, in the *Naomi Cook Book*, the authors suggested Manischewitz Matzo Meal in several recipes, most of them, however, in the Passover section at the end of the book.⁴⁸ Instead of following the profane ways of use proposed by the company, they integrated the novel product in ways that would suit their traditional needs best. The integration of the authors and readers

of the *Naomi Cook Book* into North American consumer culture did not move along a straight trajectory. Rather, they adopted various of its elements and then adapted them to their socio-cultural conventions and traditions, consequently creating new practices of doing upper-middle-class Jewishness in the Canadian kitchen. This dynamic also shows when looking at the use of Procter and Gamble's latest product.

In the middle of the cookbook, the Canadian Jewish sweet tooth did not only find the recipes for cakes and pastries, but also the Procter and Gamble company's product to best conjure these treats with: Crisco. According to Procter and Gamble, this "pure vegetable shortening, strictly kosher, contains no animal fat whatever" and by that was supposed to work wonders in the kashrut-observant household where mixing dairy and meat products in one meal was strictly prohibited.⁴⁹ Last doubts about Crisco's purity were wiped out by rabbinical statements deeming the product both kosher and pareve, neutral—blurbs that the company proudly published after their factories had been inspected by two rabbis. Nevertheless, as Jenna Weissmann Joselit pointed out, this novelty shortening made from industrially hydrogenated vegetable oil was scarcely used in Jewish classics for the high holidays such as Strudel, as "Crisco's taste ran more toward such American culinary staples as apple pie."⁵⁰ When the bakers involved in the *Naomi Cook Book* introduced Crisco as their weapon of choice for a genuine pie crust, they confirmed this statement and by that brought together kashrut and North American eating standards in ways the vendors had not intended on.⁵¹

Procter and Gamble marketed Crisco, not as pure alone, but based on its vegetable foundation also as healthy—which is the reason why Heinze recognized "a wedding [. . .] between American and Jewish concepts of purity."⁵² This conjunction and the ads in the *Naomi Cook Book* both are different expressions of the same phenomenon. To free the consumers of their worries about foods that were produced en masse in anonymous factories, nationwide operating enterprises such as Crisco assured their clientele that their industrially processed goods were crafted in the most modern and sanitary ways possible. In the *Naomi Cook Book* alone, more than half of the advertisements for foods featured keywords such as clean, pure, healthy, sanitary and secure. This advertising strategy comes up while Jews in North American urban centres experienced a crisis of confidence in the quality of industrialized food, caused by a lack of rabbinical supervision in the large cities. Crisco successfully closed this gap, as did Borden's Condensed Milk company when already in 1910, Borden's "identified the old and the new with fine simplicity: 'Pure Means Kosher—Kosher Means Pure.'"⁵³ This conjunction brought forward a condensed moment of North American Jewish integration, just like the *Naomi Cook Book*, as the recipe collection integrated "the Old and the New" suggesting that being Jewish in North America meant participating in North American consumer culture. A central aspect of this equation is the social status of the Jews involved, and the question of how to get there.

Innovations like Crisco or the Acme electrical cooking range promised their consumers not only efficiency but also a certain social position, which means these products held more than just practical appeal. They also served cultural and social functions. Already within the first generation of Jewish immigrants—that of many of the Hadassah women’s parents—, “these consumer goods [. . .] served as the most accessible tools with which Jewish newcomers could forge an American identity.”⁵⁴ At the turn of the twentieth century, socially ambitious Jews had to renounce their traditional food ways for often non-kosher American or Canadian foods of the higher classes in order to assimilate smoothly and quickly into North American mainstream society.⁵⁵ In 1928, the *Naomi Cook Book* showed that consumer goods provided another way to forge an *integrated* North American Jewish identity, while still following Jewish dietary laws.

The dishes offered on the pages of the *Naomi Cook Book*, which were suggested to be prepared with specific ingredients and appliances the advertisements next to them touted for, give evidence to the achieved or aspired social standing of their originators. It is them who order their readership to go along and resume the role of a consumption-oriented, tradition-conscious, and socially ambitious North American Jewish woman. The Hadassah women did so in an editorial note, in which the committee expressed their gratitude to the advertisers and called upon their readers to acquire the respective products by hoping for “wherever this book may go, we trust its friends to show their appreciation.”⁵⁶ Even more so, the authors ordered their readers to resume this role through the recipes of the *Naomi Cook Book*.

This calls for a new understanding of the recipe as a special unit of communication, a speech act. Speech acts, according to philosopher John Langshaw Austin, are linguistic utterances with performative (or illocutionary) function.⁵⁷ Following J. R. Searle’s interpretation of Austin’s work, recipes, for instance, are directive illocutionary acts, because they order someone to do something.⁵⁸ Recipes, as compiled in the *Naomi Cook Book*, are such performative utterances; they order and they suggest: “Cut Crisco into flour with two knives, add water. Care should be taken to keep dough dry. Roll lightly. This makes a flaky dough.”⁵⁹

In the realm of literary studies, the concept of speech acts is utilized to analyze the relationship between speaker, speech act, and recipient and thus framing speech acts as a social practice.⁶⁰ Looking at texts as speech acts, therefore, serves to unravel the social, institutional, and conventional contexts of the production and reception of literary texts.⁶¹ Cookbooks, too, are literary texts, as Anne Bower has shown in her compilation *Recipes for reading: Community Cookbooks, Stories, Histories*.⁶² Consequently, cookbooks with recipes, advertisements, and statements like those in the *Naomi Cook Book* are directive speech acts, transmitting orders and requests from the authors to the recipients to actively shape their respective institutional and con-

ventional settings, social contexts, and situations. For example, by using industrial processed or mass-produced foods such as Crisco or Purity Flour, which were manufactured by big North American companies, to conjure both Apple Strudel and Apple Pie with the help of the latest Acme electrical range to serve these delicacies at Rosh Hashanah as well as at a game of bridge or at a tea party, the authors of the *Naomi Cook Book* conformed to an ideal that they would propose to their readers to follow: being simultaneously a modern consumer, a savvy middle-class housewife, and a devoted Jew.

Of course, the ideal did only rarely correspond with the complex reality of individual lives. Still, it was efficacious, because it integrated aspects of the Old and aspects of the New into a coherent North American Jewish identity and thus functioned as a model for the Hadassah women and their readers to aspire to.

Re-Framing the Integration Narrative 1928–1960

The subsequent editions of the *Naomi Cook Book* showed that the Hadassah women constantly reframed the narrative of their version of an integrated North American Jewish middle—and upper—class identity, which was set in motion by the 1928 debut. Over the course of the following decades of the 20th century, the Hadassah women adapted the integration narrative to their changing socio-cultural surroundings.

Only four years after the first *Naomi Cook Book* saw the light of day, the second of its editions came out. In this new recipe collection, the authors adapted the previous integration narrative to the socio-political development of the Great Depression and rising anti-Semitism in Canada. They now steered their efforts of sketching a group identity for their readers towards mainstream Canadian society as their primary reference point and concurrently decreased the Jewish content of their cookbook. Thus, in 1932, the Hadassah women discarded most of the confidently promoted Jewishness of the *Naomi Cook Book's* first edition. The editors decided, for example, to get rid of the foreword, which in 1928 delivered the conceptual framework of their Canadian-Jewish cookbook. By including detailed information about vitamins and nutrients, on the other hand, the editors took on recent insights in the field of domestic hygiene and doing so, underscored their position as modern Canadians—allegedly opposed to a traditional Jewish diet, which did not care much for vitamins. As consumers, the editors and readers also adapted to the changing consumption landscape of the Great Depression. Many recipes and advertisements featured keywords such as “economical” and “rich in value” emphasizing the merit of a dish or product during times of scarcity. In addition, the second edition of the *Naomi Cook Book* generally presented fewer advertisements than in its prior edition and specifically no recommendations at all to buy costly household appliances, instead, the 1932 edition put forward advertisements for loan corporations that accepted high-end furniture

as securities. Eventually, the advertising companies, who in 1928 eagerly canvassed the promising target group of Jewish customers, also reduced their Jewish wording. The Canadian Industries Limited company, for instance, still promoted their Windsor Salt as a pure kosher product, only in the 1932 edition, they banned the word “kosher” from the product name, hinting at its kashrut suitability only in the description.⁶³

In the *Naomi Cook Book*'s third edition, published three years after the end of the Second World War to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Canadian Hadassah's first recipe collection, the foreword and with it a distinctive Jewish narrative reappeared. In this edition, the authors confidently promoted the Jewish experience of migration and diaspora, dietary and ceremonial laws, as well as a cornucopia of Ashkenazi dishes to complete the Canadian Jewish dinner table, which became less formal compared to the first edition. The advertisements in this edition only took up a third of the space they filled in the 1928 original, randomly featuring products of mostly local enterprises such as a printing and stationery company, a cigar stand, and several meat markets.⁶⁴ In return, the recipes of the third edition much more naturally suggested canned or processed foods as ingredients, especially Jell-O, but also canned fruit, vegetables, and fish. For example, of the four ingredients, it took to make “Savory Sauerkraut”—sauerkraut, tomatoes, tomato soup, and onion—only one, the onion, was not canned.⁶⁵

The *Naomi Cook Book*'s third edition, again, took part in rewriting the Jewish integration narrative by promoting a desired integrated Jewish lifestyle that weaves in traditional as well as contemporary Jewish and North American threads. In the 1948 edition, which coincided with the founding of the state of Israel and thus the fulfillment of the Zionist cause, the cookbook's purpose of supporting a Jewish national homeland was not only presented on the very first page but now also on the recipe-level. To add to a more Zionist table, the 1948 edition of the *Naomi Cook Book* suggested in a recipe to replace potatoes with Jerusalem artichokes, which “look like small potatoes, but are not so mealy.”⁶⁶ While still supporting the existence of a Jewish homeland in the Middle East, the authors of the *Naomi Cook Book* were among those Canadian Jews, who, increasingly Canadian born, middle class, and educated, had sacrificed for the national war effort; they had given their sons and daughters to fight in the Second World War, some to die, alongside their fellow citizens. As partners in battle and after the harrowing experience of the Holocaust, Canadian Jews strongly placed their national loyalties in their Canadian homeland and would not tolerate the injustice of peacetime anti-Semitism, which they still had to put up with during the 1930s and early 1940s.⁶⁷ What follows was a steady increase of Jewish integration into mainstream society, which was also reflected on the pages of the fourth and last edition of the *Naomi Cook Book* and simultaneously brought forward a whole new set of integration challenges.

The year 1960 brought to life the final edition of the *Naomi Cook Book*, in which the Hadassah women redirected their agency to facilitate processes of building a group identity to promote a strong Jewish narrative within the overall framework of Canadian citizenship. Historian Harold Troper described the 1960s as a decade, in which Canadian Jews became more invested in Canada and in their Jewish particularism—a finding that corresponds with the contemporary edition of the *Naomi Cook Book*, published by the Naomi Chapter of Toronto “to mark 40 years of service in the Hadassah Wizo Organization, and to re-dedicate itself to continuing effort in the upbuilding of the state of Israel.”⁶⁸ Re-dedicating seemed to be the keyword for this cookbook, as the recipe editors and donors also felt the need to reintroduce to their fellow Canadian Jews—who, by this time, were well acculturated—the acceptable cuts for kosher-style cooking. Yet, the recipe donors were not overly careful regarding kashrut, as, for instance, they didn’t overtly mix meat and dairy in their dishes, but didn’t give hints to be attentive for using kosher gelatin or shortening either. This finding, too, points towards Canada’s Jews being more and more merged into their North American socio-cultural surroundings.

Jewish national loyalties lay with their Canadian home. Following the observation that US-Jewish cookbooks of the postwar era did not feature Israeli or Middle Eastern content, food writer and immigrant historian Lara Rabinovitch explained that “even as American Jews devoted much energy and funds to the new state of Israel in the postwar period, most of their cookbooks promoted and perpetuated cultural and political semblance to the United States.”⁶⁹ Accordingly, the absence of recipes for hummus or falafel and the presence of recipes for Barbecue and “Wine Recipes for the Gourmet” in 1960 Naomi edition pointed to authors’ and readers’ cultural and political semblance to Canada.

Whereas the *Naomi Cook Book* from 1960 fitted in seamlessly with its predecessors in terms of integrating Canadian food practices, it strikingly fell out of the series regarding the sponsoring section. Compared to the original *Naomi Cook Book* from 1928, already in the 1932 and 1948 edition, fewer and fewer sponsors filled the pages with their names, products, and services: In 1928, the Hadassah recipe collection counted 45 advertisements, in 1932 the number decreased to 31 while in 1948 it sank to only 13. In their final edition of the *Naomi Cook Book*, the Hadassah women eventually refrained completely from including advertisements. They simply did not need to anymore. “For the organized Jewish community and its leadership,” elaborated Troper, “the late 60s were characterized by institutional growth and increased budgets to pay for an explosion of community programming, including political action programming.”⁷⁰ Comfortably established within North American consumer culture and upper-middle-class lifestyles, the Hadassah women felt no need to inscribe themselves into the former while the latter provided them with a financial cushion that allowed the organizing committee to abstain from booking external sponsors.

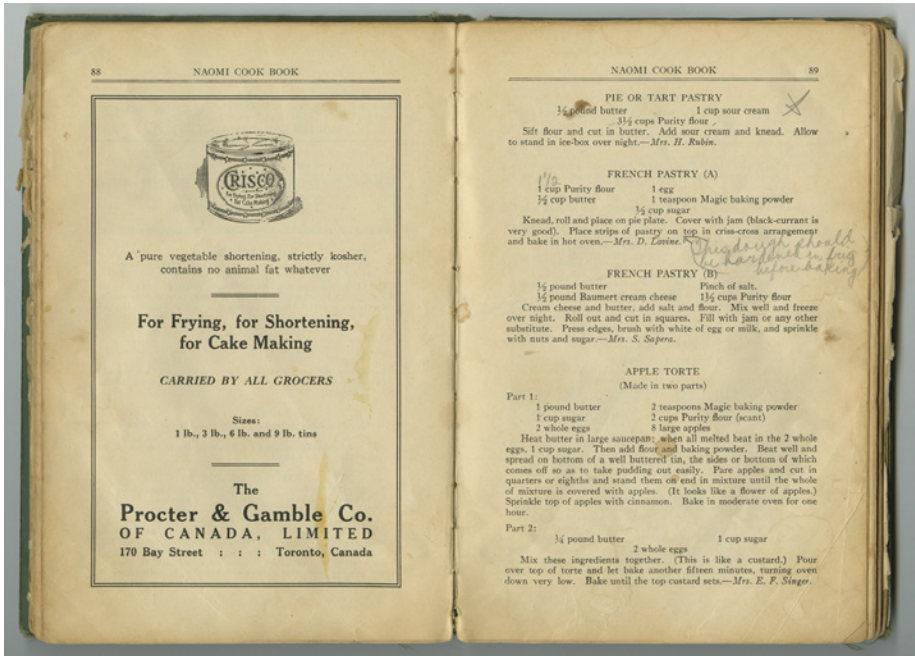
More Than a Cookbook

After Jewish food made it into the *Canadian Cook Book* and by that into the canon of Canadian cuisine in 1953, the 1960 edition of the *Naomi Cook Book* proofed that the alleged success story of Jewish integration brought forward another integration challenge: the reintegration of Jewish food practices into Americanized and Canadianized Jewish households. In the 1960 edition of the *Naomi Cook Book*, the editors referred to their starting point in the 1920s, when Jewish middle—and upper—class women still knew the kosher cuts of meat by heart but strove to inscribe themselves into an integrated Anglo-American Jewish identity. As this wish was widely achieved in the 1960s, their successors could blissfully neglect this thread within the 1960 cookbook. Instead, on their index page of the final edition, the Hadassah women praised this publication as “The Standard of Canadian Jewish Cookery,” by that emphasizing the roots of Jewish particularism within Canadian cookery dating back to the 1920s as well as its established position in Canadian society in 1960.

In 1928, the first edition of the *Naomi Cook Book* accounted for a generational shift, as it did not settle for praising North American consumer culture at the cost of abandoning Ashkenazi Jewish heritage, but proving that Jewish traditions and kosher-style dishes went very well with sophisticated North American cuisine and middle-class consumption practices, instead. Moreover, with the foreword and the recipes, the authors of the *Naomi Cook Book* conceptually connected the contemporary Jewish concern of Zionism with Ashkenazi heritage in a North American setting. By that, the Hadassah women created and exerted their agency of building a hybrid Jewish group identity as they de- and prescribed a desired traditional but modern Jewish life in the middle and upper class of urban Canada at the end of the 1920s. According to the Hadassah women, this lifestyle was to be achieved and maintained not only by integrating traditional Jewish and modern American dishes, but by consuming the latest household appliances and industrial foods that were mass-produced for an upper-middle-class and Jewish market in order to guaranteed participation in North American consumer culture—and by that, in mainstream society.

Between the *Naomi Cook Book*'s first edition in 1928 and its last one in 1960, the Jewish integration narrative was altered through perpetual (re-)framing and by that adjusted to shifting socio-cultural realities. Although women were banned from opinion-forming professions throughout the first half of the 20th century, the Torontonian Hadassah women still took part in writing and rewriting this narrative by compiling and publishing their recipe collection over five decades. Their readers, too, co-wrote huge parts of it, as women then may not have been the rulers of the parliaments and business counters, but they were the rulers of domestic consumption and thus assumed power over the social positioning of their families. This is not to be underestimated, since, as Heinze has shown, consumption was central to North American acculturation.

With its always changing trajectories, integration is a never-ending process and thus a constant of human coexistence. Examining the history of food ways through cook-books allows for unravelling the history of integration not as a linear sequence of steps on a ladder leading to completion, but as a process with recurring and re-assembling challenges, contradictions and contestations.



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